

Experiment HP-7: Interference of Stimuli on Associative Tasks - The Stroop Effect

Exercise 1: Interference of Color Stimuli on Reading.

Aim: To determine the effect of the color in which a word is printed on the subject's ability to read the word.

Approximate Time: 15 minutes

Procedure

1. The subject should sit with his or her back to the computer monitor. Use the subject's hand which is closer to the iWorx equipment.
2. Select one person from your group to be the subject. Ask the subject to go to the sink, wash his or her hands with soap and water, and dry them thoroughly. Washing the hands insures that surface oils or other substances, which might lower skin conduction, are removed. Do not use alcohol to clean the fingers, alcohol dehydrates the skin.
3. Attach each GSR electrode to the volar surface of the distal finger segment of two non-adjacent fingers; the index and the ring fingers are the ones usually used. Attach the electrodes with the Velcro straps so that the straps are snug, but not overly tight. Make sure the fingers are moistened with saliva or GSR conductive paste.
4. Place the plethysmograph on the volar surface (where the fingerprints are located) of the distal segment of the subject's middle finger, and wrap the Velcro strap around the end of the finger to attach the unit firmly in place.
5. The subject should rest the hand with the GSR electrodes and pulse plethysmograph comfortably in his or her lap. The electrodes and transducer should be free from any extraneous pressure and their cables should be hanging freely. Instruct the subject not to move the hand during the recording process; movement will introduce artifacts into the recording.
6. Type "Task 1: Read Words in Black" in the Mark box that is to the right of the Mark button.
7. Click on the Record button, located on the upper right side of the LabScribe Main window ([Figure HP-7-L1](#)). The signal should begin scrolling across the screen.
8. Click on the AutoScale All button. The signals on these channels should expand to fill the channel windows.
9. Record until the skin conductance level of the subject has reached a stable baseline.
10. Instruct the subject to read the words in the first column of [Table HP-7-L1](#) aloud, and as quickly as possible. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins reading the list.
11. Type "End of First Task" in the Mark box.
12. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has read the last word in the first column. Continue to record.
13. While the subject relaxes for 1 to 2 minutes, type "Task 2: Read Words in Conflicting Colors" in the Mark box.

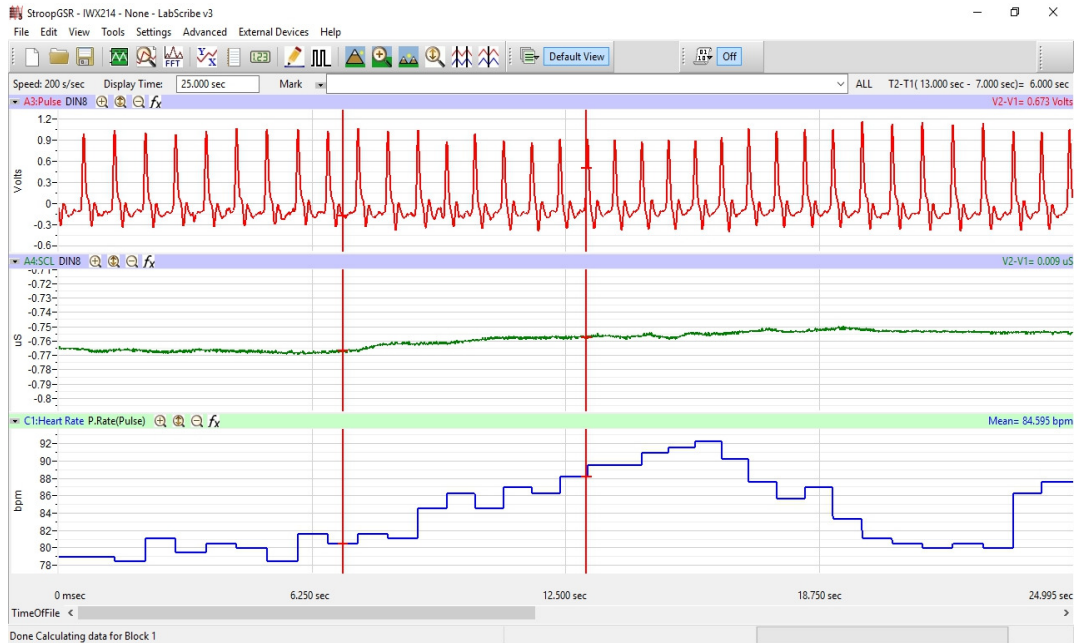


Figure HP-7-L1: Pulse, skin conductance level (SCL), and heart rate of subject performing the task of reciting the names of colors printed in black. During the task, the subject's skin conductance level increased by 1.83%..

