

Oral language in frontotemporal dementia. Clinical experience and review

Lenguaje oral en demencias frontotemporales. Experiencia personal y revisión del tema

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Frontotemporal dementia has 3 variants: frontal or behavioral (VF), progressive non fluent aphasia (APnF) and semantic dementia (SD). This one frequently starts as a progressive fluent aphasia (APF). In a series of 40 patients with clinical and brain imaging we found 31 VF, 6 APF and only 3 APnF cases. The oral language in VF patients was usually abnormal, non fluent and non informative; the number of ideas was reduced and some of them were out of context. Seventeen out of 31 VF had aphasia, and the deficit of oral comprehension was frequent. Their attitude was unusual, with severe dementia, apathy or euphoria. In groups APnF and APF the speech was fairly informative, dementia was less severe and their attitude (anxiety) more understandable than in the group VF. Fluency differentiates these groups. Only 2 subjects in the group APF had a nonverbal semantic defect that led to the diagnosis of SD. We conclude that in the VF, unlike the usual Alzheimer's disease, there is a loss of interes