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Impact of interface design on drivers' behavior in

partially automated cars: an on-road study

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ABSTRACT

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In partially automated vehicles, the driver and the automated system share control of the vehicle. Consequently, the driver may have to switch between driving and monitoring activities. This can critically impact the driver's situational awareness. The human-machine interface (HMI) is responsible for efficient collaboration between driver and system. It must keep the driver informed about the status and capabilities of the automated system, so that he or she knows who or what is in charge of the driving. The present study was designed to compare the ability of two HMIs with different information displays to inform the driver about the system's status and capabilities: a driving-centered HMI that displayed information in a multimodal way, with an exocentric representation of the road scene, and a vehicle-centered HMI that displayed information in a more traditional visual way. The impact of these HMIs on drivers was compared in an on-road study. Drivers' eye movements and response times for questions asked while driving were measured. Their verbalizations during

the test were also transcribed and coded. Results revealed shorter response times for questions on speed with the exocentric and multimodal HMI. The duration and number of fixations on the speedometer were also greater with the driving-centered HMI. The exocentric and multimodal HMI helped drivers understand the functioning of the system, but was more visually distracting than the traditional HMI. Both HMIs caused mode confusions. The use of a multimodal HMI can be beneficial and should be prioritized by designers. The use of auditory feedback to provide information about the level of automation needs to be explored in longitudinal studies.

KEYWORDS

automated vehicles, human-machine interface, multimodal interface, mode transition, verbatim, eye tracking

1. INTRODUCTION

The scientific literature identifies inattention while driving as the main cause of road accidents, with more than 70% of car crashes involving inattention or fatigue (Dingus, Neale, Klauer, Petersen, & Carroll, 2006; Lemercier, Pêcher, Berthié, et al., 2014; Victor, Dozza, Bärgman, et al. 2015; Wang, Knipling, & Goodman, 1996). In a society where the priority is to substantially increase road safety, automated cars appear to be the solution for reducing the human factor in road accidents. However, as vehicles become more automated, the collaboration between the driver and the system also becomes more complex. Partially

automated vehicles can take charge of some parts of the driving activity. The driver and the system therefore have to work as a team, as they share control of the vehicle. For this team to be efficient, its two members need to communicate via a human-machine interface (HMI). Communication can take place via auditory, haptic and visual displays, as well as via controls. The term *HMI* is used here to encompass all the explicit and implicit forms of communication between the driver and the system. In automated vehicles, the precise role of the driver depends on the state of the automated system. An increasing level of automation means an increasing amount of information to be displayed. Drivers therefore have to be capable of finding the right information, in order to know which role they need to play in the team. The present study investigated how the design of the HMI in partially automated vehicles influences drivers' understanding of the level of automation and the functioning of the system. In the present exploratory study, two vehicles were driven on road to evaluate the impact of two different HMIs in an ecological setting.

1.1. Automated driving

Highly automated cars are expected to arrive on the market within the next few decades. The idea behind automation is that the system replaces the driver in the operational, tactical, and strategic control of the vehicle (Michon, 1985), allowing the driver to devote attentional resources to other activities (e.g., reading, working, or talking to other passengers). Six levels of automation have been established, based on the driver's and system's respective degrees of control (SAE, 2018). The present study focused on vehicles equipped with Level 1 and Level 2 systems. At Level 1, the driver is responsible for the operational, tactical and strategic control of the vehicle. Level 2 vehicles are classified as partially automated vehicles, as the car can partially perform the driving activity. Relying on

adaptive cruise control (ACC) and lane centering assist (LCA), the system controls the vehicle's longitudinal and lateral movements. However, even if the vehicle drives itself, drivers are not passive, as they must monitor the vehicle's environment and behavior. Operational control is therefore carried out by the system, but the driver is in charge of strategic and tactical control.

Humans do not perform well in prolonged monitoring activities. According to Bainbridge (1985), it is very hard for them to maintain their visual attention on tasks in which very little happens for more than 30 minutes. In highly automated vehicles, this can lead to disengagement in the monitoring activity and engagement in secondary tasks (Carsten, Lai, Barnard, Jamson, & Merat, 2012). The problem is that the system requires specific conditions to operate properly. For LCA, the main condition is to have clear lane markings, so if these markings cease to be visible, the LCA may switch itself off. In this scenario, drivers must realize that the automated system has switched itself off and that they therefore have to take over control of the vehicle.

1.2. Issues with existing Level 2 vehicles

Existing partially automated vehicles appear to have difficulty communicating the correct information to the driver. Drivers have been found to be less inclined to look at the road when using the Tesla Model S with Level 2 systems activated than they are when using a Level 1 or Level 0 (Gaspar & Carney, 2019). These authors found that drivers potentially over-relied on the system and were not fully aware of the role they still had to play. In a naturalistic study featuring the Tesla Model S, Banks, Eriksson, O'Donoghue, and Stanton (2018) observed confusion between the levels of automation. Participants were filmed and recorded as they drove on the road for 40 minutes. The recorded behaviors were then

analyzed. At some point, several drivers let go of the steering wheel, in the mistaken belief that they had activated the Level 2 automation. They only realized that they were confusing modes of automation when they consulted the HMI display. Mode confusions can lead to very hazardous situations, if the driver expects the vehicle to behave in a specific way and it does not (Sarter & Woods, 1995). For example, if drivers think that the vehicle is in charge of lateral control, they will not move the steering wheel in a bend, meaning that the vehicle ploughs straight into the side of the road. Banks, Eriksson, O'Donoghue, and Stanton (2018) suggested that one possible reason for these mode confusions is that drivers place too much faith in the system, but hypothesized that the HMI's lack of transparency is the most likely cause.

