Strengthening Visual Learned CP Research

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Abstract

Learned categorical perception (CP) occurs when judgments of stimulus similarity or discriminability are altered as a result of learning to categorize the stimuli; for example, there may be enhanced discrimination of items straddling a category boundary or of differences anywhere along a category-relevant dimension. Typical visual learned CP experiments do not test for both kinds of effects or employ control groups receiving exposure to the stimuli comparable to that received by category learning groups, rendering the results ambiguous in multiple ways. We will present results from a new experimental paradigm that is designed to achieve the following important goals: (a) test for and clearly distinguish all known types of boundary and dimension-wide effects considered variants of learned CP and (b) determine whether observed changes in performance are actually due to categorization training by comparing them to the changes caused by comparable stimulus exposure in the absence of category learning.