

Oum El Bouaghi University
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of English
Module: Academic Writing
Level: M1. Didactics. Groups: 01and 02
Teacher: Soraya Guerfi

Lesson:one Main Features of Abstracts

1. Introduction

An abstract is an essential piece of any academic or professional research paper. This concise synopsis serves as an overview or a summary of the content of the research paper. Thus, it should appropriately represent the main ideas discussed in the paper and meet the expectations of the readers.

The APA publication manual (2010) holds that the abstract should function just like the title of the research, but it includes the main finding of the research.

2. Characteristics of an abstract

A good abstract should be:

- a. Concise but filled with information.** Each sentence must be written with maximum impact in mind. To keep your abstract short, focus on including just four or five of the essential points, concepts, or findings.
- b. Objective and accurate.** The abstract's purpose is to report rather than provide commentary. It should also accurately reflect what your paper is about. Only include information that is also included in the body of your paper.
- c. Short.** According to the APA style manual, an abstract should be between 150 to 250 words. The abstract should also be written as only one paragraph with no indentation.
- d. Structure the abstract in the same order as your paper.** Begin with a brief summary of the Introduction, and then continue on with a summary of the Method, Results, and Discussion sections of your paper.
- e. Write a rough draft of your abstract.** While you should aim for brevity, be careful not to make your summary too short. Try to write one to two sentences summarizing

each section of your paper. Once you have a rough draft, you can edit for length and clarity.

2. Steps of writing an abstract

An abstract of a research paper enables the reader to have a clear idea about the most crucial points of the research which are explained by many scholars.

According to Swales and Feak (2010, p. 174) much recent work in discourse analysis has investigated the number of “rhetorical moves” (or communicative stages) in abstracts in various fields—and in various languages. Most researchers identify a potential total of five moves.

Move #	Typical labels	Implied questions
Move 1	Background/introduction/situation	what do we know about the topic?
Move 2	Present research/purpose	what is this study about?
Move 3	Methods/materials/subjects/procedures	how was it done?
Move 4	Results/findings	what was discovered?
Move 5	Discussion/conclusion/significance	what do the findings mean?

4. Types of abstracts

There are two main approaches to writing RP abstracts. One we will call **the *results-driven* abstract because it concentrates on the research findings** and what might be concluded from them. The other approach is to offer an ***RP summary abstract in which you provide one- or two-sentence synopses of*** each sections of the paper. RP abstracts can be characterized as either *indicative* (describe what was done) or *informative* (include the main findings) A descriptive abstract is akin to a table of contents in a paragraph form, Informative abstracts are generally used for documents pertaining to experimental investigations, inquiries, or surveys. These abstracts state the purpose, methodology, results, and conclusions presented in the original document. Informative abstracts may be viewed as standalone documents. Indicative abstracts are best used for less-structured documents, such as editorials, essays, opinions or descriptions; or for lengthy documents, such as books, conference

proceedings, bibliographies, lists, and annual reports. Indicative abstracts are usually written for documents that do not contain information relating to methodology or results.

References

1. American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
2. John M. Swales & Christine B. Feak, (2010). *English for Professional and Academic Purposes*. New York: Editions Rodopi.
3. <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-write-an-abstract-2794845>

Practice:

Q1: What is the type of each abstract?

Q2: What are the rhetorical moves that are adopted in these abstracts?

Abstract: 1

The Influence of Vocabulary Knowledge on Reading Comprehension Achievements (Written by Dr S. Laraba)

We can never overstate the power of words. Perhaps the greatest tools we can give students, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary. This research reports on the importance of vocabulary to reading achievement. Providing vocabulary instruction is one of the most significant ways in which teachers can improve students' reading comprehension. Readers cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean. A large vocabulary is more specifically reflective of high levels of reading achievement.

