Writing an abstract

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Overview

- What is an abstract?

- Why write abstracts?

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What is an abstract?

- An abstract is a short summary of a research article, a book, a speech, or a research idea that you hope to undertake.

- It is a self-contained piece of writing that can stand on its own.

- There are two types of abstracts:

  a) a summary of an already completed research study

  b) a brief proposal of a study we are planning to undertake

Why write abstracts?

- To give readers (our lecturers, supervisors, reviewers, other researchers,) a clear idea of what our study is about, or is going to be about.

- Abstracts are the means by which our research is selected for study or for presentation.

Contents of an abstract

- a full title (of 5-12 words),

- a summary of the research study, usually in a single block paragraph in 200-300 words

- Up to five keywords

- the name(s) of the researcher(s), with their affiliations

Writing the abstract

The body of your abstract usually includes

- A brief background to your study

- The aim of your study

- The methodology: What have you analysed? Or what kind of texts? Who are the participants? How many? What method(s) did you employ? What are you going to analyse?

- Why / how your findings are significant: how your study hopes to contribute to the body of knowledge on the general topic

- Use the future tense for proposed studies (*This study will….*) and the present tense for completed studies (*this study explores…*)

- Your abstract should *not* include long quotes, too many references or lists of references

Writing the title and key words

Your title should not be limited to the general topic, but to your specific topic. It can be fairly long, even up to 10-12 words.

- If "Early 20th century Sinhala fiction" is your general topic area, this can be your specific topic:

  "The depiction of greathouses in early 20th century Sinhala fiction."

- This is more specific: "A Marxist analysis of the depiction of greathouses in early 20th century Sinhala fiction" as it also indicates your analytical approach/framework.

- This is even more specific as it includes the text you have selected for analysis: "A Marxist analysis of the depiction of greathouses in early 20th century Sinhala fiction: Martin Wickramasinghe's *Gamperaliya*" but its perhaps too detailed and, at 17 words, a bit too long.

- So "A Marxist analysis of the greathouses in Martin Wickramasinghe's *Gamperaliya*"

The keywords are identified from your general and specific topic, your methodology, the texts chosen for analysis, the writer, and the theory/theoretical framework you use in your analysis. The key words usually recur in your title and in your abstract.

Code mixing in tuition classes for Economics and Biology in the Kiribathgoda area

Code mixing is an important concept in sociolinguistics and it is a widely observed phenomenon in Sri Lankan speech. It is the use of one language in another language, or the mixing of two or more languages. Moreover, code mixing is commonly used by bilingual speakers for communication in various situations. Most Sinhala speakers mix Sinhala and English languages both intentionally and unintentionally when communicating with others. Many research studies on code mixing have been conducted in various fields such as fiction writing, broadcasting media, print media, and advertising. However, no research has been conducted on code mixing in tuition classes although it is widely used in this field. Data for the study were collected through questionnaires and unstructured interviews which were conducted after analyzing them in order to gather in depth data. The sample included a randomly selected group of teachers and students in tuition classes for Biology and Economics in the Kiribathgoda area. This study explores when and why code mixing is used in the field of tuition. In addition it investigates the advantages and disadvantages in using code mixing and its nature of occurrences.

Key words: Code mixing, Tuition classes, Students, Teachers, Economics, Biology.

The depiction of love in Sri Lankan English poetry.

The topic of the research is the depiction of love in Sri Lankan English poetry. The poems Words to a daughter by Yasmine Gooneratne, A Soldier's Wife Weeps by Kamala Wijeratne, Fisherman Mourned by his Wife by Patrick Fernando and The Gift of Love by Jean Arasanayagam have been selected as the primary sources. The representation of love in these poems is scrutinized in terms of the effect of the Sri Lankan culture on the expression of love, and how the artists have utilized the English language in their works. The review of previous research on Sri Lankan English poetry reveal that there is research on the reconciliation of the indigenous traditions and Western traditions, the role of the English language and the fusion of local idioms and the English language in Sri Lankan English poetry. The effect of Sri Lankan culture on the expression of love and the use of language in Sri Lankan English love poems is not found in the research. The methodology that is followed in this research is content analysis. This study found that Sri Lankan culture has influenced the depiction of love in Sri Lankan English poems and that the use of language in the expression of love reflects Sri Lankan social and cultural values, beliefs and traditions and manifests a typically Sri Lankan usage of English.

Key words: love, culture, language, Sri Lankan English poetry

The Contribution of Cumaratunga Munidasa as a Neologist

Cumaratunga Munidasa (25th July 1887 - 02nd March 1944) was one of the greatest classical Sinhalese scholars of the recent times, remembered over the years for his extensive contributions to a number of disciplines. He is admired by many as the first to recognize and to fulfil the need for new Sinhala terms for modern technical and scientific concepts for the benefit of the Sinhala speech community in the last century. However, up to now, no attempt has been made to examine his role as a neologist. Therefore this study attempts to undertake this task. A corpus of data was collected for examination by referring to a number of books and paper articles written by Cumaratunga. It was observed that he had followed several morphological processes in coining neologisms, which reflect a number of salient features that one should take into consideration when coining Sinhala technical terms. Since a large number of neologisms coined by Cumaratunga have gained currency today, further studies of the morphological processes as well as the standards maintained by him as a neologist should be encouraged.

Key words: Cumaratunga, neologisms, morphological processes

Reference and further reading

- The Writing Centre, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Available at https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/abstracts/ Accessed 18 September 2018