

**PRACTICAL TRAINING IN MAJOR – EXERCISABLE  
THEORETICS  
PRACTICAL TRAINING IN REMEDIAL GYMNASTICS MAJOR  
BASED ON THE STUDENTS' OPINIONS**

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This study consists of the following parts:

- Introduction
- Legal background of the topic
- Key words
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- Empirical analyses
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- Summary
- References

**Introduction**

The title of this study reflects to the eternal truth that the development of skills needed to the successful pedagogical activities is as important in the teaching of specialized methodology as in the teaching of up-to-date theoretical knowledge.

The parallel occurrence of these two things in the course of the training might have persuasive power on the future nursery and primary teachers, as they can directly experience the practical realization of special methodological knowledge.

There have been series of attempts nearly in all fields of teacher training to modernize and renew the practical preparation of students for their profession as well as to make it more efficient somehow.

These attempts appeared in the increase or decrease of number of lessons, or in the change of way of closing the semesters (practical course mark or terminal examinations).

1. The fundamental goal in all cases is the acquisition of such science-based knowledge which combined with practical skills will actually enhance the children's liking of motion.

2. Another topic which is worth mentioning is that the teacher candidates' responsible preparation for the career is not present in many students. Their preparation for the practical tasks needs further thinking.

3. The theoretics and practice of remedial gymnastics have changed significantly recently. The dance and exercise performed to music have been incorporated into the remedial gymnastics. In the practice the teachers have bigger pedagogical freedom both in the development of structure of PE lessons and in the selection of organizational forms.

In the methodological training of remedial gymnastics our students have to be supplied with such knowledge and experience which will make them competent to carry out tasks aimed at restoring the health.

In my experience only the teacher, who is well-educated and has satisfactory theoretical knowledge as well as a lot of practical experience, is able to utilize the possibilities ensured by the pedagogical freedom.

### ***Legal background of the topic***

There are several laws and decrees connected to the topic. The first appendix of MKM decree No. 11/1994. (VI.8.) about the lessons of simplified physical education and remedial gymnastics is of great importance<sup>(1)</sup>.

1. The students have to participate in simplified physical education on the PE lessons or instead of PE lessons (hereinafter Category 1) if they are able to do the exercises only in part on the PE lesson or not at all, because of their health state – based on the medical opinion, or instead of compulsory PE lessons the students have to participate in remedial gymnastics (hereinafter Category 2), or do not have to take part in any kind of physical education at all (hereinafter Category 3).

2. The students participate in a simplified physical education (Category 1) if their physical condition is degraded because of a longer disease, or they have a slight disorder of locomotive organs or a slight medical disorder, and therefore can not do some exercises of the PE lessons. The simplified physical education can be arranged within the PE lessons or instead of them.

3. The students have to participate in remedial gymnastics (Category 2) if because of the disorder of locomotive organs or a medical illness, their physical condition does not allow them to take part in the PE lessons. Based on medical advice the students can take part in the PE lessons as well.

4. The students do not have to take part in the PE lessons (Category 3) if their disorder of locomotive organs or a medical illness impedes them even in participation in remedial gymnastics.

5. The health screening has to be carried out until 15 May except when the cause of screening occurs later than this day. The students examined by the doctor have to be recorded, and their health conditions at the time of first examination and results of later control examinations have to be recorded.

6. The number of lessons of simplified physical education or that of remedial gymnastics can not be lower than the number of compulsory PE lessons prescribed for the students of the same age group.

7. If the simplified physical education or the remedial gymnastics are carried out in the frame of pedagogical services, the number of lessons has to be determined in such a way that the students could take part at least on as many PE lessons as it has been detailed in paragraph 6.

8. If the necessary facilities are available, the students have to participate on one swimming lesson per week as a PE lesson.

