WRITING ABSTRACTS

Task 1
Imagine you are a member of a grant committee. Read the following two abstracts for a grant application and decide which project you would fund and justify why. Discuss in pairs/small groups.

Abstract no. 1: Constitutional Right to Environment in Europe

Many European countries have already recognized a human right to environment in their constitutions; this tendency reflects a new legal approach to environmental protection applying human rights instruments to solve environmental problems. The project proposal is aimed at comparing the constitutional right to environment in European states and assessing its impacts for environmental quality. Additionally, the author plans to utilize the experience of other countries to make suggestions for stipulation and interpretation changes in the right to a favourable environment in the Czech Republic. Despite its recognition in our Constitutional Charter, it has been applied only to a small extent up to now. Final results of the project will be a monograph in Czech and an article in English. (120 words)

Abstract no. 2: Constitutional right to environment: European experience and legal ways to enliven the right in the Czech Republic

The human right to a favourable environment, incorporated in the Czech Constitution in 1993, suffers serious insufficiencies based on legislative and interpretative reasons that discourage its successful implementation. The practical non-claimability of this right restricts possible legal ways how the Czech citizens may participate in protecting and defending "their" environment. The proposed project aims at formulating concrete changes in implementing legislation and in interpretation of the right to a favourable environment in the Czech Republic that would turn this constitutional tool into a living legal instrument applicable in judicial proceedings. To that purpose, the applicant of the project intends to learn from positive experience of those European countries that show successful results in litigating the right to environment, compare their way of enacting the right in legislation and of interpreting it in courts, and propose legal paths to bring the inefficient right to life. (144 words)

Task 2
In each abstract, underline the sentence which presents a problem to be solved. Who will benefit from the project? How?

Task 3
In each abstract, identify moves 1-5, if available, and comment on their explicitness.

Task 4
Put the following sentences from abstracts into an order according to the rules stated in the analysis of the Nature article. Are any of the moves missing from the abstracts?

Abstract 1

a/ In terms of the verb tense in each move, the preferred pattern was as follows: the present tense usually occurred in the first, second, and fifth move, while the past tense was often used in the third and fourth moves.
b/ It is hoped that with detailed analyses of abstracts, the results of this study may serve as a complement to the guidelines for novice writers to construct a proper research article abstract in applied linguistics.
c/ The results showed that the abstracts analyzed tended to take a four-move structure instead of a five-move one as proposed in literature.
d/ This study examined 90 research article abstracts in three applied linguistics journals (i.e., *TESOL Quarterly*, *Applied Linguistics*, and *Language Learning*) from two dimensions: the move structure features and the verb tense of each move.
e/ In addition, since some publishers have word limits on abstract length, authors would usually follow the publisher's guideline accordingly, thus there existing some differences concerning the move structure features among the abstracts in the three journals.

f/ It was also found that there were some variations between the abstracts written by native speakers and non-native speakers of English.
(adapted from Tseng, F. (2011): p.27)

Abstract 2

a/ However, within two years most of them relapse, mainly due to low levels of insight into the illness and nonadherence to their oral medication.

b/ Early application of long-acting injectable second-generation antipsychotics can significantly reduce the risk of relapse in the future and thus improve not only the social and working potential of patients with schizophrenia but also their quality of life.

c/ Therefore, although the formal data available is limited, many experts recommend prescribing long-acting injectable second-generation antipsychotics (mostly risperidone or alternatively paliperidone) in the early stages of schizophrenia, particularly in patients who have benefited from the original oral molecule in the past and agree to receive long-term injectable treatment.
d/ Approximately 80% of patients with the first-episode schizophrenia reach symptomatic remission after antipsychotic therapy.
(adapted from Přikryl, R. (2012): p.29)

Abstract 3

a/ It is suggested that sociological, ethnographic, cross-cultural, translatological, pedagogical and critical approaches may enrich the current understanding of written academic genres.

b/ After reviewing some of the central notions attached to the discipline of genre analysis of written academic discourse, the paper argues for an extension of the traditional research agenda by calling for a broad sociolinguistics of genre.

