

# Embodiment Case study

## Final thesis

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*The Name of the person observed is Zsiga. (Zsiga is nickname of Zsigmond. Zsigmond is Sigmund in hungarian.)*

Zsiga turned 7 at the end of January. He has fine, silky, golden brown hair. His skin is creole, fine and creamy. His eyes are bright green with almond shaped eyes. Body type is age appropriate, rather thin. There is still a noticeable "baby bump" on his stomach, but it is not large. Buttocks slightly protruding.

## Anamnesis

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The pregnancy was not planned. The pregnancy was without complications. He was born at 40 weeks at home. The baby was 52 cm long and weighed 3680 g. He was breastfed until the age of three and breast milk was his main source of nutrition until the age of one.

At the age of one and a half, his little brother was born, at which time the two children were breastfed simultaneously by their mother. His first teeth emerged at 5 to 6 months of age. Breastfeeding started from 8 to 9 months of age. According to the mother and my observations, Zsiga became a poor eater. He is only willing to eat a few foods that he finds very boring, and if he is not hungry, he will not eat them. Mum is vegan, he would insist on fruit and vegetables, but the child refuses to eat them. He does not force the child to eat this way, she will prepare whatever he is happy to eat. He eats slowly. If he is hungry, he will eat large quantities. Mother and grandmother say he does not eat properly at home.

His development is ideal (according to his mother's memory): he crawled at six months, stood up at 9 months and started walking at one year. He started to talk at the age of two, and was communicating in coherent sentences at three. A slight lisp is noticeable in his speech. *I observed that he is slow to form words, often pointing or shaking his head rather than speaking. He has difficulty speaking. His preferred answer to questions is "No! He often uses this as a joke.* No hearing problems.

Housebroken from 17 months of age. He had no other illnesses apart from the usual childhood illnesses. Chickenpox has also been avoided for the time being. *In comparison, he is often absent from school, though only for a day or two. He often says he is tired.* He had a broken elbow, the circumstances and time of which were not specified by her mother.



Mum sees Zsiga as right-handed. *However, my observations are that he usually starts exercises, stepping, jumping and balancing with his left foot and tends to reach for objects with his left hand. On one occasion he described himself as left-handed.*

The tooth change started at the age of 6. So far 3-4 teeth have fallen out.

The mother felt the need to consult a child psychologist when Zsiga was 5 years old. She wanted to clarify her own role and responsibilities as a parent. She wanted to get confirmation of her mothering skills, which she did. I didn't ask her much about the problems she had experienced, but on one occasion she mentioned that she herself had been going through a difficult mental state. She and Zsiga's father had separated shortly before. Sometimes the screentime took the place of dealing with the children. Before and after the divorce, the family lived in the city centre, with few ideal places for the children, and for a mother with psychological and existential problems, this was an easy solution, the serious drawbacks of which she has since seen. On the other hand, dad is a cameraman, and the side effects of the screen are more easily dealt with in the family. On one occasion, Zsiga reported that daddy needed a beer for the football match, so he took the boys (aged 5 and 6.5) to the pub and they watched the match there. Mum is keen that screen time is strictly regulated, timed and controlled, but last week Zsiga complained that, at his brother's insistence, mum let them watch a story in the evening, which made them go to bed 'very late' and he was terribly tired.

He started kindergarten at the age of 4. He had a difficult time being separated from his mother. According to his mother, Zsiga builds relationships with children and his environment easily. On the other hand, on the field trip, while the children in the class were running around and getting to know each other, Zsiga was metres behind the group, never letting go of his mother's hand. He refused to shake hands with the class teacher. It took him weeks to bond with the class. He is a sensitive and empathetic child, but sometimes in the heat of the game, he doesn't yet sense when he is hurting others. He is prone to aggressive movements, hitting, playing ninja, shouting. But basically, he has a non-abusive attitude.

At school, he often acts out in class, jumping into the middle of the rhythmic circle and shouting, making fun of activities. The calmness is typical when there is no one to do it with, but it is not permanent. He does most of his movements with his hands in his pockets. So he runs, jumps, paces. He likes to cover his head with his hood. He is clumsy in slow movements and lost in the advent spiral.

The depth of the tasks varies. If he finds them difficult, he refuses to do them at any cost. If he is with an adult and does it for him or is strongly guided, he is willing to work, but will not do it independently. What he feels like doing, he will do only until he encounters difficulty.

He dresses slowly. Daddy still dresses him and the class teacher says he is babysat at home, treated like a small child for his age.

He is very active: playground, bicycle, scooter, roller skates, climbing trees, playing in the sand, mud. He loves to dance and has a good sense of rhythm for his age. He is also interested in musical instruments.

The father's answers are not known. I have not been able to find out his habits when he was with his father. Dad has not replied to my letters, and mum said not to try, that she would tell dad everything, that she would mediate.

