

Abstract

Object permanence is a cognitive ability, which allows individual to realize the existence of an object even it is not directly accessible to its senses. This ability is essential for successful using of complex cognitive operations. Object permanence is qualitatively and gradually change throughout the development of a child. Congruently, it is not developed to the same level in various species of animals. The aim of this study is to study object permanence in naive rhesus monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*), because there is still some uncertainty about the development of this ability in macaques. Our results show that the naive subjects do not have the highest stage of object permanence (and they do not use representative strategy to solve the tasks), however, other results of our team suggest that more experienced individuals are able to achieve the highest stage under certain circumstances.

We show that experimental design used to test object permanence can be modified and used also for studying of other cognitive abilities. We test the preferences of macaque monkeys toward novel non-food stimuli. The reactions of different species of animals can vary. The reactions depend on the type of stimuli (food or non-food), but also on the ecology and ethology of the species. Age, sex and personality of the individual can also affect reaction of an individual. In our study we used methodology differing from those commonly used. We observed neophobic tendency in tested monkeys. We also noted some differences between monkeys and a preference for some objects.

Key words: primates, rhesus macaque, cognitive functions, object permanence, novel object preference, neophobia, neophilia

