

The objective of the work is to understand the experience of individuals with schizophrenia diagnosis using the hermeneutic-narrative approach. The theoretical foundation for the research is conception of "narrative structured experience", which is understood as way, how to understand and describe connections and meanings within an autobiographical narration.

The methodological foundation of the work is the hermeneutic-narrative approach and its assumption that the human experience is narratively structured. Thus, if we want to study, what it is like to "become a schizophrenic individual", it is possible to explore the way, how this experience and the relevant understanding are structured in a narration. Using the life-story analysis we can explore, how the individuals acts in their life experience, how they cope with psychotic states of their consciousness and how their life is reflected by them and by others. Analysis also reveals connections between influence of their family environment, communication patterns and "giving the meaning" to the experience within their life.

The research sample consists of 8 service users of sheltered community housing for people with psychotic experience (in two different towns in Czech Republic).

The data collection methods were the narrative interviews facilitated with the question: "Tell me, how your life-story was before you came to mental hospital?".

The data processing phase consisted of three major stages. At the first stage we proceed from the data to the topics and categories of narrative analysis enhanced with higher level terms of agency and positioning. These higher level terms lead to three specific categories, which constitute a framework of the research.