The decree of the Health Minister No. 51/1997 (XII. 18) <sup>(2)</sup> about the screening examinations of children at given ages prescribes the following:

Age-related screening examination:

*In one year age and till six years age annually:*

- a) Total physical examination,
- b) Nervous system examination
- c) Examination of cryptorchidism until two years age, examination of testicles every year
- d) Evaluation of height, body mass (head circumference measurements as required), as well as development and nutritional status based on Hungarian standards
- e) Identification of psychological, motor, mental, social development and behaviour problems
- f) Examination of sensory functions based on the professional guidelines as well as examination of speech development
- g) Examination of locomotive organs: with special respect to static foot problems and disorders of backbone (postural faults, scoliosis),
- h) Blood pressure measurements between the ages of 3-6
- i) Early dental screening and care

**Key words:** remedial gymnastics, correction, competence

### **Background**

First a few words about the historical background of education of remedial gymnastics at our Faculty:

In 1989 a special course of remedial physical education was started in our College. In 1993 this special course was developed into the special course of corrective gymnastics. My husband as a physician helped in the organization of screening examinations, and in the inviting of his colleagues to read lectures in the medical subjects.

The classroom observations and the instructing of lessons by the teacher candidates are practiced in specially organized groups of children in our training institutions. The starting of specialized training was the result of a many sided cooperation of the College and the municipality of the town.

Since 1998 our faculty has had specialized remedial gymnastics training within the nursery and primary teacher training courses.

Since 2001 the accredited training of remedial gymnastics as a special course for the nursery and primary teachers has been available in our Faculty.

In September 2006 the children's and remedial gymnastics special course was started in the nursery and primary teacher courses on BA level.

In the course of studies in the abovementioned educational structure the students are provided with such knowledge which prepares them for the use of the preventive and corrective gymnastics.

As a summary of this short overview it is worth pointing out that the training in remedial gymnastics has a 22 years long history at our Faculty, and during this time the knowledge of remedial gymnastics in the nursery and primary teacher training has developed significantly.

The number of students getting BA degree in remedial gymnastics (2000-2011) is shown in the following table.

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2000	65
2001	66
2002	50
2003	72
2004	Modification special course
2005	76
2006	23+ BA in children's and remedial gymnastics
2007	27
2008	25
2009	35
2010	36
2011	34
<b>In total</b>	<b>509</b>

Demonstration of practical training in the Major as a structural frame of training

The following table will help the understanding:

### LESSON AND EXAMINATION PLAN OF THE CHOSEN SUBJECT

NO.	SUBJECTS	1. SEMESTER			2. SEMESTER		
		Chosen subjects					
		lessons	Form of exam.	credit	lessons	Form of exam.	credit
	<b><i>General foundation subjects</i></b>						
1.	Locomotor development	5	Etex+	3	-	-	-
2.	Anatomy	15	Etex	4	-	-	-
3.	Physiology	10	Etex	3	-	-	-
	<b><i>Professional foundation subjects</i></b>						
1.	Theoretics of physical education*	10	Test	3	15	Etex	3
2.	Internal medicine	10	Etex	3			
3.	Orthopaedics	10	Etex	3			
4.	Movement therapy and methodology*	10	Test	3	15	Etex	3
5.	Remedial gymnastics				10	Qualified signature	3
6.	Athletics and theoretics of athletics	5	Pcm+	2			
7.	Gymnastics and theoretics	5	Pcm	2			
8.	Physical Education games	5	Pcm	2			
9.	Sport games	5	Test	2			
10.	Swimming and water gymnastics				10	Pcm	2
11.	Performance diagnostics				5	b	2
	<b><i>Practical training and skills development</i></b>						

NO.	SUBJECTS	1. SEMESTER			2. SEMESTER		
		Chosen subjects					
		lessons	Form of exam.	credit	lessons	Form of exam.	credit
1.	Functional gymnastics				5	Pcm	2
2.	Practice analysis				5	Pcm	2
3.	Children's Exercise instruction practices				15	Pcm	3
4.	Remedial Gymnastics instruction practices				10	Pcm	3
5.	Thesis consultation						2
	<b>In total:</b>	<b>90</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>90</b>		<b>25</b>

**Thesis: 10 credits – Form of examination: qualified signature**

**+Etex: Endterm examination**

**+Pcm: Practical course mark**

Let us look at these data in more details. How to evaluate the practical training of the major and what should it include within the teaching of subject Movement therapy and methodology?

During the first semester the teaching material is processed by such a way that the practical training could be started as early as possible. In this period of training the suggested movement material can be tried and practiced by the students themselves.

