

# Behavioural changes in frontotemporal dementia and their cognitive and neuroanatomical correlates

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## Abstract

Behavioural changes are a central feature of frontotemporal dementia (FTD); they occur in both behavioural-variant (bvFTD) and semantic dementia (SD)/semantic-variant primary progressive aphasia subtypes. In this study, we addressed two current clinical knowledge gaps; (i) are there qualitative or clear distinctions between behavioural profiles in bvFTD and SD, and (ii) what are the precise roles of the prefrontal cortex and anterior temporal lobes in supporting social behaviour? Resolving these conundrums is crucial for improving diagnostic accuracy and for the development of targeted interventions to treat challenging behaviours in FTD. Informant questionnaires to assess behavioural changes included the Cambridge Behavioural Inventory-Revised and two targeted measures of apathy and impulsivity. Participants completed a detailed neuropsychological battery to permit investigation of the relationship between cognitive status (including social-semantic knowledge, general semantic knowledge and executive function) with behaviour change in FTD. To explore changes in regional grey matter volume, a subset of patients had structural MRI. Diagnosis-based group comparisons were supplemented by a transdiagnostic approach which encompassed the spectrum of bvFTD, SD and “mixed” or intermediate cases. Such an approach is sensitive to the systematic graded variation in FTD and allows the neurobiological underpinnings of behaviour change to be explored across an FTD spectrum. We found a wide range of behavioural changes across FTD. Although *quantitatively* more severe on average in bvFTD, as expected, the item-level analyses found no evidence for *qualitative* differences in behavioural profiles or “behavioural double dissociations” between bvFTD and SD. Comparisons of self and informant ratings revealed strong discrepancies in the perspective of the caregiver versus patient. Logistic regression revealed that neuropsychological measures had better discriminative accuracy for bvFTD versus SD than caregiver-reported behavioural measures. A

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1 principal component analysis of all informant questionnaire domains extracted three components,  
2 interpreted as reflecting: (1) apathy, (2) challenging behaviours and (3) activities of daily living.  
3 More severe apathy in both FTD subtypes was associated with (a) increased levels of impaired  
4 executive function and (b) anterior cingulate cortex atrophy. Questionnaire ratings of impaired  
5 behaviour did not correlate with either anterior temporal lobe atrophy or degraded social-semantic  
6 knowledge. Together, these findings highlight the presence of a wide range of behavioural changes  
7 in both bvFTD and SD, which vary by degree rather than quality. We recommend a transdiagnostic  
8 approach for future studies of the neuropsychological and neuroanatomical underpinnings of  
9 behavioural deficits in FTD.

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3 social-semantic knowledge; transdiagnostic

4

## 5 **Introduction**

6 Behavioural changes are a core manifestation of frontotemporal dementia (FTD) and have a  
7 considerable impact on both patients and their caregivers.<sup>1-3</sup> They are classically associated with  
8 behavioural-variant FTD (bvFTD) and the prefrontal cortical atrophy in this condition<sup>4-7</sup> although  
9 have also been linked to other brain areas and changes in connectivity.<sup>8</sup> Behavioural changes are  
10 now recognised as common in semantic dementia (SD; encompassing semantic-variant primary  
11 progressive aphasia and ‘right’ semantic dementia or right temporal variant FTD)<sup>9-13</sup> where  
12 pathology is centred on the anterior temporal lobes (ATLs) leading to degraded semantic  
13 memory.<sup>14,15</sup> This study aimed to resolve two key current gaps in clinical knowledge. First, are the  
14 behavioural changes in bvFTD and SD largely the same or are there qualitatively distinct  
15 behavioural profiles? Identifying discriminative behaviours would improve management and  
16 expectations in clinic and improve bvFTD versus SD diagnostic accuracy. Such accuracy is  
17 particularly relevant for disease-modifying clinical trial design, as the two disorders are typically  
18 associated with different neuropathologies.<sup>16</sup> Second, what are the precise contributions of the  
19 prefrontal cortex and the ATL in supporting social behaviour? Revealing the cognitive and  
20 neurobiological mechanisms underlying behaviour change in FTD is vital for informing the  
21 development of targeted pharmacological and behavioural interventions. To address these clinical  
22 conundrums, we explored the range of behavioural changes that are caused by FTD and the  
23 similarities and/or differences between FTD subtypes. Participants also completed extensive  
24 neuropsychological testing and structural MRI, to investigate the cognitive and neuroanatomical  
25 bases of changed behaviours. This calls for a transdiagnostic approach, including not only  
26 archetypal cases of bvFTD and SD but also “mixed” or intermediate cases that express prominent  
27 clinical features of both conditions, as part of a continuous clinical spectrum.<sup>17</sup>

1 People with FTD can behave in ways that reflect a loss of or disregard for social norms or etiquette,  
2 which can be misinterpreted as disinhibition or loss of empathy.<sup>13,18</sup> Apathy and impulsivity are  
3 also common and co-occurring features of FTD and may exacerbate abnormal social behaviours.<sup>19</sup>  
4 Behavioural disturbances are the hallmark of bvFTD and have been associated with structural,  
5 functional and neurochemical changes in the orbitofrontal cortex, inferior frontal gyrus, anterior  
6 cingulate cortex, insula and their connected subcortical structures.<sup>20-24</sup> The frontopolar cortex is  
7 another area atrophied in bvFTD, with one theory proposing that this region supports  
8 representation of the long-term consequences of social behaviour.<sup>25</sup>

9 Behavioural changes are also common in SD, despite initial presentation with semantic and  
10 language deficits. Indeed, large cohort studies have reported similar rates of behaviour change in  
11 SD and bvFTD.<sup>17,19,26,27</sup> Unlike bvFTD, the atrophy in SD is primarily centred on the ATLs.<sup>15</sup> In  
12 their severest form, the co-occurring semantic and behavioural impairments are reminiscent of the  
13 Klüver-Bucy syndrome, which is characterised by a multimodal associative agnosia and chronic  
14 behavioural change following bilateral (but not unilateral) ATL ablation in macaques<sup>28,29</sup> (and in  
15 rare human cases).<sup>30</sup> Behavioural changes and prosopagnosia are commonly reported in SD  
16 patients with asymmetric rightward biased ATL atrophy<sup>31-33</sup>; this clinical observation has led to  
17 proposals that the right ATL has a specialised role for social-semantic knowledge<sup>33,34</sup> and that  
18 these patients constitute a distinct clinical entity - the right temporal variant FTD.<sup>31,33,35</sup> However,  
19 formal assessments have demonstrated that social deficits are also found in SD with left dominant  
20 atrophy.<sup>31,36,37</sup> Recent investigations have found that degraded social-semantic knowledge is  
21 associated with *bilateral* ATL atrophy in FTD: there is no evidence for selective or greater social-  
22 semantic deficits in the presence of R>L atrophy or following selective right ATL resection for  
23 surgical treatment of epilepsy.<sup>38,39</sup> Consequently, it appears that the left and right ATLs are both  
24 important for social behaviour and need to be investigated in FTD alongside prefrontal cortical  
25 regions.

26 We have proposed a neurocognitive model of impaired social behaviour in FTD - *controlled*  
27 *social-semantic cognition* (CS-SC).<sup>8</sup> According to the CS-SC framework, impaired social  
28 behaviour in FTD results from damage to two distinct yet interactive components – (i) ATL-based  
29 *social-semantic knowledge*, and (ii) *social control*, which is supported by the prefrontal cortex.  
30 Social-semantic knowledge refers to our long-term database of the meaning of words, objects and  
31 behaviours acquired over our lifetimes and is critical to understand and generate appropriate

1 behaviours across specific contexts.<sup>8,34,40</sup> In a previous study, we demonstrated that social- and  
2 non-social-semantic deficits were highly correlated in FTD and were uniquely associated with  
3 *bilateral* ATL atrophy.<sup>39</sup> Social control includes the selection, evaluation, decision-making and  
4 inhibition processes supported by the orbitofrontal and medial prefrontal cortices and interacts  
5 with ATL-based semantic representations to guide controlled social behaviour.<sup>8</sup> A key hypothesis  
6 from the model is that the behavioural changes in SD result predominantly from a degradation of  
7 social-semantic knowledge following bilateral ATL atrophy, whereas the behavioural changes in  
8 bvFTD appear to result primarily from difficulties controlling social-semantic knowledge  
9 effectively to guide socially appropriate behaviour across changing contexts and scenarios.<sup>8</sup>

10 In this study, we measured the range of behavioural changes in FTD (spanning bvFTD, SD and  
11 intermediate cases) and their cognitive and neuroanatomical bases. We utilised the Cambridge  
12 Behavioural Inventory-Revised and two questionnaires of apathy and impulsivity, together with  
13 neuropsychological assessments and structural MRI. For the first time, we systematically explored  
14 the link between comprehension of a wide range of social concepts and behaviour change in the  
15 same FTD cohort. To achieve comprehensive coverage of behavioural changes in FTD, two  
16 additional informant questionnaires were applied alongside the CBI-R: the Cambridge  
17 Questionnaire for Apathy and Impulsivity Traits (CamQUAIT) and the Apathy-Motivation Index-  
18 Caregiver version (AMI-CG). The CamQUAIT measures apathy and impulsivity/challenging  
19 behaviours and was included because, unlike the CBI-R and other standard measures, the  
20 questionnaire was developed and validated specifically for use in the context of people with  
21 frontotemporal lobar degeneration. Apathy is a core feature of FTD, and considered to be  
22 multidimensional construct, so we included the AMI-CG as this questionnaire has been shown to  
23 be sensitive to subtypes of apathy, to explore (a) whether apathy subtypes could be disentangled  
24 in FTD, and (b) whether each subtype had separable neural substrates and neuropsychological  
25 correlates.

26 The inherently shared phenotypic variation in FTD and the highly correlated atrophy across  
27 frontotemporal areas means that inter-subgroup comparisons limit the ability to localise precise  
28 functions to specific brain regions, and they can also be blind to the patterns of phenotypic  
29 variation that occur across the FTD clinical spectrum (including intermediate FTD cases who do  
30 not fall neatly into one diagnostic category).<sup>17,26,27,39,41</sup> Therefore, we also used a data-driven  
31 transdiagnostic approach which treats FTD as a spectrum where patients represent phenotypic

1 points along a frontotemporal atrophy continuum,<sup>42</sup> to supplement classical diagnosis-based  
2 comparisons with multivariate analytics.

