

Giving an Abstract a Narrative Structure

Use this worksheet to practice what is discussed in

- **Information Sheet 15: Giving a Paper a Narrative Structure**

Task 1

Read the two abstracts below and answer the questions on the next page.

A Comparison of Discourse Patterns Papers Written by Native Speakers and Non-Native Speakers

Version A

This report contains the results of a textual analysis of 12 academic papers on economics or socio-economic topics. Six of the papers were written in English by English native speakers; six papers were written in English by German native speakers. The work investigates differences in various textual aspects between the papers of the two cultures. It studies whether findings reported by Clyne (1987) are still relevant for Germans writing in the academic context today. The results suggest that, although some problems identified by Clyne are no longer present in the English being written by Germans, there are still issues that might be related to a writer's cultural background. These issues appear to be associated with providing a paper with structure and presenting this structure to the reader. The author suggests further work is necessary to identify the exact structural components within a native speaker paper so that those teaching English for Academic Purposes can integrate the findings into their work.

Version B

Some linguists consider academic writing styles to be culturally different. Clyne (1987), for example, has suggested some stylistic differences between academic texts written by English native speakers and ones written in English by German native speakers. That research poses two interesting questions: Are the differences still the same in 2010? If not, what should now be taught in academic writing courses in Germany?

To answer these questions, this paper investigates 12 economic papers (6 by native English speakers and 6 in English by native German speakers). The results showed that, although German scientists have learnt from native speaker texts and are no longer making many of the mistakes made in 1987, some issues remain. In particular, teachers of academic writing should concentrate on structure in a paper. To do this, they need more information on how native speakers are providing that structure.



Questions

1. Which of the two versions has been written with an ABT/OCAR structure?
2. Which version do you prefer?
3. In Version B, where do you think the Resolution begins?

Possible Answers

Your answers may differ

Question 1: Version B, Question 2: The author of this worksheet prefers Version B. But you are entitled to prefer Version A. Question 3: In Version B, the Resolution would start with the sentence “In particular, teachers of ...”

Task 2

Can you re-write the start of the following abstract using the ABT structure?

Text adapted from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11269-020-02502-x>

This paper presents a case study on the impact of dynamic management of wetland storage on downstream flood control at the Cypress Creek Watershed in Houston, Texas. Dynamic storage management can be achieved by optimizing the schedule of flow releases from managed wetlands because it can minimize downstream inundation. Theoretically, if wetland storage capacity can be increased on a watershed scale, flood mitigation can be improved. Unfortunately, case study data to prove this theory is sparse. The main objective of this study is to compare the extent of downstream flood inundation with and without dynamic management of wetland storage.

Possible Answer

Your answer may differ

Dynamic storage management can be achieved by optimizing the schedule of flow releases from managed wetlands because it can minimize downstream inundation. Theoretically, if wetland storage capacity can be increased on a watershed scale, flood mitigation can be improved. Unfortunately, case study data to substantiate this theory is sparse. This paper presents a case study on the impact of dynamic management of wetland storage on downstream flood control at the Cypress Creek Watershed in Houston, Texas. The main objective of this study is to compare the extent of downstream flood inundation with and without dynamic management of wetland storage.