In the second semester of Movement therapy and methodology subject the students prepare individually by practising the suggested movement material and instructing the exercises with each other.

In the second semester within the frame of Remedial gymnastics subject the students can attend demonstration lessons, and can take part actively in the demonstration lessons themselves.

In the instruction of practice of Remedial gymnastics the students apply their theoretical knowledge (individual preparation and instruction of the lesson in a special group of children).

#### Research goals

The main goal of research was to study the balance between the theoretics and practice in Remedial gymnastics Major in specialized post-graduate training as well as in the BA courses of nursery and lower primary teachers specialized in children's physical education and in remedial gymnastics.

#### Hypothesis

1. It is assumed that the theoretical and practical training in our remedial gymnastics courses is in balance.

2. It is assumed that in the active teachers are able to plan and instruct the locomotor development and correction if they have the special competences.

### Methods

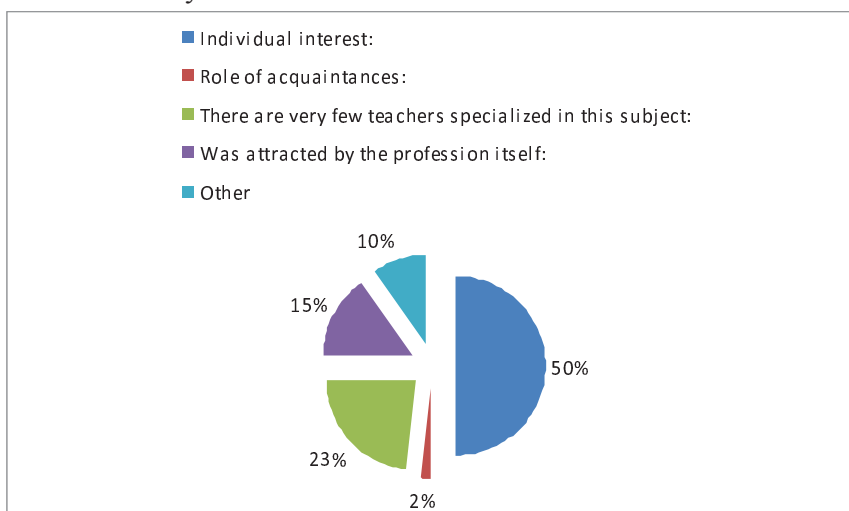
The studies involved the South Great Plain region of Hungary. From among teachers specialized in remedial gymnastics 150 teachers were chosen random (75 nursery teachers and 75 lower primary teachers). First a preliminary questionnaire was tested by a smaller group of teachers to get information about the correct formulation of the questions. Then the final questionnaire was prepared. The aim of the questionnaire survey was to get relevant information applying the most proper questions to elicit whether the theoretical or the practical side of remedial gymnastics prevails.

### Results

Here are the results of the questionnaire research. We have to agree with the statement that the curricular modernization of a subject will reach its improving and developing intention only if both the teacher and the students of the given subject have a positive attitude to the changes. Now only the questions closely connected to the topic will be discussed in details.

#### *Why did you choose the training in remedial gymnastics?*

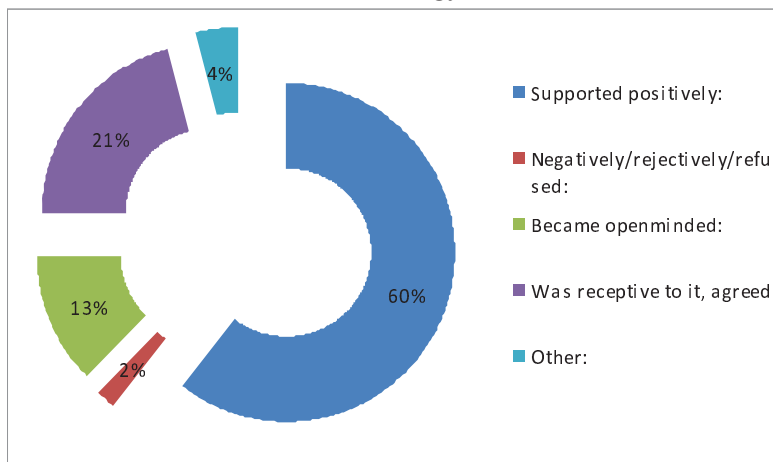
50% of respondents chose it based on his/her individual interest, 23% of respondents decided to study the subject because there have been very few teachers specialized in this topic, 15% was attracted by the profession itself and for 2% the training was advised by their friends.



