

UC Merced

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society

Title

Assessing the Effectiveness of Wayfinding Directions

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9rx325zp>

Journal

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 32(32)

ISSN

1069-7977

Authors

Hund, Alycia
Padgitt, Amanda

Publication Date

2010

Peer reviewed

Assessing the Effectiveness of Wayfinding Directions

Alycia Hund

Illinois State University

Amanda Padgitt

Illinois State University

Abstract: Our goal was to assess people's responses to wayfinding directions. Ninety college students rated the effectiveness of route descriptions through the basement of a university building. They also provide open-ended responses regarding wayfinding preferences and completed wayfinding anxiety, wayfinding strategy, and environmental familiarity self-report measures and a sense of direction exercise. The primary goal was to specify the descriptive features contained in effective and ineffective wayfinding descriptions. The best-rated route descriptions included more cardinal features, landmarks, left-right, distance, number, straight, and miscellaneous information than did the worst-rated route descriptions. Moreover, positive mentions of landmarks and negative mentions of cardinal directions were very frequent. As expected, women reported significantly higher spatial anxiety than did men. Men preferred orientation strategies more than did women, whereas women preferred route strategies more than did men. Women also reported poorer sense of direction and made larger sense of direction errors than did men.