



JOANNA BARTKOWIAK

University of Adam Mickiewicz Poznań, Poland

“Neurologopedics in theory and practice. Selected aspects of child’s diagnostics and therapy”

**Published by: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii
Techniczno-Humanistycznej, Bielsko-Biała 2012**

Scientific edition by: Joanna Skibska, Dawid Larysz

A few weeks ago I had a chance to read a very interesting book entitled: *“Neurologopedia w teorii i praktyce. Wybrane zagadnienia diagnozy i terapii dziecka”* (*“Neurologopedics in theory and practice. Selected aspects of child’s diagnostics and therapy”*) scientifically edited by Joanna Skibska and Dawid Larysz, published in 2012. I was inspired to reach for this book by my academic classes as well as by my professional work. The contained information proved very useful at the beginning of my professional career and as a novice speech therapist searching for information regarding therapies for children with various dysfunctions I found answers to many nagging questions.

The above book is a collection of papers of many authors, more or less known scholars, special education teachers and speech therapists. When presenting the contents of the book one should mention the following names: Dawid Larysz, describing the psychomotor development of children’s central nervous system, Katarzyna Meroń, systemizing knowledge on early speech therapy intervention and Marzena Machoś-Nikodem, writing about early neurologopedic diagnostics. As we continue we begin to immerse in particular developmental dysfunctions, such as children’s aphasia described by Joanna Skibska, paediatric mutism presented by Izabela Janik, coexistence of selective mutism in neurotic disorders described by Agnieszka and Matusz Warchał as well as nursery children stammer-

ing problem observed by Katarzyna Węsierska. Another very interesting topic is speech in the context of the development of children with mental disabilities described by Joanna Palacz, as well as speech stimulation in children with the Down's syndrome presented by Katarzyna Knyps-Korycka and the subject of cerebral palsy (CP) in neurologopedic theory and practice by Katarzyna Kubanek. However, the part which was of particular interest to me was the subject of autism in children and relevant diagnostics and neurologopedic therapy described by Joanna Belter-Czeraniak, most likely due to the fact that she usually works with autistic children.

In the first part of the book we can find some very useful theoretical knowledge regarding central nervous system development in prenatal and postnatal period as well as information on mechanisms associated with brain plasticity. This information, often incomprehensible due to complex terminology, has been presented in such a manner that readers know what they are reading about and understand all the topics which are addressed. The second paper begins with explanation of early speech therapy intervention and quotes an easy to follow table with pre-lingual activity development. Also, the topics of buccofacial reflexes as well as child's speech development up to the third year of age and speech therapy management are presented. Apart from "pure" theory we can also find some practical advice for speech therapy practices with children. The third part presents a wider context of speech development. The author quotes Lenneberg, whose words cannot be objected and are as follows: *"It should be argued that it is not a specific or particular brain aspect that is responsible for the ability to acquire language but rather the cooperation of multiple parts of the brain"*. Moreover, the author very clearly presents the methods of therapies and stimulation of children with psychomotor dysfunctions. Other papers discussing the problem of aphasia, mutism, staggering, the Down's syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy contain theoretical information on these disorders, explanations of terminology, classification and characteristics both of particular conditions as well as related speech disorders. Additionally, every paper includes some practical information, which adds to the knowledge that can be used both in professional work as well as in a home setting.

Practical application of these texts is an undoubted asset that I often stress here since even the best written book that introduces terminology and very important theory is not sufficient as a tool to implement this knowledge into practice. Yet, the discussed book contains such descrip-

tions and inspirations that it is much easier for me to imagine functioning of a child with particular disorders and related therapies. Thus, this is the book that in my opinion enables the reader not only to enrich and systematise the theoretical knowledge but also to upgrade their professional practices and therefore is useful for students, novice speech therapists and more advanced professionals.

Having read this book I have to admit that my feelings are definitely positive. When I was reaching for these texts I was prepared for another dose of difficult theory. However, to my surprise, both the cited information, theoretical and more practical one, as well as the simple language have created a very readable completeness and thus, I have found the book that I will be surely returning to. The only flaw that caused my mixed feelings is the terminology used in the part describing the development of mentally impaired children since in my opinion the expressions such as: mental retardation or mental handicap have negative and depersonalizing connotations. I definitely prefer "intellectual disability" or "people with disabilities", as thanks to such terminology we avoid perceiving such persons through the prism of their disability. Nevertheless, I do believe that this book is worth recommending.