



Creating a multisensory learning tool for children studying on the simplified curriculum

Children with severe intellectual- and multiple disabilities study on the basis of an individual curriculum

THE PROBLEM

- Children studying on the basis of a simplified curriculum are not provided with educational tools that are tailored to their needs and teachers must create them themselves.
- The tools in use often do not support the needs of the student.
- Different education and care institutions have very different tools for learning the concepts that define weekdays and seasons.
- The lack of a unified system in individual education makes it difficult for students to understand what they have learned.

THE TARGET GROUP

- Children with severe intellectual and/or multiple disabilities study on the basis of an individual and simplified curriculum
- The tool is also suitable for a broader audience (eg kindergarten children in younger age groups and adults with severe and profound intellectual and / or multiple disabilities).

THE GOAL

To create a multisensory learning tool mode that supports learning in order to develop understanding and self-awareness of children and adults with severe and profound intellectual and / or multiple disabilities through different senses, perceptions and experiences, and to create common multisensory symbols for all the days of the week, seasons, and the weather.

SCIENTIFIC ASPECT

- The individual abilities of every student need to be recognitionized, and need to be taken into account in teaching methodologies (Open Society Institute, 2005).
- The emphasis of simplified education and care taking is to develop the pupil's senses and perceptions through body's sense of touch (Simplified curriculum of basic school 2010, appendix 3).''

- It is necessary to provide stimuli through different senses as the simplified curriculum student, due to his or her physical and cognitive abilities, has very limited opportunities to learn about the environment – through touch, visually and audibly. Research has confirmed that people with profound disabilities should be treated like partially sighted people unless proven otherwise. Also, up to 30% of them may have hearing loss and over 20% have combined sensory impairment (Van den Broek, Janssen, Van Ramshorst, & Deen, 2006; Van Splunder, Stilma, Bernsen, & Evenhuis, 2006; Evenhuis et al., 2001).
- The learning tool has been developed based on a multisensory storytelling (Brug, 2015) methodology.

THE RESULT

- A learning tool model that stimulates different senses was created for simplified curriculum students in collaboration with practitioners in the field.
- Studying was made more playful and different senses were stimulated
- The tool was used by three teachers/instructors during the first test period with four of the simplified curriculum students. The learning tool was tested using the eye-tracking glasses

FOLLOWING THINGS WERE CREATED WITHIN THE PROJECT...

- A model of the learning tool that stimulates different senses was created for the students in collaboration with the practitioners from the simplified education department of Tallinn Tondi Basic School.
- A methodological guide for the creation and use of the instrument, which could be further developed and sent into production
- Testing the tool in the simplified education department of Tallinn Tondi Basic School.
- User – experience feedback (students and teachers)

GOING FORWARD...

- Combining nearly twenty years of practice in Estonian simplified education with the research on the use of multisensory stories, we created a prototype that could become a standardized educational tool for schools and institutions (hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, etc.) providing simplified education in Estonia for children with severe and profound intellectual and / or multiple disabilities.
- trainings in the creation and use of the SEN tools

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