Abstract

This thesis focuses on pareidolias as sensory illusions in patients with an idiopathic form of REM sleep behavior disorder (iRBD). The literature review presents iRBD as a prodromal stage of neurodegenerative diseases from the range of alpha-synucleinopathies. Then, the phenomenon of pareidolia as a potentially clinically useful measure of progressive neurodegeneration in iRBD is explored. The empirical part of this thesis aims to test the discriminative potential of the Noise Pareidolia Test (*TŠP*) in a Czech population of iRBD patients ($n = 17$) and cognitively healthy volunteers ($n = 54$). Another aim was to map the neuropsychological context of pareidolia occurrence in both groups and finally to compare the frequency of pareidolia responses in iRBD patients with mild cognitive impairment (iRBD-MCI) versus iRBD without cognitive impairment (iRBD-NC). Subjects were assessed with the *TŠP* and other neuropsychological tests. Results of the analyses showed that *TŠP* demonstrated poor intergroup discrimination ability. A significant association was found between a measure of global cognitive function and the ability to correctly recognize faces in the *TŠP* in iRBD patients. Patients with iRBD-MCI showed a higher number of pareidolia responses compared to iRBD-NC. These findings provide a valuable exploratory insight into the relationship between pareidolia and cognitive abilities in iRBD in Czech clinical settings.

Key words: pareidolia; REM sleep behaviour disorder; α-Synucleinopathies