

February 2013
Issue 4

ESL GO! Newsletter

SLS/ESL Program, Department of English, Purdue University

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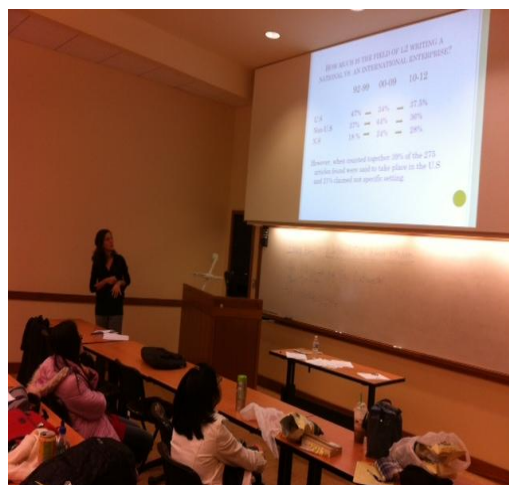
CONGRATULATIONS TO Q-AWARD RECIPIENTS

The following SLSers received Q-Awards for being in the top ten percent of Fall 2012 instructor evaluations: Matthew Allen, Yu-Shan Fan, Dennis Koyama, Meihung Lin, Veronika Maliborska, Andrea Patterson, Elena Shvidko, and Yunjung You. Best wishes for continued success and excellence in teaching!

ESL Speaker Series

There were two speaker series events over the last few weeks. The first presentation was by Matthew Allen and Gracemarie Mike. It was titled, First-Year Composition through a Global Engineering Perspective. The presenters addressed their experiences teaching a first-year composition class within the Global Engineering Cultures and Practices Learning Community. They explained how they implemented the course in a way that meets the goals of the composition program and the needs of Learning Community and first-year engineering students.

The second speaker series event was a presentation of, An Investigation of Geographical Patterns in L2 Research Published in the Journal of Second Language Writing. Carolina Pelaez-Morales provided an overview of patterns in the L2 writing research, relating these patterns to geographical location.



Making Tables with Excel

Putting research results in Table format is one way to succinctly present information to readers. However, creating Tables that are straightforward to read is no easy task. This quick tips editorial will *not* solve all your Table woes, but it will provide one example of an efficient way to create streamlined Tables for presenting results.

The first step to making any Table in Word is to start in Excel. Yep, Excel. The flexibility of Excel provides a canvas to create, move, and combine information in ways that Word cannot because Word has margins and tabs that auto-adjust creating more damage than progress. When creating a Table in Excel, it is important to know that Excel is only the scratch paper for the Table. You will still need to edit the Table once it is pasted into Word.

A typical data entry format for Excel looks something like this:

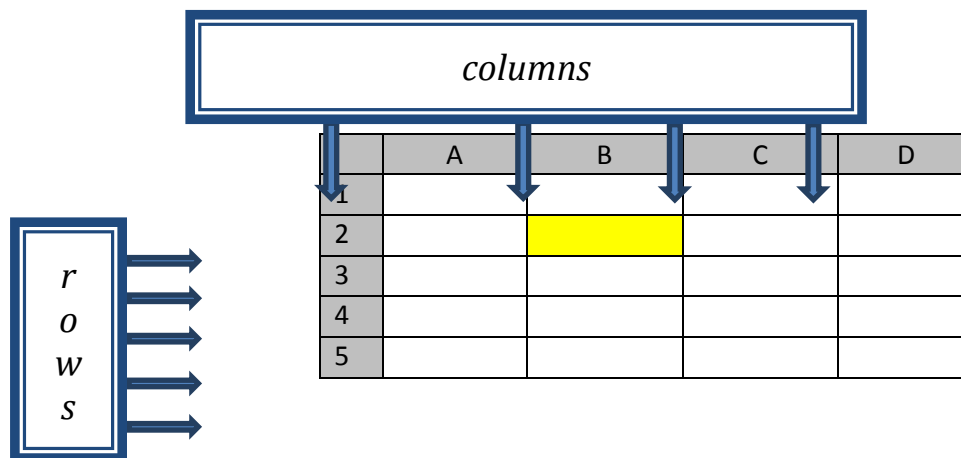


Figure 1. Screenshot of Excel spreadsheet

In the simulated Excel screen above, I have left all the cells empty, except one colored yellow, and indicated with blue arrows what are known as “columns” and “rows”. Excel cells are called by their column then row; thus, cell “B2” is colored yellow—see how it works? In what follows, I will fill in the cells of this empty Excel screenshot with terms and describe how to make an APA formatted Table. However, before I begin, I want to answer one of the most common questions about nexus of the relationship of Tables, APA, and journals:

“Why do I need to make the Table in APA format when the Tables in the journal are not APA?”

This question has several answers, but I will offer the two most important. One, the journal’s article reviewers—who help the journal editor determine which articles get published in a journal—have expectations and keeping all of the manuscripts in the same format helps the reviewer identify and consider information in a systematic way. Two, keeping all the Tables in the same format allows the journal’s copy editor to expeditiously format the Table into what looks best in printed and online formats, which can drastically reduce an article’s time sitting in the queue between “under editorial proofing” and published. Back to our Table ...

