STORYTELLING IN COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

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Abstract
Analogies, examples, narratives, case studies and stories are common tools used in teaching. When teaching computer programming, the value of using these tools is amplified due to the abstract nature of the discipline. Analogies such as eating Smarties™ out of a packet can be used to illustrate the concept of loops, and the example of transferring water from one glass to another glass already filled with water can be used to illustrate the concept of swapping the value of two variables.

This poster aims to identify and collect the different “stories” used by instructors when teaching computer programming. In this poster, the term “stories” refers to analogies, narratives, example, cases studies, graphical illustrations, and any other “non-standard” form of supporting a theoretical concept.

This poster will present some stories used in the teaching of computer programming, and by means of a questionnaire, ask participants to identify:

1. A “story” that they use to support their teaching;
2. The concept / theory they are trying to explain or illustrate by means of the “story”; and
3. How effective they think their “story” is in explaining the concept / theory to the students.

The results obtained from this questionnaire are expected to contribute in a variety of ways towards further research and support in the area of teaching computer programming, some of which are:

- Provide an insight into the common trends regarding use of “stories” in teaching computer programming;
- Identify the value gained from using “stories” in teaching computer programming;
- Enable the collation of common “stories” used, which can be shared amongst computer programming instructors;
- Provide a background for further research to identify which “story” type works more effectively for different groups of students, for example, international students, ESL students, students of each gender type, students with different learning styles etc.

Keywords
Storytelling, analogies, narratives, example, cases studies, graphical illustrations, computer, programming

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