3

## 4 **Materials and methods**

### 5 **Participants**

6 Forty-seven people with a clinical diagnosis of FTD were recruited from specialist clinics in the  
7 Cambridge Centre for Frontotemporal Dementia at the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust  
8 (Addenbrookes) ( $n = 40$ ), St George's Hospital, London ( $n = 4$ ) and John Radcliffe Hospital,  
9 Oxford ( $n = 3$ ). Twenty-six people had a primary diagnosis of bvFTD<sup>5</sup> whereas 21 met criteria for  
10 SD (encompassing both L>R and R>L patterns of temporal atrophy).<sup>14,15</sup> For each participant, grey  
11 matter intensity values in the left and right ATL were extracted and linear regression models fitted  
12 using the control data, with each region of interest as the dependent variable and age, intracranial  
13 volume (ICV) and scanner site included as covariates. Each FTD patient's data were entered into  
14 the model, and the residuals were used to calculate two indices: ATL magnitude (left + right) and  
15 ATL asymmetry (left – right). Of the SD group, 18 had L>R ATL atrophy and 3 had R>L ATL  
16 atrophy, an uneven balance that aligns with clinical experience. The distribution of graded ATL  
17 magnitude and asymmetry values for each FTD case are displayed in Supplementary Fig. 1.

18 Eighteen age-matched healthy participants were recruited from the MRC Cognition and Brain  
19 Sciences Unit, University of Cambridge. Most participants provided written informed consent  
20 obtained according to the Declaration of Helsinki. Where participants lacked capacity to consent,  
21 their next of kin was consulted using the 'personal consultee' process as established by UK law.  
22 Demographic and disease information is reported in Table 1. There was a significant difference in  
23 sex distribution found between groups, however no significant interactions between group and sex  
24 were detected for any group comparisons, indicating that sex had no influence on the findings.

25

## 1 **Informant questionnaires**

### 2 **Cambridge Behavioural Inventory-Revised**

3 The Cambridge Behavioural Inventory-Revised (CBI-R) measures behavioural change in  
4 neurodegenerative disorders<sup>12,43</sup> and includes 45 items which cover ten domains: Memory and  
5 Orientation, Everyday Skills, Self-Care, Abnormal Behaviour, Mood, Beliefs, Eating Habits,  
6 Sleep, Stereotypic and Motor Behaviours, Motivation. For each item, the informant rates the  
7 frequency of the behaviour/functional impairment over the past month on a five-point Likert scale  
8 or responds N/A if not applicable. A percentage score for each domain is calculated, where higher  
9 scores indicate increased frequency of behavioural change.

### 10 **Apathy-Motivation Index-Caregiver version**

11 The Apathy-Motivation Index-Caregiver version (AMI-CG) is an informant questionnaire  
12 designed to measure apathy in neurological patients.<sup>44</sup> There are 18 items covering three apathy  
13 subtypes: Behavioural Activation, Social Motivation and Emotional Sensitivity. For each item, the  
14 informant rates how appropriately the behaviour describes the thoughts and behaviours of the  
15 patient from five response options ranging from ‘completely true’ to ‘completely untrue’. A score  
16 is derived for each apathy domain by averaging item scores, where higher scores indicate greater  
17 levels of apathy. The caregiver version was used, as cognitively impaired participants may lack  
18 the necessary insight to provide a reliable self-report (e.g., Klar et al.<sup>44</sup>). All controls and a subset  
19 of the FTD cohort (bvFTD = 21, SD = 15) also completed the original self-report version of the  
20 AMI<sup>45</sup> to allow a direct comparison of self versus informant ratings.

### 21 **Cambridge Questionnaire for Apathy and Impulsivity Traits**

22 The Cambridge Questionnaire for Apathy and Impulsivity Traits (CamQUAIT) is a 15-item  
23 informant questionnaire designed to measure apathy and impulsivity, developed and validated  
24 specifically in the context of syndromes associated with frontotemporal lobar degeneration.<sup>46</sup>  
25 Informants rate the frequency of behaviours over recent weeks from four response options. Scores  
26 are calculated for two domains – “Motivation and Support” (CamQUAIT-M) and “Impulsivity  
27 and Challenging Behaviours” (CamQUAIT-C) where higher scores indicate increased frequency  
28 of behaviour change.

## 1 **Neuropsychology**

2 Participants completed a battery of neuropsychological tests.<sup>39</sup> Tasks assessed comprehension of  
3 multiple types of social concepts, including famous people,<sup>47,48</sup> abstract social concepts,<sup>25,34,49-52</sup>  
4 emotions,<sup>53,54</sup> social norms understanding and sarcasm detection.<sup>55</sup> Where possible, ‘non-social’  
5 comparator tasks were included, matched for lexical frequency, specificity and imageability.<sup>56</sup>  
6 General semantic memory was assessed using the modified picture version of the Camel and  
7 Cactus test (CCT) and naming tasks from the Cambridge Semantic Memory Test Battery,<sup>57-60</sup> a  
8 synonym judgement task<sup>59,61</sup> and the 30-item Boston Naming Test.<sup>62,63</sup> Global cognition was  
9 assessed using the Addenbrooke’s Cognitive Examination-Revised (ACE-R), a dementia  
10 screening tool with five subscales: Attention and Orientation, Memory, Language, Fluency and  
11 Visuospatial Function<sup>64</sup>. The Brixton Spatial Anticipation Test<sup>65</sup> and Raven’s Coloured  
12 Progressive Matrices Set B<sup>66</sup> were included as tests of executive function.

## 13 **Structural MRI**

14 A subset of the FTD cohort (bvFTD = 15, SD = 18) and 35 age-matched healthy controls had a  
15 T1-weighted 3T structural MRI scan on a Siemens PRISMA, University of Cambridge using an  
16 MPRAGE sequence. Of these, 29 participants (bvFTD = 1, SD = 12, control = 16) were scanned  
17 at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit (TR = 2000ms, TE = 2.85ms, TI = 850ms), and 39  
18 (bvFTD = 14, SD = 6, control = 19) were scanned at the Wolfson Brain Imaging Centre (TR =  
19 2000ms, TE = 2.93ms, TI = 850ms). Raw data were converted to the Brain Imaging Dataset  
20 format<sup>67</sup> and preprocessed using the Computational Anatomy Toolbox version 12 in SPM 12.<sup>68</sup>  
21 Images were segmented into grey matter, white matter and cerebrospinal fluid, modulated, and  
22 normalised to MNI space using geodesic shooting.<sup>69</sup> Normalised grey matter images were spatially  
23 smoothed using a 10mm FWHM Gaussian kernel.

24 Voxel-based morphometry (VBM) was conducted to explore grey matter volume differences  
25 between groups. Separate general linear models were fitted for each contrast, with age, ICV and  
26 scanner site as covariates, and independent t-tests conducted to compare groups. An explicit mask  
27 was used, based on a method recommended for VBM of severely atrophic brains.<sup>70</sup> Significant  
28 clusters were extracted using a cluster-level threshold of  $P(\text{FDR}) < 0.05$ , based on an initial voxel-  
29 level threshold of  $P < 0.001$ . Results were visualised using the xjView toolbox



1 (https://www.alivelearn.net/xjview) and brain regions labelled using the Automated Anatomical  
2 Labelling Atlas 3.<sup>71</sup>

### 3 **Statistical analysis**

4 Behavioural data were analysed using the ‘rstatix’ package<sup>72</sup> in R studio version 4.0.3<sup>73</sup> and IBM  
5 SPSS version 28. Normality and equality of variance were assessed by Shapiro-Wilk tests and  
6 Levene’s test, respectively. If data were normally distributed then one-way ANOVAs and post-  
7 hoc Tukey’s range tests were conducted if there was equality of variance across groups, whereas  
8 Welch ANOVAs and post-hoc Games Howell tests were conducted where variances were not  
9 equal. Where data were not normally distributed, Kruskal-Wallis tests with post-hoc Dunn’s tests  
10 were conducted. A  $P < 0.05$  threshold was used to determine statistical significance.

### 11 **Frequency of behavioural changes in frontotemporal dementia**

12 Informant-based Likert scale ratings in neurodegenerative disorders may be influenced by  
13 symptom duration. For example, caregivers may overestimate the frequency/magnitude of  
14 behavioural features initially when these may be noticeably florid and distressing relative to a  
15 premorbid baseline. Conversely, caregivers may acclimatise to behaviours over time and thus  
16 begin to underestimate their frequency and/or magnitude. Moreover, the emergence of apathy or  
17 motor deficits may mitigate the expression of other challenging behaviours. To account for the  
18 temporal evolution of the clinical syndromes, we explored the prevalence of individual behaviours  
19 in FTD regardless of their frequency. First, for each CBI-R domain, a patient was binarised as  
20 ‘impaired’ if they had a rating above ‘never’ or ‘not impaired’ otherwise. Second, each patient was  
21 binarised as ‘impaired’ (i.e. item frequency rated more than ‘never’) or ‘not impaired’ (i.e. item  
22 frequency rated ‘never’) on each CBI-R item ( $n = 45$ ). Differences in the prevalence of behaviours  
23 in bvFTD versus SD were explored using  $\chi^2$  tests.

### 24 **Extracting the magnitude and dimensions of behaviour change in** 25 **FTD**

26 CamQUAIT and AMI data were missing for one bvFTD participant, meaning 1.4% of the total  
27 FTD data were missing. For the FTD cohort only, raw scores for each questionnaire domain were  
28 z-scored and missing data were imputed using probabilistic principal component analysis.<sup>74,75</sup> This

1 method requires the number of extracted principal components to be pre-specified and so k-fold  
2 cross-validation was conducted to determine the optimum number of components, based on the  
3 solution with the lowest root mean squared error for held out cases over 1000 permutations.<sup>76</sup> Two  
4 principal component analyses (PCA) were used in the analyses. In the first, PCA with varimax-  
5 rotation was conducted on the questionnaire domains to extract the underlying behavioural  
6 dimensions of variation in FTD. An initial PCA extracted four principal components which  
7 explained 78.3% of the total variance (see Supplementary Fig. 2 for the factor loadings). One  
8 bvFTD participant had an extreme outlier factor score (4.05) on the third principal component,  
9 which was reflected as interpreting *psychosis*. This participant was the only case in the sample to  
10 display prominent psychotic features, and this component disappeared when this participant was  
11 removed from the PCA (the other three components remained stable). Consequently, this  
12 participant was excluded and the final PCA was re-run with  $n = 46$ . The results from this final  
13 PCA are reported below and used in all further analyses. Sampling adequacy and suitability of the  
14 data for the PCA was assessed using the Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of  
15 sphericity. The number of principal components to extract was determined using the elbow method  
16 on the scree plot of eigenvalues.<sup>77</sup> Factor scores for each participant were calculated using the  
17 regression method and groups were compared using independent t-tests.

