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How People Examine Self/Others Learning History

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Abstract

We investigated how people examined the self or another's learning history using a complex dynamic control task. Thirty-eight undergraduates were assigned to self or self-as-instructed-other conditions. Participants were asked to perform the task twice and describe their thinking as they examined the learning history provided in the second session. The participants in the self condition were provided with their own learning history, whereas those in the self-as-instructed-other condition were presented with their learning history as if it were another's. We compared their performance on the control and structure tests between conditions. The results showed that performance on the control test improved over sessions regardless of the condition. The results also showed that the participants in the self-as-instructed-other condition engaged in evaluation or guessing more often than those in the self condition, suggesting that there are differences in how people examine a person's learning history depending on its source.