

# VIDEO INTERACTION GUIDANCE (VIG) TEACHING EXERCISES FOR STUDENTS OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

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## **Abstract**

At the ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Education in Budapest, students with a bachelor's degree in special education and speech therapy have the opportunity to supplement and reinforce their teaching practice with Video Interaction Guidance (hereafter, VIG).

I will show, supplemented by pictures, how VIG was adapted as a method in the faculty's speech therapist training, including the initial difficulties and the positive results it has had from the perspective of the teachers, the video trainer, and the students.

As a result of the successful student exercises, VIG was also included in the compulsory course „Professional Supervision in Speech Therapy” within the master's degree program in Speech Therapy, offering our students the opportunity to try out their case presentations and supervision requests week after week, supplementing their picture-by-picture interaction analysis with the VIG method.

**Keywords:** teacher education, Video Interaction Guidance, speech and language therapy, supervision

## **Introduction**

In this paper, you can gain insight into the process of reinforcing the VIG method in the speech and language therapy practice of a student of speech and language therapy. Through our joint activities, I will demonstrate the wide range of practical applications and results of VIG.

Starting in the academic year of 2009/2010, students at the ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Education in Budapest have had the opportunity to supplement and reinforce their teaching practice with the VIG method.

## Introducing the VIG method

Before starting to work with the speech and language therapy students, I introduced the VIG, explained its history in Hungary, and answered the most frequently asked questions.

The first Hungarian guiders were introduced to the program in 1997-1998, trained with the involvement of Dutch, Czech, and Scottish experts, with significant Dutch state support. In 2023, the Videotraining Association – Hungary celebrated its 25th anniversary with a dual purpose. On the one hand, it was to provide a guide-supervision service to those who turn to it; and on the other hand, to train and support those interested in the method, to promote the VIG at home and abroad, and to maintain contact with fellow practitioners abroad. The guiders and the supervisors/trainers of the association have been working with VIG from the very beginning, based on international principles and a national best practice. The method is warmly recommended as a service to all helping professionals who want to receive sustainable and easily accessible help (Medveczky & Pattermann, 2006).

*„Human social systems are distinguished from other living systems by the form and degree of their communicative capacity. Communication and man are inseparable. According to P. Watzlawick, an eminent researcher of human communication, man cannot help but communicate. Reality – secondary – is created through communication. Disturbances in communication influence the whole system concerned (quoted by Hézszer, 1996. 18.)”*

The VIG method does not aim to solve problems immediately, but to focus on a step-by-step approach. If the clients require it is possible to continue the VIG process when a professional enters into a new contract. A higher education degree in the humanities is required to enroll in the Videotraining Association – Hungary’s VIG program, which teaches a professional to formulate the client’s request for help, instead of „psychologising” it, which becomes the so-called „Work Points” – the focus of the work between the client and the guider. It is quite natural that, in front of the video camera, the client may not behave exactly the same way as usual, because the focus is not on „catching them in the act” – analysing their mistakes – but on reinforcing the expected behaviour and communication. There is also evidence that the initial fear dissipates after the first feedback meeting. Video recordings show many times what we remember and present the reality, unlike a verbal description. Given its NGO status, the Videotraining Association – Hungary is able to offer its services free of charge through successful applications (Medveczky & Pattermann, 2006). *„[...] the guider’s most important task is to build trust, with successful communication at*

*the center. It is considered a basic principle that all children initiate contact, but failure to do so will result in the child not trying again. It is also important that the client's request for help expresses a desire for change [...] The method can only be successful if it is undertaken voluntarily and if the guider has the necessary professional skills (Bányai, 2002. 53.)” „What is it that every VIG client is improving at? The VIG method, in addition to being effective in helping to solve a specific problem situation, is by its very nature self-confidence-boosting and anxiety-reducing. Self-knowledge, self-efficacy, finding inner resources, and a sense of competence and the intrinsic self-love that goes with that all are enhanced by the method (Szarka, 2021. 61.)” „The effectiveness of the method is demonstrated by the fact that, in the majority of cases, there is no need for further intervention (Balogh, 1999. 9.)”*

VIG is a short, intensive, helping-developing method an intervention where the clients are guided to reflect on video clips of their own successful interactions. VIG works by actively engaging clients in a process of change towards better relationships with others who are important to them. These recordings and discussions are prepared and conducted by trained guiders (Kennedy, Landor & Todd 2011). Comprehensive research on the success of VIG in our country has not yet been done. Each case is different, and success means different things to each client and each guider. Four years ago, in their own research, all the guiders interviewed answered that the process is successful when parents recognize their strengths, which they dare to rely on consciously, thereby consolidating their competences; and through practice, they operate new patterns consciously, which show a clear change in the client-child interaction in the recordings of the next sessions (Veres-Kovács, 2020).

