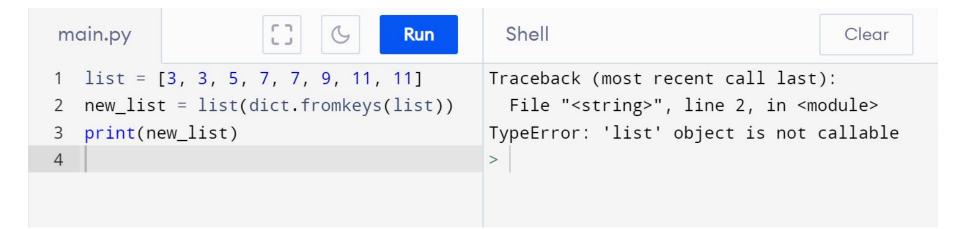


Automatically Enhancing Error Messages

Christoph Treude, The University of Melbourne



MAXIMS FOR MALFEASANT DESIGNERS, Or

HOW TO DESIGN LANGUAGES TO MAKE

PROGRAMMING AS DIFFICULT AS POSSIBLE

Richard L. Wexelblat Bell Laboratories Holmdel, NJ 07733

If men could learn from history, what lessons it might teach us! But passion and party blind our eyes and the light which experience gives is a lantern on the stern which shines only on the waves behind us. -Coleridge

KEYWORDS: Programming Language Design Programming Language Structure Programming Languages

ABSTRACT

Communication with the computer is by artificial languages: programming languages and command languages, as well as ad hoc languages of messages. While many such languages are sufficiently rich to permit proper expression of what must be said, some are so limited or inconsistent that a user must go to needless effort in learning the language and using it to communicate successfully with the computer.

As part of the final exam of a course on the design of computer languages for human use, students were asked to suggest what "... the language designer can do to make the programming process as difficult as possible." process and increase the chances of making errors and writing poor programs. The answers tended to stress the particular topics and areas covered in the course, but they represent a reasonable cross-section of the things which the language designer would do well to avoid. Many student responses were duplicates or slight variations on a common theme. After merginging similar or closely related responses, there were 29 items, maxims for malfeasant designers. For convenience, I have grouped them into five categories:

•Program writing and formatting •Program and control structures

Maxims for malfeasant designers, or how to design languages to make programming as difficult as possible

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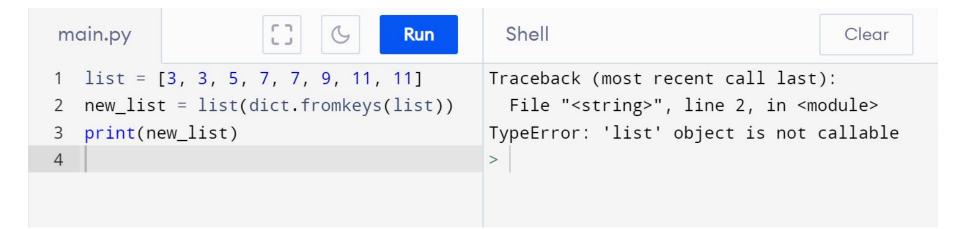
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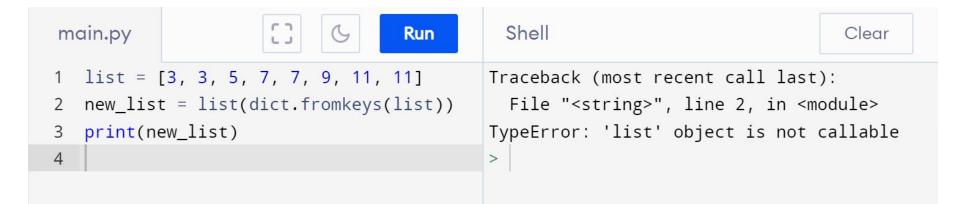
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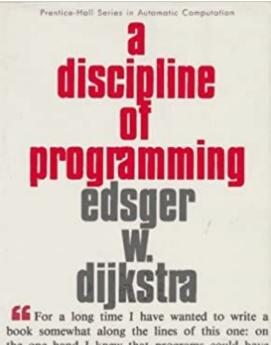
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Use cryptic diagnostics