Abstract 2: Writing Feeds Literature

(Written by Pr. A. Nemouchi)

The place of writing in any training syllabus at all educational levels is essential. As all other language skills, writing has proved to be the cornerstone in the complex process of learning a language. The requirements for all subjects constituting the curriculum to be evaluated in the written form make the mastery of writing indispensable and the knowledge of its rules a

perquisite for learning and success. In the English language more than in Arabic and French which prevail in the Algerian school, the rules which govern the paragraph appear as numerous and rigid, and often influence negatively on the students outcome in the subjects of literature, linguistics, civilisation and whatsoever. This situation has motivated the modest study at hand which aims to measure and compare the freshmen and sophomores' students' proficiency in writing and literature. The procedure consisted in collecting their marks in writing and comparing them to those obtained in literature. The comparative analysis revealed that the students' marks in writing and literature reflect a logical correspondence between the learners' performance in both modules. In other words, good students in writing are dominantly good in literature, and this is quite understandable because writing in literature class does not require any type of gift; it is simply a meticulous practice of the teachers' instructions with negligible reference to creativity which is the basic substance of literature.

References:

- Laraba, S. (2010). The Influence of Vocabulary Knowledge on Reading Comprehension Achievements. *Revue Sciences Humaines* , 137-146.
- Nemouchi, A.(2014,December). Writing Feeds Literature. *Revue Science Humaines*, volume 42, pp.109-116.

Lesson Two: Steps of Writing a Research Paper

1. Introduction

Writing a research paper is not an easy task. A researcher may encounter many challenges before and during the conduction of the research work. Kandal (2015) states that “research means pushing forward the boundaries of human knowledge” (p.19). So, it is not about summarizing, information, it is about discovering new things. “This involves developing a hypothesis, testing the hypothesis and reaching conclusions based on this testing” (Kendal, 2015, p. 46).

2. Stages of Writing research Paper

There are some stages which should be respectively followed by any investigator when writing a research paper (an article, a dissertation or a thesis), which are as follow:

1. Settle on the main question of the research. It is the reason why you want to conduct a research. (Kendal, 2015)
2. Identifying a precise topic that interests you. Your attitude towards the subject that you would like to investigate should be well defined. The variables should be clear and well-specified. Avoid ambiguous and general words.
3. Collecting data, information and sources that would help you to argue you topic, then, organize them into a way that helps you build a well-constructed research paper.
4. Making your research paper outline. The outline helps you organize your ideas into a logical and formal way. The researcher may modify his outline by revising, adding new titles or subtitles or even cancelling other titles or subtitles.

In the outline the main concern of the research should be well covered through the different aspects that explain it. (The researcher should focus more on the core of the study not the unimportant points, by providing sufficient information about the main ideas of the research).

5. Kendal (2015, p. 36) includes “developing a hypothesis” as the core of the research work .Clarifying your hypothesis, by expressing your own argument objectively towards your topic of investigation.
6. Preparing the introduction of your research paper. The researcher should introduce his subject, states the problem that pushes him to tackle such subject specifically, he may mention the targets of the research, can also raise the research question questions and state his/her argument, and provide the structure of the research paper.

7. Writing the first draft of the research by tackling the literature review initially, then the practical part, then the conclusion. The literature review is very helpful, according to Gall (1996, as cited in Practical Assessment, 2009) who argues that the literature review plays a role in: delimiting the research problem, seeking new lines of inquiry, avoiding fruitless approaches, gaining methodological insights, identifying recommendations for further research, and seeking support for grounded theory.
8. “Presenting your analysis and reasoned argument” (Kandal, 2015, p. 45) in an appropriate way that has to be consistent, logical and clear.
9. “Bringing together your conclusions and leaving the reader feeling that you have made a clear contribution to knowledge” (Kandal, 2015, p. 45)
10. Revising your writing do not skip any part of the work, see whether everything is well-discussed, you may ask for an advice of an expert in the field or a teacher. Check the form of your paper.
11. Checking your writing, spelling and grammar is also important.

References

1. Ellen, Herman, *The Stages of Writing a Research Paper*, <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/ellenherman/resources-for-students/the-stages-of-writing-research-papers/> retrieved 15/04/2019.
2. Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation, Vol. 14 [2009], Art. 13
3. Kendal, S. (2015). *How to Write a Research Paper*. Bookboon. Ventus. ISBN 978-87-403-1069-6

Lesson Three: Choosing and Limiting the Subject

1. Introduction

After searching and reading different articles, students should settle down on a particular topic. It is commonly known that a research is generally based on a question, and the researcher seeks to find an accurate response through quantitative or qualitative study. As maintained by Rozakis (2008) “Research begins when you need to answer a question or solve a problem. In order to find solutions, you want to know how other people have approached similar problems, but you will come up with your own answer. Then you can meet your own needs” (p.1).