## 18 **The neuropsychological and neuroanatomical correlates of behaviour** 19 **change in FTD**

20 A second, separate varimax-rotated standard PCA was conducted on the FTD neuropsychological  
21 data. This PCA extracted three components, labelled for ease of reference and interpretation as:  
22 (1) *FTD severity*, (2) *semantic memory* and (3) *executive function* (Supplementary Fig. 3).<sup>39</sup> Note  
23 that such labelling is approximate and implies differential weighting rather than exclusivity of  
24 features across components. The SD group had significantly lower factor scores (i.e. poorer  
25 performance) on the *semantic memory* component compared with bvFTD ( $t = 5.38, P < 0.0001$ ),  
26 whereas the bvFTD group had significantly lower scores than SD on the *executive function*  
27 component ( $t = 3.97, P = 0.0002$ ) (Supplementary Fig. 4).

28 The association between neuropsychological performance and behaviour change was explored by  
29 fitting separate forced-entry linear multiple regression models with factor scores on each  
30 component extracted from the informant questionnaire PCA as the dependent variable, and the

1 three neuropsychological components (*FTD severity, semantic memory, executive function*) as  
2 predictors. In the FTD cohort only ( $n = 32$ ), voxel-based correlations<sup>78</sup> were conducted to  
3 determine the regions of grey matter intensity associated with factor scores on the informant  
4 questionnaire PCA-derived behavioural dimensions. A linear regression model was fitted with  
5 each factor score as the dependent variable, and age, ICV and scanner site included as covariates.  
6 There were no significant clusters for any correlations using an initial voxel-level threshold of  $P$   
7  $< 0.001$ . Therefore, we applied a slightly more lenient voxel-threshold of  $P < 0.005$ , whilst keeping  
8 a cluster-level threshold of  $P(\text{FDR}) < 0.05$ .

## 9 **BvFTD versus SD discrimination**

10 Logistic regression was conducted to determine the ability of each informant questionnaire PCA-  
11 derived behavioural dimension to discriminate between bvFTD and SD. This was compared with  
12 the discriminative ability of the three neuropsychological components (described above).  
13 Discriminative ability (as a diagnostic forced two-choice classification) was expressed by receiver  
14 operator characteristic (ROC) curves with “area under the curve” as the summary metric.

15

## 16 **Results**

### 17 **Grey matter volume differences between groups**

18 The VBM results align closely with the expected distribution of frontotemporal atrophy in FTD  
19 and in each syndrome (Fig. 1 and Supplementary Table 1). The bvFTD group had reduced grey  
20 matter volume, which was maximal in the prefrontal cortex, and extended to the temporal lobes,  
21 insula, parietal lobe and cerebellum. The SD group had reduced grey matter volume in the bilateral  
22 ATLs, maximal at the temporal pole, with additional loss in the posterior temporal cortex,  
23 prefrontal cortex and insula. Comparisons between bvFTD and SD revealed reduced volume in  
24 the bilateral ATLs in SD, with no significant clusters emerging in the reverse contrast.

25

## 1 Behavioural changes in FTD

2 Table 2 and Fig. 2A display group average total scores on each questionnaire domain. As expected,  
3 the bvFTD group had significantly higher scores (i.e. more severe behaviour change) than controls  
4 across every domain. These main effects were not driven solely by the bvFTD sample, however -  
5 the SD group also had significantly higher scores than controls on every domain apart from CBI-  
6 R Self-Care ( $P = 0.15$ ), CBI-R Beliefs ( $P = 0.09$ ), AMI-CG Emotional Sensitivity ( $P = 0.18$ ) and  
7 CamQUAIT-C ( $P = 0.30$ ).

8 Post-hoc pairwise comparisons between FTD subtypes revealed that the bvFTD group had  
9 significantly higher scores on the following CBI-R domains: Everyday Skills ( $P = 0.005$ ), Self-  
10 Care ( $P = 0.0003$ ), Abnormal Behaviours ( $P = 0.0006$ ), Eating Habits ( $P = 0.007$ ), Sleep ( $P = 0.04$ )  
11 and Motivation ( $P = 0.002$ ). The bvFTD group also had increased ratings of apathy, with higher  
12 scores on the Behavioural Activation ( $P = 0.002$ ) and Emotional Sensitivity ( $P = 0.0002$ ) AMI-  
13 CG domains, and both CamQUAIT subscales (CamQUAIT-M,  $P = 0.002$ ; CamQUAIT-C,  $P =$   
14  $0.0002$ ). There were no differences on the AMI-CG Social Motivation domain ( $P = 0.07$ ) or on  
15 the following CBI-R domains: Memory and Orientation ( $P = 0.74$ ), Mood ( $P = 0.12$ ), Beliefs ( $P$   
16  $= 0.09$ ) and Stereotypic and Motor Behaviours ( $P = 0.26$ ). These results demonstrate that people  
17 with FTD are impaired across a wide range of behaviours, and this is not selective to bvFTD but  
18 is true in SD too (although milder on average).

19 In each CBI-R domain, the percentage of ‘impaired’ bvFTD patients was above 50% (Fig. 2B).  
20 This was also true in SD, except for Self-Care (23.8%) and Beliefs (33.3%). There was a  
21 significantly higher proportion of bvFTD patients impaired on the Everyday Skills ( $\chi^2 = 5.61$ ,  $P =$   
22  $0.02$ ), Self-Care ( $\chi^2 = 15.25$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) and Abnormal Behaviours ( $\chi^2 = 6.93$ ,  $P = 0.008$ ) domains.  
23 There were no significant differences on the remaining CBI-R domains (Supplementary Table 2).

24 The percentage of participants impaired on each individual CBI-R item is reported in  
25 Supplementary Table 3. For each item ( $n = 45$ ),  $\chi^2$  tests were conducted to explore whether  
26 particular behaviours were more prevalent in one FTD subtype than the other. Twenty-five out of  
27 45 (55.6%)  $\chi^2$  tests were significant, and in every single situation, this was due to a significantly  
28 higher proportion of impaired bvFTD participants. There were no instances where the opposite  
29 was true, i.e. impaired behaviours significantly more frequent in SD. In other words, we detected  
30 no “behavioural double dissociations”.

1

## 2 **Association between self- and caregiver-ratings of apathy**

3 Despite large differences in AMI-CG ratings between FTD and controls, there were no differences  
4 between groups on the self-rated version of the AMI for Behavioural Activation ( $H(2) = 2.1, P =$   
5  $0.36$ ), Social Motivation ( $F(2,51) = 0.76, P = 0.48$ ) or Emotional Sensitivity ( $F(2,51) = 0.03, P =$   
6  $0.97$ ). The correlation between AMI-CG and AMI scores for each group is displayed in Fig. 3.  
7 Self- and informant-ratings of apathy were positively correlated in controls (Behavioural  
8 Activation;  $r = 0.71, P = 0.001$ , Social Motivation;  $r = 0.58, P = 0.01$ , Emotional Sensitivity;  $r =$   
9  $0.5, P = 0.04$ ). In contrast, there was less concordance between self- and informant ratings in the  
10 two FTD subgroups. There were no significant associations in bvFTD (Behavioural Activation;  $r$   
11  $= 0.17, P = 0.47$ , Social Motivation;  $r = 0.25, P = 0.28$ , Emotional Sensitivity;  $r = 0.23, P = 0.32$ ).  
12 There were significant correlations between SD patients and informant ratings for Social  
13 Motivation ( $r = 0.53, P = 0.04$ ) and Emotional Sensitivity ( $r = 0.6, P = 0.02$ ) but not for Behavioural  
14 Activation ( $r = 0.23, P = 0.41$ ). These findings highlight the discrepancy between the perspective  
15 of the patient and the caregiver in FTD, particularly in bvFTD<sup>44</sup> (and thus why it is important to  
16 collect informant reports in the clinic; see Discussion).

17

## 18 **Extracting the dimensions of behavioural change in FTD**

19 The PCA conducted on the informant questionnaire data had a KMO statistic of 0.75, indicating  
20 meritorious sampling adequacy<sup>79</sup> and Bartlett's test for sphericity was significant ( $P < 0.0001$ )  
21 indicating presence of at least some common factors in the covariance matrix. Visual inspection  
22 of the scree plot indicated three principal components, which explained 77.7% of the total variance.  
23 Factor loadings for each questionnaire domain and factor scores for each participant are displayed  
24 in Fig. 4. For the full details of the neuropsychology PCA, see Rouse et al.<sup>39</sup>

25 The first principal component had an eigenvalue of 6.96 and explained 46.42% of the total  
26 variance. The Motivation, Self-Care and Everyday Skills CBI-R domains, CamQUAIT-M and the  
27 three AMI-CG domains loaded positively on this component. Accordingly, this component was  
28 labelled *apathy*. The bvFTD group had significantly higher factor scores than SD on this  
29 component ( $t = 3.70, P = 0.0006$ ). The second principal component had an eigenvalue of 2.38 and

1 explained 15.8% of the total variance. The Mood, Beliefs, Abnormal Behaviours, Eating Habits  
 2 and Stereotypic and Motor Behaviours CBI-R domains, and the CamQUAIT-C loaded positively  
 3 on this component. This component was labelled *challenging behaviours*. Again, bvFTD patients  
 4 had significantly higher factor scores than SD on this component ( $W = 354, P = 0.04$ ). The third  
 5 principal component had an eigenvalue of 1.27 and explained 8.44% of the total variance. The  
 6 Abnormal Behaviours, Eating Habits, Memory and Orientation and Everyday Skills CBI-R  
 7 domains loaded positively on this component, and thus the component was labelled *Activities of*  
 8 *Daily Living (ADLs)*. There were no differences in factor scores between bvFTD and SD on this  
 9 component ( $t = 1.20, P = 0.24$ ).

