

Thoughts of Teachers About the Special Education and Training (SET)

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Abstract

The present work deals with the general concept of the verb “educate”, but also the more specific concept of educational methods, rules and pedagogical principles that govern the learning process for students with autism. The research focuses on the education of students with autism according to the theory of mind (TOM) and the application of differentiated pedagogical materials and educational tools, according to the TISIPfSENs (Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs). It also focuses on the relationship emerging from the educational process between the teacher and the student. The methodology utilizes a bibliographic overview and study of texts on childhood autism by Claire Synodinou’s book, reflecting on the meaning of the education of the mind and the soul. The research tools are defined according to the methodology of observing children with special educational needs (SENs). The first tool uses hetero-observations for understanding persons with autism which conducted as part of a voluntary work in Day Center for children and adolescents, exploring the meaning of mind and soul education through interactive teaching sessions between therapists and the 15 serving persons with autism, aged 8 to 19, with an average age of 12 years. The second tool utilizes the self-observations of the volunteer – philologist about what she understands and thinks about the special education and training (SET) to the autism. The thoughts contain as a part of the pedagogical tool TISIPfSENs education with emphasis to the differentiated pedagogical material used to carry out the educational process. The results suggest the need for reformulation of meanings for the SET, the mind and the soul primarily intended to humans with peculiarities, such as neuropsychiatric disorders in autistic spectrum. Furthermore, the necessity of educating People with Autism in Day Centers with the TISIPfSENs pedagogical tool is emphasized. Concluding the above, it is suggested to study the TOM theory for autism, as well as the more systematic SET with the soul of both the teachers and the student.

Keywords: educate, autism, TISIPfSENs, hetero-observation, self-observation.

1. Introduction

1.1 *Theoretical clarification of terminology*

In the theoretical part we look at the terminologies regarding the true meaning of the verb “educate” in people with autism, the Special Education and Training, the Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (Christakis, 2011: 191), the Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs), Theory of Mind, Day Centers

and the Methodology of Observing People with Autism, with Self-Observation and Hetero-Observations (Christakis, 2011: 21). The purpose of this study is to highlight the necessity of using hetero-observations and self-observations by the volunteer-philologist at the Day Center for People with Autism through the TISIPfSEnS pedagogical tool, aimed at understanding autism. The true meaning of the verb “educate” lies in the importance of systematically teaching, imparting (developing) knowledge or developing skills in a particular subject and is also defined as practicing a particular subject in the dictionary of the New Greek language, with comments on proper use of words, interpretative etymological spelling of synonyms – opposite main names of scientific terms acronyms (Babinotis, 2002: 574).

The conceptual approach of Special Education and Training (SET) is very complex and is defined both by the models referring to the necessity of special education programs as well as by the institutionalization of special education programs (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 88). The discussions around the issue of neuropsychiatric disorders and autism emphasize the first two decades of the 21st century (Synodinou, 1999: 39-51) and focus on organic basis (Hut, 2005: 319-344) of autism with respect to neurobiological, neurophysiological, and neuropsychological correlates (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 734-736). Autism is characterized as one of the most elusive, complex and difficult (Grandin, 2009) in their treatment of neuropsychiatric developmental disorders, highlighting the wide variety of clinical expression resulting from multifactorial developmental dysfunctions. These dysfunctions result in severe disturbances in the behavior of autistic individuals, in the development of social relationships (Tordjman, 2019) and in the reciprocal interactions with other individuals with whom they coexist, or in general with their social environment (Vojundroukas, Kalomiris & Papageorgiou, 2007). The neuropsychiatric disorder of autism, is complicated and difficult to deal with, because so far the investigations, although they have documented the biological rather than psychological origin, not found a single biological cause that the causes and the reasons appear be like the expression clinic, multifactorial (Panhellenic Association of Speech Therapists, 2007: 65-66).

The Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSEnS) as a term refers to the educational model of special education. It is a pedagogical tool that is utilized to address the special educational needs of children and young people through differentiated and structured teaching intervention (Drossinou Korea, 2017, 305-381). The Neuropsychiatric disorders and autism in children and young people use the pedagogical practices in the school, in the academic community, and the family “through” the special education proposal and training (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 731-777). Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (Synodinou, 1999: 39-51) concerning the neurobiological (Hut, 2005), the neurophysiological and the associated neuropsychiatric bases (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 735) and it is characterized by deficits in behavior, in the development of social relationships and mutual interactions with their social surroundings (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 727-808).

The “theory of mind” is a psychological theory that has proven successful and accurate in predicting and interpreting the universal and specific characteristics of autism. Researchers Uta Frith, Alan Leslie and Simon Baron – Cohen have suggested that the trio of autism-related behavioral deficits are the result of a deficiency in the fundamental human capacity for “reading the mind”. Children with normal growth, from the age of about four years, realize the ideas and desires that people have about the world and that these mental states determine more than the natural state of the world a person's behavior. The interpretation of autism according to the “theory of mind” indicates that people with autism do not have the capacity to think about ideas of their own or of others, and are therefore particularly deficient in certain skills related to socialization, communication and creative imagination (Happe, 2003: 81-131).

Day Centers for People with Autism function as day care units and enhance the psychosocial rehabilitation of children, adolescents, and young adults (ages 8-22) with

autism (Hellenic Society for the Protection of Autistic People, 2017), as part of a private non-profit initiative, with the ultimate goal of autonomy and full integration into society. The services are the diagnostics, the Therapeutic rehabilitation based on the principles of TE ACCH as the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children, the ABA as the Applied Behavioral Analysis, the PECS: Picture Exchange Communication System (Hut, 2005), the Child Psychiatry monitoring, Family Counseling (Drossinou Korea & Galani, 2016), the speech therapy, occupational therapy, special education, and Adapted physical education (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 57-72).

2. Methodology

The participatory observation methodology (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2006: 219-271) of the volunteer-philologist refers to the ability to collect information through the senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. It is distinguished in hetero-observations and self-observations (Drossinou Korea & Bakogianni, 2018: 49-56). The volunteer-philologist's observations focus on what the individual does with autism, dealing with, and communicating with, the philologist with a specific goal of teaching intervention and providing challenging dynamic stimuli for learning readiness. Self-observations focus on what the observer feels about the educational problem of autism, highlighting what he or she experiences in the emotional transaction with the child, what he or she hears from the child and what he or she thinks about the child, as well as teaching strategies and techniques that take place in the teaching practice. Also note the words of the person with autism spontaneously says to the therapist, to himself or herself and to surrounding people in general. Also, we have used the bibliographic overview of autism was used as a study tool by Synodinou's book *Childhood Autism* and our experience as a volunteer at an Autism Day Center.

2.1 Working assumptions

1. If therapeutic approaches are aimed primarily at humans and then at specificities.
2. If the fulfillment and the achievement of educational skills is promoted through the use of the pedagogical tool "Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENS)".

2.2 Research tools

The differentiated pedagogical, educational materials and their bibliographic overview from Synodinou's book used between the research tools. The diversified teaching interactions are accompanied by differentiated pedagogical materials and educational tools (eg cognitive, differentiated social story texts with visual conceptual facilitators, machines, shoe – boxes, folders), designed and implemented by the teacher, according to the particular needs, interests and characteristics of each child. Also, the diversified pedagogical materials and educational tools were used, in relation to body boundaries. Synodinou uses a mediation in the therapeutic relationship developed with educational materials, such as clay, painting, and engravings, depending on what the children choose. The mediation through the plasticine and the fingerprint painting is also used to develop relationships between a child with autism and an adult, educational, special teachers, educator, therapist. Mediating plasticine or graphs allows the space to be created between the child with autism and the special educator (therapeutic relationship: patient-therapist, one-to-one), as Synodinou points out. This space is a kind of neutral field – the field separator, and co returned within the same time – which protects vulnerable parts of both disclosed in this relationship one opposite the other (face a face). This

intermediate neutral space allows them to meet there and remain without fear of being hurt. The media used – plasticine or white paper – is like a screen on which the patient can leave traces. This “screen” is white at the beginning of each session; it fills with colors and enriches as the communication articulates. Such special pedagogical practice favors opening the child out, as well as the necessary space and time is given, by the time the child begins to treat the outside of it. So, the research is empirical and utilizes the methodology of participatory observation (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2006: 44-60) of the volunteer-philologist according to the pedagogical principles of Special Education and Training, in 15 individuals, 8 -22 years old with autism.

