

Assignment 4: Starting the pilot study

Chris Potts, Ling 390a: Controlling the Discourse, Fall 2007

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Background This assignment officially begins your pilot study. This study is, in many ways, your central piece of empirical investigation for the course, and it is the main component in the final paper. It's also a first step towards a contribution to the field of pragmatics and discourse processing.

Tasks My goal is to get you off on the right foot. Thus, for this assignment, you should turn in the following things:

- (1) A statement of your current working hypothesis (with independent and dependent variables identified)
- (2) A copy of the questionnaire (or questionnaires), exactly as subjects see it/them, but with the test conditions (nonfillers) marked.
- (3) Five completed questionnaires (that is, the results of running five subjects)

You don't need to have analyzed the data from your five subjects, but it would be useful to point out any trends that you think might be arising in the data.

Note You will not be graded on the current level of success of your questionnaire, but rather on how thoughtful and careful you were in designing it. This is just to say: don't frantically change your hypothesis just because your first five subjects aren't doing what you expect. (November 28 and 30 will be devoted to trying to understand what's going on and adapting.)