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I.   Introduction

In English III B, a required course for all third-year students, you will learn how to prepare and conduct a poster session in English. We hope you will enjoy the activities, improve your communication skills, and learn academic English by engaging in different tasks.

In class, most activities will be done in groups. There are two purposes for group work; first, you will learn to discuss something with your group members, to communicate with them, and sometimes to negotiate in sharing preparation tasks. These experiences might not always be easy and fun, but they will be very beneficial in the future. Second, you can improve your English by communicating with other members. If you think you are more proficient than other members in English, try to take the initiative in group work. You should also try to explain clearly or paraphrase what you are trying to say. You will learn by teaching others. If you are not so confident in English, ask questions of your group mates. In turn, you can take the leadership in the content. You may be able to contribute to the group by designing a poster.

As of September 2022, we hope that the poster sessions will be conducted in person or in a hybrid way. Your instructor will update you.

The more effort you put into this activity, the more you will learn. Please consider that this is a good opportunity for you to learn not only English but also how to relate to and work with your classmates. Good luck to you all!

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II. Poster Session Basics

1. What is a poster session?

A poster session is a type of presentation. You will summarize your study on a poster and present it to a small audience. As a novice scholar in your field, you will probably first have a chance to do a poster session rather than other types of presentations.

2. How is it different from a speech presentation?

You will find different types of presentations when you attend a conference as a student or on business.

    a. poster session
    b. speech/oral presentation
    c. workshop
    d. symposium/panel discussion

How is a poster session different from other types of presentations?
    Preparation
        Abstract
        Poster
        Speech script (if necessary)
    Audience
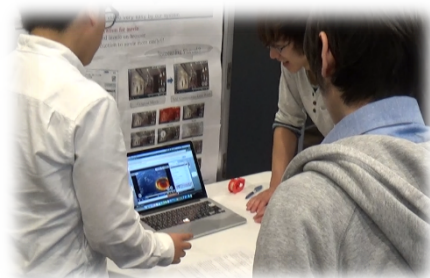   Small. Usually one, two, or a few.
    Communication
        Interactive
        More extensive Q&A

3. What happens at a poster session?

You will put up a poster on a board (usually specified) and stand by the poster. When people approach, you will explain about your study on the poster. You can use supplementary tools such as laptop PCs, handouts, and so forth.

Logistics on the Poster Session Day:

In-Person	Online (Zoom)
・The poster session will be done in the 3rd and 4th periods of the poster session day. All the classes of the same department participate. ・The poster session place will be announced by the instructor in advance. ・Put up your posters at lunch time, even if your class is in the 4th period. ・If your class is in the 3rd period, help organize the panels. ・If your class is in the 4th period, put the tables and chairs back after the poster session.	・Zoom links will be provided in advance. ・Make sure your Zoom has been updated. ・Read the book of abstracts before the poster session, and prepare to ask / answer questions. ・If pre-recorded videos are available, watch them. ・Follow the instructions provided by the instructors.

4. Preparation Schedule

The schedule may change, depending on the department and the pandemic situation.

Steps	Tasks	Important Dates (Deadlines)*
1	**Forming groups**: **A group of 3** is highly recommended.	
2	**Deciding on a topic and an outline**: Group members discuss possible topics and then choose one; they next prepare an outline.	
3	**Submitting a research plan**: 1) purpose of the study, 2) method, and 3) (predicted) results	
4	**Writing an abstract** – individual writing: everyone must write an abstract.	
5	**Submitting a group abstract** – Compare and contrast group members' abstracts. Decide on the best abstract or combine members' abstracts into one abstract and submit it.	*
6	**Conducting research and designing a poster**	
7	**Completing and submitting a digital poster file** to the instructor	*
8	**Rehearsal**	
9	**Poster session**	*
10	**Writing a paper /critique**– individual writing	
11	Reflection and Evaluation	

III. Planning and Conducting Research

1. Brainstorming and Choosing a Topic

Choose **a topic related to your academic interests.** Discuss in a group to find out what the common interests of the members are. Make sure to focus the topic into **a good title.** The title is very important: as in a conference, <u>the audience will browse titles and choose which poster session(s) to attend</u>. The title should not be too general; it should be **interesting and well-focused**.

