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A call for attention!--TV news broadcasts and the effects of competing news presentations on perception

V Gattol, T Ditye, C C Carbon, F Hutzler

In our fast-moving society, news networks are challenged to supply an ever-growing array of information simultaneously. Recent developments in TV news broadcasts have shown to incorporate new presentation techniques, such as crawlers and additional headlines transporting different stories at the same time. We analyzed to which degree viewers are actually capable of processing these various contents altogether; recall data were supplemented by eye-movement measures and aesthetic evaluations of the different broadcast designs. Stimuli consisted of news-broadcasts that were varied in the type of information (no add-on, highly relevant, little relevant) and the way of presentation (crawler vs static). Content recall of the main story was strongly reduced in both add-on-conditions and modulated by relevance. Crawlers showed increased fixation times but did not differ from the static subtitles in content recall for the add-ons. Further, aesthetic evaluations revealed that plain broadcasts (no add-on) were generally preferred and judged as more reliable as well as less overcrowded and strenuous.

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