Bizarreness Effect and Its Relation to Memory and Metamemory

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Abstract

Research shows that participants predict their memory performance to be lower when they experience disfluencies during encoding, even though encoding disfluency does not always affect actual memory performance. Bizarre statements are typically encoded slower than common statements, which constitutes an example of an encoding disfluency. The current study investigated how disfluencies during encoding for bizarre and common statements affect actual and predicted memory performance from a metacognitive perspective. Across two experiments under intentional learning instructions, participants made either memory predictions or vividness ratings for bizarre and common statements, followed by a free recall task. Participants predicted to remember common statements more than bizarre statements for both Experiment 1 (self-paced encoding) and Experiment 2 (experimenter-paced encoding), even though the actual memory performance was higher for bizarre than common statements. This demonstrates a metacognitive illusion for the bizarreness effect, similar to other manipulations of encoding disfluency.

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