1.3. Mental model

As the relation between the driver and the system changes according to the degree of automatization, so the HMI has to change too. Carsten and Martens (2019) recently established goals that need to be achieved when designing HMIs for automated vehicles. The first goal is to ensure that the driver understands the capabilities of the vehicle and the level of automation that has been activated. To achieve this goal, HMIs need to adapt to the new constraints that automation places on the driving activity. In the present study, we compared two HMIs to evaluate which one came closer to meeting Carsten and Martens (2019)'s first goal. HMIs need to foster accurate mental models and avoid mode confusions. *Mental models* are the representations that humans have of a system's purpose, form, functioning, state, and structure (see Seppelt & Victor, 2020, for a more detailed definition). In the context of automated driving, drivers with an accurate mental model know when the

automated system has been activated or deactivated. They also understand which situations are appropriate for using the system. Driving-related mental models are influenced by three main factors: experience, training, and HMI transparency (Endsley, 2017). Experience came into play in Forster et al. (2019)'s study, as the more situations the participants encountered, the more accurate their mental models became. These findings were supported by Strand et al. (2018)'s study, where three purchasers of Level 2 vehicles were interviewed as they familiarized themselves with the system. Results revealed that although they refined their mental models, their primary representations of the system influenced the subsequent formation of their mental models. Blömacher et al. (2020) reached the same conclusion. They gave correct or incorrect information to drivers regarding the functioning of the system before they used a Level 3 vehicle. Results revealed that the veracity of the information given at the beginning influenced the formation of mental models and reaction time at takeovers. However, although experience with an automated system allows individuals to form accurate mental models, it can sometimes lead them to disengage from the monitoring task (Solís-Marcos & Kircher, 2019). These results highlight the influence of training and experience on the formation of mental models. Moreover, they support the idea that the driver's first impression of the system is crucial. The information displayed by the HMI needs to clearly be understood, so that the driver forms an accurate mental model at the very beginning of the interaction. To be understood, the HMI must be tailored to the human's cognitive limits and to the specificity of driving an automated vehicle. Several cognitive models have been built to inform design in transportation and are discussed in the next section.

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1.4. Models of driving activity

Michon (1985) proposed a very classic hierarchical categorization of the driving task (operational level, tactical level, and strategic level). Stanton et al. (2001) used this categorization to develop a model of the driving task that focused on the interaction of the driver with the automated system. This model is composed of three subtasks: navigation (choosing the itinerary), control (whether to turn right or left at the next intersection), and hazard identification (avoiding pedestrians, trees, buildings, respecting speed limits). Automated driving consists in supporting or replacing the human in one or more of those tasks. ACC, for example, replaces the driver in the longitudinal control of the car. Mental workload is supposed to decrease as the human has fewer tasks to perform, but appears to stay stable with automation (Stanton et al., 2001). This is because although automation replaces the driver, reducing the number of driving-related tasks, it increases the number of tasks related to monitoring the system's activity, meaning that the mental workload remains the same. This issue could be addressed through the design of HMIs, which are not necessarily adapted to the changes in the driving activity. Interfaces designed to help drivers perform their tasks and which take their cognitive limits into account might be more effective.

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1.5. Design solution to improve interaction with the automated system

When driving, humans have to process a large amount of visual information from both the cockpit and the external environment. One model that is relevant to HMI design because it takes account of humans' cognitive limitations is the multiple resource model developed by

Wickens (2008). Currently used in the design of interfaces for complex environments that require simultaneous information processing, this model can predict the allocation of attentional resources to tasks performed simultaneously according to their qualitative characteristics. For the same amount of information, tasks in different sensory modalities (e.g., visual and auditory) are performed better than tasks in a single sensory modality. Accordingly, HMIs that use multiple sensory modalities to communicate should elicit a more effective distribution of attentional resources. Zhang et al. (2019)'s meta-analysis showed that HMIs providing a combination of visual and auditory or tactile information allow take-over time to be reduced in Level 3 vehicles. HMIs using two or more sensory channels to inform the driver on the state of automation help the latter understand which actions have to be performed. Use of a similar HMI in Level 2 vehicles could also improve interaction between the automated system and the driver.

1.6. Research question and hypotheses

The number of studies carried out on open roads with Level 2 vehicles is increasing (Banks, Eriksson, O'Donoghue, & Stanton, 2018; Endsley, 2017; Solís-Marcos & Kircher, 2019). So far, studies have investigated the impact on the driver of driving an automated vehicle at a subjective or cognitive level. However, none of them have compared different HMI designs, even though some HMIs may be safer than others. According to the multiple resource model and previous studies of Level 3 vehicles (Wickens, 2008; Zhang et al., 2019), a driving-centered HMI that takes the limitations of the human cognitive system into account by providing information via multiple resource channels (i.e., visual and auditory) should be more easily understood and elicit more accurate mental models, compared with a classic visual-only vehicle-centered HMI. We therefore asked whether a multimodal HMI centered

on the driving activity and the limitations of the human cognitive system is more efficient than a visual HMI centered on the state of the advanced driver-assistance system (ADAS). By comparing the on-road usage of two existing vehicle HMIs, we sought to identify which HMI characteristics help drivers to understand the capabilities and automation status of their vehicle. We hypothesized that compared with the classic visual vehicle-centered HMI, an exocentric and multimodal driving-centered HMI allows the driver to have a better understanding of how the vehicle operates when the automated system is activated. This translates as better retrieval of information about the system, fewer visual fixations on the cluster, and fewer mode confusions. To test this hypothesis, participants drove one of two vehicles equipped with HMIs that fitted our description (i.e., driving-centered HMI vs. vehicle-centered HMI) on an open road while using automated systems.

2. MATERIAL & METHOD

2.1. Participants

We recruited 20 volunteers (19 men) aged 27-59 years (M = 40.80, SD = 8.53). They had held a driving license for a mean period of 21 years. The volunteers had no visual, even corrected (myopia, astigmatism, presbyopia), or auditory impairment. They were recruited among employees at Renault Group's Technocentre site in France. They were not paid, and they all signed an informed consent form. These volunteers were randomly assigned to one of the two vehicles (10 participants for each vehicle). The main criterion for recruitment was to have never driven the vehicle to which they were assigned. Seven participants had already driven a Level 1 vehicle before the experiment: two in the vehicle-centered HMI group, and

five in the driving-centered HMI group. None of the participants had driven Level 2 vehicles before. All participants were familiar with an automatic gearbox and cruise control.

