

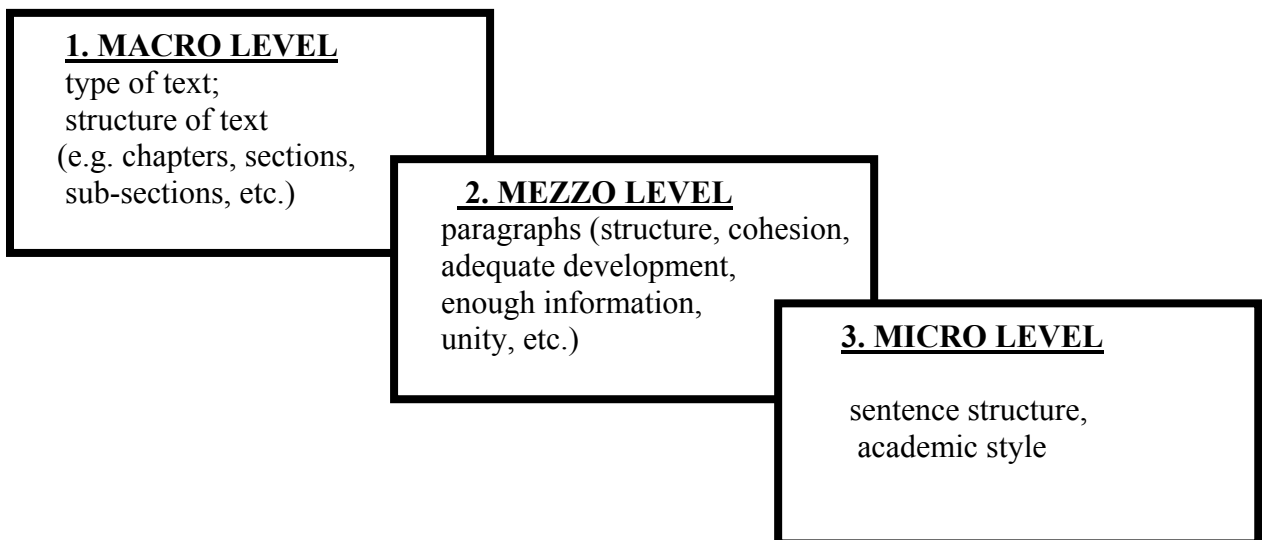
MASARYK UNIVERSITY
Dept. of Foreign Languages

POSTGRADUATE ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE

SESSION 3

1. SESSION 2 PLAN

2. SESSION 1 SUMMARY



(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007)

3. Title analysis

1. PARAGRAPH

1.1.

What is a paragraph?

1.2.

Look at the paragraph features and discuss what they mean:

► cohesion

► development

► direct structure

► length

Topic sentence (expressing the “problem”) →	The emphasis of the criminal justice system has until recently been on the battle between the offender/defendant and the state/prosecutor and not the actual harm experienced by the victim. <i>In Fact</i> victims have had minimal participation in the criminal justice process; their role being primarily to provide information to the state prosecutor with no involvement in prosecution and sentencing. McShane and Williams (1992, p. 260) contend that “victim neglect is not simply a result of indifference, it is a logical extension of a legal system which defines crime as an offence against the state”. <u>They argue that this neglect can be remedied by training of personnel within the criminal justice system and through victim support services.</u>
Expansion of point →	
Evidence/ support →	
<u>Closing sentence</u> (e.g. solution) →	

(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007)

1.3.

Topic sentence exercise:

Choose the best among the four topic sentences for each paragraph below.

A)

The first is the wear-and-tear hypothesis that suggests the body eventually succumbs to the environmental insults of life. The second is the notion that we have an internal clock which is genetically programmed to run down. Supporters of the wear-and-tear theory maintain that the very practice of breathing causes us to age because inhaled oxygen produces toxic by-products. Advocates of the internal clock theory believe that individual cells are told to stop dividing and thus eventually to die by, for example, hormones produced by the brain or by their own genes.

- 1. There are two broad theories concerning what triggers a human's inevitable decline to death.*
- 2. Some scientists believe that human contains an "internal time clock" which forces them eventually to die.*
- 3. We all must die some day.*
- 4. My biology professor gave an interesting lecture Thursday.*

B)

The strictest military discipline imaginable is still looser than that prevailing in the average assembly-line. The soldier, at worst, is still able to exercise the highest conceivable functions of freedom -- that is, he or she is permitted to steal and to kill. No discipline prevailing in peace gives him or her anything remotely resembling this. The soldier is, in war, in the position of a free adult; in peace he or she is almost always in the position of a child. In war all things are excused by success, even violations of discipline. In peace, speaking generally, success is inconceivable except as a function of discipline.

