# Introduction to Cognitive Ergonomics /Human Factors

## **Ergonomic principles of today** were adhered to 25 centuries ago



Cutting tools used by Homo Sapiens were adapted both to the tasks to accomplish and to the characteristics of the hand

Archeological museum of Naples (Italy)

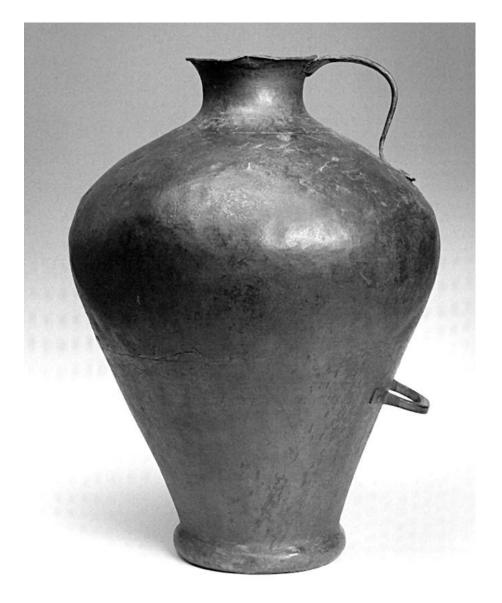
## **Ergonomic principles of today** were applied by Ancient Greeks

"πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον άνθρωπος"

(man is the measure of all things)

Plato's Protagoras

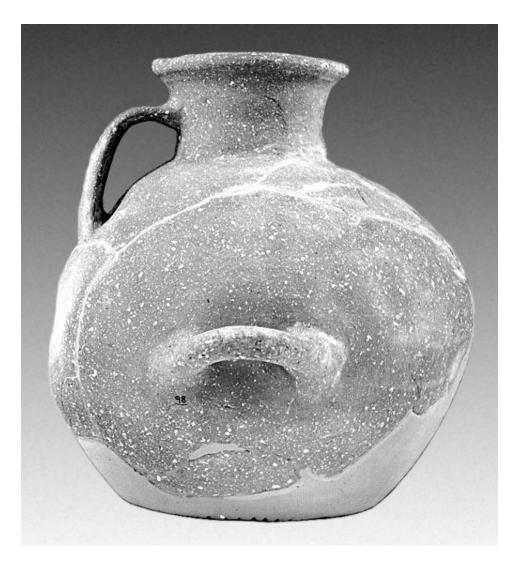
## **Ergonomic principles of today** were applied by Ancient Greeks



Bi-handled bronze urn. The necessary force to lift the urn is applied to the lower handle, whilst the upper one is used to control the flow of the liquid

> National Archaeological Museum of Athens

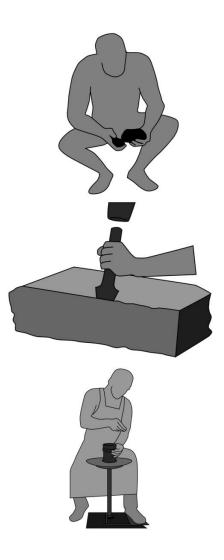
# **Ergonomic principles of today** were applied by Ancient Greeks



Tri-handled urn. The two horizontally opposed handles fit for carrying it when full. The third, neckattached handle fits for carrying the urn when empty. It also facilitates a stabilising grip on the urn when carried on the shoulder

> Archaeological Museum of Andros

# As far as technology is evolving, cognitive components of work become more important



Direct treatment of materials with hands or/and with other materials

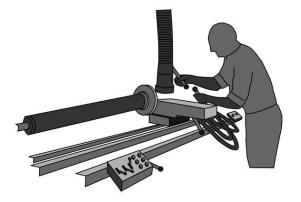
Treatment of materials using simple tools:

Tool mediated manipulation

Treatment of materials using simple machines:

- Setting-up the machine
- Machine manipulation
- Repairing machine

# As far as technology is evolving, cognitive components of work become more important



Treatment of materials using machines with simple automation:

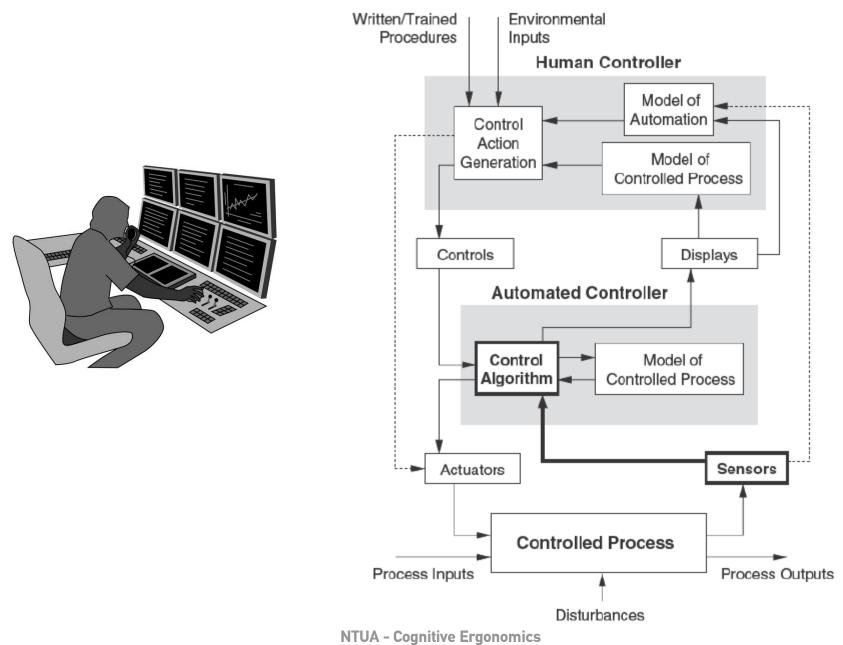
- set up through analogue control panel
- supervision through the control panel and direct perception of physical signs
- decisions for intervention when something goes wrong



Treatment of materials using programmable machines and automatic control systems:

- programming production process in idle time (off line)
- control through predetermined (designed) scripts
- management of unexpected situations (not detectable by the automatic control systems)

# **Contemporary model of human-automation coupling**



#### **Cognitive Ergonomics / Human Factors**

Studies the **behaviour of human problem solvers** who confront complexity in the course of their daily tasks.

It is **ecological**, because it studies behaviour in multidimensional, open worlds.

The cognitive ergonomist should consider what counts as effective **stimulus or signs** for the human agent, in a given situation. Thus, addresses the content and semantics of the studied domain.

The aim of C.E. is not merely to analyse a world; it is **to change behaviour** and, consequently, performance in that world.

C. E. is problem-driven and tool-constrained. This means that it aims to analyse human behaviour **in specific technological - social contexts** and to understand the sources of both good and poor performance, i.e., the cognitive problems to be solved or challenges to be met.

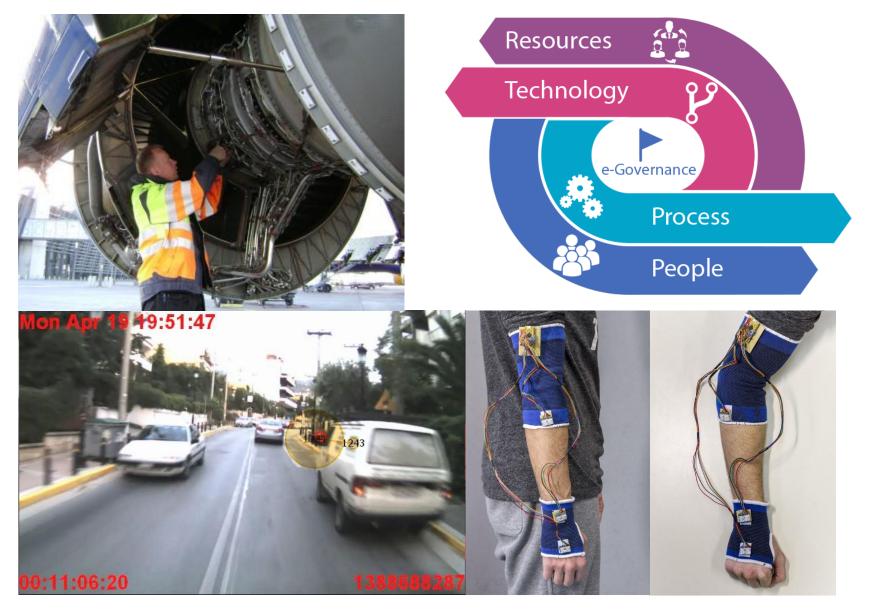
#### **Cognitive Ergonomics / Human Factors**