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2.2. HMIs and embedded systems

We selected two vehicles with similar types of driving assistance (ACC and LCA) but different HMIs. The HMI in the first car provided an exocentric representation of the road scene and a multimodal display interface. It displayed relevant information for driving a partiallyautomated vehicle and took the limitations of the human cognitive system into account (Blömacher et al., 2020; Forster et al., 2019; Strand et al., 2018). This HMI is therefore referred to hereafter as the driving-centered HMI. The HMI in the second car only provided visual information about the state of the ADAS, and is therefore referred to hereafter as the vehicle-centered HMI. These HMIs differed on three major points: 1) the representation of the information regarding driving assistance; 2) the location of this information; and 3) the modalities used. The driving-centered HMI represented information in an exocentric form (Tesla Model S, software version 8.0). The detection of road markings and other vehicles was indicated on the cluster. Icons representing the activation of Level 1 or Level 2 automation were displayed at the top of the cluster. The visual feedback was supplemented with auditory signals. When the Level 2 automated system (ACC + LCA) was activated or deactivated, a sound was emitted. The sound of activation was a two-note rising tone. The sound of deactivation was a two-note falling tone. By contrast, the vehicle-centered HMI only provided visual feedback (Volvo XC60). Pictograms representing the activation of automation were located on the cluster and the head-up display (HUD). The steering wheel was slightly stiffer at Level 2 than at Level 1 for both vehicles, but the strength needed to override the lateral control was slightly greater for the driving-centered HMI than for the

vehicle-centered HMI. A description of the technical features of the two HMIs is provided in Table 1. Both vehicles required specific conditions to activate their automated system. Two clear road markings were necessary for the activation of Level 2. The driving-centered HMI indicated the availability of the automation by highlighting the road marking representation in gray on the cluster. If the system could no longer detect one of the road markings, it switched itself off. The main reason for deactivation was failure to detect a road marking. The one major difference between the two types of automation was that the Tesla was able to perform automatic lane changes. When Level 2 was activated, activation of the turn signals automatically resulted in a lane change.

Table 1: Display of onboard system activation by the driving-centered HMI and vehicle-centered HMI. The HUD of the vehicle-centered HMI is shown on the righthand side.

		Driving-centered HMI	Vehicle-centered HMI
No assisted s	ystems	Detected vehicle	75 200 250 250 250 250 250 250 250 250 25
Display of activated systems	ACC (Level 1)	ACC icon LCA icon	120 140 150 130 130 150 150 150 150 150 150 150 150 150 15

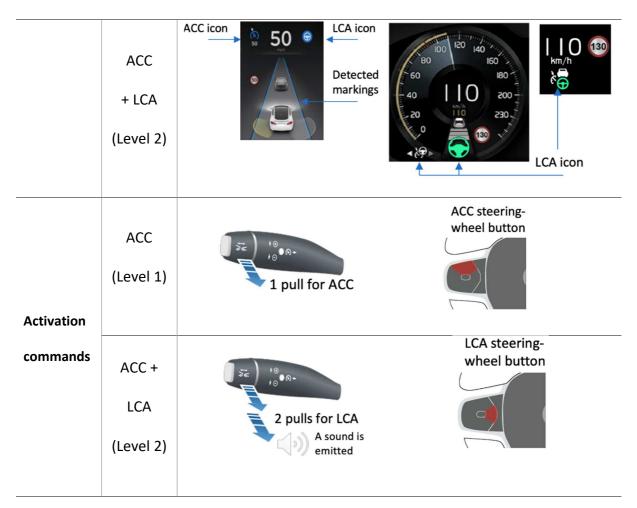




Figure 1: Photos showing the instrument panel and forward views of each vehicle with either the driving-centered HMI (left) or vehicle-centered HMI (right). The letter A indicates the icon displayed when LCA and ACC are activated.

2.3. Task

Participants had to drive the vehicle they were assigned on a pre-established circuit. They were instructed to drive normally, as though they were driving their own car. They were encouraged to use the automated system whenever they wanted and whenever they felt safe. They were instructed to respect the speed limits and traffic laws. A satnav system indicated the directions both visually (on the central multimedia screen) and verbally in each vehicle. During the drive, the experimenter asked the driver questions. The questions were asked when the driver was cognitively available (e.g., while driving along a straight road), so as not to increase cognitive load. Drivers had to respond as spontaneously and sincerely as possible. These questions were designed to evaluate the drivers' understanding of the vehicle's status and functioning.

2.4. Road circuit

The road circuit was a 45-minute round trip along public roads and highways, at an average speed of 75.75 km/hr. First, participants drove along a divided highway for 4 km. Then came a 9-km stretch of motorway (four lanes of traffic travelling in each direction for 4 km, then three lanes in each direction for 5 km), followed by a further 11 km on a divided highway. They then turned round at a roundabout, and followed the same itinerary in the opposite direction until they reached their starting point. For the entire round trip, the two sides of the road were separated from each other by a central reservation, and the road was mostly straight or slightly curved.

2.5. On-road questioning

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Participants were asked on-road questions to assess their awareness of the functioning and level of automation of the vehicle they were driving. To answer the questions, drivers either had to look for the requested information in their environment or else retrieve it from memory. The questions covered four topics. The first type of question (system questions) was system-oriented and concerned the status and functioning of the vehicle (e.g. "What is your current speed?" or "Is the ACC activated?"). The second type of question (personal questions) covered personal information about the driver (e.g. "Do you have children?"). The third type of question (interior questions) covered information accessible inside the car (e.g. "What radio station are we listening to?"). The last type of question (exterior questions) covered information accessible outside the car (e.g. "Is the car behind us black?") (see Appendix 1 for the list of questions). The system questions were mixed with the other types of questions, so that participants were not able to prepare their answers. The order of the questions was randomized. The answers to the questions were recorded. The start and end times of each question and each answer were extracted with Audacity software for the vehicle-centered HMI group, and BeGaze software for the driving-centered HMI group.

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2.6. Eye tracker

Our choice of eye-tracking technique took into consideration the areas fixated by drivers during the experiment while answering the questions. This measure allowed us to ensure that drivers knew where to find the required information. We used SensoMotoric Instruments (SMI) Eye Tracking Glasses, which are equipped with infrared sensors to monitor eye movements (saccades, fixations and blinks) and a front camera to record the field of vision. The eye-tracking data were recorded at a sampling frequency of 60 Hz. The

glasses were connected to a mobile phone (Samsung Galaxy Note 4) that allowed us to power the glasses, calibrate the gaze measures, monitor the visual behavior in real time, and store the video and audio recordings. Eye-tracking data were extracted and processed using BeGaze 3.7 software. We also used this software to map the fixations. This mapping consisted in associating each recorded fixation with an area of interest (AOI). BeGaze software then calculated the gaze count and duration for each AOI. There is no explicit definition of a gaze in the BeGaze software, but we worked on the principle that a gaze is a fixation on an AOI if it remains within a 100-pixel area for around 20 ms.