Table 1

Example Excel Sheet with Questions and Number of Items from a Campus Survey

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Variable	Sample item		No. of items		Chronbach's α
2	Qualitative research skill	I understand the dangers of a 'double barrel' question"		25		.75
3	Quantitative research skill	I understand the meaning of a <i>p</i> -value		32		.81
4	Sociolinguistic knowledge	I can explain the difference between the terms 'dialect' and 'accent'.		18		.67
5	Curriculum development	I can create a speaking curriculum using the 'functional syllabus' approach		12		.64

Whether the Table is for qualitative, quantitative, or both kinds of data, the task of creating a Table is the same regardless of data type. The example Table 1 shows a qualitative Table from a fictitious survey. I have colored yellow the cells that need to be left empty.

Pasting Table 1 from Excel into Word is simple. Copy and Paste the cells you want and copy them with "ctrl c" in Excel and paste them into Word with "ctrl v". Once in Word, the Table will likely be too large for the Word document, so open the "Layout" tab under the "Table tools" tab in the editing ribbon at the top of Word. To select your pasted Table, you will need to mouse over the Table, the "table selection handle" (which looks like a plus sign in a square) will appear at the top left of the Table. Figure 2 shows the "Table selection handle" next to the blue arrow.



Figure 2. Table selection handle

Click the table selection handle and auto fit to either "window" or "content" depending on how large or small you want the Table, which can be a matter of how long your sentences are.

To edit Table 1, select the Table through the "table selection handle" and: Right click → Table properties → click "table" from the tabs at the top of the dialogue box → click the "borders and shading" button near the bottom of dialog box → click "custom" design at the bottom left → then click on the line style you want → then click the cell walls that you want lines on. The margins for the "sample item" column can be adjusted by cells using the sliders on the ruler at the top of Word. To do this, select the TEXT only, do not select the whole cell, then slide the bottom arrow 2 characters to the right. This adjusts the tabs for the contents of "sample item" to create an indent to the second line of the text in the cell. Doing this makes the text a little easier to read, but much easier to distinguish from the line that follows it. The yellow columns from Table 1 above are now "no fill color", which can be done through the "paint bucket" on the "Home" tab of Word, and have created a nice margin between the text and the data. With small numbers, as in this example, it is not difficult to align numbers and

margins, but what about Tables used to describe different groups on the same survey (or test)? This is a little more tricky but quite simple after the first time around.

Variable	Sample item	No. of items	Chronbach's α
Qualitative research skill	I understand the dangers of a 'double barrel' question"	25	.75
Quantitative research skill	I understand the meaning of a p -value	32	.81
Sociolinguistic knowledge	I can explain the difference between the terms 'dialect' and 'accent'.	18	.67
Curriculum development	I can create a speaking curriculum using the 'functional syllabus' approach	12	.64

The first step is the same, start in Excel. You will need to make sure you have all of the headers for your Table in Excel. Table two is an example using parts of the Table 1 from above and displaying the Mode (which is the most common response) and the Range (which is the difference of the highest value and the lowest value) are shown for a fictitious survey with a five point Likert scale response (i.e., 0 -5) with half point rating possible.

Table 2
Example Excel Sheet with Questions and Data from a Campus Survey

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1			Prerequisite SLS courses completed				
2			Zero			All	
3	Variable		Mode	Range		Mode	Range
4	Qualitative research skill		3.00	4.50		5.00	1.50
5	Quantitative research skill		2.50	4.00		5.00	1.50
6	Sociolinguistic knowledge		3.50	4.50		5.00	1.00
7	Curriculum development		3.50	4.00		5.00	1.00

After pasting into Word, merging the pink cells together (C1 through G1), the green cells together (C2 and D2), the light blue cells together (F2 and G2), and "auto fit" to contents. To "merge" cells, you: Select the cells to be merge with your mouse → click on "layout" under the "table tools" tab (which is only visible when a part or the whole table is selected). → click the "merge cells" button. To "autofit" the table select the Table using the "table selection handle" (See Figure 2) then click on the "autofit" tab under the "layout tab" of the "table tools" tab, then select if you want to fit the table to "window", "contents", or "specific column width" from the dropdown menu. If you merge all colored cells with their cells of the same color (except yellow), and "autofit" the table to "contents", you should get a Table like this:

Variable	Prerequisite SLS courses completed			
	Zero		All	
	Mode	Range	Mode	Range
Qualitative research skill	3.00	4.50	5.00	1.50
Quantitative research skill	2.50	4.00	5.00	1.50
Sociolinguistic knowledge	3.50	4.50	5.00	1.00
Curriculum development	3.50	4.00	5.00	1.00

Now, remove the color, and add lines to make a completed Table:

Table 2a
Example Excel Sheet with Questions and Data from a Campus Survey

Variable	Prerequisite SLS courses completed			
	Zero		All	
	Mode	Range	Mode	Range
Qualitative research skill	3.00	4.50	5.00	1.50
Quantitative research skill	2.50	4.00	5.00	1.50
Sociolinguistic knowledge	3.50	4.50	5.00	1.00
Curriculum development	3.50	4.00	5.00	1.00