The cognitive ergonomist's problem is to analyse the world in question in order to:

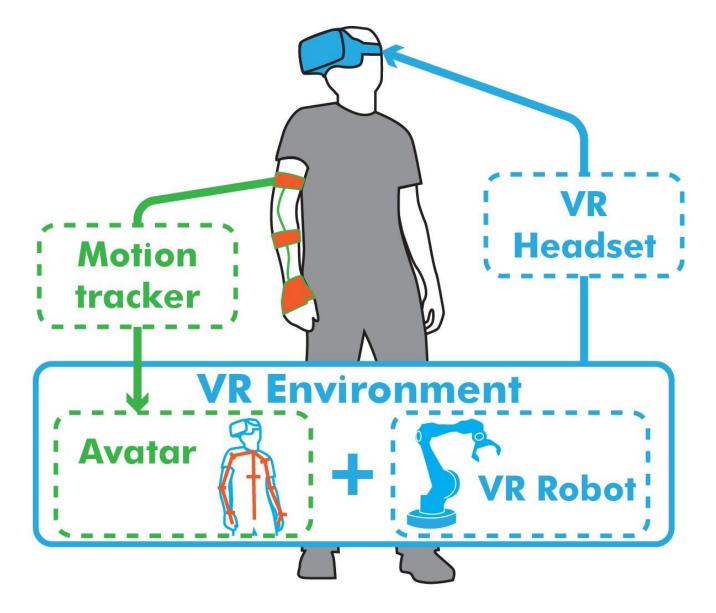
- (i) identify mechanisms driving the dynamics of the cognitive agents' behaviour
- (ii) explain the desirable and undesirable work outputs,
- (iii) conceive an effective representation of the world, i.e. a model with predictive power, useful both for the design of future cognitive artefacts, and their evaluation when put in use.

The term cognitive artefacts is used here in its broader sense, including both artefacts with a material manifestation as well as abstract artefacts.

#### **Applications in ErgoU-NTUA**



#### **Experimental set-up for Human-Robot Interaction in VR**

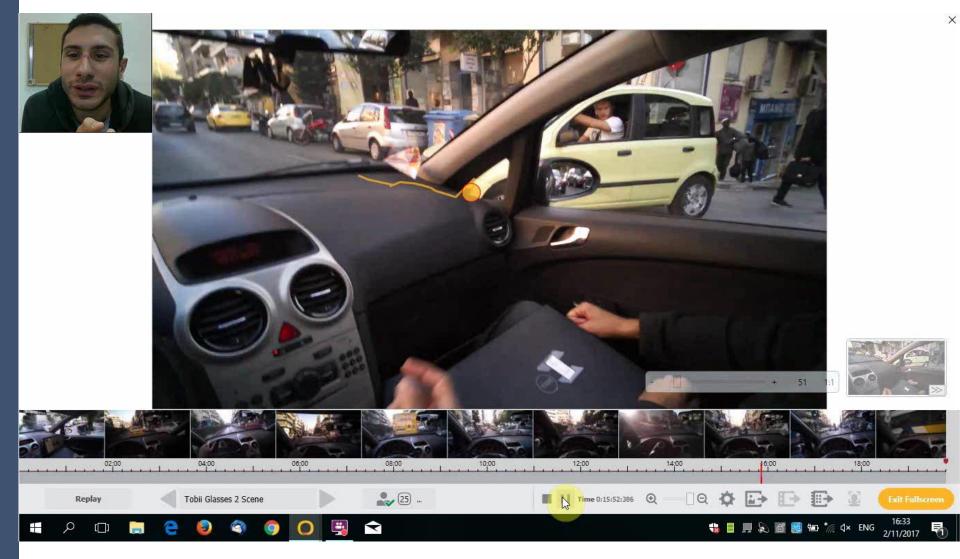


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#### **Testing Human-Robot collaboration schemes**



