

CUFE, M. Sc. MPM, 2014-2015

Summaries and Abstracts

When do people write abstracts?

- when submitting articles to journals
- when applying for research grants
- when writing a proposal
- when completing the Ph.D. or M.A. theses
- when writing proposal for conference papers
- When summarizing the contents of work
- when are asked to summarize a text.
- ...

Summaries/Abstracts

- ✓ Are condensation of the text**
- ✓ Are written for long reports/ articles**
- ✓ Are aid to the memory**
- ✓ Are read first to discover content**

Content

- ✓ Includes thesis
- ✓ emphasizes what is new
- ✓ Stresses objectives, conclusions and recommendations.
 - Introduction: one or two sentences
 - Body: Briefly touch necessary details to clarify message
 - Includes
Conclusions/recommendations
- ✓ Has rules: Do not use "I" or a figure in the abstracts

Three forms: Informative, descriptive, and indicative (mixed).

Summarize

The two processes, speaking and writing, are not identical. Writing is not simply speech written down on paper. Learning to write is not just a natural extension of learning to speak a language. We learned to speak our first language at home without systematic instruction; whereas, most of us had to be taught in school how to write that same language. Many adult native speakers of a language find writing difficult. A speaker speaks to a listener who is right there, nodding or frowning, or interrupting or questioning. For the writer, the reader's response is either delayed or nonexistent.

1- Descriptive Abstract

This paragraph advances differences between speaking and writing. (5 words)

2- Informative Abstract

Speaking and writing, are not identical. The paragraph shows that writing is not speech; learning to write is not the same as learning to speak. It highlights difficulties of writing. Feedback obtained in both cases is different. *All these differences plaid for teaching writing.*

1

1- Descriptive Abstract

This paragraphs advances differences between speaking and writing. (5 words)

2

2- Informative Abstract

Speaking and writing, are not identical. The paragraph shows that writing is not speech; learning to write is not the same as learning to speak. It highlights difficulties of writing. Feedback obtained in both cases is different. *All these differences plaid for teaching writing.*

3

3- Indicative Abstract

This paragraphs advances differences between speaking and writing. It mentions three arguments: writing is not natural, is difficult, and is conventional. These arguments plaid for teaching how to write.

Descriptive Abstracts

- ✓ **Lists key element/topics without details**
- ✓ **Rarely exceeds few sentences**

Examples of Descriptive statements

The essay lists the natures and functions of summaries. The ways the readers use summaries are mentioned briefly. A distinction between descriptive and informative is made, and the advantages and disadvantages are compared.

This report discusses production problems, raw-material supply-difficulties, and changes in sales.

Informative Abstracts (IS)

- ✓ **should be independent by itself**
- ✓ **length is proportional to the form**

Examples of IS

- ✓ **The cost of merchandise has been dependent on the cost of ingredients, cost of labor, availability of raw material, promptness of delivery, and volume of demands.**
- ✓ **Aging of the foam reduces its thermal resistivity by 7%.**

Rules of Thumb for All Abstracts

Summaries for Empirical Reports

One or two sentences for the introduction, few sentences for the method, and the last half states the conclusions.

Summaries for Action Reports

Introduce the topic, state actions, recommendations and give the main reasons for recommendations, follow with cost, savings, time, and evidence.

Use no formulas

Tell what is new or to know

Use direct, active sentences

“International cooperation is important” not

“The importance of the international cooperation is emphasized.”

Do not write "The collapse of the element was for two reasons, of which the first was the increase in the pressure and the second was the increase in the temperature."

But write "the element failed for two reasons: the pressure had increased over 1500 psi, and the temperature exceeded 325° F."

Contents of the Abstract

Part	Function
Introduction	Establishes context of the paper and motivates the research
Purpose	Indicates purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper.
Methods	Provides information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc.
Product	States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished.
Conclusion & Recommendations	Summarizes results and extends them beyond the paper, draws inferences, points to applications/wider applications. Shows Impact and recommendations