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Automatic and Controlled Attentional Processes in Amnesic Mild Cognitive Impairment: The Use of a Mini-Verbal Test

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ABSTRACT

Recent finding suggests that in Amnesic Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) executive functions deficits may be a frequent clinical finding. Automatic and Controlled attentional processes are related to the allocation of cognitive resources in different stimuli, being important to executive functioning. The present study aims at assessing the hypothesis of executive dysfunction deficits in MCI patients. Method: forty five MCI patients and forty five normal aging controls (NC) were assessed with the Five Digits Test (5D), a Mini-Verbal test version of the Stroop Test. Group comparisons were performed by t tests and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test. Results: comparisons indicates significant differences between NC and MCI in efficiency measures of controlled attentional processes, with moderate effect sizes, but not in automatic attentional processes or processing speed. Conclusion: the present work shows a selective pattern of impairment in MCI, indicating specific deficits in executive functioning with spared processing speed.

KEYWORDS

Executive Functions; Selective Attention; Five Digit Test; MCI; Attentional Process

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