

Abstract

The traditional assumption that perfumes are used only for masking of the body odour was doubted by the results of recent researches. In spite of the fact that the biological role of human body odour is very important, it is likely that perfumes are not in conflict with the body odour but there is mutual cooperation. Individuals could choose the scent which goes with their body odour instead of hiding it.

In the theoretical part of this thesis I describe a dual inheritance theory, which is a basic concept for our research. We have been concerned with the interaction between biological effects of body odour and social effects of perfumes. Moreover, we have worked on the assumption that the body odour of relatives is similar. We have tested if people are better in their choice of the appropriate perfume for their relatives than for anyone else, in this case partners. Which perfume fits into which body odour was assessed by the independent evaluators of opposite sex because one of the main objectives of chemical signalling is to attract a potential partner.

Surprisingly, the results of our research have shown that in the case of couples, the samples of the body odour and perfumes chosen by female partners were slightly better evaluated than the perfumes chosen by men themselves. Moreover, there were more significant differences in relatives' evaluation and the samples with the perfume which was chosen by sister were evaluated as significantly more attractive than the samples with the scent chosen by men themselves. That could mean that women can better imagine how the perfume will smell on particular men or that they have a different taste than men and the perfume which they have selected is assessed as more pleasant by the same sex evaluators.