

The Floor Strategy: Wayfinding Cognition in a Multi-Level Building

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Abstract

This short paper is concerned with strategies and cognitive processes of wayfinding in public buildings. We conducted an empirical study in a complex multi-level building, comparing performance measures of experienced and inexperienced participants in different wayfinding tasks. Thinking aloud protocols provided insights into navigation strategies, planning phases, use of landmarks and signage. Three specific strategies for navigation in multi-level buildings were compared. The cognitively efficient floor strategy was preferred by experts over a central-point strategy or a direction strategy, and overall was associated to better wayfinding performance.