

Effects of noise on reading: What do we know about this topic with respect to the occupational context?

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ABSTRACT

Reading in conditions with unwanted sounds is a common situation that many employees have to deal with in different occupational settings. There are studies investigating effects of noise on reading, but in most cases these studies are laboratory studies and only specific aspects could be implemented like in a real work system. Therefore, a direct transfer of those results to everyday working situations is limited. The studies also differ in several aspects like the reading task, the duration of testing or the study design.

This contribution summarises results from several studies dealing with effects of noise on proofreading tasks. In addition to the aim to uncover similarities and differences across studies, the results are analysed in the light of the question to what extent they provide information about noise effects in the frame of an occupational context, or even the reduction of possible detrimental effects. Necessities for further studies will be pointed out, like consideration of more realistic working demands or studies with employees rather than students. Finally, an outlook on a planned BAuA-research project in this field is given.