- 1. Soldiers need discipline.*
- 2. We commonly look on the discipline of war as vastly more rigid than any discipline necessary in time of peace, but this is an error.*
- 3. Although soldiers are not always disciplined, they serve an important social function in wartime.*
- 4. In times of peace, soldiers often convert easily from wartime pursuits to the discipline necessary successfully to compete in even the most competitive marketplace.*

(Adapted from: from Blank, D.: "The Eternal Quest"; Mencken, H.L.: "Reflections on War" in: <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/rvtopic.html>)

1.4.

Closing sentence exercise:

Choose the best among the three closing sentences for the paragraph below.

When it comes to the arts, there is a clear case for subsidy. The arts have nothing to do with making money. They exist in order to express certain essential truths about human beings by means of new kinds of poetry, music, painting, and so on. However, these new kinds of art may not be popular, and thus there may be little support by the general public for them, and so artists cannot rely on selling their work to provide them with an income. In fact, history shows that many artists have not been properly appreciated while they were alive. For example, Mozart, whose works are so popular nowadays, lived close to poverty for most of his life.

Possible closing sentences:

- 1. Thus, in order to ensure their survival, it is essential for the arts to be subsidised.*
- 2. If he had been subsidised, Mozart would not have been so poor.*
- 3. When the arts have to make money, they are no longer fulfilling their true purpose, but instead become a branch of commerce.*

(Adapted from: Waters, M., Waters, A.: 1995, p.110.)

1.5. Development

A paragraph has to have enough information in it to justify being a paragraph! It should consist of a main point that is then further elaborated on. Discuss what some possible development models can be.

<p>Topic sentence -main idea</p> <p><i>Expansion of point(italic)</i></p> <p><u>Comment</u></p>	<p>The research on anxiety suggests that like self-esteem, anxiety can be experienced at various levels (Oxford 1999). <i>At the deepest or global level, trait anxiety is a more permanent predisposition to be anxious. Some people are predictably and generally anxious about many things. At a more momentary, or situational level, state anxiety is experienced in relation to some particular event or act.</i></p> <p><u>As we learned in the case of self-esteem, then, it is important in a classroom for a teacher to try to determine whether a student’s anxiety stems from a more global trait or whether it comes from a particular situation at the moment.</u></p>
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(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007; Source: Brown, H.D (2000)

1.6.

There are several ways in which paragraphs can be developed. Read the following paragraphs and match them with the types of development below.

1. Development by Detail
2. Development by Comparison and Contrast
3. Development by Process
4. Development by Example and Discussion
5. Development by Combination of Different Methods

a)

To identify the species the wasp apparently must explore the spider with her antennae. The tarantula shows an amazing tolerance to this exploration. The wasp crawls under it and walks over it without evoking any hostile response. The molestation is so great and so persistent that the tarantula often rises on all eight legs, as if it were on stilts. It may stand this way for several minutes.

b)

The broad range of positive characteristics used to define males could be used to define females too, but they are not. At its entry for woman Webster's Third provides a list of "qualities considered distinctive of womanhood": "Gentleness, affection, and domesticity or on the other hand fickleness, superficiality, and folly." Among the "qualities considered distinctive of manhood" listed in the entry for man, no negative attributes detract from the "courage, strength, and vigor" the definers associate with males. According to this dictionary, womanish means "unsuitable to a man or to a strong character of either sex."

c)

Work tends to be associated with non-work-specific environments, activities, and schedules. If asked what space is reserved for learning, many students would suggest the classroom, the lab or the library. What about the kitchen? The bedroom? In fact, any room in which a student habitually studies becomes a learning space, or a place associated with thinking. Some people need to engage in sports or other physical activity before they can work successfully. Being sedentary seems to inspire others. Although most classes are scheduled between 8:30 and 22:00, some students do their best work before the sun rises, some after it sets. Some need a less flexible schedule than others, while a very few can sit and not rise until their task is completed. Some students work quickly and efficiently, while others cannot produce anything without much dust and heat.

d)