14. Instruct the subject to read the words in the second column of [Table HP-7-L1](#) aloud, and as quickly as possible. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins reading the list.
15. Type "End of Task 2" in the Mark box.
16. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has read the last word in the second column. Continue to record as the subject relaxes for a minute.
17. Click Stop to halt the recording.
18. Select Save As in the File menu, type a name for the file. Click on the Save button to save the data file.
19. Begin Exercise 2 after allowing the subject to rest for 1 or 2 minutes.

Exercise 2: Interference of Word Stimuli on Naming.

Aim: To determine the effect of words on the subject's ability to name the colors in which the words are printed.

Approximate Time: 15 minutes

Procedure

1. While the subject relaxes for 1 to 2 minutes, type "Task 3: Name Color of Symbols" in the Mark box.

2. Instruct the subject to say the colors of the symbols in the third column of [Table HP-7-L1](#) aloud, and as quickly as possible. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins saying the colors.
3. Type “End of Task 3” in the Mark box.
4. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has read the last word in the third column. Continue to record.
5. While the subject relaxes for 1 to 2 minutes, type “Task 4: Name Color of Conflicting Words” in the Mark box.
6. Instruct the subject to read the color of the words in the fourth column of [Table HP-7-L1](#) aloud, and as quickly as possible. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins reading the list.
7. Type “End of Task 4” in the Mark box.
8. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has read the last color in the fourth column.
9. Continue to record for 1 to 2 minutes.
10. Click Stop to halt the recording.
11. Select Save in the File menu.

Data Analysis: Pre-Task 1

1. Scroll through the data file and locate the recording that was made before Task 1.
2. Use the Display Time icons to adjust the Display Time of the Main window so that the segment before Task 1 can be viewed on the screen.
3. Click the 2-Cursor icon ([Figure HP-7-L2](#)) so that two vertical lines appear on the Main window. Use the cursors to select the complete segment before Task 1. This section of data can also be selected by:
 - Placing the cursors on either side of a stable recording of the subject’s skin conductance level and heart rate.
 - Clicking the Zoom between Cursors button on the LabScribe toolbar to expand or contract the recording to the width of the Main window.

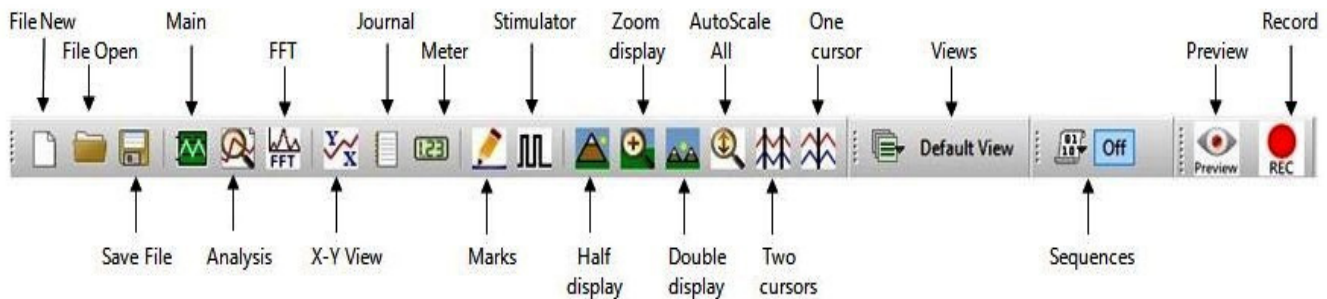


Figure HP-7-L2: The LabScribe toolbar.

4. Click on the Analysis window icon in the toolbar or select Analysis from the Windows menu to transfer the data displayed in the Main window to the Analysis window ([Figure HP-7-L3](#)).
5. Look at the Function Table that is above the Pulse channel in the Analysis window. The mathematical functions, Max, Min, Mean, and T2-T1, should appear in this table on the top margin of each channel.
6. Once the cursors are placed in the correct positions for determining the values for these functions in a stable section of the recording, the values can be recorded in the on-line notebook of LabScribe by typing the names and values of the functions directly into the Journal.
7. The functions in the channel menu of the Analysis window can also be used to enter the names and values of the functions from the recording to the Journal. To use these functions:
 - Place the cursors at the locations used to measure the maximum, minimum, and mean tonic skin conductance levels and resting heart rates.
 - Transfer the names of the functions to the Journal using the Add Title to Journal function in the Skin Conductance Level channel menu.
 - Transfer the values for those functions on all channels to the Journal using the Add All Data to Journal function in the Skin Conductance Level channel menu.
8. Use the mouse to click on and drag a cursor to the left margin of the data displayed on the Analysis window. Drag the other cursor to the right margin of the same data.
9. Record the values for Max, Min, and Mean on the Skin Conductance Level and Heart Rate channels in the Journal using the one of the techniques described in Steps 6 or 7, and on [Table HP-7-L2](#).