2.3 *First research tool: Hetero-observations*

Hetero-observations refer to the frequency of weekly participatory observations in the Day Center on certain days of the week and with a certain time of onset and expiration of observations. The hetero-observations of the volunteer-philologist focus on the achievement or not of the educational skills with social activities integration. These record the data on the educational skills (1), the teaching interactions (2), and autonomy levels (3). Social inclusion activities are carried out with the help of volunteer-philologist inside and outside the Day Center. The programs are distinguished in internal and in external. In internal programs, the participatory observations record educational skills either individually or at the micro-group level. The content of these internal social inclusion activities is about puzzles, painting, plasticine, music, self-employment, rotate series, tactile adjustment and desensitization activities, preparation of the lunch, gymnastic, card matching, creative work, relaxation, washing, leveling and picking table, folding clothes, games with the ball, learning PECS, activities thin - gross motor, activities of contact and social conciliation in the form of dialogue. The content of external social inclusion activities refers to community integration, such as excursions. The teaching interactions are marked with the observations in interior and exterior environments. The interiors are bordered by classrooms featuring plastic, wooden pedagogical materials, puzzles, desks, plasticine, clay, colors, paints, brushes, scissors, glues, picture cards representing everyday life activities, people's emotions, social stories, social work, stories equipment (corridor, elliptical, bicycle, balls, wreaths, cones, ropes, mattresses), tablets, bricks, cartons, canvases.

Exteriors environments are bordered by the local community and public stations, as the park, the supermarket, the cinema, cafes, museums and archaeological sites. The learning skills are achieved mainly indoors and record the response to stimuli of simple and complex instructions such as the completion of a puzzle, the learning time, communication with the PECS, card identity with dimensional -3d objects with visualization help, self-service activities. These include tooth brushing, dishwashing, table-picking, supermarket shopping lists, as well as traffic safety and security activities. Part of the training skills is performed with volunteers in outdoor training, such as the supermarket. The volunteer-philologist participated in interactions between people with autism and employees in the supermarket, in financial transactions, in the selection of certain products, in the search for certain products, assisting them in locating the products, the quantity, the size, the weight without some intervention goals according to the TISIPfSENs pedagogical tool. The conceptual approach “through” to Special Education and Training for children and young people with special needs (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 55-112) support skills at the supermarket focused on financial transaction and understanding of the concept notes and coins in their financial value, without however, to set the target, the specificities of the individual with autism, the construction of differentiated intervention promotes community integration.

The levels of autonomy are described and analyzed in the fifth phase of TISIPfSENs, assessing the functional achievement of targeted educational skills and scored with very great help (1), great help (2), help (3), little help (4), and without help (5). The volunteer-philologist who

cares some people with an autism uses a scale from 1 to 5 according to the TISIPfSEnS to record social integration and the purpose of the Day Center. Observation time is 45 minutes to one hour depending on the duration of the program and the total time is 4 months (February - May).

The sample consists of 15 individuals with autism, aged 8-19 years. The center accommodates 15 people with an average age of 12 years, 8 boys and 7 girls. One of them had graduated or dropped out of special schools or other special education structures. Moreover, a child participating has weekly session in speech therapy and supported at home by a special tutor of the center. Note also, that the position of volunteer-philologist is not fixed but moves from group to group depending on the needs of the Day Center at both internal and external programs. The volunteer-philologist participates in the Center from 17.00 to 21.00 and runs 3 days a week and the total observation period is 4 months (February – May).

