**TITLE**

**Working Memory**

Working memory has been a critical component to human cognition studies in the literature. Baddeley (1986) describes working memory (WM) as the temporary storage of stimuli being encoded. Working memory plays its biggest role as part of your short-term memory (STM). STM, defined by Baddeley (1986), is when you can hold a short amount of information for a limited time. STM works in an interacting system that serves higher level mental processes. These higher level mental processes include reasoning, problem-solving, and learning.

Baddeley and Hitch (1994) first proposed a working memory model in 1974. Their model included the idea of a phonological loop, visuospatial sketchpad, and central executive. The phonological loop (previously the articulatory loop) has two parts: phonological storage and subvocal rehearsal. Phonological storage is when a person holds a sound memory trace until this trace is then rehearsed by the subvocal rehearsal of the model by repeating the trace internally. Baddeley and Hitch’s memory model additionally includes a visuospatial sketchpad, which is primarily responsible for visual and spatial encoding. Visual encoding would be when you receive an incoming image or stimuli and your brain is recognizing it so you can respond appropriately. Baddeley and Hitch (1994) explain that the visuospatial sketchpad is a type of work space for incoming information. The final piece of their model is the central executive. The central executive is responsible for controlling when the phonological loop and visuospatial sketchpad are used, and how they interact with one another (Baddeley, 2002).

**Measurement of Working Memory**

Working memory has been tested in the field of psychology since Miller introduced the “magic number” in 1956. Yuan et al. (2006) suggest that there are two types of measurement; simple memory span and dual-tasks. Simple memory span tasks are when a participant is presented with a stimuli (words, numbers, or positions) and then asked to recall them in either the same or reversed order they were presented. Simple span tasks are generally used to measure short term memory (Mathy, Chekaf, & Cowan, 2018). Dual-trials tasks are when both processing and storage are both being encoded at the same time. Conway et al. (2005) identified most working memory measurements are considered dual-task because of their complexity. More modernly they are considered complex span tasks (Schmiedek, Hildebrandt, Lovden, Wilhelm, & Lindenberger, 2009). This is because there are two sources of data the experimenter is collecting, the processing component and the storage component.

The Online Working Memory Lab (OWL) is an online version of these various complex spans including the automated operation span, reading span, symmetry span, and running span (Hicks, Foster, & Engle, 2016). The OWL is available for most operating systems allowing labs all over the world to utilize their tasks.

One of the most used tests to measure WM is the Operation Span (OSPAN) created by Turner and Engle (1989). In the OSPAN the participant is given a math problem which they have to identify the solution as correct or incorrect (processing component) with a word or letter being presented after they answer. The participant is then supposed to recall (storage component) that word after a few trials. The original OSPAN and the automated OSPAN (Unsworth, Heitz, Schrock, & Engle, 2005) still hold the same task, but the automated OSPAN has 15 trials. The automated OSPAN also has a practice period where the participant is presented with a math problems. After the math practice, they are given a sample trial of math problem where they are told to remember a letter after answering whether the math problem was true or false. After both practice portions are completed the participant then begins the real study.

Daneman and Carpenter’s (1980) Reading Span Task (RSPAN) is another example of a complex WM measurement. The authors originally had two ways of testing this. In the first part of the RSPAN participants were to read sentences out loud to the experimenter, while doing this the participant also had to remember the last word of the sentence for recall later. After the participant finished a few sentences, they had to recall the last word in the order the read the sentences. For the second part, Daneman and Carpenter (1980) had the participant read sentences that were from general knowledge, politics, and other subjects; while still trying to remember the last word. After reading the sentence the participant had to identify if the statement was true or false. The experimenters were only interested in if the participant had recalled the words in order or not.

N-Back

**Fluid Intelligence**

There are copious amounts of brain mechanisms that work into how much you can hold in your working. One factor is intelligence, specifically fluid intelligence (*Gf*). Horn (1968) describes intelligence as behavior that can be observed and measured. Horn is describing that, for researchers in the behavioral sciences, intelligence needs to be measured in some aspect for it to be considered observable.. Jaeggi et al. (2008) classify *Gf* as a human ability that allows participants to adapt their thinking to the problem at hand regardless of acquired knowledge. In addition, Gray, Chabris, and Braver (2003) highlight that *Gf* is related to attentional control, or a person’s ability to disregard any interference that could affect performance. Gray et al. also says that attentional control is necessary for the abstract thinking needed for *Gf.* Horn (1968) reports that Cattell presented the idea of *Gf* in 1941 at an APA convention. Since then it has grown popular in the behavioral sciences as a way to measure intelligence that is always expanding.

