

虎皮鹦鹉的认知表现及关联

解博雅^{①②} 李怡晴^{①③} 邹瑀琦^{①②} 方昀^① 孙悦华^{①*}

① 中国科学院动物研究所, 动物生态与保护生物学院重点实验室 北京 100101;

② 中国科学院大学 北京 100049; ③ 河北大学生命科学学院 保定 071002

摘要: 许多研究认为, 不同个体的认知能力存在差异, 同一个体的多种认知表现之间可能存在关联。然而, 目前对动物认知表现关联的研究结果存在诸多矛盾和争议。本研究以虎皮鹦鹉 (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) 为研究对象, 通过自我控制、联想学习和反转学习三项认知实验, 探究三项表现的联系。实验结果发现, 在虎皮鹦鹉中, 联想学习表现越好, 反转学习亦表现越好。个体对实验装置的新异恐惧 (对新环境或新事物的恐惧) 越弱, 自我控制表现越好。雌、雄个体在三项认知实验中的表现没有显著差异。综上所述, 虎皮鹦鹉的一些认知能力存在关联, 这暗示了虎皮鹦鹉中可能存在一般认知能力 (“g”)。新异恐惧与自我控制表现的强烈相关, 说明了勇敢程度可能会影响认知表现。

关键词: 认知; 自我控制; 联想学习; 反转学习; 关联

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Different Cognitive Performances and their Correlations in Budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*)

XIE Bo-Ya^{①②} LI Yi-Qing^{①③} ZOU Yu-Qi^{①②} FANG Yun^① SUN Yue-Hua^{①*}

① Key Laboratory of Animal Ecology and Conservation Biology, Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101;

② University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049; ③ School of Life Sciences, Hebei University, Baoding 071002, China

Abstract: [Objectives] Previous studies proposed differences in cognitive performances among different individuals, and there may be associations between multiple cognitive performance in the same individual. However, the correlations of cognitive performances in animals are still controversies. We would like to explore the associations between the performance of the different cognitive experiments. **[Methods]** In this study, we used self-control, associative learning and reversal learning experiments to investigate the correlations among these cognitive performances in the Budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*). A detour reaching task was used to measure the individuals' self-control ability, with a transparent open cylinder (6.5 cm in length and 6.5 cm in diameter; Fig. 1a) in which a food reward was placed in the center. Trials were conducted at one-minute intervals for a total of ten times, all trails were performed on the same day if possible. The trial was considered as successful if the subject inhibited the initial response of pecking the transparent cylinder and went around

* 通讯作者, E-mail: sunyh@ioz.ac.cn;

第一作者介绍 解博雅, 女, 硕士研究生; 研究方向: 鸟类生态学; E-mail: xbyfuture@163.com。

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to the open ends of the cylinder to obtain the food reward. Subjects were considered complete the self-control task once they had successfully circled the open ends of the cylinder without pecking at the transparent cylinder walls three times in a row. The number of successful trials was considered as the self-control ability. A color-discrimination task was designed by using a wooden foraging grid (16 cm × 6 cm × 3 cm) with two wells (2 cm diameter, 1 cm deep; Fig. 1b) to test the associative learning ability of Budgerigars. In each trial, the wells were covered by a dark-green lid and a light-green lid. In associative learning, light-green was assigned as the rewarded color. In the first experiment, individuals were able to observe two wells and they could find that only light-green well with a food reward. In all subsequent trails, individuals were only allowed to open well once before the task was removed. Individuals were considered to have completed associative learning if they could successfully open the light-green well 8 times out of 9 trials. The number of trials taken to reach this criterion (including the last 9 experiments) was used to assess the individual's associative learning ability. After 24 hours of the individual completed associative learning, the reverse learning would be carried out. The same foraging grid would be presented with the only difference of the colour of the rewarded lid being reversed from that of the associative learning task. The experimental protocol and the criteria for passing were the same as the associative learning task described above. Before the above experiments start, the time span between the experimental devices were watched and touched for the first time was recorded for each individual, which was used to represent individuals' neophobia. We use Spearman rank correlation matrix to analyze the correlation between three cognitive tests, and the relationship between cognitive traits and neophobia time. Paired *t*-test was used to analyze the differences between number of trails of associative learning and reversal learning. Independent sample *t*-test was used to analyze the differences between males and females in three cognitive experiments. **[Results]** The number of successful self-control trials was 6.8 ± 1.9 times. The numbers of trails until passed associative learning and reversal learning were 74.7 ± 42.5 times and 106.6 ± 68.1 times, respectively. Individuals' neophobia times for each two devices were 247.7 ± 538.3 s and 47.9 ± 73.9 s. Our results showed that the number of trails until passed associative learning was less than reversal learning in the same individual ($t = -2.711$, $df = 24$, $P = 0.012$), while better reversal learning came along with better associative learning ($r_s = 0.560$, $P = 0.004$; Fig. 2). Self-control performance was associated with the neophobia ($r_s = -0.480$, $P = 0.014$), less neophobia came along with better self-control performance. There was no significant difference between male and female Budgerigars in three cognitive performances (Table 1). **[Conclusion]** Our experiments found a strong correlation between associative learning and reverse learning, and this suggest that general cognitive ability may exist in Budgerigars. Self-control experiments had no significant correlation with other cognitive experiments, however, they were associated with neophobia, so cognitive performances might be affected by non-cognitive factors. More research is needed in the future to verify the association between cognitive performances.