The first group date in 3 April had external integration activity, social club and in this, the visit of an archaeological site. Teaching interactions develop 3:2, that is, 3 people with ASD, a psychologist and a volunteer-philologist. Regarding educational skills, one person took the initiative and initiated a discussion, while regarding the levels of autonomy, 1 out of 3 people managed without help and 1 out of 2 failed to comply with the rules of conduct.

The second group date in 20 May had internal integration activity gymnastics. Teaching interactions develop 3:2, that is, 3 people with ASD, a trainer and a volunteer-philologist. Regarding educational skills, there was provocative and partially aggressive behavior among 2 out of 3 people. One of the 2 people, after reprimanding, stopped paying attention to the other's challenging behavior. As for autonomy levels, all 3 people continued their activities (treadmill, bike) without assistance.

The third group date in 22 May had internal activity, speech therapy. The teaching interactions develop 2:2, 2 people with ASD, one speech therapist, and one volunteer-philologist. The target was the learning of PECS and the social conciliation. After completing and successfully matching items – cards, one of the 2 people with ASD requested the correct card. Regarding the levels of autonomy one person can do without help, the other with little help.

Table 1. The sample of the study

A/a Day Center - volunteer - philologist	Number of people with autism	Average age	Men	Average age	Women	Average age
Afternoon: 17.00-21.00	15	12	8	13	7	15

Table 2. Heterogeneous comments of a volunteer philologist

Day Center Teams 1. Open from 17.00-21.00.

Frequency of weekly observations in the Day Center: three days of 3-4 hours, starting and ending times of observations: February – May

A/S, Date/Groups	Educational skills - participatory observations of the volunteer – philologist			
	Activities (afternoon - evening) Social inclusion	Didactic Interactions	Educational skills	Levels of autonomy
1 st team: 3 people Date: 3 April	Afternoon, outside, Social Club: archaeological site	3 people with ASD, one psychologist, one volunteer - philologist	One person took the initiative and started a discussion	Only one out of 3 people managed it without any help and one out of two people managed to comply with the rules of conduct without help

2 nd team: 3 people, date: 20 May	Afternoon, indoor, gymnastics	3 people with ASD, one trainer, one volunteer - philologist	Challenge between 2 out of 3 people. One of the 2 people, after reprimanding, stopped paying attention to the other's challenging behavior.	All 3 people continued activities (treadmill, bike) without help.
3 rd team: 2 people, date: 22 May	Afternoon, indoor, speech therapy	2 people with ASD, one speech therapist, one volunteer - philologist	Learning of PECS, Social Conciliation. After successfully matching items - cards, he asked for the right card.	One person can help without help, the other with little help

2.4 Second research tool: Self-observations

Self-observations refer to the frequency of weekly participant observations at the Day Center on certain days of the week and with some observation start and end times, but also at a later time when the volunteer thinks about past events, such as why the young person with autism did not have achieved targeted educational skills that promote the quality of life in the community. The self-observations of volunteer-philologist focus on achievement or not of the targeted educational skills to the TISIPfSEnS, which has been taught in university with an emphasis on learning readiness activities that promote social inclusion. These self-observations record individual items about the volunteer's feelings and thoughts about the targeted educational skills (1), structured-teaching and differentiated activities (2), levels of autonomy (3), and achievement levels (4). The targeted educational skills are formulated according to the first, second and third stages of the TISIPfSEnS. That is, the intervention plan is recorded on the basis of systematic empirical observation (first phase), informal pedagogical evaluation (second phase) and steps of segmentation of the educational achievement goal (third phase). The content of the goals is defined by skills that are learned through activities of readiness in the area of emotional organization with emphasis on interest in learning, self-empathy and cooperation with others. The child outwardly expresses his/her self-image, develops interest in his/her environment and collaborates with others, if allowed by the environment, but also by humans. The child's needs to develop social skills and functional interaction with others in his attempt to integrate into his or her social environment is directly linked to his or her feelings. Interests keep the child emotionally alert and working with others allows him/her to evaluate their actions, accept their failures, rejoice in their successes, share and give them the necessary space and time (Ministry of National of Education and Religions – Pedagogical Institute, 2009). The structured diversified activities focus on the achievement of Social Inclusion skills that are not exclusively carried out by the volunteer, but auxiliary within and outside the Day Center. Although differentiated internally and externally, the programs of activities are not structured into educational skills in an individual or small group teaching plan, as proposed by TISIPfSEnS. The self-observations also note what a person with autism could have achieved if there had been a plan with appropriately structured-doctrinal differentiated adaptive activities carried out indoors and outdoors. The self-observations on the levels of autonomy of educational skills are defined by reflection on achievements marked with very great help (1), with great help (2), with help (3), with little help (4), and without help (5). The wording of the comments and suggestions is a continuation of the interactive observations that have been made with participatory observations in internal and external environments. The self-observation at achievement levels is determined by what this young person with autism can accomplish without

