

Mediumship Information: Retrieved from a Repository or by an Interaction with the Deceased?

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Abstract: The correct information identified in 100 readings obtained by 28 self-claimant mediums, applying a triple level blind protocol, were classified into two categories: (1) information that the medium declared to be received interacting with the deceased and (2) information without such interaction. Among the 1295 pieces of correct information identified in the 100 readings, 164 (12.6%) statements were related to a purported interaction with the deceased. Even if only a small percentage of information is correct, such information suggests that mediums seem to retrieve their information by interacting with the deceased and not only retrieving them by searching a sort of universal memory of the deceased persons' experiences.

Keywords: consciousness, death, deceased, mediumship, survival.

INTRODUCTION

Mediumship information can be obtained from three sources: (i) the persons who have known the deceased, usually the sitters; (ii) a universal memory storage of all human experiences, such as the Akashic records (Nash, 2020), or (iii) interacting with the deceased (discarnate) persons. To exclude the possibility that information could be passed on by sitters, researchers devised experimental designs with different levels of blinding.

The minimum level of blinding is one, whereby the sitters are blind to which of two or more readings contains information that refers to the deceased (i.e., the discarnate). The maximum level of blinding applied is five (see Beischel, Boccuzzi, Biuso, & Rock, 2015). In this case, (1) the medium was blind to information about the sitter and the discarnate before and during the reading; (2) the sitter-raters were blind to the origin of the readings during scoring; (3) Experimenter 1 who recruited and trained the sitter-raters was blind to which mediums read which sitters, and which blind readings were intended for which discarnates; (4) Experimenter 2 who interacted with the mediums during the phone readings and formatted the

readings into item lists was blind to any information about the sitters and the discarnates except the discarnates' first names; and (5) Experimenter 3 who interacted with the sitters during scoring (i.e., e-mails and received by e-mail the blinded readings) was blind to all information about the discarnates, blind to which medium performed which readings, and blind to which readings were intended for which discarnates/sitters.

From the meta-analyses of all experimental studies carried out from 2001 to 2021, the most used levels of blinding were two and three (Sarraf et al., 2020). However, these differences did not reveal any differences in the mediumship accuracy. If the sitters as the source of mediumship information can be excluded by applying different levels of blinding, it remains to be explored if it derives from the mediums' exceptional telepathic skills, known as Living Agent Psi (LAP; a.k.a. Somatic Psi), or from sources in the afterlife, known as the survival hypothesis (Beischel, Rock, Pekala, & Boccuzzi, 2021; Rock & Storm, 2015).

As to the investigation of LAP (Somatic Psi) theory, currently no one has investigated the purported telepathic skills of mediums. However, in a series of studies, Beischel, Mosher, and Boccuzzi (2017), Beischel et al. (2021), Rock and Beischel (2008), and Rock et al. (2009, 2014) found that mediums' phenomenology differs depending on whether information is received from the deceased or received telepathically from sitters.

This study is related to the so-called survival hypothesis. The aim is to investigate whether mediums retrieve information from direct interaction with the deceased, or from a universal storage of all human experiences, as has been postulated for Akashic records.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 28 self-claimant mediums who were recruited by our team (second and third authors, LL & FS) using an advertisement that was run in Italy. The mediums were all female, with chronological ages ranging from 21 to 68 years (Mean Age = 55 years; *SD* = 12 years). Participation in the study was voluntary. The only incentive was to obtain a written declaration that they had achieved the information accuracy level, corresponding to at least 55% of correct information in two different readings, from the research team.

Sitters

All three authors contacted people they knew to find sitters and offered them free mediumship consultations. The sitters were selected based

on their overt interest in the subject matter and their intimate familiarity with the departed people from whom they requested the readings.

Ethical approval

This study was approved by the Ethical Committee of Psychological Research of the Padova University, Prot. no. 3670. Both mediums and sitters were required to read and confirm orally the protocol as informed consent.

Procedure

The mediums were interviewed using a triple-level blinding protocol. With this protocol, mediums were given only the deceased first name without the surname by a research assistant who acted as a proxy sitter. Both were blind to the identity of the deceased.

The name of the deceased was obtained by a second research assistant who was in contact with the sitters. The sitters received two anonymous readings: one related to their requested deceased (the intended one) and the other related to another deceased of the same sex (the non-intended/control).

Sitters were required to assess each piece of information as *correct*, or *partially correct with clarifications*, or *wrong*. Furthermore, they were requested to rate each of the two readings globally using an ordinal scale identical to the scale used by Beischel (2007). Scores ranged from 0 = information totally wrong, to 6 = excellent, where a rating of 6 effectively means free of errors and containing compelling evidence of authentic communication.

Once the sitters' evaluations were received, we classified each piece of correct information given by the medium as either 'direct interaction with the deceased', or 'without apparent interaction with the deceased'. Information in the first category included direct communication between the medium and the deceased; for example, "*He/She is showing me ...*", "*He/She tells me ...*". The second category included all other information, e.g., "*I see that ...*", "*I feel that ...*", etc.