In Table 2a, the spaces between the “Zero” and “All” columns may seem trivial but they allow for the column headers to stand out, and they assist the reader to access information quickly (which is the purpose of a Table, right?). Consider Table 3, a Table with multiple administrations of a survey:

Table 3
The Mean and Standard Deviations for Two Administrations of a Department Survey of SLS Knowledge by Number of Prerequisite Courses Completed

Variable	1995				2000			
	Zero		All		Zero		All	
	Mode	Range	Mode	Range	Mode	Range	Mode	Range
Qualitative research skill	3.00	3.50	5.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	1.00
Quantitative research skill	2.00	4.50	5.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	1.00
Sociolinguistic knowledge	3.00	4.00	5.00	1.50	3.50	4.50	5.00	1.50
Curriculum development	3.00	4.50	5.00	1.00	3.50	4.50	5.00	1.50

As seen in Table 3, spaces between columns can help a

reader use the column header terms and underlines as way to determine which data belongs to which column label.

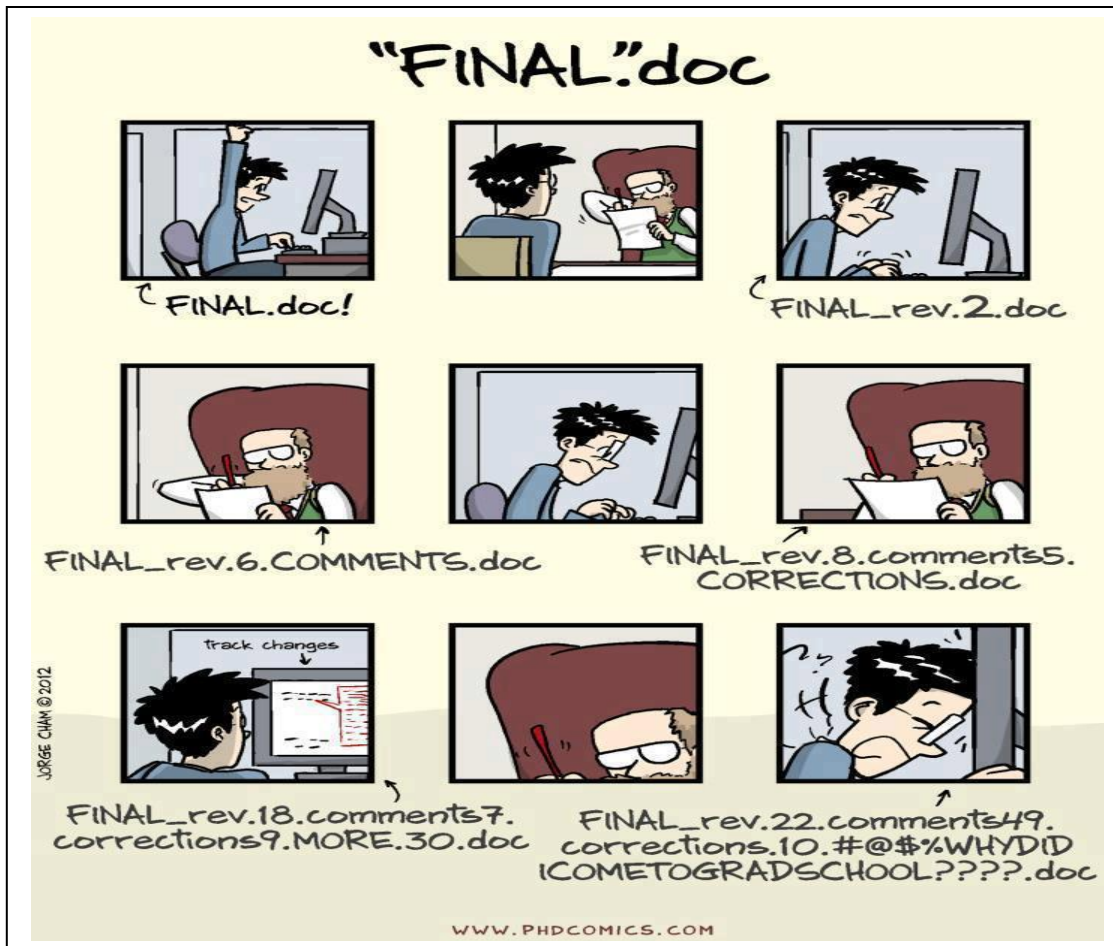
There is no single best way to display data, but there are limitations as to the format, style, and contents of a Table, so it is best to consult the APA 6th edition for more details on what is acceptable Table formatting.

Dennis Koyama

Upcoming Event

On Thursday, March 28, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., in STEW 322, there will be a workshop titled Teaching & Learning: International TAs’ Perspectives, by Dr.

Luciana de Oliveira. TAs Panel includes Alsu Gilmetdinova (Russia), Shu-Wen Lan (Taiwan), Sara Solorzano (Honduras), and Reiko Akiyama (Japan)



ESL GO! Website:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~eslgo/index.html>

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Please send any suggestions, questions, or contributions to kbelmiho@purdue.edu