

Intact Semantic Priming of Critical Lures in Alzheimer's Disease: Implications for False Memory

Submitted by Emmanuel Lemoine on Wed, 04/22/2015 - 16:48

Titre	Intact Semantic Priming of Critical Lures in Alzheimer's Disease: Implications for False Memory
Type de publication	Article de revue
Auteur	Evrard, C. [1], Colombel, Fabienne [2], Gilet, Anne-Laure [3], Corson, Yves [4]
Editeur	Oxford University Press (OUP)
Type	Article scientifique dans une revue � comit� de lecture
Ann�e	Sous presse
Langue	Anglais
Date	sous presse
Titre de la revue	The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences
ISSN	1758-5368
R�sum� en anglais	<p>OBJECTIVES: The present study examines the question of the activation of the critical lure (CL) in Alzheimer's patients with a Deese-Roediger-McDermott (DRM)-like task. More precisely, older adults and Alzheimer's patients performed a lexical decision task in which they were asked to categorize strings of letters as words or nonwords. Contrary to the DRM paradigm in which the activation of the CL is inferred from its production at recall, such a lexical decision task does not require the joint use of intentional recovery strategies and source-monitoring processes that are known to be particularly impaired in Alzheimer's patients. The performance at the lexical decision therefore reflects the activation of the CL without contamination from such strategic processes. METHOD: Twenty-nine older adults and 25 Alzheimer's patients performed a lexical decision task with DRM lists intermixed with neutral words and nonwords. RESULTS: Analysis indicated that older adults as well as Alzheimer's patients showed shorter lexical decision latencies for CLs than for other types of words. DISCUSSION: Contrary to the existing literature, our results suggest that the activation of the CL is preserved in Alzheimer's patients at mild to moderate stages of the disease.</p>
URL de la notice	http://okina.univ-angers.fr/publications/ua10076 [5]
DOI	10.1093/geronb/gbv006 [6]
Lien vers le document	http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25693999 [7]
Titre abr�g�	The journals of gerontology. Series B, Psychological sciences and social sciences

Liens

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[6] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbv006>

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