## 10 **BvFTD versus SD discrimination**

11 Receiver operating characteristic curves showing the bvFTD versus SD discriminative ability of  
 12 each behavioural and neuropsychological component are displayed in Fig. 5. *Semantic memory*  
 13 had the highest predictive accuracy (AUC = 84.1%) followed by *executive function* (AUC =  
 14 78.8%) and *apathy* (AUC = 78.5%). There was poor discriminative accuracy from *challenging*  
 15 *behaviours* (AUC = 67.4%), *FTD severity* (AUC = 55.5%) and *ADLs* (AUC = 61.1%). When  
 16 combined, *semantic memory* and *executive function* had excellent predictive accuracy (AUC =  
 17 95.1%) while *apathy*, *challenging behaviours* and *ADLs* combined had good predictive accuracy  
 18 (AUC = 83.1%).

## 20 **The neuropsychological and neuroanatomical correlates of behaviour** 21 **change in FTD**

22 A linear multiple regression model with the three neuropsychology components as predictors (*FTD*  
 23 *severity*, *semantic memory*, *executive function*) was significant for *apathy* factor scores ( $F(3, 42)$   
 24  $= 5.25, P = 0.004$ ) with *executive function* the only significant individual predictor ( $t = -3.51, P =$   
 25  $0.001$ , standardized beta = -0.46). The negative beta value indicates that higher levels of *apathy*  
 26 were associated with poorer status of executive function. To investigate which specific aspects of  
 27 executive function were most related to *apathy*, partial correlations were calculated between each  
 28 of the three tasks that loaded on the *executive function* factor and *apathy* factor scores, whilst  
 29 controlling for the other two tasks. *Apathy* factor scores were significantly correlated with

1 performance on the Brixton Spatial Anticipation Test ( $r = -0.56, P = 0.001$ ) but not with the Ravens  
2 ( $r = -0.03, P = 0.90$ ) or TASIT ( $r = 0.06, P = 0.76$ ). The model was significant for *ADLs* factor  
3 scores ( $F(3, 42) = 5.04, P = 0.0001$ ), where *FTD severity* was only significant individual predictor  
4 ( $t = -3.18, P = 0.003$ , standardized beta =  $-0.42$ ). The negative beta value indicates that increased  
5 impairments in *ADLs* were associated with increased levels of *FTD severity*. The model was not  
6 significant for the *challenging behaviours* component ( $F(3, 42) = 1.85, P = 0.15$ ).

7 Voxel-based correlational analysis detected no regions of grey matter that were associated with  
8 factor scores on the *apathy* or *challenging behaviours* component. However, when a measure of  
9 global atrophy was added as a covariate, then significant clusters emerged for *apathy* in the dorsal  
10 anterior cingulate cortex (Brodmann area 24), supplementary motor area and precuneus. Higher  
11 factor scores on the *ADLs* component were negatively associated with grey matter volume in the  
12 medial prefrontal cortex, precentral gyri and left insula (Fig. 6 and Supplementary Table 4). A  
13 similar set of brain regions was associated with total atrophy and indeed, when total atrophy was  
14 included as a covariate in the analysis, then no regions remained for *ADLs*.

15

## 16 Discussion

17 Behavioural changes are a common manifestation of frontotemporal dementia; they are a defining  
18 feature of bvFTD and are also common in SD.<sup>9,10,12,80</sup> This study addressed two clinical  
19 conundrums, each with important implications. First, are there clear qualitative distinctions  
20 between the behavioural profiles in bvFTD and SD? We confirmed the frequency and  
21 dimensionality of abnormal behaviours in FTD, with *quantitative* rather than *qualitative*  
22 differences between bvFTD and SD. For discrimination of bvFTD versus SD, neuropsychological  
23 measures of semantic memory and executive function were much more powerful than behavioural  
24 change. We also found that there was a large discrepancy between patients' self-ratings of *apathy*  
25 *versus* informant ratings, highlighting the importance of the caregiver's perspective when  
26 measuring behavioural change in FTD and for effective evaluation in diagnostic clinics.<sup>81</sup>

27 Second, what are the roles of the prefrontal cortex and anterior temporal lobe in supporting social  
28 behaviour? The transdiagnostic approach, including intermediate cases, reveals the underlying  
29 dimensions of behavioural change, and it is the individual expression of these dimensions that was

1 used to study neuroanatomical correlates of FTD behaviour and neuropsychology rather than a  
2 traditional binary group comparison. Apathy was a major dimension in FTD, and apathy severity  
3 was associated with impaired executive function and anterior cingulate cortex atrophy in both  
4 bvFTD and SD. No association was found between behavioural changes and levels of semantic  
5 knowledge or ATL grey matter volume. In the following sections, we discuss these findings and  
6 their implications, including in relation to the emerging concept of a ‘right temporal variant FTD’ –  
7 currently a highly debated topic in the field.<sup>82</sup>

## 8 **Do behavioural profiles in bvFTD and SD differ quantitatively or** 9 **qualitatively?**

10 People with bvFTD displayed the expected wide range of behavioural and social disturbances.<sup>5,83</sup>  
11 Behavioural change was common in SD too. Indeed, across CBI-R domains, a high percentage of  
12 FTD patients displayed a degree of impairment, in contrast to age-matched controls who were at  
13 floor-level. Taken together, these results highlight the sensitivity of informant questionnaires for  
14 detecting behaviour changes in FTD and reinforce that both bvFTD and SD patients have abnormal  
15 scores across every behavioural domain. The behavioural overlap mirrored the radiological  
16 overlap - there was a degree of bilateral ATL volume loss in bvFTD and a degree of prefrontal  
17 volume loss in SD, in line with previous neuroimaging comparisons.<sup>41,84</sup> This confirms the absence  
18 of an absolute neuroanatomical division between bvFTD and SD. Instead, each patient has  
19 correlated atrophy in multiple regions and occupies a different point in a frontotemporal  
20 multidimensional atrophy space. Patients (beyond their initial presentation) often display  
21 intermediate phenotypes and express diagnostic criteria for more than one syndrome.<sup>85</sup> This  
22 clinical overlap reflects systematic, graded variations across FTD rather than absolute, mutually  
23 exclusive categories. Accordingly, the use only of categorical comparisons seems to be suboptimal  
24 for disentangling the precise functions of the ATL and prefrontal regions. Therefore, we also  
25 adopted a transdiagnostic approach to FTD and applied multivariate analytics sensitive to the  
26 heterogeneity in FTD to model the graded behavioural and cognitive variations and then identify  
27 their neuroanatomical underpinnings.

28 Group-level diagnostic-based comparisons revealed higher levels of apathy, abnormal behaviour,  
29 changed eating habits, impaired everyday skills and self-care in bvFTD compared to SD. In  
30 contrast, there were no differences in stereotypic behaviours, mood or abnormal beliefs. Although



1 there were many individual behaviours more common in bvFTD, there were no specific behaviours  
2 more common in SD. This finding contrasts with some previous studies that have identified distinct  
3 behavioural profiles in bvFTD and SD.<sup>9,13</sup> For example, Snowden et al. reported that, although  
4 obsessive behaviours were common in both FTD subtypes, there was a more ‘compulsive’ quality  
5 to these behaviours in SD (e.g., clock watching). Here we found that, although compulsive  
6 behaviours were indeed highly prevalent in SD, they were even more frequent in bvFTD. Taken  
7 together, the lack of any behavioural double dissociations coupled with the broad group-level  
8 differences suggests that the behavioural signatures of bvFTD and SD (at least those captured by  
9 the questionnaires used) do not differ *qualitatively*, but rather *quantitatively* and *unidirectionally*  
10 (bvFTD>SD).

11 An important clinical implication of contrastive behavioural signatures in bvFTD and SD is  
12 improved diagnostic classification. This is particularly salient for disease modifying treatments, as  
13 bvFTD and SD are associated with different underlying neuropathologies (TDP-43 type C in SD<sup>86</sup>  
14 and heterogeneous pathology in bvFTD).<sup>87</sup> Consequently, accurate diagnosis is vital for clinical  
15 trial stratification, to ensure that any participant in a trial actually has the proteinopathy the drug  
16 is targeting. We found that, although apathy was a good discriminator between bvFTD and SD,  
17 behavioural measures had poorer discriminative ability than two neuropsychological measures;  
18 *semantic memory* (SD<bvFTD) and *executive function* (bvFTD<SD) and was most powerful when  
19 the two neuropsychological components were combined (AUC = 0.95). Previous studies have  
20 shown that bvFTD and SD can be clearly distinguished using neuropsychology, with a double  
21 dissociation between semantic memory (impaired in SD) and executive function (impaired in  
22 bvFTD).<sup>88,89</sup> This finding implies that, rather than chasing subtle behavioural differences (which  
23 appear to be primarily quantitative rather than qualitative in nature), neuropsychological  
24 assessments of semantic memory and executive function should be considered the discriminative  
25 ‘gold standard’ at least in terms of bedside testing or when neuroimaging is not available.  
26 According to current consensus criteria, a possible bvFTD diagnosis requires a neuropsychological  
27 profile of executive deficits with relative sparing of episodic memory and visuospatial function.<sup>5</sup>  
28 Based on our findings, we suggest that relatively preserved semantic memory should be included  
29 as an important neuropsychological criterion for bvFTD.

## 1 **The roles of the prefrontal cortex and anterior temporal lobes in** 2 **supporting behaviour**

3 The informant questionnaire PCA extracted three behavioural components: *apathy*, *challenging*  
4 *behaviours* and *ADLs*. Apathy is a core feature of FTD; it is a diagnostic criterion for bvFTD<sup>5</sup> and  
5 is also common in SD.<sup>90</sup> Apathy is considered a multidimensional construct and distinct subtypes  
6 have been proposed, each associated with different neural circuitry.<sup>91,92</sup> In the current study,  
7 behavioural, social and emotional apathy domains were highly intercorrelated and co-loaded onto  
8 the same component, indicating that all three domains are concurrently affected by FTD.<sup>93</sup> Direct  
9 comparisons between FTD subtypes revealed increased severity of apathy in bvFTD, in keeping  
10 with this feature as a core diagnostic criterion.<sup>5</sup> There was evidence for increased apathy in SD too  
11 – indeed the majority of patients (61.9%) had apathy factor scores outside of the control-defined  
12 normality cut-off (see Fig. 4). These findings highlight the prevalence of apathy in FTD and its  
13 occurrence across the FTD spectrum. Apathy can be difficult to distinguish from depression as  
14 they both include features such as loss of interest and anhedonia.<sup>94</sup> However, in our study the mood  
15 domain of the CBI-R did not co-load with the apathy measures but loaded onto a statistically  
16 orthogonal component (*challenging behaviours*). This suggests that the motivational changes  
17 found in this study were not due to affective changes, in keeping with other studies which have  
18 found apathy and depression to be dissociable in FTD.<sup>95</sup>

19 The CS-SC model proposes that the impaired social behaviour in FTD can result from damage to  
20 two distinct yet interactive components: (i) *social-semantic knowledge*, underpinned by the  
21 bilateral ATLs, and (ii) *social control*, including selection, evaluation, decision-making and  
22 inhibition supported by prefrontal cortical regions. A core hypothesis from the model is that  
23 atrophy in medial prefrontal regions will cause deficits in the ability to control and regulate social-  
24 semantic knowledge effectively, to guide appropriate and adaptive social behaviours.<sup>8</sup> By taking  
25 a transdiagnostic approach, we were able to reveal the underlying behavioural dimensions across  
26 the FTD clinical spectrum and show that anterior cingulate cortex atrophy is associated with  
27 increased levels of apathy, aligning with the predictions of the CS-SC framework.

