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The Role of Insight and Analytic Learning During Concept Acquisition

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Abstract

We report an experiment that examines the relationship between insight and analytic learning and relational concept acquisition. This paper introduces a novel paradigm in which warmth judgments were included throughout a relational category learning task. Specifically, some subjects completed this category learning task through classification, whereas others completed it through inference. Additionally, some subjects made warmth judgments throughout this task, whereas others did not (control). The results revealed no evidence that warmth judgments impacted concept learning. More importantly, we find that subjects who engaged in classification reported greater and more rapid increases in warmth judgments than subjects who engaged in inference. These findings directly paralleled subjects' learning patterns, wherein classification subjects showed evidence of more rapid learning, whereas inference subjects displayed more gradual, stepwise learning. Taken together, the present results suggest that classification involves more insight-based learning, whereas inference seems to involve more analytic learning.