investigating the automaticity of constructive appraisals

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Interaction requires a constructive process
= multiple-input process

INPUT
stimulus = actual state
motivational state
expected state
coping potential
agency/accountability

OUTPUT
specific emotion
specific interaction
pattern
criticism:

constructive appraisal process is slow, laborious
→ not a plausible candidate cause of (all) emotions

3 strategies to deal with criticism:

1. appraisal is not a cause but a constituent of experience
2. supplement constructive appraisal process with fast, automatic retrieval process
3. alternative
2 types of processes: **constructive** retrieval of past outcomes, **associative** nonautomatic automatic

2 types of conditions: **optimal** much time much attentional capacity conscious input intention, **suboptimal** little time little attentional capacity unconscious input no intention intention to avoid
under optimal (nonautomatic) conditions

stimulus
= actual state

goals/concerns
= desired state

match

mismatch

positive

negative

low

high

negative

less

coping potential
under optimal (nonautomatic) conditions

stimulus
= actual state

goal/concern
= desired state

comparison

mismatch

outcome = negative
under optimal (nonautomatic) conditions

stimulus = actual state

goal/concern = desired state

comparison

association
stored in memory

outcome = negative
under suboptimal (automatic) conditions

stimulus
= actual state

activation
of association

outcome = negative
under suboptimal (automatic) conditions

stimulus = actual state

outcome = negative

activation of association

goal/concern = desired state

positive
Investigate empirically whether constructive processes can operate automatically.
SOA: 300 ms

**Prime Target Response**

**Positive**

- Flower
- Cancer

**Negative**

- Party
- War

If prime valence = target valence → **Congruent** trial
If prime valence ≠ target valence → **Incongruent** trial
RT

congruent  incongruent
SOA: 300 ms

Prime: flower, cancer

Target: party, war

Response: positive, negative

If prime valence = target valence → congruent trial
If prime valence ≠ target valence → incongruent trial
rewarded category: animal=10, profession=10

game: P, A

prime: frog, surgeon

target: party, war

SOA:300 ms

comparison: match/mismatch

response: positive, negative

if prime valence = target valence → congruent trial
if prime valence ≠ target valence → incongruent trial
SOA=300 ms

Preprime: house in flood, house on fire

Prime: boat, water

Target: party, war

Response: positive, negative

If prime = remedy for preprime
If prime = no remedy for preprime
If prime valence = target valence (congruent trial)
If prime valence ≠ target valence (incongruent trial)
SOA=300 ms

prime

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>negative stimulus &amp; coping</th>
<th>positive</th>
<th>positive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>negative stimulus &amp; no coping</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>negative</td>
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if prime valence = target valence \(\rightarrow\) congruent trial
if prime valence \(\neq\) target valence \(\rightarrow\) incongruent trial
conclusion