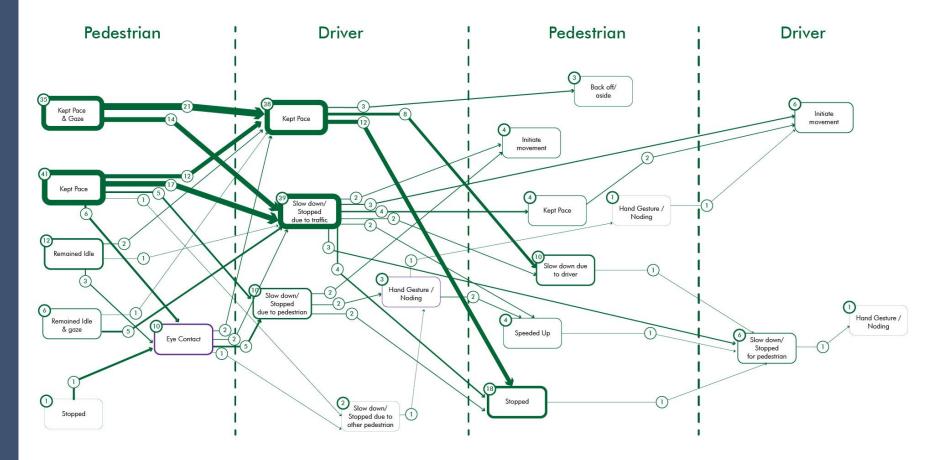
#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction Recording eye-gaze coupled with retrospective Think-Aloud



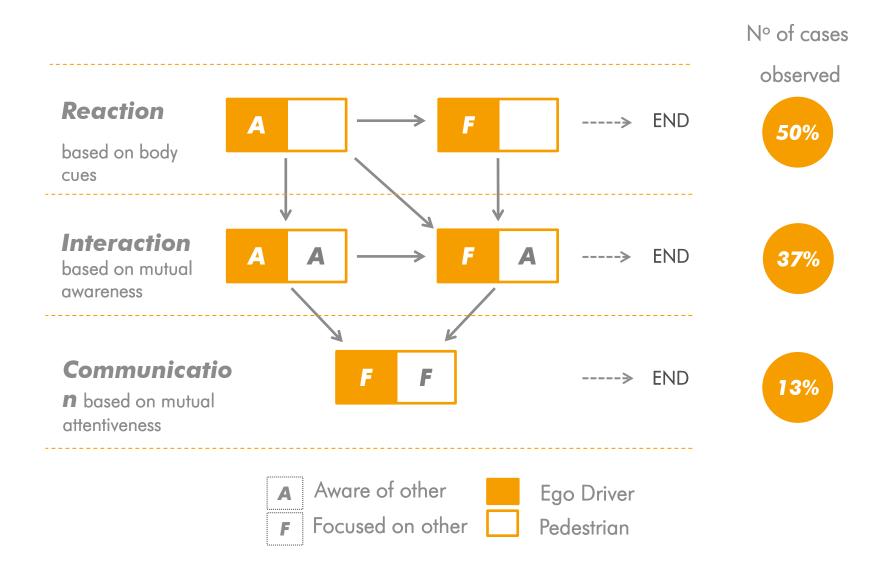
#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction From field observation to compiled data

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#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction From data to as-is modeling