Although the interpretation of traffic signals may seem highly standardized, close observation reveals regional variations across this country, distinguishing the East Coast from Central Canada and the West as surely as dominant dialects or political inclinations. In Montreal, a flashing red traffic light instructs drivers to careen even more wildly through intersections heavily populated with pedestrians and oncoming vehicles. In startling contrast, an amber light in Calgary warns drivers to scream to a halt on the off chance that there might be a pedestrian within 500 meters who might consider crossing at some unspecified time within the current day. In my home town in New Brunswick, finally, traffic lights (along with painted lines and posted speed limits) do not apply to tractors, all terrain vehicles, or pickup trucks, which together account for most vehicles on the road. In fact, were any observant Canadian dropped from an alien space vessel at an unspecified intersection anywhere in this vast land, he or she could almost certainly orient him-or-herself according to the surrounding traffic patterns.

e)

A recent study (Williams, 1999), of six U.S. cities shows death rates increasing with just 15 micrograms per cubic meter of Particulate Matter 10 (PM10) pollutants. In all, at least 8 studies have now shown that PM10 at any level kills people. A study of people in Steubenville, Ohio, (Markoff, 1998) showed that each increase of 100 micrograms per cubic meter of total suspended particles is associated with a 4% increase in the death rate. Interestingly, the Steubenville study showed that the death rate changes as fine particle levels change, but not as sulphur dioxide levels change.

(Adapted from: Turner, D.: <http://vlc.polyu.edu.hk/AcademicWriter/Paragraphs/paragraph.htm>; Petrunkevitch, A.: "The Wasp and the Spider" <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/rvpardev.html>)

1.7. Cohesion within paragraphs

Text cohesion is the way the writing holds together, to make sense. Each sentence should relate to the other sentences in the paragraph. What cohesive devices that assist in creating text cohesion can you think of? (e.g. *key words or synonyms repeated; parallel structures such as using a repeated grammatical form*)

(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007)

1.8.

Look at the two following paragraphs and decide which of them has a better overall plan. Support your opinion with evidence.

A)

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. The skin, hair, teeth, finger- and toenails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to diagnose the diseases they suffered in life such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal afflictions of the dead people: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head, and polio killed a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

B)

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. The process of mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages. It was a remarkably effective practice. Indeed, mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. Their skin, hair, teeth, fingers and toenails, and facial features of the mummies are still evident. Their diseases in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies, are still diagnosable. Even their fatal afflictions are still apparent: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head: a child king died from polio.

(Adapted from: Alison Brown, 2007; Fowler, Aaron & Anderson: 2001, pp. 81-2)

1.9.

The following sentences are in the wrong order. Put them into the correct order so that they form a logically structured paragraph.

- a. The heart line is the top line.
- b. There are three main lines: the heart line, the head line, and the life line.
- c. This line represents the person's mind, and indicates whether or not he or she values intelligence and knowledge.
- d. Palmistry consists of the practice of evaluating a person's character or future life by reading the palm of that person's hand.
- e. In palmistry, the reader usually begins by reading the person's dominant hand, which is the hand he or she uses the most.
- f. It starts at one end of the palm and ends about at the ring finger on most people.
- g. Finally, the life line, which extends from one end of the palm to the wrist.
- h. The next line down is the head line.
- i. This line represents what the person believes about love, their past love experiences, and what fears the person has about love.
- j. This line represents the person's vitality and vigor.

(Adapted from: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/eap/palmistry.htm>)

1.10.

Identify the signalling words in the following paragraph and discuss their function.

To begin with, it is necessary to consider the long-term implications of the decision to increase our dependence on permanent staff in our restaurants. For example, let us say we do go ahead. In this case, our reliance on hourly-paid staff will decrease. As a result, costs will reduce, as permanent staff are cheaper than hourly-paid staff. In fact, it is not necessarily the case, especially as there is no way of knowing what the relative costs of hourly-paid staff and permanent staff will be in ten years' time. However, as a rule permanent staff are more reliable than full-time staff and this is a genuine advantage. As a consequence of these two advantages, permanent staff would seem to be a better option. In other words, they are cheaper and more reliable so they are better. In that case, it is not necessary to hesitate. Naturally, nothing is so simple. In short, cost is an unknown factor and the most economical choice is not known.

(Adapted from: <http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/parag/paragex9.htm>)

1.11.

Read these five paragraphs and try to decide which are appropriate for academic writing and which are not? Discuss why.

1. The course through elementary school can vary considerably from child to child, and overall problems can range from mild and easily managed to severe and intractable, depending upon factors such as the child's intelligence level, appropriateness of management at school and parenting at home, temperamental style of the child, and the presence or absence of complicating factors such as hyperactivity/attentional problems, anxiety, learning problems, etc.

