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Predictors of Incidental and Intentional Learning: Curiosity, Construal Level, and Musical Arousal

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Abstract

Having an intention (or not) forms a categorisation system for learning. Correspondingly, incidental learning stands for learning without intention to learn. The current paper examines the influences of incidental and intentional learning. 170 adults participated in three experimental studies. In each experiment, participants examined some animal illustrations and read paragraphs about them. In the first study, animal illustrations were arranged as being common (i.e., low curiosity) or novel to examine the effect of curiosity. Low curiosity level was more effective on incidental learning and vice versa for intentional learning. In the second study, mental time travel manipulation showed focusing on current time increased intentional learning. In the third study, the effect of arousal was examined via the tempo of the music (i.e., faster tempo for high arousal level). Low arousal level increased incidental learning. Ultimately, curiosity, mental time travel, and arousal could be essential in intentional and incidental learning.

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