EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SYNAESTHESIAS AND ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES

Christine Simmonds-Moore, PhD
University of West Georgia, USA

Grant 223/10


Methods: An online survey included the Synaesthesia Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) the Oxford Liverpool Inventory for Feelings and experiences (OLIFE), Deiner’s Life Satisfaction Questionnaire, the Anomalous Experiences Inventory (AEI) and 5 items tapping parapsychological experiences. Twenty-seven synesthetes and 27 matched controls completed the TimeStyle™ inventory, the synesthesia subscale of the TAS, Bem’s precognitive memory task and a Mental time travel task. Synesthetes completed a Synesthetic Characteristics Questionnaire. Interviews were conducted.

Results: Different types of synaesthesia varied in incidence. The SEQ was not normally distributed but was reliable and loaded onto one factor. SEQ scores correlated with scores on the AEI and positive schizotypy. Traditional paranormal experiences were associated with scoring higher on the SEQ. SEQ scores did not relate to well-being. This relationship appears to be mediated by schizotypy cluster membership. There was no evidence for ESP in the combined group, the controls or the synaesthetes and differences between groups was not significant. SEQ scoring did not correlate with ESP. Associators scored higher on the psi task than projectors (post hoc). Future thinking correlated with SEQ scores but not ESP. Past thinking correlated with ESP. Mental time travel did not relate to ESP but some variables were stronger in synaesthetes. An IPA suggested that ability to represent has a role in synaesthesia and anomalous experiences.

Conclusions: There is an overlap between the tendency to experience synaesthesia and anomalous experiences which may include ESP performance in some types of synaesthesia.

Publications:

Key words: synaesthesia; schizotypy; wellbeing; anomalous experience; ESP