



Casuistry – Jachym

1 Initial information

Jachym is currently student of the 8th grade and is 15 years old. He came to our school in the 6th grade. Jachym is very kind, jolly boy who takes great interest in sports.

Jachym grows up in nuclear family and has got two younger siblings. One of which is 13 years younger and the mother has therefore been fully occupied with taking care of the little child and related activities. The father does not partake much in daily functioning of the family and mother herself deems him impractical and incapable. During her prolonged hospitalization the school had to consult with grandmother for the father did prove unreliable.

The cooperation with mother is at the first glance very good, she meets regularly with Jachym's class teacher and is interested in how he copes but the moment responsibility for his results is pushed on her as well (supervision and help with school preparations, regular checks on calendar and record book) the communication becomes difficult and it happened often that the mother did uphold to her part of the deal. There was a time when Jachym was left alone with his duties and it took him quite a long time to adjust.

2 Detailed anamnesis

2.1 The report of pedagogical-psychological consulting

First school

Learning disability: dysorthography – disability, below average mathematical skills – above all attention deficit, ADHD – disadvantage.

Lower secondary school

Learning disability: slight dysorthography – disability, ADHD – disadvantage.

2.2 First school

Jachym attended the 1st grade at a different school in the same town. During the second half of the 2nd grade he transferred to another school, which is the school with multi-age classes. There Jachym received an individual education plan on demand of his parents, which he followed, even though the consulting only suggested minor supportive measures that could be implemented into normal curriculum. Jachym had regular issues with Czech, Mathematics and English.

In the 5th grade he started to have difficulties with national history and geography and natural history. In the end he received fail marks in those subjects and had to repeat the grade. Based on the

information his mother gave us she came to an agreement with the school for Jachym to repeat the grade. Part of the deal his mother made was that he receives fail marks from those subjects deemed as not that important for the child. From our point of view however, it may have lowered Jachym's self-confidence because he had issues with English and math and suddenly he was being given fail marks from utterly different subjects.

2.3 Jachym's way of work and functioning when advancing to lower secondary school

Jachym came to our school in the 6th grade. He was not the only one in class with special education needs but he belonged to those who have it hard getting used to a new environment plus the change that comes with advancing to the lower secondary school.

At the initial meeting his mother insisted we elaborate and individual study plan for him, which would modify the teaching of languages, mathematics, history and geography. After we were given reports we concluded that according to school legislation Jachym has no right to be given special education plan. We drafted a supportive programme, nowadays a plan of pedagogical support, which above all included languages. The mother continually demanded adjustments in geography and history, where she argued Jachym has great difficulties when it comes to orientation in space and time. After consulting his teachers however, this claim was not proven. Working with a map in geography and ordering events chronologically in history seemed to cause Jachym no difficulties at all. Those subjects were not included into supportive programme, as the recommendation from consulting did not point out anything like that.

Most of the problems Jachym had during the 6th grade stemmed from too huge a change in way he worked in class and the organization of school days as whole. To that adds the growing demand for him to be self-sufficient and responsible for school preparations he did at home. At that moment he was relying on the help of teachers but mainly parents to allow him to adapt more easily on this system. At first he did not do his homework and was not prepared for both written and verbal exams, which both reflected on his results. Even though our whole school work's with the same diary and we all write things down in it together. Jachym was not able to reach a functioning system even with the help from teachers. It was necessary to oversee Jachym at all times, if he wrote down anything at all and we later demanded his mother to check and confirm with signature that Jachym was prepared according to diary. Her signatures did not work for long. Jachym at that time was utterly dependent, chaotic, and lacked self-confidence.

The situation stabilized a bit towards the end of the first half and we was praised for not even forgetting basic school supplies. We wanted to praise him for at least something like managing part of his duties. During the second half however, it all went to worse as he began to forget even the most basic school supplies. Thus he became marked as an often failing student and his self-confidence dropped again. Jachym was also quite often spaced out and that excluded him from the group. In stressful situations neurotic behaviour manifested (twitching, stuttering).

Nevertheless, since the 6th grade he was very industrious and eager to help anyone. The problem was he often did not understand the instruction, which prevented him from performing the required action, no matter how much he wanted to. A great upside was Jachym's involvement in sport competitions, so we were able to praise at least for representing the school.