c/ They can do so by revealing some of the ideologies and implicit norms on which particular disciplines rely in the discursive production and reproduction of knowledge, as well as the textual practices present in the transformation, recontextualization, translation, editing, etc., that may affect the eventual form of the academic texts produced, in particular, by non-native scholars coming from other cultural and academic backgrounds than the dominant global English-language model.

d/ The text discusses the position of local academic traditions in the modern context of global academic discourse dominated by the Anglo-American rhetorical style that represents the standard for modern international academic communication.
(adapted from Chovanec, J. (2012): p.5)

Task 5
Order the following sentences of an abstract about treating patient suffering from anxiety so that a coherent whole is created. The first sentence (1) and sentence (10) have been kept in place.

(1) Randomized controlled trials have established that individual cognitive therapy based on the Clark andWells (1995) model is an effective treatment for social anxiety disorder that is superior to a range of alternative psychological and pharmacological interventions.

(2) A cohort of 11 patients meeting DSM-IV criteria for social anxiety disorder worked through the programme and were assessed at pre-treatment and posttreatment.

(3) Nine patients (82%) were classified as treatment responders and seven (64%) even achieved remission status.

(4) iCT implements all key features of the face-to-face treatment; including video feedback, attention training, behavioural experiments, and memory focused techniques.

(5) However, normally the treatment involves up to as many as 14 weekly face-to-face therapy sessions, making it a time-consuming procedure.

(6) iCT shows promise as a way of reducing therapist time without compromising efficacy.

(7) No patients dropped out.

(8) Further evaluation of iCT is ongoing.

(9) Therapist support is via a built-in secure messaging system and by brief telephone calls.

(10) Therapist time per patient was only 20% of that in face-to-face CT.

(11) We therefore developed an internet based version of the treatment (iCT) that requires less therapist time.

(12) Improvements in social anxiety and related process variables were within the range of those observed in randomized controlled trials of face-to-face CT.

(adapted from Stott et al., 2013, *"Internet-Delivered Cognitive Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder: A Development Pilot Series"*)

Task 6
Write down the first draft of your abstract for the final conference at the end of the course. Follow the structure suggested.

Task 7
Fill in the gaps in the following abstract using the expressions below.

In spite of a recent _____ (1) on the developmental nature of sexuality, the counselling profession does not promote a consistent _____ (2) of sexuality or guidelines for conducting sexuality counselling. Using_____ (3), this study was conducted to examine the construct "sexuality" and "sexuality counselling" from counsellors' _____ (4). One synchronous online _____ (5) and two online individual interviews were conducted with counsellors predominantly in the Southeastern United States. _____ (6) from the _____ (7) include: sexuality is multi-dimensional; sexuality is developmental; sexuality counseling is dialectical; and sexuality training in counseling is insufficient. Implications of these findings for counselors, counselor education, training, and supervision are discussed.

themes; focus group; data; emphasis; perspectives; a qualitative approach; definition

Task 8
Study the following clauses and decide which of the following they describe: the general background/situation, the problem, the aim(s), the method(s), the results or the implications. Then decide if you yourself could use the phrase in your own abstract writing.

a/ While the XXX has been shown to be essential for embryo development, ...

b/ Furthermore, (these quantitative methods) allow one to tackle large-scale problems that would otherwise be insoluble by ...

c/ Our data indicate that...

d/ This broad absorption may be explained by...

e/ Here, we describe the generation of heterozygous...

f/ In this paper, I use a combination of these two strategies to argue that ......

g/ There are two obvious ways of questioning (the thesis/argument): first, arguing that ...., and, second, arguing that .....

h/ However, (someone's) account of the issue does not address the ....

i/ Against this claim, the question of .... comes up in two ways. First, if…; Second, ...

j/ I will question to what extent ...... and whether (an experience of) ....

k/ The aim of this contrastive study of .... is to contribute to the theoretical understanding of...

l/ In this paper, I seek to investigate the limits of ......

Task 9
Read the introduction and part of the conclusion of a research article on academic writing in English below and identify the five abstract moves. Then, on the basis of the identification, try to formulate an abstract to the article.

