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Effects of the Plausibility of the Retracting Information on Memory Updating

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Abstract: The plausibility of the retracting information, which can affect whether the retracted information be replaced by the retracting information, had not been studied much in previous studies on continued influence effect. An experiment was conducted to investigate how the plausibility of a retracting information affects the understanding of an event in which some of the information had been retracted. In the experiment, the plausibility of the retracting information (low versus high) and the manner of correcting information (simple retraction versus supplying an alternative) were manipulated, and the participants were asked to answer memory questions and inference questions. Retracted information was better remembered for memory questions, but was used less frequently for inference questions when the retracting information was less plausible compared to when the retracting information was quite plausible. The results were interpreted to support the ‘memory-based’ theory of memory updating.