**Expertise**

The last construct that may affect your working memory or fluid intelligence is expertise. Chi, Glaser, and Rees (1982) describe expertise as having an abundance of knowledge and having skill to apply that knowledge. The authors argue that having this knowledge and skill plays a large part in intelligence as a whole. Because participants are able to recall their skill better and faster, they are perceived as more intelligent. This effect has been demonstrated primarily with the skillsets of chess (Chase & Simon, 1973) and physics (Chi, Feltovich & Glaser, 1981).

In Chase and Simon’s (1973) study on chess and perception, they had three classes of participants who played chess. From highest to lowest they were: master, Class A player, and beginner. The way the authors decided to study working memory was to isolate “chunks” that would then be encoded by the participant between two different tasks. These chunks were created by having a chess position set up having one of 28 variations. Chunks refer to Miller (1956) and his “magical number” 7, which proposes that most humans can contain 7 individual pieces of information plus or minus 2. In Chase and Simon’s (1973) perception task two boards were set up. One with the chess position already displayed with the chunk they were to replicate, and the second with all the chess pieces at their starting points. The participant was told to examine the board for five seconds and recreate as much as they remember, they just had to complete the task quickly and accurately. The participant was able to repeat memorizing and recalling the board layout until they recalled the original set perfectly. It took those in the master class participants less trials than the Class A players and beginners suggesting that the expertise influenced their results. Those in the “master” class would encode the preset chess boards and recreate their model faster than the other two groups of participants.

Chi et al. (1981) looked at the same idea of expertise, but with those in the field of physics. For their categories of participants, they used PhD students in the physics department (experts) and undergraduates who had only completed one semester of a physics course (novices). They were given 24 problems to group together by the how the solution to the problem was to be found. All participants were interviewed after they separated the problems to their respective categories to see how they reasoned why that problem fits with the category they chose. They determined that the experts sorted by the laws of physics, and the novices sorted by surface structures. Theses surface structures refer to objects, terms, or configurations of the problem presented.

In the second part of the study, the experts and novices were presented a new set of 20 physic problems. This part of the study also included an intermediate participant who was a fourth-year physics major. These problems were created to include both physic laws and surface features combined to see how the participants would categorize them. The results were replicated from the previous study by the expert and the novice participants. Yet, the intermediate participant reasoned both by using the laws of physics and surface structures, showing that they had applied the laws, but not yet left the surface structure. These studies by Chase and Simon and Chi et al., demonstrate that expertise is perceptually learned through practice and understanding. They both demonstrate ideas of chunking (working memory) and previous knowledge (intelligence) that can lead to expertise.

**Interplay between these systems**

With these three constructs combined, WM, *gF,* and expertise, they could help shape how things may get stored in our short term or long-term memory. They each play an important part in how we view the world around us and evaluate everyday situations. WM is said to be linked to *gF* by both constructs sharing a need to from your secondary memory (Shelton, Elliott, Matthews, Hill, & Gouvier, 2010). Shelton et al. (2010) also found in their study that WM was a predictor for *gF*. Fukuda, Voegl, Mayr, and Awh (2010) argue that the link between WM and *gF* is also a way to understand any basic understanding of overall general intelligence (*g*).

Grabner, Neubauer, and Stern (2006) looked at the impact of intelligence and expertise on performance and neural efficiency. The authors found that more intelligent participants had better performance than less intelligent participants in chess. There was an exemption that those who were an expert at the task (chess in this study), it could make up for their lack of intelligence.

While Guida, Gobet, Tardieu, and Nicolas (2012) noted that by using template theory (TT) with long-term working memory (LT-WMT), when an expert, the experts LTM is used as WM which would make that individuals memory storage and processing have higher processing. TT (Gobet & Simon, 1996) uses the idea of templates, or patterns, which you (as a person or participant) can fill in different information at hand to complete problems (such as chess). These templates can also be chunks. LT-WMT (Ericsson & Kintsch, 1995) is described as the association of information that has been encoded and the retrieval cues in LTM. For chess this would be remembering a certain cluster of pieces and being able to retrieve them and use them in a match. While in everyday life this could easily be after studying for long periods of time and seeing a definition to term question on an exam. Therefore, one could use LT-WMT … rephrase the first sentence and put it here.

Expertise works alongside WM and *gF* because it is needed to be able to recall and think about new problems at hand that the expert is evaluating.

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