

THE “DUAL DIAGNOSIS” OF PHARMACORESISTANT EPILEPSY AND PSYCHOGENIC NON-EPILEPTIC SEIZURES. CLINICAL CASE

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Introduction

According to the ICD-10, psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES) are classified as dissociative disorders [1]. Patients with drug-resistant epilepsy are at higher risk of developing PNES, which are diagnosed in 20-30% of patients with drug-resistant epilepsy [2].

Material and methods

Case of a **42-year-old** patient, with **epilepsy from the age of 13**, suspected of being drug-resistant on polytherapy with **Carbamazepine 1200 mg/day, Levetiracetam 3000 mg/day and Topiramate 50 mg/day**.

Aim

To make differential diagnosis between epileptic seizures and PNES, and to demonstrate the combination of those in “dual diagnosis”.

Results

Clinical features of ES vs PNES [3,4]

Clinical Features	ES	PNES
Age of onset	All ages	All ages, 15-25 most common
Sex	No clear difference	F:M 3:1 ratio
Length of ictal events	< 70s (< 2 min for tonic-clonic seizures)	> 10 min
Seizure patterns	Stereotypical and organized progression	Non-stereotypical, less organized spatial patterns, variable rhythmicity and amplitude movements
Reactivity during attack	Restricted or no clear reaction	+
Vocalization	At the beginning	Can fluctuate
Incontinence	Frequent	Occasional/rare
Pupillary response	Not normal	Normal
Eyes	Open	Closed
Clenching of the jaw	During tonic phase	Does not occur during tonic phase
Injury	Common, tongue biting lateral	Uncommon, tongue bite usually midline
Postictal headache	+	-
Amnesia	Common	Variable, sometimes conscious during seizure, rapid return to consciousness
Psychiatric history	Occasionally present	Commonly noted

