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Story-Based Intervention. Social Stories as a Method of Working with Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

KEYWORDS ABSTRACT

autistic spectrum disorder, social stories, self-regulation, special educational needs

Following the example of other scientific disciplines, pedagogy faces the challenge of implementing an *evidence-based* work model. The subject of the present research is the review and analysis of the results of reports concerning the effectiveness of implementing *social stories* in working with students with autism spectrum disorders at the elementary education stage. The main goal of the study is to popularise social stories as an effective method of working with such students. The reviewed literature encompasses foreign scientific journals available via electronic databases. The materials selected in the query were thoroughly analysed, particularly in terms of the subject of the research, its goals and the course of an intervention with the use of a social story. Indications for the application of social stories while working with a child on the autism spectrum were identified. Taking into account the objective limitations of the presented research reports, there appears to be a need to continue the research on the effectiveness of story-based interventions.

Introduction

Iwona Chrzanowska points to the need to change thinking about the so-called ‘organisational culture’ of the school as one of the important aspects in the process of implementing inclusive education (Latin: *includer* means inclusion, joining, encompassing) as a “model of a perfect school system” (Chrzanowska 2018, 2019). According to data contained in the Educational Information System (for the school year 2018/2019, as of 30 September 2018), the following numbers of students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, including Asperger syndrome, were identified in educational facilities: in kindergartens, 12,077 children follow the curriculum for children with special educational needs (including 2,093 children in special kindergartens), and in schools – 21,422 pupils (including 1,514 pupils in special schools). The analysis of statistical data simply imposes on us the necessity to accelerate transformations in the area of the ‘organisational culture’ of educational institutions. However, this is not possible without removing barriers that consist in misunderstanding or fragmentary knowledge of the specific features of the educational functioning of students with disabilities and of a neurodiverse development path. This conclusion is confirmed by the opinions of many people involved in the process of education. The call for a change is an extremely important voice in the pedagogical environment (expressed, e.g., during the third international conference “Autism. Lights and Shadows,” organised by the Prodeste Foundation in 2019 in Toruń, Poland), to which educators cannot remain indifferent. The most common objections against the currently popular therapeutic strategies include the departure from the solid scientific foundations of the methods used; a low level of therapists’ responsiveness; following a given method in a literal, unreflective manner; focusing on modifying behaviour rather than satisfying needs; and excessive – and sometimes even ambivalent or debatable (in terms of its legitimacy) – directiveness. No method is a magical panacea for autism. There is no autism treatment method; after all, autism is not a disease. Therapy as such is to help overcome particular difficulties in specific areas of functioning. In the case of autism spectrum disorders, the most important difficulties involve the socio-emotional sphere, communication and sensory perception (DSM-5 2018).

In order to unify the terms, the present article uses the notion of autism spectrum disorder without dividing the students into those with autism and those with Asperger syndrome. The justification for adopting such a perspective is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) published in 2013, which introduced some changes to the definition of autism. Compared to the previous release and the ICD-10 classification, DSM-5 replaced three pervasive developmental disorders: autism, Asperger syndrome, and pervasive developmental disorders not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), with the common overarching category of autism

spectrum disorders (ASDs). In addition, Rett syndrome (RTT) and childhood disintegrative disorder were excluded from the classification (Morrison 2016).

Following the example of other scientific disciplines, pedagogy also faces the challenge of implementing an evidence-based work model. According to a report by the National Autism Center published in 2015, scientifically established interventions towards children, adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum below the age of 22 encompass behavioural interventions based on assumptions of the applied behaviour analysis, the cognitive behavioural intervention package, language training, modelling, natural teaching strategies, parent training, the peer training package, pivotal response training, schedules, scripting, self-management, the social skills package, and story-based intervention (NAC 2015; Suchowierska, Novak 2013). As noted by Sam Goldstein and Sally Ozonoff, a low level of social functioning is an important factor, often determining the diagnosis of autism (Goldstein, Ozonoff 2017). When reviewing the available forms of the professional development and enhancement of qualifications of teachers and therapists/specialists in psychological and pedagogical support, one cannot help but think that those involving behavioural therapy are the most popular ones. Further, there exists a significant disproportion between scientific studies on behavioural interventions towards people on the autism spectrum and reports dealing with other methods considered to be *evidence-based* ones. Information about them can be found primarily in foreign literature, which significantly hinders their implementation into educational and therapeutic practice.

