

Abstract

The main aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of pre-foveal and post-foveal information on comprehension. By applying the self-paced, fixed-window paradigm, the amount of parafoveal information available was systematically manipulated, while subjects could control the speed of presentation. Four display conditions were included: only a single (fixated) character (C), two pre-foveal characters with the fixated one (2+C), two post-foveal characters with the fixated one (C+2) and two pre- and post-foveal characters with the fixated one (2+C+2). Reading time under these conditions were recorded and subjects' general comprehension for these presentation formats was tested. Results showed that mean reading time per character was significantly longer in condition 1 (C). This meant pre- and post-foveal information was conducive to speed up reading. Interesting reading profiles were observed which might revealed the relative functional strength of both kinds of parafoveal information.