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### **Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society**

#### **Title**

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#### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6sg0t233>

#### **Journal**

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 45(45)

#### **Authors**

Longo, Alexis S  
Kurtz, Kenneth

#### **Publication Date**

2023

Peer reviewed

# Release from Proactive Interference with Relational Categories Versus Traditional Entity Categories

Alexus Longo

State University of New York at Binghamton, Binghamton, New York, United States

Kenneth Kurtz

Binghamton University, Binghamton, New York, United States

## Abstract

It is well known that continuous encoding and recall of similar semantic content leads to memory deficits caused by the build-up of proactive interference. This build-up can be released if the content is switched to a different semantic category. While release from proactive interference has been studied using non-semantic content, it has yet to be studied with relational categories (i.e., categories that cohere based on fulfilling a particular semantic relationship such as obstacles). Recent findings suggest that relational information may be stored as individual entities similar to traditional entity categories. To assess the extent to which entity and relational content are similarly stored and retrieved, participants repeatedly encode and recall lists of word singletons in either an entity or relational category condition. Recall performance is evaluated for each list to compare the build-up and release of proactive interference for participants exposed to a semantic content switch or corresponding no-switch controls.