Karen Arcos, PhD
University of California President's Postdoctoral Fellow in Psychology
UC Santa Cruz

Learning, Memory, and Uncertainty

This talk covers two learning and memory studies. First, the talk examines visual deprivation’s impact on memory abilities. Although those who are blind exhibit larger short-term memory capacity relative to the sighted, the extent to which this generalizes to nonverbal information and more complex memory tasks is unclear. In a test of verbal and nonverbal memory, sighted and congenitally blind adults completed a battery of auditory working and recognition memory tasks using difficulty-matched verbal and nonverbal information. While blind individuals exhibited a verbal memory advantage over sighted individuals, their advantage was eliminated for nonverbal memory. Second, the talk examines uncertainty’s role in memory. Learners may encounter inaccurate information which may or may not be true. However, uncertainty may encourage people to critically assess information’s accuracy. Uncertainty may also have negative effects, such as leading people to mistrust to-be-learned information or to subsequently confuse the remembered information’s accuracy. Participants learned individual statements about history. They were presented with only true statements or true and false statements while informed of each statement’s accuracy. Participants in a third condition were presented with true and false statements, judged statements’ accuracy, and then received feedback on which statements were true and false. On a cued recall test, all participants recalled true statements’ key terms. Next, they read pairs of true and false statements and indicated which was true. Preliminary results suggest that being presented false information and receiving feedback on information’s accuracy can, in some situations, enhance learning true information.

HEB Seminar Series
March 21, 2022 | 12:00 – 1:00 PM
Via Zoom Meeting ID: 910 5033 6303
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