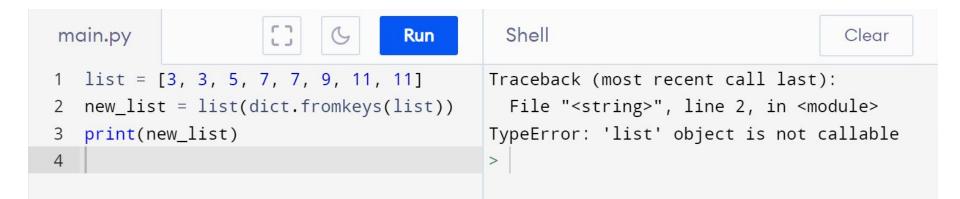
To maximize difficulty for the user, it is important that the diagnostic messages reflect what the program did, rather than what the user did.



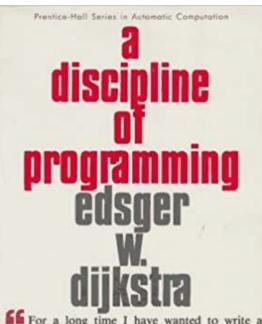




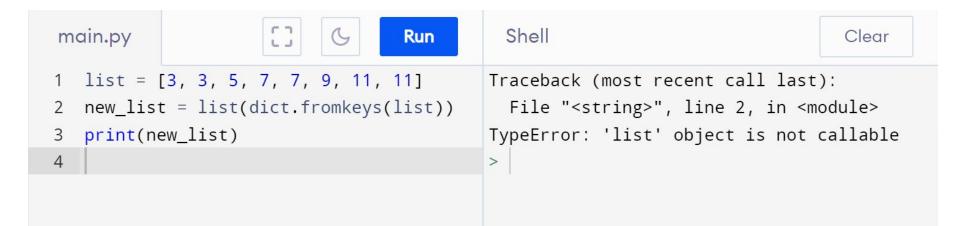
book somewhat along thile I have wanted to write a book somewhat along the lines of this one: on the one hand I knew that programs could have a compelling and deep logical beauty, on the other hand I was forced to admit that most programs are presented in a way fit for mechanical execution but, even if of any beauty at all, totally unfit for human appreciation.







For a long time I have wanted to write a book somewhat along the lines of this one: on the one hand I knew that programs could have a compelling and deep logical beauty, on the other hand I was forced to admit that most programs are presented in a way fit for mechanical execution but, even if of any beauty at all, totally unfit for human appreciation.

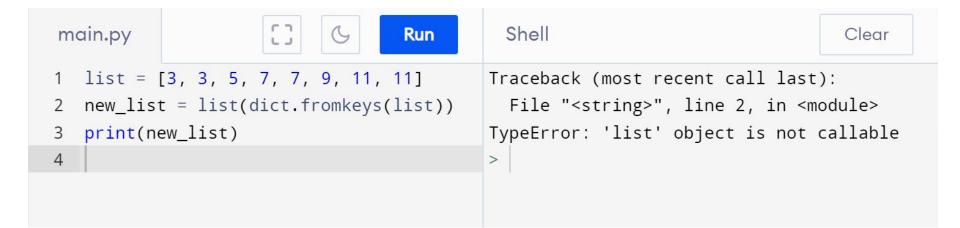


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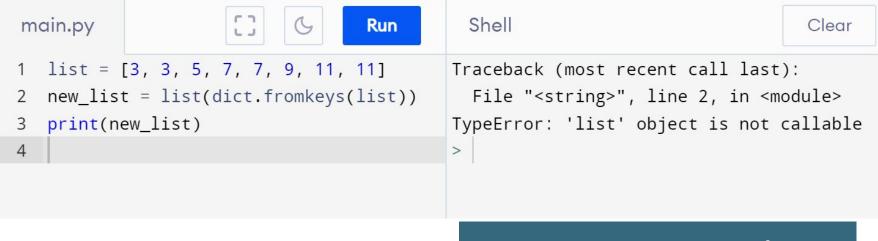
It should work fine. Don't use tuple, list or other special names as a variable name. It's probably what's causing your problem.

```
>>> l = [4,5,6]
>>> tuple(l)
(4, 5, 6)
>>> tuple = 'whoops' # Don't do this
>>> tuple(l)
TypeError: 'tuple' object is not callable
```



