

## **ABSTRACT**

Phonetic-phonological ability is one of the components that is purposefully developed during speech therapy intervention. This ability is very important for the development of reading and writing in the early stages of literacy acquisition. In particular, emphasis is placed on phonemic awareness, which is related to the perception of the phoneme structure of words, phonetic analysis and synthesis etc. For the targeted development of phonemic awareness, a structured methodology of Language skills training according to D. B. Elkonin was created.

The diploma thesis examines the possibility of developing phonemic awareness in children with Down syndrome in the case of using Language Skills Training according to D. B. Elkonin. The practically conceived part presents the results of a qualitative research investigation. Participant observation was the method of data collection, and a non-standardized pre-made test of phonemic awareness was used to assess the level of phonemic awareness, based on the test of the authors of the Elkonin methodology and the Preschool Skills Diagnostic by Bednářová and Šmardová (2015).

The research investigation was conducted by action research 6 pre-school and younger school age probands with Down syndrome were included in the action research. Based on the analysis of the available data, changes in individual lessons and general suggestions for modifying the methodology were defined in advance, so that it would be more suitable for the research sample in terms of its specifics. Over the course of one year, the subjects attended modified language skills training lessons according to D. B. Elkonin. Observation focused on the work of the probands during the performance of partial tasks and took place with the participation of the researcher and the parents of the children from the research sample. At the beginning and at the end of the action research, the probands were tested with the aforementioned test, which reflected the influence of the development of phonemic awareness in the research sample. It follows from the research data that the proposed changes were positively received and according to the data from the phonemic awareness test, the modified version of the Elkonin methodology had a positive effect on the phonemic awareness of the majority of the probands.

## **KEYWORDS**

Phonemic awareness, Down syndrome, Language skills training according to D. B. Elkonin