Key words: Cognition; Self-control; Associative learning; Reversal learning; Correlation

认知被定义为“动物从环境中获取、处理、储存和处理信息的机制”(Shettleworth 2009)。认知能力在动物的一生中起着至关重要的作用,从根本上影响个体获取资源、避免捕食、

探索新的栖息地和维持社会关系等行为(Cole et al. 2011)。个体不仅能通过遗传进化解解决适应性问题,也能通过不断学习来改变自身的行为以更好地适应环境(Enquist et al. 2016)。基

于动物和人类大脑结构的相似性,自 20 世纪初以来,已经有大量关于动物学习的实验研究,使用从原生动物到人类的多种实验对象进行多种认知研究 (Pearce 2008)。

个体的认知能力包含许多方面,如自我控制 (self-control)、联想学习 (associative learning)、反转学习 (reversal learning) 和空间记忆 (spatial memory)。这些认知能力广泛存在于许多物种中,对动物的生存有着重要意义。野外和室内实验中,许多物种都表现出一定程度的自我控制——抑制最初产生的本能倾向,最终展现出与之相反行为的能力 (Amici et al. 2008, MacLean et al. 2014)。自我控制能力在动物觅食、建立关系和规避高等级个体中起着重要作用,对未来规划有着重要意义。例如,放弃之前的觅食地点转而探索新的觅食地 (MacLean et al. 2014); 当与同伴争夺资源时,个体选择放弃短期的利益以培养与同伴长期的合作关系 (Stephens 2002)。联想学习反映了个体对两个事件的联系能力 (Pearce 2008)。动物通过联想学习能够理解并判断环境或事件信号,并对特定刺激做出适当反应,从而有助于适应环境 (Enquist et al. 2016, Lind 2018)。在反转学习中,个体需要选择同之前被强化的选择相反的选项 (Bond et al. 2007),因此体现了个体快速根据环境变化产生新选择的能力 (Audet et al. 2016),被认为是行为灵活性的一个方面 (Boogert et al. 2010)。空间记忆是指对外界环境地理位置或方向的记忆能力,在鸟类觅食和繁殖等重要的生命活动中起到至关重要的作用 (Day et al. 1999)。

在以往对鸟类认知的研究中,研究者们进行了许多实验研究,试图去探索认知实验表现间的关系 (Boogert et al. 2011, Shaw et al. 2015, Bebus et al. 2016)。然而到目前为止,这些认知表现间的关联仍存在争议。有关联想学习和反转学习的研究发现,两者之间关系复杂。对丛鸦 (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) 亚成体的研究发现,个体的联想学习表现越好,反转学习表现

越差 (Bebus et al. 2016)。这可能与个体对新信息的接受程度有关,当个体坚持经验主义而不采纳新的信息时,无法快速地适应环境变化 (Sih et al. 2012)。然而,更多的研究结果与上述结论相反,即联想学习表现越好,反转学习越好。如雄性歌带鹀 (*Melospiza melodia*) 在有关颜色的联想学习和反转学习任务中,两种认知表现呈正相关 (Boogert et al. 2011)。而对北岛鸚鵡 (*Petroica longipes*) 多项认知表现的研究发现,多项认知表现,包括自我控制、联想学习、反转学习和空间记忆,之间存在微弱的、不明显的正相关关系 (Shaw et al. 2015)。

了解多项认知能力间的联系对于认知的进化研究十分重要,然而迄今为止,对认知能力之间关联的研究尚不充分。本实验以虎皮鹦鹉 (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) 为研究对象,进行自我控制、联想学习和反转学习三项认知实验,试图探究三项认知实验表现间的关联。我们预测,虎皮鹦鹉的三项认知实验表现间存在相关关系。

