



# STOU TALK

Department of Research and Development  
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## 2-3-4: The Magic Number for Abstract Writing

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# Plan for the day..

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- Greeting and breaking the ice
- Evidence for inspiration
- Getting to know **the abstract**
- The magic number is **2-3-4**.
- **4 strategies** for writing an abstract
- **Analysing samples**
- **A mock topic for your abstract**
- **Choosing a good target journal: experience sharing**



## First, let's break the ice and hear your expectations

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- Ask me **3 questions** about the topic of this STOU talk today.
- Then, tell me **1 interesting fact** about yourself.
- What do you expect to gain/learn from this session?

([menti.com](https://www.menti.com))



# Academic/Professional genres

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- Lab reports
- Assignments
- End-of-year reviews/Progress reports
- Dissertations
- Abstracts
- Manuscripts/research articles
- etc.



# Abstracts as an academic/professional genre

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- When?
- What?
- Who?
- For what?
- What included?

# Abstracts as an academic/professional genre

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- \* *the synopsis of an article (Bhatia, 1993)*
- \* *an advance indicator of the content and structure of the article, a representation of the article (Swales, 1990) or*
- \* *a crystallisation of the whole article (Salager-Meyer, 1990)*

*'a description or **factual summary** of the much longer report, and is meant to give the reader an **exact and concise** knowledge of the full article'* (Bhatia, 1993, p. 78)

This information relates what the author(s) **did**, how **did** the author(s) do that, what the author(s) **found out**, and lastly, what suggestions or conclusions the author(s) want to provide.



# Two formats of abstract

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- Structured
- Unstructured

# Structured abstract

**PubMed.gov**  
US National Library of Medicine  
National Institutes of Health

PubMed

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[Clin Toxicol \(Phila\)](#). 2014 Jun;52(5):525-30. doi: 10.3109/15563650.2014.913175. Epub 2014 May 5.

**Evaluation of dexmedetomidine therapy for sedation in patients with toxicological events at an academic medical center.**

[Mohorn PL](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Vakkalanka JP](#), [Rushton W](#), [Hardison L](#), [Woloszyn A](#), [Holstege C](#), [Corbett SM](#).

**Author information**

**Abstract**

**INTRODUCTION:** Although clinical use of dexmedetomidine (DEX), an alpha2-adrenergic receptor agonist, has increased, its role in patients admitted to intensive care units secondary to toxicological sequelae has not been well established.

**OBJECTIVES:** The primary objective of this study was to describe clinical and adverse effects observed in poisoned patients receiving DEX for sedation.

**METHODS:** This was an observational case series with retrospective chart review of poisoned patients who received DEX for sedation at an academic medical center. The primary endpoint was incidence of adverse effects of DEX therapy including bradycardia, hypotension, seizures, and arrhythmias. For comparison, vital signs were collected hourly for the 5 h preceding the DEX therapy and every hour during DEX therapy until the therapy ended. Additional endpoints included therapy duration; time within target Richmond Agitation Sedation Score (RASS); and concomitant sedation, analgesia, and vasopressor requirements.

**RESULTS:** Twenty-two patients were included. Median initial and median DEX infusion rates were similar to the commonly used rates for sedation. Median heart rate was lower during the therapy (82 vs. 93 beats/minute,  $p < 0.05$ ). Median systolic blood pressure before and during therapy was similar (111 vs. 109 mmHg,  $p = 0.745$ ). Five patients experienced an adverse effect per study definitions during therapy. No additional adverse effects were noted. Median time within target RASS and duration of therapy was 6.5 and 44.5 h, respectively. Seventeen patients (77%) had concomitant use of other sedation and/or analgesia with four (23%) of these patients requiring additional agents after DEX initiation. Seven patients (32%) had concomitant vasopressor support with four (57%) of these patients requiring vasopressor support after DEX initiation.

