

ORAL AND WRITTEN PRESENTATIONS – GUIDELINES

Each term, you will have to give an oral presentation and hand in a written one. One of these must be on a grammatical topic, and the other on a lexical one. In the first term you can, for example, choose to do an oral lexical presentation and a written grammatical one; and this will mean that in the second term you will have to do a written lexical one and an oral grammatical one.

For a grammatical presentation, you may choose a topic you have discussed in class; or you may choose to talk or write about something you have not discussed but you think is worth discussing.

For a lexical presentation, you are advised to choose a topic that you have not covered in your class discussions of Core Concepts, Semantic Fields, etc.

The most important consideration in your choice of topic must be the amount of material your book provides for that particular topic. For example, if you choose to discuss emphatic structures, you must be sure there are plenty of them in your book; likewise, if you choose to discuss animal idioms, there should be a sufficient number of them in the book.

THE ORAL PRESENTATION:

I. Time limit:

Your presentation should take no longer than 20 minutes, including time for answering your colleagues' questions and doing exercises.

II. Content and organization:

1. Your presentation must be based firmly on your extensive reading book. You will, of course, have to refer to other sources; but the centre of your attention must remain the book and the lexical or grammatical material it provides. (Thus, for example, most of the illustrations you provide must come from the book - if you have decided to talk about vocabulary related to academic life, on the basis of Lodge's *Changing Places*, then the bulk of the vocabulary you discuss must really come from that book.)

2. A presentation should consist in *your own* analysis of the material in hand - for example, if you choose to talk about a particular grammatical rule, you must analyze how that rule is applied in *your* book, considering factors such as the context, the effects produced, the meanings generated, and possible deviations from the rule as defined in grammar books. The mere listing of examples or definitions, without any comment on your part about the use of the particular lexical or grammatical item in its particular context, does not amount to a presentation.

3. Your presentation should have a clear structure. It is a good idea to give your audience a very brief overview, in the very beginning, of what you are going to talk about. You should also say, in your introduction, why you have chosen this particular topic. (This may mean that you will also need to provide some background about your book.)

4. Think carefully about the scope of your presentation: it should be neither too narrow nor too broad (remember you have a time limit). Do not waste time on grammatical or lexical points which are too basic and present no difficulty for anyone.

5. For grammatical presentations, you must use *more than one* grammar book as reference.

6. At the end of your presentation, make sure you acknowledge your reference sources.

III. Delivery:

1. You should *not* read a text prepared in advance: you should really talk to your audience, maintaining eye contact with your colleagues, and making sure you keep their attention. (This does not, of course, mean that you cannot *occasionally* consult some notes or an outline you have prepared.)

2. Accuracy, range of vocabulary, accent, and fluency will all be taken into account and will be reflected in your grade.

IV. Handouts and other materials:

You are very strongly advised to prepare handouts for your audience. These can contain, e.g., an outline of your presentation, examples and illustrations from your book, charts, diagrams, pictures or even cartoons (use your imagination!). Another good idea is to prepare one or two exercises based on the material you cover. This will ensure your audience's active participation in the presentation.

THE WRITTEN PRESENTATION:

I. Length: four to five A4 pages (no more than 2,000 words).

II. Content and organization:

1. See requirements for the Oral Presentation.

Once again, we would like to press the point that a presentation must be a coherent text, not a list of examples or definitions. It must have an introduction, in which you explain your choice of topic and outline the scope and structure of the presentation; a body, in which you analyze your material; and a conclusion, in which you sum up your main points.

2. Make sure you acknowledge all quotations (which should be used sparingly!), and provide a bibliography at the end of your presentation.

Within the body of the presentation, use quotation marks to indicate that you are using someone else's words, and give, in brackets, the title of the work you are quoting from, its author, and the relevant page; or, if you are using an Internet source, the relevant link (make sure you give a precise address - e.g., not just *wikipedia*, but http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_linguistics).

If you are drawing on someone else's ideas, again, even if you are not using their very words, you must acknowledge the fact in the same way (unless these ideas are common knowledge) by supplying, in brackets, the title of the work, its author, and the relevant page; or, with Internet sources, the relevant link.

The bibliography should list all your sources; for each source, provide the author, the title of the work, the publishing house, and the year of publishing (in that order). Please make sure you include all your Internet sources as well.

Failure to acknowledge that you are quoting other people or building on their ideas counts as plagiarism, and will be heavily penalized; in extreme cases, a presentation may get a zero grade. Please bear in mind that plagiarism is a form of cheating and constitutes a serious academic offence. On how to avoid accidental plagiarism, please see the excerpt from Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* below.

III. Language:

As with oral presentations, accuracy and range of vocabulary will be taken into account and will be reflected in your grade.

IV. Layout:

All written presentations must be typed (stick to Times New Roman 12 and 1.5 spacing, and leave reasonable margins). Make sure your presentation looks tidy - this includes pagination; indentation and graphical division into appropriate sections (introduction, separate body paragraphs, conclusion); italics, underlining and the like where relevant, etc.

Unlike oral presentations, written presentations should not, of course, contain exercises.

NB

You *must* consult your teacher (either of them) about your choice of topic, the scope of your presentation, its structure, etc. (For example, making good exercises for the oral presentation is not an easy task, and you may need your teacher to give you some tips.) The topic must be agreed on *well in advance*: at least two weeks before you have to give your presentation.

Avoiding accidental plagiarism

From Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 214-217

"In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas. To borrow another writer's words and ideas without proper acknowledgement is a form of dishonesty known as plagiarism.

To avoid plagiarism, you must cite all quotations, summaries, and paraphrases as well as any facts or ideas that are not common knowledge. In addition, you must be careful to put paraphrases and summaries in your own words.

When you summarize or paraphrase, it is not enough to name the source; you must restate the source's meaning using only your own words. You are guilty of plagiarism if you half-copy the author's sentences – either by mixing the author's well-chosen words without using quotation marks or by plugging your own synonyms into the author's sentence structure. The following paraphrases are plagiarized – even though the source is cited – because their language is too close to that of the original source.

ORIGINAL VERSION

If the existence of a signing ape was unsettling for linguists, it was also startling news for animal behaviourists.

Davis, *Eloquent Animals*, p. 26

UNACCEPTABLE BORROWING OF WORDS

The existence of a signing ape unsettled linguists and startled animal behaviourists (Davis 26).

UNACCEPTABLE BORROWING OF STRUCTURE

If the presence of a sign-language-using chimp was disturbing for scientists studying language, it was also surprising for scientists studying animal behaviour (Davis 26).

To avoid plagiarizing an author's language, resist the temptation to look at the source while you are summarizing or paraphrasing. Close the book, write from memory, and then open the book to check for accuracy. This technique prevents you from being captivated by the words on the page.

ACCEPTABLE PARAPHRASES

When they learned of an ape's ability to use sign language, both linguists and animal behaviourists were taken by surprise (Davis 26).

According to Flora Davis, linguists and animal behaviourists were unprepared for the news that a chimp could communicate with its trainers through sign language (26)."