the help or care of an adult instructor at the Day Center or even with the support of teaching with a volunteer philologist.

Table 3. Self-observations of a volunteer philologist

Day Center Teams 1. Open from 17.00-21.00.

Frequency of weekly observations in the Day Center: two days 3-4 hours of observation start and end time: February – May

A/S, Date	Thoughts - feelings of volunteer – philologist:			
	-Targeted Educational Skills	-Structured-teaching differentiated activities	-Levels of autonomy	-Achievement Levels
1 st team: 3 people Date: 3 April	Start a conversation	Step 1. We sit down Step 2. The teacher starts the discussion Step 3. Children continue	2 out of 3 do it without help	In a group of two, three or four children, each waits his turn and says briefly, showing cards with activities he did the day before. They record what they say and then hear it.
2 nd team: 3 people Date: 20 May	Observe the rules of conduct	Step 1. They read their program Step 2. Go to the fitness equipment Step 3. Stop the program	1 in 3 without help	Creating rules of conduct in the form of a 'contract'. Agreeing on common rules and painting them. Image collage in the corresponding rules.
3 rd team: 2 people Date: 22 May	Don't be provocative	Step 1. Read the program Step 2. Start activities Step 3. Causes the speech therapist	1 in 2 without help	Visualized rules in the form of social history.

The study was conducted over a five-month period with two weekly participant observations of six hours in the Attica basin.

2.5 The limitations of research

The volunteer was given no medical history. Most guests received anti-epileptic and antipsychotic treatment.

3. Results

The results show the need to re-formulate the meanings of education, mind and soul that are primarily intended for humans and then for particulars, such as neuropsychiatric disorders in the autistic spectrum. Furthermore, the necessity of educating People with Autism in Day Centers with the pedagogical tool TISIPfSENs is emphasized. according to the research tools and what emerges from them, as used and analyzed, hetero-observations make it easier for the philologist to understand autism and educational practice with differentiated pedagogical materials and educational tools, while self-observations put in volunteer – philologist delimitation issues highlighting the pedagogical reflection and the need to use the TISIPfSENs pedagogical tool.

3.1 Therapeutic approaches are primarily aimed at the individual and then for the specificities.

The bibliographic overview of Synodinou's book indicates that plasticine or graph mediation allows to be created a neutral space, a "screen" between the child with autism and the special educator (therapeutic relationship: patient-therapist). This space, thanks to its neutrality, enables the child to unfold unconsciously enough elements of himself, which in any case facilitates the therapeutic relationship. Synodinou says that through her therapeutic work with psychotic and autistic children, she has been exposed to many things. The term "autism" indicates that the child is stuck in his pathology, perhaps because of the term itself, which is interpreted as self-folding, however, even if another term is used, the difficulties presented are commensurate. The special educator with plasticine and painting blocks tries to encounter child autism through this space he creates with the specific pedagogical materials, to understand and help the student who has difficulty in their daily life. The autistic person is completely indifferent to the other and unlike the psychotic one, the confusion between inside and outside does not exist, as the outside does not exist for the child. The paradox is that the outside is intense and the child is simply trying to protect himself from it and not be exposed. Thus, it ends up wrapping itself completely and closing itself in a "shell of impervious defense" (Synodinou, 1999: 35-37).