## **The teacher-student interaction**

Our speech-language pathology students spend their first teaching practice in the university's practicing kindergarten or school for children with speech and language impairments, so our highly qualified, long-time practitioners and student-centered practitioner colleagues introduce them to the practical activities of speech and language pathology work – teaching our students how to prepare their lesson plans, while preparing them for their week-to-week teaching practice.

Children with speech impairment have a verbal channel disability, due to an impairment in speech comprehension and/or speech production. Often, at first sight, it seems that their intellectual abilities are impaired, but this is not always the case, and it is very difficult to understand their speech. For these reasons,

it is essential for speech and language therapy students to be aware of their own non-verbal communication, to be authentic in their verbal and non-verbal communication, to be able to recognise and interpret the non-verbal signals of their students, and to be a model for their students to follow. „*The quality of school relationships has a significant impact on students' achievement and success at school, the way students feel at school, and the attitudes and beliefs they develop towards learning. The quality of teacher-student interactions also determines whether teachers achieve the goals they set at the beginning of the teaching-learning process* (Birta-Székely, 2008, 8.).”

Based on her own empirical research, the author found that teachers absolutely dominate in communication with their students, as 99% of the initiatives come from them. Therefore it is not a good thing, as it can be an obstacle to an effective and functional working relationship between them. As many of us have experienced as children, in this research, verbal communication predominated over non-verbal, with few negative responses from students, which can be interpreted both positively and negatively – thus creating an apparently positive teacher-student relationship, but also a superficial and less effective one (Birta-Székely, 2008).

### **Using the VIG in the practice of special needs education students**

Through my case study, I will provide insights into the versatile use of VIG in the field of student practice in teacher education. „*It is true of most psychological counselling or therapy situations that the specific problem which the client presents is really only on the surface, almost the tip of the iceberg. When we start working, it very soon becomes clear that the root of the problem lies elsewhere, and sometimes we have to start working in a completely different area. In psychological help, we go as deep as our own professional competence allows or as far as the client requires. The same is true of the VIG method. The Work Point (the specific goal, the area in which the client wants to develop), formulated by the client at the first meeting, can be reworded and deepened several times during the course of the joint work* (Gombás, 2018. 252-253.).”

At the core of VIG, the guider seeks feedback along the working point through interactions that have been well managed, in which the client can truly become a positive model of themselves. The negative signs can be reported back in contexts that empower the client – e.g., look where they started and where they have ended up (Gombás, 2018).

The following description is based on five recordings and five feedback sessions, covering our intense twice-weekly sessions over a two-month period.

To respect the anonymity of the participants, I have deliberately changed the names and omitted some details.

Barbara is a student of speech and language therapy. At the beginning of her fifth semester, she bolstered her first speech and language therapy practice with the VIG method. In my case study, I will highlight the areas we worked on together where Barbara was most satisfied with her own progress.

An initial difficulty was that the students were informed that they would have two tutors. I was very happy to address this question, since it is not strictly true. We work at different levels, helping students with my trainer colleague:

- The trainer prepares and assists students with the content of the practical lesson.
- The guider works with the student and the children's communication, their communication and relationship levels, thus helping the student.
- Before the start of the student practice the guider will hold a year-level briefing on the VIG placement, to which he or she will invite his or her colleagues and the students. At this meeting, they discuss the framework, the opportunities, and their cooperation. Weekly meetings take place between the practitioner and the guider. They coordinate with each other when the guider will handle the practitioner's teaching of his or her speech and language therapy student.
- The first five (out of 14) exercises are done with VIG in an intensive format.
- In week 5, there is one recording each of the type of lesson chosen by the student, followed by a feedback session in the same week.