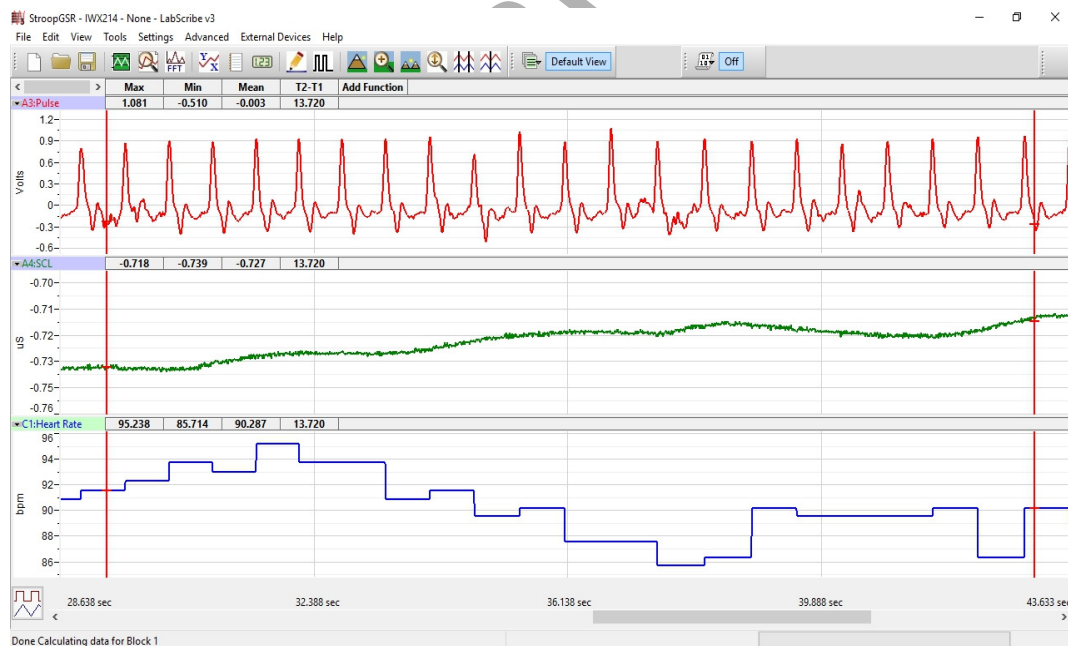


Figure HP-7-L3: Pulse, skin conductance level (SCL), and heart rate data for Task 2 (Words in Conflicting Colors), as displayed in the Analysis window. The subject took 20.075 seconds to complete this task. During the task, the subject's SCL rose 7.70%.

Data Analysis: Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 4

1. Scroll through the data file and locate the recording that was made during Task 1.
2. Use the Display Time icons to adjust the Display Time of the Main window so that all data recorded during Task 1 can be viewed on the screen.
3. Click the 2-Cursor icon ([Figure HP-7-L2](#)) so that two blue vertical lines appear on the Main window. Use the cursors, or the Zoom between Cursors function, to select the complete set of data from Task 1.
4. Click on the Analysis window icon to transfer the data displayed in the Main window to the Analysis window.
5. Place the cursors at the beginning and end of the data recorded during Task 1. Measure the values for the following parameters:
 - Maximum, Minimum, and Mean Skin Conductance Levels, which are determined by using the Max, Min, and Mean computed functions on the data in the Skin Conductance Level channel.
 - Maximum, Minimum, and Mean Heart Rate, which are determined by using the Max, Min, and Mean computed functions on the data in the Heart Rate channel.
 - Task Completion Time is the time between the first and the last word or color in the task being spoken, which is determined by the T2-T1 computed function.
6. Transfer the values for these parameters to the Journal using either of the techniques described in the previous analysis section. Record the values for these parameters on [Table HP-7-L2](#). Calculate the difference between the maximum and minimum skin conductance levels, and the maximum and minimum heart rates. Record these values in the Journal, and [Table HP-7-L2](#).
7. Repeat Steps 1 through 7 on the following segments of the data file:
 - Time between Tasks 1 and 2.
 - Task 2.
 - Time between Task 2 and 3.
 - Task 3.
 - Time between Tasks 3 and 4,
 - Task 4.
 - Time after Task 4.
9. Calculate the differences between the completion times of Task 2 and Task 1, and Task 4 and Task 3. Report these values in the Journal, and [Table HP-7-L2](#).

