

Introduction

The Five-Factor Theory (FFT) is one of the most consistent efforts in psychology to describe personality traits. The FFT suggests that five dimensions are sufficient for describing the basic dimensions of personality. These dimensions are neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. The most commonly used inventory to assess personality according to the Five-Factor Model (FFM) is the NEO-PI-R, a self-assessment questionnaire. However, for elderly individuals suffering from memory deficits a self-assessment questionnaire might not be adequate. For this reason the Structured Interview for the Five-Factor Model (SIFFM) appears as an interesting alternative, hence this validation study.

Material and method

Subjects

The sample consisted of 260 individuals from the general population (aged 20 to 88 years) and 45 participants diagnosed with a mild dementia of the Alzheimer type (aged 62 to 89).

Table 1. Description of the sample

	Women			Men		
	N	Mean age	SD	N	Mean age	SD
Healthy participants from the general population	172	56.12	8.13	88	55.32	7.50
Patients with mild mild Alzheimer disease	30	78.92	6.68	15	78.40	6.48

Instruments

We used the French version of the SIFFM (Trull & Widiger, 1997) which includes 120 questions assessing personality traits considered by the FFM. This interview assesses the five main personality domains. Each domain is made up of 6 facets. In addition, subjects from the general population also responded to the NEO-FFI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1989) consisting of the 60 items assessing the five main personality domains.

Results

Table 2 shows the internal reliabilities for the five domains for the original English-version and for the French-version of the SIFFM. The internal reliabilities for the French-version are similar to the one observed for the original version and for the NEO-FFI-R.

Table 2. Internal reliabilities for the five domains for the SIFFM and the NEO-FFI-R.

	SIFFM	SIFFM	NEO-FFI-R
	English Form	French Form	
Neuroticism	.87	.85	.76
Extraversion	.87	.84	.79
Openness	.77	.81	.74
Agreeableness	.72	.63	.70
Conscientiousness	.86	.73	.82

Table 3 shows the Varimax rotated principal components structure of the SIFFM. The eigenvalues of the first six principal components amounted to 5.01, 3.27, 2.53, 2.19, 1.58 and 1.14. Each component seemed to be correlated with one specific personality dimension. The factorial structure of the French-version was compared using a target factor analysis with English-structure. Finally, these results are in line with those observed for the English-version.

Table 3. Varimax structure of the SIFFM and correlations between the components and the personality domains

	Varimax rotated principal components				
	1	2	3	4	5
Neuroticism					
Anxiety	.73	-.08	.14	-.01	.16
Hostility	.56	-.01	.06	-.05	.53
Depression	.74	.00	-.05	-.06	.04
Self-Consciousness	.65	.01	-.18	-.15	-.19
Impulsiveness	.24	.20	-.15	-.06	.60
Vulnerability	.69	-.09	-.17	.07	.00
Extraversion					
Warmth	-.17	.11	-.01	.70	.16
Gregariousness	-.27	.27	.01	.50	.13
Assertiveness	-.36	.17	.35	.15	.58
Activity	-.26	.50	.43	.21	.21
Excitement-Seeking	-.23	.56	.06	.18	.43
Positive Emotion	-.41	.37	.12	.45	.14
Openness to experience					
Fantasy	.15	.62	-.04	-.07	.26
Aesthetics	.02	.63	.00	.12	-.06
Feelings	.46	.25	.20	.32	.02
Actions	-.10	.67	.04	.15	.08
Ideas	-.01	.75	.18	.01	-.03
Values	.08	.73	.03	.08	.07
Agreeableness					
Trust	-.18	.13	.01	.55	-.24
Straightforwardness	.12	-.18	.11	.33	-.25
Altruism	.08	.25	.13	.62	-.06
Compliance	-.07	-.07	-.07	.24	-.62
Modesty	.49	-.08	-.23	.03	-.38
Tender-Mindedness	.23	-.11	.07	.66	-.11
Conscientiousness					
Competence	-.01	.26	.68	.12	.04
Order	.15	-.17	.67	.04	.00
Dutifulness	-.11	-.05	.53	.06	-.13
Achievement Striving	-.03	.14	.55	.07	.10
Self-Discipline	-.23	.11	.71	-.01	-.02
Deliberation	.18	.03	.40	-.16	-.53

Tableau 4 shows the correlations between the five domains as measured by the SIFFM and the NEO-FFI-R. For each domain the coefficient is significant and equal or above .55 suggesting a satisfactory convergence between the two instruments.

Table 4. Correlation between the SIFFM and the NEO-FFI-R

NEO-FFI-R	SIFFM				
	N	E	O	A	C
N	.75	.27	.05	.06	.10
E	.28	.67	.11	.08	.08
O	.04	.26	.55	.15	.03
A	.24	.02	.12	.56	.02
C	.02	.07	.19	.06	.58

Conclusions

Overall, the results suggest that the French-version of the SIFFM has similar psychometric proprieties as the English-version and that this interview might be an interesting alternative for assessing personality traits of individuals having difficulties responding to self-assessment inventories, such as the NEO-PI-R.

Reference

- Costa, P.T. & McCrae, R.R. (1989). *The NEO-PI/NEO-PI-FFF manual supplement*. Odessa FL.
Costa, P.T. & McCrae, R.R. (1992). *The NEO-PI-R manual*. Odessa FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
Trull, T.J. & Widiger, T.A. (1997). *SIFFM : Structured interview for the Five-Factor Model*. Odessa FL.