

Abstract:

This dissertation presents theoretical and empirical research on the agoraphobia. The theoretical part outlines the history and diagnosis of agoraphobia since the mid-nineteenth century to the present through selected theories of this disorder. Concept of normality and diagnosis of agoraphobia disorder according to ICD -10, DSM IV and DSM V are also addressed. Space is also devoted to the philosophical concept of anxiety and body in relation to space.

In the empirical part of the thesis the life story narrative analysis as well as analysis of narrative interviews with women suffering from agoraphobia was carried out. Ten women represent the sample. Received research data were analysed using the categorial-formal analysis. Following research objectives were set: to analyse importance of the disease in lives of participants, to describe the individual specific form of the disease, to analyse individual meaning and purpose attributed by the participants to their disease, to describe diverse aspects of life depicting. The aim was also to learn about the ways participants manage their disease including the use of therapy.

Life story narrative analysis of female agoraphobia proved to be a suitable method for understanding the very meaning of agoraphobia disorder and also the meaning that is being attributed to the disease by participants themselves.

Key words: narration, life-story, women, agoraphobia