2.7. Drivers' comments

During the tests, participants were free to comment on their driving experience. The comments made during the entire experiment were recorded with the eye-tracker's microphone. As the microphone was placed on the bridge of the glasses not far from the mouth, the audio recording was good enough to hear the participant's comments. These comments were transcribed and classified. This method served to complement the eye-tracking and on-road questioning measures. The goal of the analysis was to identify mode confusions, which was not possible with the quantitative data. It also served to collect information about which aspects of the HMI allowed drivers to understand the automated systems.

2.8. Procedure

Participants began the experiment by filling out a questionnaire. The training phase then began. During this phase, the basic controls were explained to the participants, as were

specific aspects of the activation and deactivation of the automated system. The driver's responsibilities regarding the use of each assistive device were explained to participants. Afterwards, the participants were equipped with the eye-tracking glasses. The volunteers then drove the vehicle for about 10 minutes on a straight road. Once the experimenter was sure that the volunteers were able to control the car and its features, the experimental phase began. Participants drove for about 45 minutes, following the pre-established circuit on the satnay. The experimenter sat in the front passenger seat and asked the participant questions without disturbing him or her. Finally, the experiment ended with a questionnaire and an interview.

2.9. Experimental design

A 2 (between-participants) x 4 (within-participants) experimental mixed design was used.

The first factor we manipulated was the driven vehicle, and it had two modalities (driving-

centered HMI vs. vehicle-centered HMI). The second manipulated factor was type of

question, and it had four modalities (system questions vs. personal questions vs. interior

questions vs. exterior questions).

2.10. Measures & analysis

2.10.1. Response times to on-road questions

For the audio recordings of the drivers answering the on-road questions, we began by extracting the start and end times of each question and each answer. To measure the time needed by participants to access the information and verbalize it, we calculated the interval between the end of the question and the end of the answer. The assumption of normality of

residuals for mean response times was not met for the driving-centered HMI group. We ran a mixed variance analysis on means of median response times, with type of questions as a within-participants factor, and HMI type as a between-participants factor. To investigate HMI use in greater depth, the questions were analyzed separately for each system. Given the small sample, we ran a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test for each system question, with HMI type as a between-participants factor. The Mann-Whitney U test is a nonparametric test that allows two small independent samples to be compared, in order to decide whether they are equally distributed or not (Mann & Whitney, 1947).

2.10.2. Fixation count and duration

Gaze positions were coded on a reference image featuring all the AOIs. We used four or five AOIs for each vehicle. For the driving-centered HMI group, the AOIs were the external environment, the interior environment, the speed display, and the ADAS. The vehicle-centered HMI had the same AOIs, plus the HUD (see Fig. 2). For each AOI, we extracted the mean fixation duration and number of fixations during an 8-second window, extending from 4 s before to 4 s after the end of the question. This window allowed us to consider the processing time (i.e. listening to the question, finding the answer, and verbalizing it). The analyses compared the driving-centered HMI group and the vehicle-centered HMI group on the mean duration and number of fixations. Owing to the small sample and the non-respect of the normality of residuals for the driving-centered HMI group, we ran nonparametric analyses. Nonparametric Wilcoxon rank-sum tests were carried out, with group as a between-participants factor for both measures. The same analyses were carried out separately for each system question on each AOI, except for the HUD. No participants were excluded from the analysis (*N* = 20).





Figure 2: AOIs used in the driving-centered HMI (left) and vehicle-centered HMI (right).

The HUD displayed the vehicle's speed and information about the automated system (see Table 1). The HUD AOI was too small for us to know for certain whether the fixations were on the speed information or on the automation information. We therefore did not include the HUD in the comparison between the two HMIs. We can, however, assume that during the questions about speed or the automated system, drivers looked at the HUD to obtain the relevant information. To consider the fixations on the HUD, we calculated descriptive statistics. For the vehicle-centered HMI group, we calculated the means and standard errors of fixation count and duration on the HUD, speed display, and ADAS AOIs. The same operation was repeated for the driving-centered HMI group, minus the HUD. We then calculated the mean fixation count and duration for each AOI for the questions on speed. We repeated the same operation for the questions on the automated system.

2.10.3. Classification of drivers' comments

The drivers' comments about the HMI in relation to the automated system were transcribed and categorized, using a bottom-up approach. Three categories and 15 subcategories emerged. The three categories were (1) activation of ACC (Level 1) or ACC combined with LCA (Level 2), (2) deactivation of ACC (Level 1) or ACC combined with LCA (Level 2), and 3) mode confusions. Each category contained five subcategories. These subcategories corresponded to the communication medium between driver and system: (1) visual information display on the cluster; (2) auditory signals; (3) haptic feedback; (4) kinesthetic sensations; (5) commands; and (6) HUD (only for the vehicle-centered HMI group). The analysis consisted in counting the number of comments in each category and subcategory.

4. RESULTS

After indicating the response times for each type of question and each vehicle, we compare the vehicles on the system questions. Next, we describe the analysis of the eye-tracking data, comparing the two groups on fixation count and duration for the system questions. Finally, we describe the classification of the drivers' comments for each vehicle.

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4.1. Response times

We found a difference in the means of median response times between the groups and types of question (see Table 2). The ANOVA revealed an effect of type of question on response times, F(3, 16) = 7.01, p < .001, indicating that participants needed different amounts of time to answer the system questions, personal questions, interior questions, and exterior questions. Less time was needed to answer the system questions than either the personal questions, interior questions, or exterior questions. Regarding the effect of type of HMI on response times for each type of question, the mixed ANOVA revealed no significant effect, F(3, 16) = 3.53, p = .077, $\frac{d = .67}{d}$. This means that participants took more or less the same time to answer each type of question regardless of which group they belonged to (see Fig. 3). No interaction effect was observed between type of question and group (p > .1). For the system questions, groups differed slightly on the means of median response times (see Table 2). However, this difference was not significant (p > .1). Regarding the personal questions, we found a slight difference between the groups, but tests indicated that it was not significant (p > .1). This suggests that personal questions were not influenced by type of HMI. For the interior questions, there was a small difference in mean response times, as well as in standard deviations. However, tests indicated that these differences were not significant (p > .1). For the exterior questions, we found a substantial difference. Drivingcentered HMI drivers seemed to answer questions about the external environment quicker than vehicle-centered HMI drivers did. Again, however, tests indicated that this difference was not significant (p > .1). We then compared the two groups on response times for each system question.