2. Myerscough (1994: 10) points out that Glasgow was the first ECC to 'adopt an all-encompassing definition of culture: "everything that makes Glasgow what it is: history, design, engineering, education, architecture, shipbuilding, religion and sport, as much as music, dance, visual arts, literature and the theatre."' While the U.K. tends to distinguish between culture (which includes art, music, literature and architecture) and heritage, other nationalities do not. As Bywater (1993) observes, the lack of clear and universally accepted definitions makes an assessment of trends in cultural tourism very difficult. Williams (1983: 87), argues that culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language, 'used for important concepts in distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought.' In post-modern, post-industrial society the entire culture can be seen as dominated and determined by the leisure industry and tourism. Therefore there is great doubt over the usefulness of cultural tourism as a theoretical term yet its usefulness as a means of attracting visitors to urban sites seems unquestioned by local and national policy makers.

3. The goals and objectives of a dissertation are quite different from the goals and objectives of a journal article. Dissertations are like memoirs – they contain a great deal of “process” information in addition to the research “content.” The process information allows the dissertation committee to see all the roads one investigated when selecting and defining the research problem, all the plans one considered before selecting the final methodology, and many other details that would be considered extraneous in a journal article. Dissertations are lengthy for the same reason that legal trials often are lengthy – the writer is providing reams of evidence, i.e., meticulously building a case to back up the ultimate conclusions that are offered. Such laborious justification regarding what was or was not done, or considered, in a research project – leaving no conceptual stone unturned – is not expected nor appropriate to journal manuscripts.

4. Hegel has been immensely influential, not least for bequeathing the dialectic and the division of history into a few great epochs to Marx. He was the son of a tax official in Stuttgart. While at the theological seminary at Tübingen, he became interested in the works of Rousseau and Kant. His Lectures on the Philosophy of History outline the developmental pattern of world history. He was worried by class divisions but did not see them as unbridgeable.

5. Salman Rushdie's essay 'Commonwealth literature does not exist', written in 1983, articulates a stage in the literary emergence and development of the (once - but no longer?) colonised, leading from the critical denigration and self-doubt of the term 'colonial literature'; through 'Commonwealth literature'; to the concept of 'post-colonial literature', which still acknowledges the colonial past as a defining presence; to the current precarious discovery of 'new literatures in English', in which the shift to the plural celebrates diversity. There have been no references to Commonwealth literatures, nor even to post-colonial literatures.

(Adapted from: <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/academicwriting/30.html>, Pollard, R. Q. Jr. :From Dissertation to Journal Article: A Useful Method for Planning and Writing Any Manuscript <http://www.ispub.com/ostia/index.php?xmlFilePath=journals/ijmh/vol2n2/writing.xml>)

1.12. Development by Comparing and Contrasting

PROCESS:

- ▶ **DECIDE:** **compare** them (emphasise the similarities) **contrast** them (emphasise the differences)
- ▶ If you write a paragraph emphasizing the similarities between two subjects, you must also discuss at least one difference, and vice versa.
- ▶ The opening sentence of comparison/contrast often states that the two subjects are similar/different enough to be compared/contrasted.
- ▶ **DECIDE:** **BLOCK FORMAT** individual items being compared or contrasted in a complex way, listing all the points for one item or element of comparison or contrast, and then listing all the points for the other item or element of comparison or contrast)
 SEPARATING FORMAT each point with examples from both items or elements being compared or contrasted
- ▶ The summary sentence in a comparison/contrast paragraph either presents a conclusion based on the information given or restates the purpose of comparison and contrast.

PHRASES

COMPARING

X is like Y
 X is similar to Y
 X is comparable to Y
 X is as ... as Y
 X resembles Y in many ways
 X parallels Y in some ways
 X is not quite as... as Y.
X is not exactly → entirely → quite **the same as / like** Y.

CONTRASTING

X is unlike Y
 X is different from Y
 X differs from Y to some extent in that...
 Unlike X, Y is

In contrast to X, Y is
 Compared to X, Y is ... (In comparison to X, Y is)
 X and Y are different / dissimilar in every way / respect.
X is totally → completely → entirely → quite **different from Y.**

X is exactly → precisely → very much → (quite) a lot → rather → somewhat → a little → slightly → scarcely → hardly → only just → not at all **like Y.**

X is exactly → precisely → just → virtually → practically → more or less → almost → nearly → about **the same as Y.**

(Adapted from: Malovičová, I. et al.:2005 English For Academic Purposes, CJV MU)

1.13.

Read the comparing/contrasting paragraph below and analyse it according to the principles in the task 1.12.

