



artevelde university college ghent

MEMBER OF GHENT UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

Imagination

“the video coaching project”

VIDEOCOACHING

STIMULATING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH IN INTERACTION WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Representing interaction, discussing interaction

Giselinde Bracke
Ine Hostyn
Ann Steverlynck
Sofie Verschaeve

Artevelde University College, Ghent (Belgium)

2013-2017

Elements good recordings for video coaching

- ✓ *Informing in advance (informed consent)*
- ✓ *Simple & available equipment (mobile phone, hand camera)*
- ✓ *Get used to children & professionals*



- ✓ *Short recordings (10 minutes)*
- ✓ *Blend into the environment*



- ✓ *Initiative of the practitioner where and when*
- ✓ *Indicate when you stop filming "Is it OK?"*
- ✓ *Filming interaction: children & professional in the picture*

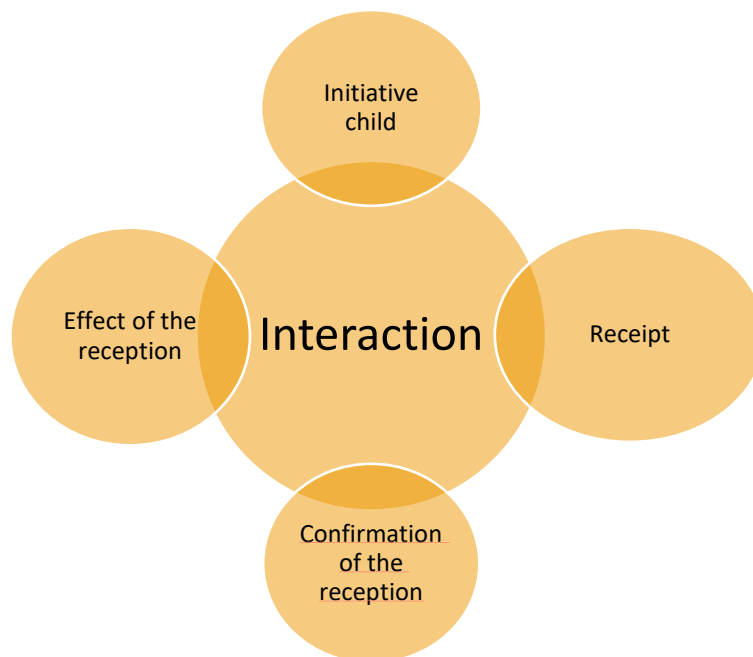
A video coaching trajectory in a nutshell

Key elements for video coaching with focus on interaction

- ✓ Inform in advance all the people involved about why and how video coaching will be used. A safe learning environment is essential!
- ✓ An equivalent relationship with curiosity comes first! (no evaluation)
- ✓ Make short video recordings: 10 minutes is the directive.
- ✓ The professional involved is/remains the owner of the videoclips that are used for internal use.
- ✓ Start the coaching conversation with 'looking small towards children' (LSC) To freeze is the message!
- ✓ Search for initiatives of children and appoint them with a framework that departs from the perspective of children in the interaction.
- ✓ From 'looking small towards children' (LSC) to 'looking small towards yourself' (LSY)
- ✓ By looking in detail at the interaction with young children there is more awareness of the quality of the interaction. From this analysis, goals can be formulated in function of growth.
- ✓ As video coach, you take up the same role in your coaching conversation as you expect from the professional towards the children (e.g. the initiative of the coachee should come first in the conversation).
- ✓ Repeat the process of making videos and discuss them a few times: minimum 2 times, ideally 3 times.
- ✓ Organize a final meeting (focus group) with the people involved: this explains and strengthens the impact.

