

A primacy effect in monkeys when list position is relevant.

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In Experiment 1 (1a and 1b), Rhesus monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) learned lists of two-choice visual discriminations in which list position was relevant to discrimination performance. For example, Stimulus A was the rewarded stimulus if it was presented at List Position 1, but was not rewarded if it was presented at any other position in the list; similarly, Stimulus B was rewarded only at List Position 2, and so on. In learning these lists, all animals showed a marked primacy effect. In Experiment 2 (2a and 2b), Rhesus monkeys and Cynomolgus monkeys (*M. fascicularis*) learned lists of visual discriminations in which each visual stimulus occupied a fixed position in a list, but list position was not relevant to discrimination performance. For example, Stimulus E was always rewarded, and was always presented at List Position 1. To increase the salience of list beginning as a distinctive event, successive presentations of the list were separated by 24-hr intervals. In Experiment 2 there was no primacy effect, however. These results show for the first time that a primacy effect can be obtained in visual discrimination learning by monkeys. Furthermore, they suggest that it is obtained only when list position is relevant to the discrimination learning task.

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