

Scientists study social memory formation

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A team of Canadian and French scientists has identified the internal part of the prefrontal cortex as key to memorizing social information.

Researchers from Canada's McGill University and France's University of Paris used a functional magnetic resonance imaging technique to measure cerebral activity in 17 volunteers while they accomplished a memory task involving pictures of social scenes (interacting individuals) and non-social scenes (landscapes with no people).

The researchers identified the medial prefrontal cortex as being the key structure in memorizing social information from a picture.

The scientists said that finding opens important perspectives regarding our understanding of the mechanisms of human recollections and mental disorders such as schizophrenia and autism that affect social and relational skills.

The study is presented in the February issue of the Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience.

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