



Designation: E253 – 09

Standard Terminology Relating to Sensory Evaluation of Materials and Products¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E253; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Referenced Documents

1.1 *ASTM Standards*:²

E284 Terminology of Appearance

2. Terminology

absolute judgment, *n*—an evaluation of a stimulus made without direct comparison to other stimuli. (2007)

acceptability/unacceptability, *n*—degree to which a stimulus is judged to be favorable or unfavorable. (2006)

acuity, *n*—the ability to detect or discriminate sensory stimuli. (2007)

adaptation, sensory, *n*—a decrease in sensitivity to a given stimulus which occurs as a result of exposure to that stimulus. (2006)

affective test, *n*—any method to assess acceptance, liking, preference, or emotions for a stimulus or stimuli. (2008)

after effects, *n*—total array of sensations that occur after removal of the stimulus from the sensing field (for example, with foods) or after application of the stimulus (for example, with non-foods). (2008)

after feel, *n*—feel of the skin after application of a sample, with or without touching, usually measured at a specified time point. (2008)

aftertaste, *n*—the oral or nasal sensations that occur after the stimulus has been removed from the oral cavity. See **after effects**. (2007)

agusia, *n*—lack of sensitivity to taste stimuli. (1996)

alternative forced choice (AFC), *n*—method in which 2, 3, or more stimuli are presented, and assessors are given a criterion by which they are required to select one stimulus. (2008)

DISCUSSION—Typical examples include 2-AFC (directional different test) and 3-AFC (selecting the one stimulus among a set of three that differs in a defined attribute).

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anchoring point, *n*—a reference point against which other items are judged. (1996)

anosmia, *n*—lack of sensitivity to odor stimuli. (1996)

A-not-A test, *n*—a method of discrimination testing comprised of at least two samples; at least one sample is a previously identified sample (“A”) and at least one is a test sample. All samples are presented blindly, and the assessor’s task is to assign the label “A” or “not-A” to each of the samples. (2001)

antagonism, *n*—joint action of two or more stimuli whose combination elicits a level of sensation lower than that expected from combining the effects of each stimulus taken separately. (1996)

aroma, *n*—perception resulting from stimulating the olfactory receptors; in a broader sense, the term is sometimes used to refer to the combination of sensations resulting from stimulation of the entire nasal cavity. (1996)

DISCUSSION—Aroma, odor, and smell have the same basic meaning; however, in common usage they may have different connotations.

assessor, *n*—a general term for any individual responding to stimuli in a sensory test. (2006)

DISCUSSION—The terms *assessor*, *judge*, *panelist*, *panel member*, and *respondent* all have the same basic meaning, although sometimes different connotations. Usage of these terms varies with the training and experience of the investigator, habit, tradition, personal preference, and other factors.

astringency, *n*—the complex of sensations due to shrinking, drawing, or puckering of the epithelium as a result of exposure to substances such as alums or tannins. (1996)

attitude, *n*—a predisposition to respond in a characteristic way toward a class of objects, concepts, or stimuli. (1996)

attitude scale, *n*—a means for eliciting indications of the attitudes or opinions held, usually on a measuring system using marks or value designations. (1996)

attribute, *n*—a perceived characteristic. (1996)

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E18 on Sensory Evaluation and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E18.01 on Terminology.

Current edition approved May 1, 2009. Published May 2009. Originally approved in 1965. Last previous edition approved in 2008 as E253 – 08a. DOI: 10.1520/E0253-09.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard’s Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

