



Different Purposes and Strategies for Addressing the Scrambling Behaviour of Old Children in Kindergarten

- A Case Study in Class D at T Kindergarten in Fuzhou

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Abstract. In this paper, children in the older class of T Kindergarten, Fuzhou, were selected for behavioural observation. Class D of the same kindergarten was also sampled for a case study based on questionnaires, to observe the children in the class and record their typical scrambling behavior. Cases were also classified according to different classification bases.

Keywords: Old Children in Kindergarten, Conflicts, Pre-school Education

1 Introduction

Interpersonal conflicts lie within the spectrum of social exchanges between young children. Kindergartens provide opportunities for children to interact with their peers. However, conflicts are inevitable in interpersonal interactions that disputes, arguments, and fights are commonly visible in settings like kindergartens and households [1]. Peer conflict is a frequent problem in young children's daily interactions and is of great significance to their development. Children's ability to resolve peer conflict can reflect their level of social cognition and social adaptability. If seized properly, interpersonal conflicts can be regarded as educational opportunities for promoting the development of the social and language domains in older children, as well as well as enriching younger children's establishment of social concepts. In contrast, children would miss such learning opportunity for social development if their teachers and parents omit and oversee. Vice versa, this would possibly result in the development of certain bad behavioral habits that affect the acquisition of social interaction skills, e.g., demonstration of aggression, crying and tattling during conflicts to resolve scramble behavior. This article focuses on the act of conflict as a scramble.

Experts and scholars have suggested multiple definitions for scrambling behaviors. The common ground among all, though, is that scrambling covers a full process of conflict, that usually starts with one or both parties disagree on each other, and then express confrontation with tone and actions for expressions, and usually results in using a variety of strategies to achieve his or her scramble goals. This concept

includes the cause of the struggle, the way the struggle is carried out, and the outcome of the struggle [2].

[Case 1] A teacher asks the child next to her to pick up a dropped material from the maths law area. The two children pushed and shoved each other with their shoulders and arms, neither of them allowed the other to pick up the material as instructed. Shi Shi grabbed one end of the material and looked at the teacher while shouting, "This is what the teacher told me to come and sort out." Yu Yu also grabbed one end and shouted, "But I got it first." Finally, Yu Yu said first, "I will let you have it first this time, and I will come back to help the teacher next time."

In the above case, the struggle began when both children wanted to help the teacher for gaining praise, and they used pushing and shouting to end the struggle.

As we can see, scramble behavior is a conflict between children in kindergarten that occurs during peer interaction, and is triggered by people, objects and events.

2 Types of Scrambling Behaviour of Kindergarten Children and Statistical Analysis

Although older children are beginning to use verbal behaviour such as communication to resolve conflicts that occur during interpersonal interactions, they are young enough to have limited ability to organise language and non-verbal behaviour still accounts for a large proportion of their behaviour. In addition, the older children have more social experience than the younger children and are able to imitate their teachers and parents in order to learn how to resolve conflicts and apply them in their lives. Therefore, the factors that influence children's fighting behaviour in the older classes are complex, including family factors, children's own factors, teachers' factors and social factors, with parents having the most significant influence on children. Parents are their children's first teachers and the people who spend the longest time with them in early childhood, so family factors are essential to the influence of young children's scrambling behaviour. From a young child's point of view, in most cases, actions precede verbal expression, and in addition to this, the type of temperament a child is born with is a factor that influences scrambling behaviour. In addition, when young children arrive at kindergarten, they are influenced by more social aspects. In consequence, young children in kindergarten develop different types of scrambling behaviour.

There are various types of scrambling behavior among young children, which can be classified into different perspectives. In terms of the purpose of the scramble, it can be divided into two categories: the scramble for sovereignty over objects, and the scramble for adults' attention; in terms of resolution strategies, it can be divided into three categories: passive scramble (physical aggression, threatening orders), neutral scramble (telling off), and active scramble (sharing, humility, cooperation).