2. Steps of Writing a Research Topic

There are some stages/steps that should be followed to decide about a specific subject

1. Select an area of study.
2. Read to find topics that interest you.
3. Choose a particular topic.
4. Precise your variables, by narrowing down your topic, by selecting exact words that would reflect your main concern and purpose. Rozaki (2008) claims that as a researcher you should

“think of the purpose statement as your focus, your guiding light, your blueprint, your mantra.” (p. 3).

5. The topic of interest should be arguable that is to say debatable, which enquires the researcher to put a hypothesis and then he/she tries to either approve or disapprove it through some tools of investigation as questionnaire, observation, experiment...etc. represent the variables which would be later tackled in the research paper.

Students may have more than one preferred subject. So, they may follow the same steps to give themselves more options of various topics. So, when the students come up with some topics, then they may choose the one that suits them and satisfy their skills and objectives.

References

1. Laurie, R. (2008). *Farmingdale Handbook on Writing Research Papers*. New York: Farmingdale State College .
2. <https://www.coursehero.com/file/p7qonir/PublicationSource-Type-is-it-a-popular-source-scholarly-source-or-in-between/>

Practice

Choose a topic in one of the following fields of research (psychology, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, or language teaching) by following the same steps mentioned above.

Lesson Four: Developing an Outline

A good outline is important because:

- An outline will show where you're going and how to get there. Use the outline to set goals for completing each section of your paper.
- It will help you **stay organized and focused** throughout the writing process and **help ensure proper coherence** [flow of ideas] in your final paper. However, the outline should be viewed as a guide. As you review the literature or gather data, the organization of your paper may change; adjust your outline accordingly.
- A clear, detailed outline **ensures that you always have something to help recalibrate your writing** should you feel yourself drifting into subject areas unrelated to the research problem. Use your outline to set boundaries around what you will investigate.
- **An outline helps you organize multiple ideas about a topic.** Most research problems can be analyzed from a variety of perspectives; an outline can help you sort out which modes of analysis are most appropriate to ensure the most robust findings are discovered.
- An outline not only helps you organize your thoughts, but it can also **serve as a schedule for when certain aspects of your writing should be accomplished.**

I. General Approaches

There are two general approaches you can take when writing an outline for your paper:

The **topic outline** consists of short phrases. This approach is useful when you are dealing with a number of different issues that could be arranged in a variety of different ways in your paper. Due to short phrases having more content than using simple sentences, they create better content from which to build your paper.

The **sentence outline** is done in full sentences. This approach is useful when your paper focuses on complex issues in detail. The sentence outline is also useful because sentences themselves have many of the details in them needed to build a paper and it allows you to include those details in the sentences instead of having to create an outline of short phrases that goes on page after page.

II. Steps of Making the Outline

A strong outline details each topic and subtopic in your paper, organizing these points so that they build your argument toward an evidence-based conclusion. Writing an outline will also help you focus on the task at hand and avoid unnecessary tangents, logical fallacies,

Identify the research problem. The research problem is the focal point from which the rest of the outline flows. Try to sum up the point of your paper in one sentence or phrase. It also can be key to decide what the title of your paper should be.

1. **Identify the main categories.** What main points will you analyze? The introduction describes all of your main points; the rest of your paper can be spent developing those points.
2. **Create the first category.** What is the first point you want to cover? If the paper centers around a complicated term, a definition can be a good place to start. For a paper about a particular theory, giving the general background on the theory can be a good place to begin.
3. **Create subcategories.** After you have followed these steps, create points under it that provide support for the main point. The number of categories that you use depends on the amount of information that you are trying to cover. There is no right or wrong number to use.

