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Language Profile of a Child with Landau-Kleffner Syndrome

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ABSTRACT

We report here a longitudinal study of a 3.8 year old female child diagnosed as having Landau-Kleffner Syndrome (LKS). Speech-language analysis was carried out over a two-year period while the child was on medical treatment regime. The result of the language evaluation suggests that this child demonstrated exacerbation and remission in accordance with the regime of medication. However, the recovery was significant during the exacerbation phase although not complete. At the end of the two-year period, she was found to have a lag of over one-and-half year in the language function as against the chronological age. Detailed conversational sample from the child is reproduced at the end of this paper.

Keywords: Landau-Kleffner syndrome, acquired epileptic aphasia, syntactic disorder, phonological disorder

1. INTRODUCTION

The Landau-Kleffner syndrome (LKS) or the syndrome of acquired epileptic aphasia refers to loss of language in a previously normally developing child, in the context of either clinical seizures or, in the absence of clinical seizures, an unequivocally paroxysmal EEG associated with spike-wave discharges predominating over superior temporal regions that is activated by sleep. The onset of language disturbances may be abrupt or insidious in nature, and most often with a classical symptom of unresponsiveness to verbal stimuli, demonstrating impaired auditory verbal comprehension. This is usually mistaken for acquired deafness. Other terminologies in vogue are, childhood