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A case study of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), hyperlexia and language delay

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Introduction: This case study describes a boy, 5 years old, with autism spectrum disorder(ASD), hyperlexia and language delay. Hyperlexia is a condition characterized by precocious single-word recognition skills and weaker comprehension skills. Also, 63% of all children with ASD have language impairment.

Case history: The boy, with greek native origin, is the only child of the family, with normal growth, but a delay at language milestones. First word was at 18 months, two-word phrase was at 24 months. At the age of 3 years old, his mother reported that the child had been interested in reading. He enjoyed reading aloud to other children when in kindergarten, and sought out unusual print and fonts. To be more specific, he had an obsession in the substances of drugs and could read difficult medical terms and chemical compounds.

Methods: For the diagnosis we used standardized tools (ADOS-2, ADI-R), clinical assessment and interview with the parents.

Findings: The child diagnosed with Autism spectrum disorder and hyperlexia.

Treatment: Counseling provided to parents, prescription of treatments (speech therapy, parent training, social communication therapy).

Conclusions: This case study presents a a 5-year-old boy with precocious oral reading behavior, co- occurring with ASD. Oral language was only produced in response to written stimuli, although no ability to respond to written text in a meaningful way. In conclusion, ASD can emerge with different and various language forms, that is needed to be detected and cured in early childhood.

Biography

Dimitrios Zygogiorgos is a pediatrician, working at the E.R. department of University Children hospital "Aghia Sophia", now specializing in Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics. His field of interests is Autism, Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Learning Disorders in childhood and adolescence.

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