In general, there are two types of presentations:

  Type A: an experimental study

    You plan and conduct some kind of experiment, survey, and/or interview, and report its results. This study will give you <u>first-hand data.</u>

    <Examples>

      -Predictive Model of Medical Costs with Time Series Analysis

      -Simulation of an Algorithm on Sports Game Schedules

      - Task Scheduling for Shorter Computer Processing

    Note: When you are reporting on a study from your seminar or other classes, obtain permission from the professor(s) to use the data for the poster session.

  Type B: a review study

    You search some data and/or studies, read them carefully, and review them with your own analysis. This study will give you <u>second-hand data</u>.

    <Examples>

      -Energy Management Systems to Make Our Earth Healthy

      -Examining Winning Methods in Stone-taking Games

      -Development of CG Techniques in Science Fiction Movies

    Note: Your group should have a clear conclusion or an opinion based upon the research. You may not just copy-paste information from the Internet.

★<u>You should capitalize the first word plus all the words except for articles and prepositions</u>.

   <Exercise: Correct the following title.>

      a statistical analysis of hitting streaks in baseball

★What is the title of your presentation? Present it in class, and get feedback from classmates.

  (   )

2. Literature Survey

You should start by looking for previous studies. You can search the academic journals of your area, or ask your seminar professor(s) or librarian how to find out if there have been studies already done.

You should refer to the previous studies to show that your study is necessary and important in the field.

3. Outlining/Planning a Study

First, you have to make an outline (a story) of the poster. A poster should include:
    -Title
    -Full names of all the members
    -Affiliation
    -Introduction
    -Body (for example, methods, procedures, results, and so forth)
    -Conclusions
    -References

4. Conducting Research/ Experiment

Your methodology depends on what kind of research you have, such as an introduction of a theory, experiment, survey, or mathematical simulation. In any case, you must show your purpose and goal/conclusion clearly. These are some examples of procedures.

a.   Experimental study
    1) Setting research question(s): what you would like to answer
    2) Planning your experiment: subjects, material, and procedure(s)
    3) Comparison and contrast among groups
    4) Statistics
    5) Result and conclusion

b.   Conducting survey
    1) Planning your survey: subjects, material and procedure
      i.   Survey item selection: important!
     ii.   Data collection
    2) Statistics
    3) Result and conclusion

c. Introduction (and application) of a theory
1) Theoretical review: why it is important and how it works
2) Practical examples
3) Conclusion: future issues

Success of your research is mostly contingent upon its planning. Thus, do it carefully.

Research Plan Memo

IV. Designing and Creating a Poster

1. Designing/Making a Poster

Posters speak for themselves without the presence of their presenters. Therefore, designing is one of the most crucial factors in poster presentations. Readability, intelligibility, and understandability should be considered. For designing posters, desktop publishing (DTP) apps such as Adobe Illustrator, Apple's Pages, and Microsoft Publisher are recommended. For online poster presentations, PowerPoint is recommended.

a. Text
   1) Size: Title > Section name > Main text > Sub text/Caption
   2) Minimize the amount of text
   3) Maximize your text size

b. Sectioning/Zoning
   1) Classification of sections
   2) Coherent layout for understanding
      i. Top to bottom
      ii. Center to peripherals

c. Color
   1) More color doesn't necessarily improve understanding.
   2) Meaningful use of color

d. Images/Figures/Tables
   1) Use visual tools like images, figures, and tables to make your data more understandable
   2) Background images should be chosen wisely to avoid conflicting with overlaid text

2. Printouts

For in-person poster sessions, your A0-size (841 × 1189mm in portrait) poster will be printed using a large-scale color printer at the school office. Before the submission deadline, you will submit your poster data in digital form (pdf file preferred). If you miss the date, you will have to print it out by yourselves. Please be careful!

Recommended Font Sizes

Title	60-72 pts
Heading	36-48 pts
Texts	26-30 pts
References, Captions	12-14 pts

*Note that a conference might have formatting guidelines for posters. If so, follow those guidelines.

For **online poster sessions,** you should create a horizontal (landscape) poster using PowerPoint and convert it to PDF.

Landscape

Portrait
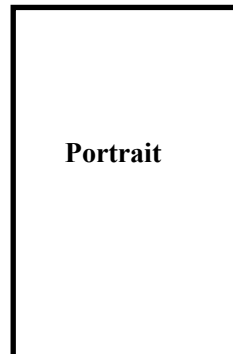
V. Reading and Writing an Abstract

1. What is an abstract*?*

Usually, when one wants to give a presentation at a conference, s/he has to write an abstract and send it to a designated location, for example, the *Call for Papers* (CFP) on the conference website.

