

MASARYKOVA UNIVERZITA

Fakulta sociálních studií

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Tento text slouží výhradně jako učební materiál pro studenty kursu „Metody výzkumu v psychologii“ (PSY 722), vyučovaného na Fakultě sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity v Brně.

Výzkumná zpráva – III. část

Presenting qualitative research up close

Zdroj: Wilson, H. S., Hutchinson, S. A.: Visual Literacy in Poster Presentation.

In: J. M. Morse (Ed.): Completing a Qualitative Project. Thousand Oaks, Sage, 1997.

Normal Left Justification

The use of font styles and line justification can enhance or detract from the message or the information you are trying to convey. The tone of the text can change from dramatic to light-hearted by changing the font.

All Capitals

THE USE OF FONT STYLES AND LINE JUSTIFICATION CAN ENHANCE OR DETRACT FROM THE MESSAGE OR THE INFORMATION YOU ARE TRYING TO CONVEY. THE TONE OF THE TEXT CAN CHANGE FROM DRAMATIC TO LIGHT-HEARTED BY CHANGING THE FONT.

Italic Setting

The use of font styles and line justification can enhance or detract from the message or the information you are trying to convey. The tone of the text can change from dramatic to light-hearted by changing the font.

Inappropriate Personality Font

The use of font styles and line justification can enhance or detract from the message or the information you are trying to convey. The tone of the text can change from dramatic to light-hearted by changing the font.

Centered Justification

The use of font styles and line justification can enhance or detract from the message or the information you are trying to convey. The tone of the text can change from dramatic to light-hearted by changing the font.

Full Justification

The use of font styles and line justification can enhance or detract from the message or the information you are trying to convey. The tone of the text can change from dramatic to light-hearted by changing the font.

Figure 4.1: Font and Format Comparisons

Box 4.1. FONT DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Use uppercase letters to stand alone at the beginning of a sentence; don't set entire words in all capitals.
- If you need emphasis, use boldface or color, not capitalization or underlining.
 - Use italic text sparingly for single words and Latin names. The legibility of italic text tends to be low. The same guideline applies to use of calligraphy.
 - Smooth scanning along lines of text is enhanced by keeping line length to 50-70 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation).
 - Avoid varying the starting position of lines in the body of text because shorter lines can interrupt scanning and the eye of the viewer can have difficulty locating the start of the next line.
 - Centering titles is fine but avoid centering lines in the body of text.

Use of color is an important consideration. A muted but distinctive background wash such as taupe or blue-grey is suggested to unify the poster elements and distinguish your poster from others. Colorful heads and subheadings are also encouraged. Brightly colored icons or symbols can highlight major concepts and add poster eye appeal. Color experts discourage the use of pastels and light colors on a light background and the use of dark colors on a dark background. Be wary of a poster design that consists of many monochrome, laser-printed, 8½- by 11-inch sheets of densely typed text, taped on separate pieces of colored art paper. The resulting impression is one of separate islands of information overload—each demanding equal attention. Not only does the viewer's eye become aware of the edges and the haphazard arrangement, but often the text is too small and too much to be read from any farther away than a few feet (Forsyth & Waller, 1995). Use your imagination by making some panels larger and others smaller. Consider arrows or some designation that will serve as directions for your viewer. Put the most important message in the

Box 4.2. LAYOUT GUIDELINES

- The typical size for a table poster is 3 by 6 feet; a wall-mounted poster is 4 by 8 feet; and a tripod or easel poster is usually 2 by 3 feet.
- Professional display boards with an aluminum frame and cloth surface range from \$500 for a tabletop model to \$3,500 for a complete backdrop with display tables. Costs of professional graphic art services were quoted at approximately \$100/hour (in 1996).
- Access to color laser-quality printers and computer-generated graphics can conserve the cost of engaging a commercial graphic artist.
- Poster board, the most common material for a research poster, and the Velcro to attach panels to the board can be purchased at moderate cost from artists' supply stores, university bookstores, and office supply companies.

center of your poster at eye level or higher. Highlight key points with visual techniques like colored bullets. Keep your format lean and uncluttered. Lettering on posters must be viewed from 3 to 4 feet and thus should be in at least 16- to 18-point type. The visual schema of a grounded theory study readily lends itself to graphic presentation. The ethnographer, phenomenologist, narrative analyst, and investigator emphasizing other modes of qualitative inquiry must be inventive and imaginative to determine how to tell a visual story.

Because we (Wilson and Hutchinson) must often transport our research posters in the passenger cabin on international flights and carry the poster through international airports to clear customs, we have elected to place transportability near the top of our list of considerations in selecting poster materials and choosing a design. Consequently, instead of the most common format—printed display sections that are arranged on a poster board—we have (with Holzemer) prepared a cream and blue, professionally printed research

poster on a 4- by 6-foot laminated single panel that can be rolled into a cardboard tube for transporting it and that weighs little or nothing. This particular format cost \$125.00 and requires that a backboard or wall be present at the conference so that the laminated rectangular single panel can be tacked up. We realize that, in emphasizing portability, our poster can be viewed as “flat” when compared with three-dimensional displays.