1 研究方法

1.1 研究对象及装置

1.1.1 研究对象 虎皮鹦鹉为小型攀禽,原产地澳大利亚 (Masure et al. 1934)。以往对虎皮鹦鹉的研究发现其可以完成较为复杂的觅食任务,因此较为适宜进行认知实验研究 (Chen et al. 2019)。

本实验的研究对象为野生型 (羽色以绿、黄、黑为主要色调) 成年虎皮鹦鹉,所有个体都是绿色。雄性 13 只,雌性 12 只,年龄均在 1 岁以上。通过右腿上佩戴的有编号的黑色脚环来识别不同个体。实验室每天保持 15.5 h 光照和 8.5 h 黑暗。除了实验期间,所有虎皮鹦鹉个体都可以自由取食混合种子和淡水,并补充乌贼骨、红土和蔬菜。在实验开始前一周,将实验个体单独饲养在小笼中。

1.1.2 实验装置 认知实验设计了两种装置,虎皮鹦鹉需采取不同的取食技巧获取食物。自

自我控制装置为透明圆筒（图 1a），直径 6.5 cm，长 6.5 cm，其内放置食物（谷子），底部粘有铅块固定。面对透明筒壁时实验个体需要抑制直接啄取食物的冲动，绕到侧面的开口处取食。联想学习和反转学习实验装置（图 1b）为挖孔的木块，长 16 cm，宽 6 cm，高 3 cm，孔径 2 cm，孔内放置食物（谷子），孔上覆盖不同颜色的盖子。个体需要学会打开正确颜色的盖子获取食物，浅绿色为联想学习的奖励颜色，深绿色为反转学习的奖励颜色。

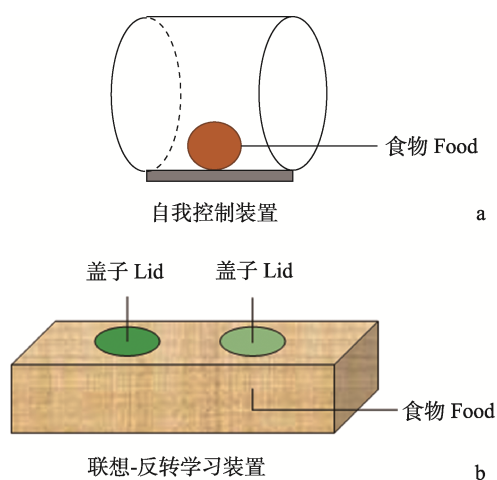


图 1 实验装置图

Fig. 1 The experimental devices

a. 自我控制装置；b. 联想-反转学习装置。

a. Self-control experimental device; b. Associative-reversal learning experimental device.

1.2 认知实验

1.2.1 自我控制 (self-control) 将自我控制装置放入单独饲养实验对象个体的小笼 (48 cm × 33 cm × 32 cm)。装置每次放入饲养小笼内 1 min，共计放入小笼 10 次。如果可能，所有实验在同一天进行。以实验获得成功的次数用来衡量自我控制表现。在统计分析中，未获得成功的被试获得最低分 0 分。自我控制实验成功的标准是：实验对象绕到圆筒的开口端取食，并且在成功取食前没有连续 3 次啄到透明

的筒壁。

1.2.2 联想学习 (associative learning) 在第一次实验中，实验对象可以搜索联想-反转学习装置上的两个孔，以发现只有浅绿色盖子盖住的孔内含有食物奖励。在随后的所有实验中，实验对象只允许在任务结束前搜索一个孔，最多有 1 min 的时间来完成任务。如果打开的是含有食物的孔，则允许其在 1 min 的剩余时间内进食；如果打开的是不含食物的孔，则取出联想-反转学习装置，准备进行下一次实验。每次实验之间至少间隔 1 min，每只虎皮鹦鹉每天最多进行 50 次实验；如果某一天达到了最大实验次数，则第二天继续实验。为了确保颜色是与食物奖励相关联的线索，而不是位置，浅绿孔的位置是伪随机的，并且在连续 3 次以上的实验中不在同一侧，实验中奖励孔的位置按照特定序列循环，左-右-左-右-左-左-右-右-左-右。当实验对象在 9 次连续实验中至少有 8 次 (8/9 正确的概率明显偏离随机概率，二项检验 $P = 0.039$) 打开了浅绿色盖子时，该个体被认为成功地完成了实验。达到这个标准前的实验次数 (包括最后 9 次实验) 被用来衡量联想学习表现。

1.2.3 反转学习 (reversal learning) 反转学习在联想学习完成 24 h 后进行，使用和联想学习相同的实验装置、实验方法和成功标准。不同的是，反转学习中只有深绿色盖子盖住的孔内含有食物。达到标准前的实验次数 (包括最后 9 次实验) 被用来衡量联想学习表现。