28 Increased apathy was associated with poor executive function, a finding which replicates previous  
29 FTD studies,<sup>96,97</sup> and which can emerge years before conversion from presymptomatic to  
30 symptomatic states in genetic FTD.<sup>98</sup> When the executively-loading tasks were analysed

1 separately, performance on the Brixton Spatial Anticipation Test was the only task that was  
2 significantly correlated with apathy, potentially indicating a more specific relationship between  
3 apathy and certain aspects of executive function (e.g., the ability to adapt flexibly to rule changes  
4 and inhibit previous response strategies). It was not possible from our study to determine the causal  
5 relationship between apathy and executive function, however a previous study reported that apathy  
6 predicts executive cognitive decline in presymptomatic genetic bvFTD.<sup>98</sup>

7 Voxel-based correlational analysis revealed that apathy severity in FTD was negatively correlated  
8 with grey matter volume in the anterior cingulate cortex. This was true not only of the bvFTD  
9 sample (classically associated with anterior cingulate cortex atrophy) but in SD too, indicating that  
10 (a) the increased levels of apathy in bvFTD>SD reflects the predominance of prefrontal atrophy  
11 in the former condition and (b) the apathy in SD is a consequence of pathology spreading into  
12 medial prefrontal areas (rather than a distinct neurocognitive process associated with ATL atrophy,  
13 for example). Atrophy or hypometabolism in the anterior cingulate cortex has been strongly linked  
14 with apathy in FTD<sup>99-102</sup> as well as in other neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's  
15 disease<sup>103,104</sup> and Parkinson's disease.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, anterior cingulate cortex lesions cause severe  
16 apathy and abulia.<sup>106</sup> The neurocognitive mechanism of social control deficits underlying apathy  
17 in FTD can be explained by a predictive coding framework as a 'failure of active inference' due  
18 to reduced precision of prior expectations, leading to failures in correctly adapting actions to the  
19 environment and thus diminished goal-directed behaviour.<sup>8,107</sup> In support of this hypothesis, apathy  
20 is associated with reduced prior precision in both healthy participants and people with Parkinson's  
21 disease.<sup>108,109</sup> The anterior cingulate cortex may be the anatomical substrate of goal priors, or  
22 potentially underpin a hub for the integration of prior expectations with sensory inputs. Apathy is  
23 a multidimensional construct, where even theorised subdomains such as 'emotional sensitivity' or  
24 'social motivation' might encompass multiple behavioural subcomponents. It is possible that two  
25 people with FTD might exhibit 'apathy' for different mechanistic reasons, which would raise the  
26 question of whether the syndromes should be regarded as equivalent on this behavioural  
27 dimension. Although apathy had a common neuroanatomical correlate in bvFTD and SD, future  
28 studies that utilise functional neuroimaging<sup>110</sup> and ancillary physiologically informed  
29 techniques<sup>111,112</sup> may be able to deconstruct the complex behavioural changes that are called apathy  
30 and disinhibition.

1 A key hypothesis of the CS-SC framework is that the impaired behaviour in SD is predominantly  
2 due to a degradation of social-semantic knowledge following bilateral ATL atrophy.<sup>8</sup> Here we  
3 found no association between impaired social-semantic knowledge and behavioural change in  
4 FTD. How does this fit with the predictions of the CS-SC framework? First, our social-semantic  
5 battery already contains tasks which provide direct measures of social abilities (e.g., emotion  
6 recognition, person recognition, sarcasm detection) and the SD patients were impaired on these  
7 and more so than the bvFTD subgroup.<sup>39</sup> Thus these direct assessments do detect social changes,  
8 and we have formally shown that they are very highly correlated with both general (non-social)  
9 semantic impairments and atrophy in the ATL bilaterally.<sup>39</sup> Second, unlike some of these direct  
10 measures, it seems possible that questionnaires such as the CBI-R may miss these more  
11 “semantically driven” aspects of behavioural change, and instead are more sensitive to deficits in  
12 prefrontal-based “social control” processes such as apathy or disinhibition. If correct, then the  
13 development of better-targeted informant questions, sensitive to these aspects of behaviour change,  
14 including formal assessment of behavioural change associated with SD in earlier studies<sup>9,10,113</sup> is  
15 an important avenue for future research.

## 16 **Implications for the ‘right temporal variant of FTD’**

17 FTD patients with R>L ATL atrophy often present with behavioural changes; this clinical  
18 observation is routinely observed in specialist clinics<sup>114,115</sup> (although there are exceptions).<sup>116</sup> In  
19 recent years, efforts have been made to characterise and define the right ATL temporal variant,  
20 motivated in part because of the high clinicopathological correlation with TDP43-opathy rather  
21 than tauopathy, and in part because the existing criteria for svPPA do not include the associated  
22 behaviour changes.<sup>14</sup> This has led to several proposals of diagnostic criteria and an appropriate  
23 label for these patients, including the ‘right temporal variant of FTD’,<sup>35</sup> and ‘semantic behavioural-  
24 variant FTD’.<sup>33</sup> An international working group has been formed, with the aim to define a cohesive  
25 clinical phenotype for this syndrome, driven by the lack of uniform consensus criteria and  
26 nomenclature.<sup>117</sup> A multi-centre retrospective analysis of 360 FTD patients with predominant right  
27 ATL atrophy found that the most common symptoms at initial presentation were: compulsive  
28 behaviours, disinhibition/socially inappropriate behaviour, naming/word-finding difficulties,  
29 memory deficits, apathy, loss of empathy, prosopagnosia, and problems recognising and altered  
30 reactions to taste, bodily sensations, smell and sound.<sup>117</sup> However, despite R>L asymmetry in all

1 cases, only four cases had selective right ATL atrophy. This complicates the localisation of  
2 function of these features to the right ATL. For example, many of the behavioural features listed  
3 above (reduced empathy, apathy, compulsive behaviours, social disinhibition) are also common in  
4 bvFTD,<sup>5</sup> and even the behaviours considered to be associated more with 'right temporal variant  
5 FTD' than with bvFTD (e.g., rigid preoccupations and narrowed food preferences) can be seen in  
6 L>R SD patients too.

7 One mechanism behind the behavioural changes in R>L SD is a degradation of social-semantic  
8 knowledge following right ATL atrophy.<sup>33,52,117</sup> However, a recent study found that there were no  
9 differences in social-semantic knowledge between L>R and R>L SD patients, and that both  
10 general semantic knowledge and social-semantic knowledge were associated with *bilateral* ATL  
11 volume.<sup>39</sup> L>R and R>L patients had overlapping neuropsychological profiles, without highly  
12 selective social-semantic deficits in R>L ATL cases. A similar pattern was found in the current  
13 study - we did not find any evidence for behavioural disturbances specific to those with R>L ATL  
14 atrophy. Rather, R>L and L>R patients were highly overlapping in terms of their position along  
15 the behavioural dimensions and exhibited bilateral levels of ATL atrophy (although we note that  
16 coverage of every possible relevant behavioural feature was not possible). In summary, the data  
17 from FTD suggest that social-semantic knowledge is part of a broader conceptual system  
18 underpinned by the bilateral ATL. This is consistent with three lines of evidence from other patient  
19 groups and healthy participants. First, selective right ATL resection for temporal lobe epilepsy  
20 does not cause a selective impairment for social concepts or lead to behavioural changes.<sup>39,118</sup>  
21 Second, distortion-corrected or distortion-reducing fMRI studies in healthy participants have  
22 found bilateral ventrolateral ATL activation for both social and non-social concepts.<sup>49,51</sup> Finally,  
23 transcranial magnetic stimulation to the left *or* right ATL generates a transient disruption to social-  
24 semantic decision making.<sup>50</sup>

25 Why then, do people with R>L ATL atrophy consistently present with behavioural problems?  
26 Group studies have found that R>L SD patients typically have more temporal lobe atrophy overall  
27 than L>R,<sup>31,41</sup> and increased prefrontal atrophy.<sup>119</sup> Based on our CS-SC model, there are at least  
28 two (non-mutually exclusive) alternative explanations for the increased behavioural change in  
29 R>L SD. First, R>L SD patients have greater total ATL volume loss bilaterally, leading to a greater  
30 degradation of social-semantic knowledge which is important for appropriate social behaviour.<sup>8</sup>  
31 Second, the increased behavioural changes in R>L SD result from their correlated atrophy in

1 prefrontal areas important for social control, such as the orbitofrontal cortex and anterior cingulate  
2 cortex.

3 Our findings have implications for the nosological status of the ‘right temporal variant of FTD’.  
4 We conceptualise SD as a *unitary-yet-graded* disorder, where SD is an umbrella term for a  
5 neurodegenerative disorder encompassing both L>R (svPPA) and R>L (‘right’ SD, ‘right temporal  
6 variant FTD’), where L>R and R>L cases represent spectrum points of the same disease. The  
7 *unitary-yet-graded* model of SD is supported by several key findings. First, although atrophy may  
8 be asymmetric early in SD, hypometabolism tends to be more symmetrical.<sup>120</sup> Second, L>R and  
9 R>L cases become increasingly similar over time and merge into the same clinical syndrome as  
10 atrophy rapidly spreads into the contralateral ATL.<sup>36,119,121,122</sup> Third, L>R and R>L ATL atrophy  
11 is associated with TDP-43 type C pathology, suggesting these cases constitute a single disease.<sup>123</sup>  
12 Clinical heuristics and educational material may reasonably highlight the differences between  
13 bvFTD and right temporal variant FTD or right SD, not least because of the differences in the risk  
14 of genetic mutations, motor neuron disease and parkinsonism. However, we recommend that a  
15 research agenda motivated by mechanistic insights and aspirations for disease-modifying  
16 treatments does not get distracted by attempts to impose binary diagnostics on L>R versus R>L  
17 syndromes, as if they represented distinct diseases.

