

Poster presentation

Ability of picture naming in chronic schizophrenics

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Background

The purpose of this research was the study of the abilities of picture perception and naming in two different groups of schizophrenics, according to their place of living. Subjects: Forty-two chronic schizophrenics participated in this study (21 male, 21 female). Twenty-two of them were living in alternative residences, while the other twenty were institutionalized. The two groups did not differ in the years of schooling and the years of their commitment in institution. Their age ranged between 30 and 81 years and all the patients fulfilled the criteria a) of schizophrenia, according to ICD-10 and b) those of chronicity.

Material and Methods

All the patients were evaluated with the Boston Naming Test, with PANSS scale, GAF and Thought, Language and Communication scale (TLC). Possible effects of the positive, negative and general psychopathology symptoms of schizophrenia were investigated, as well as thought and language ability in picture naming. Patients with neurodegenerative diseases and severe cognitive dysfunction were excluded from the study. None of the patients showed any thought-language disorder according to TLC (≤ 7).

Results

It was found that a) the two groups differed in the total correct answers they scored for pictures. The group living in alternative housing performed better in the Boston Naming Test; the two groups did not differ in the correct answers with semantic [(F = 1.39) = 0.471, p = n.s.] or phonological cues [(F = 1.39) = 0.733, p = n.s.] b) the negative symptoms' scale correlates positively with the total wrong answers ($r = 0.325$, $p < 0.05$). The general psychopathology correlates negatively with the total correct answers (r

= -0.411, $p < 0.05$), while it correlates positively with the total wrong answers ($r = 0.424$, $p < 0.05$) c) TLC thought and language correlate negatively with correct answers ($r = -0.543$, $p < 0.001$), ($r = -0.394$, $p < 0.001$) and in a positive way with wrong answers ($r = 0.478$, $p < 0.001$), ($r = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The chronic schizophrenics, who live either in alternative residences or in traditional psychiatric hospital, differ in their ability of picture perception and naming, while none of the two groups could benefit from the semantic or phonological cues. Negative and general psychopathology symptoms correlate with quantity and quality of performance.