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## THE EFFECT OF THE LENGHT OF PREEXPOSURE ON THE EXPLORATORY BEHAVIOR TO OLFACTORY CUES

Liberal, U., Angulo-Alcalde, A. & Rodríguez, G

UPV/EHU

The one-trial object recognition task is one of the most common procedures in studying the memory function in rodents (e.g., Ennaceur & Delacour, 1988). On the first phase of this task, subjects receive an exposure trial with a pair of identical objects (A & A). On the subsequent test phase, one of these objects is replaced by a novel one (A & B). Under these conditions, animals show more, and longer, exploratory approaches to the novel (B) than to the familiar object (A). This preference for novelty has been interpreted as reflecting the previous formation and encoding of a cognitive representation of the familiar object. Most of the studies using this task have relied on visual-spatial aspects of the exposed objects, and little attention has been paid to the exploratory behavior to olfactory cues. In the present research, we used two different recognition tasks (Experiments 1 and 2) adapted for this sort of cues. Our results replicate the standard recognition effect: a short preexposure to one odor (A) generated a preference to explore a novel stimulus (B) on test. Interestingly, however, we also observed that when the preexposure to the A odor is extremely brief the animals show a preference to explore the familiar A odor rather than the novel B odor. We interpret these results in terms of an attentional process that enhances the vigor of the orienting responses to those sources of information that generates more uncertainty. Our proposal, based on the notion of entropy, is that a partially known stimulus (e.g., an odor very briefly previously exposed) can generate even more uncertainty that a novel stimulus.