**CONCLUSION:** Common adverse effects of DEX were noted in this study. The requirement for vasopressor support during therapy warrants further investigation into the safety of DEX in poisoned patients. Larger, comparative studies need to be performed before the use of DEX can be routinely recommended in poisoned patients.

PMID: 24792780 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]



# Abstracts: Content and structure (1)

(Bhatia, 1993)

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A 4-move framework for a typical abstract, which comprises:

- *Introducing purpose:* outlining objectives or goals of the experiment
- *Describing methodology:* providing a good indication of the experiment design, including information on data, procedures and methods
- *Summarising results:* offering observations and findings, and suggesting solutions to the problem
- *Presenting conclusions:* interpreting results and drawing conclusions

# Abstracts: Content and structure (2)

(Hyland, 2000)

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*A 5 rhetorical moves in article abstracts:*

- **Introduction:** Establishes context of the paper and motivates the research or discussion (I)
- **Purpose:** Indicates purposes, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper (P)
- **Method:** Provides information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc (M)
- **Product:** States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished (Pr)
- **Conclusion:** Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draw inferences, points to applications or wider implications (C)

# Abstracts: Content and structure (3)

(Lores, 2004)

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Swales' Create a Research Space (CARS) structure for **indicative type** of abstract

- *Move 1*: A general indication of **context** or territory where the research was conducted
- *Move 2*: A reference to any perceived gap or questions in the knowledge of the topic under study **REAL WORLD PROBLEMS**
- *Move 3*: An announcement of the **principle findings and ways they can fill up the gap or answers to the questions** indicated earlier

# Abstracts: Content and structure (4)

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More abstracts these days display a mixed type of informative-indicative abstracts:  
*Combinatory type*

- o The abstract starts with a CARS structure.
- o The IMRD is embedded in the last Move of CARS.

# Four features or strategies

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- Move reversal
- **Move recycling**
- Move balance
- Move embedding