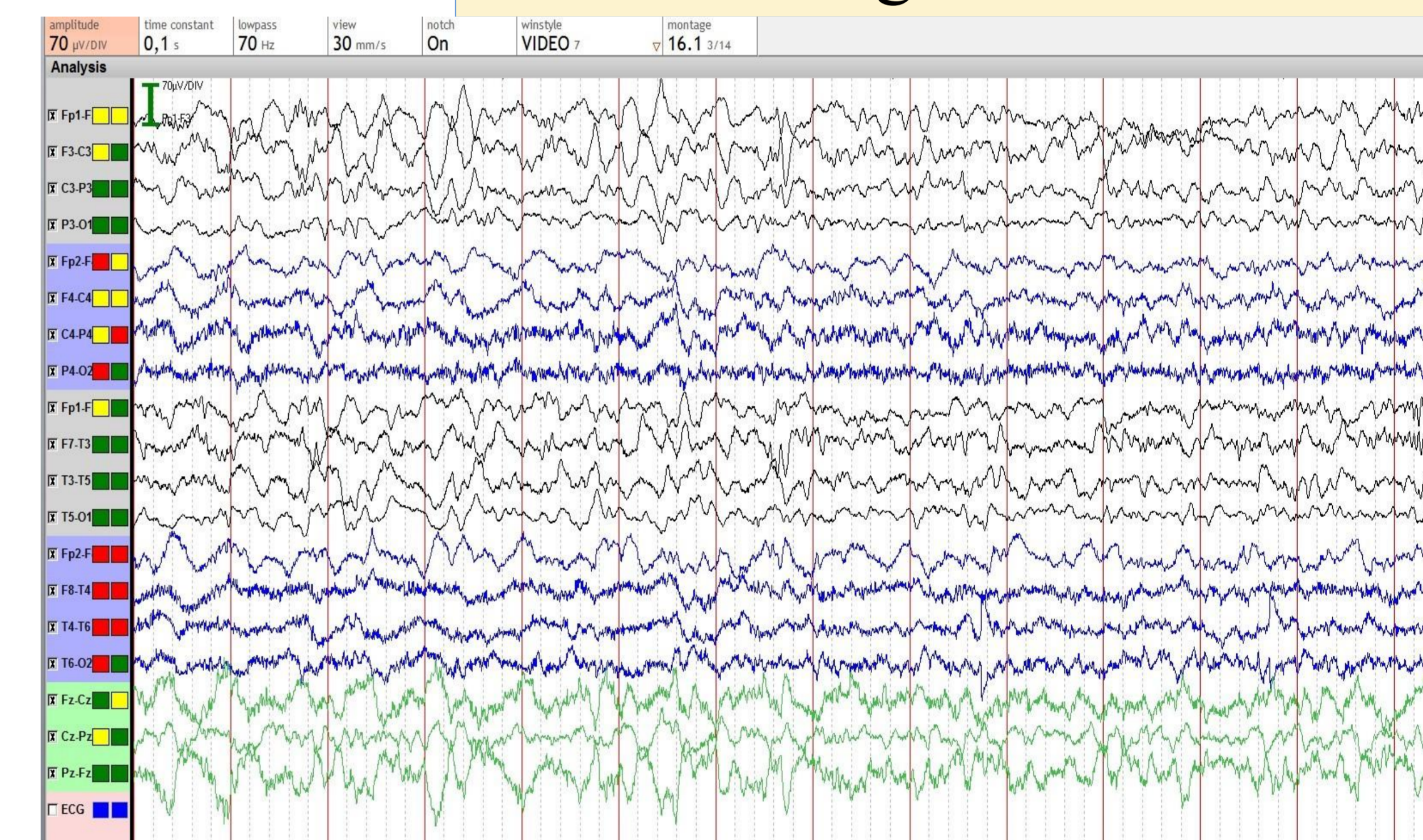


Fig. 3 PNES

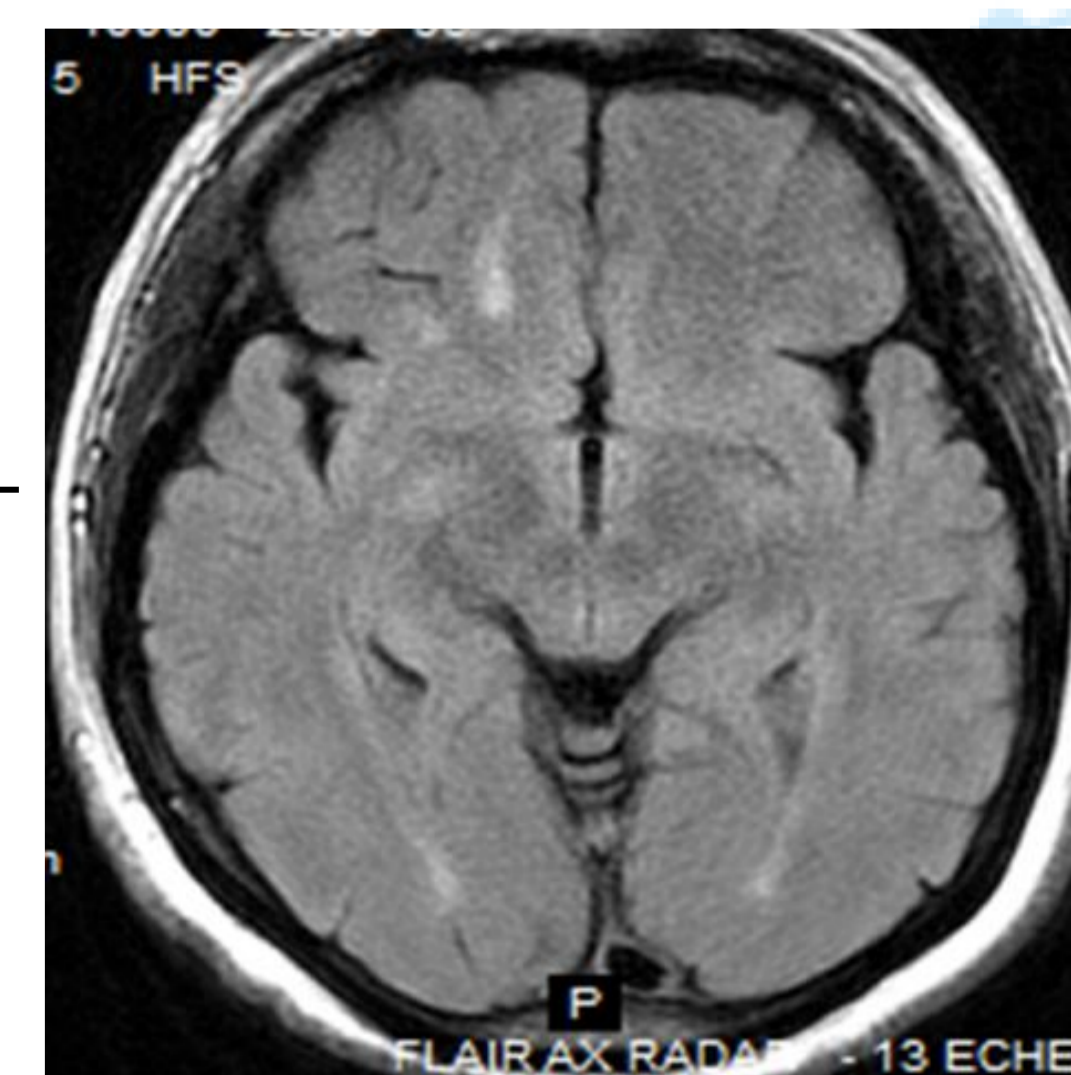


Fig. 4 →
Brain MRI- Right Frontal Basal posttraumatic sequelae

Conclusions

In the management of epilepsy, suspected of being drug-resistant, it is necessary to consider the possibility of the presence of epileptic seizures and PNES, the importance of multidisciplinary team collaboration and electrographic correlations on EEG.

Keywords: Drug-resistant Epilepsy, Psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES).

Fig. 1 Seizures onset

Fig. 2 Seizures

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