Although the interpretation of traffic signals may seem highly standardized, close observation reveals regional variations across this country, distinguishing the East Coast from Central Canada and the West as surely as dominant dialects or political inclinations. In Montreal, a flashing red traffic light instructs drivers to careen even more wildly through intersections heavily populated with pedestrians and oncoming vehicles. In startling contrast, an amber light in Calgary warns drivers to scream to a halt on the off chance that there might be a pedestrian within 500 meters who might consider crossing at some unspecified time within the current day. In my home town in New Brunswick, finally, traffic lights (along with painted lines and posted speed limits) do not apply to tractors, all terrain vehicles, or pickup trucks, which together account for most vehicles on the road. In fact, were any observant Canadian dropped from an alien space vessel at an unspecified intersection anywhere in this vast land, he or she could almost certainly orient him-or-herself according to the surrounding traffic patterns.

(<http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/parunif.html>)

1.14.

Read the following set of paragraphs and analyse them according to the principles in the task 1.12..

Although individual authors have individual styles and may deviate from writing conventions of a particular language culture, it is possible to outline certain different tendencies in both the organization and the lexical and grammatical structures of texts written in English and in Czech. These tendencies suggest that Anglophone and Czech writers have different priorities and focus on different aspects of writing.

The main focus of Anglophone authors is to make the reader understand a certain theory or problem. Authors try to present their ideas as clearly as possible and in a way which requires least effort on the part of the reader. They organize their text carefully, and select lexical and grammatical means that allow a smooth comprehension of the relationships between phenomena described in the text. Anglophone authors assume responsibility for the readers' comprehension of the presented material; their texts are primarily oriented towards the reader.

The main focus of most Czech authors, in contrast, is to present a certain theory or problem in all its complexity. They therefore often employ complex syntactic structures capable of covering as many details of the theory as possible. Czech authors anticipate potential queries and try to answer them in advance or to present their findings through less assertive, 'modalized' formulations, suggesting that a different interpretation of the phenomenon in question is possible. Smooth comprehension of the text is not the writer's main priority. Authors pay less attention to organizing their texts in a logical way and sometimes obscure their message by excessive lexical variation. The responsibility for decoding the message is assigned to the reader. Czech academic texts are primarily oriented towards the topic.

(Adapted from: Chamonikolasová, J.:<http://www.phil.muni.cz/stylistika/studie/comparing.doc>)

1.15.

Choose two academic articles from your field, compare/contrast the quality of their styles (sentence/paragraph level) and write one/two comparing/contrasting paragraph(s) (max.300 words). Place your text to the IS discussion forum.

2. COHERENCE AMONG PARAGRAPHS

2.1.

Divide the following text into paragraphs.

(Remember that each paragraph should develop a particular theme.)

How to stop yourself snoring.

Snoring is caused when the airway at the back of the nose and throat becomes partially obstructed. This is usually due to the loosening of the surrounding oropharyngeal muscles, but the reasons why this should occur are varied. The most common are smoking, obesity and the consumption of relaxants such as alcohol and sleeping pills. As with any common ailment, there are a host of "miracle" cures advertised - but you should first try a few simple steps to see if you can halt the snoring before adopting more drastic measures. Lifestyle changes can be the most effective. If you are overweight, a loss of weight will help to reduce the pressure on your neck. You should also stop smoking and try not to drink alcohol at least four hours before you go to bed. Beyond this, try to change your regular sleeping position. Raise the head of your bed with a brick, or tie something uncomfortable into the back of your pyjamas to encourage you to sleep on your side. Both of these will help to alter the angle of your throat as you sleep, and may thus make breathing easier for you. It is also important to keep your nasal passage clear and unblocked. Allergies, colds and hay fever can temporarily cause you to snore; nasal decongestants may help, but you are not advised to use such remedies for long periods. Nasal strips, as worn by sportspeople, have been proven to reduce nasal airway resistance by up to 30 per cent, so consider these as a long-term alternative. If this fails, then you may wish to look at the varied snoring aids that are on the market. They range from neck collars that stop your neck tilting, through to mandibular-advancement devices (such as gumshields) which reduce upper airway resistance, and tongue-retaining devices. You can also buy essential-oil products that are added to warm water and infused or consumed before bedtime. They claim to tone up your palate and unblock your nasal passage. Finally, if your symptoms persist, visit your GP or contact the British Snoring and Sleep Apnoea Association (01737 557 997) for advice. If you do not, your partner might.

(Source:Irving,M.: *Esquire*, March 1999 in <http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/parag/paragex1.htm>)

2.2.

What devices that assist in creating text coherence can you think of?

