

CS 321 Human-Computer Interaction

Discussion Questions for Wednesday

Part of this experience is learning about concepts in HCI. Another Part of this experience is learning how to work in a group and develop a group process.

The Group Process:

1. For each small group discussion the group must choose a group leader, a group recorder/reporter, and a rat hole watcher.
2. These positions must change for each discussion so that everyone will do each of these tasks at least once.
3. The recorder/reporter is responsible for taking notes and reporting on the group's ideas when the discussion period is over.
4. The group leader is responsible for making sure everyone has an opportunity to voice an opinion and to manage the group's discussion time so that each question is discussed.
5. The rat hole watcher makes sure the conversation stays on topic. This person has the power to stop the conversation and get it back on track.

Grading:

5 points will be awarded for being part of the discussion group. An extra point will be given to each of the group roles.

Important: The group reporter is responsible for handing in the discussion notes, a list of the group members present that indicates who was the reporter, who was the leader, and who was the rat hole watcher.

1. How are metaphors used to help create good interfaces?
2. Note the definition of “metaphor” below. Discuss the “systematicity” of the metaphor examples from your reading questions. Choose the best or most unique one to present to the class and describe its systematicity.
3. Discuss the objects (an artifact) that you chose as being either poorly designed or well designed using the terms: affordances, constraints, visibility, and feedback.
 - a. Come to an agreement on the definitions of the terms affordance, constraint, visibility, and feedback.
 - b. Choose two of the objects you think best demonstrate these terms. The person who brought the example to class will present it to the class.

Metaphor from:

Metaphors We Live By, Lakoff & Johnson

"The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (page 5). By describing concept A in terms of concept B, the way we think about the concept A becomes structured by the way we think about concept B. for example, "the fact that we conceptualize arguments in terms of battle systematically influences the shape arguments take and the way we talk about what we do in arguing." (page 7) The systematicity highlights those aspects of concept A we are relating, while hiding unrelated aspects.

An example of a metaphor and an explanation (partial) of its systematicity:

Metaphor: the Internet as a "highway" for information

Systematicity:

Highlights

Data *travels* on wires from one place to another.
ISPs provide *on ramps* to access the Internet.
Internet *traffic* is heavy.
Data *collisions* occur on the Internet.

Hides

Modems and servers determine download speed.
Having only one ISP limits you to one on ramp.
Recovering from data collisions or heavy traffic requires retransmission.