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Structuring cooperation in doctoral research, transferrable skills training,
and academic writing instruction in Ukraine's regions

Academic Writing

CURRICULUM

Courses description

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UNIT II. WRITING AN ACADEMIC ABSTRACT

1. Introduction

Unit “Writing an Academic Abstract” helps PhD students improve their scientific writing skills needed to report on their research in an academic manner. This module prepares PhD students to produce two types of an academic abstract: an abstract for an academic article and a conference abstract.

2. Aim

The unit aims at developing and/or elaborating PhD students’ skills necessary to:

- (a) submit an abstract for an academic publication,
- (b) submit a conference proposal,
- (c) quickly judge how relevant any article is to their fields of research (without having to read the whole paper),
- (d) attract potential readers’ curiosity and stimulate the target audience to want to read the complete article.

3. Competences

Understand the nature, structure, and stylistic features of an abstract for an academic article.

Master the grammar features, including use of tenses, voice, sentence structure of an abstract for an academic article.

Master the vocabulary and stylistic features of writing an informative and well-balanced abstract for an academic publication.

Understand the nature, structure, and stylistic features of an abstract for an academic conference presentation (conference abstract).

Understand the nature, structure, and stylistic features of a conference abstract.

Master the grammar features, including use tenses, voice, sentence structure of a conference abstract.

Know the typical procedure stages of submitting a conference proposal.

4. Learning Objectives

This unit will develop the PhD students’ ability to:

- avoid unstructured proliferation of ideas;
- capture the main ideas in very clear and short sentences;
- adapt the abstract for different conference and journal requirements.

5. Learning Outcomes

The PhD student will be able to

- write an abstract for an academic publication in compliance with the requirements of a peer-review journal;
- write a conference proposal for an abstract inclusion in a conference program; produce coherent and unified abstract paragraphs with good computer abstract architecture and succinct writing style.

6. Unit Contents

Topic 1. Introduction to the Unit: nature and functions of abstracts. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 2. Types of abstracts. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 3. Abstract structure. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 4. Communicative strategies of abstract writing. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 5. Academic and informative style of abstracts. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 6. The lexical and syntax structure of English abstracts. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 7. The lexical and grammar structure of English abstracts. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 8. Technical aspects of evaluating English abstracts (scaling, assessment, and self-assessment). (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 9. Submitting abstracts: requirements and recommendations. (0,1 ECTS)

Topic 10. Submitting a Conference Abstract: requirements and recommendations. (0,1 ECTS)

Unit duration - (1 ECTS)

7. Assessment

The following descriptions can be used when making an assessment of a PhD student's abstract

Excellent: demonstrates the discourse conventions and style of research writing; communicates complex ideas in an effective way, fulfilling all communicative purposes; can substitute an equivalent term for a word with synonymic constructions; can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, emphasizing the relevant issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion; writes a well-organized, coherent abstract text, using a wide variety of cohesive devices and organizational patterns with flexibility; sections and paragraphs are clearly marked; uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely, uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control, flexibility and sophistication, errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips.

Very good: can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources; develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail text is a well-organized, coherent whole, using a certain number of cohesive devices and organizational patterns with relevant flexibility; sections and paragraphs generally clearly marked and well-organized; uses a range of vocabulary effectively and precisely with a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with relative control and flexibility; errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures;

Good: can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within the research field, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence; communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate; text is well-organized and coherent with a variety of cohesive devices and organizational patterns to generally good effect; uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately; uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility; Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication;

Fair: Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors; can write very brief abstract to a standard conventionalised format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions; text is quite disorganized, using basic linking words and cohesive devices; uses some conventions of the communicative task in appropriate ways to communicate straightforward ideas; text is quite coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices;

Poor: can write simple phrases, the use of connectors and cohesive devices is occasionally appropriate; difficulty in paraphrasing and selecting appropriate

synonyms; inappropriate style and structure of the abstract; has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations; uses some simple structures correctly with systematic basic mistakes in tenses, use of articles etc.; limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire.