The next question was how *the remedial gymnastics approach of teachers influenced their environment*.

60% was influenced positively, 21% agreed with the training, 13% became open-minded, 4% mentioned other factors e.g. the possibility of a better job, or the intention

of initiating the remedial gymnastics in the nursery school, while 2% mentioned that their environment refused the idea of remedial gymnastics.

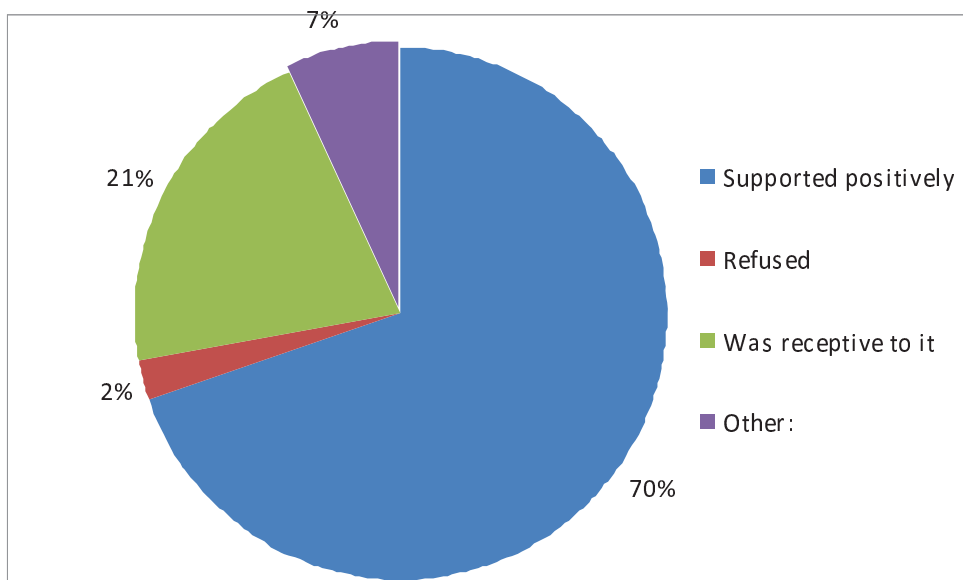


It would be worth studying why some members of the examined teachers' direct environment refused it.

The third question was *what results had been experienced in spreading of idea of remedial gymnastics*.

The idea of remedial gymnastics for us means that it is easier to correct the problems if they are recognized earlier and it is more difficult if the problems are recognized later.

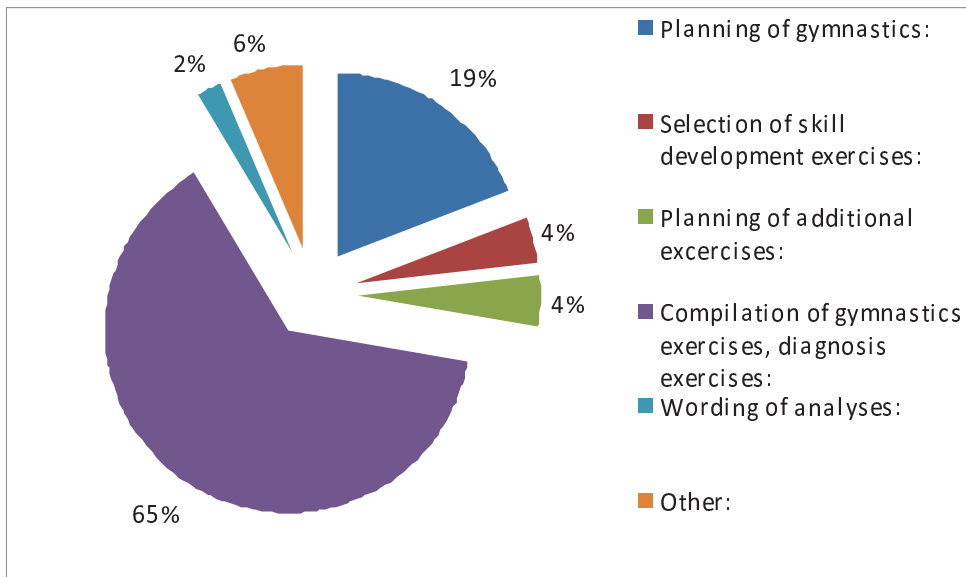
70% supported it positively, 21% became receptive, 7% agreed with it while 2% refused the idea.





