RAISING STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF HOW TO WRITE AN ABSTRACT FOR A RESEARCH PAPER

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ABSTRACT: The essence of research writing is becoming a crucial part of every person's life who is involved in education. Despite the fact that there are ongoing extracurricular clubs to raise research writing skills, the rate of students who are involved in article writing is not significant. Thus, this paper aims at developing students' awareness of how to write a research abstract and its types to apply in their writings. In this article, I included the essence of an abstract in writing a paper, different types of an abstract with different structures, and a model proposed by Hyland.

KEYWORDS: Selection, indexing, descriptive, informative, modeling.

INTRODUCTION

An academic work, such as an essay, a research proposal, or a conference presentation, is summarised and previewed in an abstract. The first section of an article that readers will view is the abstract: They assist readers in anticipating what will happen next and establishing expectations. It is not an extract; it is an original piece. Without further citation to outside sources or to the original paper, an abstract must be totally self-contained and make sense on its own. It emphasizes important subject areas, your research's goal, the value or significance of your study, and the primary conclusions.

When students are asked about writing an abstract, they confuse that part with an introduction. However, they both have different aims and purposes to enlighten on their part. Particularly, the abstract includes the essence of the whole paper by covering the background of the research, the aim of the paper, the methods to conduct the research, the findings of the research, and the conclusion with recommendations. On the other hand, the introduction parts introduce the paper with background, the purpose of the paper, the thesis statement, and key issues to be discussed in the article.

Importance of an abstract in research paper

A number of academic settings call for the usage of abstracts. In the beginning, readers utilize them to determine whether an item belongs in their research and justifies being read in its entirety. Second, in order to present at many academic and professional conferences, presenters must first submit an abstract. Third, authors frequently include abstracts in funding request letters and research articles.

The abstract gives the chance to go into greater detail about each key point made in the article and aids readers in determining whether they want to continue reading. Therefore, the abstract must contain sufficient essential information [such as summary results, observations, trends, etc.] to be helpful to someone who might want to review your work. Abstracts are crucial for both indexing and selection processes.

Selection: Abstracts enable potential readers to rapidly assess whether the article is pertinent to their goals and whether they need to read the entire document.

Indexing: Abstracts are searched in the majority of academic journal databases that you can access through the library. Users can quickly retrieve data thanks to this. Abstracts must include the important words a potential researcher might use.

To make an abstract important and strong, the writer: 1. provides all the critical academic components of the long work, including the background, purpose, focus, methods, results, and conclusions, in a single, well-developed paragraph that is clear, short, and able to stand alone as a unit of information; 2 contains nothing not mentioned in the paper; 3. employs one clear, short, well-developed paragraph that can stand alone as a unit of information.

Types of an abstract

Abstracts can be descriptive and informative. Articles in psychology, humanities, and social sciences frequently utilize descriptive abstracts. Typically, this kind of abstract is about 50 to 100 words long. The majority of descriptive abstracts share a few essential components. As follows:

1. Background
2. Objective
3. Special focus/aspect of the paper
4. A summary of the contents (not always included)

An example of a descriptive abstract:

[Background]The opportunity to design and deliver short programs on referencing and avoiding plagiarism for transnational UniSA students has confirmed the necessity of combating both the 'all-plagiarism-is-cheating' reaction and the 'just-give-them-a-referencing-guide' response. [Purpose]The notion of referencing is but the tip of a particularly large and intricate iceberg. Consequently, teaching referencing is not adequate in educating students to avoid plagiarism. [Particular focus]In this presentation, I will use the transnational teaching experience to highlight what educating to avoid plagiarism entails.