What is the meaning of *abstract* here? Take a look at the following definitions.

(1) *abstract* (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* [LDOCE], 6th ed., 2012)
    A short written statement containing only the most important ideas in a speech, article etc.

(2) *abstract* (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* [OALD], 8th ed., 2010)
    A short piece of writing containing the main ideas in a document.

What creates common ground between these is that an <u>abstract is a kind of short written document that includes only important ideas</u>. Then, in the next section, let us first look at the length of the abstract.

2. Length of an abstract

The length of an abstract varies from one field to another. The following is a synopsis of what kind of abstract is expected in each field.

Table 1. The length of the abstract (partially based on 尾鍋 2015:78)

Name of journal, magazine, etc.	Length	Note
Nature	50~150 words	*Summary* instead of *abstract* is used.
JACS	80~200 words	*Journal of the American Chemical Society* (*JACS*, or *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*)
Linguistics in general	350-500 words	It depends on subfields and conferences
General length (尾鍋 2015)	150~200 words	This length may be specified in the field of science in general.
General length (ACPI)	300-350 words	*Academic Conferences and Publishing International*

Practice #1

Take a look at the *IEEE* website where one can find a large array of abstracts in a variety of scientific fields. Then select one subfield (e.g., mathematics) and choose 10 relevant abstracts. After saving them on your computer, you can count the number of the words in each abstract and calculate the average.

3. Structure of an abstract

Here is one sample of an abstract. Each sentence is numbered; text should not be smaller than 12 points. Note that only verbal expressions in the main clauses are specified (in boldface and underlined). Permission for the use of the abstract is provided by the authors.

Active Learning through Poster Session:
Ongoing Development of a Presentation Course

①A crucial skill in the academic sphere **is** the ability to effectively disseminate research results at conference venues. ②Whereas oral presentations **comprise** the primary activity therein, in our faculty poster presentations continue to be seen as indispensable for students. ③To date, however, poster presentations **have received** little attention in curriculum development and research, yet a poster presentation and its preparation offer students myriad opportunities to engage in active learning as they collectively prepare and write proposals (which were submitted and "vetted"), then design and create the poster, craft the script, participate in the poster session, and finally critique their poster presentation. ④***This presentation*** first **covers** the inception of a one-term course on poster presentations for third-year students at a university in Tokyo and then **elaborate** on its ongoing development over its second year of existence, during which several measures were implemented based on feedback from the first year. ⑤As was found in the 2015 results, a post-session survey **revealed** that the 216 students found the course and poster session to be challenging yet interesting and conductive to improvements in their English skills. ⑥A series of *t*-tests (corrected) **indicated** that, compared to the 2015 results, in this second iteration abstract writing and preparation for the poster session had improved, as had proficiency in explaining results. ⑦Students again **preferred** this active learning format to that of their regular classes, perceived the class to be useful in the future, and expressed a sense of accomplishment upon completing the poster session. ⑧In addition to broadening participants' knowledge of a very authentic yet underutilized method of fostering improved presentation skills, academic vocabulary, and area-specific knowledge, ***this presentation*** **is** expected to provide insight into steps undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of this active learning approach to poster session. (292 words)

(*JACET 56th International Convention (2017, Tokyo) Book*, p. 91)

Check point #1: *The distribution of the verbal forms (tense and aspect)*

☞ The present tense forms are underlined as in ① and ②; they show either *general idea* or *background* for the following main idea: *Introduction*.

☞ The present perfective forms, which are enclosed in squares, introduce the current situation of the research as in ③: *Background*.

☞ The most important idea in ④ is shown in the present tense form: *Main idea*.

☞ The main idea ③ is based on the following ⑤ through ⑦, all of which explain the surveys done in the past; therefore, the past tense forms are used there: *Supportive evidence*.

☞ Finally, some implication or prospects are expressed in the present tense form as in ⑧. Depending on the research area, the future form may sometimes be used: *Implication* or *Prospect*.

☞ On the other hand, the progressive form is seldom used.

Check point #2: *The form of the subject for main ideas*

☞ The main idea is expressed by the very specific subject form *this presentation*, italicized here and underlined with a wavy line for clarity. This serves to emphasize the authors' originality and uniqueness.

☞ In the past, the magazine *Nature* encouraged contributors to use *Here we show* when they introduced their specific ideas in the abstract (尾鍋 2015: 76).