From my own student days, I remember clearly when children gave different answers and reacted differently than I had expected or what I had prepared for. I immediately thought that my listening skills were lacking. One of my motivations for the video training of the speech and language therapy students was that they should not have experienced what I had experienced as a student, and VIG proved to be a good tool for this. *„VIG is an intervention where the clients are guided to reflect on video clips of their own successful interactions. The person who engages with the client and leads the process is called the Video Interaction Guider (hereafter, ‚guider‘). VIG works by actively engaging clients in a process of change towards better relationships with others who are important to them. Guiders are themselves guided by the values and beliefs of respect and empowerment. These include a hope that people in troubled situations do want to change, a respect for what they are managing to achieve in their cur-*

rent difficulties, and conviction that the power for change resides within clients and their situations (Kennedy, Landor & Todd 2011, 21).”

VIG is „ ... used as a reattribution process to positively transform automatic cognitions” (Schepers, König 2002, 100.). Possible reactions of the clients (in this case, the student teachers):

- their performance improves (Figure 1),
- they become more persistent, etc.

Schepers & König 2002 combined the idea of reattribution with theoretical models such as:

- the attribution theory,
- Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy, and
- Seligman’s “learned inertia model” (Figure 2).

This model is about how the VIG model improves the client’s efficiency.

At the beginning of the process, it highlights client reactions that are suspected to be harmful. He attributes the failures to the client’s lack of skills. For example, the student prepares for a practical trial with several extra tasks, but does not choose the right task for the situation; hence, the children do not produce the expected behaviour.

In the next section, it recommends that the client applies „more favourable attributes”. For example, the failure above is not explained by the listener as a lack of his or her own abilities (internal attribution), but as a result of inappropriate selection (external attribution). Long-term changes are related to the effectiveness of the responses. For instance, „I can solve the problem.”

The principle of reattribution in VIG focuses on 3 dimensions:

- causal dimension,
- the dimension of stability over time (e.g., competence), and
- the controllability dimension (e.g., the effort dimension).

The aim and task of the guider is to elucidate for the client:

- learned helplessness,
- a lack of motivation to perform, or
- performance deficits.

The previous items are addressed by changing attributes of efficiency, performance, and pleasure and motivation in order to have a positive influence on the educational skills of the children (Schepers & König 2002).

## **Reattribution and VIG**

Our perception is influenced by the functioning of our shape-background discrimination; wherein shape = focus, and background = context. Therefore, it is very important what we consider as shape and what we consider as background in a perceptual process. For example, to stay with the former specific student teaching:

- shape = focus on the student and his or her behaviour, the fact that he or she struggled for a long time, chose between tasks, and became disheartened.
- Other fellow students and the trainer judge the responding student (e.g., uncertain, made the children wait).
- While the student who is teaching, “What should I do?!”

The shape (focus) and context (background) of our perceptual perspectives is in constant state of dynamic change. The participant’s point of view differs from that of the observers. (The perceptual perspectives are organised in Figure 1)

In the process of VIG, clients are the actors who focus on their actions within the interaction situation. Their personality is the context in which they perceive the situation. Thus, the client’s internal motivation is to prefer external attributions in their interaction with the child (Schepers & König, 2002).

Returning to our example above, the student teacher perceives social pressure, because his or her supervisor and fellow students monitor the situation and perceive him or her as an inadequate speech therapist teaching children (external attribution).

The specific effect of VIG is that, during the feedback sessions with the guider, the clients become spectators. They focus on the actors, while the interaction situation preserved in the recording provides the context. This is when internal attributions take place. During feedback consultations, clients have the opportunity to see themselves in action, since they have changed from actor to spectator. This is of great importance in the VIG process, as changes in the figure-background constellation can also result in changes in attribution. Strom’s research in 1976 confirmed the above (cited in Schepers, König 2002). Attribution changes when the client is given the task of viewing his own behaviour as an observer in the feedback session, because then the internal attribution is transformed into an external attribution, as shown in Figure 3 on the next page.

