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State- and Trait-Creativity as Predictors of Semantic Distance in Verbal Analogy Generation

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Abstract

Creativity is often considered a static trait, but recent work has shown that a creative state can be induced through explicit instruction to be creative. A two-term verbal analogy generation task (e.g., GLOVE : HAND :: ____ : ____) that included a randomized instruction to Answer Creatively vs. Answer Quickly was used to explore the impact of state creativity, and convergent and divergent thinking upon the creativity (i.e., semantic distance) of the generated analogies. Results confirm that instruction to Answer Creatively yielded more semantically distant analogies. Additionally, the magnitude of improvement between instructional conditions was predicted by performance in the Quickly condition. Participants producing less creative analogies in the Quickly condition benefited substantially, whereas participants producing more creative analogies benefited less. Convergent and divergent thinking predicted more creative analogies in the Quickly condition but not in the Creatively condition.