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Informative articles are typically used in studies on science, engineering, or psychology. This type of abstract conveys the key points of the report in no more than 200 words, on average. Many informative abstracts share crucial components. These sections could each have 1-2 sentences in them. The components consist of:

1. Background
2. Objective or goal of the study
3. Method employed
4. Discoveries and outcomes
5. Conclusion

An example of an informative abstract:

[Background]Metalinguistic awareness contributes to effective writing at university. Writing is a meaning-making process where linguistic, cognitive, social, and creative factors are at play. University students need to master the skills of academic writing not only for getting their degree but also for their future careers. It is also significant for lecturers to know who our students are, how they think, and how we can best assist them. [Purpose]This study examines first-year undergraduate Australian and international engineering students as writers of academic texts in a multicultural setting at the University of Adelaide. [Method]A questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data about students' level of metalinguistic awareness, their attitudes toward, expectations for, assumptions about, and motivation for writing. [Results]The preliminary results of the research show that students from different cultures initially have different concepts about the academic genres and handle writing with different learning and writing styles, but those with a more developed metalanguage are more confident and motivated.[Conclusion] The conclusion can also be drawn that students' level of motivation for academic writing positively correlates with their opinion about themselves as writers. Following an in-depth multi-dimensional analysis of preliminary research results, some recommendations for writing instruction will also be presented.

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Modelling of an abstract by Hyland (2007)

Discipline-specific abstracts differ somewhat, yet within a discipline, they frequently follow recognizable patterns. We can make a few broad conclusions. Typically, abstracts range from 100 to 300 words. They sparingly cite references. They are designed to stand alone and be comprehended independently of the main text. Each sentence has a certain purpose.
A five-part model that Hyland (2007) discovered in scholarly articles is presented. Common components of an abstract include an introduction, a purpose, a method, a result, and a conclusion. Each component serves a distinct communicative purpose or specific purpose. About

half of the abstracts included a distinct introduction and conclusion, with the majority including an aim, method, and result.

	Part	Function	Key element example
1	Introduction	creates a framework for the paper and drives the research or discussion	"This research expands on prior research,"
2	Purpose	identifies the paper's purpose or thesis and describes its objectives.	"This study studies…" "The aim of this study is…" "This study addresses a gap"
3	Method	includes information on design, procedures, data analysis, etc.	"A qualitative data collection was used"
4	Result	provides results and findings	"The results show that"
5	Conclusion	applications, broader implications, and the range of the interpretation	"The results confirm previous studies that…"

An example of the model:

[Introduction] In many forest ecosystems, green leaf deposition (greenfall) constitutes an enrichment over background levels of litterfall nutrients and may therefore influence key ecosystem processes. [Purpose] This study examined the litter quality and decomposition rates of green leaves compared to senescent litterfall for four dominant tree species (Dacryodes excelsa, Manilkara bidentata, Guarea guidonia, and Cecropia schreberiana) in a lower montane rainforest at El Verde Field Station, Luquillo Experimental Forest, Puerto Rico. [Method] Green leaves from the canopy and freshly senesced leaves from the forest floor were analyzed for carbon, nitrogen, and fiber and placed in litter bags in the field for up to 16 weeks. [Result] Green leaves displayed significantly higher rates of decomposition than did senescent litter among all four species. [Result] Green leaves also had significantly higher nitrogen concentrations and lower lignin-to-nitrogen ratios compared to senescent leaves. [Conclusion] These results suggest that green fall may have a major influence on decay processes and nutrient cycling in forests that experience large-scale green foliage removal.

Retrieved from: Fonte and Schowalter, "Decomposition of Greenfall vs. Senescent Foliage in a Tropical Forest Ecosystem in Puerto Rico," Biotropica, 2004.

CONCLUSION

Frequently, when someone is asked to create a report or article, an abstract is included. This normally comes before the main body of the writing and provides a succinct summary of the report or article's subject. To get a fast overview, a reader looks through the abstract. It describes what the reader can expect from the work and ought to be based on all that has been written. This paper is of great importance to those who are aiming at improving research writing skills, namely abstract writing. The paper introduces the importance of an abstract, its types, and a model by Hyland.

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