

## Abstract

Although evaluative conditioning is studied for a long time, many of its aspects are still the subject of controversy, e.g. the role of consciousness, or susceptibility to extinction. The main doubts are related to theories explaining the mechanism of this phenomenon. There are two competing approaches. One describes the evaluative conditioning as automatic, effortless and requires no conscious thought. Coexistence of the conditional and unconditional stimulus creates an association in memory of the receiver. Second, in turn, implies the need to involve awareness, cognitive resources and attention. Conditioning is described here as the formation of the cognitive proposition on the relationship between unconditional and conditional stimuli.

The objective of the proposed research is to determine the impact of the dynamics of emotional processes in attitude formation thorough evaluative conditioning. Evaluative conditioning is defined as a change of affective assessment of neutral conditioned stimulus, which can be attributed to its repeated presentation with affective unconditioned stimulus. The most important factor for understanding this phenomenon is affective transfer between unconditional and conditional stimulus. Unfortunately, previous research focused mainly on the affective valence. However, every emotional reaction is described not only by valence, but also by the arousal level. So far, studies on this issue considered only fear conditioning, biased due to methodological drawbacks. It is therefore planned to broaden the research on determining the role of arousal in evaluative conditioning. We plan to investigate how the autonomous arousal affects the conditioning effect. We will compare the effects induced by the positive and negative unconditional stimuli. We will try to determine the effect of arousal elicited by unconditional stimulus on extinction of the conditioned response or change in its character. In addition, we examine the role of consciousness and degree of control over acquisition and affective reactions depending on the arousal elicited by emotional stimuli.

Our research may lead to a resolution and support of the associative or propositional explanation. They can also help to prove the recently proposed model of two processes. In addition, the use of psychophysiological measures will describe more fully the role of arousal in the formation of the conditioning effect, as well as its magnitude. Constant registration of psychophysiological responses will tell whether the applied unconditional stimuli are strong enough and whether they appear in a right moment. This will allow us to determine such characteristics of evaluative conditioning, that bring strong and lasting results, which is important for practical and theoretical understanding of how attitudes and preferences are formed.