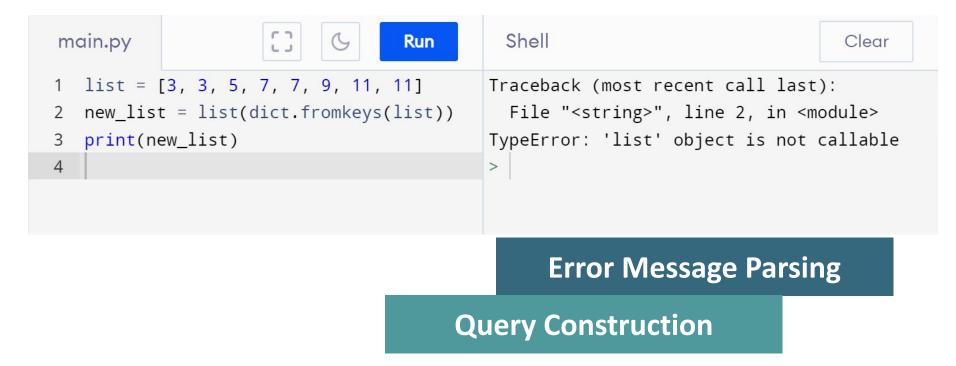




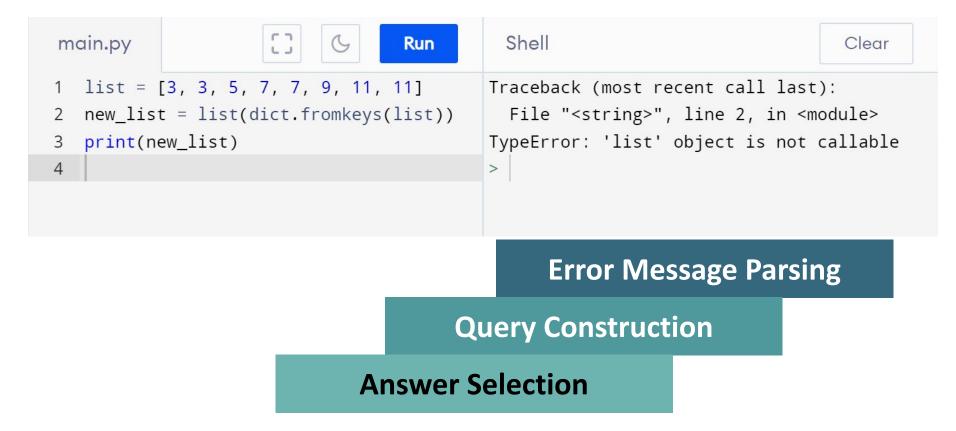


Error Message Parsing

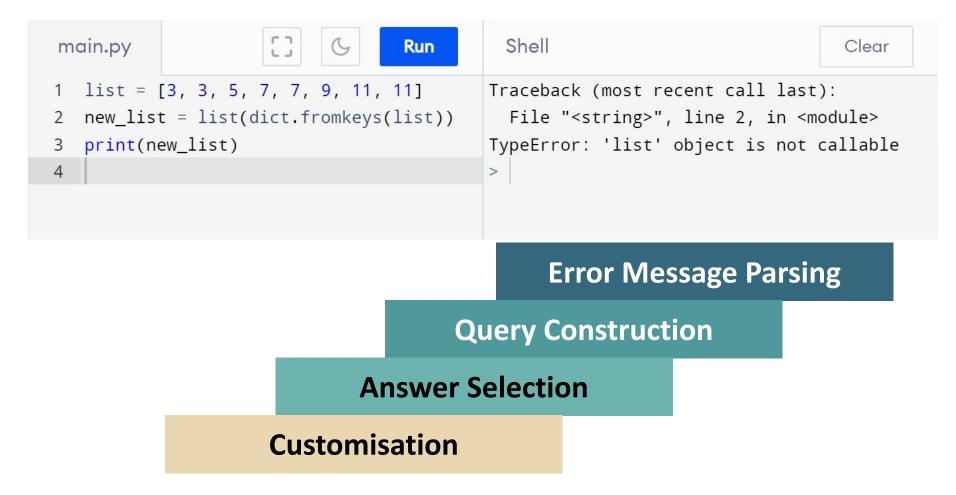




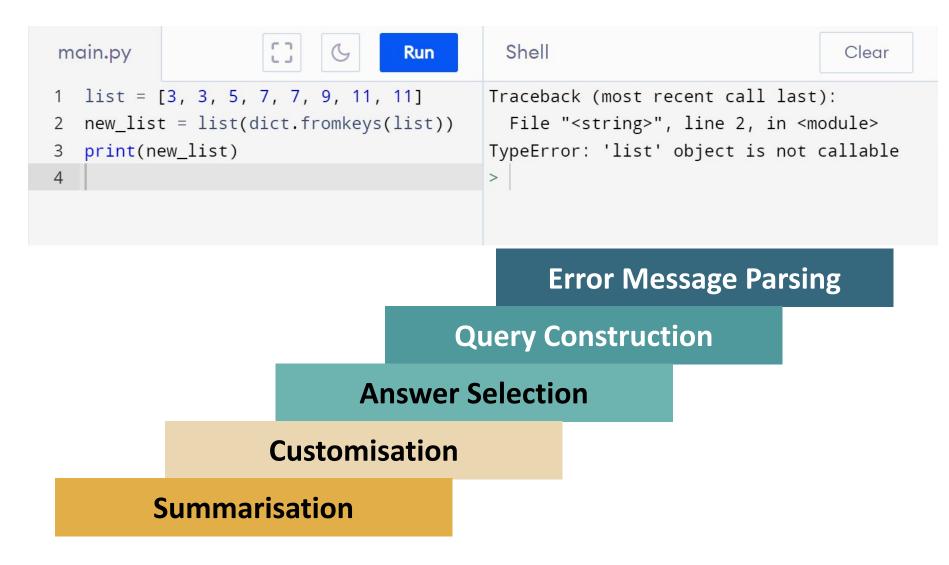




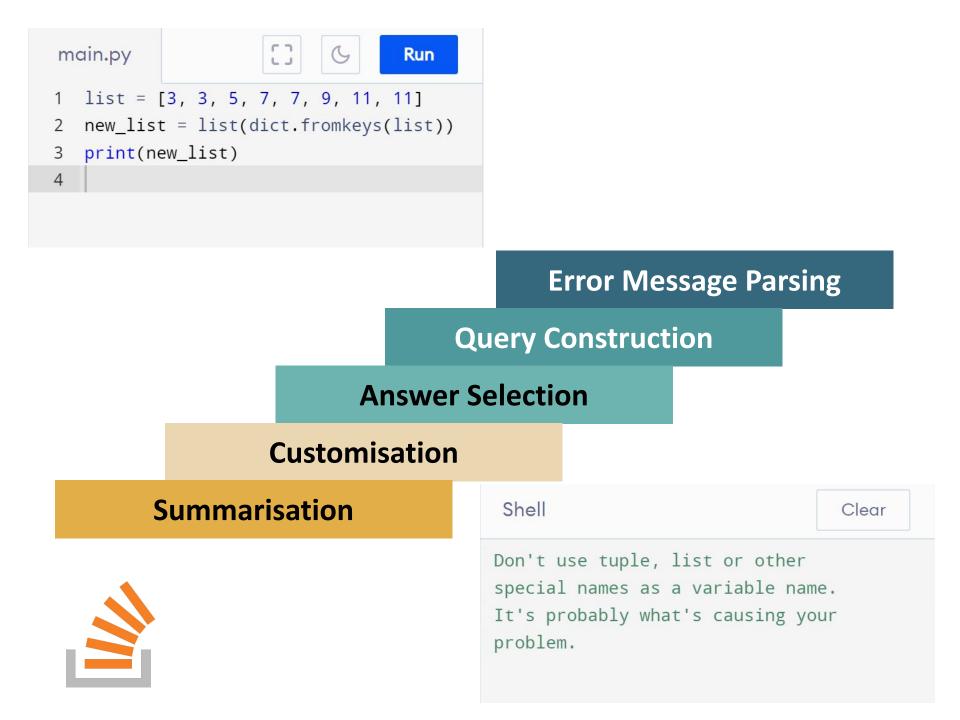


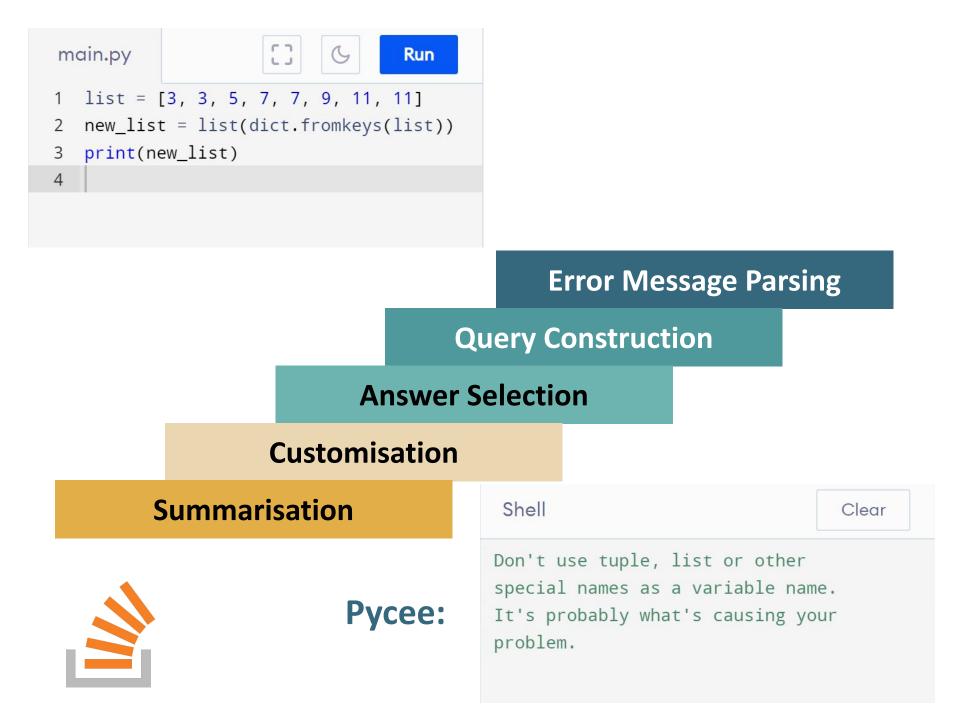












How do programmers perceive Pycee?



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- 3: <u>List Less Than Ten</u> **J J**
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- 5: List Overlap JJ
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- 7: List Comprehensions J J
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- 9: <u>Guessing Game One</u> **J J**
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- 11: <u>Check Primality Functions</u> J J J