We also carry handouts of bibliographic literature, interview guides, and focus group topics as well as copies of our abstract and business cards in a briefcase. Such a briefcase can also accommodate about 12 separate panels or “spreads” that themselves also can be laminated individually and mounted on a poster board as an alternative, although less portable, poster design. Our decision to use a professionally printed and laminated panel also sacrifices the flexibility that Lippman and Ponton (1989) encourage. They argue that because poster sessions often are used to report research in progress, a design that makes it possible to add to the poster once the study is completed or to make changes based on feedback from conference participants is worth considering. This property is especially noteworthy for qualitative research, which by nature continues to be reshaped with additional data. Authorities urge that an effective poster is one that is done with style, simplicity, orderliness, and sincerity. We add to this list creativity and visual literacy. The layout should not confuse clutter and a jumbled, overwhelming amount of content with artistic expression in the context of a poster presentation. Make every word tell a story.

Morra (1984) has summarized 20 advertising principles for poster presentations that serve as a useful checklist for effectiveness. (See Box 4.3.)

Art, illustrations, and graphics. Colorful pie and bar graphs are regularly used to report quantitative research findings in poster presentations. They break up the text and contribute “eye appeal.” They certainly can become components of qualitative research posters as well and are effective in summarizing demographic information. But because qualitative research often discovers concepts and themes, symbols and photographs as well as carefully selected quotes (non-graphics) can be used to communicate the essence of meanings that your study has surfaced. Figure 4.2 illustrates a research poster that has employed the guidelines for effective poster design, while Figure 4.3

Box 4.3. POSTER CHECKLIST

1. Less is better. Don't try to say too much.
2. Bigger is better. Don't crowd your exhibit.
3. Put the most important message at eye level.
4. Write to one person (often a stranger) using active verbs.
5. Use short sentences, short paragraphs, and short words.
6. Write headlines with brief, colorful nouns and vigorous active verbs.
7. Five times as many viewers read headlines as read text copy.
8. Headlines (panel titles) with 10 or fewer words get more readers than those with more.
9. Headlines that promise the reader a benefit, contain news or offer helpful information attract above average readership.
10. Use the largest type possible. Headlines must be read from across the room. Text must be seen from three to five feet away.
11. Avoid using all capital letters to present text.
12. Keep columns three to four inches wide. Longer lines are harder to read.
13. Darker (blue or green) type on lighter (white or cream) background is easier to read than white type on a dark background.
14. Use color for emphasis but limit colors to one or two.
15. Help your readers with arrows, bullets, or other marks.
16. Set a key paragraph in boldface type for attention.
17. Use subheads every two to three inches.
18. Photos are better than drawings.
19. Write a caption for every graph or illustration. People read text under illustrations.
20. If you present unrelated ideas, number them and put them in a list. (Morra, 1984)

offers a hypothetical illustration of a poster on the same study that fails.

In the research poster depicted in Figure 4.2, which was based on an analysis of interview data focused on awareness contexts in early probable Alzheimer's disease, Hutchinson, Leger-Krall, and Wilson (in press) selected brief, pithy quotations to illustrate the differences between open, closed, suspected, and pretense awareness contexts. An example illustrating open awareness was the straightforward statement, "I need help"; an example of closed awareness, "I am not like the others." An example of suspected awareness was the statement, "My brain feels like it shut down"; an example of pretense, "I feel trembly but I smush it down." Each of these brief, vivid quotations was accompanied by a computer-generated symbol representing the awareness context being explained. Each of the four contexts was displayed on a different color spread. Figure 4.3 portrays unrelated islands of text overload using an uninteresting black-and-white color scheme.

A poster is said to be worth a thousand words if it is effective. Colleagues in nursing, medicine, and dietetics have all published authoritative articles on how to make one that works. All urge that photos, tables, graphs, and other visually appealing elements replace lengthy, detailed narratives whenever possible. This recommendation poses a particular challenge for the qualitative researcher attempting to report narrative textual data.

Experts concur that it is wise to seek the advice of local medical illustration departments in hospitals and universities and also to invite your colleagues to critique your poster before finalizing it and presenting it at a regional, national, or international meeting. At the University of California, San Francisco's Department of Community Health Systems, faculty members are encouraged to display posters about their research on a designated hall bulletin board, not only to obtain feedback about the poster's effectiveness but also to keep students, faculty, and visitors informed about in-progress research.

The Presentation Phase

If you have attended to the many details of the prepresentation phase of a poster, the presentation phase should be smooth and straightforward. All of the authorities we consulted in preparing this chapter (Gregg & Pierce, 1994; Miracle & King, 1994; Vogelsang, 1994) agreed that it's essential that you assume that anything that can