

Research on Issues and Guidance Strategies of Peer Interactions During Area Activities in Senior Kindergarten Classes

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Abstract: Area activities in a kindergarten setting are primarily child-centered, allowing children to make their own decisions, operate independently, and explore freely. These activities are crucial for enhancing children's ability to interact with peers. During these self-directed area activities, children are not only able to reflect on their own behaviors but also respond to the actions of others. This cooperation and understanding foster improved peer interactions. This paper utilizes observational methods, interviews, and literature reviews, employing observation sheets for studying S Kindergarten. It focuses on three key issues in children's peer interactions: aggressive behavior, egocentrism, and gender differences. The study analyzes the current state of teachers' guidance strategies across three levels: linguistic, interactive, and environmental setup. It evaluates the existing practices in teachers' guidance methods and concludes by offering improvements and recommendations for guiding peer interactions in senior kindergarten classes.

Keywords: Peer Interaction, Guidance Strategies, Area Activities

1. Introduction of the Problem

1.1. The Importance of Peer Interaction in Children's Area Activities

In kindergartens, peer interaction forms a significant part of children's daily life and plays a crucial role in their social development. [1] Area activities enable children to engage in self-exploration, natural growth, and self-cooperation. Through these activities, children proactively merge ideas with peers, learning to accommodate, cooperate, and understand one another. [2] The cultivation of children's interaction skills is a continuous process, evident throughout the day's learning activities, making area activities a vital component of daily life that also nurtures peer interaction skills. In these activities, children not only reflect on their actions but also react to those of others, fostering cooperation and mutual understanding.

1.2. Deficiencies in Peer Interaction During Area Activities

Although children are the primary participants in area activities, their freedom to choose and explore independently does not reduce the importance of teacher guidance. As Yu Qi points out, teachers

must leverage their role and status to address challenges. [3] Each aspect of area activities, including material allocation, environmental setup, rule establishment, activity progression, and post-activity evaluation, necessitates teacher guidance. In observations of kindergarten area activities, the author noted that children sometimes engage in disputes due to their lack of experience in social interactions. For instance, in one scenario, a child named Xiaoyu wanted to play with a toy along with another child, Haohao. However, Haohao was not interested in playing together, which led Xiaoyu to forcefully take the toy from Haohao, resulting in a conflict and unsuccessful interaction between them. In such situations, teachers sometimes adopt a hands-off approach, not intervening or applying specific strategies to resolve issues in children's interactions. This lack of guidance can diminish the effectiveness of area activities and hinder children's development. In kindergarten area activities, there are numerous issues with how teachers guide children in peer interactions. This guidance can affect both the value of the activities and the children's development. There are two main scenarios: In one, teachers completely ignore children's interactions, staying aloof from the activity and letting children independently handle their interaction problems. In another scenario, teachers guide the interactions in an arbitrary manner, which can also cause various issues. For instance, teachers may not fully understand the children's individual characteristics and interaction habits, leading to guidance that is either whimsical or overly controlling, disrupting the natural rhythm of the children's interactions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research on Peer Interaction Issues in Area Activities

The author organizes literature related to the research topic "Issues and Guidance Strategies in Peer Interactions during Area Activities of Senior Kindergarten Classes".

2.1.1. Research on Aggressive Behaviors in Peer Interactions in Area Activities

Children's aggressive behavior refers to the act of a child causing harm to others or destroying objects of others. Wang Yanping notes that as older kindergarten children develop cognitively, emotionally, and in terms of gender differences, some may exhibit aggressive behaviors in area activities. These behaviors include physical aggression like hitting or kicking during play, [4] verbal aggression such as mocking, insulting, or swearing, [5] and habitual aggression where frequent aggressive acts become a routine, like hitting or verbally abusing others spontaneously. [6] Such behaviors hinder the positive development of children in area activities and children without aggressive tendencies tend to avoid interacting with their aggressive peers. [7]

2.1.2. Research on Gender Differences in Peer Interactions during Area Activities

Gender differences refer to variations in personality and role-related behaviors between genders. It is important for teachers to closely observe, understand, and engage in meaningful dialogue to address these gender differences as they become apparent in children's interactions. [8] Li Yiguo observes that although the long-standing social tradition of male superiority over females is gradually fading, stereotypical perceptions still exist. [9] For example, in Doll home of the older preschool class, girls, who generally have more developed social interaction skills than boys, often take a leading role in organizing various role-playing games, with a significant presence of gender stereotypes. [10] Girls typically play gentle roles such as mothers or princesses, while boys often assume roles like fathers or policemen, portraying more aggressive or brave characters. [11] In construction play areas, girls demonstrate stronger cooperative interaction skills than boys, who are more prone to conflicts and disagreements. [12]