## 18 **Limitations and future directions**

19 People with FTD often lack insight into their changed behaviours<sup>15,19,124-126</sup> and may have  
20 cognitive deficits that cause unreliable response strategies<sup>127</sup> and violations of the assumptions  
21 underlying questionnaires and self-report forms (e.g., of consistent and meaningful responding).<sup>127</sup>  
22 Indeed, this was highlighted by the discrepancy between patient and caregiver reports of apathy in  
23 the current study. Informant ratings/interviews are therefore a common and important method for  
24 assessing behavioural changes in both clinical and research settings. However, there are multiple  
25 possible factors to consider when interpreting informant ratings. For example, there is evidence  
26 that informant ratings are influenced by caregiver burden.<sup>128</sup> Additionally, there may be an  
27 interaction between informant ratings of behaviour and the time since the behaviour’s onset, such  
28 that in the early stages of the disease the obvious change from premorbid baseline ‘magnifies’ any  
29 behavioural changes and leads to disproportionately high ratings. Indeed, this possibility motivated

1 the parallel analyses of CBI-R behaviour severity/frequency versus behaviour presence in the  
2 current study (see above).

3 The plethora of behavioural features associated with FTD makes it extremely challenging for a  
4 single study to fully capture the spectrum of clinically relevant features. Indeed, it was this  
5 challenge that motivated our decision to assemble a battery of informant questionnaires rather than  
6 rely on a single standard tool. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the current study did not cover  
7 all the possible behavioural domains that may contribute to bvFTD versus SD phenotypic  
8 discrimination, such as anosognosia,<sup>129</sup> empathy loss,<sup>33</sup> and aberrant reward behaviours.<sup>27</sup>  
9 Relatedly, the factor loadings and interpretation of a PCA are dependent on the tasks entered,  
10 meaning that if a dataset fails to include crucial behavioural features present in the patient  
11 population studied, the resultant PCA will not derive a principal component for this clinically  
12 relevant behavioural dimension. Our conclusion of quantitative not qualitative differences between  
13 FTD syndromes pertains to the behaviours sampled by our measures, but a crucial mission for  
14 future research is to incorporate a more comprehensive survey of all relevant behaviours. This  
15 includes diverse ethnic and linguistic groups, which may differ from the UK regarding the  
16 tolerance and response to social norm violations in people with FTD.<sup>130,131</sup>

17 Our cross-sectional study design meant that many participants were several years into their  
18 dementia; the average time since symptom onset was around six years. As typical of previous FTD  
19 cohort studies, there were overlapping radiological profiles between bvFTD and SD with atrophy  
20 extending beyond the initial respective atrophy centres (Fig. 1). It is therefore possible that  
21 discriminative behavioural signatures between bvFTD and SD exist early on but soon disappear  
22 as atrophy spreads and clinical phenotypes become increasingly similar, and thus not detected in  
23 the current study<sup>17,85,132</sup> A critical avenue for future research is to track similarity/differences in  
24 behaviours longitudinally to explore how behavioural phenotypes merge or diverge. In addition,  
25 studies could retrospectively analyse informant questionnaires from previous clinic visits, to  
26 investigate whether selective behavioural features exist in FTD subtypes in the earlier stages of  
27 the disease.

28 The PCA-based approach in this study may have obscured some more specific relationships  
29 between social-semantic impairments and particular aspects of behaviour change, such as socially  
30 inappropriate behaviour or “disinhibition”. However, without inclusion of more specific tests of

1 social executive functions, it remains difficult to differentiate between prefrontal versus temporal  
2 contributions to inappropriate social behaviour. Future studies could relate informant ratings of  
3 behavioural changes with performance on social executive tasks used in previous FTD studies,  
4 which assess the ability to resolve social dilemmas<sup>133</sup> and social decision making.<sup>134</sup>

5

## 6 **Data availability**

7 Due to the limits of the ethics approval for these patient studies, the raw data cannot be openly  
8 shared. Requests for anonymised data can be addressed to the senior author and may require a data  
9 transfer agreement.

10

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16

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24



## 1 **Competing interests**

2 The authors report no competing interests.

3

## 4 **Supplementary material**

5 Supplementary material is available at *Brain* online.

6

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25

## 1 **Figure legends**

2 **Figure 1 Voxel-based morphometry results.** Rows display regions of reduced grey matter  
3 volume in each patient group compared to age-matched controls. The bottom row shows regions  
4 of reduced grey matter volume in SD compared to bvFTD. Groups were compared using  
5 independent t-tests, with age, intracranial volume and scanner site included as covariates. Images  
6 are thresholded using a cluster-level threshold of  $P(\text{FDR}) < 0.05$  (after an initial voxel-level  
7 threshold of  $P < 0.001$ ). Significant clusters are overlaid on the MNI avg152 T1 template. Co-  
8 ordinates are reported in Montreal Neurological Institute space.

9  
10 **Figure 2 Scores across each CBI-R domain.** (A) Average total scores across each CBI-R domain  
11 in each group. (B) The percentage of bvFTD and SD participants impaired on each CBI-R domain.

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13 **Figure 3 Association between self and informant ratings of apathy.** Data points represent  
14 scores on the self-rated AMI plotted against scores on the AMI-CG for each AMI domain.

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16 **Figure 4 PCA loadings and factor scores.** (A) Factor loadings for each informant questionnaire  
17 domain. Dashed vertical lines indicate the factor loading cut-offs ( $>0.5$ ). (B) PC1 (*apathy*) plotted  
18 against PC2 (*challenging behaviours*). (C) PC2 (*challenging behaviours*) plotted against PC3  
19 (*ADLs*). (D) PC3 (*ADLs*) plotted against PC1 (*apathy*). The dashed lines indicate the factor score  
20 of a hypothetical participant scoring 1.96 standard deviations below the control average on each  
21 task, and the shaded regions show the regions of preserved performance.

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23 **Figure 5 Receiver Operating Characteristic curves distinguishing between bvFTD and SD**  
24 **using the neuropsychological and behavioural components.**

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1 **Figure 6 Regions of grey matter volume associated with factor scores.** Multiple linear  
2 regression models were fitted with each factor as the main effect and age, intracranial volume and  
3 scanner site included as covariates. Images are thresholded using a cluster-level threshold of  
4  $P(\text{FDR}) < 0.05$  (after an initial voxel-level threshold of  $P < 0.05$ ). Significant clusters are overlaid  
5 on the MNI avg152 T1 template. Co-ordinates are reported in Montreal Neurological Institute  
6 Space.

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1 **Table I Demographic and disease information**

	bvFTD	SD	Control	Group difference	Post-hoc
N	26	21	18	-	-
Sex (M: F)	18:8	7:14	9:9	$\chi^2 = 6.05, P < 0.05^a$	-
Age (years)	64.3 (9.1)	66.1 (7.0)	64.3 (6.9)	H(2) = 3.6, ns <sup>b</sup>	-
Education (years)	11.5 (1.9)	13.7 (3.0)	15.3 (3.3)	<b>H(2) = 14.8, P &lt; 0.001<sup>b</sup></b>	bvFTD < C, SD
Years since symptom onset	6.2 (3.5)	5.9 (3.4)	-	W = 272, ns <sup>c</sup>	-
Years since diagnosis	1.7 (1.6)	2.3 (1.8)	-	W = 219, ns <sup>c</sup>	-
FRS (%)	21.6 (17.0)	55.7 (25.9)	95.1 (5.9)	<b>H(2) = 43.9, P &lt; 0.0001<sup>b</sup></b>	bvFTD < SD, C; SD < C

2 Mean and standard deviations are reported for each group. Significant p-values are highlighted in bold. bvFTD, behavioural-variant  
 3 frontotemporal dementia; C, control; FRS, frontotemporal dementia rating scale; ns, not significant; SD, semantic dementia.

4 <sup>a</sup>Chi-square test

5 <sup>b</sup>Kruskal-Wallis test

6 <sup>c</sup>Wilcoxon rank-sum test.

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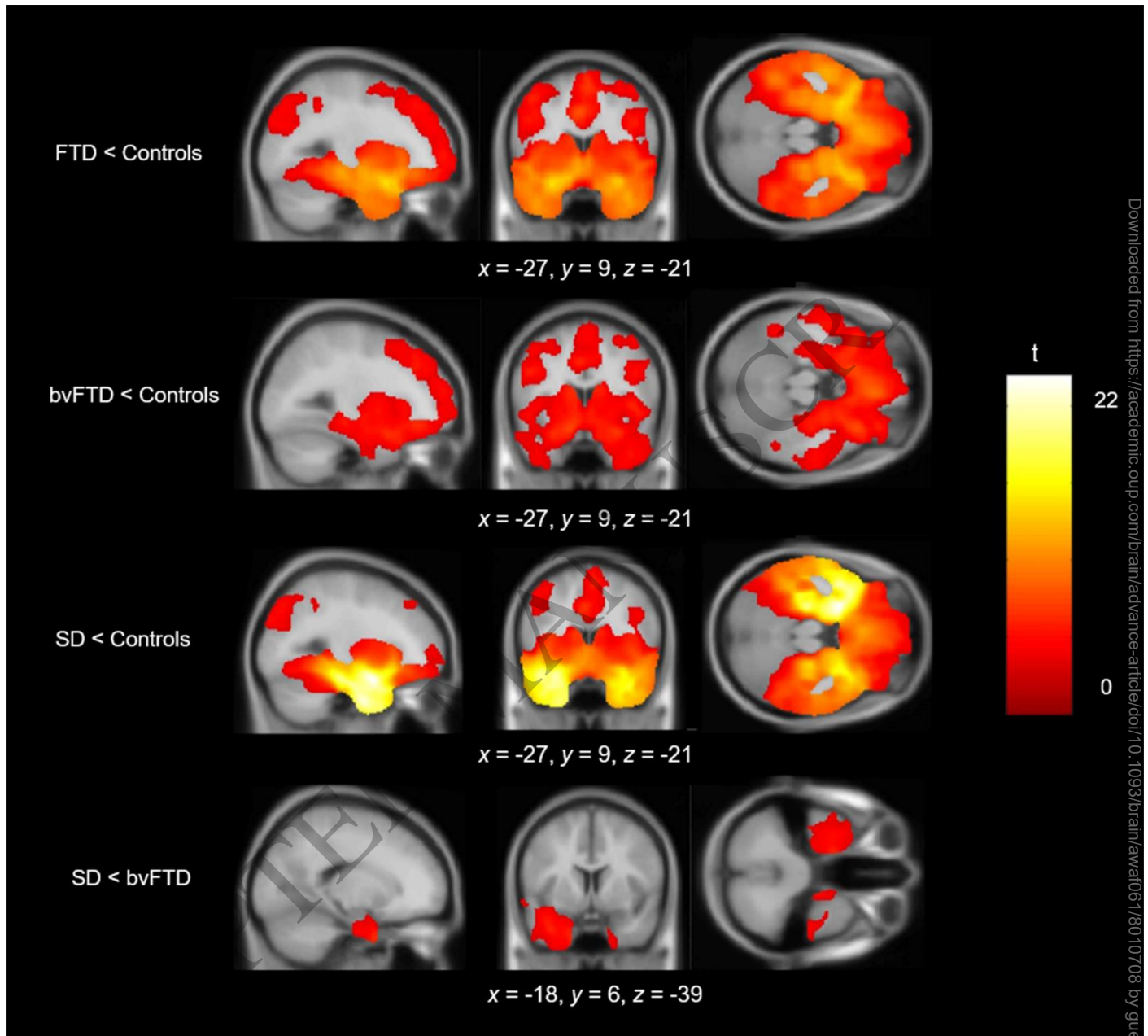
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1 **Table 2 Average total scores on each Informant Questionnaire Domain**