The following question asked *if the theoretical or the practical training is prevailing in the education of remedial gymnastics.*

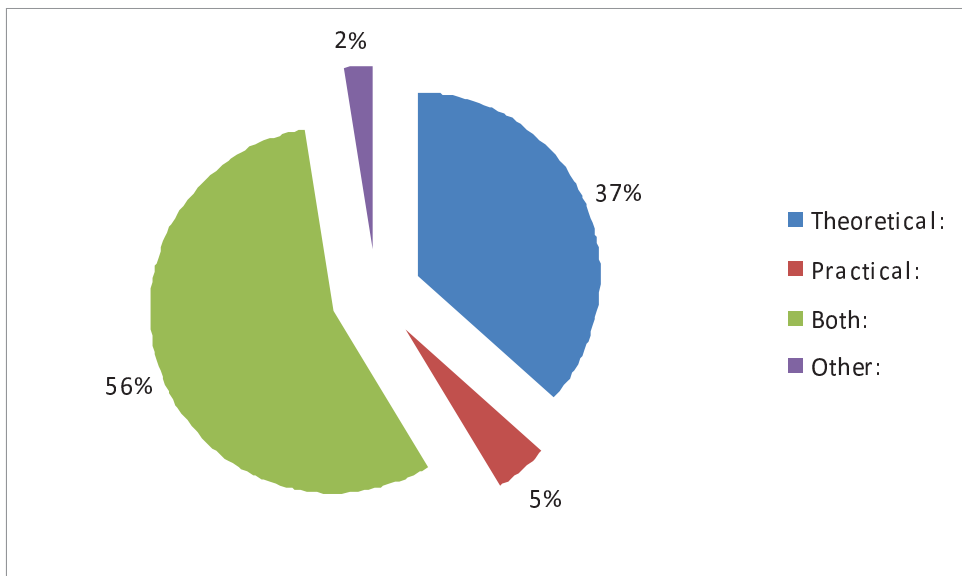
56% answered that the theoretical and practical training is in balance, 37% responded that the theoretical training is prevailing. Only 5% responded that the practical training is prevailing, and 2% marked 'other', and they expected more practical training.



It is clear from the responses that there are further tasks in the improvement of balance of theoretical and practical training of remedial gymnastics. It has also turned out that the practice of the Major subject actually serves as a connecting link between the theoretics and the practice. Hopefully this link is strong enough to serve as a stable base to the connection between the nursery and the lower primary teachers' practice, as it has to bear heavier and heavier loads.

The fifth question was the following: *Within the planning of remedial gymnastics which part of planning of the lessons was mostly supported?*

According to the teacher candidates' opinion 64% got help in compiling of corrective exercises, 19% got help in compilation of gymnastics exercises, 8% in the selection of skill development exercises, 7% in the planning of additional exercises, and finally 2% in the analyses.



Anyhow the results draw attention to the fact that the acquisition of theoretical knowledge provides a reasonable basis for the elaboration of corrective exercises.

