Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:SP 2010

Department:Journalism

Degree:MA

Title:PRODUCING EFFECTIVE STORIES: THE INFLUENCE OF PRESENTATION TYPE AND EMOTIONAL TONE ON ATTENTION, AROUSAL AND MEMORY

This study explores how presentation type and emotional tone interact with attention, arousal and memory. A psychophysiological experiment was conducted in the PRIME lab where attention, arousal, valence and memory were measured using heart rate, skin conductance, self report data, and an audio recognition test.

Using the Limited Capacity Model of Motivated Mediated Message Processing, it was hypothesized that a moving and still images combined presentation would elicit greater attention and skin conductance levels than the moving image presentation or still image presentation. It was also hypothesized that stories with unpleasant emotional tone would be better remembered, elicit more attention and be more arousing than stories with pleasant emotional tone. It was predicted that memory would be best for the still image slideshow presentation.

The analysis found that participants experienced the greatest arousal during exposure to the still images presentation. The greatest cardiac deceleration occurred during the moving images presentations. Participants paid more attention to and better remembered stories with unpleasant emotional tone. Media professionals need to determine the goals of their messages and then use the proper type of presentation that will communicate the message effectively.