

Introduction

Perceptual information can have a strong influence on judgments of learning (JOLs; Rhodes & Castel, 2008). The presented characteristics of a word often influence perception about how easy or difficult it would be to remember the word, but have no influence on actual recall. Rhodes and Castel demonstrated that participants consistently perceived large font words as easier to remember than words presented in smaller font even when they were explicitly told to ignore the font size.

Another typographical characteristic often used to increase perceptual influence is font style. Wehr and Wippich (2004) demonstrated that the use of distinctive typography, such as the use of italicized or emboldened words, could influence participants' perceptions about how easily a word can be remembered.

Previous studies have often illustrated the influence these perceived characteristics have on judgments of learning and we sought to compare the strengths of both font size and font styles in this study.

Hypotheses

- We expect JOLs will be influenced by font size: Large > Small
- We expect JOLs to be influenced by font style: Bold > Italic > Regular
- We do not expect recall to be influenced by font size or style

Method

Participants

- 53 younger adults (M age = 22.73, SD = 4.75), 67% female
- 45 older adults (M age = 71.14, SD = 6.27), 50% female

Design

- 2 (Age: Younger Adults, Older Adults) x 2 (Trial: 1, 2) x 2 (Font Size: 18pt, 48pt) x 3 (Font Style: Regular, Italic, Bold) design

Materials

- 60 unrelated word pairs (e.g., elephant – ship)
- Each word pair presented in the same font size and style

Small (18 pt font)

Large (48 pt font)

