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**doc. Paed Dr. Beáta Akimjaková, PhD.,**  
special assistant Catholic University in  
Ružomberok, Faculty of Education

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY PEDAGOGY TEACHERS AT THE JURAJ PÁLEŠ INSTITUTE IN PF CU IN LEVOČA**

### **Grafomotorics**

The notion of graphomotorics can be explained by familiarization with terms such as motorics, gross and fine motor skills.

Zelinková (2001, p. 50) describes motorics as follows: "... is a term indicating the overall motoric ability of an organism." It has an important role in child development. It is the first means in the process of cognition of the outside world, involved in the development of cognitive functions. We distinguish between gross motor skills, which are done through large musclegroups (walking, running, climbing) and fine motor skills, which are ensured by tiny muscles (movements of hands, fingers, articulators).

It is enough if one of these functions was not sufficiently developed and could mean that drawing and writing would be difficult at school. It is important that the child has the conditions to express themselves in the drawing already in the family environment.

Bednářová, Šmardová (2011, p. 5) define graphomotorics as: "*The term graphomotorics refers to the part of fine motorics and psychic functions that is necessary for drawing and writing, and the degree of development, which is markedly marked by drawing and writing. The psychic functions are above all: intellectual as sumptions, visual perception, sensorimotor coordination, spatial perception, willpower, attention.*"

Thus, graphomotoric skills represent a set of skills that individual gains if we systematically support psychomotor processes through child activity. In doing so, we create the preconditions for managing the more demanding processes that accompany the acquisition of written expression (Pondelíková, 2011, p. 13).

According to Lipnicka (2007, p. 6), the child's graphomotorics develops in stages and individually, but in a physiological way. For this reason, children or children of the same age exhibit approximately the same features of drawing or writing. Specific deviations may occur with respect to individual peculiarities, in terms of slower or faster graphomotor development, and thus graphomotorics is, according to Zelinková (2001, p. 54), influenced by the level of development of fine and gross motor skills. We can also include drawing in this area.

### **Drawing**

Drawing begins to develop around the second year of life, when the child takes writing instruments and rejoices to leave a mark. Gradually, graphic expression evolves and reflects the intellectual understanding of the world. Drawing can be one of the methods of diagnosis. Psychologists analyze the child's drawing as one of the manifestations of the child's emotional life, while the pedagogical approach focuses on improving the child's drawing and developing the child's creativity.

Drawing is a non-violent way to the child, a means to establish contact, relax the atmosphere, to recognize the child and to intervene therapeutically.

The information that can be obtained from the drawings is:

- Provides overall development level information
- Provides information on fine motor skills and graphomotorism
- provides information about visual and spatial perception
- Provides information about visual motility (visual perception with hand movement)
- Provides information about the emotionality of the child
- Provides information on child relationships and attitudes
- is a means of communication,
- can be a rehabilitation tool
- can be a therapeutic tool.

Factors influencing the development and level of child's drawing:

- mental maturity of the child
- motor skills.
- laterality,
- visual perception,
- Memory,
- the ability of imagination and reproduction,
- Attention (Bednářová, Šmardová, 2011, p. 5).

Drawing as part of a child's development is related to his overall mental maturity. The drawing does not have to be on the same level as the intellect. The graphic manifestation of a mentally retarded child is below the age level compared to peers. A pupil with intellectual disabilities is perceived as a unique personality with its distinctive needs and specificities, and the more complex our support and approach to its development, the more versatile it will be equipped for full integration into society, the surrounding world and its part.

Basic movements in writing and drawing are based on coarse motoring, large joint movements. Therefore, when a child fails to draw, grossmotoring is the first area to focus on. The development of graphomotorics is mainly helped by creating enough drawing opportunities. The child should have available colors and drawing paper. There is no need to underestimate "doodles". The child needs to be encouraged in the drawing, appreciated and partial achievements. Especially in children who do not develop graphomotor skills like their peers. When drawing, as with other activities, we must move from the simplest elements, leave enough time to automate them, increase graphomotor skills and let the child experience a sense of success. Drawing ideas should match the child's age, be close to him. When drawing, there should be a playful, relaxed atmosphere. Drawings should be archived, the child often

understands it as a game, it is a motivation for creativity and can compare older creations with the present.