- audition**, *n*—the sense of hearing. (1996)
- aversion**, *n*—feeling of dislike provoking avoidance of a stimulus. (1996)
- bias**, *n*—systematic error manifested as a persistent positive or negative deviation of the method average from its accepted true value. (1996)
- bipolar scale**, *n*—scale where the end anchors are semantic opposites and there is an implied or anchored mid-point. (2008)
- DISCUSSION—Examples of semantic opposites are “too thin” to “too thick,” “dislike extremely” to “like extremely.”
- bite, chemical**, *n*—stinging experienced primarily in the oral cavity as a result of exposure to substances such as highly carbonated beverages. (1997)
- bitter**, *adj*—taste produced by substances such as quinine or caffeine when in solution. (2003)
- blinded**, *adj*—an element of experimental control in which the identity or an aspect of a treatment, condition, or substance is hidden from the participant (single blind) or both the participant and the experimenter (double blind). (2008)
- body (food)**, *n*—the quality of a food or beverage relating either to its consistency, compactness of texture, fullness, flavor, or combination thereof. (1997)
- brightness**, *n*—see **color** (*of an object*). (2001) (For consensus technical definition see **brightness** in Terminology E284).
- burn chemical**, *n*—perception of increased temperature and irritation resulting from exposure to such substances as ethyl alcohol, or high concentrations of NaCl or acids. The sensation lingers a short time after the stimulus is removed. (1997)
- chroma**, *n*—see **color**. (2001) (For consensus technical definition see **chroma** in Terminology E284).
- classification**, *n*—a method of sorting stimuli into predefined categories. (1997)
- color (of an object)**, *n*—the appearance of an object dependent upon the spectral composition of radiant and incident light, the spectral reflectance or transmittance of the object, and the psychological response of the observer. The experience may be described in terms of three attributes: hue, brightness, and chroma. (2001) (For consensus technical definition see **color** in Terminology E284 as defined by Committee E12.)
- hue*—attribute of color related to the wavelength of electromagnetic energy and experienced as “red,” “green,” “blue,” and other elements of the visible spectrum.
- brightness*—aspect of visual perception whereby an area appears to emit more or less light.
- chroma*—experienced as color purity, attribute of color used to indicate the degree of departure of the color from a gray of the same brightness.
- color blindness**, *n*—total or partial inability to differentiate certain hues. (1997)
- consumer panel**, *n*—a group that is representative of the potential user population and that does not have technical knowledge of the products to be tested. (1997)
- context effect**, *n*—effect upon the perception of a stimulus arising from its interrelationship with other stimuli in a presentation set. (1997)
- contrast**, *n*—*visual*, the degree of dissimilarity in appearance of two parts of a field of view seen simultaneously or successively. (1998)
- contrast effect**, *n*—special case of context effect in which the perceived degree of difference between stimuli is exaggerated as a result of their interrelationship. (1997)
- convergence**, *n*—tendency of a stimulus to be perceived as similar to prior stimulus or stimuli. (1997)
- convergence effect**, *n*—special case of context effect in which the perceived degree of difference between stimuli is diminished as a result of their interrelationship. (1997)
- cooling, chemical**, *n*—sensation of reduced temperature experienced as a result of exposure to certain substances such as menthol or anise. The sensation usually persists after the stimulus is removed. (1997)
- cooling, physical**, *n*—sensation of reduced temperature experienced as a result of exposure to thermally cold substances, such as ice; to substances that evaporate rapidly, such as acetone or alcohol; or to substances that have a negative heat of solution, such as crystalline sorbitol. The duration of the sensation is usually limited to the time of direct contact with the stimulus. (1998)
- cutaneous sense**, *n*—any of the senses whose receptors lie in the skin or immediately beneath it (or in the external mucous membranes): contact, pressure, warmth, cold, and pain. (1997)
- descriptive analysis**, *n*—any method to describe and quantify the sensory characteristics of stimuli by a panel of trained assessors. (1998)
- difference limen**, *n*—See **threshold, difference**. (1997)
- discrimination**, *n*—the process of qualitatively or quantitatively differentiating among stimuli. (1998)
- discrimination test**, *n*—any method to determine if differences among stimuli are perceptible. For example: triangle tests, duo-trio tests, paired comparison tests, etc. (1998)
- duo-trio test**, *n*—a method of discrimination testing comprised of two coded samples and one identified reference. One of the coded samples and the reference are identical. The assessor is asked to select which of the two coded samples is different from the reference or which of the two coded samples is the same as the reference. (1998)
- expectation, error of**, *n*—a bias due to preconceived ideas that influences an assessor’s judgment. (1999)
- expert**, *n*—a common term for a person with extensive experience in a product category who performs perceptual evaluations to draw conclusions about the effects of variations in raw materials, processing, storage, aging, etc. Experts often operate alone. (1995) (See also **assessor** and **expert assessor**.)
- expert assessor**, *n*—an assessor with a high degree of sensory acuity who has experience in the test procedure and established ability to make consistent and repeatable sensory assessments. An expert assessor functions as a member of a sensory panel. (1995) (See also **assessor** and **expert**.)
- extended use testing**, *n*—sensory or consumer testing of a product over a time period that allows for multiple usage occasions.