TESTING THE PSI-MEDIATED INSTRUMENTAL RESPONSE THEORY USING AN IMPLICIT PSI TASK

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Objectives: The project utilises the successful implicit psi design adopted by Luke and colleagues (2008a, 2008b) to provide a platform for ESP effects so as to systematically investigate necessary or sufficient psychological conditions for their occurrence.

Methods & Results: The project consists of four experiments that systematically explore the utility of this implicit psi task as a paradigm for generating replicable psi effects. Each study considers a unique research question, but the protocol is largely standardised to allow comparison across studies and to constitute a programmatic replication attempt.

Study 1 was a simple replication attempt using a more refined contingent reward system employing images from the International Affective Picture System. The number of trials was increased to enhance statistical power, but all other design elements remained consistent with the original studies. Participants achieved a hit rate marginally greater than MCE, but this difference was nonsignificant.

Study 2 tested the assumption that to be successful the psi task should be covert, by comparing intentional and non-intentional conditions in a between-subjects design. Although participants scored marginally better at the nonintentional task, differences were nonsignificant.

Study 3 focused on PMIR predictions concerning factors that affect sensitivity to the psi stimulus and incorporated an experimental measure of latent inhibition. Results were suggestive of a non-intentional psi effect but failed to reach significance, whilst latent inhibition was found to be unrelated to precognitive performance.

Study 4 explores experimenter interaction effects with two experimenters (1 male, 1 female) conducting separate trials and participants rating the experimenter-participant interaction. Measures of reward and punishment sensitivity are included. Data collection will be complete by April 2012.

Discussion: Although the three studies completed to date failed to yield independently significant evidence of non-intentional psi, hit rates overall remain above chance expectations. Meta analysis of the four studies combined will enable a more informative assessment of the evidence for non-intentional precognition and its covariate