



Fantasy proneness, mental imagery and reality monitoring

André Aleman ^{*}, Edward H.F. de Haan

Psychological Laboratory, Helmholtz Institute, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Received 7 October 2002; received in revised form 9 May 2003; accepted 1 July 2003

Abstract

Individual differences in fantasy proneness and vividness of mental imagery have been suggested to be related to source memory confusions. To test this hypothesis, two groups scoring either high or low on a measure of fantasy proneness (selected from a group of 231 subjects) were compared on measures of self report vividness of mental imagery, objective imagery ability and reality monitoring performance. The two groups differed significantly on ratings of imagery vividness ($p < 0.01$), but not on the imagery performance tasks, nor on reality monitoring performance. Our results indicate that, although fantasy proneness is associated with experiences of vivid mental imagery, it does not necessarily lead to reality monitoring errors.

© 2003 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Fantasy proneness; Reality monitoring; Mental imagery; Hallucinations; Source memory

1. Introduction

Fantasy proneness is a concept that denotes a range of experiences considered to be related to a deep involvement in fantasy (Wilson & Barber, 1983). Examples of such experiences are day-dreaming, spending a large part of the time fantasising, experiencing strong bodily concomitants of fantasies and having fantasies with hallucinatory (“real as real”) intensities, amongst others (cf. Merckelbach, Horselenberg, & Muris, 2001).

Fantasy proneness has been linked to phenomena such as paranormal and hallucinatory experiences. In addition, it has been hypothesised that fantasy proneness would be associated with hypnotizability and with false memories. It is important, however, to note that such associations have not always been confirmed (cf. Braffman & Kirsch, 1999).

^{*} Corresponding author. Address: Department of Psychiatry, Brain Division, University Medical Center, A01.126, Heidelberglaan 100, 3584 CX Utrecht, The Netherlands. Tel.: +31-30-2508459; fax: +31-30-2505443.

E-mail address: a.aleman@azu.nl (A. Aleman).

Earlier studies have reported relations between dissociative experiences and source memory biases (specifically false positives, or ‘confabulations’) on the one hand, and between dissociative experiences and fantasy proneness on the other hand (Kuzendorf & Karpen, 1997; Merckelbach, Muris, Horselenberg, & Stougie, 2000). We hypothesised that fantasy proneness might be associated with mental imagery ability, and with biases in reality monitoring, i.e., the meta-cognitive process of distinguishing between internal and external sources of information. Mental imagery measures included subjective ratings of imagery vividness and more objective, behavioral measures of visual and auditory imagery performance. The hypothesis that fantasy proneness might lead to impoverished reality monitoring was derived from the theoretical framework provided by Johnson and Raye. According to Johnson and Raye (1981) and Johnson, Hashtroudi, and Lindsay (1993), reality discrimination difficulties can arise in one of two ways: (1) the images and percepts are less distinctive from each other with regard to their sensory characteristics (e.g., the images have an increased vividness, and will therefore resemble percepts more), (2) images and percepts are less distinctive from each other with regard to the meta-cognitive processes associated with each (e.g., generating mental images normally requires more cognitive effort than processing of percepts; this could be altered). It is conceivable that both processes might play a role in fantasy proneness, i.e. fantasy prone people might have more vivid imagery and it might also be more easy for them to generate imagery. Thus, both reality monitoring ‘pathways’ might be predisposed towards confusing images and percepts more often.

With regard to the fundamental premises of the Johnson and Raye (1981) model, findings have indeed been reported that are indicative of perception being generally more vivid (in terms of sensory details and contextual attributes) than imagery (Kosslyn, Sukel, & Bly, 1999). Moreover, it has been reported that increasing sensory similarity between perceived and imagined items increases source confusion (Kahan, 1996). Also consistent with the assumptions of the Johnson and Raye model is the finding that mental imagery may be related to reality monitoring, such that subjects with better imagery performance make more source confusions (Aleman & De Haan, 2001; Johnson, Raye, Wang, & Taylor, 1979).

The present study was designed to investigate the relations between fantasy proneness, mental imagery and reality monitoring experimentally with subjects drawn from the normal population. We predicted that fantasy prone subjects would report more vivid imagery experiences, would perform better on imagery measures, but would make more source confusions on the reality monitoring task.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

A high and a low scoring group of participants was selected from 231 undergraduate psychology students who completed a measure of fantasy proneness, the Creative Experiences Questionnaire (CEQ; Merckelbach et al., 2001). The CEQ is a dichotomous (yes/no) self-report scale consisting of 25 items. Examples of the items are “As a child, I had my own make believe friend or animal”, and “I spend more than half of the day (daytime) fantasising or dreaming”.

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات