

Why do we miss the dancing bear?

Dr. Chia-huei Tseng Dec 13, 2013



1. Visual search enables us to study attention.

Search is an integral part of our life. We search for keys, for friends' face in the crowd, and for signs of love. When we follow our intention to move our eyes, the gaze pattern of our eyes (called eye movement) becomes a way that we can tape into our mind. Psychologists use a machine called "eye tracker" to study these gaze patterns.

From the Volkswagen commercial example, what attracts your attention?

Knowing our attentional selection helps us visual design and power point. What are the key factors determining the success of a poster?

2. Attention is not an unlimited resource.

When we concentrate on a task fully, it usually requires our efforts to ignore the irrelevant distraction around. This selection ability is crucial for our success in study, work and daily function such as walking and driving.

How many passes does the team in white make? _____ (your count)

Under the influence of attention, in-attentional blindness and change blindness can occur. This is because we are limited to what our attentional system has selected for us to note. Therefore, we may not have impression or memory for things we choose to ignore.

3. Attention is beyond visual.

Although visual system seems to dominate our attentional selection, other senses also play a role. Cocktail is a good example. When we concentrate on a conversation, we are still able to pay attention to neighboring pair's conversation, especially if messages are of great importance to us (such as our names). Let's try to see if we can reproduce the cocktail party effect together.

Your group conversation contents:

Your neighboring group(s) conversation:

Did you accurately record both (or all) conversations?

Remember – every action requires attention. The more difficult ones require more attention.

Therefore, always be aware of this limitation when you do multi-tasking.



Submit your Change Blindness Demo to our facebook to win a privilege HKU lab tour!!

1. Select a picture of your like.
2. Edit it so that a part (or parts) of the picture is different from the original one.
3. Make a two-frame movie with a blank in between to make the difference invisible.

Winner selection criteria:

1. The effect itself – the more invisibility you can create to full our attention, the better.
2. Taste of your picture – sheer beauty and pleasantness to see gives you extra bonus!

Submission deadline: December 31, 2013, 11:59 p.m.