Questions

1. Is there a difference between the changes in the subject's skin conductance level (SCL) in Tasks 1 and 2? Is there a difference between the subject's heart rate in Tasks 1 and 2?
2. Did the subject take longer to complete Task 1 or Task 2? Did the color stimuli interfere with reading words?

3. Is there a difference between the changes in the subject's skin conductance level (SCL) in Tasks 3 and 4? Is there a difference between the subject's heart rate in Tasks 3 and 4?
4. Did the subject take longer to complete Task 3 or Task 4? Did the word stimuli interfere with naming colors?
5. Did the subject take longer to complete Task 2 or Task 4? Did the word stimuli make color naming more difficult or did the color stimuli make reading words more difficult? Why is this so?

Predictions

1. What would happen if the order of the colors in the list of words for Task 2 (Reading Colored Words) was repetitive?
2. What would happen if the order of the colors in the list for Task 3 (Naming Colors of Symbols) was repetitive?
3. What would happen if the order of the colors in the list of words for Task 4 (Naming Colors of Words) was repetitive?
4. What would happen in Task 4 if the subject was a child who had not yet learned to read?
5. What would happen in Task 4 if the subject was just beginning to speak English?

Exercise 3: Interference of Word Stimuli on Determining Direction

Aim: To determine the effect of words on the subject's ability to name the location of a word in a frame.

Approximate Time: 15 minutes

Procedure

1. The subject should sit with his or her back to the computer monitor. The subject should rest the hand with the electrodes comfortably on his or her lap.
2. Instruct the subject that the object of the task is to name the position of the word in each frame on [Table HP-7-L3](#) aloud, and as quickly as possible.
3. Type "Task 5: Name Position of Same Word" in the Mark box that is to the right of the Mark button.
4. Click on the Record button located on the upper right side of the LabScribe Main window ([Figure HP-7-L1](#)). The signal should begin scrolling across the screen. Record until the skin conductance level of the subject has reached a stable baseline.
5. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins naming the position of the word.
6. Type "End Task 5" in the Mark box.
7. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has named the last position on [Table HP-7-L3](#). Continue to record.

8. Type “Task 6: Name Position of Different Words” in the Mark box, as the subject relaxes for 1 to 2 minutes.
9. Instruct the subject to name the position of the word in each frame on [Table HP-7-L4](#) aloud, as quickly as possible. Press the mark button as soon as the subject begins naming the position of the word.
10. Type “End Task 6” into the Mark box.
11. Press the mark button as soon as the subject has named the last position on [Table HP-7-L4](#). Continue to record as the subject relaxes for 1 to 2 minutes.
12. Click Stop to halt the recording.
13. Select Save in the File menu.

Data Analysis: Tasks 5 and 6

1. Scroll through the data file and locate the recording that was made before Task 5.
2. Use the Display Time icons to adjust the Display Time of the Main window so that the segment before Task 5 can be viewed on the screen.
3. Use the same techniques used on the data from Exercises 1 and 2 to measure the maximum, minimum, and mean skin conductance levels and heart rate from the data recorded before Task 5.
4. Transfer the values for these parameters to the Journal using either of the techniques described in the first analysis section. Record the values for these parameters on [Table HP-7-L5](#).
5. Use the same techniques to measure and record these parameters for the other segments of Exercise 3:
 - Task 5,
 - Time between Tasks 5 and 6,
 - Task 6, Time after Task 6.
6. Measure the task completion times for Tasks 5 and 6. Record the values for these times in the Journal and on [Table HP-7-L](#).
7. Calculate the difference between the maximum and minimum skin conductance levels, and the maximum and minimum heart rates. Record these values in the Journal, and [Table HP-7-L5](#).
8. Calculate the differences between the completion times of Task 6 and Task 5. Report this value in the Journal, and on [Table HP-7-L5](#).
9. Select Save in the File menu.