3.EVIDENCE & REFERENCE

3.1.

Evidence is the support for your statements and opinions from other sources. The quality of your evidence is in fact more important than your opinions. Without evidence your work does not belong in an academic environment.

If you are doing primary research you use your own data as the most important evidence. However in most academic papers this is usually done by placing your own work in the context of other academic work. At the end of longer papers you will use references and perhaps appendices to support your paper.

(Adapted from: <http://vlc.polyu.edu.hk/AcademicWriter/Paragraphs/paragraph.htm>)

Which are the most common ways of referencing?

3.2.

Which of the following statements should be referenced when used or referred to in a piece of academic writing?

1. Academic environmental scientists and those employed by NGOs tend to give more credence to the supposed human health risks associated with organo-phosphate pesticides than do scientists working for government departments or 'industry' research organisations.
2. The immortal line "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" can be used to describe e.g. corruption or a situation in which something is wrong in a country.
3. To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, as Newton found out, but so many writers forget this and it is so critical and basic to any story.
4. Although majority of children who were born preterm are nowadays free of major handicap (i.e. cerebral palsy or mental retardation) 25% to 50% of these infants exhibit milder neuromotor, sensory, cognitive or behavioural deficits.
5. The European Union currently has twenty-seven member states.
6. The greatest threat of childhood diseases lies in the dangerous and ineffectual efforts made to prevent them through mass immunization. There is no convincing scientific evidence that mass inoculations can be credited with eliminating any childhood disease.

(Adapted from: <http://www.greenwich.ac.uk/~bj61/talessi/tlr5.html>, <http://www.amypadgett.com/2007/05/to-every-action-there-is-equal-and.html>; <http://renew.com/general59/weu.htm>, <http://www.whale.to/m/quotes26.html>; Czechóova, K.2005, p.6)

3.3.

In text referencing (using sources)

It is important to support the points you make with evidence and examples from other research thoughtfully and carefully so you do not plagiarise. Look at the student paraphrased versions of Harden's idea and comment on the quality of their referencing.

Original material:

'...nurses can be viewed as an oppressed group, a view supported by the fact that nurses lack autonomy, accountability and control over their own profession. Yet nursing is by far the largest occupational group within the sphere of healthcare, so why is it so powerless? For me the history of the domination of nursing is inextricably linked to that of the domination and oppression of women.'

Source: Harden, J 1996, *Enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation: the case for critical pedagogy in nurse education*

Student version 1:

Although nurses form the largest occupational group in the healthcare profession, they can be seen as an oppressed group. Harden (1996) states that the domination of nurses is inextricably linked to the historical oppression and domination of women in society. For nurses, she claims this oppression is illustrated by the extremely limited professional independence they have as seen by their lack of accountability and control over their profession.

Student version 2:

Despite nurses forming the largest group in the healthcare professions, Harden (1996) claims they can be categorised '*as an oppressed group*' (p.33). She explains the domination of nurses as a reflection of the historical oppression and domination of women in society. For Harden (1996), this subservient role of nurses is illustrated by their '*lack of autonomy, accountability and control over their own profession*' (p.33).

Student version 3:

Nursing is by far the largest occupation group in healthcare. Yet, nurses can be seen as an oppressed group. This view is supported by the fact that nurses lack control over their own profession. They do not have autonomy or accountability. The history of the domination and oppression of women is the link to explaining the domination of nursing.

(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007)

3.4.

Rewrite the following passage from Andrew Merton's article "Return to Brotherhood" in your own words in roughly the same length:

For many adolescent males just out of high school, the transition to college represents a first step in a struggle for a kind of "manhood" from which women are viewed as objects of conquest-worthy, but decidedly inferior, adversaries. The idea of women as equals is strange and inconvenient at best, terrifying at worst. Unfortunately, most colleges and universities provide refuges ideally suited to reinforce these prejudices: fraternities.

*Note: fraternity – a social organization for male students at an American or Canadian college
(vs sorority – a female equivalent)*

4. ABSTRACT

4.1.

The abstract of a thesis, paper, article or other document is a shorter version of the originals providing its gist. The aim of an abstract is to give the reader a clear, objective, accurate and balanced account of a written or spoken text. After reading the abstract, someone may decide to read the whole document (or in the case of a public presentation, attend the meeting at which the document will be read out and/or discussed). The abstract should be understandable even when read separately from the original.

(Adapted from: Malovičová, I. et al.:2005 English For Academic Purposes, CJV MU)

4.2.

