



ACADEMIC WRITING for international students (English programme) SPRING 2016
SESSION 2 (selected activities)



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IN THE SESSION THE FOLLOWING AREAS WILL BE COVERED:

- 1. REVISION OF TOPICS COVERED IN THE PREVIOUS SESSION + HOMEWORK**
- 2. ABSTRACTS AND THE WRITING OF ABSTRACTS**
 - TYPES OF ABSTRACTS
 - TYPICAL FEATURES OF ABSTRACTS
 - LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF A PUBLISHED ABSTRACT
 - WRITING ABSTRACTS AND THEIR PEER-REVIEW
- 3. STUDENT PRESENTATIONS ON BACKGROUND LITERATURE**
- 4. GRAMMAR: COHESIVE DEVICES – LINKING EXPRESSIONS FOR SENTENCE STRUCTURE**

E-learning:

<https://is.muni.cz/auth/el/1411/jaro2016/aVLAWo61/index.qwarp>

I. DISCUSSION ON WRITING STRATEGIES

Discuss these possible writing strategies with a partner. Which one/ones do you use a lot? If you rarely or never use some of the strategies, discuss why you do not.

1. **Translating.**

2. Spending a lot of time on **gathering information** or **doing research** and then quickly writing your paper from your notes, data sources, or outlines.

3. Referring to one or more “**model**” **papers in your discipline**, noticing in particular such matters as how the papers are organized, how phrases are used, and where and why examples or illustrations are provided.

4. **Relying on a mentor** (either native or non-native speaker) who “knows the ropes” and can anticipate how a particular written text might be received by a particular set of readers or reviewers, and who may also be able to offer advice on which journal or conference a piece might be submitted to and why.

5. **Relying on friends** who are not in your field to help you with phraseology.

6. Developing a sense of the **anticipated audience**, particularly with regard to what needs to be said and what does not.

7. Recognizing the need for some **stylistic variation** and acquiring the linguistic resources to achieve this.

8. **Finding useful phraseology** from other, possibly published papers and using it to string your ideas together.

9. Constructing an appropriate author “persona”, so that you come across as **a member of the disciplinary community**.

10. Concentrating on making sure your **sentence-level grammar** is accurate because that is the most important aspect of getting your ideas across.

II. ABSTRACTS AND WRITING OF ABSTRACTS:

Structure

1. Background/introduction
2. Purpose
3. Methods/materials
4. Results/findings
5. Discussion/conclusion

1. Each section answers some implied questions. Match the following questions with the sections above.

- a. What was discovered? Section ____
- b. How was the research done? Section ____
- c. What do we know about the topic and why is it important? Section ____
- d. What do the findings mean? Section ____
- e. What is this study about? Section ____

2. Here is an abstract from a published paper. It is 178 words long. Read it through looking for the main function of each sentence (background, purpose, methods, results, and discussion).

Warmer Climates Boost Cyanobacterial Dominance in Shallow Lakes¹

(1) Dominance by cyanobacteria hampers human use of lakes and reservoirs worldwide. (2) Previous studies indicate that excessive nutrient loading and warmer conditions promote dominance by cyanobacteria, but evidence from global scale field data has so far been scarce. (3) In this paper we show that although warmer climates do not result in higher overall phytoplankton biomass, the percentage of the total phytoplankton biovolume attributable to cyanobacteria increases steeply with temperature. (4) Our analysis is based on a study of 143 lakes along a latitudinal transect ranging from subarctic Europe to southern South America. (5) Our results reveal that the percent cyanobacteria is greater in lakes with high rates of light absorption. (6) This points to a positive feedback because restriction of light availability is often a consequence of high phytoplankton biovolume, which in turn may be driven by nutrient loading. (7) Our results indicate a synergistic effect of nutrients and climate. (8) The implications are that in a future warmer climate, nutrient concentrations may have to be reduced substantially from present values in many lakes if cyanobacterial dominance is to be controlled.

¹ (Kosten, S. et al. (2012), Warmer climates boost cyanobacterial dominance in shallow lakes. *Global Change Biology*, 18: 118-126.)

3. Answer the following questions about the abstract.

- a. Are introductory statements general or specific?
- b. Are they in first person or third person style?
- c. What tense is used?

4. Read the sentences below and fill in the gaps with one of the following verbs:

develops - calls - argues - provides - looks - consider

- a. This paper _____ an axiomatic basis for a representation of personal preferences in which ...
- b. The authors _____ a broad class of situations where a society must choose from a finite set of alternatives.
- c. This paper _____ that the analysis of these games involves a key technical issue.
- d. This paper _____ at the effectiveness of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in reducing the time that manufacturing plants spend in a state of non-compliance.
- e. This study _____ into question the established view that lack of information on clean-up cost functions represents a serious problem ...
- f. This paper _____ a model of corporate hierarchy in which workers accumulate heterogeneous human capital suitable for different positions within the hierarchy.

5. Sometimes, the Methods section sentences are expressed in the passive form. Rewrite the following sentences using the passive voice.

- a. We then monitored the physicochemical parameters of the lake water for 1 year.

- b. We collected samples for particulate toxin analysis from more than 140 lakes...

- c. We detected microcystins in nearly 50% of the samples.

6. Read the following conference abstract on conference abstracts © Complete it with the following phrases:

has not yet become a subject of research As a result, this study raises a broader question

This paper attempts to describe to provide some tentative explanations

plays a significant role It will also be shown This issue will be discussed

can be regarded as has been investigated

Cultural Variation in the Genre of the Conference Abstract: Rhetorical and Linguistic Dimensions

The conference abstract is a common and important genre that A. _____ in disseminating new knowledge within scientific communities, both national and international. As a genre with the specific features of "interestingness" created to attract the attention of reviewing committees, the conference abstract B. _____ by Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995) and Swales (1996). However, the issue of cultural variation in the genre C. _____, although the conference abstract, like other genres of academic discourse, can be presumed to reflect national proclivities in writing.

