Summary

Academic Writing @ uninsubria

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1 Introduction

Academic writing is defined by its clear organization, use of precise language, and adherence to a formal tone. For instance, academic texts often follow a logical flow-from introductions to conclusions-with well-supported arguments and carefully constructed sentences. This structure allows writers to effectively convey complex ideas and present research findings in a way that is accessible and credible to readers.

> **Goal:** This course aims to guide learners through these conventions, beginning with understanding the overall structure of an article and progressing to mastering individual sentence construction.

Keywords: *Academic Writing, Article, Abstract, Paragraph, Sentences*

2 Article

An article is typically structured to present research findings or discussions in a clear and organized manner. Here's down the key components of an article:

1. **Abstract:** A brief summary of the article's content, including the main findings and conclusions.
2. **Content:** The main body of the article, which is often divided into sections or subsections.
3. **Conclusion:** Summarizes the main findings and suggests future research directions.

Imagine the content of an article as a container of introduction, methods, results, and discussion. This structure is commonly known as the *IMRaD Method*:

> **IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) Method:** This is a method for structuring scientific articles. It helps organize the content logically, making it easier for readers to follow the research process and findings.

2.1 IMRaD Method

Let's go more in-depth with this method:

1. **Introduction:** Introduces the topic, provides background information, and states the thesis or main argument.

2. **Methods:** Describes the research design, materials used, and methods of data collection and analysis.
3. **Results:** Presents the findings of the research, often with tables, figures, and statistical analysis.
4. **Discussion:** Interprets the results, discusses their implications, and compares them with previous research.

3 Abstract

Before starting to write an article, it is essential to draft an abstract. An abstract is a concise summary of the article, typically between 150 and 250 words, 300 at most. Let's break down the key structure of an abstract:

1. **Introduction:** States the purpose of the study, the research focus, and the hypothesis or objective guiding the work.
2. **Methods:** Describes the study design, including the time frame, location, materials or procedures used, and characteristics of the study population or data set.
3. **Results:** Presents the key findings of the study and indicates whether the results support the original hypothesis.
4. **Discussion:** Interprets the implications of the findings, highlights their relevance within the broader research context, and suggests possible directions for future investigation.

$\boxed{EXAMPLE}$

[1] This study investigates the impact of urban green spaces on mental well-being among adults living in high-density cities. The objective was to assess whether proximity to green spaces correlates with reduced levels of self-reported stress and anxiety. [2] A cross-sectional survey was conducted between March and July 2024 across five major metropolitan areas in the United States. A total of 1,250 participants aged 18–65 were recruited through stratified random sampling. Data were collected via standardized mental health questionnaires and geospatial analysis of residential distance to the nearest green space. [3] Analysis revealed that individuals living within 500 meters of a green space reported significantly lower stress levels ($p < 0.01$) and moderate reductions in anxiety scores ($p = 0.04$) compared to those living farther away. These associations remained significant after adjusting for socioeconomic status, age, and employment. [4] The findings suggest that access to urban green spaces plays a meaningful role in promoting mental health. As cities continue to densify, integrating green infrastructure into urban planning could serve as a low-cost, scalable strategy for enhancing public well-being. Further longitudinal research is recommended to explore causal relationships and long-term effects.

4 Paragraph

To write a good paragraph, it should be necessary to follow this method:

> **TEECL (Topic, Explanation, Evidence, Comment, Link) Method:** This is a method to structure your writing. Start with a topic sentence, explain it, provide evidence or examples, comment on the significance, and link to further information or context.

4.1 TEECL Method

Let's go more in-depth with this method:

1. **Topic:** The first sentence of the paragraph should clearly state the main idea or topic.
2. **Explanation:** Explain what you mean in greater detail.
3. **Evidence:** Support your explanation with evidence, examples, or data that reinforce your point.
4. **Comment:** Consider the strengths and limitations of the evidence, explaining why it is relevant or important.
5. **Link:** Summarize the main idea, and make clear how this paragraph supports the overall argument.

$\boxed{EXAMPLE}$

[1] Social media significantly impacts teenagers' mental health. [2] Social media platforms expose adolescents continuously to idealized images and unrealistic standards, amplifying feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. [3] For instance, a recent study by the American Psychological Association (2022) found that adolescents who spent more than three hours per day on social media were 60% more likely to experience anxiety and depression symptoms compared to peers with less screen time. [4] Although this study highlights strong correlations, it also acknowledges variations based on individual resilience and parental support. Nevertheless, the evidence clearly underscores the need to monitor and moderate social media use among teenagers. [5] Thus, addressing teenagers' mental health requires a proactive approach to social media regulation and education.

5 Sentences

To improve the quality of your writing, sometimes it could be useful to start transforming your sentences. Here are some common transformations:

- **Passive Form:** Shifts the focus from the doer of the action to the action itself.
- **Modal Verbs:** Used to express ability, possibility, advice, and obligation.
- **Fixed Expressions:** Enhance the formality and professionalism of the text.

5.1 Passive Form

This form is used when the action is more important than who performs it, or when the doer is unknown or irrelevant. The general form for the passive form is:

$$\text{BE + Past Participle} \tag{1}$$

> The passive form could not be used with intransitive verbs, which do not take a direct object. For example, "He sleeps" cannot be transformed into the passive form because there is no object to become the subject of the passive sentence.

5.2 Modal Verbs

These verbs are used to express ability, possibility, advice, and obligation. They can also indicate past meanings when combined with the perfect form. The general form for modal verbs is:

$$\text{Modal Verb + Base Verb} \tag{2}$$

Here's a breakdown of some common modal verbs and their uses:

Modal	Feature	Meaning
Can	Ability	The ability or capacity to do something
Could	Ability	Past ability or a polite possibility
Dare to	Ability	Courage or boldness to do something

Modal	Feature	Meaning
Would	Possibility	Hypothetical situations or polite offers/requests
May	Possibility	Formal permission or a moderate degree of possibility
Might	Possibility	Low degree of certainty or weak possibility
Should	Advice	Advice, recommendation, or moral duty
Shall	Advice	Formal suggestion, proposal, or future intent (in questions)
Ought to	Advice	Moral advice or expected behavior
Must	Obligation	Strong necessity, duty, or logical conclusion
Have to	Obligation	External or imposed obligation or necessity
Be supposed to	Obligation	Expectation, duty, or rules established by others

5.3 Fixed Expressions

The use of these expressions enhance the formality and professionalism of the text, we can summarize the most common expressions by feature in the following table:

Feature	Expression
Introducing	The aim/purpose of this paper is to
Introducing	This study sets out to
Introducing	This paper argues that
Structuring	In addition, it is essential to consider

Feature	Expression
Structuring	Furthermore, this study highlights
Structuring	In contrast, it is also important to acknowledge
Highlighting Evidence	According to
Highlighting Evidence	Recent studies suggest that
Highlighting Evidence	There is evidence to suggest that
Argumenting	It could be argued that
Argumenting	A possible explanation for this is
Argumenting	This supports the view that
Presenting Results	The findings indicate that
Presenting Results	The data reveals that
Presenting Results	This suggests that
Hedging	It is possible that
Hedging	It seems that
Hedging	It could be the case that
Concluding	In conclusion, it is clear that
Concluding	To sum up, the evidence suggests that
Concluding	Further research is needed to