### **Art activities for graphomotor development**

Art is the subject where it is possible to experiment with different materials, tools, materials, and techniques. Through art, fantasy, creativity, observation abilities, aesthetics and the taste of the child develop. We know from our own experience that art education affects pupils and calms them down. It is mainly used for pupils who were overly nervous and helped them to control their nervousness. In art, concrete work is created, which is real, created in a real environment. Before we go to art activity, we focus on the motivation that often contains the game. It is the game that helps find the way to creativity and imagination. We often combine the game with other forms of motivation, such as listening to music or snippets of fairy tales, reading books, looking for pictures or illustrations, and so on. It is important that the pupil takes an emotional relationship to the topic by which he/she activates all his / her abilities necessary to implement the chosen topic. A common mistake in practice is that pupils and themes are still repeating them within the plan, so we try to change and constantly add new knowledge to our art activities.

Pupils in the first year learn to store paint with a brush on the paper surface, interrupt brushstrokes (dots, spots, dashes), magnify spots from the center and create as simple shapes as the ball, apple and the like.

In the second year, art focuses on games with the colors that pupils learn to know the properties of color and material by embedding, sweeping into a damp substrate. They learn the contrast between light and dark colors.

An excellent technique is a fingernail that develops fine motor skills. Pupils can also apply color, even with their fingertips, or the entire palm. The significant effect of this technique is that tactile perception releases tension.

In the second year, there is already a sense of space in the context of environmental awareness. Pupils create specific spatial situations from the immediate surroundings. It is possible to model from various materials such as plasticine, modurit, terracotta, salt dough, sand, clay, paper with adhesive, metal mass (Vladová, 2009, p. 68).

### **Art activities in the teaching process**

In the next section, we will show the possibilities of using art activities in the teaching process through which pupils developed graphomotorics.

As the selected group of pupils comes from a socially disadvantaged environment, where social and linguistic conditions do not sufficiently stimulate the development of the mental, voluntary and emotional characteristics of the individual, they do not support its effective socialization and provide adequate incentives for personality development; so that they correspond to the particularities of the pupil whose physical, psychological or social development differs significantly from the standard development. Often times, we are the first to pay attention to these pupils.

#### *Pupil characteristics:*

In the classroom, pupils of the first and second grades of the A variant are joined. Four are housed in a children's home, two are from their own families, but attend a boarding house, and one is in foster care. They all came from a socially

disadvantaged environment. The teacher had to start work from the very beginning. First of all, with self-service habits, teach them to concentrate on their lessons, to say hello, to keep writing instruments, to name colors.

These pupils did not attend kindergarten, as a result, they did not have any school habits. Parent education is neglected, so we devote time to their moral side. They only control the Roma language, which is very poor in vocabulary and thus overcome the communication barrier. We know from our own experience that such a pupil learns to adapt to a new situation in the first year and to cope with all obstacles.

In the practical part, we present activities that helped us to create primary school habits, introductory graphomotor exercises, and art activities. The pace of the pupils is very slow in this period and all activities are led by the teacher. It follows the performance of pupils and chooses the methods of work accordingly.

The aims of the teaching units were processed according to Bloom's taxonomy (Turek, 2006, p. 15). We focused mainly on the categories of memory, understanding, and application. For special school pupils, higher categories are less likely, though not unrealistic.

#### *Class Features:*

It is important that the environment and climate in the classroom that pupils enter for the first time are positive. Every thing is conditioned by relationships between teacher, pupils, and parents.

The class that pupils enter for the first time is tailored to make pupils feel welcome and impress with their appearance. We use images that mark classes and other areas of the school. Through daily walks through school, accompanying pupils to lunch with teachers, spending breaks with pupils, pupils gradually develop a habit and begin to orient themselves in the school premises.

The class is tailored to there quirements of the first year. The benches are colored and arranged so that the pupil shave enough space for themselves. Each pupil has his / her bench, his / her space for which he/she is responsible. He is led to keep his order there and to keep his teaching needs. The floor of the classroom is covered with industrial carpet, which we use for games that are often motivated for learning activities. In addition to the classic wooden board, we have an interactive whiteboard in the classroom, which is a great didactic and motivational tool for the teacher himself. Working with this board is a great asset to the teaching process, pupils like to work with it and help them develop knowledge. Another very useful tool we often use in the subject is the lego system. This tool helps the teacher to break the initial barriers and change pupils' moods. We use it to learn colors, to learn concepts before, after, on, below, next, and others. Pupils can meet others in the corridors, the school yard, and the dining room. In the early weeks, we often have to attend classes of older pupils who attend older siblings and give freshmen the feeling that they are not alone. In the classroom and its surroundings, we have boards, which pupils fill in with their artwork.