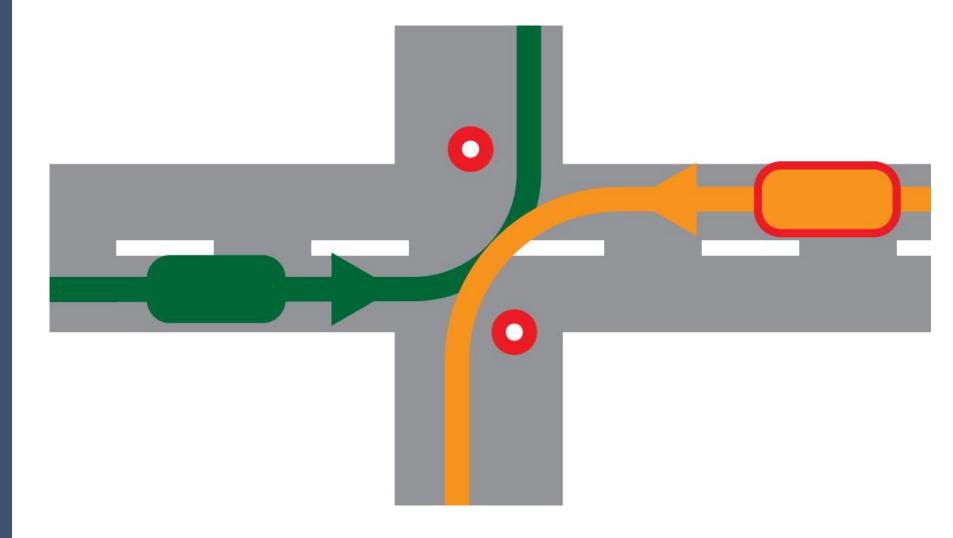
#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction From as-is modeling to conceptual models



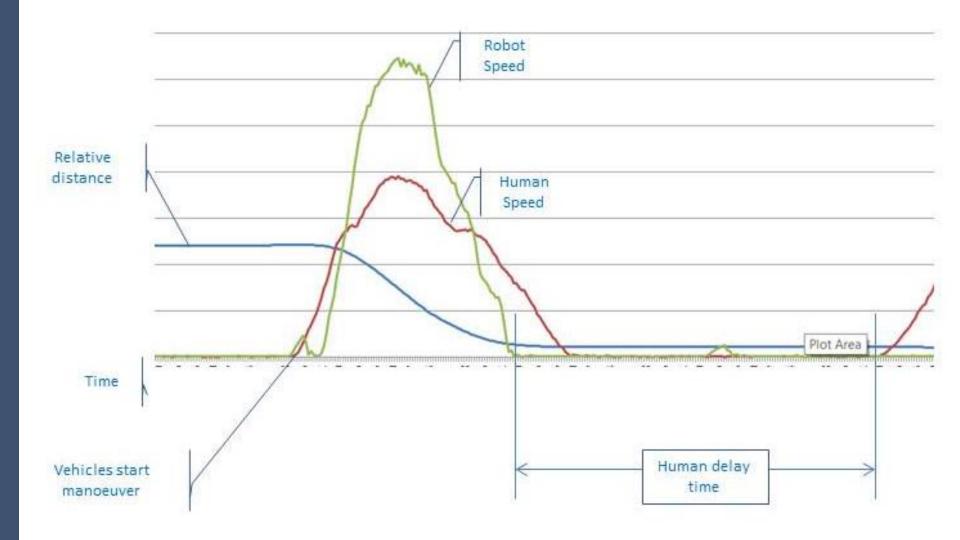
#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction from field observations to naturalistic experiments



#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction Naturalistic experiments – Scenario building



#### Autonomous vehicles (AV) – Human Interaction Naturalistic experiments – Data gathering



# Reconstruction of the interface A historical example

### **Define the interface in these machines**



## The evolution



## Today... find the drawbacks of this design





# What is wrong with this specific interface?



# How I put it?



# Interfaces: means of informing the human + means of manipulating the machine



Command interface of PDP-8/E minicomputer. The actuator array at the bottom is used to enter lines of machine code into the computer (1970)

# Interfaces: Communication language

Natural speech	Human
High level scripting	<pre>class Triangle {      float surface()     return b*h/2;   }</pre>
Low level programming	LOAD r1,b LOAD r2,h MUL r1,r2 DIV r1,#2 RET
Machine code	0001001001000101 0010010011101100 10101101
Electrical pulses	Machine

