

Extra credit, and making up for missed work

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

Sep 26

Papers

There are no extra credit opportunities for the papers. You just have to do them.

Homeworks

There will be a total of five homeworks. I am offering two ways in which to make up for low grades (including 0s) on homeworks:

- (1) Participate in an experiment for the Linguistics department. (See the syllabus for details.)
- (2) Attend the October 4 Freeman Lecture, Bartlett 65, 4:00 pm, and answer one of three questions about it. I'll hand the questions out at the lecture.

Quizzes

There will be a total of six quizzes. You can make up for two of them by finding a relevant post on Language Log and writing a short paragraph about it. (Or, if you read a book or article that is relevant to this class,¹ you can write a paragraph about that instead.)

Extra credit

I am interested in the pragmatics of usability (of computers, of electronics, of websites, of building floorplans, etc.). I think linguists could contribute greatly to making things easier to interact with.

So, you can get one quiz's worth of extra credit for bringing in an example of terrible usability failures: computer menus that ask pragmatically confusing questions, road signs with dangerous ambiguities, and other things like that. You can do this twice for extra credit. (You're likely to have a chance to write about these examples, so it's good to be on the lookout for them anyway.)

¹For example, *Don't Think of an Elephant* (George Lakoff), *Words that Work* (Frank Luntz), *Talking Right* (Geoff Nunberg), or *Speaking of Crime* (Lawrence Solan and Peter Tiersma).