Measuring and interpreting the force of responses to stimuli in reaction time research

Together with reaction time the force with which people make key-presses in responses to stimuli can provide important clues about cognitive and affective processes. However, while there has been much discussion of factors involved in the accurate measurement and recording of reaction time, key issues and assumptions upon which measurement and interpretation of response force are founded are far less completely studied.

Most normally, computer keys are pressed with suitable force without explicit thought. However, much more needs to be known about the strategies adopted by participants in the generation of responses to stimuli before confidence can be high about incorporating response force measures in substantive research controversies. Of considerable importance to the development of methodologies involving response force is the careful, explicit, examination of issues underlying the accurate measurement and interpretation of response force as a dependent measure in itself. This project aims to examine links between visual perception and action, and the effects of the strategic control of response force in reaction time research.

For further information about this project contact

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