2.1.3. Research on Egocentrism in Peer Interactions During Area Activities

The new *Guidelines* highlight the significance of nurturing children's mental and physical well-being.[13] Wei Xiaojuan notes that children aged 3-7 begin to develop self-awareness through understanding the relationship between 'self' and 'objects' and vice versa. [14] In kindergarten area activities involving peer interactions, it's observed that most children exhibit self-centered behaviors. [15] Jean Piaget suggests that "Children at this age are egocentric, which means they have difficulty thinking outside of their own viewpoints.[16] During area activities, children often display behaviors such as stubbornness, unreasonableness, monopolizing toys, selfishness, and arrogance. [17]

2.2. Research on Guidance Strategies for Peer Interactions in Area Activities

2.2.1. Research on Teacher Observation in Peer Interactions During Area Activities

The kindergarten guidance document *Outline* clearly states: "Teachers, colleagues, and friends of the children must be the leaders and supporters in challenging situations. The right approach is more effective." [18] Observation is essentially a perceptive activity, enabling teachers to understand and master the individual characteristics and peer interaction habits of each child. Through observation, teachers can provide targeted guidance in area activities, fostering the accurate and enhanced development of every child based on their individual capabilities.[19] During the process of exploring peer interactions in area activities, children need timely assistance and guidance from teachers. [20] However, Qian Loke and Gao Yuhan note that some teachers lack a clear understanding of the importance of observing children. Observations are often conducted superficially, only to meet rigid requirements set by kindergartens. Consequently, issues in peer interactions during area activities are frequently overlooked, and appropriate guidance is not provided in a timely manner. [21] This highlights the crucial role of teachers' observations in children's area activities.

2.2.2. Research on the Value of Guidance Strategies in Peer Interactions During Area Activities

One significant form of children's autonomous activities is free play in area activities, focusing on children's learning and self-reflection. Lin Xia points out that the role of teachers in area activities is to direct the exploration of activities towards a clear direction. [22] Through observation, teachers can accurately and comprehensively understand the problems and reasons behind children's interactions with peers in area activities, recognize each child's individual characteristics and interaction habits, and provide appropriate guidance. However, this does not mean that teachers should intervene and assist at all times and places. [23] As children's development in areas such as cognition, imagination, and thinking is limited, making it challenging to conduct area activities effectively or to achieve a high level of activity as anticipated, teachers, using their sharp observational skills, sound judgment, and critical thinking, should confidently and appropriately guide children, providing the necessary support when needed. [24] Zhang Yuan believes that authoritarianism and non-intervention can make children unfriendly towards democracy. Some social scientists argue that in peer groups, teachers' standards of evaluation have the greatest impact on children. [25] This underscores the importance of teachers in identifying and resolving issues in children's peer interactions during area activities.

2.3. Review of Existing Literature and Research Gaps

Firstly, an understanding of existing research, rich in findings, provides a solid foundation. Existing studies on children's interactions during area activities, as well as their peer interactions within these activities, have revealed the relational and academic significance of such interactions. These studies

have helped shape the direction of the author's research on peer interactions in area activities and the strategies teachers use to guide children in these interactions. While existing research provides a basis, there are gaps that need addressing. Focusing on senior kindergarten classes as a starting point will help refine and enhance this line of research.

Secondly, regarding the research on peer interactions in senior kindergarten classes' area activities, on one hand, existing studies largely focus on observations and problem identification from teachers' perspectives, often based on their experiential insights. However, children's social development often requires more autonomous activities. Therefore, the research needs to center around children, exploring issues of peer relationships and interactions within area activities. On the other hand, most existing guidance strategies focus more on middle class children's peer interactions. There is a relative lack of research, both domestically and internationally, on guidance strategies for peer relationships in area activities for senior kindergarten classes. This gap allows author an opportunity to improve guidance strategies for peer relationships in area activities for senior kindergarten classes.

In conclusion, building on the foundation of previous research, this study focuses on the peer relationship issues and guidance strategies in senior kindergarten classes' area activities. By observing the real issues present in these activities among older children and interviewing their teachers, this research delves deeper into identifying the actual problems in peer interactions within these activities. It aims to propose practical guidance strategies that can be effectively implemented in kindergarten settings. This approach is intended to enhance the development of peer relationships among children during area activities and equip teachers with actionable strategies.

