

The Coherence Principle

Theory

The coherence principle (also called *seductive details*¹⁾ effect) claims that extraneous material that may be interesting or motivating but is irrelevant for learning objectives generally wastes learning resources and hinders learning of important material. This assumption is grounded in the fact that human cognitive resources are limited. Still, [cognitive load theory](#) predicts this effect will only occur if the cognitive load imposed by important learning material is high enough.²⁾

Practice

Research status

³⁾⁴⁾

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²⁾
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Moreno, R., Mayer, R., Spires, H. and Lester, J. The case for social agency in computer-based teaching: Do students learn more deeply when they interact with animated pedagogical agents?. *Cognition and Instruction*, 19(2), 177-213. 2001.

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Mayer, R., Heiser, J. and Lonn, S. Cognitive constraints on multimedia learning: When presenting more material results in less understanding. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(1), 187-198. 2001.

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