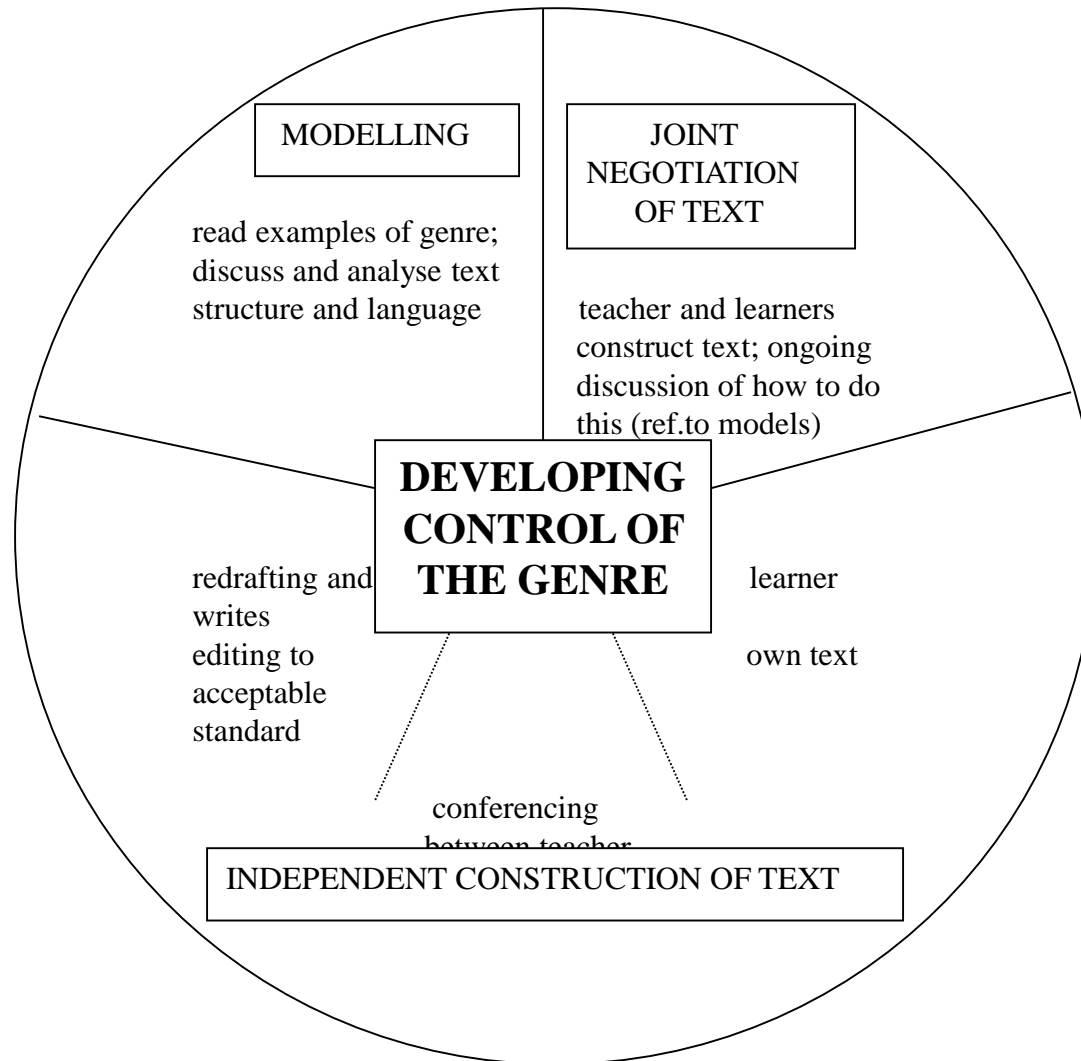


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# Theory VS Practice

# Writing an abstract: Genre-based approach

(Burns, 2001)



# Doing abstract analysis

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- Read the abstract samples, and try to decide what type of abstract they are.
- Divide the content into Moves you have learned today.
- Then, do some more analysis of abstract samples provided.
- Study language of each Move and make notes.





# Language of the Introduction

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- Factual background information
- Tense: Present Tense or Present Perfect
- Phrase or Fraction of the sentence which represents Theory



# Language of the Purpose

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- Fixed phrases informing the objectives or purposes of the research
- Tense: either past or present simple

# Language of the Materials and Method

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- Action Verbs [*perform, use, simulate, build, determine, calculate, model, investigate, measure, compare*]
- Passive Voice [was used, was simulated]
- Tense: past simple
- Subject [Non-human e.g. materials and chemicals]



# Language of the Results or Products

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- Perceptive Verbs [found, seen, shown, indicated, pointed to]
- Existential form: There was, there were
- Passive voice
- Tense: Mostly past tense
- Subject: Non-human



# Language of the Conclusion

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- Interpretive Verbs : [Summarize, conclude, elucidate]
- Pick words according to your own interpretation.
- Still not clear cut solution in the research finding: use Hedging words such as might, MAY, should, plausibly, possibly



# Writing your own abstract

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- Pick an aspect which is worth publishing.
- Decide which type of abstract you want to go with.
- Prepare information suitable for each move.
- Try assembling the information together to make an abstract.



# Final thoughts

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- The 3 models are only the most frequently found ones, not the perfect one you have to follow.
- Analysis of any abstract helps you decide what is good and bad, and it gives you new ideas about how to write a good one.
- For the language, practicing typical linguistic features of each Move makes perfect.

# Matching your manuscript with a journal

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- Relevance: Topic, methodology, and even region
- 2. Impact: Indexing database
- Acceptance and rejection rates: Proportionate to the impact you aim for
- 1. Familiarity with the journal itself!

[Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics \(scu.ac.ir\)](http://scu.ac.ir)

VS

[About Journal - Tarbiat Modares University Journals System - Language Related Research](#)



# When in Rome, .....

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- Let them know you want to enter their house.
- Follow (strictly) their house rules (registration) and recommendations (template).



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**Thank you  
and  
Good luck**