Poster Presentations: Theory and Application

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Deciding on a Poster Presentation

Poster presentations are best suited making a point that is best conveyed **visually** (as opposed to orally).

*Resist the temptation to view a poster presentation as somehow inferior to an oral presentation. It's **not** inferior: it appeals to different modalities.*

What is meant by "Visual"?

Here, visual refers to the manner in which information is most naturally conveyed and comprehended.

Visual modes include:
- tables
- graphs
- bulleted lists (as you see to the right)
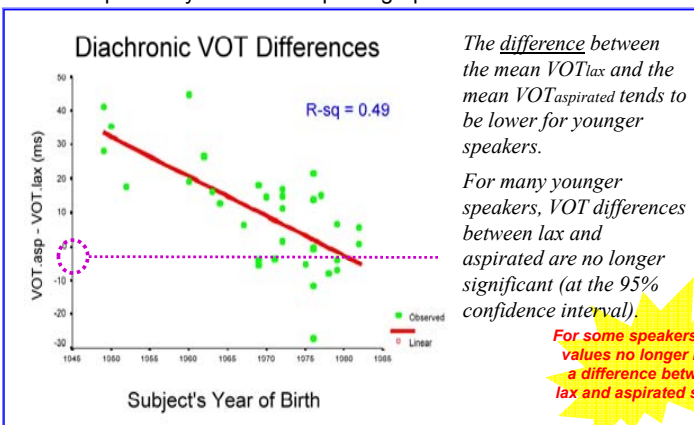- illustrations (including screenshots of acoustic data)
- photographs

Poster graphics should:
- Convey a point quickly
- Be conceptually simple
- Avoid complicated formats
  (e.g., don't use 3-D images unless necessary)

If your story can be told effectively in visual formats, then a poster presentation may be the most appropriate vehicle for disseminating your research!

An Example of a Graph

With explanatory text and a "splash graphic"

The <u>difference</u> between the mean VOT$_{lax}$ and the mean VOT$_{aspirated}$ tends to be lower for younger speakers.

For many younger speakers, VOT differences between lax and aspirated are no longer significant (at the 95% confidence interval).

For some speakers, VOT values no longer mark a difference between lax and aspirated stops.

Revised 2/7/06

Setting Up a Poster in PowerPoint (PPT)

1. Open a new file
2. Choose the blank page as your layout
3. Using the menus at the top of the window, go to `File > Page Setup`, and then enter the dimensions of your **final product**
   - These should be given by the conference organizers
   - A common size: 36" x 48"
4. Click `OK`
   - Ignore any complaints about how your dimensions are too large for the current computer

Laying Out Your Poster

PPT Basics

- The blank PowerPoint slide is the canvas upon which you will design your entire poster
- Use the zoom function to move in and out of your poster (`View > Zoom`)
- To move a box, select it and then use the arrow keys

Inserting Content

- To insert a chunk of text, create a text box: `Insert > Text Box > Horizontal`
  - keep text to a ***minimum***!
- To insert graphics, either
  - create them directly in PPT by selecting the appropriate items under the Insert tab   ***or***
  - create them in other programs (Excel, SPSS, etc.) and copy them into PPT
- You will need to resize graphics many times
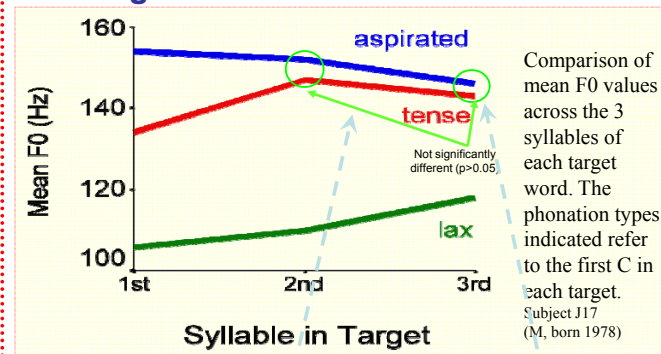
Formatting Advice

- Print title across the top @ 72 pts
- 3-column format (as done here) is optimal
- Headings: ~54 pts;   Main text: 36 - 44 pts
- Light background with dark lettering
- Consistent color scheme

Basic Outline

- Central Claim / Main Point
  - Imagine that your reader will take in only the **first** paragraph; what should s/he learn?
- Background Information
  - Exercise restraint here; include only what's **really** necessary to understand the rest of the poster
- Methodology
  - Again, exercise restraint!
- Data
  - The heart of your presentation
- Conclusions
  - Don't simply restate your main point: contextualize your findings; what do they *mean*?

Guiding Your Audience

Comparison of mean F0 values across the 3 syllables of each target word. The phonation types indicated refer to the first C in each target. Subject J17 (M, born 1978)

Not significantly different (p>0.05)

Don't be shy about guiding your reader to what's important by using arrows, splash graphics, circles, etc.

Printing Your Poster

- Prepare: library.uta.edu/dms/dms.jsp
- Go to: Digital Media Studio (Central Library, Basement)
- Bring: A drive with your PPT file

Avoid non-standard fonts. They may not exist on the DMS computers!

- Ask for: Assistance
- Pay: $4 - $8

Printing Handouts

- Go to `File > Print`
- Select your regular printer
- Click "Scale to fit paper"

UTA Alumna Colleen Ahland in front of her Poster at the BeST Conference, Leiden, 2005