Table 2: Mean (standard deviation) response times depending on HMI and question type.

	System	Personal	Interior	Exterior
	Questions	Questions	Questions	Questions
Driving-	1.61 s	1.17 s	2.27 s	1.50 s
centered	(0.46)	(1.08)	(0.84)	(0.86)
HMI group				
Vehicle-	2.16 s	1.13 s	2.55 s	2.17 s
centered	(1.50)	(0.41)	(1.04)	(0.74)
HMI group				

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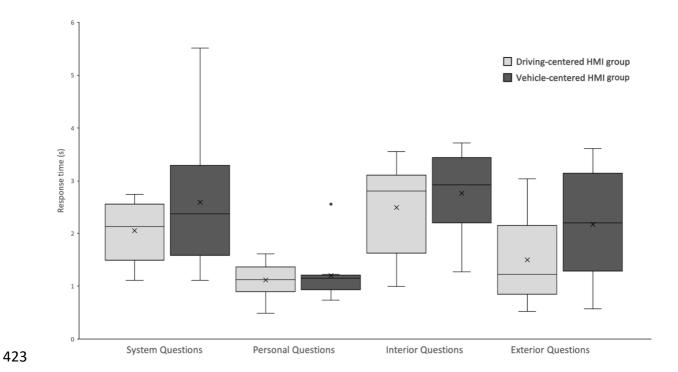


Figure 3: Boxplot of response times depending on type of question and HMI group.

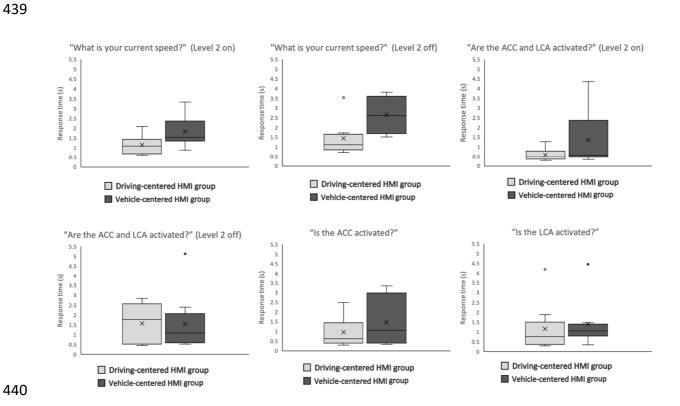
4.2. System questions

The Mann-Whitney tests on each system question revealed significant differences between the two groups (see Fig. 4). For the question "What is your current speed?" when the automated system was active, analysis revealed a significant difference between the groups, U=14, p=.02, r=-0.55. On average, driving-centered HMI users gave their speeds faster (Mdn=1.15) than vehicle-centered HMI users did (Mdn=1.82). For the question "What is your current speed?" when the automated system was inactive, analysis revealed no significant effect, U=6, p=.07, r=-0.51. Driving-centered HMI users responded slightly faster (Mdn=1.43) than vehicle-centered HMI users did (Mdn=2.64). Analysis of responses to the other system questions failed to reveal any significant differences (p>.1; see Table 3).

Table 3: Sample sizes and median (interquartile range) response times depending on the question and the HMI. * p < .05.

System questions	Driving-centered	Vehicle-centered	Test results
	HMI group	HMI group	
"What is your current	<u>(n = 10)</u>	<u>(n = 8)</u>	<i>U</i> = 14, <i>p</i> =
speed?"	1.08 s	1.53 s	.02, <i>r</i> =55
(Level 2 on)	(0.74)	(1.01)	
		*	
"What is your current	(n = 9)	(n = 4)	U = 6, p = .07,
speed?"	1.11 s	2.61 s	r =51
(Level 2 off)	(0.08)	(1.91)	

"Are the ACC and LCA	(n = 10)	(n = 9)	U = 30, p =
Are the Acc and LCA	(11 – 10)	(11 – 9)	· · ·
1: -112" (11 2)	0.40 -	0.56	.24, <i>r</i> =28
activated?" (Level 2 on)	0.49 s	0.56 s	
	(0.41)	(1.90)	
"Are the ACC and LCA	(n = 9)	(n = 9)	U = 43, p =
			.86, <i>r</i> =05
activated?" (Level 2	1.78 s	1.09 s	
,			
off)	(2.05)	(1.49)	
3117	(2.03)	(1.45)	
"Is the ACC activated?"	(n = 10)	(n = 10)	U = 36, p =
is the ACC activated:	(11 – 10)	(11 – 10)	.32, r =24
	0.62.5	1.00 a	.52,124
	0.62 s	1.06 s	
	(1.05)	(2.59)	
"Is the LCA activated?"	(n = 9)	(n = 8)	U = 25, p =
			.32, <i>r</i> =26
	0.76 s	1.05 s	
	(1.14)	(0.60)	
	(1.14)	(0.60)	



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4.3. Eye tracking

The subsequent analyses served to compare the two groups on each measure, each AOI, and each system question. Because of the large number of analyses (more than 50), only the significant effects and those tending toward significance are reported here. For the question "What is your current speed?" when the ACC and LCA were active, no significant difference was observed between the groups on the mean fixation time on the speedometer, U = 17, p = .06, r = -0.449 (see Table 4). Driving-centered HMI users made slightly longer fixations on the speedometer (Mdn = 294 ms) than vehicle-centered HMI users did (Mdn = 75 ms; see Fig. 5). For the question "What is your current speed?" when in manual driving mode, analysis revealed an effect of group on the number of fixations on the speedometer, U = 3, p= .02, r = -0.656. Driving-centered HMI users looked at the speedometer more often (Mdn = 2) than vehicle-centered HMI users did (Mdn = 0). Groups did not differ significantly on mean fixation time for this question, U = 5.5, p = 07, r = -0.524. On average, driving-centered HMI users made slightly longer fixations (Mdn = 523 ms) on the speedometer than vehiclecentered HMI users did (Mdn = 0 ms). For the question "Is the ACC activated?" when it was activated, the test revealed no significant effect on the number of fixations on the ADAS AOI, U = 20.5, p = .07, r = -0.422. Driving-centered HMI users tended to look slightly more often (Mdn = 6) at the ADAS than vehicle-centered HMI users did (Mdn = 0). A significant difference was observed for the number of fixations on the interior of the vehicle for the same question, U = 17, p = .03, r = -0.422. Vehicle-centered HMI users (Mdn = 1) made more fixations on the interior of the vehicle than driving-centered HMI users did (Mdn = 0). In

addition, there was a significant difference between the groups on mean fixation duration outside the vehicle for the same question, U = 11, p = .009, r = -0.614. Vehicle-centered HMI users (Mdn = 5793 ms) looked outside the vehicle for significantly longer time periods than the driving-centered HMI users did (Mdn = 4066 ms).