Role reversal also raises the level of awareness of the actors involved:

- they better recognise their own behavioural motives and patterns;
- they become more aware of their expectations; and



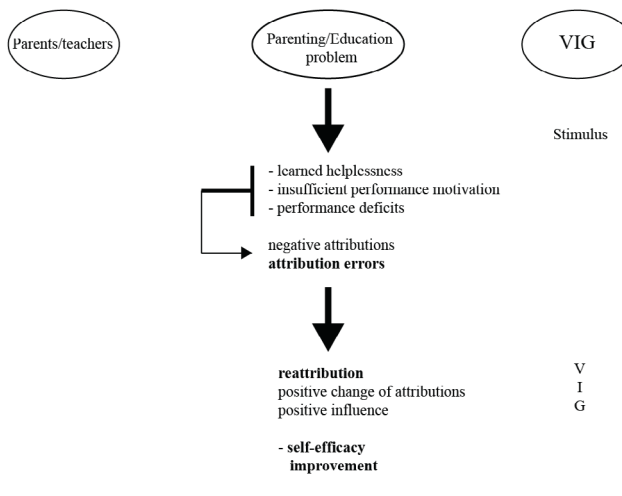
- they get closer to their own feelings and thoughts.

The focus changes:

- The spontaneous focus of the actors on the educational situation and the child is broken during the action.
- The actor becomes an observer.
- In perception, the figure becomes the personality on which the focus is directed. The client's behaviour, skills, and efforts become the focus of attention – i.e., they perceive themselves as the actor.
- Clients can avoid attribution to the environment or the child's deficits.
- When they give feedback, they feel more and more personally responsible for their own behaviour, and recognising and accepting individual responsibility is a pathway to change.

VIG helps to visualise perception processes and feedback situations, helping clients practice and develop their skills (Schepers & König, 2002).

**How VIG improves client efficiency, combined with the reattribution model**

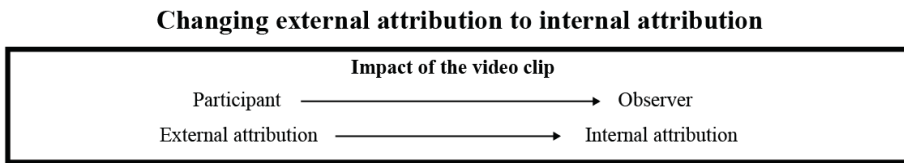


**Viewpoint differences between participant and observer**

	Focus (shape)	Context (background)
Participant	Interaction situation	Own personality
Observer	Participant	Interaction situation

**Figure 1.** Viewpoint differences between participant and observer  
Based on Schepers & König 2002, 101.





**Figure 2.** Changing external attribution to internal attribution  
Based on Schepers & König 2002, 102.

### Case study

I present it below Barbara's VIG System of 15 years ago from the 2009/2010 school year. During her 1st student placement (as a 5th semester student), Barbara signed up for a student placement with VIG, during which she and her guider completed a student placement using the VIG methodology during the first 5 weeks of the 15-week placement. Barbara met with the guider twice a week, once when the guider videotaped the student's practice, and again when the guider was prepared and they had their feedback session using the video recordings according to the VIG methodology. Barbara was coached week by week by her own tutor for her next practice teaching, after they had discussed her weekly practice teaching, the guider used the video frames to analyse the relationship interactions through the VIG method of relationship building, so that Barbara could complement her normal student practice with the relationship building VIG. Barbara's work points became the ones she asked her guide for help with.

VIG Work points were:

1. Levels – They are preschoolers with speech disabilities, and I am an adult.
2. Make my own communication clear.
3. How do I know I'm being watched?



**Figure 3.** First recording: Barbara is bending down to the children, makes eye contact with them, and tries to pay attention to everyone.



**Figure 4.** First recording: Barbara is sitting on a small chair facing the children, maintaining eye contact and paying attention to everyone.



**Figure 5.** First feedback consultation.

- Tímea Somogyi, guider: *“Barbara, what do we see in this opening picture?”* (See Figure 3.)
- Barbara: *“Oh, that I’m dealing with Balázs. And while I’m doing that, I’m watching two other boys who have started something over there. I don’t know. They were talking to each other, they were doing something. So I try to divide my attention between the children. I don’t know what happened in the end.”* (Barbara seems to be thinking.)
- Guider: *“Let’s have a look. I’ll rewind the film a bit, and we’ll watch a bit more.”*
- Barbara: *“Good, I’m looking forward to it.”*  
(The guider rewinds the film a little, lets her watch it a little longer, and then pauses the film just short of stopping it. Barbara notices it herself and expresses in the feedback session the details she has observed and found negative.)
- Barbara: *“I know why I didn’t realize that they’re kindergarteners and they’re like 50 centimeters tall, and their eyes are like 50 centimeters from the ground, and I’m 155 centimeters. Now, bridging this height difference is quite a problem, so I should have sat down on that tiny chair and then the contact between us would have been much better. I think I was rocking the chair (it shows), so I was going to sit on it, but then I changed my mind, I didn’t know if this tiny chair could hold me.”*
- Guider: *“Did you or did you not sit down, Barbara? Let’s have a look. I’m going to rewind the film a little bit, and then please, see for yourself.”*
- Barbara: *“I tried! Yes, yes, I sat down! (Figure 4.) But I don’t like those tiny*

*chairs, so maybe that bigger ball that was there would have been good. I'll have to find another way, because they can't be planted higher...*"

(Barbara seems to be thinking.)

