

Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Abstract	ix
Deutsche Kurzzusammenfassung	xiii
Preface	xvii
List of Figures	xxiii
List of Tables	xxv
List of Abbreviations	xxvii
1. General introduction	1
1.1. Motivation	1
1.2. Outline	7
2. The state-of-the-art in modeling visual attention	9
2.1. The phenomenon of visual attention	11
2.2. Brain structures involved in visual attention	13
2.3. Neurophysiological findings and related models	17
2.4. Visual attention in object localization and recognition systems	22
2.4.1. Saliency models with pure bottom-up attention	24
2.4.2. Top-down guided saliency models	25
2.4.3. Models with top-down attention as holistic, cognitive control	28
2.5. Neuro-computational system-level models	35
2.6. Conclusion	41
3. Microcircuit model of attention	43
3.1. Introduction	43

3.2. Methods	45
3.2.1. Model overview and structure	45
3.2.2. Divisive normalization	47
3.2.3. Modeling of attention via amplification	48
3.2.4. Modeling of suppression	49
3.2.5. Mathematical description of the model	49
3.3. Results	54
3.3.1. Biased competition	54
3.3.2. Attentional modulation of the contrast response function: contrast gain or response gain	60
3.3.3. Attention modulation of neuronal tuning curves	64
3.3.4. Attentional modulation of surround suppression	67
3.3.5. Predictions	71
3.4. Discussion	73
3.4.1. Relation to existing single-area models	73
3.4.2. Model limitations	78
3.4.3. Physiological origin of suppression	78
3.4.4. Relevance of the model for psychophysical experiments	80
3.4.5. Influence of model parameters	80
3.5. Conclusion	82
4. Object localization with a model of visual attention	85
4.1. Introduction	86
4.2. Model	91
4.2.1. Overview	91
4.2.2. Mechanisms at neuronal level	94
4.2.3. Attention as a holistic, cognitive control of the visual system	95
4.2.4. Learning of object representations	98
4.2.5. Mathematical description of the model	100
4.3. The role of neuronal attention mechanisms in object localization	118
4.3.1. Feature-based amplification represents the target	118
4.3.2. Feature-based suppression removes noise	121
4.4. Results	124
4.4.1. Evaluation methods	124
4.4.2. Performance of the full system	127

4.4.3. Performance impact of the feature-based amplification	132
4.4.4. Performance impact of the feature-based suppression	134
4.5. Discussion	138
4.5.1. Existing models	138
4.5.2. Survey of reported performance boosts due to attention	144
4.5.3. Improvements in comparison to previous works	145
4.5.4. Limits of the proposed model	148
4.6. Conclusion	151
5. Object substitution masking	155
5.1. Introduction	156
5.2. Model	159
5.2.1. Overview	159
5.2.2. Relevant model aspects and modifications for OSM	162
5.3. Results	169
5.3.1. Behavioral data and model fits	169
5.3.2. Explanation of OSM	173
5.3.3. Attention mechanisms in OSM	177
5.4. Discussion	182
5.4.1. Relation to existing models and theories of OSM	182
5.4.2. Discussion of open questions in OSM	189
5.5. Conclusion and outlook	195
5.5.1. Conclusion	195
5.5.2. Outlook	197
6. General conclusion	199
6.1. General discussion	199
6.1.1. Role of the neuronal mechanisms in behavior	199
6.1.2. Role of the mechanisms in physiology and behavior	201
6.1.3. Boundaries of the conducted research	203
6.2. Conclusion	204
6.3. Outlook	208
Appendix	211
A. Microcircuit model of attention - results with standard parameters	211
B. Object localization with a model of visual attention	215

CONTENTS

C.	Alpha function to simulate spatiotemporal receptive fields	218
C.1.	Time variant function in the retina and the LGN	218
C.2.	Modeling spatiotemporal receptive fields	219
Bibliography		223