Questionnaire domain	bvFTD	SD	Control	Group effect	Post-hoc
CBI-R Memory and Orientation (%)	59.7 (22.9)	56.1 (24.8)	5.2 (5.7)	H(2) = 36.7, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Everyday Skills (%)	58.7 (27.7)	29.0 (31.8)	0.3 (1.2)	H(2) = 36.3, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Self-Care (%)	33.9 (30.5)	9.5 (21.5)	0.0 (0.0)	H(2) = 29.2, P < 0.0001	bvFTD > C
CBI-R Abnormal Behaviour (%)	55.4 (25.7)	21.2 (22.1)	4.2 (6.2)	H(2) = 36.3, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Mood (%)	33.4 (23.4)	21.7 (19.0)	6.9 (6.7)	H(2) = 18.4, P < 0.001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Beliefs (%)	14.5 (22.4)	4.4 (8.2)	0.0 (0.0)	H(2) = 16.0, P < 0.001	bvFTD > C
CBI-R Eating Habits (%)	60.6 (27.4)	31.3 (24.0)	0.7 (2.0)	H(2) = 39.3, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Sleep (%)	50.0 (25.7)	30.4 (28.9)	11.8 (10.9)	H(2) = 19.8, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Stereotypic and Motor Behaviours (%)	60.3 (30.3)	47.3 (34.7)	6.9 (8.3)	H(2) = 25.5, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CBI-R Motivation (%)	71.5 (25.6)	32.1 (25.7)	2.2 (4.9)	H(2) = 44.0, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
AMI-CG Behavioural Activation (4)	3.0 (0.9)	1.5 (1.0)	0.5 (0.5)	H(2) = 37.0, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
AMI-CG Social Motivation (4)	2.6 (0.8)	2.1 (0.8)	1.1 (0.8)	F(2,61) = 21.0, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
AMI-CG Emotional Sensitivity (4)	3.0 (0.9)	1.6 (1.0)	1.1 (0.6)	H(2) = 29.0, P < 0.0001	bvFTD > C
CamQUAIT-M (27)	20.5 (5.7)	12.8 (6.0)	4.7 (3.1)	H(2) = 38.8, P < 0.0001	bvFTD, SD > C
CamQUAIT-C (18)	8.4 (3.9)	4.2 (3.3)	2.7 (1.9)	F(2,61) = 17.9, P < 0.0001	bvFTD > C

2 Mean and standard deviations are reported for each group. AMI-CG, Apathy-Motivation Index-Caregiver version; bvFTD, behavioural-variant  
3 frontotemporal dementia; CamQUAIT, Cambridge Questionnaire for Apathy and Impulsivity Traits; CBI-R, Cambridge Behavioural Inventory  
4 Revised; C, control; SD, semantic dementia.  
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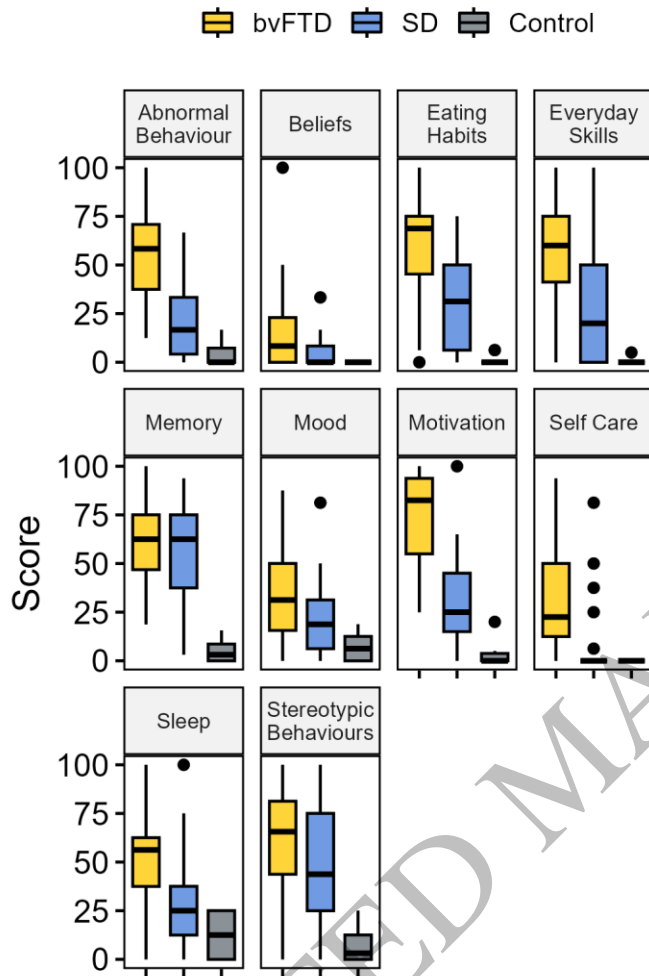




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Figure 1  
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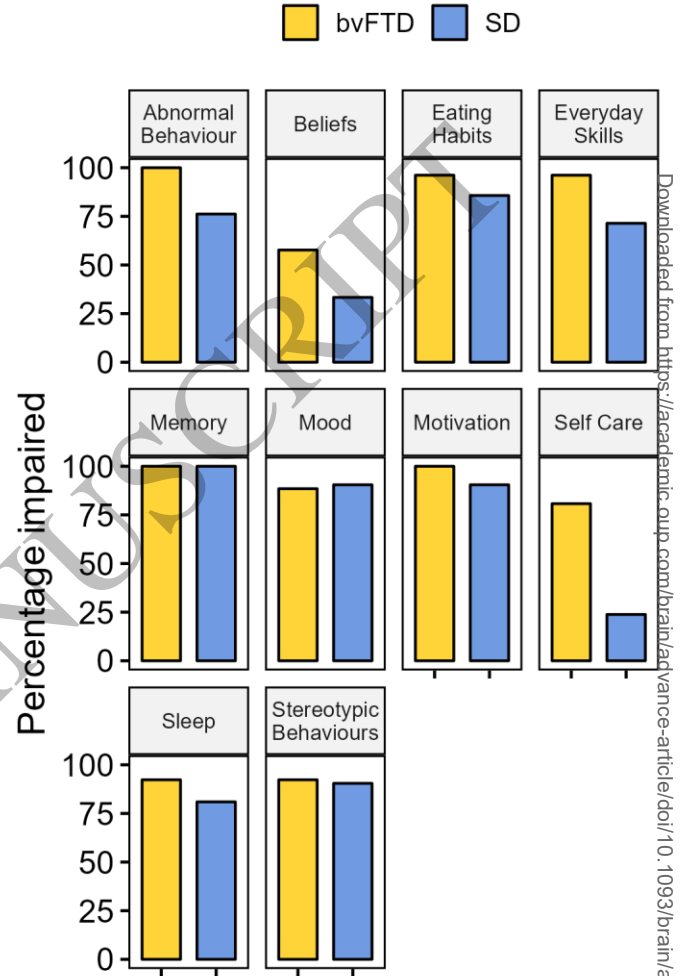


Figure 2  
185x140 mm (x DPI)

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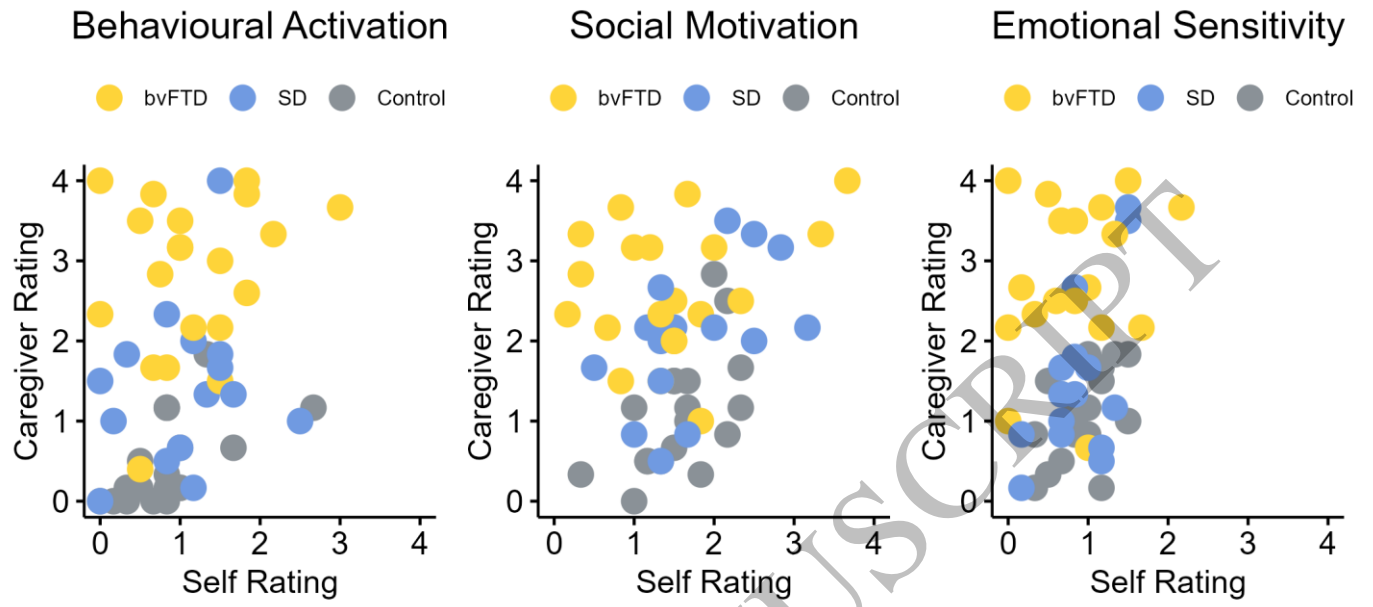


