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Giovedì 15 giugno 2017

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Scrittura abstract tesi di laurea
in lingua inglese

OUTLINE

- What is a scientific/academic abstract
- The 4 moves – Le 4 fasi
- Strumenti a disposizione
- Alcuni esempi

1. What is a scientific/academic abstract

«An abstract is the summary of research report, article, proceeding or dissertation. In general, it is the first part of the paper for facilitating readers to quickly consider objectives and significance of the study before making decision whether to further read the full paper”
(Supantranont 2012: 145)

1. What is a scientific/academic abstract

“A summary of the much longer report, and is meant to give the reader an exact and concise knowledge of the full article” (Bhatia 1993)

1. What is the role of a scientific/academic abstract?

TO HELP THE READERS TO ASCERTAIN THE PAPER'S PURPOSE, TO PROVIDE THEM WITH A PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH, AND SOMETIMES TO HELP TO RECALL ITS BASIC CONTENT.

2. Types and content of a scientific/academic abstract

1. Informative abstracts (used in experimental studies, inquiries or surveys. A paraphrase of the full paper.

OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS

1. Indicative abstracts (used in editorials, essays, opinions, conference proceedings, bibliographies, lists and annual reports). **A description rather than a paraphrase.**

IT MAY NOT MENTION METHODOLOGY OR RESULTS

2. Types and content of a scientific/academic abstract

General characteristics (grammatical structures in education and humanities). From a study conducted in the 1990s

- Use of the past tense, third person, passive, non-use of negatives
- Written in **tightly worded sentences**, avoiding repetition, meaningless expressions, superlatives, too many adjectives, illustrations, descriptive details, examples, footnotes, subtitles.
- Length: 450–500 words
- Not a replica of your paper introduction

3. The 4 moves – Le 4 fasi

Genre analysis established the existence of language features in particular genres used for **communication** among **members of the same professional community**.

WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNITY?
THE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC WRITING

3. The 4 moves – Le 4 fasi

In academic writing textual structures are arranged according to MOVES, each move has certain purposes and function for communication.

A MOVE is like a STEP/STAGE having a particular/monor communication purpose to fulfil, which in turn serves the major communicative purpose of the GENRE, i.e. academic writing (Swales, 1990)

3. The 4 moves – Le 4 fasi

1. Introduction (Introducing purposes)
2. Methodology (Describing methodology)
3. Results (Summarising results)
4. Discussion (Presenting conclusions)

3. Available tools to help us write a DECENT abstract

1. Dictionaries

2. The web

3. Corpora

4. Corpus analysis on academic genres and academic abstracts

3.4 Corpus analysis on academic genres and academic abstracts

Move 1. Introducing purposes

Aim/aims/aimed

AIM AS A VERB IN SIMPLE PRESENT ACTIVE MORE
PREFERRED

COLLOCATIONS AFTER AIM: TO/AT/OF

(Cfr. Table 4: 149; Table 7: 151)

3.4 Corpus analysis on academic genres and academic abstracts

Move 2. Methodology – Thesis organization

– THE PRESENT...

– IS DIVIDED/IS ORGANIZED

In the actual methodology move, we find words with the meaning of ‘use’, i.e. *use, apply, employ, propose*.

The words **METHOD** and **APPROACH** are commonly found to tell about the method used in the study

3.4 Corpus analysis on academic genres and academic abstracts

Move 3. Results

- SHOW in present active form
- SHOW/FIND in verb collocation: (results/findings/analysis/method/technique/study/work/thesis) shows/ed (find/found) that....
- FIND also as verb in simple past passive form (...WAS FOUND TO..)
- The noun FINDINGS mostly in the plural form

3.4 Corpus analysis on academic genres and academic abstracts

Move 4. Conclusions

- SUGGEST verb in simple present active form and in collocation:

Study/findings/we/implications/ evidence/analysis
+ suggest(s) that

- When writing conclusions the present tense is used more than the past tense in active and passive forms

4. Alcuni esempi

First person:

First-person pronouns in scientific writing are acceptable if used in a **limited fashion** and to **enhance clarity**.

In other words, don't pepper your paper with I's and We's. But you don't have to rigidly avoid the first person either. For example, use it when stating a nonstandard assumption ("Unlike Day and Gastel, I assumed that..."). Or use it when explaining a personal action or observation ("We decided not to include...").

Finally, follow the conventions in your field.....

4. Alcuni esempi

Forma: interlinea, giustifica paragrafi, capoverso o no (uniformità), uso delle interpunzioni, convenzioni tipografiche.

Stile: precisione nell'uso del lessico, frasi brevi, evitare le lunghe parentetiche, capoverso (indentation).

Indentations signal to the reader that she is about to dive into another topic or start a new section. They help present content in a logical fashion.

You should generally indent each new paragraph within a section *except* the first.

4. Alcuni esempi

WORD ORDER!!

«In the following work, it has been analysed the rule that...»

«For this reason, it has analysed the figure of Idra»

«In the first chapter it is analysed the Anglo-Saxon work..»

«It will be underlined the specific functions...»

«In this section, it is described their religion with the sacred texts...»

4. Alcuni esempi

**COLLOCATIONS, OBSCURE MEANING, REPETITIONS,
ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS, FALSE FRIENDS**

- The figure of dancers??
- In any moment??
- In sum up??
- The study of a case??
- Comparing to??
- Argument???
- Can survive to ??
- «They are able to reach immediately a big audience even if it is physically dispersed»???

CHECKING, CHECKING AND CHECKING

- Use dictionaries
- Google the word/expression!
 - Check corpora
- And always ask yourself:

IS THIS RIGHT?? IS THIS CORRECT??
IN ENGLISH??

CHECKING, CHECKING AND CHECKING

- GOOGLE: <https://www.google.it/>
- CORPUS OF AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH: <http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>
- WORD REFERENCE:
<http://www.wordreference.com/>