3. Definition of Concepts

3.1. Kindergarten Area Activities

Kindergarten area activities are designed by teachers based on scientific knowledge, utilizing classrooms or different zones within kindergartens to cater to each class's developmental level. [26] Yang Ling and Ma Xiaoyan believe that dividing the kindergarten into different areas is beneficial for fostering children's autonomy, providing them with the best possible learning environment, and assisting in their rapid development. [27] Zuo Wenling argues that area activities should be human-centered, starting from the actual development level of the children. These activities should be closely integrated with the kindergarten curriculum, allowing children to engage in genuine self-directed learning and play. The design of these areas should permit children to enter and leave freely, ensuring the utmost development of each child. [28]

In terms of area activities, the West adopted area-based actions, initially proposed by Montessori [29], showing increasingly significant development and wider influence. Influential figures or approaches include the HighScope Curriculum, John Thomas, Mary Elizabeth York, and the Spectrum Project. [30] In the early 1990s, some scholars who studied abroad introduced this approach to domestic kindergartens in China, sparking a popular trend. [31] Area activities, based on scientific research levels and the developmental stages of children in each class, can be categorized into various areas: Construction area, Performance area, Book area, Intelligence area, and Dolly Home, among others. These activities are considered as group activities, free play activities, and learning activities, which better implement individualized education for children and contribute to the systematic and sustained nature of early childhood education.

3.2. Peer Interaction

Peer interaction refers to the communication among children or adolescents with their peers. [32] According to Li Shanying and Chen Huiting, peer interaction involves interactions between children of the same or similar ages, impacting their psychological and behavioral aspects. [33] Zhou Yue

notes that peers are children of the same age and cognitive level, including only children. Children use language or non-verbal symbols and various communication methods at specific times to achieve emotional and social development. [34] Sun Yao believes that fostering children's interactive abilities can enhance their self-confidence and teach them social interaction skills, thereby better developing their sociability. [35] Peer interaction helps children to become less self-centered and to develop self-awareness. [36] Additionally, peer interaction acts as both a model and a reinforcing factor in children's learning, assisting them in feeling a sense of belonging and acquiring social interaction skills.[37]

3.3. Teacher's Guidance Strategies

In Chinese, "guidance" means imparting knowledge and offering direction, while "strategy" refers to principles and methods determined based on the situation. In education, strategy is synonymous with "method" and "steps," essentially encompassing teaching and training to advance both educators and students towards educational goals. During children's autonomous free-play activities, appropriate guidance from teachers fosters their creativity. [38] Teachers, as professionals appointed by society and the state for educational instruction, are responsible for fostering students' comprehensive development in morality, intellect, physical health, aesthetics, and practical skills. [39] During area activities in kindergarten, teachers play a significant role in the children's engagement. They are responsible for creating an inviting and harmonious environment for activities. This atmosphere enables children to freely choose their activities, encouraging them to actively explore games with their peers. Such an environment fosters the development of peer relationships and leads to the best possible learning outcomes. [40] Upon reviewing literature, it's found that there's no clear definition of teacher guidance strategies. Thus, in this context, teacher guidance strategies are defined as follows: In area activities, senior class teachers detect issues in children's peer interactions and select appropriate intervention methods tailored to the developmental stages of various children. These strategies are employed deliberately, systematically, and in an organized manner to guide children effectively, thus enhancing their social development.[41]

4. Research Design

4.1. Purpose and Significance of the Study

4.1.1. Purpose

To enhance the quality of children's area activities, it is essential to set guidelines for peer communication in these activities within the *Early Learning and Development Guidelines for Children Aged 3 to 6 Years*. [42] This study focuses on the children of the senior classes in kindergartens, aiming to investigate the problems and guidance strategies in peer interactions during their area activities. It seeks to maximize the significant value of kindergarten area activities, promote comprehensive development of children in various domains, foster their social development, and enhance the professional competence of teachers. By analyzing the issues, causes, and teacher guidance strategies in peer interactions during area activities in S kindergarten of S town in Q city, this study synthesizes guidance strategies for peer interaction in these area activities, providing a reference example for other kindergartens.

4.1.2. Significance

(1) Theoretical Significance:

The area activities are scientifically arranged by teachers based on the personality traits and age characteristics of children in their class. In these activities, children exhibit different peer interaction behaviors in different areas due to their varying levels of development. This research on peer interactions of senior class during area activities at S kindergarten focuses on analyzing issues related to aggressive behavior, gender differences, and self-centeredness. Effective guidance strategies are proposed to provide insights for subsequent research on peer interactions in area activities among older kindergarten children. Additionally, this study contributes to the theoretical research on peer communication in area activities and supplements research on teacher guidance strategies.