The subject of the present study is a review and analysis of the results of research reports on the effectiveness of interventions using social stories towards students with autism spectrum disorders at the stage of elementary education. Such effectiveness is understood as the degree to which the intended goals are achieved (Kondalkar 2010, cited in Pyszka 2015). The main goal of the study is to popularise social stories as an effective method of working with a student with autism spectrum disorders. The article starts with a discussion of the theoretical assumptions of the social stories method and of the principles of constructing social history according to the concept of Carol Gray. Based on a review of the literature, the possibilities of using social stories for students with autism spectrum disorders at the level of early education are then discussed, and finally, indications on the use of social stories in pedagogical practice are formulated.

Social Stories According to Carol Gray – Theoretical Assumptions of the Method

Social stories are individualised, short narratives describing a specific social situation – beliefs, emotional states and behavioural scripts from the perspective of their recipient, using the appropriate formal and linguistic organisation (Gray, Garand 1993; Gray 1998; Pisula 2012; Atwood 2013; Gray 2014; Prokopiak 2017). The phenomenon of the method's worldwide popularity can be attributed to its strong roots in school practice. From 1977–2004, Carol Gray, the author and promoter of the method, worked as a teacher of children and teenagers on the autism spectrum at a public primary school in Jenison, Michigan. The first social stories were created in 1989 in response to the needs of her students as an attempt to cope with their difficulties.¹

Gray believes that the theoretical justification for the application of social stories while working with students with autism spectrum disorders results from the cognitive deficits that affect their difficulties in social understanding (Gray, Garand 1993). The approach of Gray is close to cognitive concepts of autism: deficits in the theory of mind – the ability to identify, recognise, and understand the thoughts, intentions, and desires of others, due to which it is possible to understand and predict other people's behaviour (Baron-Cohen 1995, cited in Atwood 2013); and weak central coherence – a tendency to think in a fragmentary way and difficulties with differentiating and combining pieces of information into a coherent whole (Firth, Happé 1994, cited in Atwood 2013).

One of the basic assumptions of a social story-based intervention is dialogue and the subjective treatment of the recipient by striving to understand the individual, subjective perception of events. A social story works on the assumption of the feedback between the recipient who has difficulty understanding the expected pattern of social behaviour and specialists, parents, guardians, and, finally, siblings. Gray identified ten principles for constructing a social story that have an impact on the effectiveness of an intervention undertaken with the use of it (Table 1).

¹ For further information on Carol Gray and the first social stories, see <https://carolgraysocialstories.com>.

Table 1. Principles for constructing a social story according to the concept of Carol Gray

Criterion		Discussion
<i>ONE goal</i>		The goal of a social story is to share information with the recipient in as clear and transparent a way as possible, taking his/her mental, physical, social and emotional balance into account, in order to equip the recipient with knowledge rather than modify his/her behaviour.
<i>TWO-step discovery</i>		Work on creating a story consists of two stages: collecting precise data and identifying a situation from the individual perspective of the recipient of the story. Gray also distinguished three types of information contained in social stories: news (objective information), interpretations of news (descriptive information), and connections and consequences (information linking past, present and future).
<i>THREE parts and a title</i>		The story has a three-fold composition: introduction, body and conclusion.
<i>FOUR-mat</i>		It is important to present and organise a story so that it responds to the individual needs of the recipient, i.e. appropriate choices should be made as to its length, vocabulary and grammatical composition, font style, size and colour, as well as photos, symbols and illustrations.
<i>FIVE factors</i>	<i>Perspective</i>	When writing a social story, one should pay attention to the first- or third-person perspective, the patient tone of response, the use of past and present and/or future tense, precision and literal accuracy, and the appropriate selection of vocabulary.
	<i>Vocabulary</i>	
<i>SIX questions in a story</i>		Taking into account the accuracy of a statement, a story should contain the answers to the following questions: <i>who? what? when? where? how? and why?</i>
<i>FIVE types of sentences</i>		A story can use the following types of sentences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ descriptive sentences: objective statements about a situation, ▪ perspective sentences: statements regarding the internal state of people (e.g. their thoughts, feelings, beliefs), ▪ directive sentences: statements about a recommended reaction or behaviour (they may refer to the recipient, to the team or be self-improving), ▪ affirmative sentences: statements emphasising or reinforcing previously provided information, ▪ partial sentences: statements with gaps to be completed.

