

Abstract:

The aim of this thesis is to describe the cognitive profile, including the developed and deficient cognitive functions, in a group of children and adolescents with specific learning disabilities. The theoretical part of the thesis introduces Reuven Feuerstein's work, especially his concepts of structural cognitive modifiability and mediated learning experience, the theory of cognitive deficits, cognitive map and Feuerstein's instrumental enrichment programme. The characteristics of traditional and dynamic assessment, basic differences between these diagnostic approaches and cognitive symptoms of specific learning disabilities are also described in the thesis. The results of the examination of twenty-eight DYS-centrum's clients with specific learning disabilities are qualitatively analyzed in the empirical part. We focus on their developed and deficient cognitive functions, their fulfilment of complex tasks, a preferred modality in which the tasks are presented, and differences between the results obtained through static and dynamic testing. The results collected from individual subjects are finally compared and visualized using figures and graphs which gives an overview of the studied phenomena throughout the whole research sample. We found all the clients of the research sample having following deficient cognitive functions: blurred and sweeping perception, a difficulty of placing oneself in space and a narrow mental field. On the contrary the ability to categorize and the logical justification proved to be their most developed cognitive functions. Throughout the whole research sample the difficulties in fulfilment of complex tasks were apparent.

Keywords:

Reuven Feuerstein, theory of deficient cognitive functions, cognitive modifiability, specific learning disabilities, traditional and dynamic assessment