There is a huge scar around his mouth. His tongue keeps going round and round. It's gotten worse in the last 2-3 months. It only goes away when he's with mommy. It intensifies on Father's Days and after time with grandparents. I haven't found the root cause yet, but I suspect he is reacting to internal tension with this physical response. I will recommend psychologist intervention for the parents.

## Reflection test

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When I found out that we had to choose a subject for a fixed case study, I already knew that Zsiga was a potential candidate, but I still wanted to be sure and did a reflex test of the whole class. Zsiga was among the children with the most reflexes. Besides, I knew that he would not be able to do the exercises regularly at home and, as the family was in a difficult situation, the child would benefit most from the opportunity to develop at school. On the other hand, I feel that he needs the most personal attention and care when someone is just looking after him. In some situations, that in itself is healing.

I embedded the reflex test in a story and did some of it with the children, so that they could experience it as a game and not an exam.

Two little hens walked, then two bears. They met a stork and then the stork showed them where north, south, east and west were. The bears then started wrestling, and the big bear (me) joined in, making requests. For days, the children asked when we would play the game again.

### ***Zsiga results:***

**Chicken step:** confidently but not accurately stepped forward. -1  
backwards imprecise, concentrated, slow, hands in fists. -3.

**Frog-walk (teddy bear walk):** forwards confidently but not accurately. -1  
backwards imprecisely, concentrating, slowly, hands in fists. -3

**Standing on one foot:** steady on left foot, upset by other activity.

**Eye muscle test:** eyes moved separately up to midline, from then on with head. At the midline, he missed for a second, then jerked his whole head to the side. Sometimes the eye did not follow the direction of attention, but drifted to a point and compensated with peripheral vision.

**Head position:** in active case, the tongue made a circle around the mouth - 1-2  
Passive: head completely back - 4

There were several errors in the examination of the large reflexes. Perhaps the most typical was that the children were very quick to complete the tasks and I was inexperienced.

**ATNR:** (I suspect that I did not do this test properly) For this reflex, the score was 1-1.

**STNR:** When I asked him to look at me, he sat down like a cute puppy and smiled. -4  
He was able to look at his knees with a slight back bend. -2/3

**TLR:** Looking up, he wobbled slightly - 2  
Turning downwards, he began to contract. -2

**Moro reflex test** was negative. -0

All motor movements are very fast, it is difficult to catch him in the act, but there are some. Neither crawling nor climbing is archetypal.

**Galant** reflex is completely negative. -0

## Sensory tests

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### ***Touch and sense of self:***

Appearance closer to the hypersensitive child: good circulation, sweating, sweet smell, fine hair and skin. Sores around the mouth.

He clings to certain clothes because they are comfortable and refuses to wear others. Does not like shoes on the feet. Very picky, likes foods that are easy to chew. He does not like to brush his teeth. Often messy, does not like to comb his hair. Likes to be petted and cuddled, but only by people he trusts. Easily picks up and reflects the mood of the environment. He reacts intensely. When in a tantrum, he will shout and argue, then get offended and hide under the table.

In addition, he is a dreamer, does not notice when others are hurt, and is brave despite his anxieties. He finds it difficult to recognise and respect boundaries. He feels clumsy.

He tries to avoid challenges. Finds it difficult to get things started. Unwilling to draw or do needlework. If he does draw, he does it quickly and considers it ugly.

### ***Sense of life and sense of reflection:***

The parasympathetic nervous system and the sympathetic nervous system over-act, depending on the situation.

Appears constantly drowsy, may have dirty clothes. Avoids eye contact, hugging is initiated by him. He has a strong attachment to his mother. Sibling jealousy may be repressed, as the parents divorced shortly after birth, just as the first dachshund period was due to occur. High pain threshold. He is selective about who he talks to and often cries at too high a pitch during play. He has trouble sleeping, but so far no details have been revealed. I have already described his relationship with eating. He is shy, doesn't like new people, lacks confidence.

### ***Self-motion and speech sense:***

His muscles are nicely formed and tight. Mouth tight, shoulders raised, pelvic bones tilt forward but feet mostly forward. Legs rounded, joints flexible. Slight tremor when exerted.

Unable to sit still for long periods. Uneven energy distribution, too fast or too slow. Eye-hand coordination is poorly developed.

Pronunciation is not clear, responding to requests more difficult than peers. Speaks in too high a voice, often shouts. He lisps and sounds slightly nasal.

His school performance also showed signs of this, copying slowly from the blackboard, failing to put what he saw or heard in his notebook.

### ***Sense of balance and hearing:***

Moves too fast and prefers fast activities to slow ones. Likes to spin. At 6-7 years old, he lacks cross-functioning and does not yet have strong laterality. He has difficulty with spatial orientation and some language difficulties. He has difficulties copying from the blackboard. He has difficulties with counting and proportions. He can concentrate for short periods.