1.3 新异恐惧测定

新异恐惧被定义为，第一次将实验装置放入笼内时，个体从看到实验装置到触碰实验装置所需要的时间 (Bergman et al. 2009)。新异恐惧时间反映了个体对新事物的恐惧水平，恐惧心理可能在实验中对个体表现产生显著影响。在本实验中，分别测定了个体对自我控制实验装置和联想-反转学习装置的新异恐惧时间。

1.4 数据分析

使用 Spearman 秩次相关法分析三项认知

实验的相关性, 以及认知实验与两项新异恐惧的相关性。使用配对 t 检验分析同一个体联想学习和反转学习次数的差异, 使用独立样本 t 检验分析雌、雄个体在三项认知实验中的差异。所有分析均在 R 4.1.1 (R Development Core Team, <https://cran.r-project.org/>) 中进行, 使用“Hmisc”包 (Harrell et al. 2018) 进行 Spearman 秩次相关分析。

2 实验结果

共有 25 只虎皮鹦鹉 (13 只雄性, 12 只雌性) 完成了实验, 所有虎皮鹦鹉都进行了三项认知实验和新异恐惧的测定。

2.1 新异恐惧和认知表现的关系

个体对自我控制实验装置的平均新异恐惧为 (247.7 ± 538.3) s, 范围 2 ~ 1 827 s, 对联想-反转学习装置的平均新异恐惧为 (47.9 ± 73.9) s, 范围 0 ~ 315 s。两项新异恐惧存在显著正相关关系 ($r_s = 0.500, P = 0.012$)。

虎皮鹦鹉对自我控制实验装置的新异恐惧与自我控制成功次数存在显著负相关关系 ($r_s = -0.480, P = 0.014$); 虎皮鹦鹉对联想-反转学习装置的新异恐惧与联想学习 ($r_s = 0.000, P = 0.987$)、反转学习 ($r_s = -0.270, P = 0.197$) 均不存在相关关系。

2.2 认知表现之间的关系

自我控制平均成功次数为 (6.8 ± 1.9) 次, 范围 2 ~ 9 次。联想学习达到连续 9 次实验中至少 8 次打开浅绿色盖子这一标准平均需 (74.7 ± 42.5) 次, 范围 9 ~ 184 次。反转学习达到标准平均需 (106.6 ± 68.1) 次, 范围 27 ~ 299 次。同一个体完成联想学习的次数显著少

于反转学习的次数 (配对 t 检验: $t = -2.711, df = 24, P = 0.012$)。

因为相关性分析采用两两比较的方法进行了三次比较, 可能产生假阳性, 所以采用 Bonferroni 校正法, 通过降低 P 值的阈值进行校正。校正后, P 值小于 0.017 才被认为存在显著相关性。自我控制表现与联想学习表现相关性不显著 ($r_s = -0.110, P = 0.585$)。自我控制与反转学习相关性不显著 ($r_s = 0.200, P = 0.343$)。联想学习与反转学习的次数存在显著正相关 ($r_s = 0.560, P = 0.004$; 图 2)。

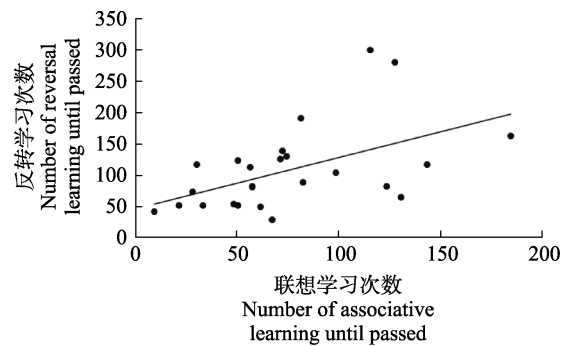


图 2 联想学习次数和反转学习次数的关系

Fig. 2 The relationship between associative learning and reversal learning

2.3 雌雄个体的差异

通过 t 检验对比雌、雄个体的三项认知实验次数。雌、雄个体在自我控制实验、联想学习和反转学习实验中均没有显著差异 (表 1)。虽然在联想学习实验中, 雌性完成实验所需次数少于雄性, 但是差异没有达到统计学上的显著 (t 检验: $t = 1.990, df = 23, P = 0.059$)。

表 1 雌雄个体认知表现 t 检验分析结果

Table 1 The results of t -test between male and female cognition performances in budgerigars