It is worth comparing the answers given to the following question:

*Which tasks were the most difficult for the students in the course of individual learning?*

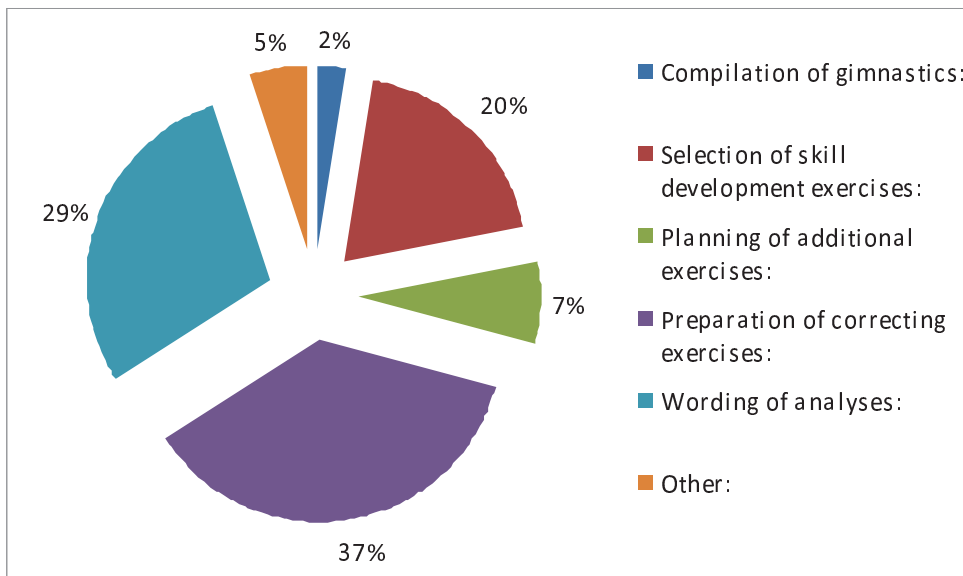
The most difficult task was the preparation of correcting exercises for 37% of students.

It means that the biggest help fore them was the assistance in the planning of corrective exercises.

In the course of individual preparation the second most difficult task was the formulation of analyses for 29%. It can be stated that the preparation of professionally adequate analyses of ‘what and why’ questions demand high level synthesis of theoretical knowledge and lots of practical experience. However the theoretical knowledge and practical experience are rarely combined in the students during the training time.

30% of students found the selection of skill development exercises difficult; however, it has been mentioned on the third place in the preparation.

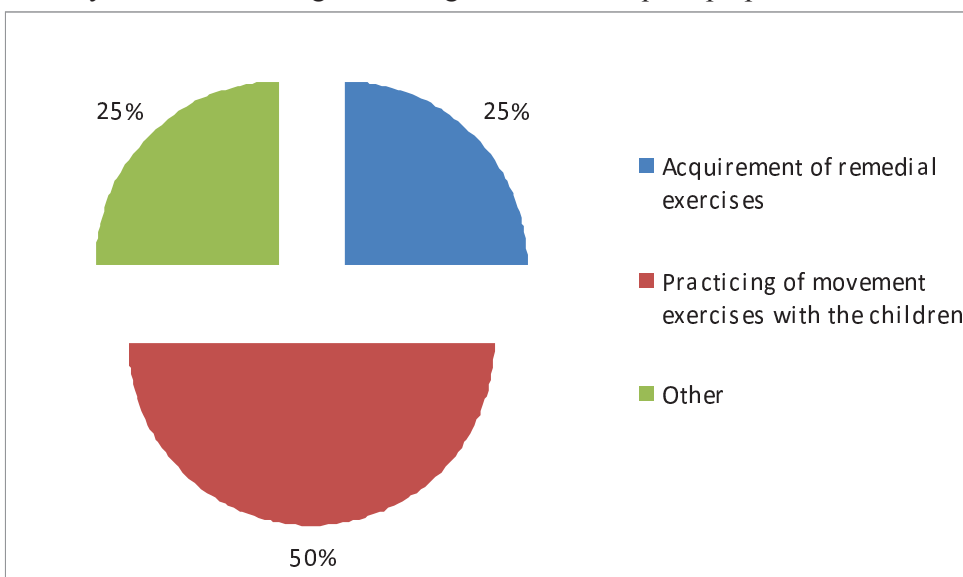
The planning of additional exercises was found easier by 7%. Compared to the previous questions this is the biggest difference. It can be explained by the fact that the students get such a help in the course of training, which supplement the previously mentioned deficiencies.



