

How can we increase the use of interleaved study in self-regulated learning?

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Abstract

Learners are often unaware of effective learning strategies, hindering their actual utilization. We investigated intervention methods to increase the utilization of effective learning strategies in self-regulated learning settings, specifically focusing on the interleaving strategy in category learning. Undergraduate students were either informed or not about effective learning methods and studied painting styles of various artists in a self-paced order. In Experiment 1, participants who received instructions about specific goals and critical skills required for category learning at the beginning were more likely to recognize the importance of identifying between-artists differences, but did not necessarily increase interleaving during their study. In Experiment 2, however, participants provided with procedural and conditional metacognitive knowledge (i.e., why interleaving is effective and how to interleave exemplars) in the middle of their study significantly increased interleaved practices. Our findings suggest that enhancing metacognitive knowledge can help encourage the use of effective learning strategies in self-regulated learning.