Abstract

Research has shown that judgments of learning (JOLs) often produce a reactive effect on learning of cue-target pairs in which target recall differs between participants who provide JOLs at study versus those who do not. Positive reactivity, or the memory improvement found when JOLs are provided, is typically observed on related pairs, whereas negative or no reactivity has been found on unrelated pairs. In four experiments, we examined JOL reactivity effects by comparing JOL and no-JOL groups to other groups who engaged in relational-type encoding/judgment tasks. Experiment 1 replicated positive JOL reactivity effects with related pairs with an extension to symmetrically related pairs. Next, Experiment 2 found that providing judgments of associative memory—a task that does not involve memory predictions—yielded equivalent reactivity patterns as JOLs. Experiment 3 replicated this reactivity pattern using a frequency of co-occurrence judgment task. Finally, In Experiment 4, a similar positive reactivity pattern was found using a relational encoding task when compared to a standard JOL. Collectively, our results suggest that previous JOL reactivity patterns are not due to memory forecasting processes via JOLs. Instead, reactivity reflects relational encoding that is strategically applied towards related, but not unrelated pairs.

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