

# The Coherence Principle

## Theory

The coherence principle (also called *seductive details*<sup>1)</sup> 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.<sup>2)</sup>

## Practice

Seductive details can appear in virtually any format, but most often as

- text
- links.

## Research status

<sup>3)</sup><sup>4)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>

[Garner, Ruth, Mark G. Gillingham, and C . Stephen White. Effects of 'Seductive Details' on Macroprocessing and Microprocessing in Adults and Children. Cognition and Instruction 6, no. 1: 41. 1989.](#)

<sup>2)</sup>

[Park, Babette, Roxana Moreno, Tina Seufert, and Roland Brünken. Does cognitive load moderate the seductive details effect? A multimedia study. Computers in Human Behavior 27, no. 1: 5-10. January 2011.](#)

<sup>3)</sup>

[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.](#)

<sup>4)</sup>

[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.](#)

From:  
<https://www.learning-theories.org/> - **Learning Theories**



Permanent link:

[https://www.learning-theories.org/doku.php?id=research\\_results:coherence\\_principle&rev=1307522880](https://www.learning-theories.org/doku.php?id=research_results:coherence_principle&rev=1307522880)

Last update: **2023/06/19 15:49**