

A study of word finding difficulties in Spanish speakers with temporal lobe epilepsy.

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Abstract

It is well established that naming deficits can be found in temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE). The aim of this study was to determine in Spanish speakers with pharmaco-resistant TLE the characteristics of subjective naming difficulties and to examine performance in a definition task and a picture task in left TLE and right TLE. We observed that almost one-third of patients report frequent and severe word finding problems during spontaneous speech. In naming tests, our patients exhibited delayed times for finding words. Even if the target word was identified and semantically activated, there was difficulty with lexical access, which improved when a phonetic cue was given. Left TLE patients derived a lower benefit from phonetic cues in accessing words, even when the word is known and recognized semantically. These findings were not related to any demographic or clinical characteristics analyzed. The fact that the only weakly lateralized variable has been a lexical access facilitation measurement could support a lexical access hypothesis for naming deficits in TLE.