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Attentional N1 latency modulation: a frequency general effect

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Attention dependent changes can be observed even in the time window of the N1 component. In a previous experiment we demonstrated that in a paradigm using low intensity tones attention not only enhances the amplitude of the N1 but also decreases its latency. In the present experiment we tested whether this early attentional effect is a general one or stimulus specific, using soft tones (20 dB SL) with four different frequencies. Our results suggest that in an attended condition the mechanism behind the decrease of the N1 latency is a general one, which means that attention increases the general sensitivity of the auditory system, thereby improving the processing of the attended stimuli.