- 12: <u>List Ends</u> J
- 13: <u>Fibonacci</u> **J** J
- 14: List Remove Duplicates 🌶 🌶
- 15: <u>Reverse Word Order</u> J J J
- 16: <u>Password Generator</u> **JJJ**J
- 17: <u>Decode A Web Page</u> **J J J J**
- 18: <u>Cows And Bulls</u>
- 19: <u>Decode A Web Page Two</u> **J J J J**
- 20: <u>Element Search</u> **J**
- 21: Write To A File J
- 22: <u>Read From File</u> **J**

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Built-in Exceptions

- Exception context
- Inheriting from built-in exceptions
- Base classes
- Concrete exceptions
 - OS exceptions
- Warnings
- Exception hierarchy

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Built-in Exceptions

In Python, all exceptions must be instances of a class that derives from BaseException. In a try statement with an except clause that mentions a particular class, that clause also handles any exception classes derived from that class (but not exception classes from which *it* is derived). Two exception classes that are not related via subclassing are never equivalent, even if they have the same name.

The built-in exceptions listed below can be generated by the interpreter or built-in functions. Except where mentioned, they have an "associated value" indicating the detailed cause of the error. This may be a string or a tuple of several items of information (e.g., an error code and a string explaining the code). The associated value is usually passed as arguments to the exception class's constructor.