Figure 3  
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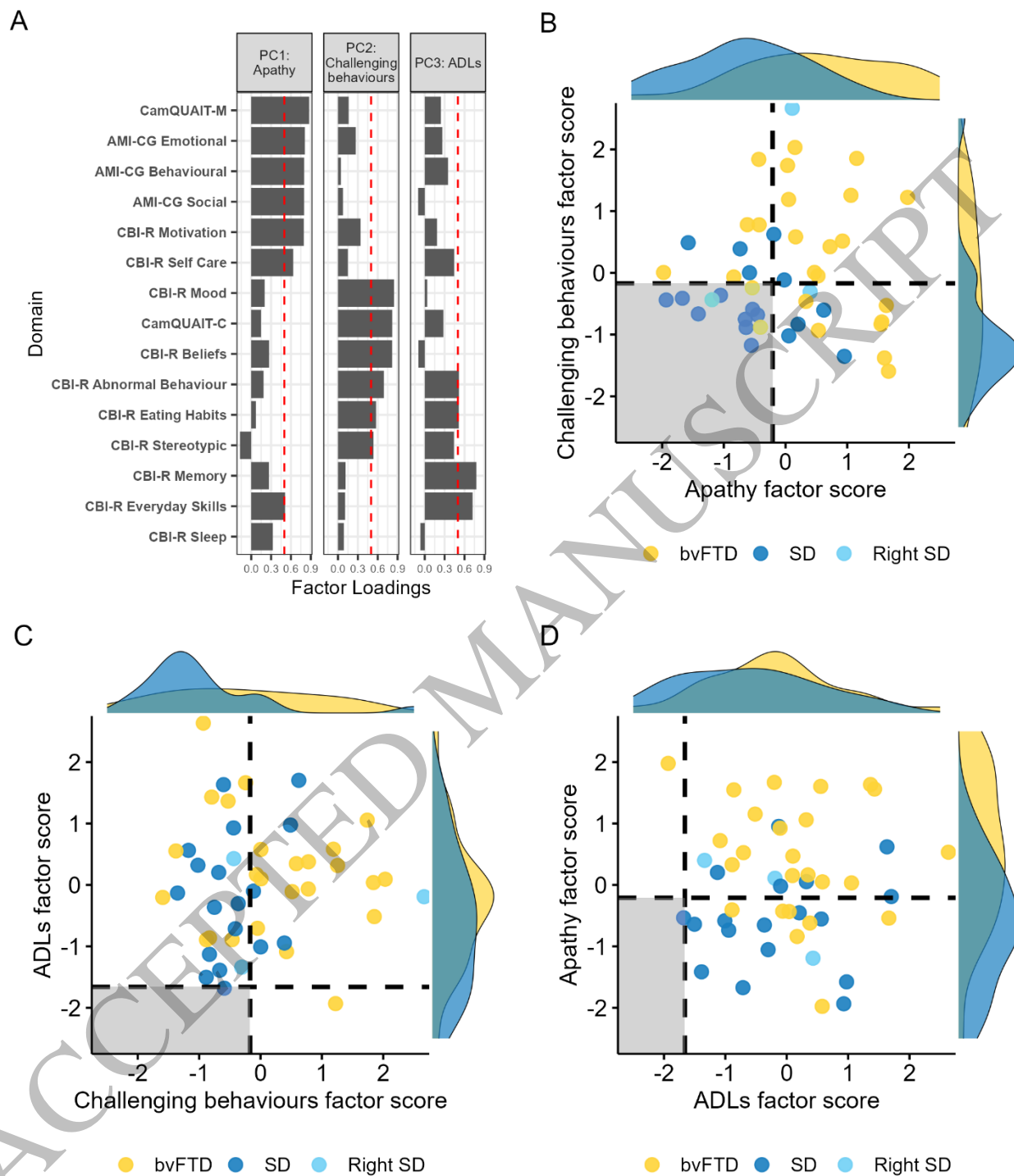


Figure 4  
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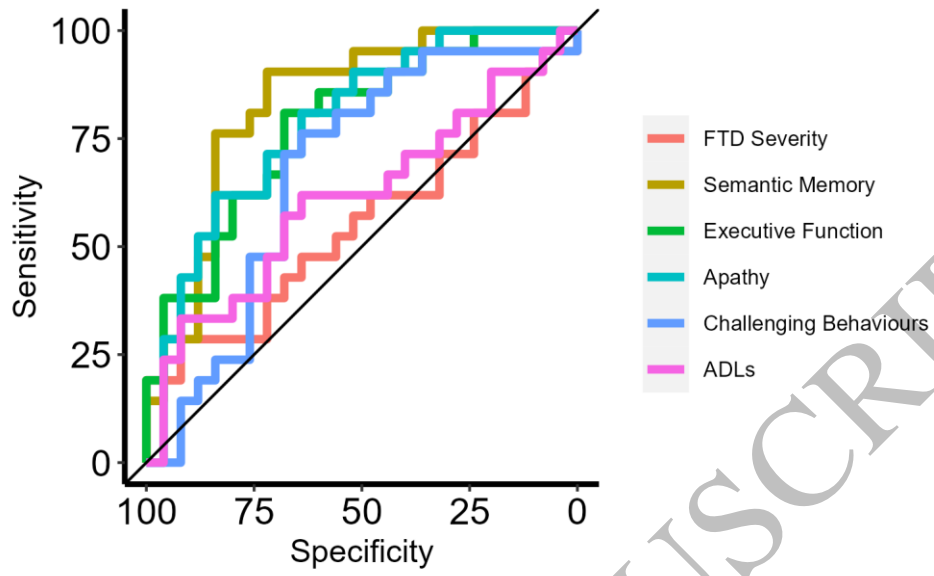


Figure 5  
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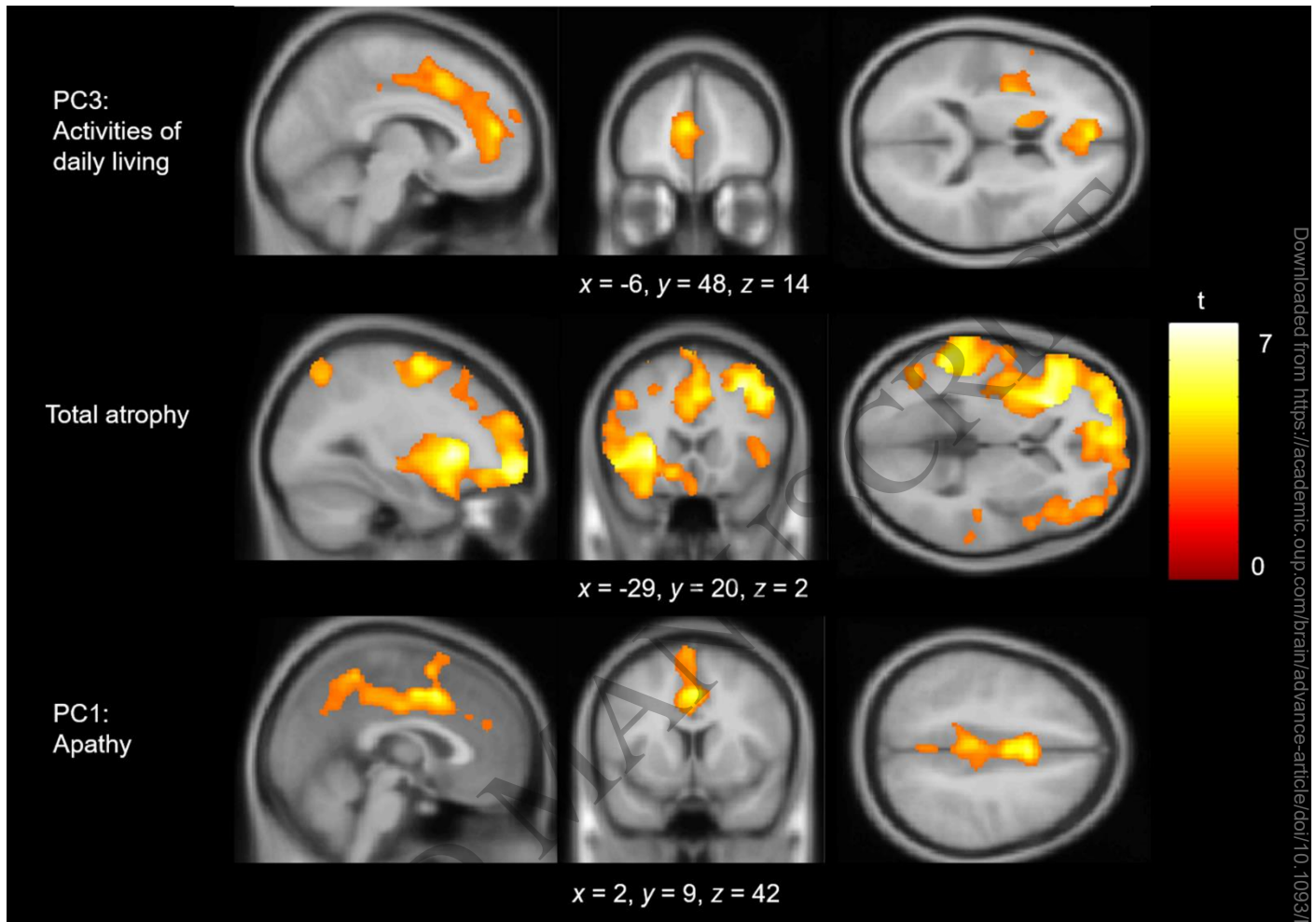


Figure 6  
185x130 mm (x DPI)

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