Summary

Introduction/Background: Present Tense (general ideas),

                                  Present Perfective (background)

Main idea: Present Tense

Implication/Prospect: Present Tense, (Future Tense)

*What was clearly done in the past: Past Tense

*What is implied for further issues: Present (or Future) Tense

*An infrequent form   Progressive form

Subject: Main ideas can be shown in the form of the first person (e.g., *we, our*) to

                  emphasize the authors' originality and uniqueness.

Practice #2

Choose the best expression to complete each sentence designated as Background, Main idea, etc.

(1) Background/Introduction:

In recent years, ○○ (is attracting / attracts / has attracted) increasing attention from physiology as well as biology… For example, △△ University (release / released / had released) the findings of their investigation into… (□□ et al. 2015).

(2) Main idea:

In this talk, we (present / presented / are presenting) an integrated yet complex structure for…

(3) Implication/Prospect:

These perspectives (serve / are serving / served) to throw light on what remains to be seen concerning…

Practice #3

Among the 10 abstracts you have chosen for Practice #1, choose one abstract and examine the distribution of the verbal tense and aspect forms. Presumably, you may find another structure that is somewhat similar to but slightly different from the above-mentioned abstract. If so, consider why that is the case.

References

"Abstract Guidelines for Papers." *Academic Conferences and Publishing International* (ACPI).

　(https://www.academic-conferences.org/policies/abstract-guidelines-for-papers/)

IEEE Xplore^® Digital Library. (https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/Xplore/home.jsp)

Suggested readings

尾鍋智子 2015『通じる！科学英語論文・ライティングのコツ』大阪大学出版会.

宋宮喜代子・糸川健・野元裕樹 2018『動詞の「時制」がよくわかる英文法談義』大修館書店.

野口ジュディー　他　2014　『Judy 先生の成功する理系英語プレゼンテーション』講談社

4. Writing an Abstract

Now it is time for you to write an abstract of your group presentation.

1. First, write an abstract individually. Even if you are working in a group, it is very important that everyone writes an abstract by himself/herself at first. You may have to submit it to your instructor.

2. Share your abstract with the members in your group. Then write a representative abstract with your group members and submit it to the instructor. The deadline is (　　　　　　　　　　　　　).

3. Check grammar and mechanical errors, and revise if necessary. The abstracts will be compiled as a brochure, which will be distributed before the poster session.

VI. Preparing for a Poster Session

1. Speech draft

-If you are not confident in speaking English, you can write a draft of your explanation (a scenario).

-You can prepare speaker notes (speaker's memo) under each slide of PPT.

-All the group members should practice explaining the entire poster.

-You may use a PC, a tablet, or a cell phone to supplement detailed data and/or to demonstrate the method.

2. Practice presenting

-Practice at least a few times. Ideally, you should NOT read the script in the poster session.

-It is a good idea to time your poster explanation. Three to five minutes for one poster is a good length.

-It is also recommended to videotape your presentation and watch the video to improve the tone of your voice, speed, delivery, intonation, gestures, and posture.

3. Preparing for Q and A

The audience may ask you questions about the poster. In advance, <u>imagine possible questions and prepare answers to them.</u> The audience may not be so familiar with your field; <u>make sure to explain in plain words</u> to those who are unfamiliar with your area.

<Sample Questions> Try to answer these questions.
Q1. Hi, nice poster!   Could you explain the main purpose of your poster?
A1:

Q2. What were the difficulties that you faced in this study?
A2:

VII. Hints on Online Poster Sessions

1. Zoom (real time)

When the Covid situations become worse, the poster sessions may be conducted on Zoom. Or some students might have to participate on Zoom, while others present in-person.   Follow the instructions of your teacher.

2. Hybrid (uploading pre-recorded videos)

You may have to record the poster presentation to conduct hybrid presentations. You can videotape by either of the following ways.

     1. Use a function of スライドショーの記録 in PPT.

     2. Record your presentation by sharing screen on Zoom.

     3. Self-record the presentation on the smartphone/video camera.

When you submit the file, Oh Meiji accepts the files less than 30MB.   Bigger files should be uploaded on One Drive, collected by Drop Box, or recorded as a YouTube unlisted video. Follow the instructions of your teacher.

VIII. Evaluation

1. Rubric

Here is a sample rubric of criteria. Use it to evaluate your own poster presentation or those of other groups. These are some typical criteria, and your class may have others.