Criterion	Discussion
<i>A gr-EIGHT formula</i>	The essence of a social story is to describe a situation, not to issue orders and recommendations aimed at changing behaviour. Gray recommends working on the content of a story and maintaining its proper setting, i.e. keeping a ratio between the number of descriptive sentences and the number of directive sentences (their product should be greater than or equal to two).
<i>NINE makes it mine</i>	A social story is supposed to take into account the individual preferences, interests, needs and limitations of the recipient.
<i>TEN guides to editing and implementation</i>	Gray recommends adhering to the following principles: textual clarity and accessibility, a readiness to use help, e.g. software and applications, the appropriate organisation of work with a story (the manner and frequency of interventions), the monitoring of work progress and its evaluation, as well as ordering stories according to their content, degree of difficulty and subject matter.

Source: The author’s own elaboration (following Gray, Garand 1993: 1-10; Gray 1998: 167-198; Gray 2014).

Methodology

The research was designed according to literature analysis methods, and it was carried out in five phases: preliminary search, result search and literature retrieval, extraction and evaluation of collected questions, synthesis and analysis of results, and reporting (Czakoń 2011; Booth 2012, cited in Mazur, Orłowska 2018). In the preparatory stage, the basic literature of the subject was selected from the opinions of research periodicals and applications using electronic databases (DOAJ). In the second stage (searching and obtaining literature), proper books were selected. I based my search strategy on the following Keywords

story-based intervention, social stories and autism spectrum disorders. Furthermore, I chose proper articles by applying the criterion of the time of their preparation, i.e. analysing only works developed after 2000, and the criterion of the age of the participants involved, i.e. early education students. The initial analysis of the literature included a review of abstracts. Then, the articles were stratified, and those directly related to the issue were identified, i.e. those that discussed the possibilities of using social stories when working with students with autism spectrum disorders in a school environment, and others that were adequate for the purposes of the study. This enabled data extraction, viz. 22 articles for content analysis. Subsequently, the materials

selected in the query were analysed in detail; in particular, I was interested in the subject of the research, its objectives, and the course of a story-based intervention. This report presents the effects of the completed research project.

The use of social stories among children with autism spectrum disorders in the light of the research

On the basis of the literature review, two main problem areas in the context of using story-based interventions can be distinguished. On the behavioural level, these are reports on the improvement of a child's functioning in the classroom and class, and reducing the intensity of disturbing and problematic behaviours. The second group of interventions focuses on socio-emotional functioning, i.e. the possibilities of supporting pro-social behaviours, improving key skills in the area of social interactions and independent play among children on the autism spectrum.

Regulating behavioural responses

The first research group opens with reports on the improvement in the functioning of students during classes after the application of story-based interventions. The team of Jeffrey Chan and Mark O'Reilly conducted a study involving three eight-year-old students diagnosed with autism and attending a public school – which, as the authors emphasise, is particularly important given the overwhelming number of studies involving students of special needs facilities. Using Microsoft PowerPoint, teacher-experimenters created social stories, adapting their content and form to the individual needs of the students and to their level of functioning. Each story consisted of up to 12 slides. A single slide contained a short statement written in a 20-point, sans serif font (limited to a maximum of four sentences) and a visual representation in the form of a photo, drawing or photograph. The students participated in therapeutic sessions using an individually prepared social story before the start of their actual lessons. For each of the boys, individual therapeutic goals were operationalised, such as proper sitting, establishing eye contact with the teacher and improving independence in writing and reading during classes. The researchers observed moderate changes in the behaviour of the children; however, these changes occurred in an inconsistent manner (Chan et al. 2011).

An Iranian study conducted by a team from the University of Tehran (Beh-Pajooch, Ahmadi, Shokoohi-Yekta, Asgary 2011) provided similar results. Three special needs school students aged 8-9 participated in the study. In the case of two of them,

a decrease in disruptive behaviours – such as crying (86% decline), unjustified walking in class (93% decline) and lying on a bench (83% decline) – was noted. Similar effects in terms of reducing crying in children with autism spectrum disorders through a social story-based intervention were also obtained by other researchers (Agosta et al. 2004; Adams, Gouvousis 2004). Also, Richmond Mancil, Todd Haydon and Peggy Whitby noted the slightly greater effectiveness of the intervention applied towards autistic students based on social stories made with the use of PowerPoint compared to a traditional paper version (Mancil, Haydon, Whitby 2009).

