Lexical access in MCI: A study on the tip-of-the-tongue events

- [Onesimo Juncos-Rabadán](✉)
- [Arturo X. Pereiro](#)
- [Nelly Rodríguez](#)
- [David Facal](#)

Background: Word finding difficulty, assessed by naming tests, has been considered as a symptom for diagnosis of MCI, but the integrity and functioning of semantic, lexical and phonological processes involved in that difficulty is a controversial issue. Our aim is to contribute to that controversy investigating tip-of-the-tongue events (TOTs) in MCI subjects. **Methods:** 28 multi-domain MCI subjects and 50 normal elderly (NE) subjects participated in an experimental task of naming from 50 famous persons pictures (familiarity controlled) included into a paradigm for facilitating TOTs for proper names. **Results:** The number of TOTs was significantly greater and the number of correct names was significantly lower in MCI group than in the NE group after controlling age and level of education as covariables. No differences on production of errors and semantic paraphasias were fund. **Conclusions:** Our findings suggest that lexical access difficulty in MCI may be produced, according to the transmission deficit hypothesis, by a transmission deficit from the semantic representations to the phonological representations, and that this deficit is stronger in MCI than in normal aging.