Protocol (Final)

Jack Rieger

1. Pre-Study Interview

What is your name and affiliation?

* Jack Rieger, software engineer at design studio

What is your field of research or study?

* graphic design on the internet, focus how to teach designer how to code

How often do you read research papers?

* pretty rarely. does often read through lengthy substacks. intimidated by research papers

How do you read a paper? Do you read it through multiple times? Which section(s) do you focus on the first time, second time, etc. and why?

* read thru first third. would look at citations if primary paper wasnt stimulating enough. tries to go thru abstract bc it doesnt tell you much

Have you used any tools or techniques to help you read papers? Are there any tools that you wish existed that you think would help you?

* tool that provided summaries of desired length. back in 2018 wasnt good, but potentially now it would be better. wished for better ways to search fields of outside area of expertise. access to materials. shorter summaries of sections.

2. Think-aloud Study

* a lot of skimming but much of it did not stick
* read the first few sentences slowly, then sped up.
* seemed frustrated by long, dense sentences
* scanned the length of the article after the abstract. “Let me see what I’m getting myself into.”
* didn’t highlight while skimming, but did pause at section headings.
* often scrolled back up to reorient
* questioned whether the authors explained things clearly
* they actually retain the information.compared multiple charts in the paper to look for patterns
* would benefit from a feature that lets users preview definitions of key terms.
* suggested that summaries or takeaways at the end of each section would make comprehension easier

3. Post-Study Interview

Which sections of a research paper do you consider most important for understanding its content?

* I found the second and second to last pages most helpful, as they were a good balance of in-depth and summarization. Abstract and conclusion paragraphs were too summarized and the middle of the paper was too in depth

When summarizing a paper, which sections provide the most useful information?

* First sentence of each paragraph (something I learned from a news writing class)

What aspects of the summarization process do you find most challenging?

* Finding a balance bw in-depth knowledge for others in the field vs easier to understand information for non-experts

Can you describe how you typically navigate through a research paper?

* title > introduction > first sentence or two of each section

Is your reading process linear, or do you follow a different pattern?

* sort of chaotic; I feel like I will read a sentence 5 times then zoom through the next few sentences and bounce around at first before feeling like I get into a flow

What challenges do you encounter when reading data-intensive research papers?

* I want the authors to speak in more plain language. Using larger words doesn’t always convey more information

What aspects of interpreting charts and statistical data in research papers do you find most difficult?

* Data visualizations can be too hard to parse if the legends don’t explain them well (this particular paper had a red/blue dot map that I couldn’t parse at all)

How do you approach understanding the “Results” or “Evaluation” sections of a paper?

* Agree w that usually I find the statistics/numbers are for experience practitioners/researchers. I like the text based qualitative descriptions of results unless its an easy to understand percentage or something like that

Do you find it challenging to connect data presented in charts to real-world implications? If so, what do you think contributes to this difficulty?

* I’ll answer this a little tangentially; I often find the sample sizes are too small to be believable / the audience of testers can sometimes be biased (e.g. we tested all collegiate students in a particular field feels kind of small/specific group). But to be more specific to your question, yes it can be hard because again sometimes the data visualizations chosen are not easy to understand, or lack the appropriate descriptions or keys/legends