Table HP-7-L2: Skin conductance levels, heart rates, and completion times during Tasks 1 through 4.

Task	Skin Conductance (μ S)				Heart Rate (BPM)				Times (secs)	
	Max	Min	Mean	Max-Min	Max	Min	Mean	Max-Min	Completion of Task	Differential
Before Task 1										
Task 1: Read in Black Print										
Between Tasks 1 and 2										
Task 2: Read in Different Color										
Between Tasks 2 and 3										
Task 3: Name Color of Symbol										
Between Tasks 3 and 4										
Task 4: Name Color of Word										
After Task 4										

Table HP-7-L5: Skin conductance levels, heart rates, and completion times during Tasks 5 and 6.

Task	Skin Conductance (μS)				Heart Rate (BPM)				Times (secs)	
	Max	Min	Mean	Max-Min	Max	Min	Mean	Max-Min	Completion of Task	Differential
Before Task 5										
Task 5: Name Same Direction										
Between Tasks 5 and 6										
Task 6: Name Different Direction										
After Task 6										

Questions

1. Is there a difference between the changes in the subject’s skin conductance level (SCL) in Tasks 5 and 6? Is there a difference between the subject’s heart rate in Tasks 5 and 6?
2. Did the subject take longer to complete Task 5 or Task 6? Did the word stimuli interfere with naming directions?

Exercise 4: Additional interferences

Aim: To perform another test for interference between associative tasks.

Approximate Time: 15-20 minutes depending on the task chosen.

Procedure

1. Find or devise an additional test for interference between tasks that seem to be associated.
 - Additional tests to demonstrate the “Stroop Effect” can be found by searching the

Internet. You should be able to find tests that demonstrate other interferences: word stimuli on counting, word stimuli on naming pictures, and audio stimuli on naming.

- Devise your own test on tasks that think are associated.
 - Test one of the predictions made earlier in this experiment.
2. Record the same parameters, skin conductance level and heart rate and test completion time, used in Exercises 1, 2, and 3.

Data Analysis

1. Use the same methods employed in Exercises 1, 2, and 3 to analyze the data collected from this additional Stroop test.
2. Construct a table to display the results of your test. Share these results with other groups in your class.
3. Compare the strength of interference of this additional stimuli to the strength of interference of the additional stimuli used by other groups of students.
4. Compare the strength of interference of this additional stimuli to the strengths of interference demonstrated in Exercises 1, 2, and 3.

Table HP-7-L1: Lists of colored words used in Exercises 1 and 2 of “The Stroop Effect”.

Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4
BLUE	BLUE	XXXX	RED
GREEN	GREEN	XXXX	BLUE
RED	BLACK	XXXX	GREEN
GREEN	BLUE	XXXX	BLUE
RED	GREEN	XXXX	BLACK
RED	RED	XXXX	BLUE
BLUE	GREEN	XXXX	GREEN
GREEN	RED	XXXX	RED
BLUE	BLUE	XXXX	GREEN
BLACK	BLACK	XXXX	RED
BLUE	BLUE	XXXX	BLUE
BLACK	GREEN	XXXX	BLACK
BLUE	RED	XXXX	BLUE
GREEN	BLUE	XXXX	GREEN
BLUE	GREEN	XXXX	BLACK
GREEN	BLUE	XXXX	BLUE
BLACK	BLACK	XXXX	RED
BLUE	BLUE	XXXX	GREEN
GREEN	BLACK	XXXX	RED
RED	BLUE	XXXX	BLUE
BLACK	RED	XXXX	GREEN
BLUE	GREEN	XXXX	BLACK
RED	RED	XXXX	BLUE
GREEN	GREEN	XXXX	GREEN
RED	RED	XXXX	RED

Table HP-7-L3: Frames with identical words and positions used in Exercise 3.

UP	LEFT	DOWN	LEFT	RIGHT
LEFT	UP	RIGHT	DOWN	UP
UP	DOWN	RIGHT	UP	LEFT
DOWN	LEFT	UP	RIGHT	DOWN
LEFT	RIGHT	DOWN	UP	RIGHT

Table HP-7-L4: Frames with different words and positions used in Exercise 3.

UP	LEFT	DOWN	LEFT	RIGHT
LEFT	UP	RIGHT	DOWN	UP
UP	DOWN	RIGHT	UP	LEFT
DOWN	LEFT	UP	RIGHT	DOWN
LEFT	RIGHT	DOWN	UP	RIGHT