



Dr Charlotte Russell

Module:

Psychological Foundations of Mental Health

Week 2:

Cognitive Processes and Representations

Topic 2:

Attention

Part 1 of 2

Topic list



This week, we will be looking at the following topics:

- Topic 1: Perception
- **Topic 2: Attention**
- Topic 3: Memory
- Topic in Action 1: Control Processes

Click **Next** to continue

What is Attention?

Attention = mechanism selection



William James
1842-1910

“Every one knows what attention is. It is the taking possession by the mind, in clear and vivid form, one out of what seem several simultaneously possible objects or trains of thought.”

Attention and Anxiety

Pathological alterations in attentional selection

Attention shapes conscious processing



We are biased toward emotional faces

Anxiety or depression



Feature of attention:
Aware/conscious of items we've selected by attention

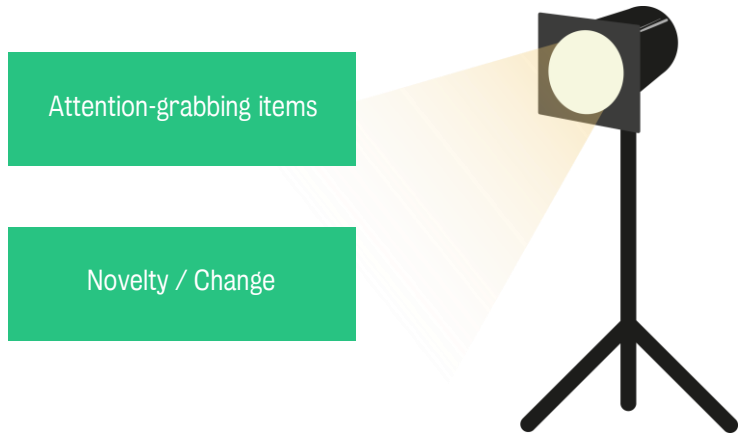


Affects behaviours, decisions, emotions

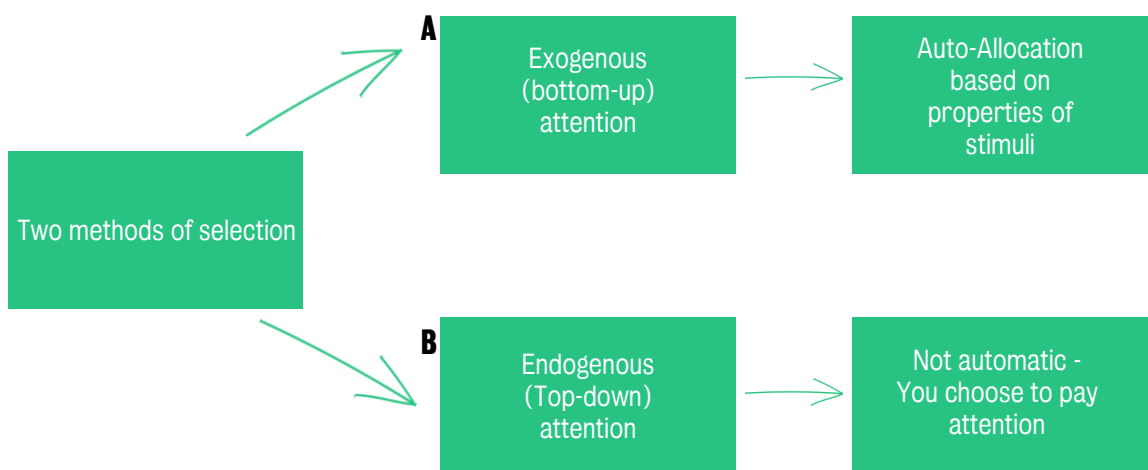
Lavie, Ro & Russel (2003)

What is Attention? Selection

What is selected by attention?