#### **Course Lesson:**

##### *Initial:*

*Organizational section:* Enrollment in the class book, motivational interview with pupils, acquainting pupils with the aim of the lesson.

*Mainobjective:* To develop fine motor skills through modeling and painting. To be able to use the acquired knowledge in practical skills.

*Incentive:*

Let's play the little cooks. We'll set upspace, pupils put table cloths on the bench, roll up their sleeves. The teacher gives each pupil a piece of unprocessed modeling material. Pupils play a game of preparing gingerbread dough. The matter is compressed, mixed, rolled unless it is sufficiently prepared.

*Main part:*

When the mass is ready, the pupils begin to roll the modeling mass to form a continuous longpuff. It needs to be the same thickness every where.

They use their hands. To repeat the already learned letters, we choose two activities. The first is to write letters with your finger in the air. The teacher enters the letters and the pupils then inscribed them in the air. These conductivity consists of writing a letter on the drawing. Teacher's help is needed to make the letter sizes approximately the same. We work with a pencil to fix a failed letter. If the letters look like they are, we'll draw them with a thick marker, preferably black. Each pupil is assigned his or her letter, after the contour of which he/she attaches his / her modeling material until he/she creates a letter. Work is demanding and requires constant teacher assistance. Often, the pup tears or does not fit the contour accurately. The teacher then works with each pupil individually. If the job is done, the whole letter is gently smoothed with water and allowed to dry properly.

After drying, the letters are painted in color, aniline colors, tempera colors, or letters sprayed with colored paint can be used. We used aniline colors. The teacher prepares pictures that are known to the pupils and display the word starting with the modeled letter. Eye, ear, cat. These pictures can be laminated. Magnets stick to the opposite side of the modeled letters by the melting gun, so pupils can manipulate the pictures and letters on the magnetic board.

*The final part of the lesson:*

The teacher evaluates the work of the pupils, each pupil presents his letter and put sit on the magnetic board for the correct picture.

*Lesson Assessment and Practice Recommendations:*

This activity is challenging for first-year students, but by being in the classroom with siblings, there is a beautiful collaboration between younger and older pupils. They learn to help others, weaker, younger. I am not ashamed to ask for help and then thank her for it.

By creating this didactic aid, pupils also help in Slovak language and literature lessons. If they can't remember the audio when they read, they'll draw it as shown. Also when writing a letter or syllable dictation. The modeled letters are still on the magnetic board. It is also a good aid for letter games. For example, looking for uppercase and lowercase letters.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we can only point out the importance of art activities in the development of graphomotor skills of pupils with mildmental retardation. Each lesson is realized in the form of thoughtful motivation, which is linked to other parts of the lesson. The main part of the lesson was focused on art activities that we

readapted to the pupils' skills with a slight degree of mental retardation. We put emphasis on the method of clarity, the method of independent and group work. We focused not only on developing skills but also on promoting knowledge. The priority was for pupils to be able to use their acquired knowledge and skills in real life.

Working with pupils required a lot of patience, but there sults of the work are also a pleasure for pupils.

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**Анастасова Н. М.**

старший викладач кафедри прикладної психології та логопедії  
Бердянського державного педагогічного університету  
lnatusya@i.ua

## **ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВИВЧЕННЯ ТА СТАНОВЛЕННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ МАЙБУТНІХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНИХ ПЕДАГОГІВ – ЛОГОПЕДІВ У ВИЩОМУ ЗАКЛАДІ ОСВІТИ**

Перебудова вищої школи на основі нового Закону України «Про освіту» стосується багатьох проблем, серед яких чільне місце належить проблемі формування висококваліфікованих педагогічних кадрів, зокрема фахівців нового рівня, педагогів-майстрів, які досконало володіють професійними вміннями та готові до взаємодії з особами, що мають особливі освітні потреби.