

Concreteness in schizophrenia and normal subjects : A psychophysiological approach

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The aim of this study was to test the hypothesis that P300 could index subtle forms of thought disorder in normal subjects through the use of proverbs test, known to be sensitive for impairment of the abstraction ability in schizophrenics and to test the validity of Rakhawy's Proverbs test in relation to P300, a well known indicator of cognitive functioning.

The Egyptian Proverbs' test was used to test concreteness in 20 schizophrenics fulfilling DSM IV criteria for schizophrenia and 20 normal subjects matched for age, sex and education. P300 was recorded at 5 sites using an odd ball paradigm.

The results showed that the sensitivity of the proverbs test was 85% and its specificity was 80%. P300 amplitude was significantly lower in schizophrenics, while latency was prolonged. P300 amplitude correlated negatively with the ability to abstract in both groups.