The effectiveness of using story-based interventions was also confirmed in a Thai study conducted by Angkhan Khantreejitranon (2018). A group of five children diagnosed with autism, aged 6-10, participated in a six-week experiment. The intensity of difficulties related to social skills was used as a criterion for the selection of the study participants. The following key areas of intervention were identified: walking around, making loud noises, difficulties with sharing toys with other children, difficulties with emotional regulation (including showing frustration inadequate to a given situation), difficulties with behavioural regulation (including destroying toys), difficulties with a smooth transition from one activity to another, and difficulties with initiating and maintaining interactions in a socially acceptable way. The intervention encompassed five 30-minute meetings with the children. Classic social stories according to Gray's recommendations were used for the intervention, plus an individually tailored social story for each child in the form of an e-book. A questionnaire addressed to the students' teachers and the Intervention Rating Profile were used for the evaluation. The researcher observed a decline in the intensification of difficult and disruptive behaviours in the analysed areas.

Shannon Crozier and Matt Tincani also noted the effectiveness of the method. Their study involved three children aged 3-5 diagnosed with autism and who attended a university kindergarten in which the inclusive education model was implemented. Each of the study phases took place in the participants' classroom. The stories had the following behavioural goals: sitting in a circle during classes, keeping arms and legs calm while sitting at a table, and proper behaviour while having a snack/meal. The booklets contained a simple illustration (e.g. a pretzel drawing) and a one-sentence caption per page written in 14-point Times New Roman. All participants demonstrated improved behaviour in the areas in which the intervention was undertaken; however, after its completion, the improvement did not persist over time to a satisfactory degree (Crozier, Tincani 2007). In turn, researchers from the University of Texas confirmed the persistence of positive behaviours for up to ten months following the story-based intervention among two students (a five- and a six-year-old) diagnosed with autism (Chan, O'Reilly 2008).

In the literature, there are also reports concerning the effectiveness of individual interventions applied to students with autism spectrum disorders. Christine Norris and John Dattilo used individualised social stories with an eight-year-old girl with autism. The intervention took place every day for ten minutes, about a quarter of an hour before going to a school canteen outside the child's classroom. A 50% reduction in disturbing behaviours during lunch, such as making noise or chanting, was observed in relation to their behaviours during the first day of the intervention. Unfortunately, a measure that would suggest persistent behavioural change over time was not included (Norris, Dattilo 1999). The results of individual interventions are also presented by a research team of Ellen Agosta, Janet E. Graetz, Margo A. Mastropieri, and Thomas E. Scruggs. The therapy was addressed to a six-year-old boy diagnosed with autism. Two individualised social stories were used, as recommended by Gray. Their creation was supported by the BoardMaker software. During the systematic intervention, the boy worked individually with a teacher based on social stories that raised some issues concerning behaviours such as shouting, crying, loud humming during activities in a peer group, and so-called 'activities in a circle'. After the cessation of the intervention, the control study pointed to the persistence of a decrease in disruptive behaviours in the form of shouting and to the prolonged participation of the child in organised activities in the circle, which makes it possible to predict a positive effect of the actions undertaken (Agosta et al. 2004).

A report by Lynn Adams, Aphroditi Gouvousis, Michael Van Lue and Claire Waldron confirms the effectiveness of parents' support in reducing the level of frustration and improving readiness for mental effort while doing homework thanks to the use of a social story. The intervention, consisting, in total, of 48 sessions, was carried out at the home of a seven-year-old boy diagnosed with autism. A social story created for the student deviated from the recommendations of Gray, since the intervention was directed at four behaviours: shouting, crying, falling to the ground, and hitting things with hands. The behaviours were selected based on the previously performed functional assessment of behaviour in collaboration with the student's parents and teachers. Thanks to the applied intervention, the frequency of undesirable behaviours was reduced, but the intervention did not lead to their complete elimination (Adams et al. 2004)

Regulating emotional responses and developing social and communication competences