Of the curriculum, Jachym had the greatest difficulties with language subjects. His results in mathematics were stable. Into the teaching of mathematics had at the time already been knowingly implemented basic principles of mediated learning.

2.4 7th grade – FIE

Since the 7th grade the class began to work with the method of Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment. All students started with Organization of Dots.

During the classes Jachym's troubles lingered on but his social side steadily improved and his standing among classmates became more firm. During the FIE classes he was more active in the first half of the year and while he withdrew a bit in the second half, it was apparent that the work intrigues him because he was able to fulfil the tasks. He managed to reach success several times in the instrument. For instance one time when he finished the page first before everyone else. He was used to being last and his rejoicing was great when he realized others were still working while his work was over. We must note that the page was done according to instruction. When we compared our conduct at the end he shared with us he had stuck with jointly prepared strategy and used a piece of paper whereas some other self-confident children did not want to follow 'some joint manual' and consequently made solving the task much more difficult for them.

Inside the FIE was Jachym able to put to use individual steps, strategies, clues and hints. Carrying these abilities to other subject however proved still too challenging. He made best progress probably in mathematics. The schoolwork, which allowed for dividing the task into consecutive steps he was able to master individual steps to reach the goal. In the Czech language the situation was a bit complex. During the second half of the year students begin the syntax analysis and later with both main and compulsory clauses, which requires knowledge as well as system you hold on to while analysing the syntax. Even with beforehand laid strategy he was not able to solve such tasks. At the end of the school year, Jachym was about to receive fail mark in Czech language for he was not able to manage any of the schoolwork. At the following meetings with his mother she approached the situation that she would rather let him fail and repeat the grade rather than to study with him over the summer break because she did not have the time for it. She finally complied with practicing the tasks we prepared for him extra, so he managed to advance to the next grade by sheer will power.

2.5 8th grade

In the 8th grade in FIE classes we continued to wrap up the Organization of Dots instrument and proceed to Identifying Emotions instrument for there were some individuals who had difficulties integrating themselves among classmates.

Towards the end of Organization of Dots Jachym began to partake again actively. He got involved the most with 'page preparations' when collecting information and formulating strategy. It was clear that some processes he had already made automatic. He was thus able to repeatedly experience success in FIE. He managed the last page very well where the students were to formulate their strategy on their own. The teacher only acted as a 'consultant' just before the connecting of dots itself and he moderated the final discussion and related bridging. Working with emotions Jachym remained in the background.

During this year we could not fail to notice the huge change Jachym underwent, and which were reflected in other classes. First we noticed Jachym to systematically sort information and indicate it in colour in the instructions to written exams (mainly in mathematics). He first underlined what was important to him and proceeded to handle tasks in the order adequate to his ability rather than in order they were handed out. While working he continued to approach his own conduct the in the same way (underlining, arrows, and so on).

Additional surprise came when he readily utilized strategies formulated with teacher's help while analysing complex and compound sentences. When it came to this task he would open a notebook, in which he had the procedure written down step by step and worked accordingly. Later he made himself a paper card of the procedure, which was more practical. He began to visit tutoring in Czech language voluntarily and prepared for its every lesson thoroughly. In case he had trouble with homework he came to school with questions on how to solve it. We can identify that he was not afraid to work his own deficiencies and learn from them. He worked rigorously throughout the year and we must note he rejoiced from every little success he could achieve and every praise he received. At the end of the year his labour bore its fruits as he could get a C in Czech language and his happiness was visible.

Jachym began to express himself well, he no longer stuttered and he thought his answers through much more.

Important fact to note was that he was able to work with diary on his own. He did not forget a single school supply and took notes properly in classes. For that effort he receive commendation at the end of the year.

If you ask Jachym for help you can be sure he will do the most to satisfy your need. Throughout the year he was praised on many an occasion both curricular and extracurricular (helping with scrap paper collecting, school decorating, organization of singing Christmas carols, publishing school magazine, representing school in sports, and so on).

Jachym became a wholly self-sufficient and responsible student who we can rely on and is a true member of his class. Strengthening of his own self-confidence led to improvement in all social relationships.

