

## **SUMMARY**

### **Narrative in Epileptic Children and Adolescents**

Epilepsy is the most frequent neurological disorder in developmental age. When it manifests itself during developmental age, it is more heterogeneous regarding causes, symptoms or prognosis than in the case of occurrence of first symptoms in adults. Children and adolescents are at different stages of the process of development and education in the broad sense. In the course of natural process they acquire new skills and abilities, and improve the acquired ones that are regularly assessed in the process of education. In epilepsy, disorders may increase that are the symptoms of progressing biological changes, adverse psychosocial factors, and unintended effects of pharmacological treatment. The persistent pathogenic mechanisms may disturb a child's linguistic, mental, cognitive, emotional and motor development. Disorders may also manifest themselves in the ways of producing and understanding the narrative text.

Narrative is the way of interpreting the world with the use of language. It is the highest component of human linguistic, communicative and cultural competence. The mastering of narrative skills testifies to a person's complete mental abilities. The present research applied the method of description of narrative in accordance with the criteria of the Neural-network Narrative Theory [Woźniak T. 2005]. The NNT [Polish: NTN] method arose from the reflection on the influence of biological determinants and the functioning of the nervous system on the development of language skills. The study distinguished and analyzed units of the description of narrative such as narrative pictures, narrative sequences and narrative scenes. Successive pictures and sequences are mutually connected in a narrative scene, being combined by inference based on meanings suggested by the narrator and decoded by the receiver. The application of the NNT method was an optimum solution for the investigations whose objective was to describe the specificity of the development of narrative, biologically determined by epilepsy and its accompanying factors. The assessment of narrative skills of epileptic children and adolescents, compared with the results of the control groups, allows determining whether and what influence the epilepsy-related factors have on the dynamics and regularities of narrative development. The research procedure applied and the research tool developed for the implementation of the research goal enabled showing the way of presenting, organizing and understanding events as well as the implementation of the pattern and structure of narrative. It made it possible, first of all, to notice the impact of perception

categories on the perception of the world phenomena (in visual, auditory, and visual-auditory modalities).

Chapter One, *Epilepsy as A Medical, Psychological and Social Problem*, presents the state of research on epilepsy and its influence on the development of children. Chapter Two, *The Development of Linguistic and Communicative Competence*, offers a theoretical presentation of the development of linguistic and communicative competence, and also discusses specific determinants of language development in epileptic children. In Chapter Three, *Methodological Foundations of Research on Narrative in Epilepsy*, the starting point was to seek the research perspective. Objectives were formulated, research hypotheses were adopted, and the studied groups were discussed, and so were the research procedures. Chapter Four, *Results. The Narrative Ability of Children and Adolescents in the Studied Group as Compared with the Control Group*, attempted to establish the specificity of constructing narrative pictures, sequences and scenes in the studied and control groups, and to compare them. Chapter Five, *Discussion*, is a synthesis of conclusions resulting from the analyses presented in Chapter Four. It shows narrative disorders revealed in the studied groups, points out cognitive disorders, language disorders, relationships between epilepsy and intellectual disability. The final Chapter Six, *Conclusions*, seeks to synthetically present the research results. It discusses linguistic and cognitive disorders revealed in the group of epileptic children and adolescents.

The showing of deficits in individual language skills is an important index in programming the therapy of the epileptic child. A systemic therapy serves to compensate for emergent developmental deficits and stimulates the development of the epileptic child in the successive stages growing up.

**Keywords:** epilepsy, narrative, disorders of narrative skills in epilepsy

Magdalena Kotowska