Abstract
This study examined memory and executive functions of switching and distributing attention in 25 Alzheimer patients (AD), 9 patients with frontal variant of frontotemporal dementia (fvFTD), and 25 healthy older people, as a control group, in three tasks: verbal digit span, Brown-Peterson (B-P) task, and dual-task. No differences were found in digit span. Qualitative analysis of errors in the B-P task indicated that both ADs and fvFTDs presented a higher number of omissions and perseverations, interpreted in this study as an index of executive dysfunction, compared to the control group. In fact, the ADs persevered more or the same as the fvFTDs, and no differences were found between the two groups of patients in omissions. The dual-task results showed that both AD and fvFTD had difficulties coordinating the two tasks simultaneously compared to the control group, but no differences were found between the patient groups. Although the presence of alterations in the executive functions of AD patients may suggest that these functions would depend on the correct functional integration of various cerebral areas, it would be of great interest to include neurological evidence in order to contrast these results in future research.