Testing Shepard, Hovland, and Jenkins' Categorization Paradigm

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Shepard, Hovland, and Jenkins 1961

- Assessed the factors that influence how difficult a categorization pattern will be to learn or remember.
- Eight shapes that vary on three dimensions grouped into two categories.
- Subjects shown these shapes one after another and asked which category they belonged to.
- 70 possible categorizations, which fit into 6 “types.”
Types

- Independent of the actual dimensions (size, color, shape)
- Type I – items in the categories vary on one dimension.
- Type II – items vary on two dimensions.
- Types III-VI – items vary on all three dimensions.
Examples of the Six Types
Shepard's Results

The more dimensions involved in a pattern, the more difficult it is to learn.
Testing Platform for Shepard's Experiments

- Take input from experimenter about categorization pattern
- Display stimuli to subject and prompt subject for a label
- Report to subject if they were correct.
- After 32 correct answers, report to experimenter statistics about this session.