III. Things to Consider When Writing an Outline

- Choose either a topic outline or a sentence outline based on which one you believe will work best for you. However, once you begin developing an outline, it's helpful to stick to only one approach.
- **Both topic and sentence outlines use Roman and Arabic numerals along with capital and small letters of the alphabet arranged in a consistent and rigid sequence**
- **Although the format of an outline is rigid, it shouldn't make you inflexible about how to write your paper.** Often when you start investigating a research problem [i.e., reviewing the research literature], especially if you are unfamiliar with the topic, you should anticipate the likelihood your analysis could go in different directions. If your paper changes focus, or you need to add new sections, then feel free to reorganize the outline.

- **If appropriate, organize the main points of your outline in chronological order.** In papers where you need to trace the history or chronology of events or issues, it is important to arrange your outline in the same manner, knowing that it's easier to rearrange things now than when you've almost finished your paper.

Reference

<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/outline>

Lesson Five: Referencing Techniques: Quoting, paraphrasing and summarising

1. What is a Reference/Citation?

In conducting a research, a writer uses other information which is not his own, he uses ideas, figures, charts or any other kind of information. In this case, he should appropriately cite the source.

2. Importance of Citing.

- Giving credit to the new work, by depending on different sources, so; the researcher is not subjective and the work is reliable, and also giving credit to the works you cited from by acknowledging and considering their works.
- Providing a trustworthy conduit to the original work. So, the reader may return back to the original source to look for more clarification.
- Using different citations may help you defend your idea, or come up with a clear idea that will drive the attention of readers.
- Attribution functions as a fact-checking tool, this is to say, the work needs to be supported to accomplish the objectives set of the researcher.

3. What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism occurs when the researcher takes any kind of information words, figures, and tables from any source article, encyclopedia or a book...without citing the source. Merriam–Webster dictionary defines plagiarism as (1: a) The theft and use of other people's ideas or words as yours; b) Use of sources without attribution; c) Literary theft and d) presenting some ideas as own and as it is new, while this idea already exists in other source. (as cited in Roka, 2017, p. 3)

4. Citing and Referencing:

In-text citation, which means citing the source within the body of the research paper, the researcher should provide the name of the author, the year and the page number.

An example from an article written by Laraba (2010, p. 238) “To give a general definition of reading is not an easy task. A number of writers gave different definitions expressing what they think of the process of reading. Nuttal (1982, p. 4) states that “In reading, the main purpose is the extraction of meaning from writing. Our business is with the way the reader gets a message from a text.”

A reference list is necessary at the end of any research paper. It includes a list of the sources cited in- text. Kendal (2015) claims that There should be relationship between the

citations and the references i.e. if a source is cited it should be on the reference list and every item on the references list should be cited . (p. 178).

The list of reference includes all the required details that are related with the sources cited in the text.

Kendal (2015) states that:

References that refer to research papers should therefore provide the following details:

The names of all the authors.

The year the paper was published.

The title of the research paper (usually in quotes) .

The title of the journal or conference where the paper was published, usually in italics.

The volume and page numbers i.e. exactly where in the publication is this specific paper.

Rozakis (2008) adds that other required information that can be inserted in referencing.

“Publication information for any print version of the source, including the volume number, issue number, or other identifying numbers. Also the date of electronic publication, the latest update, or the posting. (p. 42)

As for instance:- citing a book: Nuttal, C. (1982), *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. London. Heinemann.

Citing a journal: Laflamme, J. G. (1997), “The Effect of Multiple Exposure Vocabulary method and the target reading/writing strategy on test scores.” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 40(5), P.372, 10p.

Note: Check the APA (American Publication Association) manual for more information concerning the way you cite different sources, and different kinds of research papers.

II. Quoting,paraphrasing and Summarising

This extract is taken from a chapter of a book entitled “The Process of Research Writing: Chapter Three Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism. “

Introduction

Learning how to effectively quote and paraphrase research can be difficult and it certainly takes practice. Hopefully, your abilities to make good use of your research will improve as you work through the exercises in part two and three of *The Process of Research Writing*, not

to mention as you take on other research writing experiences beyond this class. The goal of this chapter is to introduce some basic strategies for summarizing, quoting and paraphrasing research in your writing and to explain how to avoid plagiarizing your research.