2.1 In Terms of The Purpose of The Scramble

It is observed that this class demonstrated the usual beginning of children's scrambling behavior with a struggle for sovereignty over objects and a struggle for adult attention.

2.1.1. Competition for sovereignty over objects.

This type of scrambling behavior has appeared to be the most common. During the 180 days of observation in Class D at Fuzhou T, cases of children's scrambling behavior have been recorded in the observation record form with relevant classification of children's scrambling purposes in the "Observation Record" column, with statistical analysis drawn accordingly (see Table 1). The 180 days of observation arrived at a conclusion that children's struggle for sovereignty over objects for mainly two pursuits: firstly, play materials; and secondly, specific objects such as chairs. These two situations are regarded as struggles for sovereignty over objects. Whilst competition for adult attention was to be manifested for two factors: firstly, competition for adult favorites; secondly, competition for adult praise. The bar chart demonstrates 65.63% of scrambling behavior is due to the sovereignty over objects, and 25% due to the seeking of adults' attention. It is obvious that the struggle for sovereignty over objects is most common in the social interactions of older children, mainly driven by the lack of clear sense of property rights among this age group, and some individuals' perception of what they like is their own.

2.1.2. The scramble for adult attention.

Sometimes scrambling occurs not only to fight for sovereignty over objects, but for the attention of adults. In other words, children compete to gain praise or affection from adults such as teachers or parents.

[Case 2] On Teacher's Day, the children brought in the greeting cards they had made for the teacher. The teacher asked Yoyo to help pour the water, but when Nini heard her, she grabbed the cup and handed it to the teacher first, and did not let Yoyo help out as asked for the whole time.

In the above case, Yoyo and Nini were fighting to get praise and recognition from the teacher, but Yoyo appeared to be in the more vulnerable position that she whispered to get the teacher's attention to seek help for this scrambling incident.

2.2 In terms of Solution Strategies

According to the survey, the children's resolution strategies were divided into three categories: negative, neutral and positive. According to a survey conducted in Class D of Fuzhou T Kindergarten, the majority of children in the older classes used neutral and negative scrambling response, while the number of positive scrambling response was low. During the 180-day observation period, common scramble resolution strategies were listed in the questionnaires. Combined with the parental questionnaire, it is concluded that there were five specific resolution measures mainly adopted by the

older children when scramble behavior occurred (see Table 2): verbal aggression, behavioral aggression, giving in and crying, complaining and asking for help, humbling and comforting, with one or two children having other resolution strategies.

2.2.1. Negative scramble.

Negative scrambling behavior is manifested in two main ways: physical aggression and threatening commands. Physical aggression refers to any malicious pushing, biting, kicking, hitting, that can cause physical harm to the other person during the conflict; threatening commands refer to the use of warning words by young children to prohibit or control the words and actions of their peers. According to the statistical analysis of Class D in Fuzhou T Park (see Table 2), the incidence of adopting behavioral aggression as scrambling strategy was found to be 43.75%, and the incidence of adopting verbal aggression to resolve scrambling behaviour was 28.13%. It is not difficult to see that in this period, there are still more children to take negative strategies to solve the competition conflict.

[Case 3] During the free time after lunch, Bing Bing suddenly cried and the teacher pulled Bing Bing aside to ask what had happened. Bing Bing said that when she was playing with her own toy, Yu Yu thought that the teddy bear she had brought with her was so cute that she reached for it and took it directly. Yu Yu also threatened Bing Bing that if she told her teacher, she would never play with Bing Bing again.

In the above case, Yu Yu and Bing Bing were fighting over the toy that Bing Bing had brought with her. Yu Yu grabbed the toy that belonged to Bing Bing and verbally threatened Bing Bing from telling the teacher to obtain the teddy bear.