(2) Practical Significance

Interactive activities in children's area play contribute to their harmonious development across various fields and enhance their socialization. Focusing on peer interaction development within their class aids older kindergarten children in better integrating and adapting to peer interactions in primary school. [42] Furthermore, offering theoretical and practical guidance on peer interactions assists teachers in promptly identifying and addressing issues during area activities, thus fostering teacher-child interactions. [43] Additionally, research on peer interactions within these activities provides valuable insights for kindergarten practices, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the entire peer interaction process.

4.2. Proposed Main Research Questions

4.2.1. Research Content

The study includes the following areas: the value of guidance strategies for peer interactions in area activities of the senior class; practical approaches to these guidance strategies; issues in peer interactions during area activities in S Kindergarten's senior class; and how teachers observe peer interactions in these activities.[44]

4.2.2. Core Issues to Address

Combining the research content, the study will explore issues and guidance strategies regarding peer interactions in area activities of senior kindergarten classes. Firstly, it aims to investigate the nature of peer interaction problems occurring in S Kindergarten's senior class area activities. Secondly, it seeks to explore practical approaches to guidance strategies for peer interactions in these area activities. Thirdly, the study will analyze the causes of these problems. Lastly, it intends to examine the methods used by teachers to observe children's interactions during these area activities.

4.3. Research Approach

The research strategy is divided into the following stages:

Stage One: Collection and Organization of Theoretical Literature. This stage involves gathering and organizing existing literature on topics such as "peer interactions in children's area activities," "guidance strategies for peer interactions in area activities by teachers," and "issues in peer interactions in senior class area activities." The aim is to identify innovative aspects for the research.

Stage Two: Data Collection and Documentation. Personal data and photographs are collected. Observations and records of peer interaction issues in the senior class area activities at S Kindergarten are made, along with the proposed guidance strategies by teachers. Interviews with some children and teachers in the class are conducted at the end of these activities or issues recording to establish the research direction and identify problems.

Stage Three: Organization of Collected Materials. This stage involves organizing the collected materials, including literature review and field data, based on the *Guidelines*. It includes a comprehensive review of the value of guidance strategies for peer interactions in area activities.

Stage Four: Analysis and Strategy Proposal. Focusing on the value of teacher guidance strategies in children's area activities for peer interactions, this stage involves studying the problems and guidance strategies in peer interactions in area activities of S Kindergarten's senior class. It includes problem analysis and the proposal of strategies.

4.4. Research Methods

4.4.1. Observation Method

This study involves observing a senior class in S Kindergarten, comprising 32 children and 3 teachers. The focus is on real interactions during area activities, problems arising in peer interactions, and the teachers' guidance strategies. Observations are recorded twice a week, each lasting between 45 to 60 minutes, resulting in a total of 32 observation records. The author conducts these observations in a non-participatory role. Based on current field research, established observation record templates are utilized for observing both teachers and children. Firstly, according to Appendix 1, children's choice of area and time spent in different regions are recorded and monitored. Secondly, using Appendix 2, children's peer interaction issues and teachers' guidance behaviors are observed. This involves recording the various characteristics of peer interaction behaviors, like interactions, communications, languages, and actions, as well as the circumstances of events, to analyze the reasons for issues between different children. Additionally, observations include teachers' actual guidance in area activities, their strategies, understanding the content of guidance in peer interactions during area activities, the timing of intervention, roles played during intervention, methods of intervention, and reflective evaluations. These observations support further research developments.

4.4.2. Interview Method

Aligned with the study's objectives, interviews were conducted to understand the underlying reasons behind peer interactions in children's area activities and the teachers' guidance strategies. A total of 32 children and 3 teachers were interviewed. The research utilized existing frameworks in the field, modifying selected interview outlines for relevance to this study. Interviews were conducted informally and unstructured, during breaks in observation and at the end of activities. These discussions focused on phenomena, issues, and situations related to peer interactions occurring in area activities, as well as problems encountered by the observer during subsequent data organization. These exchanges with class teachers were aimed at gathering more information to elucidate findings for further research.

4.4.3. Literature Review Method

In writing this paper, a substantial amount of domestic and international literature was referenced, including scholarly articles and books related to area activities for older kindergarten children. This included guidance strategies for area activities and peer interactions among these children. The research aimed to understand the current state of studies on peer interactions among older children in area activities. Based on this, relevant data was collected, organized, and analyzed to provide a clear understanding of the content and direction of the study. This methodical approach was taken to ensure a strong foundation for future research in this area.