According to Drossinou Korea's book (2017), the difficulties in educating children with autism require the use of an appropriately Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs). The TISIPfSENs program emerged from the need to manage pedagogical problems, such as the selection and appropriate use of pedagogical materials and educational resources (see above mediation). This specific pedagogical methodology and didactic approach of students with SEN has been formulated and created, where it is constantly looking for appropriate and smart, pedagogical, long-term and short-term teaching goals. Analyzing the principles of TISIPfSENs it can be seen that they come from a comprehensive assessment of the skills, talents, desires and knowledge of students with SEN and the way they learn. Through the semantics of the acronym TISIPfSENs, five (5) interrelated phases are created that relate to each student and aim at his/her educational problem. The teacher asked to clarify expectations is for the student with autism, emphasizing where possible, greater autonomy, and integration into society. It also attempts to cultivate and make the most of the student's interests. The first phase focuses on systematic empirical observation of the difficulty of the language courses, the second phase focuses on informal educational assessment, detection, identification and understanding of difficulties in language courses, the third phase involves the targeted teaching work plan on language courses with the sub- segmentation of the objectives, the fourth phase focuses on implementation with diversified and creative activities in the language courses and the fifth phase involves evaluating the didactic intervention in language courses (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 320-322).

3.2 The fulfillment and achievement of educational skills is promoted through the use of the pedagogical tool "Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs)".

The relation of educational skills with pedagogical tool Targeted Individual Structured – Inclusive Intervention Program of Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs) although it is obvious, but also is not happen in the Day Center. The volunteer-philologist has tried to understand the routines of autism without explaining the purpose, the methodology and the pedagogical materials and the means of intervention. The absence of the TISIPfSENs program has raised concerns and doubts about educational skills in special education and training, as well as the lifelong quality of people with autism attending in Day Centers. According to the experiences and observations of the volunteer-philologist of the Day Center, the meaning of social inclusion

has nothing to do with educational skills with the pedagogical tool (TISIPfSEnSs). Specifically, internal and external education skills remain limited in social inclusion, as they do not follow in the footsteps of the Pedagogical Tool (TISIPfSEnSs), which promotes personalized, structured, inclusive targeting with the help of differentiated pedagogical tools, through systematic observation. The vague educational process governing Day Centers restricts people with ASD who remain stagnant and unchanged in their individual and social difficulties, often displaying new inappropriate behaviors, making it even more difficult to conduct a study and work program.

4. Conclusion

The conclusions and implications for further research illustrate the need to reformulate the meanings of education, mind and soul that are primarily aimed at humans and subsequently for particulars, such as neuropsychiatric disorders in the autistic spectrum. Furthermore, the necessity of educating People with Autism in Day Centers with the pedagogical tool TISIPfSEnSs is emphasized. Its role is crucial in the development of pre-professional skills and the acquisition of autonomy or semi-autonomy (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 91). It is also suggested to study the theory of the mind for autism, as well as more systematic education with the soul of both the educator and the educator. As a precondition, the use of the TISIPfSEnSs pedagogical tool is essential as it helps people with ASD to participate in the educational process by promoting their learning and social inclusion, experiential and interactive expression in the field (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 338). It ensures that the person with ASD understands everything that he/she does on his/her own and with others. This includes planning the transition of the person with ASD from one activity to another by reducing their stress levels (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 341). Finally, it contributes to the differentiated structure of the individual work system and the individual study method as well as being oriented towards learning and pre-occupational preparedness (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 342).

Finally, learning and pre-vocational readiness activities as good pedagogical practices aim to promote and improve the emotional organization skills of people with ASD, awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, understanding of their needs, and their intellectual abilities. Implemented through pedagogical interventions with 3D cognitive machines (shoe – boxes and folders), they do not have a therapeutic mission, but assist people with autism in their socio-communication skills by supporting their autonomous or semi-autonomous living, in accordance with the principles of decolonization of Frame of Analytical Program for Special needs (Drossinou Korea, 2017: 771-777).

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