D. _____ the cultural-specific differences of English versus Ukrainian and Russian conference abstracts on the level of their cognitive structure and language, and E. _____ of the cultural and ideological backgrounds underlying these rhetorical and textlinguistic preferences. F. _____ how the inherited cognitive patterns of Slavic writers interplay with the acquired stereotypes of English scientific discourse in the abstracts they construct in English. These texts, hybrid from the viewpoint of their cultural shaping, G. _____ evidence of the transition period typical of both sociopolitical and intellectual life of Ukraine and other states of the former Soviet Union. H. _____: To what extent is it necessary to adopt the English conventions of this genre in order to be accepted and recognized by international fora? I. _____ in connection with the pedagogical implications arising from the findings and observations of this study.

Interesting phrases: tentative explanations, national proclivities

7. Read the following sentences from different abstracts. Each sentence contains a problem in usage (grammar or vocabulary). Identify and fix the problems.

- a. In this contribution are described several problems with toxic cyanobacterial blooms in Brno Reservoir.
- b. We are also focused on the implementation of new technologies for the management of harmful algal blooms.
- c. The aim of the paper is to deal with the problematic of cyanobacterial influence on tourism.
- d. It was tested by the study whether specific cyanobacteria would react to the applied strategies...
- e. The paper is devoted to the analysis of problems with cyanobacteria.
- f. Laboratory animals are not susceptible to these diseases, so research on them is hampered.
- g. Our results are similar to previous studies.

SUMMARY: 4 Cs of abstract writing:

Complete: it covers the major parts of the project/case

Concise: it contains no excess wordiness or unnecessary information

Clear: it is readable, well organized, and not too jargon-laden

Cohesive: it flows smoothly between the parts

Abstract should include:

- background/introduction
- purpose
- methods (or other disciplinary research process)
- results (if required)
- recommendations, implications, or significance (if required)
- key words

II. LINKING WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS:

1. Complete the table with examples of linking words and expressions.

MEANING	LINKING EXPRESSIONS FOR BOTH INFORMAL AND FORMAL USE	LINKING EXPRESSIONS FOR VERY FORMAL USE
ADDITION	and	additionally
CAUSE-EFFECT / REASON		
CONDITION		
CONTRAST / OPPOSITION		
EXAMPLE		
SUMMARY – CONCLUSION		
TIME		

2. Decide which type of linking expressions the following sentences belong to.

1. **Moreover**, travel information is very important for route planning.
2. We suspect they are trying to hide something, **hence** the need for an independent inquiry.
3. He **subsequently** became the chairman of the party.
4. Estimates suggest that the effects will continue, **but** at a more moderate rate.
5. There is a serious problem in the district, **namely** unemployment.
6. This poses a threat to agriculture and the food chain, and **consequently** to human health.
7. **Both** the husband **and** the wife were similarly successful in their chosen careers.
8. Some of the studies show positive results, **whereas** others do not.
9. The results are important for scientific research **in general** and geography **in particular**.
10. There is little chance that we will succeed in changing the law. **Nevertheless**, it is important that we try.
11. **Unless** I'm mistaken, she was back at work yesterday.

3. Join together the following sentences.

1. She wasn't very rich. She gave money to the beggar. (**although**)

2. He left early. He wanted to arrive on time. (**so that**)

3. You can go out tonight. You must tell us where you are going. (**provided**)

4. I don't earn a big salary. But if I did, I wouldn't buy a car. (**even if**)

5. Take a sandwich. There might be no restaurant. (**in case**)

6. There was a lot of noise. He managed to sleep. (**despite**)

7. Sue likes Opera. Joe prefers jazz. (They have different tastes.) (**whereas**)

8. The weather was bad. They enjoyed the trip. (**even though**)

9. He had the 'flu. He went to work. (**in spite of**)

10. You have to put the alarm on. If not, it won't work. (**unless**)

4. Test what you have learnt. Select a suitable conjunction in each sentence.

1. Polls show that Tony Blair is the most popular Prime Minister this century. _____, there are even members of his own party who are uneasy with his approach.

In particular	However	For instance
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2. There are some slight variations in temperature, but _____ 26 to 27°C should be expected.

consequently	otherwise	as a rule
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3. The two main Channel Islands, _____ Jersey and Guernsey, are much closer to France than to England.

for example	namely	in particular
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4. It was announced that nurses' working hours would be increased by 25%. _____, even fewer trainee nurses are expected to join the profession.

As a result	So that	Likewise
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5. Sales of CDs have experienced a small but steady fall over the past 12 months. _____, vinyl records have seen an increase in their share of the market, up to 1.7%.

Above all	Correspondingly	In contrast
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6. The Vice Chancellor explained that in light of the current financial climate and because of unexpected bad debts, it would be necessary to peg salary levels at their current level for all grades of staff. _____, no-one was getting a pay rise.

Nevertheless	In other words	Similarly
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7. It is clear, therefore, that the situation in Brazil will improve only slowly. _____ the economic problems being experienced in Japan, the outlook is slightly more optimistic.

Furthermore	In comparison	With reference to
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8. In order to try to reduce car use in the inner cities, the government has announced new restrictions on company parking spaces and _____, a new tax on individual car use.

as well as	in addition	in the same way
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9. Essays must be handed in by the deadline, _____ they will not be marked.

obviously	otherwise	as a result
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10. _____ it has been shown that fractures can occur at even relatively low pressures, the use of the material should not be completely discounted.

Nevertheless	Because	Even though
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