- Guider: *"Next week you can think about it and see how you feel comfortable."*

...

- Guider: *"Barbara, let's have a look at the second short excerpt selected. Again, please focus only on yourself, and keep in mind the second point of your work. Is your own communication clear? What do we see?"*

(Barbara is thinking. Guider waits patiently for a response.)

- Guider: *"Barbara, how is your communication?"* (Figure 5.)

- Barbara: *"Oh, I don't know."*

- Guider: *"Barbara, how do you hear yourself?"*

- Barbara: *"Understandable."*

- Guider: *"And what do the children do when you speak?"*

- Barbara: *"They respond. It's quite difficult to understand them."*

- Guider: *"I'm advancing the film towards the end of the hour. Watch yourself, please, and watch the children."*

- Barbara: *"You have my word."*

- Guider: *"I wonder why?"* (Barbara seems to be thinking, but doesn't answer.) *"What are you doing very well?"* (You can see that she is still thinking, but still not answering.) *"Look at yourself, Barbara! What is your strength that you do very well?"*

- Barbara: *"How I play with my voice?"* (Figure 6.)

- Guider: *"Yes, exactly! Your strength is that you use the suprasegmental elements of your verbal communication adequately. Let's look at your third point of work – that is, are the children listening to you in this scene?"*

- Barbara: *"Yes, they listen because they do what I ask them to do. They are very responsive."*

- Guider: *"Let's see, Barbara, what other strengths do you have in this other part of the film that you can rely on to get the children to listen to you?"*

- Barbara: *"It's important for me to see them all. (Figure 7.) I'm patient with them, helpful. I smile a lot, because I have in my mind that I want them to feel comfortable with me and to learn and grow without being noticed, because they are only toddlers. And I thought, if I were them, what would I need from a speech therapist?"*



Tulogdi (2006) summarises his practical experience in a study. Mutual communication (that is, recognising and understanding each other's functioning) can positively and visibly strengthen both professional and parental competence. „*VIG can help the client understand the child's signals and facilitate communication (Tulogdi, 2006. 25.)*.”



**Figure 6.** Fourth recording: Barbara can always pay attention to the levels and the children's needs. Even while standing, her communication is complete.



**Figure 7.** Fifth recording: Even while sitting, Barbara's work points have already been implemented (levels, her own communication, and constant awareness of when the children are paying attention to her).

Barbara's recollection

*What was it like for you being part in a VIG process 15 years ago?*

*„I was very happy to be part of the VIG event with my teacher 15 years ago. I found it novel and thought it would help me in my future practice. ... The first*

*time we talked about it, we had a general briefing where we all asked our questions and got reassuring answers about how things would happen. We planned the steps ahead of time, when and how we would meet. We all had questions that were answered reassuringly by the teacher there, so we started to complement and reinforce our student practice with VIG. For me, this was a completely new area. I saw myself as a newcomer to this adventure and wanted to learn how I could deal with children as a speech therapist.*

*“I think it was a very good and very innovative method at that time. Thank you very much! I am very grateful that we had the opportunity to record my lessons audiovisually and then discuss them with the VIG methodology later that week. I received double preparation for my training, because my trainer prepared me for the content part. We prepared the lessons according to her expectations, and we implemented them. Then, I also received extra preparation for the same lessons with my teacher on a separate, different line with the VIG methodology, so my toolbox was expanded. And I was able to gain experience, because the video recordings, the way she was recording, didn't lie, and I could see very clearly what was happening in my lessons. What good things I did and what mistakes I made. I think it helped me develop a realistic self-image of how I work, how I can make an impact with children. You can't confront anybody better than that, so this VIG showed me in a completely natural way what I did in a given situation and what impact it had on the children.*