# On cognition

All forms of knowing and awareness, such as perceiving, conceiving, remembering, reasoning, judging, imagining, and problem solving. (American Psychological Association)

- Perceiving (not sensing)
- Remembering (not retrieving inf.)
- Learning
- Problem-solving calculating reasoning
- Judging
- Anticipating
- Imagining Conceiving

Along with **Affect** (feelings-Emotion) and **Connation** (Will / Intentionality) they are "traditionally" identified as the 3 basic faculties of the mind

## **Evolution of intelligence**

Intentionality/ Self-reference

Foresight

**Autonomy - Enaction** 

**Adaptiveness** 

**Flexibility** 

• A simple exercise for the human working memory capacity

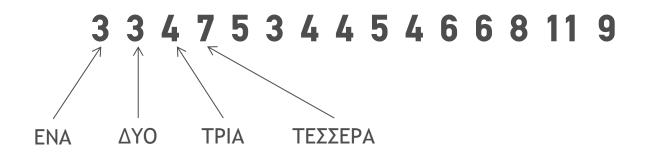
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# **Cognitive analysis in everyday life**

Change

Theoretical or novice approach:

 Mental or paper aided subtraction of amount owed (e.g. 8,35€) and amount given (e.g. 20€ bill)

20 - 8,35 = 11,65

• Retention in memory of resulting amount to return and adding up coins and bills up to a sum equating the amount to return

11,65-> 10 + 1 + 0.50 + 0,10 + 0.05

Starting from larger notes to progressively smaller coins

Cognitive actions: 1. Mental subtraction 2. memorizing amount, 3. Computation of notes and coins up to the memorized amount

# Expert way: a cognitive artifact

Change

Practical or expert approach:

• Addition («or building-up») of amount to return starting from the amount owed (8,35) upto the amount given (20)

8.35 0,05 + 0,10 + 0,50 + 1 + 10 20

• Starting from small coins to greater ones in order to ease memorizing burden

The materiality of the "tokens" aids the process

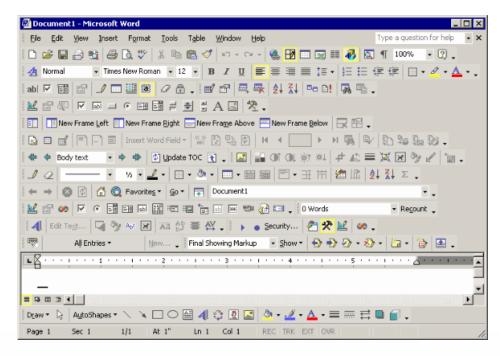
Addition is less cognitively demanding than abstraction

Cognitive actions: 1. addition with material traces up to standard amount given 2. memorizing remaining amount at each step (*note that the amount to memorize gets less demanding in each step*)