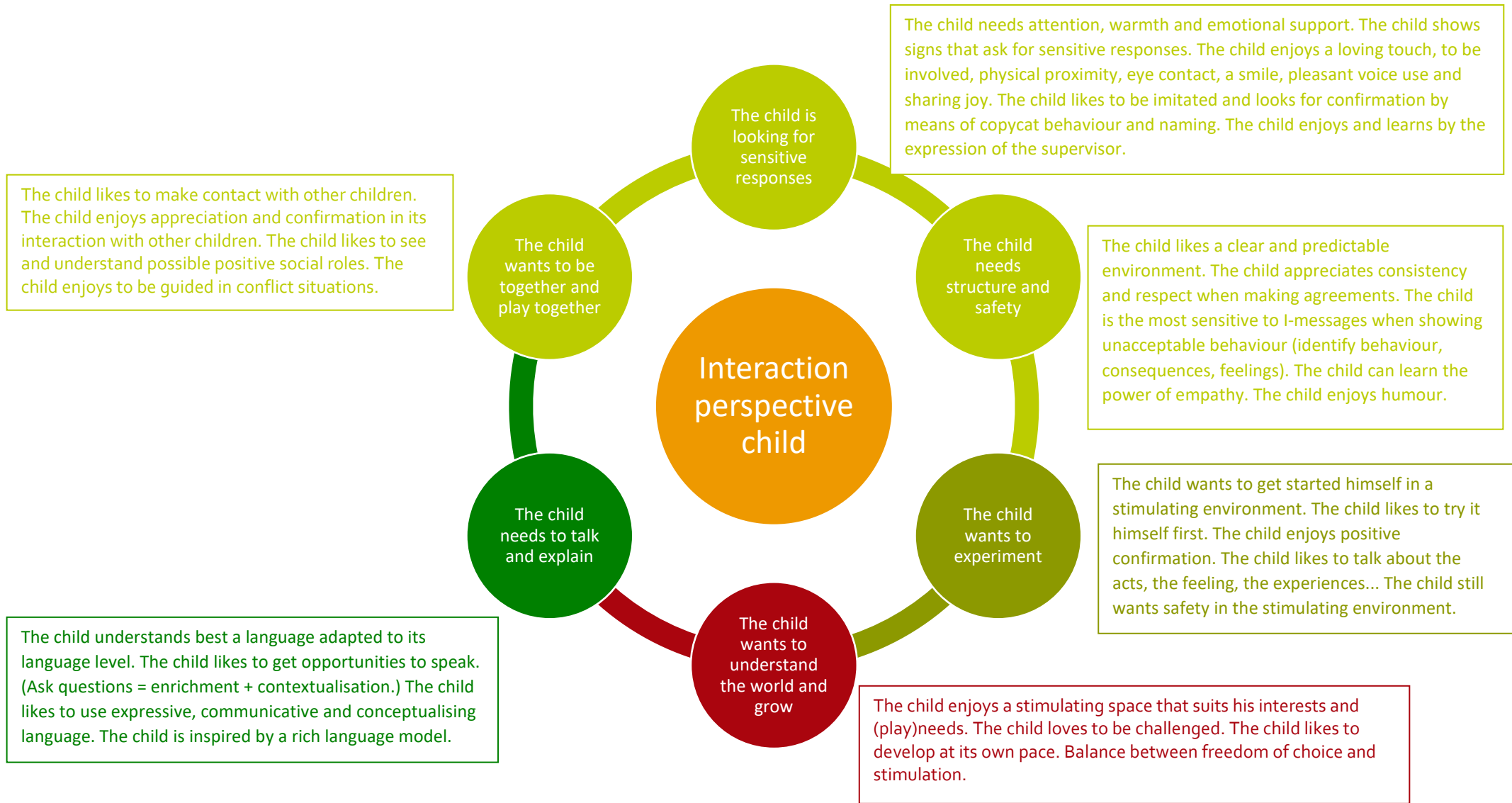
Framework basic communication

Source: Steunpunt video-interactiebegeleiding (2012)



Framework high-quality interaction – perspective CHILD

(based on DE NCKO-Kwaliteitsmonitor (2010) and research VerBEELDing University college Artevelde)



Videocoaching is Pleasant, Creates an Appetite and Gives the Possibility to Relive Experiences!

"Whipped cream? Never again!... Whipped cream? Yes please!"

BEFORE FILMING

Today, the video coach will make a video recording of our activities for the fourth time. I've been thinking carefully in advance about what I would like to have recorded. In the previous recording, I had noticed that the children were attracted by the large mirrors on our walls. This time, I want to give the children the possibility to play a lot, so they can 'shine' in their enthusiasm. That is why I will let them experiment with whipped cream on the mirrors. This is to be *thé* activity of the year.

I prepare well: I put plastic on the floor, give all children an apron and make sure they are covered from head to toe (they look like colourful little dwarfs!), I take all material needed to clean up afterwards... I leave nothing to chance as I want the children to have a really nice time.

