

# NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH - A BRIDGE TO COMMUNICATION IN SWIMMING EDUCATION IN SPORTS LESSONS IN CHILDREN WITH SEN

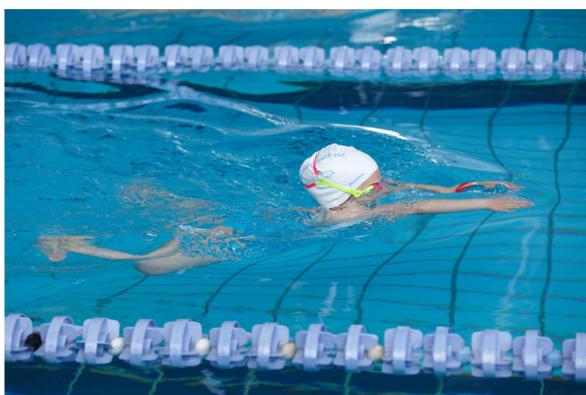
Research Group: PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Research field: Swimming

Head of the research group  
Assoc.Prof. Bilyana Rangelova  
Members of the group  
assistant Krasimira Desheva

## Project guidelines

In the present study, our research was based on an examination of children with SEN who have difficulties communicating with a range of communication disorders. However, there is an alternative for them to choose, understand, and be understood. Communication between people has never been verbal. Behind the residual deficits remains a stored intelligence that should not be passed over and wasted in children with various difficulties. The limitations that can occur in the children's growth with SEN, also affect their cognitive evolution, as well as in the cognitive sphere of the surrounding world and their background. The difficulties in communication with them lead to a limitation in the information that they are receiving.



## Introduction

Students with SEN are distinguished not only by physical disadvantages. Some others can be recognized such as intellectual disabilities or epilepsy. As a result of that, speech, intellect, sensation and behaviour are affected. Education, sports activities and socialization are put into extreme difficulties. Children's experience has a significant impact on cognitive development, depending on tactile exploration of a variety of objects and subjects; rate of preserved vision; and presenting complete and accurate information about objects around the child. All of this helps the children, even to a certain extent, to explore and control the environment in which they live. The technology in its modern kind with a high resource of possibilities allows people with fiscal disadvantages to use computer theology to write, draw, play sports, and communicate with everyone. With the technology's help, inclusive education can support many people who have communication difficulties. The use of gestures, symbols, images, various auxiliary devices, specialized software, symbolic communication applications, assistive devices etc. Allows the nonverbal child to be understood, to communicate effectively, to achieve significantly higher levels of autonomy and to reduce their need for assistance.



## Methodology



The use of low-tech tools proposed in our research would replace verbal communication and improve and increase the communication skills of people who have hurdles using verbal language due to various difficulties. We chose low-tech means of complementary and alternative communication. They do not require the use of technology software, batteries or any electronic devices. They are simple to use, and only simple guidelines are sufficient, which makes them extremely suitable for the conditions of swimming lessons.

## Results

Required technical tools: Communication boards, visual charts, communication albums, etc.

### Adaptation board

It features pictures of the teacher and the children in the class, at the swimming pool, at the sports hall and all the other sports facilities of the school. They allow to be used at home and school and would help the children with SEN to adapt more easily and quickly, avoiding tension and anxiety.

### PECS - Picture Exchange Communication System

One of the main means that are often used in practice is the laminated pictures through which the SEN child communicates and expresses himself. This good practice is known as PECS or Picture Exchange Communication System. It was developed for people on the autism spectrum, and it is also successfully applied to people with other communication disorders and difficulties. The main purpose is that the child learns to communicate through the use of stimulating and supportive strategies that lead to independent communication.

### Visual graphics

Visual graphs or timetables are a series of pictures or photographs, defined in the sequence of upcoming activities. With their help, the child with SEN can review his schedule for the day, the tasks, the structure and the means of the lesson. The visual timetables, provide structure, and a solid base, determine the start and end of the activities, show what will happen, inform the child what is about to come and make the passage of time comprehensible for him.



## Conclusion

- Emphasis is placed on sports as a phenomenon on a global scale. The search and finding of positive incentives are oriented towards the idea of equal access to education and sports, and emphasizing the connection to communication with the existing social and psychological environment would ensure progress. It would serve as an instrument to break stereotypes an alternative to improve behaviour and encourage the child with SEN to be included in society. Practicing sports activities with children with SEN requires: Knowing the child well enough and abstracting from our intuitive understanding of behavioural responses.
- Avoiding stress and frustration that can affect the quality of the learning process.
- Looking for possibilities to work with the kids with SEN in the sports area through volunteer activities of students and teachers.
- Collaboration between the family and the professionals who work with the children with SEN.
- Providing an extra homework.

### Prevention

The problematic behaviour in sports classes can be instigated by several issues, the main one is a lack of communication. Constant monitoring of the environment around the child and his conduct in order to notice any signs when trying to say something with his behaviour.

The problematic behaviour in swimming class can be described by the following features:

- Non-cooperative behaviour - when the child refuses to participate and perform a given activity.
- Frequent changes in the mood.
- Aggressive behaviour towards himself or another person.
- Phobia of classmates, objects or places.

Behavioural problems of children with SEN in swimming class often depend on how other kids perceive and interact with them, a lack of motivation to communicate, and difficulties in listening to the tasks of the lesson.