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NOTE

A note on partial report superiority

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Dr. Saul Sternberg has pointed out three errors in our recent article in this journal (Sakitt & Appleman, 1978). The following corrections should be made. (1) On p. 564, between the fourth and fifth from last lines of text, insert the following line: "minus the average (over SOA) whole report." (2) The last line of the caption to Figure 2 should read: "Whole reports, load, 5 sec, are shown in bars (combined data, n = 3)." (3) There is also an error in the drawing of the bar for the light background in Figure 3. It should have been drawn to 5.8 letters as in Figure 1.

The numbers in the text and table are correct, but we apologize to Dr. Sternberg and other readers who were inconvenienced by our errors, which were introduced during revision.

Dr. Sternberg has also rightly raised the issue of how the half-life T should be defined. For brevity, let PR and WR stand for the number of letters available in the partial and whole reports, respectively. In our paper we use the time for which PR minus the average (across SOA) whole report declines to one-half its value at zero SOA. Dr. Sternberg has pointed out that this definition depends upon the actual delay values used in the experiment and also allows partial report superiority so defined to go negative at long delays. Another possibility might be to use the time for which the PR minus its asymptote declines to one-half its value from zero SOA. The asymptote can be estimated for the no-load condition by the average whole report. For the load condition, the whole report at 5 sec can be used. The result is that the load increases the light background decay time even more dramatically (.33 to 1.54; $t = 23.7$, $p < .005$) and also raises the dark background decay time (1.6 to 1.8; n.s.). Dr. Sternberg has suggested using the difference between the PR and WR defined at the same delay time. He has calculated that the light background decay time is increased from .35 to 1.3 sec and the dark background decay time from 1.58 to 2.29 sec. Either of these new definitions makes our original point even stronger. In fact, the effect of the load on the light background condition is so dramatic that even an "eye" inspection is sufficient to demonstrate our point.

We thank Dr. Sternberg for pointing out our errors, for making these suggestions about measures of decay time, and for general helpful comments.

REFERENCE

SAKITT, B., & APPELMAN, I. B. The effects of memory load and the contrast of the rod signal on partial report superiority in a Sperling task. *Memory & Cognition*, 1978, **6**, 526-567.

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