WHILE RECORDING

I take the can of whipped cream and I spray some on the mirror. All the children remain quietly seated. None of them dare to go to the mirror. I put some children in front of the mirror and show them how they can use their fingers to wipe the whipped cream on the mirror. I still hardly get any response, and one child even starts to cry. I try everything: spraying the whipped cream on the carpet instead of the mirror, showing them they can taste it, using the cream to draw pictures and tell a story with it, etc. But the "great whipped cream party" I had hoped for just doesn't happen. I start to feel irritated. I ask my colleague to bring in two more children; maybe they will like it and then the rest will follow. But unfortunately, they too stay quietly seated and look around. After about ten minutes, I decide to end it... on a sad note, as far as I'm concerned.

I cannot hide my disappointment, so the coach asks if I would like an extra recording to conclude my track with a positive feeling. By now, I know the coach pretty well, so I am honest and say that I'm not happy. At exactly that moment, two children crawl over to the bucket of water I had already filled for cleaning up. They are interested in the water and I begin to discover it together with them. It's a nice moment: the three of us around the bucket, using the sponge, filling the cap of the spray can like a cup... The children are very interested in the water... Great! This way, I can end this recording with a positive feeling.

AFTER RECORDING

About three weeks later, I have an appointment for an interview with the video coach. Due to renovations, we will have this interview in the supervisor's office. When we enter the room, she asks if she should order some more whipped cream. "No, the activity wasn't successful at all", I answer. "I wanted to organise the best activity of the year, but it was a failure."

The video coach asks me which images I want to watch. I tell her I would like to start with the whipped cream recordings and then end on a positive note with the water activity.

While we are watching, the video coach stops the tape almost immediately (**method: freezing**). I see how X. immediately looks at the spray can when I spray on the mirror. He is fascinated by the sound. The video coach asks me what I see happening with the children (**method: looking from the children's perspective**). I stop looking at myself and I notice how one child looks very interested at the mirror and follows me with her eyes while I make a long line on the mirror with the whipped cream. A bit later, I see how Y., who usually is not very good at crawling, makes a huge effort behind my back to crawl towards the spray can and feels the edge of the nozzle. He seems fascinated by it. It's too bad I didn't notice it at the time, but now I enjoy seeing how interested the children are. The activity was more of a success than I thought back then." I hear myself asking disappointedly "Isn't this fun?", but now I can see: "Yes, it actually is fun!" I hadn't expected this at all, but these images make me experience the activity completely differently. I notice how interested the children are, and get to **relive** the experience, which is very pleasant. These images **cheer me up and make me want** to try it again. Next time, I will offer the whipped cream without too many expectations, but I will be very attentive towards the children's signals and their interests.

The video coach asks me if I'm able to end the track with a positive feeling now: "Yes, definitely! I really learned a lot from this dialogue." The video coach tells me our interesting conversation is very rewarding for her as well, and that she learns a lot from it (**method: in dialogue, learning together**). She explains how new experiences can be overwhelming, even for us adults, so we may seem less enthusiastic at first as well. She tells us about a trip she made to Chartres Cathedral. At first, she was overwhelmed and very silent, but on the way home, she became very enthusiastic and told about her experience. I recognise the same feeling in the children on the images.

We conclude that my expectations concerning the activity were different than those of the children. I'd expected a mess, and lots of experimenting, but for the children, the activity was much more about discovering all facets of a can of whipped cream (What's inside? How does this work? Where does the sound come from?...).

The video coach asks me if I want to have some photos from the recording. Yes, I would like to show these to the parents. I hadn't told the parents anything about the activity because I didn't think it was a success, but now I would like to show them how much interest their children showed in the spray can (the sound, the nozzle...) and how they explored it because it was new to them. I am proud of the pictures we select from the recording. We don't even watch the recording of the water activity... and when I leave, I say to the supervisor: "I changed my mind! Go ahead and order another can of whipped cream!"

Liesbeth, Kindervilla Waregem

- A childcare practitioner for children between 0-3 years -

Videocoaching Makes Us More Aware and Empowers Us!

"I've become more aware as a teacher and the video fragments make me aware that I still enjoy teaching!"

