

Comprehension and Interpretation of Computer Code as a Function of Typography

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Abstract

We chose the paper below as the base for our research project because we are interested in extending North and Jenkins research to a specific domain. In particular, we would like to measure the effect of typography in computer code on the speed and effectiveness of its understanding.

North, A. J., & Jenkins, L. B. (1951). Reading speed and comprehension as a function of typography. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35(4), 225-228.

(<http://psycnet.apa.org/record/1952-02975-001>)

Summary of Experiment

Hypothesis

There is a difference in the ability of a programmer to understand and interpret code given different monospaced fonts.

Sampling Method and Size

We plan to survey about 30 experienced programmers. We control the variability of programmer skills by presenting easy/simple code. We choose to perform random sampling on a population of graduate students in computer science in the New York area.

Dependent and Independent Variables and Measurement

For independent variables we choose three typeface styles (monospaced serif, monospace sans-serif and monospaced decorative). We choose as dependent variables the following: speed (in seconds) of understanding algorithm purpose, comprehension (# of correct questions) and accuracy (% correct answers).