**Background**

- Engaging in task-focused self-talk prior to a task leads to improved performance by reducing self-focused stress.\(^1\)\(^2\)
  - Self-focused talk reduces performance by inducing task-related anxiety/ness.
  - Existing research does not address the role of continuous self-talk on task performance.

- Self-efficacy and internal locus of control during the goal-setting process are associated with improved performance outcomes.\(^3\)
  - Goals that situate the learner in a position of agency lead to better performance than goals that are assigned by an outside party.

- An individual’s goal orientation, or perspectives regarding achievement, can be focused on self-improvement and mastery or on competition and demonstration of competence.\(^4\)
  - Learning goal orientations motivate learners to work toward mastery and display resilience in the face of challenge, leading to improved performance during difficult tasks.
  - Performance goal orientations motivate learners to demonstrate competence and avoid scenarios that may undermine outward displays of ability.

- Mindsets, or beliefs about the nature of intelligence and ability, are correlated with goal orientations and have similar effects on task performance.\(^5\)
  - Growth-oriented mindsets suggest that intelligence and ability are malleable, leading to greater engagement and resilience in response to difficulty.
  - Fixed-oriented mindsets frame intelligence as a static trait, leading to disengagement and helplessness responses when learners are confronted with challenges.

**Questions & Predictions**

**Does type of self-talk affect task performance?**

First-person goals that position the active agent will lead to improved performance, whereas second-person goals will undermine performance.\(^1\)\(^2\)

**Does naive mindset influence the effect of self-focused talk on task performance?**

Individuals who hold fixed mindsets are expected to demonstrate poorer performance when an audience is implied.\(^3\)\(^4\)\(^5\)

**Are typical task instructions adequate for motivating optimal performance?**

Standard task instructions (“Do your best.”) will compromise performance by implying the presence of an outside observer.\(^6\)

Rephrasing task instructions to emphasize a participant’s agency and locus of control for the task should improve performance.\(^3\)

**References & Acknowledgments**