

## Retrieval-Induced Forgetting of Stereotypical Traits: Cross-Category Inhibition and Valence Asymmetry

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The present research adapted retrieval practice paradigm (Anderson, R. A. Bjork, & E. L. Bjork, 1994) to investigate the memory inhibition of stereotypical traits. The results of experiment 1 show that retrieval practice on stereotypical traits impairs not only the later recall of other traits explicitly studied under the same social category, but also similar items under different category cues, providing evidence for cross-category inhibition. Experiment 2 examines whether valence of stereotypical traits will moderate retrieval-induced forgetting. In the retrieval practice phase, participants in our two experimental conditions performed retrieval practice on positive or negative traits of half of the studied social categories; participants in control group retrieved exemplars of a natural category as baseline. The results of experiment 2 demonstrated that positive and negative stereotypical traits are influenced in different ways by retrieval-induced forgetting. Comparing to the control group, participants who retrieved negative traits of half of the studied social categories inhibited memory for positive traits of those social groups; in contrast, participants who performed retrieval practice on positive aspects did not impair memory for negative traits of the practiced social groups. These findings suggest that negative stereotypical traits are dominant in memory and therefore can resist inhibition of retrieval practice.

**Keywords:** *cross-category inhibition, negativity bias, positive-negative asymmetry, retrieval-induced forgetting, stereotype inhibition*