Criterion	Description	Evaluation
1. Content	It interesting? Does it have depth and make an impact?	
2. Organization	Is it logical and well-organized?	
3. Poster Visual:	Good layout? Appropriate use of color?	
4. Poster Texts	Clear? Easy to read? Grammar and spelling checked?	
5.Verbal Presentation	Well prepared?	
6. Interactions with the Audience	Interactive? Questions answered well?	

Evaluation (example)

Excellent (4) - very good (3) – good (2) – poor (1)

2. Writing a critique (Optional)

Note: **Critique** is pronounced / krɪti:k / with the accent on the second syllable (thus, "cri-TEEK").

One facet of our English IIIA – IIIB course is having students critique the various presentations that constitute the course. Critiquing is, of course, a valuable exercise that requires you to evaluate the work of others (or your own work) carefully with the idea of making improvements in future presentations.

The critiquing that we have in mind has two manifestations. One involves a grading rubric, and the second manifestation is written out in prose. This document deals with prose critiques.

How to write a critique

Before you start writing, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the presentation or speech that you will write about.

- During the presentation, listen carefully.

- Write a memo about key points of the presentation and any remarks that you want to include in your critique.
- If necessary, you might contact the presenter(s) and ask for a copy of the presentation.

There are a variety of ways to structure a critique, but the following template shows the main features of a critique format that we will use in this course.

A critique usually includes four parts.

1. Introduction

Typically, the introduction is short, and you should:
- Include the name of the presenters, their topic, and the date of the presentation.
- Describe the main argument or purpose of the work.
- Have a concluding sentence that states the nature of your critique. For instance, it may indicate whether it is a positive, negative, or mixed evaluation.

2. Summary

Briefly summarize the main points and objectively describe how the presenters showed these by using techniques, styles, media, etc. *This summary should not be the focus of the critique and is usually shorter than the critical evaluation.*

3. Critical evaluation

This section should give a systematic and detailed assessment of the different elements of the work, addressing how well the presenter was able to achieve his/her the purpose. Here you could talk about any of the various points that are important in a presentation. For example, you might comment on the presenter's voice, eye contact, posture, and speed. Was the organization logical and easily understood? Were any figures or tables designed well and used effectively? Did the presenter ask for questions? Did the presenter answer questions well?

Note: *A critical evaluation is NOT only about negative things. Your critique should mention both good and bad points as appropriate.*

This evaluation is written in formal academic style and logically presented. Group and order your ideas into paragraphs. Start with the broad impressions first and then move into the details of the technical elements. For shorter critiques, you may discuss the strengths of the works, and then the weaknesses. In longer critiques, you may wish to discuss the positive and negative of each key critical question in individual paragraphs.

4. Conclusion

This is usually a very brief paragraph that includes the following:

- A statement indicating the overall evaluation of the work
- A summary of the key reasons, identified during the critical evaluation, why this evaluation was formed.
- If appropriate, provide recommendations for improvement.

5. Reference list (if appropriate)

Include all resources cited in your critique (if any).

Critique Format

Now that you know how to structure and what to include in a critique, let us proceed to how to *present* your critique. By this we refer to the actual formatting to use for your critique; this formatting is as follows.

1. A4-size paper, printed on just one side.

2. The first page is a title page that should include five parts: the title of your critique, your name, the class name, your instructor's name, and the date. The date should be written out as, for example, July 24, 2021 (not 24/7/2021).

3. Font size – title in 16-pt font, everything else is 12-pt

4. Font style: Times New Roman

The second (and any following pages) will include the following.

5. First paragraph: purpose, names, date, title of presentation; basic topic; overall evaluation

6. Second paragraph: review contents, main points; how explained?

7. Third paragraph: good points and bad points

8. Final paragraph: summary (including main points), then improvements / suggestions for future presentations

IX. Writing a Paper

Write a paper based on your group presentation. You should write about the whole poster, not just about some sections of the poster. This is an individual writing assignment.

1. Title can be the same as the group poster.
2. One paragraph should be about one component of the paper. For example, if your group did some kind of experiment, you can write the introduction in the first paragraph; the second should be about the methods, the third should explain the results, and the fourth should be about conclusions.
3. You should list your references at the end.
4. There are no specific word limits, but approximately 600-1,000 words in total would be sufficient.
5. Create a file in Word format and submit it to your instructor online. (Or follow the instructions of your instructor.)   The deadline is (   ).

References:
Purdue Online Writing Lab. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
IEEE Author Center. https://journals.ieeeauthorcenter.ieee.org/