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Selective impairment of auditory processing in chronic fatigue syndrome: a comparison with multiple sclerosis and healthy controls.

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The most consistent deficit observed in individuals with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome has been in efficiency of information processing. To examine the possibility of a modality-specific impairment, the present study examined subjects with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, multiple sclerosis, and healthy controls on an auditory-versus visual-paced serial-addition test. 20 subjects with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, 20 subjects with clinically definite Multiple Sclerosis, and 20 sedentary healthy controls were compared. One-half of the subjects in each group were administered the Paced Auditory Serial Addition Test and the other half were administered the Paced Visual Serial Addition Test. The group with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome was differentially impaired on the auditory relative to the visual processing task. The group with Multiple Sclerosis was equally impaired on both versions of the task. The results are discussed within the framework of Baddeley's model of working memory.

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