

Spritz: The Fast-Reading App.

A research report by Pharia Le

I. Summary:

Spritz Technology, Inc is a Boston-based company founded in 2012 by entrepreneurs Maik Mauer, Jamie Locke, and Frank Waldman with the mission to “change the way people engage with content in the digital age.” Through the downloadable application Spritz, users can become more time efficient when reading content on their smart watches, mobile phones, computers, and more. The company has tested over 1 million people with their technology and now it is available directly on their website as well as on Apple and Android devices. This software means more words read per minute, and language read faster. It is the idea of “reading reimagined” in which text streaming technology can be integrated into our modern communication.



II. Description:

By streaming content one word at a time, a technology called RSVP (Rapid Serial Visual Presentation), and also aligning the words at the ORP (Optimal Recognition Point), Spritz allows for a more focused and efficient reading experience.

On the computer, Spritz is downloadable for free on their website, wherein which the application “Spritzlet” becomes stored as a bookmark. The application can then be used by a press of a button on a desired webpage. This action prompts a small and movable box to appear and the application begins to read through a highlighted portion or the entire page (fig. 1). Reading speeds may be adjusted in increments of 50 words by the discretion of the user. However, on the mobile IOS platform, users must pay cash in

order to increase their reading speed. Likewise, for mobile use, content must be downloaded to the application via iCloud, Dropbox, Google Drive, and other streams.

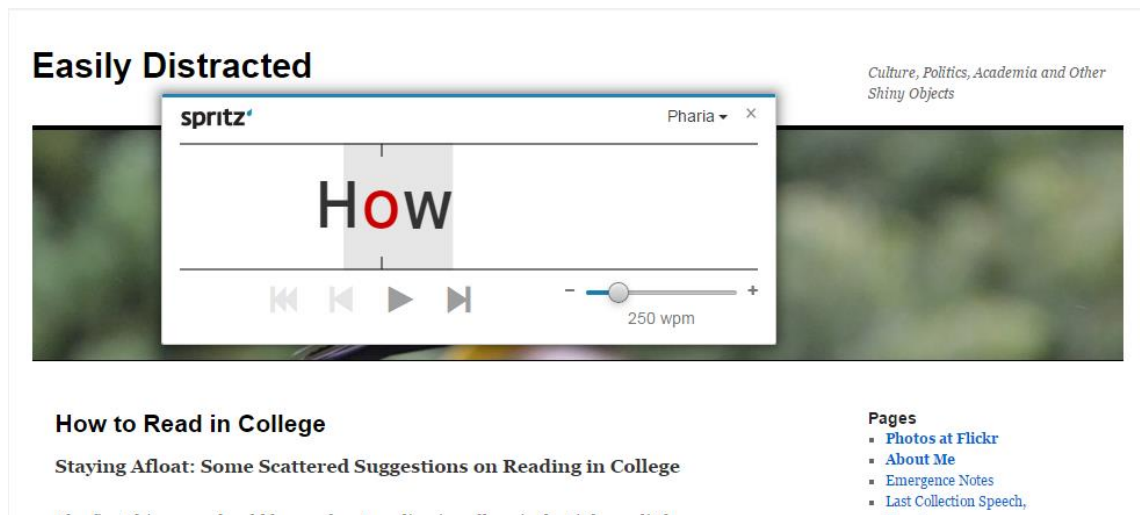
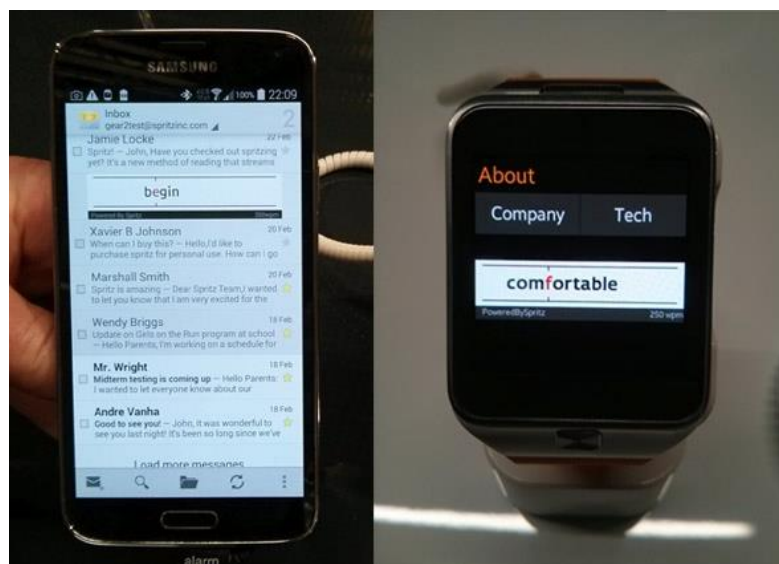


FIGURE 1: COMPUTER APPLICATION

Also, Spritz is applicable across two separate devices. As seen below, content displayed by a mobile phone may be simultaneously read from a smart watch. This allows for text messages and notes to be read quickly whenever needed.