5. Issues in Peer Interaction During Area Activities in S Kindergarten’s Senior Class

5.1. Frequency of Children’s Choice of Different Area Activities

During observations, the author observed and recorded peer interaction events in different areas, totaling 32 occurrences involving children. The distribution of these events in various activities is shown in the table below:

Table 1: Distribution of Children’s Peer Interaction Behaviors in Different Area Activities

	Reading Area	Performance Area	Intellectual Area	Construction Area	Science Area	Mathematics Area	Total
Number	2	6	5	12	4	3	32
Percentage	6.2	18.7	15.6	37.5	12.5	9.4	100

Table 1 clearly shows that among the six area activities, the Construction area has the highest frequency of peer interactions, while the Reading area has the least. The distribution of peer interactions across various area activities indicates that children engage most frequently in peer interactions in the Construction area, followed by the Performance area, with the least interactions occurring in the Reading area.

5.2. Frequency of Peer Interaction Themes in Different Area Activities

There are ten peer interaction themes, which can be categorized into three parts: friendly behaviors, unfriendly behaviors, and neutral behaviors. Friendly behaviors refer to actions that are helpful to children, such as caring for others and helping others. Unfriendly behaviors refer to actions that cause physical or psychological harm to others, such as aggression, tattling, and being self-centered. Neutral behaviors are those that lie between friendly and unfriendly behaviors.

Table 2: Frequency of Peer Interaction Themes in Various Area Activities

			Frequency	Percentage
Interacti on Themes	Friendly Behaviors	Caring/Helping	9	6.7
		Showing Friendliness	8	6.0
	Unfriendly Behaviors	Aggression	8	6.0
		Tattling	4	3.0
		Self-Centeredness	21	15.8
	Neutral Behaviors	Participating in Games	38	28.6
		Negotiating	5	3.7
		Maintaining Rules	12	9.0
		Expressing Emotions	22	16.5
		Reminding	6	4.5
Total			133	100

According to Table 2, among the ten types of interaction behaviors, the most common is playing together, followed by expressing feelings, self-centeredness, rule maintenance, caring and helping, aggression, showing friendliness, reminding, and tattling. Among the unfriendly behaviors, aggression ranks sixth, while self-centeredness is third. For instance, in the interviews, when asked if any peers had attacked them, 6% of the children reported experiencing aggressive behavior.

5.3. Gender Differences in the Outcomes of Initiated Peer Interactions

Out of 133 observed records, the outcomes of peer interactions were categorized into two types: accepted and rejected. This categorization revealed gender differences in peer interaction outcomes.

Table 3: Distribution of Outcomes of Peer Interactions Initiated by Different Genders