II. 1. How to Summarize: A summary is a brief explanation of a longer text. Some summaries, such as the ones that accompany annotated bibliographies, are very short, just a sentence or two. Others are much longer, though summaries are always much shorter than the text being summarized in the first place. Summaries of different lengths are useful in research writing because you often need to provide your readers with an explanation of the text you are discussing. This is especially true when you are going to quote or paraphrase from a source. Of course, the first step in writing a good summary is to do a thorough reading of the text you are going to summarize in the first place. Beyond that important start, **there are a few basic guidelines** you should follow when you write summary material:

- Stay “neutral” in your summarizing. Summaries provide “just the facts” and are not the place where you offer your opinions about the text you are summarizing. Save your opinions and evaluation of the evidence you are summarizing for other parts of your writing.
- Don’t quote from what you are summarizing. Summaries will be more useful to you and your colleagues if you write them in your own words. The Process of Research Writing Chapter Three, “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism,”² Steven D. Krause | <http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw> | Spring 2007
- Don’t “cut and paste” from database abstracts. Many of the periodical indexes that are available as part of your library’s computer system include abstracts of articles. Do no “cut” this abstract material and then “paste” it into your own annotated bibliography. For one thing, this is plagiarism. Second, “cutting and pasting” from the abstract defeats one of the purposes of writing summaries and creating an annotated bibliography in the first place, which is to help you understand and explain your research.

II.2. How to Quote and Paraphrase:

An Overview Writers quote and paraphrase from research in order to support their points and to persuade their readers. A quote or a paraphrase from a piece of evidence in support of a point answers the reader’s question, “says who?” This is especially true in academic writing since scholarly readers are most persuaded by effective research and evidence. For example, readers of an article about a new cancer medication published in a medical journal will be most interested in the scholar’s research and statistics that demonstrate the effectiveness of the treatment.

Conversely, they will not be as persuaded by emotional stories from individual patients about how a new cancer medication improved the quality of their lives. While this appeal to emotion can be effective and is common in popular sources, these individual anecdotes do not carry the same sort of “scholarly” or scientific value as well-reasoned research and evidence. Of course, your instructor is not expecting you to be an expert on the topic of your research paper. While you might conduct some primary research, it’s a good bet

that you'll be relying on secondary sources such as books, articles, and Web sites to inform and persuade your readers. You'll present this research to your readers in the form of quotes and paraphrases.

A "quote" is a direct restatement of the exact words from the original source. The general rule of thumb is any time you use three or more words as they appeared in the original source, you should treat it as a quote. A "paraphrase" is a restatement of the information or point of the original source in your own words. While quotes and paraphrases are different and should be used in different ways in your research writing (as the examples in this section suggest), they do have a number of things in common. Both quotes and paraphrases should:

- be "introduced" to the reader, particularly the first time you mention a source; The Process of Research Writing Chapter Three, "Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism,"³ Steven D. Krause | <http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw> | Spring 2007
- include an explanation of the evidence which explains to the reader why you think the evidence is important, especially if it is not apparent from the context of the quote or paraphrase; and
- include a proper citation of the source. The method you should follow to properly quote or paraphrase depends on the style guide you are following in your academic writing. The two most common style guides used in academic writing are the Modern Language Association (MLA), and the American Psychological Association (APA). There are certain "rules," dictated by the rules of style you are following, such as the ones presented by the MLA or the ones presented by the APA.

But when all is said and done, the question of when to quote and when to paraphrase depends a great deal on the specific context of the writing and the effect you are trying to achieve. Learning the best times to quote and paraphrase takes practice and experience. In general, it is best to use a quote when:

- The exact words of your source are important for the point you are trying to make. This is especially true if you are quoting technical language, terms, or very specific word choices.
- You want to highlight your agreement with the author's words. If you agree with the point the author of the evidence makes and you like their exact words, use them as a quote.
- You want to highlight your disagreement with the author's words. In other words, you may sometimes want to use a direct quote to indicate exactly what it is you disagree about. This might be particularly true when you are considering the antithetical positions in your research writing projects. In general, it is best to paraphrase when:
- There is no good reason to use a quote to refer to your evidence. If the author's exact words are not especially important to the point you are trying to make, you are usually better off paraphrasing the evidence. The Process of Research Writing Chapter Three, "Quoting,

Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism,”⁴ Steven D. Krause | <http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw> | Spring 2007

- You are trying to explain a particular a piece of evidence in order to explain or interpret it in more detail. This might be particularly true in writing projects like critiques.
- You need to balance a direct quote in your writing. You need to be careful about directly quoting your research too much because it can sometimes make for awkward and difficult to read prose. So, one of the reasons to use a paraphrase instead of a quote is to create balance within your writing.