Chamonikolasová, J. and J. Stašková (2005): 'Some Difficulties Facing Native Speakers of Czech and Slovak in Writing in English'

Introduction

In the last fifty years, the English language has become the language of international political, business, and academic discourse, and the ability to communicate in English has become largely indispensable. The feasibility of acquiring a foreign language is determined by the learner's natural abilities, as well as the extent of his/her exposure to the language in spoken and written communication. Other factors influencing foreign language acquisition are differences in the grammatical and lexical systems of the target language and the learner's native language, cultural differences, and – especially in acquiring advanced writing skills – differences in stylistic norms (cf. Čmejrková 1994, Chamonikolasová 2005, and Stašková 2005). The present paper looks into some of the difficulties experienced by native speakers of Czech and Slovak in writing texts in English.

The study is based on our experience in teaching academic writing to students majoring in English studies, who are expected to master the writing of academic essays, and write their final dissertation in English. We have analyzed errors in Czech and Slovak essays written as assignments for our courses. We chose 30 essays (15 written by Czech and 15 by Slovak students) that were comparable in regard to length (500-600 words) and writing style (a literary interpretation and an argumentative essay), as well as the authors' level of language skills (BA students of English). The sample that our data are based on is not very large, and we do not intend to draw any final conclusions about the frequencies of different error types. Instead, we intend to show what specific problems native speakers of two Slavic languages have to solve, and outline areas that deserve special attention in the process of teaching and learning academic writing.

Conclusion

Although errors in coherence represent only 9.6 per cent of all errors in our material, they deserve special attention: they occur not only in the essays of weaker students (i.e. essays containing high numbers of grammatical and lexical errors), but also in the essays of students with a very good command of English grammar and vocabulary. The most common causes of incoherencies in writing are lack of development of writing habits, lack of thinking about the topic, and lack of revising and re-drafting. Strategies leading to coherent writing include exercises in combining thoughts into one complex whole, joining sentences by means of conjunctions and relative pronouns, gap filling, loop writing, and précis writing (cf. Hrehovþík and Uberman 2003; Axelrod and Cooper 1991; Laaken, Landkamp and Smith 2001). Students' awareness of errors and inaccuracies can be increased through in-class analyses of sample essays (e.g. localizing the thesis, writing a descriptive outline of the paragraphs), peer editing of students' assignment essays, and by means of feedback from the teacher. Coherence has a very high priority in Anglo-American writing, and native speakers of English are more sensitive to inaccuracies in coherence than native speakers of Czech and Slovak, who often do not see the discrepancies and logical inaccuracies in their own texts. In our opinion, it should be the focus of academic writing courses to increase the students' sensitivity to text coherence and to develop their ability to present ideas clearly, logically, and linearly. A deeper analysis of coherence errors might be a good starting point for the creation of a handbook of coherent writing offering exercises addressing the difficulties of Czech and Slovak writers outlined in this paper.

Task 9
Return to your abstract from Task 6 and rewrite it using the language structures discussed in exercises 7-8.

Task 10
The following abstract is a model abstract full of hazy and suspicious language. Match the bold parts (a-q) with their translated meanings (1-16).

While it has not been possible to provide definite answers to specific questions (a) regarding the investigation of (insert topic), **it is generally believed (b)** and in some scientific communities **has long been known (c)**, that the consequences of such research are **of great theoretical and practical importance (d)**. In the present research, **a total of (insert number) samples (e)** were selected for detailed study using **modified random procedures (f)**. During the course of the analysis, data from certain samples was excluded due to extreme uncharacteristic scores, while the remaining (insert number) sets of data were employed in the main analysis. Further data, such as certain (insert descriptor) variables were collected from the respondents, and the results of this analysis **will be reported on at a later date (g)**. **Typical results (h)** are presented in figures one through ten. As indicated, **these findings are correct within an acceptable order of magnitude (i).** In comparing these results with other research, t**he most significant findings to date were those of (insert name) (j)**. If data were to be collected over an extended period of time, **it might be argued (k)** that there is indeed a substantial amount of validity to the previously formulated hypotheses **(insert name, 20__) (l)**. It is clear **that**

much additional research will be required before a complete understanding (m) of the issue is obtained. **It is hoped that this work will stimulate further study in the area (n).**
Note: **Thanks are due to (insert name) for assistance with the experiment (p)**, **and to (insert name) for valuable advice in the preparation of the manuscript (q)**.

