

Editorial ¹

This number opens with Noel W. Smith's contribution, originally published in English in the preceding issue. Given its debate provoking nature, we opted to publish it in Spanish and thus make it available to all of our Spanish-speaking readers. The article was formally presented in the prior issue, so we won't repeat it here.

The article by Javier Vila addresses the process of response recovery after a retention interval on a discriminated escape procedure. The procedure involved a virtual task in which participants escaped from a situation by identifying a goal stimulus hidden within a geometric pattern. The results showed that all participants learned the task, significantly decreasing the latency of escape. However, on the test where the stimulus was presented without the geometric pattern, the group exposed to the 24 h retention interval responded more than the group that was tested immediately after training. In other words, responding was weaker in the group that was not exposed to the delay (without the geometric component), showing overshadowing by the geometric component that was not observed in the 24 h interval group. The author describes his results contrasting operant and respondent procedures, and offering a thorough discussion on the possible interpretations in relation to the study of attention.

Saraí Pérez Ortiz, Héctor Martínez Sánchez, and Idania Zepeda Riveros contribute a study on the effects of feedback frequency on variability and stereotypy in the learning of a conditional discrimination by children and college students. Based on existing literature, the authors argue that variability and stereotypy are two parameters of behavior affected by feedback frequency and training history, which constitutes the basis for their work. Sixty children between 10 and 12 years old, and 60 college students aged 22 to 24 volunteered to participate in the study. The experimental procedure was programmed in E-Prime 1.3, and presented on two individual laptop computers. The design involved a repetition and a variation phase in five sessions of 36 trials each. In the second phase the first task was either continued or alternated, yielding 4 distinct series to which the subjects were randomly assigned. Depending on the group, continuous, partial or delayed feedback was provided. During phase 3 a transference test was implemented in which the stimuli used in the prior sessions were changed.

Their results suggest that feedback frequency may have different effects depending on whether performance is stereotyped or varied, and that it is more effective when provided continuously, regardless of the task. The authors detail their results comparing feedback type (continuous, partial, or delayed), the training criterion (stereotypy or variability), and their relationship, with the transference test. Although intermittent feedback can be compared to intermittent reinforcement, and delayed feedback simulates extinction, the authors suggest caution when interpreting the results, given the different nature of the components. Because these results differ from those observed elsewhere regarding the effect of reinforced versus induced variability, the authors suggest that more research is needed. The essay concludes by stressing the importance of this type of research in relation to a number of clinical problems like autism and ADHD.

Finally, in keeping with the tradition in *Conductual*, María Teresa Rodríguez García reports on the V SAVEEC which took place last October in Motril, Spain.

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¹ Reference of this article on the web is: <http://conductual.com/content/editorial-en-vol-4-n-3>