Scale:

90-100 – A (excellent)

75-89 – B (good)

60-74 – C (satisfactory)

Up to 59 – D (unsatisfactory)

ASSESSMENT SCALE FOR WRITING ABSTRACTS

Area	Mark	Descriptor
Task Fulfillment		<i>Very good to Excellent:</i> has full control of organization and relevance of information, fully achieves the communicative purpose
		<i>Average to Good:</i> mostly maintains control over the organization and relevance of the information; mostly achieves the communicative purpose; demonstrates enough control over the ideas
		<i>Poor to Fair:</i> not always maintains control over the organization and relevance of the information; partly achieves the communicative purpose
		<i>Very poor:</i> lacks control over the organization and relevance of the information; fails to achieve the communicative purpose
Content		<i>Very good to Excellent:</i> excellent to very good treatment of the subject; considerable variety of ideas; independent and thorough interpretation of the information; content relevant to the topic; accurate detail
		<i>Average to Good:</i> adequate treatment of the topic; some variety of ideas; some independence of interpretation of the topic; reasonably accurate detail
		<i>Poor to Fair:</i> treatment of the topic is fairly adequate; little variety of ideas; some irrelevant content; lack of detail
		<i>Very poor:</i> inadequate treatment of the topic; no variety of ideas; content irrelevant or very

		restricted; almost no useful detail; may fail to address the task with any effectiveness
Organization		<i>Very good to Excellent:</i> fluent expression; ideas clearly stated and supported; appropriately organized paragraphs and sections; logically sequenced (coherence), connectives appropriately used (cohesion); layout is consistent and appropriate
		<i>Average to Good:</i> uneven expression with the main ideas standing out; paragraphing and sectioning evident; logically sequenced; some connectors used; layout is generally appropriate
		<i>Poor to Fair:</i> very uneven expression; ideas difficult to follow; paragraphing and organization do not help the reader understand the main ideas; logical sequence difficult to follow; connectives largely absent; layout may show inconsistencies
		<i>Very poor:</i> lacks fluent expression; ideas very difficult to follow; little sense of paraphrasing and organization; no logical sequence; no connectives; layout is mostly inconsistent
Vocabulary		<i>Very good to Excellent:</i> wide range of vocabulary; accurate choice and use of terms
		<i>Average to Good:</i> adequate range of words; occasional mistakes in the choice and use of words and phrases
		<i>Poor to Fair:</i> limited range of vocabulary; frequent mistakes in the choice and use of words and phrases
		<i>Very poor:</i> very poor range of vocabulary; use of very simple words and phrases; many mistakes in the choice and use of terms; may fail to address his aspect of the task with any effectiveness
Grammar		<i>Very good to Excellent:</i> confident handling of appropriate structures, hardly any errors of agreement, tense, word order, articles, prepositions; meaning never obscured
		<i>Average to Good:</i> well-formed sentences but the choice of structures not always appropriate; some errors of agreement, tense, word order, number, articles, prepositions; meaning sometimes obscured
		<i>Poor to Fair:</i> insufficient range of structures with

		problems mainly in complex constructions; frequent errors of agreement, tense, word order, number, articles, prepositions; meaning sometimes obscured
		<i>Very poor:</i> major problems with structures – and not always appropriate, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, word order, number, articles, prepositions; meaning often obscured; may fail to address his aspect of the task with any effectiveness

Resources:

Bailey, S. (2011). Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students (3rd Ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Jordan, R.R. (1999). Academic Writing Course: Study Skills in English. Essex: Pearson Education Ltd.

Wallwork, Adrian (2012). English for Academic Research: Vocabulary Exercises. New York: Springer.

Carolyn Brimley Norris, Ph.D. (2016). Academic Writing in English - Language Services University of Helsinki .

IELTS Writing (examenglish.com)

Writing an abstract (services.unimelb.edu.au)

Academic Writing and Publishing (inf.ucv.ro)

Writing in an Academic style (sydney.edu.au)

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/index.htm

<http://www.uefap.net/grammar/grammar-in-eap-introduction/grammar-in-eap-example>

https://canvas.hull.ac.uk/courses/213/modules#module_957

http://fbe.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/631566/5_Academic_Writing_1_SentenceStructure_and_Grammar.pdf

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/english-for-uni/conditionals/>

https://canvas.hull.ac.uk/courses/213/modules#module_957