The research conducted by Naomi Schneider and Howard Goldstein indicates a high level of effectiveness of social story-based intervention applied towards children

on the autism spectrum (Schneider, Goldstein 2009). Three early education students (two six-year-olds and one nine-year-old) who displayed increased severity of difficult behaviours and were in systematic speech therapy due to communication and speech disorders took part in the study. The development of the children's language and communication was assessed using the Social Skills Rating System and the Oral and Written Language Scales. The students worked with a social story outside the classroom during systematic, individual sessions with a teacher, and observation of their behaviour took place during the classes with a peer group. The selection of behaviours subject to the intervention was preceded by consultations with teachers, a speech therapist, and – particularly importantly for the continuity of the intervention – with the children's parents. Each behaviour was linked with an individual educational and therapeutic plan. The researchers also emphasised the impossibility of including some of the children's behaviours in the area of the intervention, e.g. echolalia. Each social story was individually customised to the needs and capabilities of the child in the form of laminated cards bound in a binder. The cards were prepared using 20-point Times New Roman and PCSs (Picture Communication Symbols) generated using Board-Maker. The students showed an increase in positive behaviours, but their distribution was not harmonious and it was individual for each participant. In a subsequent study, Schneider and Goldstein noted an increase in the effectiveness of the story-based interventions towards students on the autism spectrum as a result of the application of a supportive strategy in the form of *visual schedules* (Schneider, Goldstein 2010).

Susana Bernad-Ripoll's study focused on assessing the effectiveness of the intervention based on a social story and videos with the participation of the student. The intervention involved a nine-year-old student with Asperger syndrome. In order to obtain materials for creating individual social stories, the child was recorded and photographed in various situations so that it was possible to visualise a wide range of emotional states experienced by him and to return to them repeatedly. The subject of the intervention involved an increase in social and emotional competences in identifying, recognising and understanding emotions: happiness, anger, anxiety, peace and frustration. Therapeutic sessions with the child took place at home, with one social story used per session (in total, nine sessions were conducted). Based on the collected data, an increase in the student's correct responses was observed, but their number tended to decline (Bernad-Ripoll 2007).

A separate group considers research dealing with the issue of functioning in the socio-emotional aspect, i.e. supporting pro-social behaviours and improving key skills in the areas of social interactions and independent play. The researchers Leasha M. Barry and Suzanne B. Burlew focused on assessing the possibility of using social story-based interventions in developing skills related to choosing an activity, the adequate use of objects, and students with autism playing. The study involved seven- and

eight-year-old students diagnosed with autism with low language competences. The students were observed three times a week for 30 minutes. Work with social stories took place every day during the intervention phase, as well as during classes in a peer group when a teacher gave the students corrective feedback based on a given story. The researchers noted an improvement in behaviours in the areas covered by the intervention (Barry, Burlew 2004).

A study by Tiffany L. Hutchins and Patricia A. Prelock from the University of Vermont confirmed the effectiveness of interventions using social stories and Comic Strip Conversations (CSCs) as a strategy supporting the rise of positive pro-social behaviours among students on the autism spectrum. Seventeen children aged 4-12 with a medical diagnosis of autism and the developmental level of verbal expression of at least a three-year-old participated in the study. Each individually prepared story was accompanied by photos and symbols generated using BoardMaker. The researchers used the following research tools to measure the effectiveness of the interactions: the Gilliam Autism Rating Scale (GARS), the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Observational Rating Scales (CELF-ORS) and the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS). The analysis of the collected materials showed that the interactions were effective by as much as 76.5% (Hutchins, Prelock 2012).

In turn, the objective of a study by Lisa Wright and Rebecca McCathren was to assess the initiation of peer contacts and positive responses to the initiation of peer contacts by children on the autism spectrum (Wright, McCathren 2012). To evaluate the level of social functioning, the Social Responsiveness Scale and the Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs were used. Four boys aged 3-7 diagnosed with autism participated in the study. As an exclusion criterion, the absence of significant delays in cognitive development and the presentation of basic language and communication skills were applied. The children worked with two individualised social stories. Each of them had the form of a laminated, multiple-page booklet (5-11 pages), written in 16-point Times New Roman. The books contained photos of the children and their peers. The stories were read to the children at least once a day at the same time, during an individual session with a teacher. The researchers reported a slight increase in the pro-social behaviours of three boys and a slight decrease in their disruptive behaviours.

Another study confirmed a rise in the number of pro-social behaviours after the social story intervention carried out among students with autism. The study involved three boys diagnosed with autism, aged 8-13, and verbally communicating with their environment. An individualised social story was prepared for each student in the form of laminated cards bound in a binder. Each page contained one or two sentences in a 14-point font. Based on the analysis of the collected data, progress in social interactions was determined, with the following distributions for the individual

participants: 39% – the 13-year-old, 28% – the 8-year-old and 4% – the other 8-year-old. This suggests that the possibility of increased motivation to engage in social interactions depends on the age of the student (Scattone, Tingstrom, Wilczynski 2006).