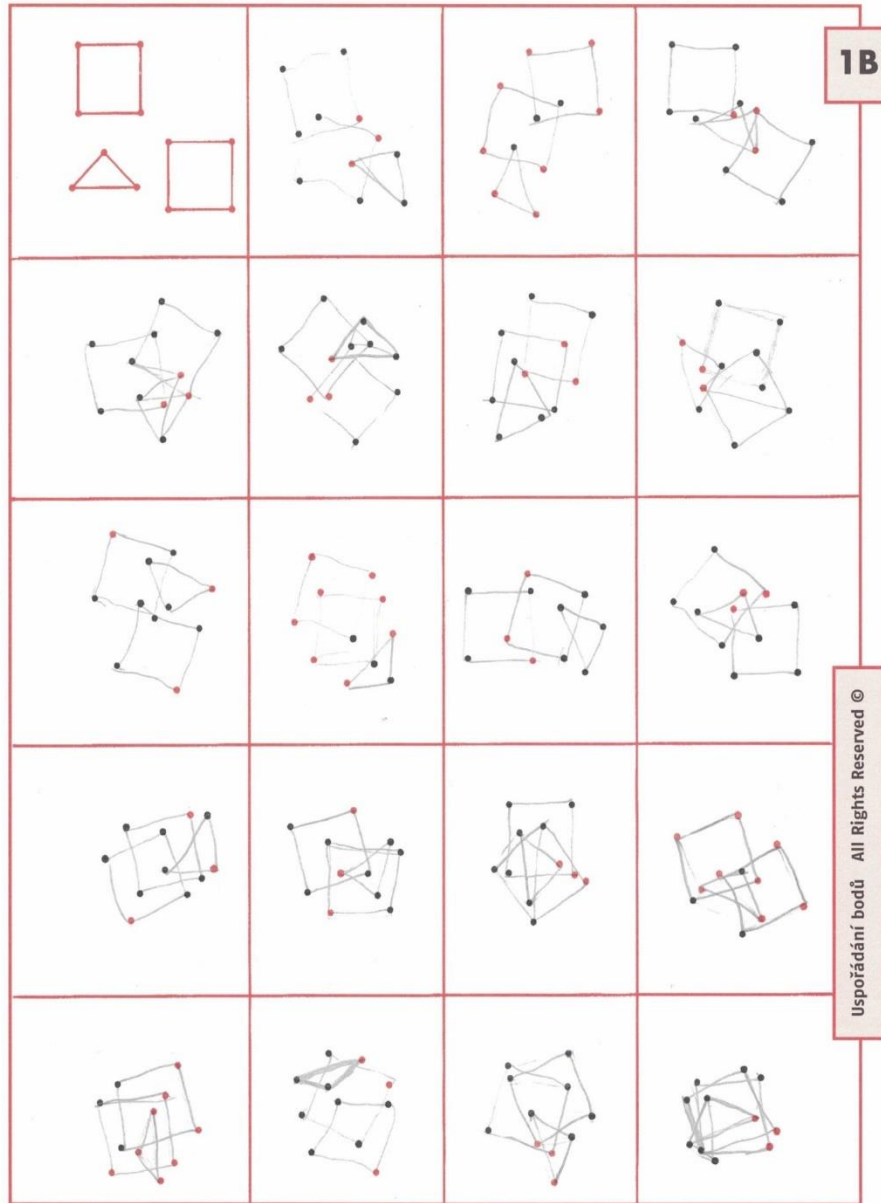
3 Final summary of Jachym's progress

We are certain that implementation of Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment into our school curriculum has largely contributed to Jachym coming to terms with and handling his handicaps and proceeding to the lower secondary school. There he managed to embrace basic principles and strategies, which are helpful to solve many various issues. Some role has also played the fact two teachers in Jachym's class have gone through FIE training and include its principles into other curricular lessons. This gives students more room to internalize the basic principles.

Jachym's own relation to FIE is very positive, in all his feedback he noted he enjoys the lessons, tries to not be afraid of his mistakes but mainly he focuses on giving himself enough time to think before speaking or acting. Additional prove that Jachym is planning to develop further is him signing up for a voluntary FIE club for it is only mandatory up to the 8th grade.

4 Attachments

- Jachym's instrument Organization of Dots – selected pages



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