

ABSTRACT

The topic of this doctoral dissertation is informal parental education in accessing speech therapy — a comprehensive and individualized learning process occurring outside of formal educational structures. The work intertwines knowledge from andragogy, counseling, and speech therapy: andragogy provides a theoretical framework for understanding how parents are recruited; counseling emphasizes the importance of support; and speech therapy brings a specialized approach to communication and therapeutic methods. In speech therapy, these three perspectives converge, creating a reality that emerges during the educational process, seeking out threats to their lives. Parental education is crucial for determining the child's treatment and for developing parents as active participants in therapy.

The aim of this work was to descriptively characterize the informal education process of parents using speech therapy, identify their needs and expectations, and explore their experiences of using speech therapy. The dissertation is based on a qualitative research approach, utilizing narrative interviews with nineteen parents of children requiring speech therapy services. The collected empirical material was analyzed, allowing for an understanding of the individually experienced emotions, coping strategies, and dynamics of parental education in the face of their children's communication difficulties.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. The first chapter covers the theoretical foundations of adult education in the context of contemporary sociocultural challenges. It presents the concepts of biographical and transformative learning, which form the foundation for understanding parental educational processes. The second chapter discusses counseling as a form of support in a world of limitless possibilities, but also as an area of informal adult education. The third chapter provides a review of the Polish and English literature on speech therapy counseling and describes the specifics of this field, with a clear emphasis on the role of parents in speech therapy counseling. The fourth chapter contains a description of the methodological basis of the research and the characteristics of the study participants. The fifth and sixth chapters contain an analysis of the conducted research, demonstrating the dynamics, multidimensionality, and evolution of parents' learning processes in the face of the crisis posed by their child's communication difficulties. The dissertation concludes with a conclusion, in which I share my research reflections and summarize the research

undertaken, emphasizing the need for a shift in approach in speech therapy by recognizing parents as partners and co-creators of the therapeutic process, rather than merely passive observers or implementers of recommendations.

I hope that the results of this research will contribute to the development of speech therapy practice and increase awareness of the importance of informal parental education in the treatment of children with communication difficulties. The dissertation also fills a research gap in speech therapy by combining pedagogical and speech therapy perspectives and highlighting the educational dimension of specialist counseling.

Keywords: informal parental education, parental learning, speech therapy counseling, biographical learning, transformative learning, speech therapy, parenting in crisis