

Abstract

Text Book

Business Correspondence and Report Writing by R. C. Sharma and Krishna Mohan
Chapter 18, pages: 222–36

“Most reports contain a synopsis which is called an abstract or a summary. Although some people regard these two terms as different names for the same element, a distinction between them is made by discriminating writers” Sharma and Mohan, page 230

* “discriminating” means showing good judgement

Features of:

- summary
- synopsis
- abstract

summary

- a shortened version
- title (not compulsory)
- does not include an academic argument
- includes the main points
- another work such as newspaper article, chapter of a book, whole book, lecture, movie, etc.
- multiple paragraphs

synopsis

- a summary, or shortened version
- title (compulsory; generally, the title of the main work)
- includes an academic argument (depends on the type of primary work)
- includes the main points
- own work such as whole book, thesis, etc.
- includes chapter summary
- multiple paragraphs

abstract

- a summary, or shortened version
- title (compulsory; generally, the title of the main work)
- includes an academic argument (compulsory)
- includes the main points
- own work, mainly research article/book/thesis
- single paragraph
- keywords (optional)

Academic Argument

Thesis statement

- single sentence
- a claim which is open for debate and dispute
- stance in the argument

Research question

- single sentence in the form of a question (?)
- focus of investigation or direction

Problem statement

- single sentence
- state problem
- proposed solution or not offer solution

<https://library.royalroads.ca/writing-centre/writing/structure/thesis-statements>

Placing Research Problem in Technical Report

Problem statement

- generally, in the first paragraph of Introduction to main report
- do not copy-paste the Abstract in the first paragraph of Introduction

Types of Abstract

Informative Abstract

- most abstracts are informative
- researcher explains all the main arguments, results and evidence
- information on purpose, methods, scope
- includes results and conclusions
- includes recommendations
- word-limit: 250-300 words

Critical Abstract

- describes main findings and information
- a judgment or comment about research validity, reliability, or completeness
- researcher evaluates or compares research with other works
- word-limit – 300-400

Descriptive Abstract

- describes the type of information found in the work
- no judgments about the work, nor results or conclusions of the research
- describes the work being summarized
- an outline of the work
- word-limit – 100 words

Structure of Abstract

1. purpose of the study (stated directly or indirectly) - **why have you chosen the topic?** (tentatively 3 sentences)

2. research problem(s) investigated - **what is the problem?**
3. the basic design of the study – **how are you going to handle the problem?** (method) (tentatively 3 sentences)
4. major findings, interpretations and conclusions – **what is/are the outcome of the research?** (tentatively 3 sentences)

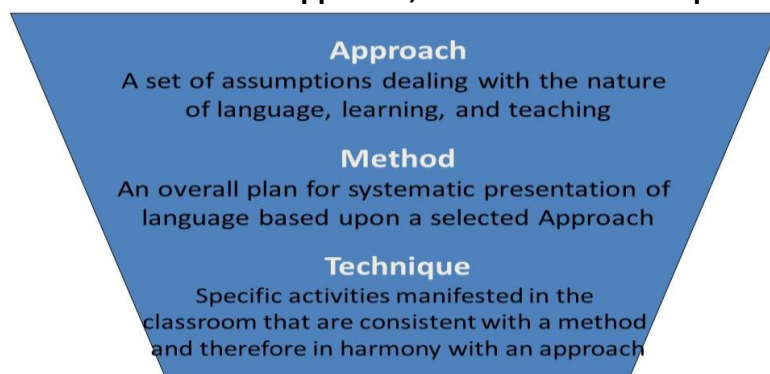
<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/8286125>

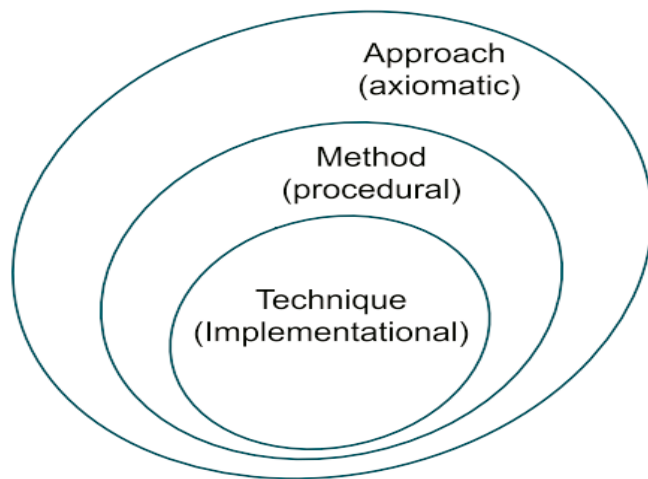
Elaboration of entry 3 in Structure of Abstract

Meaning of Research Method

| APPROACH VERSUS METHOD | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Approach is the way in which something is approached | Method is the way in which something is done |
| Refers to the direction or angle | Refers to a process |
| Refers to the theoretical framework in general | Refers to step by step guidelines |
| Approach has to be decided before selecting the method | Method can be selected after deciding the approach |
| | Pediaa.com |

Difference between Approach, Method and Technique





Abstract Formatting

- single paragraph
- abstract page comes next to title page
- the word "Abstract" is centre aligned
- no indent

Abstract in Technical Report

- informative abstract
- a single paragraph
- problem statement
- sums up the main points of the report
- comes after title page

IEEE guidelines

<https://journals.ieeeauthorcenter.ieee.org/create-your-ieee-journal-article/create-the-text-of-your-article/structure-your-article/>

Additional guidelines

- **medial science** - <http://cures.cardiff.ac.uk/files/2014/10/NSAMR-Abstract.pdf>
- **law** - <https://lawjournal.eu/write/information-for-authors/writing-abstracts/>