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Emphasis Terms for Warning Directives on Compliance Intent

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1

1

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Warnings

- Safer world
- Provide information
- Influence behavior
 - Promote compliance
- Reminder

2

2

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Warning Messages

- Information on the hazard
- Consequences from not avoiding the hazard
- Directives (instructions) on how to avoid the hazard

Toxic Vapors
Can lead to Severe Lung Damage
Wear Type 1234 Respirator in Area

3

3

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Warning Research

- Size, location/placement, color/contrast, pictorial etc.
- Signal words (e.g., CAUTION, DANGER)
- Little research concerning the instructions or directives statement in warnings.

4

4

Preliminary Study

- Kim, Wogalter, & Cowley(2007)
- A set of words/phrases that helps to enhance the compliance intent on the warning
- One-word (emphasis adjective) or two-word phrases (qualifier and emphasis adjective)
- Compared a “base directive”(control) with the same or similar statements containing 11 emphasis terms conditions.
- In context of actual directive statements of warnings

5

5

Preliminary Study (cont.)

- Wear XYZ Protective Eyewear
- Keep all body parts, hair, and loose clothing away from rollers

- Mandatory: Wear XYZ Protective Eyewear
- Extremely important: Keep all body parts, hair, and loose clothing away from rollers

6

6

Preliminary Study (cont.)

- Mean ratings and Standard Deviations(SDs) of base directive and with 11 emphasize conditions

Word	Mean(SD)
Control (No emphasis term)	4.57 (1.94)
Mandatory	6.52 (1.15)
Extremely Important	6.14 (1.54)
Required	6.07 (1.40)
Absolutely Necessary	6.05 (1.61)
Strongly Recommended	5.02 (1.55)
Important	4.98 (1.52)
Strongly Suggested	4.90 (1.76)
Necessary	4.86 (1.69)
Recommended	3.98 (1.88)
Suggest	3.71 (1.57)

7

7

Current Research

- To examine the broad range of compliance intent with the different emphasis terms

- To investigate the compliance intent of the emphasis terms in a more general context

8

8

Method

- Participants
 - 132 individuals(76 females and 56 males)
 - Average age 27.6 years(SD=10.1)
 - 42 % were undergraduate students
 - 58% were non-student adult volunteers

9

9

Method

- One-word (emphasis adjective) and two-word phrases(qualifier and emphasis adjective)
ex) crucial, extremely crucial
- 37 words/phrases
- It is _____ that you obey this warning.
- It is _____ -- Please obey the warning.
- The compliance intent on a 0 to 8-point ratings scale

10

10

Results

- Means(SDs) of the 37 words/phrases

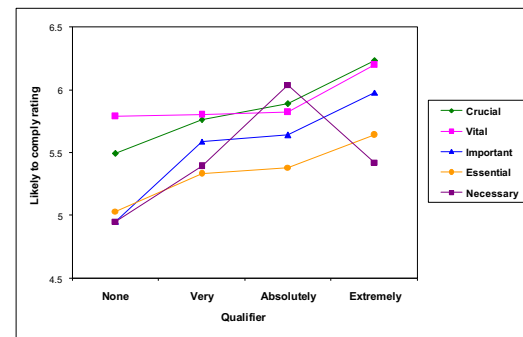
The highest Rated		The lowest rated	
Extremely Crucial	6.23 (1.97)	Please	3.18 (2.08)
Urgent	6.23 (1.67)	Voluntary	2.37 (1.99)
Extremely Vital	6.20 (1.88)	Optional	2.25 (2.03)

11

11

Results

- A 5 (emphasis adjective) X 4(qualifier) repeated measure ANOVA



12

12

Discussion

- Some terms increase the compliance intent, the other terms decrease it.
- Term variability for inclusion in warnings
- Some highly rated long emphasis terms may be worth adding to warning directives

13

13

Discussion

- Matching the level of hazardousness
- Intent to comply vs. actual compliance
- Can be used to select appropriate terms for warning directives.

14

14