Abstracts are very common in academic writing, and they have a fairly standard form. Which essential parts should an abstract consist of?

Example:

BACKGROUND: Some studies have suggested an association between paternal subfertility and hypospadias among their sons, although the association has not been systematically investigated. We therefore compared male reproductive health among a group of fathers of boys with hypospadias and a group of fathers to normal children.

METHODS: A total of 64 fathers of boys with hypospadias participated; 349 partners of pregnant women served as a control group. All men delivered a semen sample, had a blood sample drawn, underwent a physical examination and completed a questionnaire.

RESULTS: Fathers of boys with hypospadias had a significantly lower median sperm concentration ($54.1 \times 10^6/\text{ml}$) ($P = 0.004$) and total sperm count (222.0×10^6) ($P = 0.009$) than the controls (81.2 and $326.0 \times 10^6/\text{ml}$). In addition, the fathers of boys with hypospadias more often reported to have had disorders in the urogenital system (hypospadias, cryptorchidism and testicular cancer) ($11/64$) ($P < 0.001$) than the control group ($16/349$). No significant differences in waiting time to pregnancy was observed, however, 15% of fathers to boys with hypospadias had received fertility treatment.

CONCLUSIONS: Fathers of boys with hypospadias not only have an increased frequency of hypospadias, but also decreased semen quality. Most likely fathers and sons share the same susceptibility genes for reproductive dysfunction, but additional impact of environmental factors cannot be excluded.

C. Asklund, N. Jørgensen, N.E. Skakkebak and T.K. Jensen: Increased frequency of reproductive health problems among fathers of boys with hypospadias; <http://humrep.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/22/10/2639>

4.3.

Read the abstract and identify its parts:

(1) This paper seeks to analyze the quantity and quality of American newspaper coverage of Canada, its people, and Canadian happenings. (2) The study monitored five American newspapers (four local, one national) for content relevant to the topic of Canada. (3) The research period lasted two months, from 15 May 2004 to 15 July 2004 (so as to include the Canadian election). (4) The study seeks to identify the different topics covered by the papers, looking particularly at regional variations in the types of stories covered. (5) Articles were organized into seven different groupings: news and happenings, politics, cultural and social issues, health care, sports, the environment, and business. (6) At this point, a detailed analysis was conducted to determine not only the number of articles included in each category, but also the most common issues and themes presented in the coverage, as well as the source of the article (newswire, local author, or editorial). (7) Such analysis provides a profile of how Canada is covered in several regional markets within the United States. (8) The study finds significant regional variations in coverage of Canada. (9) Analysis of newspaper content provides a good sense of how Canada and Canadian culture are perceived in various regional markets across the United States, particularly in regions in which a person's main source of information about Canada is the print media.

(Adapted from: Christopher M. Belch; A View from Abroad: An Analysis of Canadian Coverage in U.S. Newspapers, http://sitemaker.umich.edu/cbelch/thesis_abstract)

4.4.

Read the following characteristics and decide which you think an abstract must have in order to be effective.

- a) The same order of facts and ideas as the original
- b) Similar wording to the original with occasional phrases exactly the same
- c) Additional information which the original writer omitted, but which help to understand the subject
- d) A personal comment on the subject
- e) Simpler vocabulary than the original
- f) Key points of the original
- g) References to figures, tables, or sources
- h) No more than 20% of the total length of the source
- i) Use of the first person singular

Abstracts are usually written in tightly worded sentences which

prefer

- ▶ past tense
- ▶ third person passive
- ▶ uses phrases instead of clauses
- ▶ uses words instead of phrases

avoid:

- ▶ negatives
- ▶ subordinate clauses
- ▶ abbreviations, jargon, symbols and other language shortcuts which might lead to confusion
- ▶ repetition and meaningless expressions
- ▶ superlatives, adjectives, illustrations, descriptive details, examples, footnotes.

in short: Abstracts eliminate redundancy.

(Adapted from: Graetz (1985) in Swales, J.M. (1990): Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings.)

4.5.

Read the following abstracts and analyse their quality.

ABSTRACT A

We describe all commutative minimal clones.