认知实验 Cognition experiments	雌性 Female ($n = 12$) Mean \pm SD	雄性 Male ($n = 13$) Mean \pm SD	t 检验 t test
自我控制 Self-control (次)	7.0 ± 1.9	6.6 ± 2.0	$t = -0.489$ $P = 0.629$
联想学习 Associative learning (次)	58.1 ± 37.0	89.9 ± 42.8	$t = 1.990$ $P = 0.059$
反转学习 Reversal learning (次)	96.0 ± 66.3	116.5 ± 70.8	$t = 0.746$ $P = 0.463$

3 讨论

自我控制、联想学习和反转学习作为经典的认知实验，分别评估了个体的自控、学习和行为灵活度，从而多维地评估了个体的认知能力 (Diamond 1990, Diskinson 2012, MacLean et al. 2014, Enquist et al. 2016, Hermer et al. 2018)。本研究对虎皮鹦鹉进行了自我控制、联想学习和反转学习三项认知测试，探究认知实验表现的相关性。结果发现，联想学习和反转学习实验所用次数存在正相关；自我控制实验成功次数与联想学习所用次数及反转学习所用次数均不相关。研究还发现，新异恐惧与自我控制成功次数存在负相关，新异恐惧时长越长，个体的自我控制成功次数越少，即新异恐惧强的个体自我控制表现较差。此外，雌、雄个体在自我控制、联想学习和反转学习三项认知实验中不存在显著差异。

在本实验中，采用 10 次连续的短期测试测定个体的自我控制能力。结果发现，自我控制表现与联想学习和反转学习两项认知实验均没有显著的相关，反而与对实验装置的新异恐惧有显著负相关。即勇敢程度越高的个体，其新异恐惧时间越短，自我控制表现越好。Shettleworth (2009) 提出，大胆的个体能够更快地完成任务，可能是因为它们的新异恐惧较低，可以更快地接触装置，尝试解决问题。本研究的结果与上述假设一致，新异恐惧较低的个体在自我控制实验任务中表现较好。但其他两个认知实验中，新异恐惧与认知表现没有相关性，我们认为这与实验设计有关。个体对装置的新异恐惧可能对耗时较短的实验产生显著影响，并掩盖了真实的认知水平。我们推测在短期快速的学习任务中，胆子较大的个体更快地学习并完成任务；在耗时较长、需要大量训练的学习任务中，新异恐惧只影响实验开始时个体接触实验装置的时间，个体的认知表现与勇敢程度没有太大的关系。

对人类的研究已经发现，一个人在一项认知任务中的表现可以预测他在其他认知任务中

的表现 (Spearman 1904, Deary et al. 2010)，Spearman (1904) 将其命名为“g”，即“general cognitive ability (一般认知能力)”的缩写，并认为“g”作为一种基本的认知能力，被个体在所有的认知任务中使用。一百多年来，随着多项心理测试和遗传学调查对这一概念的验证，“g”在人类认知中的存在已经得到了证实 (Deary et al. 2010, Burkart et al. 2017, Shaw et al. 2017)。然而，在动物中，学者们还在验证一般认知能力的存在。许多研究对啮齿类、灵长类和鸟类的多项认知表现进行了评估和分析 (Call et al. 2012, Herrmann et al. 2012, Matzel et al. 2013, Shaw et al. 2015)。对小鼠 (*Mus musculus*) 的研究虽然发现了遗传性的一般认知能力 (Galsworthy et al. 2014)，但是由于认知实验的相似性而被质疑 (Call et al. 2012, Herrmann et al. 2012)。对灵长类和鸟类的认知研究发现，个体在多项认知实验表现中的联系十分复杂 (Herrmann et al. 2012, Shaw et al. 2015, 2017)。

在本研究中，联想学习和反转学习的显著正相关，可能在一定程度上体现了一般认知能力的存在。我们对这种正相关关系的解释是，在联想学习和反转学习中，个体都被要求学会某种刺激和食物的联系，所以两项实验都反映了个体的学习能力。联想学习中，浅绿色盖子与食物的关系通过不断地练习得到了强化。反转学习中个体需要花费更多的时间，放弃之前被强化的选择 (浅绿色盖子)，转而建立深绿色盖子和食物的联系。虽然反转学习主要体现的是，面对环境和奖励条件的变化个体改变选择的能力，但是由于个体建立了新的刺激-奖励关系，因此我们认为反转学习在一定程度上也是个体学习能力的体现。

综上所述，本研究发现虎皮鹦鹉的一些认知能力存在显著的正相关关系，暗示了虎皮鹦鹉可能存在一般认知能力。虽然自我控制表现与其他认知表现不存在相关关系，但是这可能是受新异恐惧等非认知因素的影响，我们仍然认为本研究的三种认知表现间存在相互联系。未来需要更多的研究来探讨个体认知表现的关联。

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