1 The experiment did not work out, but I figured I could get some publicity anyway.
2 Forget that one, baby.
3 Wrong.
4 I'll be damned if I understand it.
5 I haven't bothered to look up the original reference.
6 (Insert name) explained what it meant to me.
7 (Insert name) was a student of mine.
8 This paper is not very good, but neither are the others on this miserable subject. (I don't plan to fool around with it anymore.)
9 The results of the other samples did not make sense and were ignored.
10 (Insert name) did the work.
11 I got who I could to volunteer.
12 I think.
13 I have such a good response to this argument that I want to be sure to use it.
14 My best results are shown.
15 Interesting to me.
16 Here's a chance to cite a friend and repay a similar favour.

References:

Chamonikolasová, Jana and Jaroslava Stašková. "Some Difficulties Facing Native Speakers of Czech and Slovak in Writing in English". *Theory and Practice in English Studies 3: Proceedings from the Eighth Conference of British, American and Canadian Studies*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2005, 53-59.

Chovanec, Jan. "Written Academic Discourse in English: From Local Traditions to Global Outreach". *Brno Studies in English*, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 5-16.

Přikryl, Radovan. „Risperidone long-acting injectable in the treatment of the first episode schizophrenia patients." *Česká a slovenská psychiatrie*, Praha: Galén, 2012, Vol. 108/2012, No. 1, p. 29-34.

Stott, Richard et al. *"*Internet-Delivered Cognitive Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder: A Development Pilot Series.*" Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 2013, Vol. 41, p. 383–397.

Tseng, Fan-ping. „Analyses of Move Structure and Verb Tense of Research Article Abstracts in Applied Linguistics Journals." *International Journal of English Linguistics*, Toronto: Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2011, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-39.

SMALL TALK AT A CONFERENCE

Task 1: Listen to the five conversations and write down sentences which function as conversation openers and conversation closers in each case. Which conversations are successful?

Conversation openers:

1/

2/

3/

4/

5/

Conversation closers:

1/

2/

3/

4/

5/

Successful conversations:

Further ways to open a conversation:

How did you hear about this event?

Hi, I don't know too many people here, so I wanted to introduce myself. I'm [name] and I work at [company].

How's your day going?

What a beautiful venue. Have you been here before?

So, on a scale of 1 to undrinkable, how terrible is the Chardonnay?

I can't believe how under-dressed I am for this event.

It's so hot (or cold) in here.

Man, I hate networking.

(adapted from *https://www.themuse.com/advice/30-brilliant-networking-conversation-starters*)

Further ways to end a networking conversation:

Laura, it's been great getting to know you, but I need to say hello to a few more folks around here. I hope you have a great evening.

Mike, I'm in a tricky stage in my career and wonder if I could pick your brain for advice over lunch some time soon. I need to say hello to a few others here, but can we plan to connect next week?

I had a great time talking with you—are you planning to go to the expo next month? It seems like something that would be relevant to both of us, so maybe we could go together.

Margaret, I have to head out right now, but I really enjoyed learning more about your work. Could I get your contact info to schedule a time for us to finish our conversation?

Steve, it was really a pleasure speaking with you. I'm going to take a look at some of the other exhibits here, but if I don't run into you later, I hope to see you at another event soon.

(adapted from https://www.themuse.com/advice/nonawkward-ways-to-start-and-end-networking-conversations)

Task 2: Decide on two topics from the list on the handout which you want to talk about. Approach a fellow conferee and start a conversation using a conversation opener. Then try to move the conversation in the direction of one of your selected topics. If the fellow conferee does not respond warmly to the first topic, try the other topic. If the fellow conferee does not seem to like the other topic either, end the conversation using one of the conversation closers above and move on.