Table 4: Sample sizes, median (interquartile range) numbers and mean durations of fixations depending on the vehicle, and results of nonparametric analysis. Significant differences are in italics. * p < .05. ** p < .01.

Question	AOI	Measure	Driving-	Vehicle-	Test results
			centered HMI	centered HMI	
"What is	Speedometer	Fixation	(n = 9)	(<i>n</i> = 8)	<u>U</u> = 17
your		duration	294 ms	75 ms	p = .06
current			(194)	(171)	<u>r = -0.45</u>
speed?"					
(Level 2 on)					
"What is	Speedometer	Number	(n = 8)	(n = 4)	<i>U</i> = 3
your		of	2 (2.5)	0 (1.25)	<i>p</i> = .02
current		fixations	*		<u>r = -0.66</u>
speed?"					
(Level 2 off)		Fixation	(n = 8)	(n = 4)	<i>U</i> = 5.5
		duration	211.6 ms	0 ms	p = 07
			(150)	(171)	<u>r = -0.52</u>

"Is the	ADAS	Number	(n = 9)	(n = 9)	<i>U</i> = 20.5
adaptive		of	6 (3)	0 (4)	p = .07
cruise		fixations			<i>r</i> = -0.42
control	Interior of the	Number	(n = 9)	(n = 9)	<u>U</u> = 17
activated?"	vehicle	of	0 (3)	1 (4)	p = .03
		fixations	*		<i>r</i> = -0.42
	External	Summed	(n = 9)	(n = 9)	<u>U = 11</u>
	environment	fixation	4066 ms	5793 ms	p = .009
		duration	(63)	(114)	<i>r</i> = -0.61

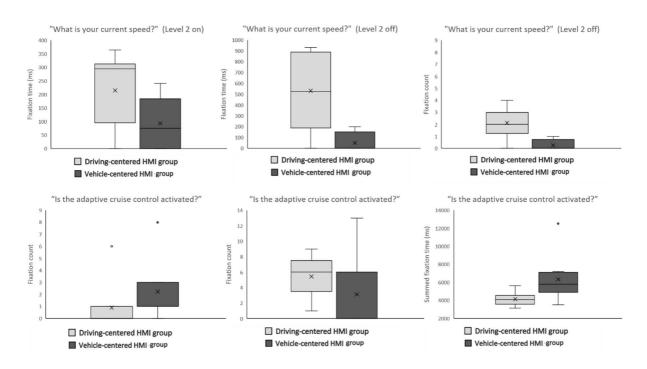


Figure 5: Boxplots of fixation counts and durations depending on the question and the HMI group.

For the vehicle-centered HMI group, the number of fixations on the HUD and their mean duration were non-negligible (see Table 5). The number and duration of fixations on the HUD were the same as for the speedometer (for speed questions) and the ADAS (for automated system questions). This suggests that the HUD was used just as much as the speedometer and the ADAS to answer system questions.

Table 5: Mean (standard deviation) fixation count and duration on the HUD, speedometer and ADAS AOIs of the vehicle-centered HMI and driving-centered HMI groups for each type of question.

		Vehicle-centered HMI		Driving	-centered HMI
Question	AOI	Fixation	Mean fixation duration	Fixation	Mean fixation duration
Speed questions	Speedo	3.20 (2.95)	146 ms (71)	2.40 (1.06)	227 ms (118)
	HUD	4.25	280 ms (117)		
System questions	ADAS	4.91 (3.61)	201 ms (124)	2.36 (1.47)	183 ms (103)
	HUD	3.20 (1.67)	336 ms (289)		

4.4. Drivers' comments

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Every participant made spontaneous comments about the driving experience, HMI, and functioning of the automated system. These comments are described separately for each vehicle. We divided them into three categories: (1) activation of automated system, (2) deactivation of automated system, and (3) mode confusions. We counted the number of comments in each category. Most of the vehicle-centered HMI users referred to the cluster to comment on the activation of the automated system (See Table 6). Four of the 10 vehiclecentered HMI users referred to the HUD. One vehicle-centered HMI user referred to the commands, and four to the haptic feedback. Finally, four participants in the vehicle-centered HMI group reported relying on kinesthetic sensations. For the deactivation of the automated system, three of the 10 vehicle-centered HMI users mentioned the commands. Only one vehicle-centered HMI user reported using the cluster. The most frequently encountered mode confusions for the vehicle-centered HMI drivers were between Levels 1 and 2. Three vehicle-centered HMI users became confused because of unclear information on the cluster. One vehicle-centered HMI user reported uncertainty or mode confusion between manual driving and ACC (Level 1) when consulting the visual information on the cluster. Another user reported mode confusion between manual driving and the ACC (Level 1) when using the commands.

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Table 6: Number of participants in the vehicle-centered HMI group (total number of participants in the group) who commented about a specific modality of the HMI regarding activation, deactivation, or mode confusions.

Activation	of	Deactivation	of	Mode	Mode	

	automated	automated	confusion	confusion
	system	system	between	between Level
			manual driving	1 and Level 2
			and Level 1	systems
			systems	
Visual	8 (10)	1 (10)	1 (10)	3 (10)
Commands	1 (10)	3 (10)	1 (10)	0
Haptic	4 (10)	0	0	0
feedback				
Kinesthetic	4 (10)	0	0	0
sensations				
HUD	4 (10)	0	0	0

Five of the 10 users of the driving-centered HMI reported relying on the visual modality of the cluster to know if the automation was activated. Only one participant reported using the auditory feedback. Two participants referred to the commands. One participant referred to the haptic feedback, while another referred to kinesthetic sensations. As for deactivation of the automated system, two of the 10 driving-centered HMI users relied on visual information displayed on the cluster, two referred to the commands, two to the auditory feedback, and one to the haptic feedback. Three participants experienced confusion between Level 2 (ACC + LCA) and either Level 1 (ACC) or manual driving when consulting the visual information. The same kind of confusion was reported by three participants when listening to the auditory feedback. Confusion between Level 1 and either the Level 2 or

manual driving was experienced by one driving-centered HMI user when consulting the visual information on the cluster. Confusion between Level 1 and Level 2 was experienced by one participant in the driving-centered HMI group when consulting the visual information. The same kind of confusion was reported by one riving-centered HMI user who relied on kinesthetic sensations.

