New Research From *Psychological Science*

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[Hypnotic Suggestions Can Induce Rapid Change in Implicit Attitudes](#)
Pieter Van Dessel and Jan De Houwer

Our environment can trigger spontaneous evaluations of persons or objects, which, because of their automaticity, have been thought to be more resistant to change than explicit attitudes. Specifically, previous research has indicated that implicit attitudes do not seem to change as a result of information that contradicts them (i.e., counterattitudinal) because they are not based on beliefs. To further examine this possibility, Van Dessel and De Houwer used hypnosis, which might influence even highly automatic behavior. Participants read positive or negative information about two fictional groups or learned to associate one individual with positive words and pictures and another individual with negative words and pictures. Afterward, some participants were hypnotized and instructed to process information more deeply than they usually would, whereas other participants went through a relaxation phase, similar to hypnosis but without the command to process information. Participants were then given information that contradicted the information they had received earlier regarding the groups or the individuals. Explicit attitudinal measures (e.g., how corrupt or virtuous a group is) indicated that both participants changed their attitude to accommodate the counterattitudinal information whether they had been hypnotized or not. In contrast, only participants exposed to hypnosis changed their implicit attitudes (measured by the Implicit Association Test and an affect-misattribution test) to accommodate the counterattitudinal information. These findings suggest that implicit evaluations can be rapidly changed to incorporate counterattitudinal information when facilitated by hypnosis. Thus, hypnotic suggestion might be used to change automatic attitudes, which can help to treat dysregulations such as addiction, depression, and phobias.

[Relational Scaffolding Enhances Children's Understanding of Scientific Models](#)

Benjamin D. Jee and Florencia K. Anggoro

Relational scaffolding involves guiding a student through comparisons between observable phenomena and corresponding modeled events (e.g., comparisons between observations of sunrise, midday, and sunset, and models of a space-based perspective of the Earth-sun system). Use of relational scaffolding might improve children's understanding of scientific models (e.g., the day/night cycle), this research suggests. Third graders performed an embodied simulation, in which they pretended to be the Earth while their observations and movements were recorded, and a 3-D model simulation, in which they simply observed a 3-D model of the Earth-sun system. Afterward, the researchers exposed some students to relational scaffolding by showing them the video footage of the observable events and the space-based perspective acquired during the embodied and the 3-D simulations, presented in a split screen highlighting the correspondences between events. Students learned more when their instruction included relational scaffolding than when it did not, and this difference persisted 6 to 7 weeks after the instruction. In another experiment, participants who saw the same videos but without receiving any relational scaffolding did not learn as well as participants who received relational scaffolding, especially if they initially had low knowledge of the subject. These findings indicate that guided comparison is a critical component for the success of relational scaffolding, especially for underprepared students, and may help students who struggle with understanding scientific models.