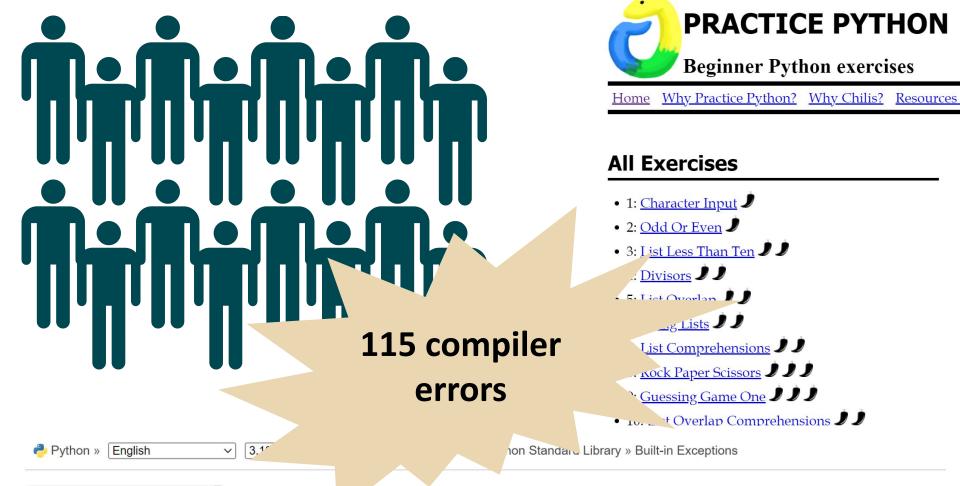


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Built-in Exceptions

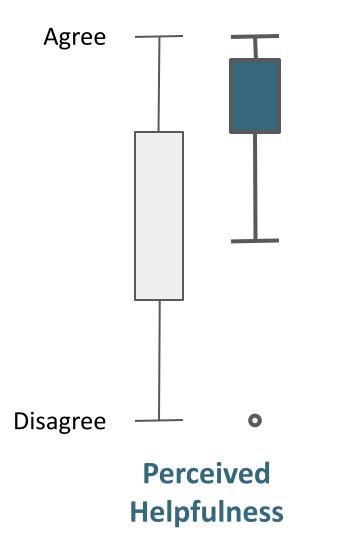
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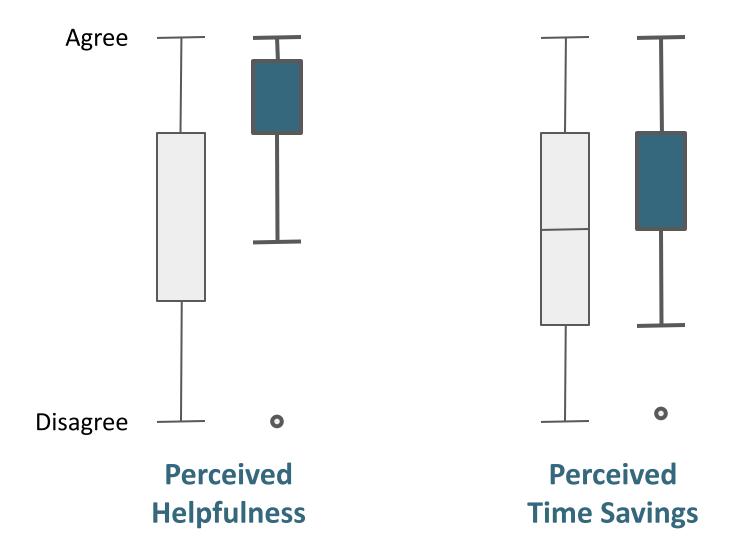
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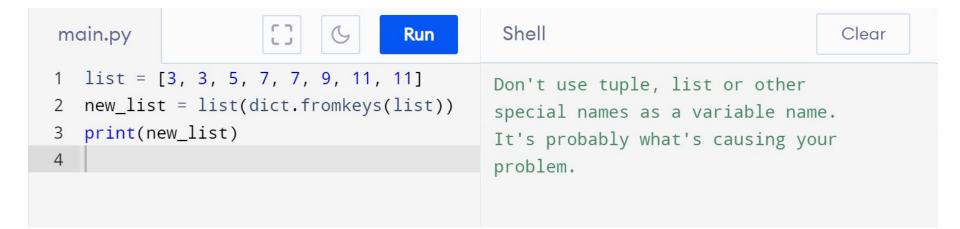
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main.py	CC Run	Shell	Clear
<pre>1 list = [3, 3, 5, 7, 7, 9, 11, 11] 2 new_list = list(dict.fromkeys(list)) 3 print(new_list)</pre>		Don't use tuple, list or other special names as a variable name. It's probably what's causing your	
4		problem.	



Crowdsource your error messages

and we'll develop tools to automate the integration