

Focal cortical dysplasia in schizophrenia

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Dear Editor-in-Chief,

The neuroimaging and volumetry studies we have previously conducted on patients with schizophrenia (Bayar Kapıcı et al., 2023) and first-episode schizophrenia (Bayar Kapıcı et al., 2023) continue our enthusiasm to bring the different developments we have experienced in this regard to the literature.

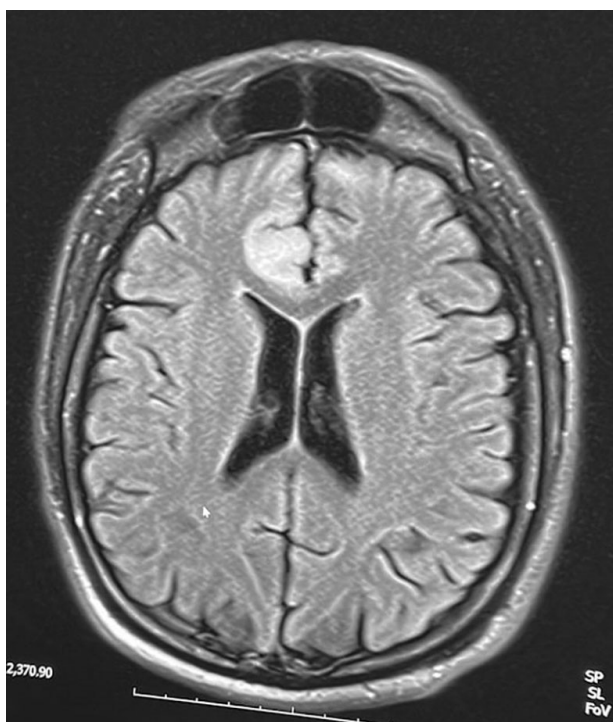


Figure 1: Focal cortical dysplasia in brain MRI

Abnormalities related to the brain development process in schizophrenia can be understood by applying brain magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). As understood from MRI studies, schizophrenia occurs as a long-term result of dysplastic or abnormal development of the brain (Bullmore et al., 1998). Literature information such as the increased risk of later developing schizophrenia in children with psychomotor development delay (Eyles, 2021), the presence of neurological soft signs in schizophrenic patients (Rathod et al., 2020) and the fact that schizophrenia, like other neurodevelopmental diseases, occurs more seriously and at an earlier age in men than in women (Velligan & Rao, 2023), and that hypoxia exposure during birth increases

the risk of schizophrenia (Jaaro-Peled & Sawa, 2020), have previously been reported. These were the assumptions used theoretically to show the abnormal development of the brain in the schizophrenia patients.

Focal cortical dysplasia (FCD) is a neurodevelopmental anomaly primarily associated with treatment-resistant epilepsy (Crino, 2015). It was first distinguished from other developmental anomalies by Taylor et al in 1971 (Taylor et al., 1971). It has been mentioned that FCD, which is associated with somatic mutations (Kabat & Król, 2012), causes an anatomical disconnection between the frontal and temporal lobes, leading to schizophrenia (Thimmaiah et al., 2012). FCD was detected on brain MRI in a 31-year-old schizophrenia patient who was followed up in the community mental health center of our hospital. The patient had no epilepsy in his medical history. As seen in Figure 1, FCD is observed as a hypointense lesion in the frontal lobe, close to the prefrontal cortex. The case of FCD detected in the frontal lobe may indicate the dysplastic anomaly in the neurodevelopmental process in schizophrenia. The presence of FCD in the brain area where executive functions are carried out, such as the prefrontal cortex, provides a significant relationship with a disease such as schizophrenia, which affects cortical functions.

Signed consent was obtained from the patient and her legal guardian for this article and image.

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The symbiotic relationship in a case of hysterical psychosis

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In a previous work illustrating a clinical case of hysterical psychosis (di Michele & Rinaldi, 2024), the authors described a characteristic element of this disorder, namely the symbolic language used by the patient that could be reconnected with the collective imagination (Jung, 1959, 1980, 1994). Here the author focuses on another main element of the described clinical case, such as the symbiotic relationship between the patient and her mother. An unsolved symbiosis complex, a disturbance which arises already in very early childhood before the development of speech, was evident in the interaction between the psychotic patient and the care-giver.

In particular, during the visit in the emergency room, the patient who presented a crepuscular state of consciousness, showed hysterical deafness which made her poorly accessible to the interview. Therefore her mother, who was present at the visit, translated the examiner's answers communicating with the patient via text messages or by silent alphabet (di Michele & Rinaldi, 2024).

The mother clearly represents a co-protagonist of the patient, substituting her when the symptom (hysterical deafness) interferes with a direct relationship between patient and therapist. The mother takes on the role of a "cultural mediator",

where she becomes the interpreter of the patient's requests, remaining just apparently neutral, with no emotional involvement.

The clinical picture described receded after administration of a tranquilizing therapy and the patient became able to answer the examiner's questions, expressing herself in a feeble and puerile voice, acting in a childish way (di Michele & Rinaldi, 2024).

Curiously, in a previous visit the patient said that she felt like Peter Pan, indeed she named her dogs Tinker Bell and Wendy.

In the dyadic relationship, the mother overwhelms the daughter's personality, preventing her from growth (expressed by the childish behavior). Personal qualities become undifferentiated and lose their individuality. The patient cannot detach from the mother figure to get strong and develop autonomy, going through the physiological developmental stages, instead, she establishes a symbiotic relationship. Evenmore, the patient developed an emulating relationship with her mother, by systematically reproducing the maternal steps, meeting deadlines and important life events.

For instance, the appearance of symptoms of the present psychotic episode occurred after a couple of months from the