*“We must have also managed to have a very good relationship, since I didn't have to be afraid when watching the film, because we analysed and looked at the situations in which I was good. On the other hand, I wanted to improve on certain things, so we also watched film clips of my lessons to see what I was already doing well and to reflect on how I could make it more professional by answering the teacher's well-asked questions. There were, of course, elements that were new to me, because this was a speech and language kindergarten group, which I was encountering for the first time. I remember having difficulty understanding their answers at first, and what I will never forget was how strange I felt, and I was confused the first time, whether or not I should dare to sit on such a small chair, because the children were sitting behind tiny tables on tiny chairs – something that the teacher and I worked on together. We talked it through. The teacher's questions helped me to get through it, because she didn't tell me what to do, she let me think about how I would be comfortable [...] so I learned to listen to myself, to recognise my own feelings and to own up to them. I'm very happy that working with the VIG method helped me develop my own self-awareness and that I was already more courageous in communicating and seeing myself as operating from the outside. It helped me to become more and*

*more conscious, more and more aware of how I operate. I think it was quite natural that I had fear; because I was facing the unknown. I remember that, over the weeks, it slowly blossomed into a deep professional relationship. The teacher's calm, patience, temperament, and understanding were very endearing to me. She always tried to show as little as possible of herself and of the making of the recording. When we discussed my recorded lessons, we discussed what I saw in the recordings, in the pictures, what impact I had on the children, what I did to achieve that – and also how I could change those things if either I or the children were uncomfortable, or if I could not achieve my goal with the lesson. How could I refine what I was doing, what I wanted to do? How could I come up with other tools? In addition, we also covered some of the professional methodological issues that had not come up in my praxis, or in preparing for my lesson the next week, when I could no longer ask my internship advisor. I remember at the time that this helped me enormously!*

*“Looking back on my own VIG practice with great fondness and gratitude, I can only recommend that anyone who has the opportunity to do so should start their professional practice with the VIG method, because you can learn a lot about yourself, about children, and about communicating with children. The discussions and analyses that you can have with your teacher will help you in your further development, will clarify what has happened, and will give you confirmation. It is important to emphasize that we had studied a lot of psychology at university, but with the VIG method, we were able to put it into practice. It has helped my own self-development. We analyzed communication from both the verbal and non-verbal side, and I was able to check my own functioning. It is also essential for us as speech and language therapists to start on the path of self-reflection and to practise it, to be able to reflect verbally on our own functioning. In this way, my student internship improved day by day and week by week.”*

### **Case study summary**

Week after week, the guider established and strengthened her level of relationship with Barbara – giving her a good model – showing Barbara's strengths of unconditional acceptance, faith in Barbara, and confidence that Barbara could solve the difficulties she asked for help with. The guider with her helpful questions activated Barbara to reflect on what she saw in the video footage, to observe her own feelings, and to remember what she was thinking and feeling when the video was taken. Therefore, with the help of the frames, they worked in a solution-oriented way, and through the positive reinforcements, Barbara's



competence as a speech therapist became stronger and more conscious. Her self-knowledge improved because she recognized and understood her own professional work as a human and speech therapist, the basic condition of which was that Barbara was open and motivated to change. She took responsibility for daring and being able to change what she wanted, e.g. sitting down on small chairs she was afraid of for the 1st time, recognizing and becoming aware of her verbal strengths, e.g. how to play with his timbre, emphasis and intonation. And she really believed all this when she looked back at herself and the children in a short clip of the video, and saw the smiles and cheerfulness on the children's faces or when and how children pay attention to her – these moments did not occur to her while teaching.

As a result of the successful student exercises, VIG has been included within the master's degree program in Speech Therapy as a new topic in the compulsory course entitled „Professional Supervision in Speech Therapy”, offering our students the opportunity to try their case presentations and supervision requests week by week, supplementing their picture-by-picture interaction analysis with the VIG method starting from the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year.

## **Summary**

I presented the VIG method as an intervention to reinforce the practice of speech and language therapy students through my own stories. The interest and openness of the speech and language therapy students who participated in the program gave me experience of the variety of ways in which the VIG method can be used in different speech and language therapy situations, such as communication. VIG can also be realistically applied in cases where the underlying symptoms are insecurity, routine, attachment/relationship, bonding, and problems associated with communication, conflict management, and acceptance.

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