The abovementioned questions concerned mostly the realization of preparation tasks. The following ones will concern the instruction of PE lessons.

*Which tasks proved to be the most difficult in the course of instruction of lessons?*

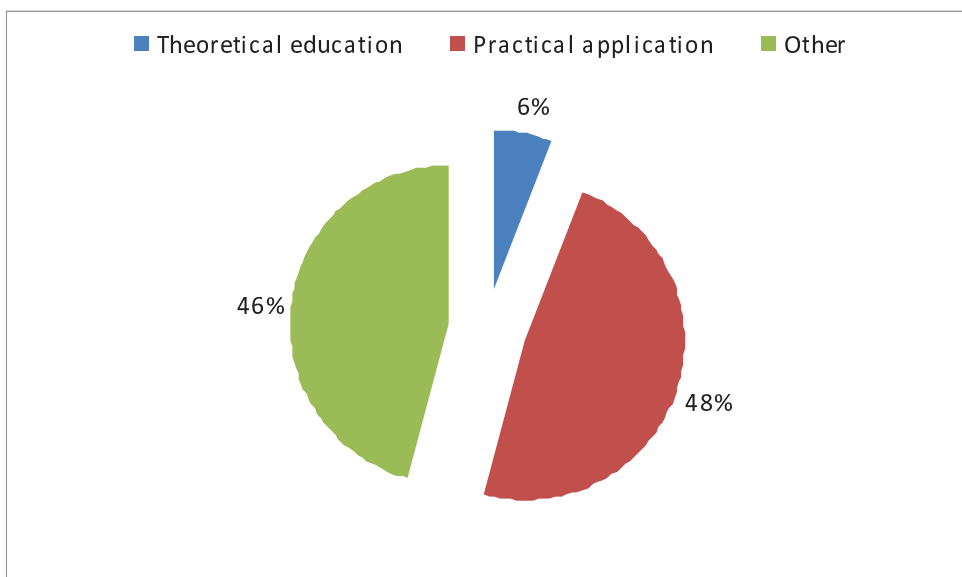
For 50% the practicing of movement exercises with the children was the most difficult. For 25% of students the instruction of none of the exercises involved difficulties. According to the answers the instruction of the lessons can be carried out without any difficulties with good management and adequate preparedness.



As it is demonstrated more practical experience is needed for the students to be able to realize the remedial gymnastics exercises adequately on the lessons. However, the students' responses, which reported on no difficulties in the course of instruction of the lessons, might be encouraging.

The aim of the following question was to identify the insufficiencies of training.

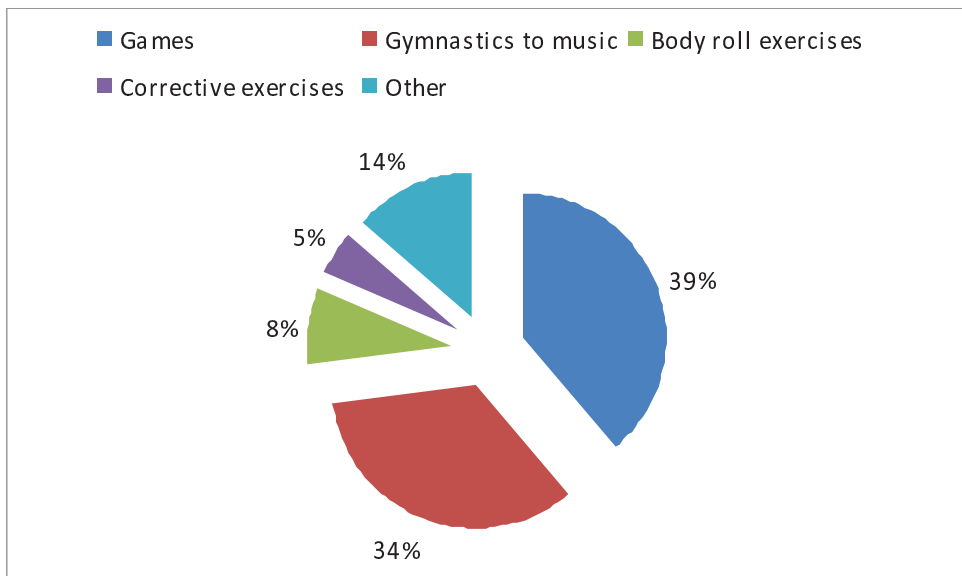
48% of respondents said that there had been insufficiencies in the practical training while, according to the opinion of 46% of respondents, the too short length of training time had been the biggest problem. They suggested higher number of demonstration lessons instructed by well-prepared experts.



