Old Forms & New Documents

An Experiment With Hypertextual Glossaries

Personalizable Documents

- ‘Electronic Paper’
- Additional content not necessarily for sharing
- Supporting users making meaning from documents
- Glossaries as a type of annotation
  - Support users’ personalization
  - Structure ➔ information scaffolding

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Hypotheses

- Glossaries will help users understand
- Glossaries will not be confusing
- Glossaries will be used
- Update-able glossaries will be better than static glossaries
Method

- $n = 40$
- Mixed design (2 sessions)
  - Within Ss for Glossary vs. No Glossary
  - Between Ss for Simple vs. Full Featured
  - Controlled for document and order
- Pre- & Post-task comprehension test
- Simulated real-world condition
  - Online articles about diseases (asthma, bronchitis, etc.)
  - Read articles to understand severity and treatment options
  - Imagine that you need to understand the text

Selected Results

- Glossaries are affectively successful
- No delay in reading
- Glossaries $\leftrightarrow$ greater understanding
- No diff between glossary types
- Ss did not use update-able glossary
  - Would re-use help? Ss said so
Implications

- Glossaries can work on the WWW
  - Change from Wright *et al.*, Black *et al.*, etc.
  - Can be incorporated into browsers & sites
- But which will be best?
  - Personal vs. Shared
  - Floating vs. Tied
  - Table in hypertext article

Take Home Message

- Glossaries *can* work on the WWW
- Floating tools can be good for users
- Tied tools can be good for vendors
- Personalizable Glossaries are needed
  - Bridges to connect documents
  - Note taking & Sense making support

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