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Authors: Paula Balea, Maria del Carmen Sanjuan, James Byron Nelson

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Learning to learn in conditioning and extinction in humans

Running head: LEARNING TO LEARN IN HUMANS

Paula Balea^{a,*}, Maria del Carmen Sanjuan^a, James Byron Nelson^a

^a Universidad del País Vasco, Sarriena, s/n 48940-Leioa, Bizkaia, Spain

* Corresponding author at: Departamento Procesos Psicológicos Básicos y su Desarrollo. Avenida de Tolosa, 70. Universidad del País Vasco, San Sebastián, 20018, Spain.

E-mail addresses: paula_balcar@hotmail.com, paula.balea@ehu.eus (P. Balea), mariadelcarmen.sanjuan@ehu.eus (M.d.C. Sanjuan), DrJBN@hotmail.com (J.B. Nelson).

Highlights

- We analyzed conditioning and extinction learning rates to several stimuli in humans.
- Learning with one stimulus increased the learning rate to other stimuli.
- Learning to learn was observed in both conditioning and extinction.
- Results were not due to physical or forms of mediated generalization.
- Outcome error may allow rapid transfer by acting as a retrieval cue.

Abstract

Learning to Learn (LTL) is the transfer of learning, separate from stimulus generalization, that appears across tasks that share a similar structure. Three experiments examined this phenomenon in both conditioning and extinction learning in humans. The latter effect is of special interest given the failures in the literature to obtain transfer of extinction between stimuli. Conditioning and extinction with one stimulus increased the rate of conditioning and, surprisingly, extinction of a different stimulus (Experiment 1). The effects appeared in the absence of physical

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