

Consideration for Language

in Asian Workshop on Molecular Spectroscopy

(i) Slides in English. This should not be a big problem, even for students, because slides can be made ahead of time, and making them requires very little knowledge of English grammar and no knowledge of English pronunciation.

(ii) Talks in English. Here we should write some instructions to the students telling them that they can use extremely simple sentences. In the absolute worst case, they can just read the English text on slides containing a bilingual outline of their talk. Their goal should just be to try to get the audience to understand the main ideas of their work. Students from all three language groups will be in the same situation, so they do not need to “be embarrassed” if their grammar or pronunciation is not as perfect as that of a native speaker. Their talk is NOT an English examination. The audience only wants to know their scientific problem and their results.

(iii) All questions to the student will be translated into his/her language by some professor, and the student can answer this question in their own language, which will then be translated into English by some professor. All of us know that questions from the audience after a talk are difficult to understand, even in our own language. But in the end, questions are really nice, because they show that somebody is interested in our results, and that somebody was actually trying to understand what we were saying about our work, etc.