II.3. Tips for Quoting and Paraphrasing

- Introduce your quotes and paraphrases to your reader, especially on first reference.
- Explain the significance of the quote or paraphrase to your reader.
- Cite your quote or paraphrase properly according to the rules of style you are following in your essay.
- Quote when the exact words are important, when you want to highlight your agreement or your disagreement.
- Paraphrase when the exact words aren't important, when you want to explain the point of your evidence, or when you need to balance the direct quotes in your writing.

Quoting in APA Style Consider this BAD example in APA style, of what NOT to do when quoting evidence: “If the U.S. scallop fishery were a business, its management would surely be fired, because its revenues could readily be increased by at least 50 percent while its costs were being reduced by an equal percentage.” (Repetto, 2001, p. 84). Again, this is a potentially valuable piece of evidence, but it simply isn't clear what point the research writer is trying to make with it. Further, it doesn't follow the preferred method of citation with APA style. Here is a revision that is a GOOD or at least BETTER example:

Repetto (2001) concludes that in the case of the scallop industry, those running the industry should be held responsible for not considering methods that would curtail the problems of over-fishing. “If the U.S. scallop fishery were a business, its management would surely be fired, because its revenues could readily be increased by at least 50 percent while its costs were being reduced by an equal percentage” (p. 84).

This revision is improved because the research writer has introduced and explained the point of the evidence with the addition of a clarifying sentence. It also follows the rules of APA style. Generally, APA style prefers that the research writer refer to the author only by last name followed immediately by the year of publication. Whenever possible, you should begin your citation with the author's last name and the year of publication, and, in the case of a direct quote like this passage, the page number (including the “p.”) in parentheses at the end.

References

D.Krause, S. (2007). Chapter Three, "Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism,. Dans S. D.Krause, *The Process of Research Writing* (p. nd). nd: Spring.

-Laraba, S. (2010). The Influence of Vocabulary Knowledge on Reading Comprehension Achievements. *Revue Sciences Humaines* , 137-146.

Kendal, S. (2015). *How to Write a Research Paper*. Bookboon. Ventus. ISBN 978-87-403-1069-6

Laurie, R. (2008). *Farmingdale Handbook on Writing Research Papers*. New York: Farmingdale State College .

Roka, Y. B. (2017). Plagiarism: Types, Cause sand How to Avoid This Worldwide Problem. *Nepal Journal of Neuroscience* , 2-6.

Lesson Six: Coherence and Cohesion in Academic Writing:

Linking words and Hedging

I. linking words:

It is very important in a research paper to present your arguments in a clear and cohesive way. There are different kinds of linking words that are used to connect between sentences, and paragraphs. The accurate use of these devices will make the writing clear and well-structured.

Note: Download a list of linking words from the following link:

<https://studentservices.op.ac.nz/assets/Uploads/Sentence-starters-linking-words-transitional-phrases-2018.pdf>

II. Hedging:

This extract is taken from an article entitled “HEDGING IN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE” written by MARIA ELENA GHERDAN

II.1. Hedges – definition: The definition of hedging has evolved through the years, from the everyday meaning found in dictionaries (protection or defence to non committal or evasive statements) to different complex definitions given by numerous researchers (Crompton, 1997; Hyland, 1994, 1995; Myers, 1989; Nash, 1990, Salager-Meyer, 1994). Lakoff (1972) introduced the notion of hedges into linguistics by defining them as “words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy”, thus rendering ideas in a less clear or absolute way. Hyland (1995) defined the term as “the expression of tentativeness in language use that represents an absence of certainty in describing any linguistic item or strategy employed to indicate either a lack of commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition or a desire not to express that commitment categorically. In academic writing, hedges “imply then, that a statement is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge, and allow readers the freedom to dispute it”. Crompton (1997) sees hedging “a linguistic strategy allowing the author to avoid committing the [absolute] truth of a proposition, statement or claim”.