III. Research Context:

Spritz is an app that combines reading methodology with technological innovation in order to improve upon communication effectiveness. The app's ideal usage is for reading content that does not necessarily need to be contemplated or deeply-absorbed for later use. For example, reading text messages, notes, news, or even romance novels would work, because they are all material that contains temporal importance. However, material such as Shakespeare would not apply, because its complexities and language would not be appreciated. Yet, Spritz may still be relevant in academia, because of its TV or flashcard-like aspect. Students can quickly "spritz" through their studying material multiple times or refresh themselves by rereading a novel within hours. The technology is still in its infancy and may later prove to connect speed-reading with deep-reading. For the future, the Spritz technology may be applied towards image integration of pictures, map, videos and more.

IV. Technical Analysis:

Spritz technology emerges from the basic understanding of traditional reading involving reading words sequentially word by word through movements of the eye. However, each word has an "Optimal Recognition Point" or ORP, where the eye must locate in order to process its meaning. After this process called "saccade," the words will be continually processed for meaning and context until a punctuation is reached and coherent thought can be formed.

Spritzing allows for material to be read faster because it decreases the amount of time needed to process a word. Instead of a reader's eyes moving along a sentence, words are flashed before them with the ORP of each word in the exact location as before. This eliminates the need to "saccade," because each word is replaced through technology known as RSVP (Rapid Serial Visual Presentation), where in which each word is flashed and replaced by another word with the position of the new ORP the same as the previous. This saves a significant amount of time because 80% of the reading time is used through the process of saccade. This idea is demonstrated in the figures of following page.

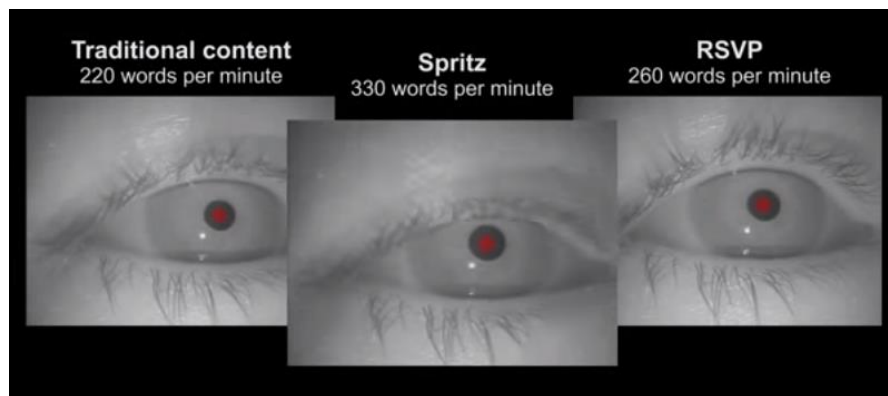


Figure 1. RSVP alignment of words



Figure 2. Spritz alignment of words

TRADITIONAL READING VS. SPRITZ



V. Evaluation of Opportunities/Limitations for the Transliteracies Topic:

Although still limited in the fact that it not an app for close reading, Spritz may prove to be an app that is relevant in our current and future reading practices. It is a product of the current generation because individuals are already familiar with words or media that is fast paced and flashy. Larger content may not necessarily need to be replaced by short summaries.

Being a society that is shifting away from long readings, an app that allows for the reader to consume information in less time may mean that quantity of information may be preserved. This means that the technology used in Spritz may be applied in many different forms in the future.

VI. Resources for Further Study:

Spritz Technology. "Spritz Introduction." *YouTube*. YouTube, 21 Oct. 2014. Web. 13 June 2015.

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xxyDVBGHL8>>.

In this video, Spritz offers a visual introduction to what platforms run the application Spritz and how it may be used: The ability to quickly read information on smart watches, phones, and on the computer and Web in general.

Thibodeau, Amy. "Speed-reading? Slow down a Little ... and Leave Time for Laughter and Tears." *The Guardian*. The Guardian, 4 Apr. 2014. Web. 13 June 2015.

<<http://www.theguardian.com/media/mind-your-language/2014/apr/04/mind-your-language-slow-reading>>.

In this article, Thibodeau argues against the notion of speed-reading because it does not allow time to think and connect to language.