*In the coming weeks we will meet again with the parents, or rather mum, to talk about Zsiga. Based on the above test results, I will propose specific actions:*

*Tapping: after bathing, a gentle peat and lavender rub, then listening to a bedtime story wrapped in a soft blanket. It's worth getting some button-down, patent clothes and letting him button up each morning, alone.*

*Sense of life. This can be helped by activities that require energy, such as frequent hiking, walking, swimming. It's worth involving Zsiga in the preparation of food to get his juices flowing amid the delicious smells.*

*Self-movement: It is worthwhile to help fine motor skills by beading, paper-folding, felting, modelling.*

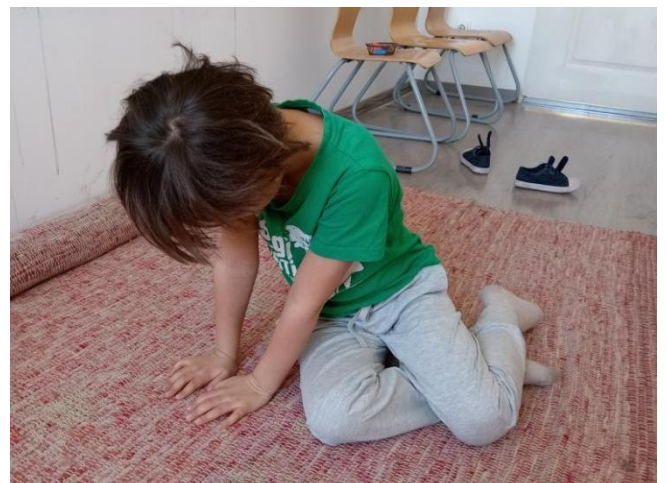
*Balance: the above advice can also affect the sense of balance.*

## **The practice line**

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At the moment we are doing half kneeling, followed by small mermaid, stretch, and back head flip, the easier crossover (since the other one is only after rubicon, and even for me, the adult, it is strong), the swing, and the belly head lift, and windmill exercises. He is very attentive to precise movements, but sometimes tends to work fast and "on the run".

I chose the back head flip and belly head lift first, due to STNR and balance instability, as





well as TLR. I wasn't wrong, because to this day, this is still one of the most difficult exercises for Zsiga.

In time we added the other two exercises, but the swing is also terribly difficult for him, so we'll stop here for a while.



My understanding was that since the exercises affect several reflexes, it's good to set up the sequence in steps, maybe deliberately skipping an exercise. With this in mind, and based on the process of getting upright, I would like to practice the back exercises with Zsiga first, and then the prone turn and head lift. These seem to appeal to his reflexes the most. For the moment, he can't do much more than that.

## The practice

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It was very hard work to establish the rhythm of the practice. The class teacher is an enthusiastic young woman who started her career, but due to her inexperience she could not take my work with Zsiga seriously enough. I first had to make her understand who she was serving and that it was in the child's best interest to keep things orderly and not to take him away from his peers during playtime.

The second difficulty was with the school. The lack of a suitable free room was a constant problem. We have now succeeded in setting up a suitable timetable and a permanent room.

At the beginning, it was difficult for Zsiga to get down on one knee and sit down, so I didn't push him for a week, we just did the windmill.

Then I did the half kneeling with him and "folded" him into the windmill. For a long time he pretended that he couldn't do the exercises, so I rotated and folded him, lifting and turning his body parts. Then, in January, he was encouraged enough to do everything himself. Since then he's been doing everything on his own, true, some things a little faster, some things not for as long,



but he gets to experience being able to do them on his own, which is hard and for which he gets praise.

During windmill time, I tell him about Jakob Streit's Puck in the Realm of Man, which he loves.

So far he has come to the exercises without resistance. Sometimes, it's as if he expects it. He probably likes the personal attention and the silence. That said, "I don't want to" has come up several times, but then he's gotten over it. It is also obvious that the current queue is difficult for him, that he is stalling when he gets to the hall. He looks around, drawing on the board. But, if I give him some space, he'll get over it and we can get on with the work.

Since we've been practicing, Zsiga has become brighter. He is direct with the children and is now the clown in the class. His relationship with the class teacher has improved a lot and I have become quite familiar with him. Sometimes he gives me a hug. He jokes with me and even dares to disagree. He copies the material from the blackboard even if it is difficult or takes longer. It's getting easier to get him to draw. I think it'll be a highlight when he finally starts on the fingernail, something we've been unable to get him to do for months.

## Finish

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Mum is very grateful and supportive. She doesn't quite understand how it is that Zsiga's previously degraded reflexes have been awakened, but the anamnesis tells the story well between the lines. Zsiga is cooperative, and as much as a child that age can show his gratitude, he is truly grateful.

We can certainly continue the work we have started until the end of the school year, and as I wrote above, I will recommend the help of a psychologist to ease the tension in Zsiga.