Regular: elephant - ship

turtle - cup

Italic: *elephant - ship*

turtle - cup

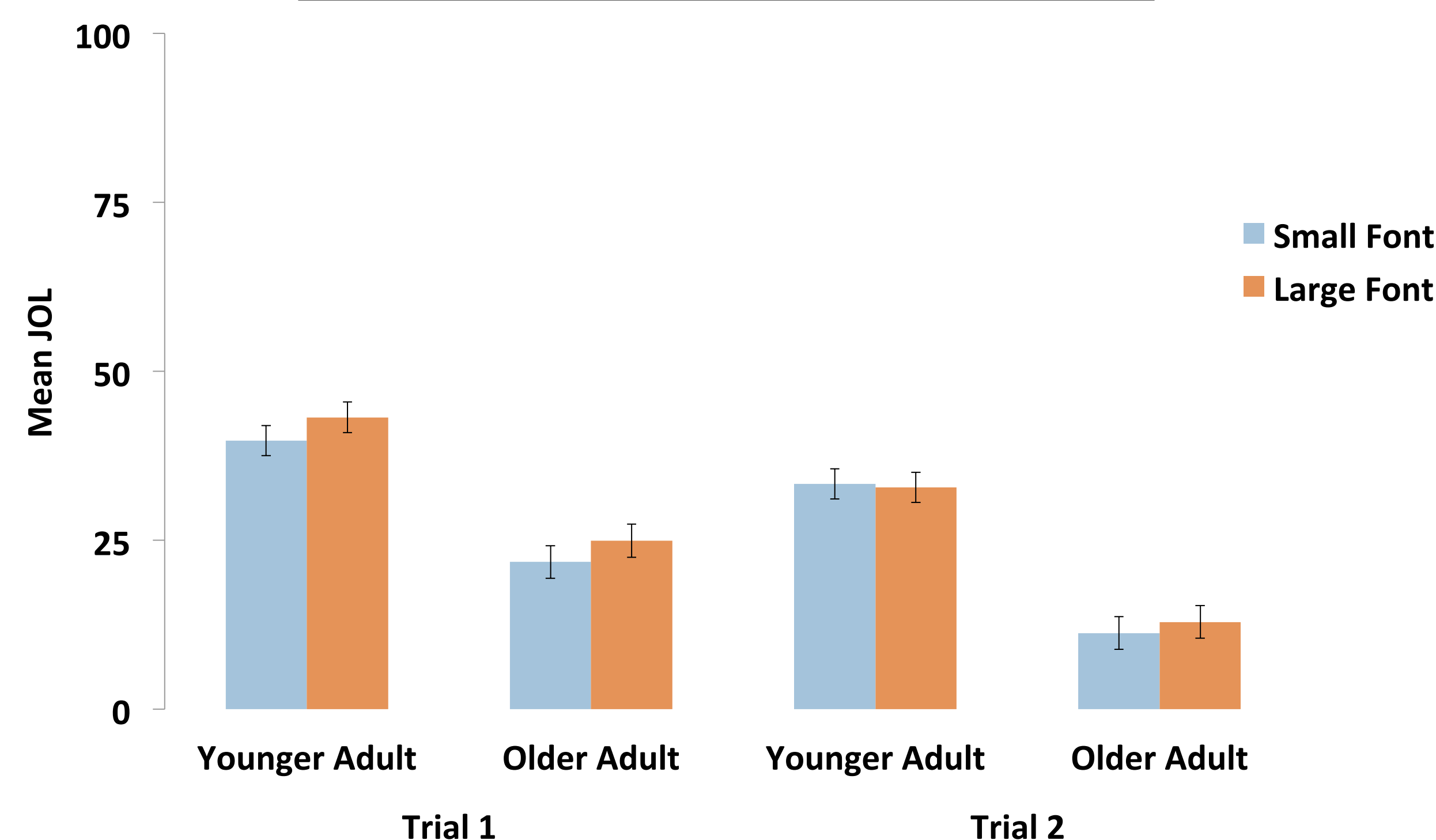
Bold: **elephant - ship**

turtle - cup

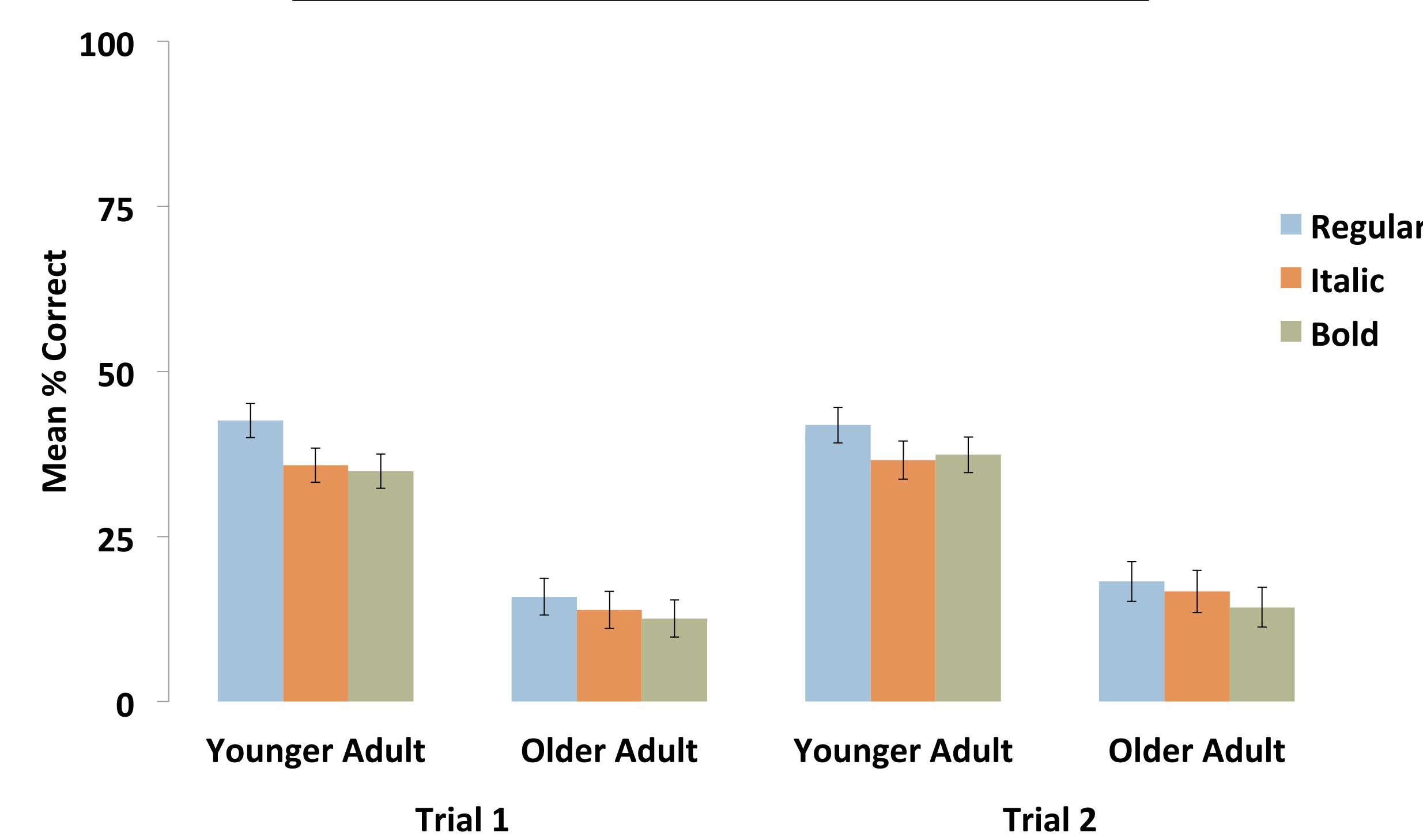
Procedure

- Study Phase with JOL → Recall Phase

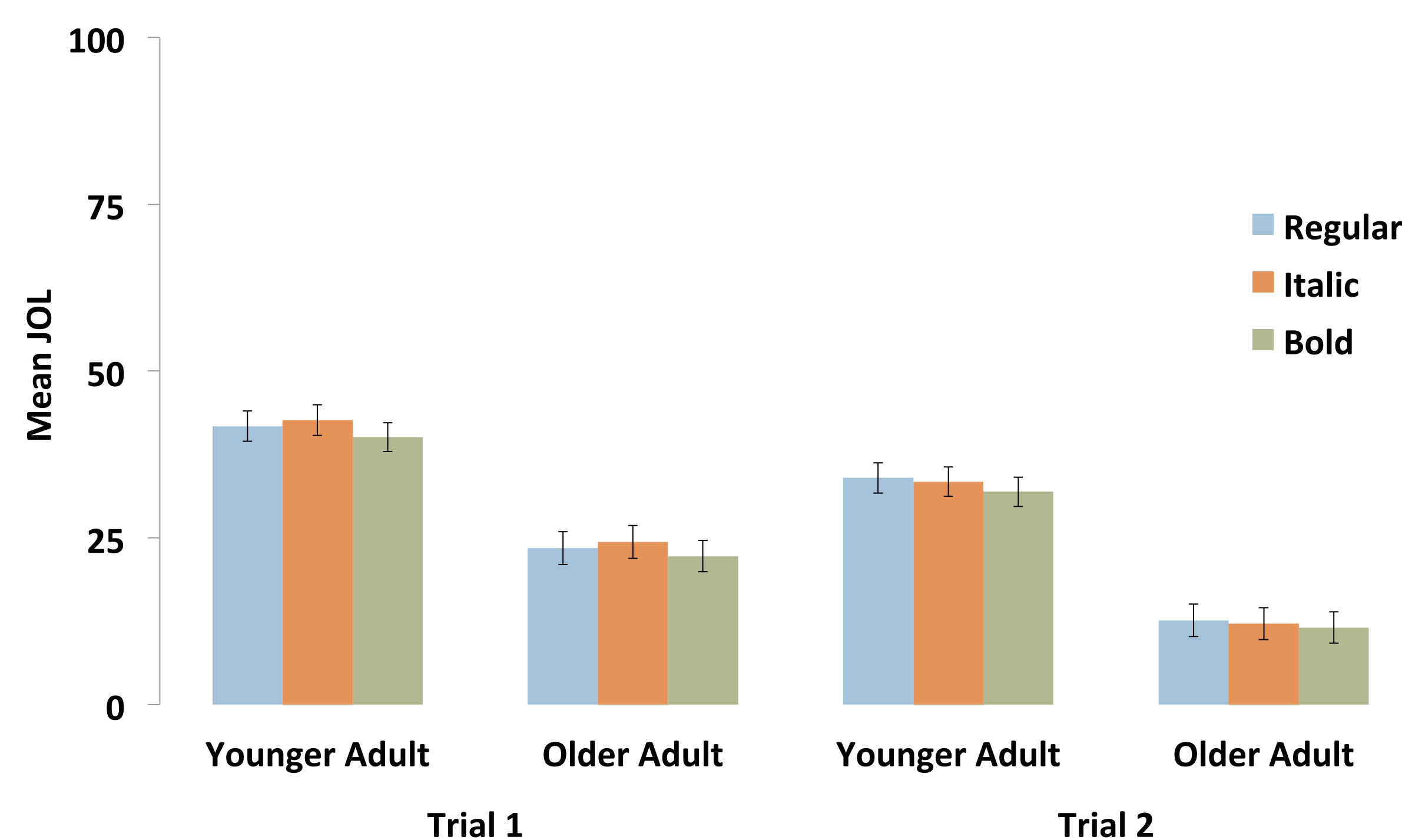
JOLs as a Function of Font Size



Recall as a Function of Font Style



JOLs as a Function of Font Style



Discussion

- Consistent with our first hypothesis: younger adult and older adult participants rated large font text as more memorable than small font words
- Analysis of data revealed that participants in both age groups predicted that regular font style would help them remember the words more than italicized and emboldened font styles.
- Participants in both age groups also rated italic text as easier to remember than bold style text.
- Disfluency – items perceived as difficult result in deeper cognitive processing (Hernandez & Preston, 2013) – may have had an increasing impact on both participants' JOLs as well as their recall.

References

- Hernandez, I., & Preston, J. L. (2013). Disfluency disrupts the confirmation bias. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49, 178-182. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2012.08.010
- Rhodes, M. G., & Castel, A. D. (2008). Memory predictions are influenced by perceptual information: Evidence for metacognitive illusions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 137, 615-625. doi: 10.1037/a0013684
- Wehr, T., & Wippich, W. (2004). Typography and color: Effects of salience and fluency on conscious recollective experience. *Psychological Research*, 69, 138-146. doi: 10.1007/s00426-003-0162-5

Acknowledgments

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