

CMSI 370-01
INTERACTION DESIGN
Fall 2013

Assignment I 105 Feedback

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1a — Your paper shows a good understanding of how interaction design relates to mental models, and explores this in relation to metaphors in an engaging manner. (+)

1b — You largely don't cover usability metrics in your paper; error rate is mentioned but only because errors are also part of the principles that you mention. This speaks to one large gap in your otherwise comprehensive literature review, which is the use of *empirical studies* relating to metaphor. There are publications out there that have compared interfaces with different degrees of metaphor and measure usability based on those different degrees. Had you spotted these, the usability metrics would have slid right in.

Now, as written, admittedly the metrics wouldn't fit very well. One only "misses" them after one realizes the lack of references to empirical work. Plus, the coverage of errors is pretty decent, so I am OK with not letting this gap drag down the proficiency too much. (|)

1c — You provide nice coverage of a good selection of principles and theories, tying them to metaphor quite well—so much so that when you were done, I felt that it ended abruptly! I think this part could have benefited from more examples, just to make the discussion more concrete. As written, it is mostly understandable only to someone who has prior knowledge of these concepts. Figures and illustrations will make the material more accessible. (|)

2a — I interpret your approach here primarily as a literature review with a touch of analysis and synthesis from class material, because that review is indeed quite thorough and well-curated. Overall, a perfectly valid approach to a paper like this, and also well-executed with the small caveat that it seemed to end rather abruptly (but in a good way). (+)

2b — You make a good argument for your self-termed "oncoming death of metaphor." The argument is well-founded with material from both the literature and from class. What isn't totally clear though is whether you are arguing for the *total* death of metaphor, or just the death of either skeuomorphism or incorrectly-applied metaphor. There are hints that what is really off is "the wrong metaphor" rather than metaphor as a whole. If one used "the right metaphor" consistently, would its death be stalled then? (|)

4d — Your literature review in terms of historical and theoretical sources is very well done. As mentioned, the one noticeable gap is for references on empirical studies. I get the feeling that this is only missing because you did not think to look for it; as a package, your paper is cohesive and well-written, leading to the positive criticism that as a result, it seems to end too soon. (+)

4e — Your commit count and messages are appropriate for work of this scale, and they are spread out decently over the month or so for which this assignment was "active." Well done! (+)

4f — Paper submitted on time, but responses to questions from Dr. Hellige's talk were not submitted. (/)

* I think that a "combo presentation" joining forces with Haley's paper will work well for the Undergraduate Research Symposium, if you are interested in that. Talk to me if you are.