

PROBLEM ABOUT THE DYSGRAPHIA IN FRAMES OF THE PARADIGMA “SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES”

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ABSTRACT

Disgraphia as a disturbance of the written form of speech is one of the common forms of speech pathology with students of the primary grades. It often leads to difficulties in gaining new knowledge and skills, and impedes the successful end of training process. For that reason it is of prime importance for the logopedic theory and practice to define and separate its symptoms, to separate it as independent nosology unit or being part of other disturbances.

Key words: dislexia, disgraphia, learning disorder, children

During the last years a serious attention is paid to students who are not able to cope with the mastery of learning content and its application practically. A tendency to increasing the number of students with learning and mastering of mass school programs disability in a world scale is observed. Because of diagnostic errors, a great part of such children are directed to specific schools. During the last years basic aim of scientific analyses was the clearing up the precise criteria for setting up of such disabilities resulting into the differentiation of category “children with specific learning disabilities”.

The disabilities of writing are among the most seen forms of speech pathology amidst the children of elementary school. The problem is still discutable in our time, from a terminological point of view, and from the point of view of symptoms, mechanisms and structure of the speech disability as well.

The difficulties in course of mastering and forming of a writing speech are obstacles for the successful competing of training and the school adaptation efficiency, they often lead to secondary remnants and deviations in the forming of child personality.

As one of the forms of writing disabilities, the specific disability of writing (dysgraphia) is connected with difficulties arising during the orthography learning and its complex rules mastering.

Psychological analysis of writing producing process allows its representing as a multilevel structure (2, 4). In the

same time, there are separated specific levels in it, as follows:

a motivation one, a linguistic one, and a motor realization of visual image of letters one. Each of them is realizing with the participation of mental operations, such as analysis, synthesis, abstraction, and summing up.

The writing is one of the greatest discoveries of mankind making possible the information fixing, storing and its transmission in the time and through the space. This makes it a specific communication form which functioning supposes a conventional system of graphic signs, and it plays a substantial role in the individual social adaptation and interaction with the environment.

Positions on the most of writing disabilities are not synonymous and often are contradictory. As J. Strother mentions, till now it is not found such, to satisfy all terminological formulations and definitions of the reading and writing disabilities (cit. There was a) (large cyst arising mainly from upper pole of spleen involving the hilum, displacing the stomach towards the right and colon inferiorly. Plenty of thick adhesions between cyst and paradesioneritoneum were present. The operative treatment included was the beginning of localization. Later, the German physician Kussmaul (1877) observed that in some cases of aphasia the disabilities were only the area of written speech forms. Similar were the data cited by the Scotch ophthalmologist J. Hinshelwood (1895), who introduced the term “word blindness”. According to him, the same is a consequence of defects in the visual memory and it is connected with reading difficulties of children with a normal intellect. During the next 1896 Morgan and Kerr reported similar cases of men with reading difficulties despite their normal intellect.

Often a common term is used for designation of writing and reading disorders - dyslexia - meaning all the peculiar difficulties of children during mastering of these two processes.

A great part of English and American experts think for the writing difficulties as of secondary and attending those of the reading difficulties (11, 12). Z. Matejcek (12) for instance uses the term “dysgraphia” as one of dyslexia

variants. In some researches the dyslexia and dysgraphia are thought not as independent speech disabilities, but as components of inborn aphasia (14). As a whole, the term “dysgraphia” in English and American literature practically is used for designation of every writing disabilities (15), much of which are not typically connected with the dysgraphia, and they are a result of unknowing of the orthographic rules.

In the same time, there are different attitudes to the definition of term “dyslexia”. A great part of authors include in it not only the reading disabilities, but and defects during the writing process, the orthographic errata, and in arithmetic skills as well.

A group of scientists from the World Federation of Neurology (1968) define the dyslexia as a reading, writing and orthography disability of children arising during the process of traditional school training, as a result of organic disorders of the basic cognition abilities (10).

The most used in the United States of America definition of dyslexia was presented in “The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94 - 42)” (1968). The same was precised by the scientist committee “Orton Dyslexia Society” (1944). In this case, the dyslexia is relating to the category of “specific training difficulties” arising under the influence of disturbances in the basic psychological processes. Here it is defined as a verbal disturbance of organic origin, for which there are specific difficulties in the process of decoding of singular words, in a lot of cases with informing of the phonological process added. Often the difficulties pointed are not adequate to the age, and to the level of other cognition and learning abilities. It is especially stressed that “the specific training difficulties” are not related to the primary disturbances of eyesight, hearing or motors, of the mental under developing, emotional disturbances, and unfavorable social, culture or economic conditions as well (10).

British Dyslexia Association enlarges the notion “dyslexia” and separates new symptoms in the structure of the disability discussed. The dyslexia here is defined as a neurological condition with organic origin. The symptoms could be manifested as an isolated or complex disability during the processes of reading, writing, of orthography, arithmetical skills and note writing. In the general picture of the condition said could be included and defects of the motor functions and learning habits as well.

During the last years the dysgraphia in a categorical way finds place in the composition of notion “specific learning disabilities”. The definition “specific” stressed over the fact, that these are cases not connected with an intellectual under development, or analyzers` violences, that the disabilities said have their own pathological mechanism. As a whole, all the existing definitions of term “specific learning disabilities” content several common positions:

- presence of a cerebral dysfunction signs;
- disharmony in the maturing of separate cognitive

functions;

- durable difficulties in the process of mastering of the school or social habits;
- dissociation between the potential cognitive abilities and the real school achievements.

V. Matanova (5, 6) represents the term “specific learning disabilities” as a term “umbrella” which includes a great number of symptoms and manifestations, and it does not reflect a single disability, but it is a general category of specific disabilities in studying and learning. The author remarks that there is not a question of training difficulties born by the presence of sensor harms, mental under developing, or negative influences of the environment and economical conditions of life. On this ground she rejects the notion “specific learning disabilities” as not precise and not correct as well.

The Russian logopaedical school points to the essential role of writing disabilities as more often seen events in writing systems on the ground of a phonetic principle. In the same time, the difficulties during the course of reading are regarded as an attending phenomenon.

Independently of the differences and terminological discussions pointed out, the dyslalia and dysgraphia continue to exist as separate noozological units of the syndrome complex defined as “specific training disabilities”.

The notion “specific derangements in the development of school skills” is discussed in 10th revision of International Classification of Diseases (ICD), under the rubric F-81. They are defined as derangements, in which the normal ways of skill obtaining are harmed during the early stages of development, and the disturbance is not a simple result of lack of possibilities for learning, or mental under developing, nor of an acquired brain trauma, or illness. To this rubric are referred and: F-81.1 - “specific reading disabilities”; F-81.2 - “specific orthographical disabilities”; F-81.3 - “mixed derangements of the school skills” (which covers the previous three rubrics) as well.

Independently of the thorough analysis of the ICD-10 criteria, it was seen that the clinical practice is far more rich regarding the fact that in case of children with “specific training needs” it is observed a great diversity of neuropathological symptoms and derangements in different areas of the psychological functioning.

In Bulgarian logopaedical theory and practice there are still used the different noozological units for definition of disability, and the summarizing them notions as “specific learning disabilities” (which is largely used) and “specific disabilities of the learning ability” as well. Perhaps, it would be good after a precise diagnosis the correction action to be directed to a compensation of concrete deficits. In the same time, it grows stronger the necessity of a full of matter specification and carefully consideration of the modern scientific tendency regarding numerous notions of the terminological logopaedical apparatus.

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