During the second recording, we record the talk session during the morning ritual. It's extra exciting because a Flemish school journal 'Klasse' films the recording and the coaching dialogue. We watch the images together and focus on looking at the children. We're both very surprised by the reaction of a few children after the talk session. A few children stand up and express their frustrations. We pause the video (**freezing and rewinding**). I'm aware that this isn't the first time. I realise that often the same children are picked to speak, in particular the children who articulate well and are rather social. The videos clearly show that the other children would also like to take a turn. I let the children choose, but because of this, not everyone gets a chance to speak. I see that this isn't right, that the most vulnerable children (non-native or less social) aren't given enough opportunities. I really want to work on this. Together, we think about how I can let the children choose, but how I can control the choosing process so that all children are given a chance to speak. I'm looking for a way to explain this visually. (**Focus on looking at children, images encourage critical thinking, images make us aware, motivation follows.**)

During the third coaching interview, I talk about the changes in the talk session during the morning ritual. I experience myself the changes as positive because the children no longer express dissatisfaction. I can now (visually) explain to the children who already had a turn to speak and who will have their turn soon. They acknowledge and respect this. I think it's good that I saw this in the videoclips and from the children's perspective itself; otherwise I would never have done anything about it. I will pay attention to this at other times in the future as well. During routines such as afternoon-snack time or transition moments, I will keep an eye on this and think about it. *"Is it still meaningful to do this in this way? That's something I learned."* (**Seeing signals that you don't see otherwise. Images encourage thinking, questioning things, is similar to professionalisation**)

To me, the framework is something enriching to watch the video fragments and to focus on the children. It allows me to see class events more from the perspective of the children. (**focus on looking at children**)

Anniek, GILKO Merelbeke

- A teacher for toddlers -

Video Coaching Empowers Me in My Role as Coordinator!

"I am useful to the childcare providers while looking at the videoclips together, my feedback is useful to them."

I started video coaching because I immediately saw the benefit for our after-school daycare. My team of childcare providers does a great job; every day, they provide a warm welcome for children after school and they also organise fun activities during the holidays. The childcare providers and I get along very well and I often drop in on their groups. Because they work as a good and self-organised team, I consider video coaching as an opportunity to also think together about how we (can) work in our daycare.

After my initial enthusiasm, I also felt first doubts. *How do I combine this with the many other tasks as a coordinator? What do I record in the busy atmosphere of a large group of children? How do I handle the discussion afterwards? What if there is something in the videoclip that I don't like? ...* I decided to start with one employee and after informing them about the what and how of video coaching, I let the childcare providers choose for themselves who would like to give it a try. We will schedule two or three recordings and interviews. This makes it a lot more doable!

The first recording was a little awkward, I was just filming around. The first conversation was exciting as well, but together, the childcare provider and I became better at video coaching by discovering the children's perspective in the video fragments and talking about the interaction. What helped a lot was pausing, analysing small pieces of interaction and starting from the focus on the children. Also, asking a lot of questions to become more aware of the interaction: *what do you see the children do, what do you do while interacting with the children, why do you do that, what if... you would do this or that, etc.* I definitely go deeper into what goes well in the interaction with the children, but I also discuss what I believe can be improved. For example, if at some point the childcare provider is very focused on organisation while handing out afternoon snacks and responds less to the children, this is also something I bring up. However, I don't forget the powerful moment in which she actively listens to a child that points to a box of Legos and then calmly says that they will take out the box of Legos after dinner. This may only be a short and fleeting moment, but it's a nice example that shows us what it means to respond to the children. "Little things in big moments."

I am pleasantly surprised that my feedback on the videos is well-received by the childcare provider. The questions help her think, the time I spend on discussing and listening is appreciated, and she has new ideas for future work based on the issues we discuss. I'm hungry for more!

Working with video coaching really did me good. It is now clear to me that my role as coordinator involves much more than just organising and boosting confidence. I still give a lot

Bracke, G., Hostyn, I., Steverlynck, A., & Verschaeve, S. (2018). *VerBEELDing. Interactie in beeld, interactie in gesprek.* [Imagination. Representing interaction, discussing interactie.] [website] Ghent, Belgium: Artevelde University College.

of responsibility, which I still find important, but I've also learned to provide concrete feedback on the basis of the videoclips, both inspiring as well as confronting. I now feel more confident giving feedback because I can do this in a balanced relationship with the childcare provider.

Before, I often dropped in and saw a lot of things happening (a lot of positive things, but sometimes also something that bothered me), but we didn't have the time to discuss it. It's also difficult to return to those kinds of things afterwards because they're only fleeting observations or the core of the experience has already been lost. With the video images, I have the opportunity to prepare a dialogue and look back at what happened during a quiet moment, together with the childcare provider. My team members also appreciate that we look at the videos together instead of me sharing my observations after just dropping in on their group. We engage in dialogue with each other, using the images as a shared focus: what an effective way of working!

In this way, the childcare providers experience my feedback as something positive and not as "criticism on their work", they appreciate my input. Definitely worth repeating!

Hanne, De Marientjes Nieuwpoort
After-school daycare coordinator