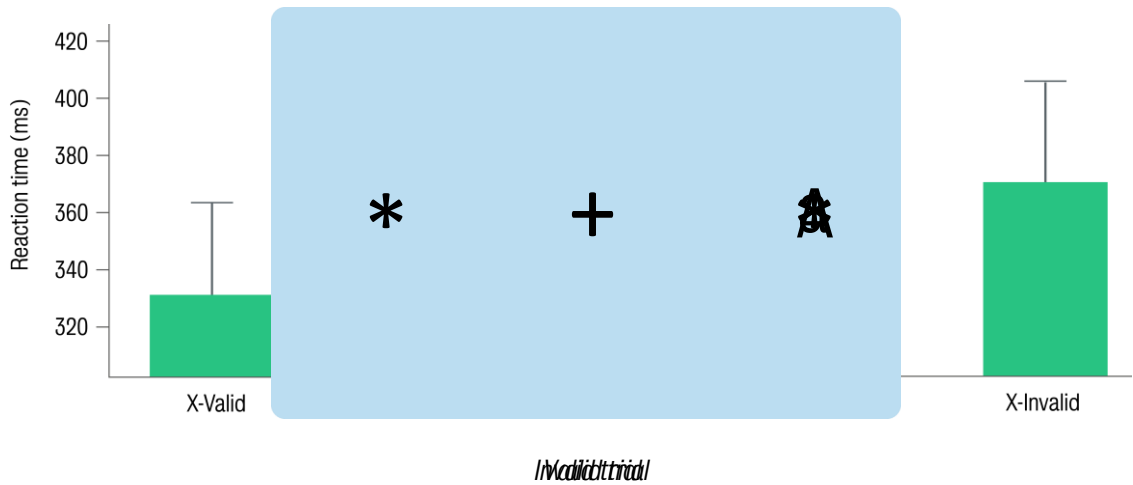


Endogenous/ Exogenous attention selection

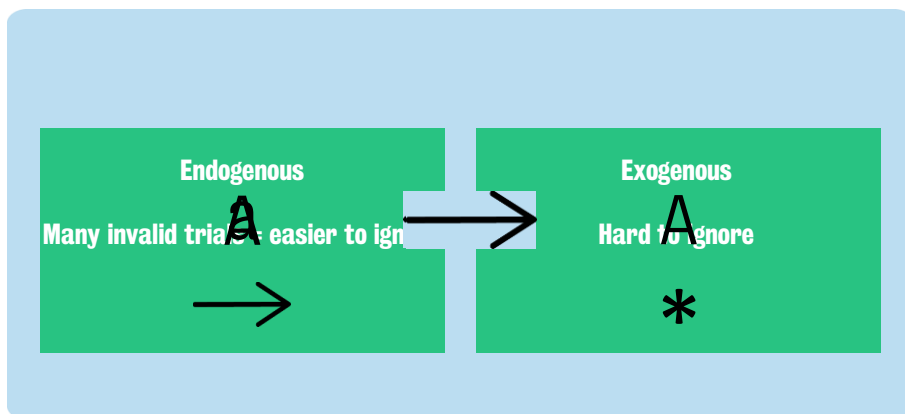


Posner (1980)

Measuring attention – Exogenous attention



Measuring attention – Endogenous attention



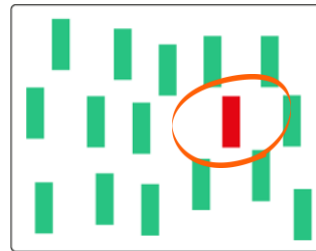
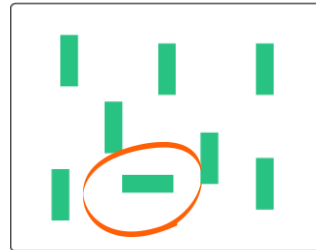
Measuring attention – Visual Search

'Parallel' or 'pop out' search

Looking for a unique target

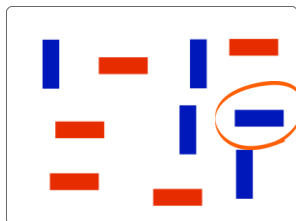
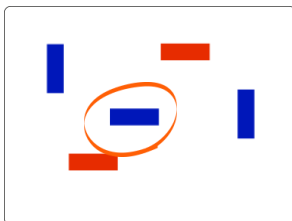
Number of distractors is called the "set size"

Number of distractors does not matter



Measuring attention – Visual Search

Serial search



To find the unique target, you have to search through all the items. It requires more attention to resources.

