Personal contributions to:  
What makes a classic? Popularity of works of two great English novelists in relation to readability

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Contributions:

* Discussing the possibilities of the research (with other group members)
* Searching for programs or certain workways to decide on tests for readability and the complexity of texts (deciding on what kind of variables would be best to use, e.g. sentence length or number of syllables)
* Researching ways to weight the popularity data from Goodreads
* Use simple analysis to get the mean popularity
* Find statistical tests that would fit our data (online, as well as in ‘Discovering statistics using IBM SPPS Statistics’ by Andy Field)
* Perform statistical tests and check if it would say something about our data and answer our research questions (covariance, correlation (Cohen’s d), effect size, standard deviation, t-tests (Welch’s 2-sampled t-test))
* Put statistical analysis into words
* Create scatterplots for some of the higher ranking correlations
* Create grouped barplot for the means of some of the higher ranking correlations to compare raw data

The final report can be found in: <https://github.com/lindaboeckhout/What-makes-a-classic-Group-A-From-Objects-to-Data/wiki>

Reflections

In the beginning of the project it seemed difficult to all get on one side considering the topic of our research. We all came from such different fields, yet oddly enough, it fit really well in the end.

It proved helpful that Lenka knew much about the technical side of research, so she could slow us down when we were being too ambitious or encourage us to think in broader prospects when we weren’t. Linda, on the other hand, knows a lot about literature and how to interpret our data when taking into account, for example, what different lives Austen and Dickens lived.

I felt like I fit right in the middle. My statistics courses all of a sudden didn’t seem so useless anymore and it was actually helpful to interpret the data even further than we initially did. I also think being a communication- and information scientist (to-be) helped in this process. I think I can make the connection between the data and the interpretation and still keep it objective, yet with a subjective eye (for example to highlight certain findings others might find insignificant). It gave us new insights. Furthermore, I kept surprising myself or was surprised in general of how much we have learned and of how much we can actually *do*. It feels good knowing that we didn’t just handle things theoretically, but actually got to exploit our newfound knowledge hands on.

It still amazes me knowing that we only got to do (basically) tiny stuff in programs like R, Rstudio, Cygwin and work with Unix and that there is still so much to discover and learn. The possibilities are quite literally infinite. The course also made me realise that there is still so much ground uncovered when it comes to humanities research. With this kind of work, we can shed light on questions that might not have been possible to answer a decade ago, but are important and useful nonetheless. It is a way to finally make the humanities a real science (which it always has been in my eyes, but not in everyone’s) and I think that is the greatest accomplishment as a scientist.

But I think what I learned most from this course, is that it’s okay to bleed a little first, before you start asking questions how and why – something that felt foreign to me before.