Willy Husted

Dr. Hellige’s Talk Questionnaire

1. Give at least two specific examples of objects or behaviors that cognitive psychologists study.

Cognitive psychologists study the behavior of speech. In particular, they study the areas of the brain that control different aspects of speech, including choosing the correct word and choosing the correct sound.

They also study positive and negative emotion, and the different areas of the brain that respond to and control emotion.

2. How do these subjects of study relate to what interaction design studies?

With advancements in Artificial Intelligence like Siri and Cortana, we are just beginning to see the possibilities of speech-controlled computing. Many (including myself) believe that speech may soon be a primary means of interacting with technology, particularly when one needs to leave his or her hands available for a different task (dentist, surgeon, driver, etc.).

Determining what areas of the brain fire when experiencing emotion relate to the interaction design guideline of satisfaction. Although satisfaction is the most subjective of the five guidelines, it is arguably the most powerful and most important. If a user feels joy while interacting with a system, that positive emotion will likely bring that user back in the future. Contrastingly, if a user experiences negative emotions like frustration while interacting with a system, he or she is unlikely to continue using the product.

3. Give at least two specific methods used by cognitive psychologists to study or learn about their subjects.

A/B Testing (a randomized experiment with two variants) is used by cognitive psychologists, as is the method of observational study.

4. How do these methods of study relate to how interaction design research is performed?

A/B Testing is heavily used when researching interaction design. For example, our first assignment pitted iOS against Android in an effort to determine which system performed better for experienced users.

Observational studies are used less frequently in researching interaction design. One common type of observational study is a longitudinal study in which researchers repeatedly observe the same variables over long periods of time. Concerning interaction design, one could imagine a longitudinal study of operating system efficiency over a period of several years. Measuring efficiency across updates would help determine whether an operating system was progressing in terms of usability or not.