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Authors

Cui, Lucy
Liu, Jereth

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Does Sans Forgetica font facilitate word memory?

Lucy Cui
University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, United States

Jereth Liu
Geffen Academy at UCLA, Los Angeles, California, United States

Abstract

The new Sans Forgetica (SF) typeface was designed to promote desirable difficulty. Here, we investigate whether SF improves memory for words with within-subject designs. Participants studied words in Arial and SF (Exp 1 and 2) and completed old-new recognition tests where words retained their study fonts (Exp 1) or were in either Arial or SF (Exp 2). They had significantly better recognition (hit rate) in SF than in Arial (Exp 1) and significantly higher sensitivity indexes (d') when words were tested in SF than in Arial (Exp 2). While encouraging, further examination of these results (e.g., response bias) suggest a less straightforward interpretation. Thus, we have reservations for the effectiveness and use of SF for improving word memory.