

**P03-69 - THE EFFECT OF MULTIPLE ATTENTION DEMANDS ON WORKING MEMORY PERFORMANCE IN SCHIZOPHRENIC AND FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOTIC PATIENTS**

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**Objectives:** Recent studies showed that schizophrenic patients possess adequate attention resources to avoid Stroop colour interference but face difficulty when delays are imposed and multiple attention demands appear. The aim of our study was to use dynamic version of the Stroop interference test based on cognitive remediation techniques within a “training- interference task-test” procedure.

**Method:** The observed subjects were chronic schizophrenic and schizoaffective patients in worsening phase and the first episode patients who were treated with SGA and having PANSS score above 60, as well as corresponding healthy controls. We trained subjects in Stroop colour interference task and immediately after the training applied different working memory task and subsequently tested the subjects (15 minutes (Stroop Colour task) and >24 hours (Stroop Word task)).

**Results:** There was an improvement of the cognitive status of schizophrenic and schizoaffective patients similarly as in healthy controls in both the reaction time and response accuracy ( $p > 0.05$ ), whereas the first episode patients performed significantly worse than other two subgroups. This was revealed both in the training and subsequent Stroop Colour interference (Reaction Time:  $p = 0.02$ , Error Code:  $p = 0.04$ ).

**Conclusions:** Our findings revealed that chronic schizophrenic patients show same level of achievement as healthy controls despite the demanding experimental design. Poorer results observed in the first episode patients could suggest the favorable effect of the SGA on cognitive functioning, or impose the role of their age. Carefully designed training of cognitive skills could be of high importance in preventing the cognitive deterioration of first episode psychotic patients.