ABSTRACT B

Plasmacytoid dendritic cells (pDCs) are natural type I IFN-producing cells found in lymphoid tissues, where they support both innate and adaptive immune responses. They emigrate from the blood to lymph nodes, apparently through high endothelial venules (HEVs), but little is known about the mechanism. We have investigated the molecular mechanisms of pDC migration using freshly isolated DCs and HEV cells. We found that pDCs bound avidly to HEV cells and then transmigrated underneath them. Two observations suggested that these binding and migration steps are differentially regulated. First, treatment of pDCs with pertussis toxin blocked transmigration but not binding. Second, pDCs were able to bind but not to transmigrate under non-HEV endothelial cells, although the binding was observed to both HEV and non-HEV endothelial cells. Antibody inhibition studies indicated that the binding process was mediated by α L and α 4 integrins on pDCs and by intercellular adhesion molecule (ICAM)-1, ICAM-2 and vascular cell adhesion molecule-1 on HEVs. The transmigration process was also mediated by α L and α 4 integrins on pDCs, with junctional adhesion molecule-A on HEV cells apparently serving as an additional ligand for α L integrin. These data show for the first time that pDCs employ multiple adhesion molecules sequentially in the processes of adhesion to and transmigration through HEVs.

ABSTRACT C

Let α be such that $0 < \alpha < \frac{1}{2}$. In this note we use the Mittag-Leffler partial fractions expansion for $F_\alpha(\theta) = \Gamma(1-\alpha-\theta/\pi) \Gamma(\alpha) / \Gamma(\alpha-\theta/\pi) \Gamma(1-\alpha)$ to obtain a solution of a Wiener-Hopf integral equation.

ABSTRACT D

Geographic indications (GIs) stand at the intersection of three hotly debated issues in international law: international trade, intellectual property and agricultural policy. Akin to a trademark, a GI identifies a good as originating in a particular region, where a given quality of the good is attributable to its place of origin. Well-known GIs include champagne and prosciutto di Parma. Although GIs have a long history, in recent years they have become central to the debate over the expansion of intellectual property rights in the World Trade Organization. We argue that GIs have gained greater political salience and economic value due to major changes in the global economy. Proponents of GIs also raise more diffuse concerns about authenticity, heritage and locality in a rapidly globalizing world. After explaining the origins of the effort to protect GIs in international law, we assess the normative justification for these unusual intellectual property rights. Some GI protection in international law is justifiable. But the existing level of protection afforded by the World Trade Organization – as well as current demands of the European Union for even greater protection – is unjustified. We defend this position through careful consideration of the major theoretical bases for property rights.

ABSTRACT E

The article tries to evaluate the Europeanization research agenda from the point of view of a politics-sphere and actor-centered approach. The authors postulate that the concept of Europeanization is lacking in regards to problems of political process and its dominant actors – political parties and interest/pressure groups. The article consists of several parts. First, a critical examination of existing Europeanization conceptualizations is provided. Second, the impact of democratic transition and consolidation upon Europeanization in new member countries of the EU (and in potential candidate states) is examined. Third, ways of necessary adaptation suitable for analyzing politics in terms of Europeanization are suggested and discussed. The article concludes with sections devoted to agenda-setting for research about the Europeanization of political parties and interest groups. The overall tenor of the article is to point out the necessity of integrating Europeanization-related issues, methodological, and research tasks into a broader framework of comparative politics/comparative government; and that the theoretical basis of actor-oriented Europeanization research should be drawn more from this area of political science than it has been in previous research.

(Sources: A) Kearnes, K.A., Szendrei,A.(1999): The Classification of Commutative Minimal Clones, *Discussiones Mathematicae, Algebra and Stochastic Methods* 19, p.147; B) Plasmacytoid dendritic cells employ multiple cell adhesion molecules sequentially to interact with high endothelial venule cells – molecular basis of their trafficking to lymph nodes, Takahiro Matsutani, Toshiyuki Tanaka, Kazuo Tohya, Kazuhiro Otani, Myoung Ho Jang, Eiji Umemoto, Kanako Taniguchi, Haruko Hayasaka, Koichi Ueda and Masayuki Miyasaka, <http://intimm.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/19/9/1031>; C) McGregor, M.(1997): On a Generalised Wiener-Hopf Integral Equation, *Archivum mathematicum (Brno)* 33, 273; D)<http://www.ejil.org/journal/Vol18/No2/art5.html> Kal Raustiala And Stephen R. Munzer; E) Petr Fiala, Vít Hloušek, Markéta Pitrová, Pavel Pšeja, Petr Suchý: Evropeizace politických stran a zájmových skupin: základní problémy a směry analýzy *Abstract: The Europeanization of Political Parties and Pressure Groups: Basic Problems and Directions of Analysis* (Pol.čas.2006/1) <http://www.iips.cz/index.php?show=001022001004>)

4.5.

Think of any academic text/talk you have written/given, or you are expected to write/give and write its abstract (max.250 words). Place your text to the IS discussion forum.