Table 7: Number of participants in the driving-centered HMI group (total number of participants in the group) who commented about a specific modality of the HMI regarding activation, deactivation, or mode confusions.

	Activation	Deactivation	Mode	Mode	Mode
	of	of automated	confusion	confusion	confusion
	automated	systems	between	between	between
	systems		Level 2 and	Level 1 and	Levels 1
			Level 1 or	Level 2 or	and 2
			manual	manual	
			driving	driving	
Visual	5 (10)	2 (10)	3 (10)	1 (10)	1 (10)
Auditory	1 (10)	2 (10)	3 (10)	0	0
Commands	2 (10)	2 (10)	0	0	0
Haptic	2 (10)	1 (10)	0	0	0
feedback					
Kinesthetic	1 (10)	0	0	0	1 (10)

sensations			

5. DISCUSSION

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Our study was designed to explore the impact of HMI design on the detection of information about the status and functioning of two partially automated vehicles. We compared two HMIs: a driving-centered HMI and a vehicle-centered HMI. The driving-centered HMI used an exocentric representation of the road scene and multimodal information to inform drivers about the level of automation. The vehicle-centered HMI used a traditional display with visual information only. During a 45-minute on-road driving session, response times and eye movements were recorded while participants answered questions. Spontaneous comments were also recorded, and subsequently classified according to whether they were related to the HMI or the status of the automated systems. In this section, we discuss the extent to which our results answer the question of whether the exocentric and multimodal drivingcentered HMI allows drivers to have a better understanding of the functioning of the vehicle when using an automated system than a classic visual vehicle-centered HMI. Overall, response times for system questions were shorter for the driving-centered HMI group than for the vehicle-centered HMI group. More specifically, the two groups differed on response times for questions about vehicle speed. When the automation was on, drivingcentered HMI users responded faster than vehicle-centered HMI users. These results suggest that vehicle speed information is more accessible in the driving-centered HMI than in the vehicle-centered HMI. However, we failed to find any differences in response times to questions about the activation of ACC (Level 1) or ACC + LCA (Level 2). Compared with the classic HMI, the multimodal and realistic driving-centered HMI seemed to inform drivers more efficiently about the functioning of the vehicle, though not about the level of automation. Regarding the eye-tracking data, for the speed questions, the driving-centered HMI group made more/longer fixations than the vehicle-centered HMI group on the speedometer. At first glance, our results suggest that the exocentric HMI captured the drivers' visual resources more than the classic HMI did when it came to vehicle speed. This suggests that it may have been difficult to extract visual information (Jacob & Karn, 2003). However, we observed a high fixation count and duration on the HUD, such that the vehiclecentered HMI drivers fixated the HUD at least as many times and for at least as long as they did either the speedometer or the ADAS. The fact that participants looked at both the speedometer and the HUD when answering the speed question suggests that they doublechecked. They may have seen the information on the HUD and verified it on the speedometer. The time needed to perform this double checking may explain why it took the vehicle-centered HMI users longer to answer questions about vehicle speed. The use of the HUD in this situation may have been more demanding than that of the driving-centered HMI. One way to measure the benefit of the HUD would be to compare the answers of vehicle-centered HMI drivers to speed questions in two HUD conditions: activated versus deactivated. This would make it possible to evaluate the HUD's impact on response times. Regarding ACC activation (Level 1), results diverged. Driving-centered HMI users looked more often at the ADAS, where the information was displayed. By contrast, vehicle-centered HMI users looked more often at the interior of the vehicle, suggesting that they were looking for the information in the wrong places. However, they also looked at the external environment for longer periods than the driving-centered HMI users, which suggests better situational awareness. We had expected driving-centered HMI users to make shorter and fewer fixations on the cluster than the vehicle-centered HMI users when answering

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576 questions on automation. The multimodal driving-centered HMI provided auditory feedback 577 about the level of automation, meaning that users could access the information without 578 having to look at the cluster. However, we found no significant differences in fixations 579 compared with the classic HMI. This suggests that the multimodal HMI did not correctly 580 inform drivers about the status and functioning of the vehicle. This result was confirmed by 581 the mode confusions encountered by the driving-centered HMI group. 582 We observed a wider range of mode confusion situations for the driving-centered HMI group 583 than for the vehicle-centered HMI group (see Tables 6 and 7). For the driving-centered HMI 584 users, most of the confusions were related to Level 2 (ACC + LCA), and involved both visual 585 and auditory information. Thus, instead of helping drivers to distinguish between the modes, 586 the multimodal HMI actually induced confusion in some of them. This may be an indication 587 that the auditory information was not correctly perceived or understood by users. In the 588 vehicle-centered HMI group, most of the mode confusions concerned Levels 1 (ACC) and 2 (ACC + LCA). There was only a subtle distinction between these two levels on the cluster, 589 590 which may explain these confusions. Fewer confusions related to the ACC were observed for 591 the driving-centered HMI. The use of a realistic representation of the vehicle being followed 592 may be an efficient clue, helping drivers to understand the activation status of the ACC 593 (Level 1). 594 According to the multiple resources model, using different sensory channels to convey 595 information is more efficient than using a single one (Wickens, 2008). According to the 596 automated driving model, an HMI that informs drivers about the tasks undertaken by the 597 automated systems is more efficient (Stanton et al., 2001). On the basis of these two 598 models, we had assumed that the multimodal and exocentric driving-centered HMI would 599 allow drivers to understand the vehicle's status and capabilities more efficiently than the 34