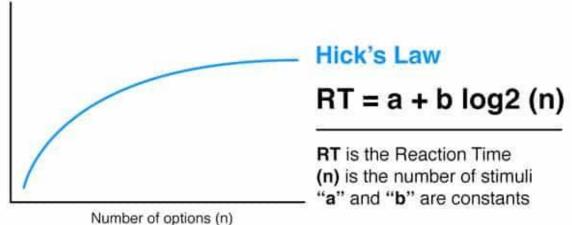
### Hick's law



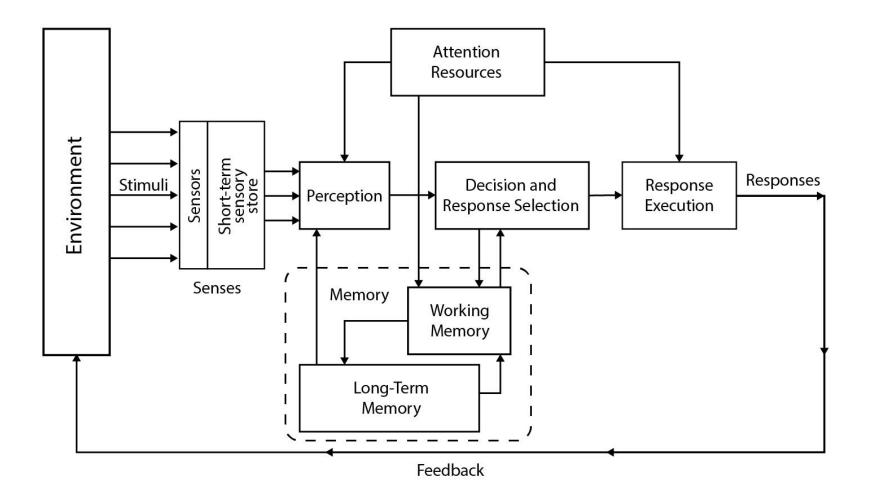
## Hick's law



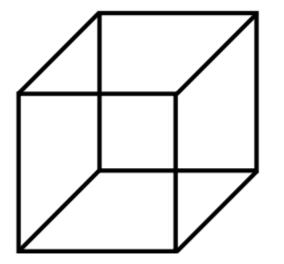
Increasing the options, increases the decision time logarithmically.



#### The model of Human Information Processing (Wickens 1992)



#### **Sensing vs Perception**





#### Single-channel hypothesis

#### Single-channel hypothesis



## Types of memory

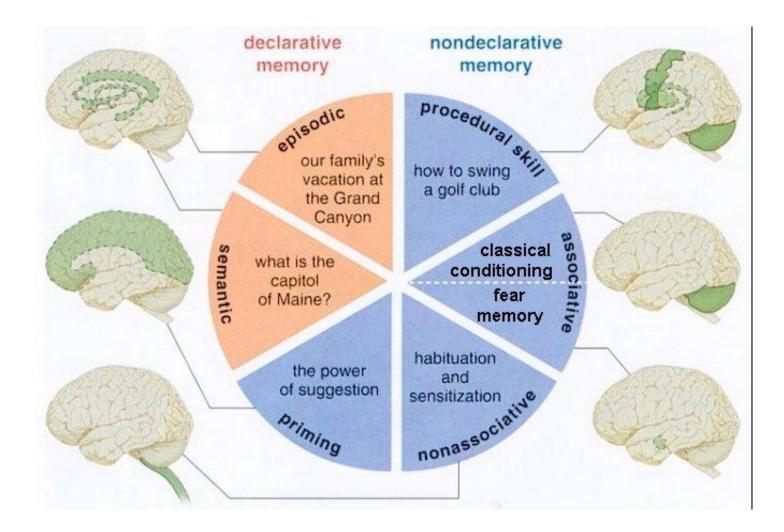
#### **Declarative:**

- They can be communicated to third parties
- It is considered conscious as it involves deliberate recall of factual information
- This type of memory appears to be controlled by the hippocampus which is a complex brain structure embedded deep in the temporal lobe.

#### Procedural

- It implies knowledge manifested while performing a familiar task.
- It is better understood as skill (perceptual / motor / cognitive).
- It is not easy to verbalize this kind of knowledge.
- The cerebellum, basal nuclei, and motor cortex are involved in procedural memory, which is generally supervised by the cerebral cortex.

#### Parts of the brain associated with different types of memory

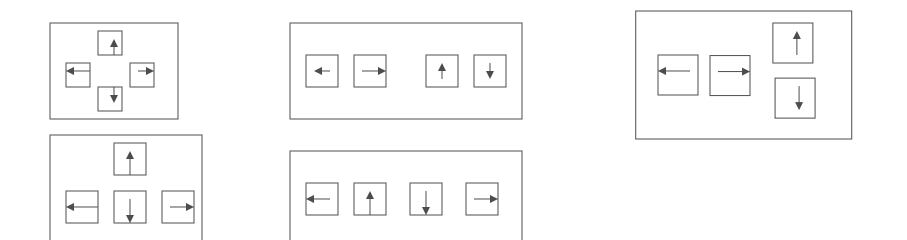


a first exercise in user centered design

design a configuration for the four "cursor" keys below

# 

#### Possible solutions – no one is optimal for all applications and people



**Reasons for solutions** 

- Functionality relation to task
- **Representation** (mapping) ease of use
  - learning investing learning time
- physiology comfort, speed of movements (and perception etc.)