The Malaysian study involved four children, aged 5-8 with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders, learning in inclusive education after a recommendation from teachers. The project lasted five weeks, and it encompassed the child's daily work with a social story tailored to their needs and capabilities and an observation of the children's behaviours in the classroom and during breaks, including during their free activity in the playground. After the social story-based intervention, three study participants improved in terms of undertaking interactions with peers and dividing their scope of attention. In the case of one child, no changes in the quality and number of peer interactions undertaken were observed. The researchers also noted an important condition for the effectiveness of work based on social stories, i.e. striving to continue therapeutic interactions in the home environment, including involving the children's parents in interactions through previously prepared materials, e.g. in the form of comic strips, mental clouds as well as mobile applications designed to create short animations (Tellagami), presentations and audio-visual materials (Book Creator) and dedicated websites such as Voki. Attention was also drawn to the need to repeat a social story with children at time intervals that suit their needs (Balakrishnan, Alias 2017). The validity of including mobile devices or computer-assisted instruction (CAI) in the intervention using social stories is also confirmed by the reports of other researchers (Hagiwara, Smith 1999; Cihak, Kildare et al. 2012; Edeiken-Cooperman 2014; Stathopoulou, Loukeris et al. 2020).

Conclusion

Apart from the reports on the effectiveness of social story-based interventions, reflections on their low effectiveness are also present. It has been noticed that a story-based intervention affects only some students on the autism spectrum, while other intervention participants showed inconsiderable changes in the communication dimension and no improvement at the behavioural level (Graetz 2003; Sansosti, Powell-Smith 2006; Watts 2008). Difficulties in assessing the effectiveness of the therapy of children with autism spectrum disorders based on the application of social stories resulted from the following aspects: limitations with regard to the ability to specify particular variables relevant to a behavioural change; the simultaneous use of other therapeutic interventions, e.g. ABA, i.e. applied behaviour analysis (Kuo, Mirenda 2003; Marr et al. 2007); and, by an overwhelming majority, the small number of children involved in the intervention and its short-term effects.

The analysis of the literature points to the conclusion that the results of the research on the effectiveness of social story-based interventions are not unambiguous and decisive. Nevertheless, social stories should be considered as an important tool for individual work with a child with autism spectrum disorders. Based on the literature review, the following indications can be made regarding the application of social stories in educational practice on three levels:

1. Planning work with a social story:
 - due to the individualised nature of social stories, it can be considered justified to use them in individual work or, if this is not possible due to the organisational structure of the kindergarten or school, in a small group, i.e. a therapeutic dyad or triad. In this case, the selection of the group should be preceded by a detailed analysis of the areas that require support – the groups should possibly be homogeneous in terms of their experienced difficulties and presented cognitive capabilities;
 - the functional assessment of behaviours and the collection of detailed data about a student/child towards whom an intervention is planned is recommended, so as to enable the most complete customisation of the content and form of a story.
2. Working with social stories:
 - a) content adaptations
 - the use of the individualised scope of social stories – the content selection is adjusted to the level of the recipient's communication and speech development;
 - splitting a child's target behavioural activity into smaller phases;
 - linking the content of the stories with each other;
 - the gradual expansion of verbal messages, in accordance with the 'step by step' principle, taking into account the current language and cognitive capabilities of a child;
 - creating a story, considering the needs, capabilities and interests of a child as a result of teamwork (teachers, professionals, parents, guardians).
 - b) form adaptations
 - using visual strategies and video modelling techniques in work with social stories;
 - creating materials in both tangible and electronic forms – e.g. e-books, presentations, mobile applications, other software.
3. Monitoring of progress and evaluation of work with social stories:
 - returning to social stories at intervals adapted to the needs and capabilities of the recipient;

- the generalisation of skills (regularity, and not the duration of the intervention, makes it possible to prognosticate its success);
- striving to ensure continuity of interactions in a kindergarten/school and at home through psychoeducation and the support of a child's parents in applying interventions in the home environment.

This overview of research reports published in foreign scientific journals allows for the exploration of the option to use social story-based interventions in special education. In view of the objective limitations mentioned in the presented research reports, it seems useful to continue the research on the effectiveness thereof. From an educational perspective, not only is it important to rely on evidence-based, empirically proven methods at the level of scientific inquiries, but it is also necessary to take actions to implement them in everyday school practice.

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