Gender	Accepted	Rejected	Total
Male	38	22	60
Female	58	15	73
Total	96	37	133

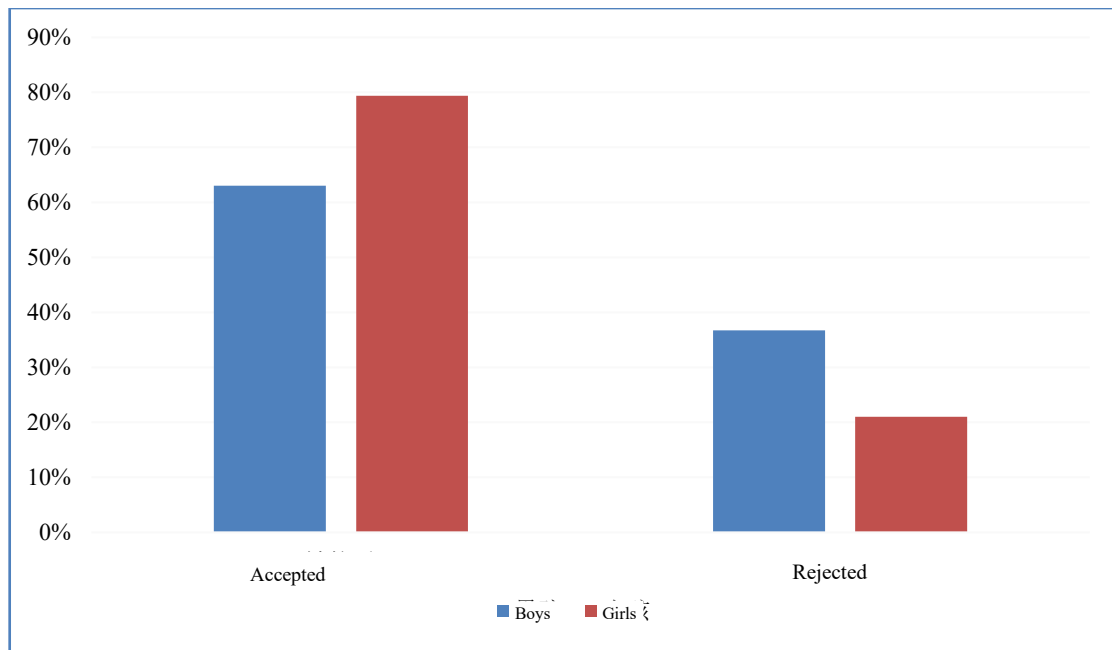


Figure 1: Distribution of Peer Interaction Outcomes by Initiator's Gender

From Table 3 and Figure 1, it's evident that for children of both genders, acceptance rates exceed rejection rates. However, it is clear that girls have a higher acceptance rate compared to boys, and their rejection rate is also lower. This indicates that girls' initiation of interactions is higher than boys' and is more readily accepted by peers.

5.4. Summary

Based on the peer interaction behavior analysis tool developed by the author, 133 interaction behaviors were observed and analyzed.

5.4.1. Patterns and Characteristics of Peer Interaction

Firstly, the frequency of peer interactions among children varies according to the type of area activity, with notable differences in the number of interactions across different areas.

Secondly, in area activities, most children tend to accept peer interaction behaviors.

Thirdly, boys have a higher frequency of having their interaction invitations rejected compared to girls.

5.4.2. Issues in Peer Interaction

Firstly, there are differences in the frequency of peer interactions among children in different area activities, leading to scattered distribution of children during activities and insufficient interactions.

Secondly, unfriendly interaction behaviors are more prevalent than friendly behaviors, with boys experiencing an increased rate of rejection when initiating interactions.

Thirdly, self-centered interaction behaviors are significantly evident in unfriendly behaviors.

6. Current State of Peer Interaction Guidance Strategies in Senior Classes of S Kindergarten's Area Activities

During the internship, author observed and recorded the state of area activities in the class. Overall, it was found that in the senior class of S Kindergarten, the frequency of teachers actively guiding children's interactions is not high, and the duration of such guidance is generally brief, typically happening only when conflicts arise among children. Below, based on observation records and data from both observations and interviews, the author will objectively discuss the situation of guidance strategies for peer interaction in the area activities of the senior class at S Kindergarten, focusing on two aspects: the acceptance at the language level and the construction at the interaction level.

Observation records and evaluations are essential skills for preschool teachers. Unlike collective teaching, area activities emphasize children's independent play and self-exploration. Therefore, teachers must observe, record and guide children's interactions in area activities. They need to understand the issues present in children's interactions and their individual personality differences, to better facilitate children's development.

6.1. Linguistic Level Guidance Strategy

Regarding language-level guidance strategies, the author's observations in S Kindergarten's senior class reveal a pattern in how teachers guide children's interactions during area activities. The observation and guidance time is short, usually concentrated on one day per week for classroom observation records. During class, teachers typically patrol for the first and last ten minutes of the area activities. Apart from these twenty minutes of supervision, sometimes children are asked to bring the items they made during class for photographing, which are used for creating children's growth files. Occasionally, teachers also engage in setting up the environment during area activities. Moreover, teachers primarily focus on maintaining order during the area activities, which might lead to overlooking issues in children's interactions. This was also confirmed by the author's observation records. Interviews with the senior class teachers at S Kindergarten provided insights into their focus areas in guidance, which are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Key Content for Peer Interaction Guidance in Area Activities by Teachers of S Kindergarten's Senior Class

Teacher's Class	Key Content of Guidance
Senior Class	1. Developing children's ability to solve interaction problems 2. Fostering children's self-awareness and understanding of rules 3. Cultivating children's cooperative interaction skills

6.2. Interaction Level Guidance Strategy

In the area activities, teachers' guidance on children's interaction behaviors also plays a role in assessment, primarily occurring at the end of these activities. Teachers organize children and invite them to assess everything that happened during the area activities. In this stage, children in the senior class primarily conduct self-assessments, with the teacher summarizing the outcomes. Sometimes, children are also encouraged to evaluate each other's participation.

6.3. Environmental Setup Level Guidance Strategy

In the senior class, due to the larger number of children and the diversity of areas, teachers sometimes find it challenging to address the interaction behaviors occurring in all areas during activities. The design of the environment plays a significant role in facilitating children's interaction behaviors. The environmental setup takes into consideration various aspects of children's needs, and well-designed environments can enhance interactive behaviors among children. Teachers can use display books related to each area (presented in pictorial form) to aid this process. However, in S Kindergarten's senior class, such display books are only placed in the science area, making it convenient for children to record their own behaviors.