A total of 100 readings were analyzed. Raw scores related to information accuracy and category are available open access for independent analyses at: <https://zenodo.org/records/16939859>.

RESULTS

Information accuracy

Accuracy of information is reported in detail by Tressoldi, Liberale, and Sinesio (2025): Intended reading *correctly identified* was 65%, where Mean Chance Expectation (MCE) = 50%; Binomial Exact z score = 2.90, $p = .002$.

Global scoring. Intended readings (score from zero to six), mean = 2.4 ($SD = 1.5$); control (unintended) readings, mean = 1.7 ($SD = 1.2$); $t(99) = 4.7, p < .001$.

Percentage of *correct* information (*correct plus partially correct*): Intended readings, mean = 41.1% ($SD = 18\%$); control readings, mean = 32% ($SD = 17.5\%$); $t(99) = 4.2, p < .001$.

Information category

Fifty-one readings included at least one piece of information related to purported interaction with the deceased. In contrast, all readings included at least one piece of information without referring to such interactions. Frequency distributions of the pieces of information suggesting direct or no interaction with the deceased and related box plots are presented in Figure 1.

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Table 1 shows the superiority of correct information related to a lack of interaction with the deceased. Information suggesting an interaction with the deceased represented 12.6% of all information.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate whether correct information obtained by mediums applying a triple-level blinding design suggested an interaction or a lack of it with the deceased.

Among the 1295 correct pieces of information identified in 100 readings obtained by 28 self-claimant mediums, 164 (12.6%) included statements related to a purported interaction with the deceased, e.g. “*He says he saw his mother again*”, “*He shows me dark work shoes*”. Even though 12.6% is small, such information suggests that mediums seem to retrieve their information interacting with the deceased rather than retrieving them by searching a sort of universal memory of deceased persons’ experiences.

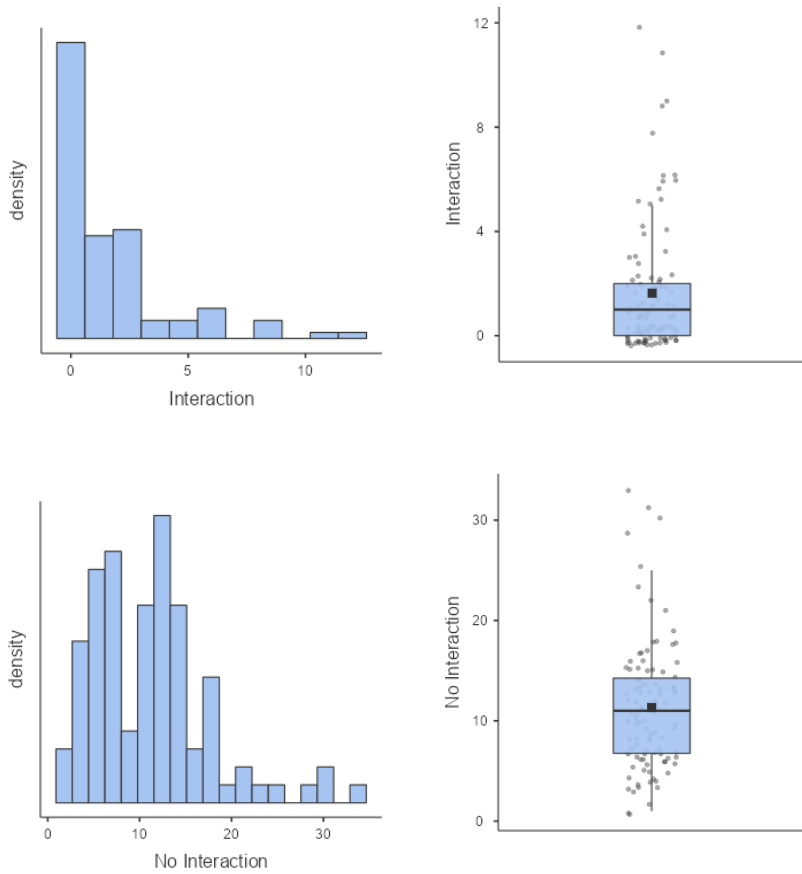


Figure 1. Frequency distributions and boxplots related to the interaction (top) and no interaction (bottom) information categories.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Two Categories of Information

Category	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range	Sum (%)
Interaction	1.64 (2.5)	0 - 12	164 (12.6)
No interaction	11.31 (6.4)	1 - 33	1131 (87.4)

Although this is the first study specifically aimed at investigating whether mediums can retrieve their information by direct interaction with the deceased, we think that the results suggest the possibility that the deceased maintain their identity and will, which is quite a different picture with respect to the hypothesized dissolution of individuality after death, as claimed by some philosophies (e.g., Nichols et al., 2018).

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CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

All authors devised the study. FS and LL collected the data; LL and PT secured the funds for the study; PT analyzed the data, and wrote the paper. FS and LL revised the paper and approved the final version.

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