vehicle-centered HMI would. Despite the presence of an HUD in the vehicle-centered HMI, the driving-centered HMI allowed drivers to respond faster to questions about the vehicle's level of automation. Interestingly, however, the driving-centered HMI captured more visual attention overall than the vehicle-centered HMI did. This result is consistent with the results of Gaspar and Carney (2019). In their study, participants used a Tesla Model S (drivingcentered HMI) to do daily drives, and their eye movements were recorded. The authors found that users looked at the external environment less frequently when Level 2 was activated. Our results corroborate these findings, suggesting that an exocentric representation tends to be visually distracting. Regarding mental models, the exocentric and multimodal driving-centered HMI seemed to induce mode confusions. Banks et al. (2018) observed similar results with participants using a Tesla Model S with an HMI similar to the one we used in our study. These authors reported mode confusions with the activation of Level 2 automation. Mode confusion with the activation of Level 2, specifically relating to visual information, was also reported in the present study. Interestingly, however, we observed more mode confusion with the deactivation of Level 2. This confusion was related to the auditory feedback intended to inform drivers about the activation or deactivation of the automated system. Participants' verbal comments indicate that some of these sounds were not understood. Carsten and Martens (2019) suggested that an efficient automated vehicle HMI design implies that the functioning of the vehicle can be understood. If the meaning of signals from the HMI is not understood, an accurate mental model cannot be forged. This is particularly important when the signal serves to inform the driver of a return to manual control. Many sounds are emitted nowadays in cars. Most of them are meant to alert drivers of an emergency. Designers should focus on sounds that efficiently inform them about the activation level of the automated system.

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5.1. Conclusion

The purpose of our study was to compare the characteristics and on-road use of two HMIs. More specifically, our protocol was intended to determine which of the two designs best helped drivers understand the status and functioning of their vehicle. The first HMI was multimodal and featured an exocentric representation of the road scene. The second HMI was more traditional and used codes that are widely used in the automobile industry. The two designs gave rise to similar performances on questions about the status and functioning of the vehicle. However, the driving-centered HMI was more efficient when it came to informing drivers about current speed. Eye movements suggested that its multimodal and realistic representation was more visually demanding. Finally, the driving-centered HMI induced mode confusions related to Level 2, whereas the classic HMI induced mode confusions related to Level 1. Taken together, results indicate that the multimodal drivingcentered HMI did not help participants driving the vehicle for the first time to gain a better understanding of the functionalities and activation level of the automated system. The mode confusions and failure to use the auditory information suggest that the sounds indicating activation and deactivation of automation could be improved. Future experiments should measure HMI use over an extended period of time.

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5.2. Limitations

On-road studies have just as many disadvantages as they do advantages. In ecological situations, some factors cannot be controlled. Variables dependent on the surrounding environment can interfere with the protocol. For example, the experiments with the vehicle-

centered HMI took place during vacation periods. The participants who drove with this HMI were therefore more likely to encounter traffic jams. When in a traffic jam, the vehicle's speed is often too low to activate the automation. The vehicle-centered HMI participants therefore used the automated system for shorter periods of time than the driving-centered HMI users did. Another limitation arising from the ecological situation concerns the intrinsic differences between the vehicles. The main difference between the vehicles here was the presence of an HUD in the vehicle-centered HMI but not in the driving-centered HMI. Drivers could obtain several types of information from the HUD, as it centralized information about automation status and speed. Given the broad range of information and the relatively small surface area, we were not able to compare eye-tracking data for this AOI with that of the other AOIs. However, analysis of participants' comments suggested that the HUD was an important source of information on automation status. Another limitation was the small sample size. With only 10 participants per group, caution needs to be exercised when considering the conclusions we drew. Except for one ANOVA, we only carried out nonparametric tests. Several differences were significant, but a larger sample size would have allowed us to increase the statistical power and strengthen the possible effects. This is one reason why we considered the drivers' comments. These supplemented the quantitative data by explaining what the participants experienced. Mode confusions are difficult to reproduce and observe in simulators. They can be accessible if drivers are interviewed, but this is generally done after the experiment, and only rarely while they are driving. Recording and transcribing drivers' comments allowed us to access mode confusions and explain the quantitative data. This exploratory study yielded relevant information about the impact an interface may have on drivers' awareness about mode status. However, it is important to note that this experiment only told us about what 37

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happens while drivers are familiarizing themselves with a vehicle. A 1-hour drive is not long enough for them to understand every feature of the HMI, and familiarity with automated systems can have an impact on their utilization (Solís-Marcos & Kircher, 2019).

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5.3. Future research

As well as emphasizing the need for the functioning of the vehicle to be understood, Carsten and Martens (2019) underscored the need to carefully calibrate trust. Too much trust leads to disengagement, while too little trust discourages drivers from using the automated system. These authors argued that the exocentric representation of the driving-centered HMI may simply serve to promote trust in the system. It may be esthetically appealing, but possibly not that useful in helping drivers take back control when necessary. It may be more suited to Level 3 vehicles, where the automated system gives drivers more time to take back control. In Level 2 vehicles, drivers need to be ready to do so at all times. The calibration of trust is therefore crucial. Future research should focus on looking for HMIs that foster the right degree of trust. One idea would be to indicate the vehicle's limitations. Beller, Heesen, and Vollrath (2013) explored the idea of warning drivers about the automation's uncertainty in order to bring them back into the loop. In highly automated vehicles, the display features an icon representing uncertainty in situations where the automation may fail. In this condition, drivers are faster at taking back control and have greater trust in the automation. This kind of display could be included in Level 2 vehicles. Another point to consider in future studies is familiarity with the system. Our study focused on the first driving session that participants had with the vehicle. A driver who is used to a Level 2 vehicle should know when the system is able to function properly or not. However, Solís-Marcos and Kircher (2019) observed a potential effect of familiarity with automation on eye movements. More specifically, the more experienced participants performed more secondary tasks, potentially leading to a loss of situational awareness. Future research should take experience with the system into account by featuring longitudinal experiments.

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Appendix: Detailed questions

Target questions
raiget questions
What is your current speed? (Level 2 on)
What is your current speed? (Level 2 off)
Is the Auto Pilot activated? (Level 2 on)
Is the Auto Pilot activated? (Level 2 off)
Is the adaptive cruise control activated?
Is the lane centering assist activated?
Personal questions
Do you have any children/grandchildren?
Do you have any pets?
What are their names?
Do you play sports?
Interior questions
What color is the pen I'm writing with?
What radio station are we listening to?
What color are my clothes?
Exterior questions
Do you think it will rain today?
Is the vehicle on our right green?
Is the car behind us black?

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DECLARATION

As a professional translator for the English language, I hereby declare that I carried out the language editing of the article entitled *Impact of interface design on drivers'* behavior in partially automated cars: an on-road study (N. Monsaingeon et al.).

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