II.2. The Importance of hedging:

Academic writing is also the language used to convey answers to research questions, by creating arguments based on claims supported with evidence or examples. Hedging is an essential part of academic writing because it allows the writer: to formulate good research answers that are not absolute or applicable in all situations, pinpointing, for example, problems with the answers of the research. Hedges allow the research to address possible problems, raise objections or anticipate opposition to the research claims, while still contributing something new to the ongoing dialogue in a research field. Being a balance of facts and evaluation, academic writing requires the researchers to strike a balance between the

data collected and the interpretation of the process of phenomenon uncovered as fully accurately and objectively as possible, while also showing how they themselves interpret the results. Thus, one can better understand why researchers do not say „X is the cause of Y” but rather „X may be the cause of Y” to show the current state of knowledge in a domain, and, subsequently to tell the researcher that while they feel strongly about the findings or answers to the research questions, they also realise that it is not the end of the academic dialogue. Defined as “downtoners” (Quirk et al., 1972), “compromisers” (James, 1983), “weakeners” (Brown and Levinson, 1987), “softeners” (Crystal and Davy, 1975), “backgrounding terms” (Low, 1996) or “pragmatic devices” (Stubbe and Holmes, 1995) hedges are commonly used to reducing commitment and negotiating meanings between the reader and the writer, especially in academic discourse.

In conclusion, hedging is important because it allows the writer of the research to:

- a) submit new arguments or make claims in a subject matter while acknowledging that there might be other valid or effective points of view.
- b) make a new contribution to scientific research in a productive, and more important, cooperative way.
- c) have the flexibility to avoid making absolute or categorical statements which claim that the researcher has found the only true answer;
- d) participate in ongoing academic dialogue in fields where new evidence is generated all the time, being almost impossible to stay up-to-date with all new findings;
- e) leave room for other voices or research perspectives. “It is by means of the hedging system of a language that a user distinguishes between what s/he says and what s/he thinks about what s/he says.

Without hedging, the world is purely propositional, a rigid, and rather dull place, where things either are the case or are not. With a hedging system, language is rendered more flexible and the world more subtle” (Skelton, 1998) Thus, hedging allows researchers to be confidently uncertain in their claims, encouraging them to state how precisely they can be in their claims, but also leaving room for lack of absolute precision especially where it is difficult or absolutely impossible to achieve it.

II.3. Hedging techniques: The most frequent hedging strategies make use of:

1. Lexical verbs (indicate, estimate, propose, assume, suggest, appear, seem, tend to, argue, doubt) e.g. Research proves the link between alcohol drinking and liver disease. (categorical claim) Research suggests/indicates a (possible) link between alcohol drinking and liver disease. (hedged claim) In the second sentence the lexical verbs indicates/suggests allow the researcher to share the results of a study without making the claim that these findings are absolute.
2. Adverbial constructions (often, quite, almost, usually, sometimes, occasionally, probably, certainly, clearly, possibly) e.g. The fire was caused by the lightning storm. (categorical

claim) The fire was probably caused by the lightning storm. (hedged claim) The hedged claim, using the adverb probably, allows the writer to share his/her view without making an absolute claim.

3. Modal verbs (must, will/would, should, may, can/could, might) which are often used to express a logical probability of a claim. e.g. In the future e-books will be widely available. (categorical claim) In the future e-books might be widely available. (hedged claim) The modal verb might in the above example allows the writer to state an idea without taking an absolute stance.

Conclusion:

In academic writing authors often have to be cautious about the way they present a piece of research, their research questions findings, results, conclusions. In order to avoid categorical or absolute phrases research writers use hedges whenever necessary.

References:

GHERDAN, M. E. (2019). HEDGING IN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE . *ROMANIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES RJES* , 123-127.