Several respondents suggested the prolongation of the training time.

*What exercises would you apply to provide pleasure for the children during the lessons of remedial gymnastic?*

For this question 39% of respondents preferred games, 34% preferred gymnastics to music, 14% posture improving games, 8% body roll exercises and 5% corrective exercises.

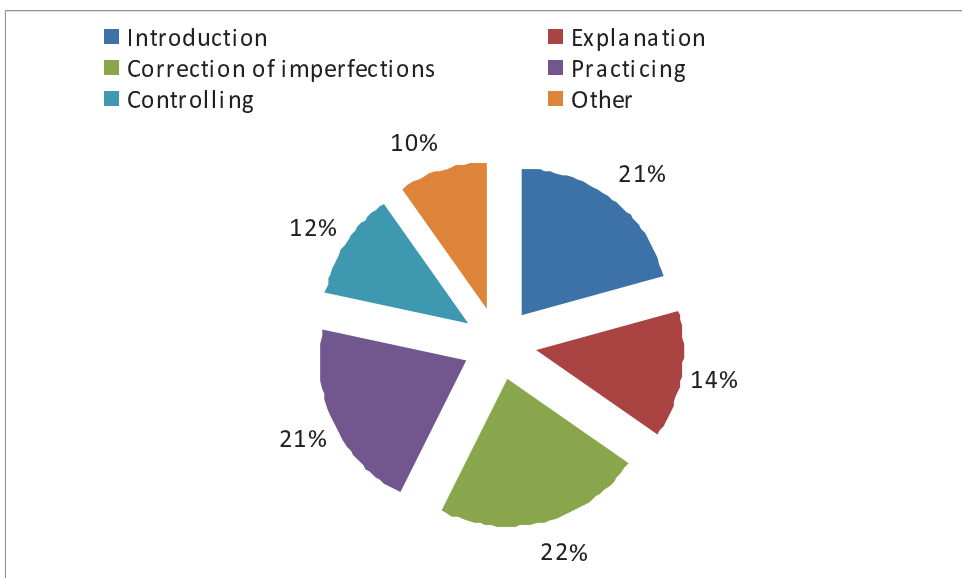


It is interesting to point out that only 39% preferred the games possibly because of their age.

The last question was the following: *What methods would you apply for practicing the corrective exercises?*

In the diagram it is visible that the different methods are applied to a similar extent (similar percentage) and are in close connection to each other.

The respondents were asked to comment the exercises of remedial gymnastics. They suggested to prepare hand-outs on the theoretical material as it would help them concentrate on the exercises.



Further on they suggested

- occasional meetings
- professional consultation
- lectures of experts
- practical demonstrations
- starting of several specialized post-graduate courses

The method of supervision was used only by a few respondents. However, there had been much more suggestions besides the ones discussed now.

### **Summary**

The teachers participating in the survey were all nursery and lower primary teachers specialized in the subject. It has been proven that the nursery teachers having the necessary competences are able to realize the development of locomotive organs and to instruct the corrective exercises. Referring to the studies of balance between the theoretical and practical training of remedial gymnastics it can be concluded that in the education of remedial training both the theoretical and the practical training is essential and neither of them can be successful without each other.

It can also be concluded that the respondents would need more practical training.

Referring to the first hypothesis it can be mentioned that the strengthening of practical training of our faculty should be continued.

Hopefully this study helped the raising of awareness of the nursery and lower primary teachers. It was also revealed that the teachers apply several different methods in the correction of movement.

Valuable information was collected from the nursery and lower primary teachers for our education of remedial gymnastics. We are convinced that our graduated BA teachers got adequate knowledge to continue their work successfully.

This type of studies is extremely important, because wide range information is collected about the students as well as our education of remedial gymnastics.

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