7. Issues with Peer Interaction Guidance Strategies in Area Activities of S Kindergarten's Senior Class

Firstly, S Kindergarten provides ample time for children's daily activities, allowing them sufficient opportunities for interaction. Secondly, the layout and allocation of area activities in the senior class are well-organized and of appropriate sizes. The designed areas are age-appropriate for the senior class and meet various needs of the children.

Despite these efforts, the environmental setups in S Kindergarten's area activities sometimes serve merely as decorations. Teachers arrange the environment based on traditional Chinese solar terms, ethnic characteristics, and festivals, but most children only give them a cursory glance and show limited interest. During interviews with the children, many expressed a desire for more interactive and engaging activities with their teachers. However, teachers primarily observe and guide the children only at the beginning and end of activities, focusing more on maintaining order and rules during the area activities. These observations are just a glimpse into the area activities of the senior class in S Kindergarten. The following sections will elaborate on this in detail.

7.1. Challenges in Adapting Environmental Setup to Children's Interaction Development

The strategic planning of area activities should be aligned with the developmental needs of the class, addressing both cognitive and personal development. These activities should meet the varying needs

of children at different developmental stages, including cognitive, personal, and peer interaction growth. However, the environmental setup and the materials provided may not effectively meet the developmental levels of older kindergarten children. Furthermore, teachers have not thoroughly investigated the interests of the children. Observations indicate that the reading area is the least frequented by children. The books provided are mostly text-based, and despite being accompanied by pictures, they are not suitable for children who cannot read yet.

7.2. Inadequate Depth in Teachers' Observation and Recording of Children's Interactions during Area Activities

Observing and recording children's interactions during area activities is a crucial task for teachers, essential for understanding the developmental differences in children's interactions. Typically, teachers use photography as a means of documenting these interactions for children's growth records, but this method does not capture the nuances of children's interactions and related issues. Additionally, senior class teachers often have limited observation time and use a singular method of recording, which makes it challenging to identify the problems and progress in children's interactions across different areas. As a result, teachers have not gained a deep understanding of children's peer interaction issues. In fact, the focus of area activities is on guiding children with planned, targeted, and feasible approaches. This guidance helps children learn to interact with peers, share, assist each other, and engage in friendly interactions. However, due to insufficient observation of children's interactions, teachers are not fully realizing their potential value in guiding and influencing these interactions.

8. Analysis of the Reasons for the Issues in Peer Interaction Guidance Strategies in the Senior Class's Area Activities at S Kindergarten

Based on the analysis of the current situation regarding peer interaction guidance strategies in the area activities at S Kindergarten, the issues with teachers' guidance have been recorded at various levels, including language, interaction, and environmental setup strategies. Now, we will analyze the reasons behind these issues to better address and resolve them.

8.1. Teachers' Lack of Attention to Children's Needs in Area Activities

In area activities that emphasize child-centeredness, attention should be given to children's age characteristics, individual differences, and interaction issues. However, teachers in the senior class at S Kindergarten have not paid sufficient attention to children's interactions during these activities. This is evident in two aspects:

First, the neglect of children's age characteristics. In terms of language-level guidance strategy, senior class teachers focus more on managing and enforcing rules, lacking attention to children's interactive behaviors and related issues. Teachers could appropriately engage in children's play, guiding them according to their age characteristics and interaction needs. This involves teacher-student interaction and cooperation at multiple levels of communication. On the other hand, during the environmental setup in area activities, teachers should consider the cognitive and developmental characteristics of older children. For example, in the reading area, books predominantly composed of text should be avoided. Teachers could create simple picture books or handbag books, allowing children to communicate more through visuals and engage in more interactions.

Secondly, teachers rarely accommodate individual differences among children. Due to limited observation and recording time, teachers overlook the varying needs for interaction development arising from individual differences among children. Additionally, although the environmental setup

in each area provides sufficient materials, the variety of materials is inadequate, often leading to conflicts among children and failing to satisfy those with different interests and abilities. Finally, in interactive peer interactions, teachers often focus on guiding just one or two children. Considering the developmental level of interactions among older kindergarten children, teachers could more appropriately participate in children's play to enhance their level of interaction.

