

Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the attention restoration effect of natural sound. While previous studies have generally found support for the restorative effect of natural scenes, such support for natural sounds is scarce. Undergraduate students (n = 26) voluntarily participated in this study during which their directed attention was measured before and after a fatigue-inducing task. Participants were randomly assigned to listen to either bird songs, soft music, or silence during a resting period before the second measure. However, no difference in self-rated restorativeness and restorativeness measured by task performances was found between different conditions. The results did not show support for the restorative effect of natural sounds compared to music or silence. Further analysis suggested that the participants' performances were possibly subjugated to the influence of practice and stress caused by the laboratory setting. More work is needed to provide a comprehensive explanation of the process of attention restoration.

Keywords: Attention Restoration Theory (ART), directed attention, natural sound,