Table 1. Statistical Analysis Chart of Scramble Resolution Strategies in Class D of Fuzhou T Kindergarten (Table Credit: Orinial)

Resolution Strategies	Ratio
Verbal attacks	28.13%
Yielding to weeping	53.13%
Behavioural attacks	43.75%
Sue for help	62.5%
Sharing with Humility	21.88%
Others	9.38%

2.2.2. Gender Scramble.

Gender scrambling implies that children take a resolution approach that is not only as violent as negative scrambling behaviour, but also not as friendly as positive scrambling behaviour. Rather, they take a gentler approach to resolving conflicts. Neutral scrambling is often accompanied by submissive crying and whining.

Tattletale behaviour is: "An interactive behaviour initiated by a young child to a teacher in everyday kindergarten life for a particular aspect of aggression from a peer, or when he or she finds that a certain behaviour of a peer is incompatible with the

collective rules of the kindergarten or with a certain requirement of the teacher, and the salient purpose of this behaviour is to stop the behaviour of the peer." According to a statistical analysis of Class D at Fuzhou T Kindergarten (see Table 2), the incidence of adopting the neutral scramble strategy of giving in and crying was found to be 53.13%, and the incidence of adopting a complaint for help to resolve the scramble behaviour was as high as 62.5%, so it is easy to see that the largest proportion of children in Class D adopted neutral scramble behaviour.

2.2.3 Active scramble.

The findings highlight the multi-dimensionality of children's social contexts, that their conflicts are usually not solely negative or aggressive [3]. Researchers have commonly tied social conflicts in line with aggression [4]. Yet, as pointed out by Shantz, some research shows that conflicts among young children entail non-aggressive aspects, and potentially lead to positive outcomes. For example, studies have shown that conflicts about object disputes often entail negotiation and compromises, and influence complex patterns of communication and interaction [5].

Positive scrambling behavior with resolution strategies such as sharing, humility and cooperation is a positive resolution strategy that helps to develop young children's social competence and improve their social interaction skills. Sharing is a pro-social behavior of human beings, which refers to the social behavior of individuals who voluntarily share resources with others of their own accord and derive pleasure and satisfaction from them. Humility is when two children, or one of them, voluntarily give up something they are fighting over to the other to satisfy the other's wishes. Cooperation means that the two children cooperate with each other through communication and negotiation to reach a solution strategy that satisfies both parties. The statistical analysis of Class D in Fuzhou T Kindergarten demonstrates that 21.88% of the children in the classroom adopted humility and comfort as a strategy to resolve the conflict, and the number of children in the classroom who were able to adopt positive strategies such as humility to resolve the conflict was low (see Table 2).

Teachers and parents should play an adequate role as role models and value the influence of behaviour and cognition among young children's peers. Parents are the first teachers of their children, and their behaviour has a subtle influence on the behaviour and qualities of their children. In case of conflict between parents or grandparents, it is important to use gentle language and a positive attitude to resolve the conflict and to help children develop the correct way of resolving conflicts. When it comes to teachers, it is best for them not to intervene at the beginning of a scramble, but to observe first, and then intervene when the child is about to get into a physical confrontation or when they are at a standstill that cannot be resolved, so that the teacher can help the child gain social experience and find better ways to resolve the scramble, thus helping the child to improve interpersonal skills. Additionally, teachers should avoid taking the role of an authority figure and using a simple, brutal approach, instead guiding children, leaving space for them to solve problems independently and providing them with more space to grow. As a teacher, it is important to help children trace the causes of their scrambling behaviour by first

listening to both sides of the argument, then helping them to clarify their thinking and analyse the reasons why they won the argument, so that they can further understand whether they are at fault, and finally guiding them to find out for themselves whether there is a better way to solve their scrambling behaviour. In a real sense, this will help children to solve their scrambling behaviour, enrich their interpersonal skills and improve their social skills.

3 Conclusion

As children progress their main social life from home to kindergarten, it is inevitable to encounter a variety of conflicts with their peers. Based on a survey of Class D, categorized by the purpose of the scramble and the means of the scramble, children's scramble behavior is reflected being commonly multi-dimensional. As parents and guardians, it is crucial to provide appropriate guidance and help to encourage their social development. From using only simple and violent solutions to gradually acquiring the skills to communicate with others. Therefore, they can be better integrated into colonial life in the future.

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