8.2. Teachers' Unclear Understanding of Their Role in Guiding Peer Interactions in Area Activities

In area activities, for older kindergarten children, teachers' participation in their play can significantly aid their growth. This involvement not only positions children at the center of the activity but also ensures appropriate development in their personality, cognition, and social skills. The level of dedication of teachers is reflected in their subtle guidance during environmental setup. Teachers typically focus on fulfilling the kindergarten's predetermined objectives, whether in terms of material provision or environmental arrangement. Three teachers collaboratively decide and implement the plan. However, once the environment is set up, children, who are supposed to be the primary beneficiaries, seem uninterested in these arrangements. Although the teachers in senior class involve children in the environmental setup, it is mostly limited to seeking their opinions rather than letting them engage in actual setup, and children's suggestions are not earnestly considered, indicating a lack of effective utilization of teachers' roles. Furthermore, during the process of interaction guidance, children's issues in peer interactions during area activities are not effectively resolved; problems remain uncorrected. Some teachers entirely skip the evaluation phase, making it difficult for children to share the joy of peer interactions in area activities, thereby not adequately enhancing their social abilities. Lastly, teachers spend limited time on observation and use a singular method of recording. Ultimately, area activities in daily life start and end arbitrarily, day after day, making it challenging for teachers to effectively guide children in peer interactions during these activities.

9. Improvement and Suggestions for Peer Interaction Guidance Strategies in Area Activities of Senior Classes at S Kindergarten

In area activities involving peer interactions among children, teachers should fully consider the children's interaction needs, effectively utilize their own value, and understand their role. The following elaborates on the improvements and suggestions for the peer interaction guidance strategies of teachers in the area activities at S Kindergarten.

9.1. Strengthening Theoretical Learning about Child Development and Integrating Theory with Practice

Analyzing the current situation of guidance strategies by teachers of the senior class at S Kindergarten, it's evident that there is a lack of systematic theoretical learning. Issues such as insufficient investment in environmental setup, short and uniform observation recording times, or being preoccupied with coping strategies during interactive guidance, all contribute to the less effective development of children's interactions in area activities.

9.1.1. Strengthening Theoretical Learning about Child Knowledge

Teachers should enhance their knowledge and understanding of child development theories, particularly focusing on the social interaction needs and development of older kindergarten children. Firstly, they should prioritize the social interaction needs of older kindergarten children, acknowledging their significant need for social interaction due to their age-specific characteristics.

This involves studying relevant literature and resources on children's social interactions, such as the *Guidelines* and the *Outline*. The knowledge acquired should then be applied dynamically and flexibly in the classroom, tailored to the specific needs of the children. Furthermore, teachers should recognize the individual differences in children's social development and develop targeted strategies for addressing issues arising from these differences. During area activities, they should diligently record and observe children's interactions, and for those exhibiting persistent unfriendly behaviors, teachers might need to communicate with their parents.

9.1.2. Integrating theory and practice

The current situation of teacher guidance in area activities shows that teachers focus more on enforcing rules rather than genuinely addressing children's social interaction issues. Consequently, Teachers often end up repeating similar types of guidance without genuinely engaging with the children's social needs. However, teachers should apply their effectiveness in area activities by integrating theory with practice. They should utilize their knowledge to address specific social interaction issues within their class, formulating effective resolution strategies. This approach requires constantly reinforcing their understanding of child development, especially in social interactions, to ensure relevant and impactful guidance.

9.2. Recognizing the Effectiveness of the Teacher's Role in Guiding Children's Interactions

In children's area activities, it is essential to balance the child's autonomy with the effectiveness of the teacher's role. Teachers must recognize that while children are the main agents in these activities, their role in guiding and enhancing children's communication and instructional skills is also vital. By continuously observing and documenting interactions in children's area activities, teachers can guide children to meet the requirements for social interactions as outlined in the *Outline* and *Guidelines*. Their guidance should be based on a thorough understanding of each child, including their unique developmental stages and individual differences. Using their professional knowledge, teachers should interpret the deeper meanings behind children's interactions.

In summary, teachers in children's area activities should maintain a balance between theory and practice and between the child's autonomy and the teacher's role. They should develop interaction strategies that are appropriate for the age and individual differences of the children in their class.

10. Conclusions

This paper focuses on the issue of peer interaction among older kindergarten children during area activities, emphasizing the importance of teacher guidance and the dominant role of children in these activities. The study aims to address the challenges in teacher guidance strategies for peer communication, analyze the reasons for these challenges, and propose improvements.

Research was conducted in a senior class at S Kindergarten, observing the problems in children's peer interactions during area activities and the teachers' guidance strategies. Interviews were conducted with some children and teachers. Despite the author's best efforts to observe, interview, and collect data, the presence of the author might have influenced the behavior of both teachers and children. Additionally, the author faced challenges in exploring the issues and guidance strategies in children's peer interactions during area activities due to limited capabilities. After repeated literature review and discussions with teachers, a clear research approach was developed. The subsequent analysis of causes and suggestions for improvements are based on three aspects: language, interaction, and environment. Although this paper is completed, the author acknowledges personal limitations and humbly seeks feedback and corrections from fellow educators.

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