Retrieval-Induced Forgetting Effects in Retrospective and Prospective Memory in Normal Aging: An Experimental Study

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Abstract: Retrieval-induced forgetting (RIF) refers to the phenomenon that selective retrieval of some information impairs memory for related, but not previously retrieved information. Despite age differences in retrieval-induced forgetting regarding retrospective memory being documented, this research aimed to highlight age differences in RIF of the prospective memory tasks for the first time. By using retrieval-practice paradigm, this study comparatively examined RIF effects in retrospective memory and event-based prospective memory in young and old adults. In this experimental study, a mixed factorial design with age group (Young, Old) as a between-subject variable, and memory type (Prospective, Retrospective) and item type (Practiced, Non-practiced) as within-subject variables was employed. Retrieval-induced forgetting was observed in the retrospective but not in the prospective memory task. Therefore, the results indicated that selective retrieval of past events led to suppression of other related past events in both age groups but not the suppression of memory for future intentions.

Keywords: prospective memory, retrieval-induced forgetting, retrieval inhibition, retrospective memory

Conference Title: ICCPM 2017: International Conference on Cognitive Psychology and Memory

Conference Location: Amsterdam, Netherlands

Conference Dates: May 14-15, 2017