

Requirements to abstracts*

The current abstract execution requirements are set on grounds of the goals established by scientific journals: not only drawing of attention of Russian readers, but entering the international arena to increase their citation indexes.

For foreign scientists and experts interesting in the Russian-language journals abstracts of publications are the only source of information, because only abstracts are translated into English. Readers assess the paper as a whole, its actuality using the paper abstract. It is hard to see whether a given paper is interesting for the reader and he (she) needs to have its full text (preliminarily translated into English), or not, basing on 3-5 sentences in abstracts earlier admitted for publishing in Russian journals. Meanwhile, an abstract should be perceived as a self-contained easy-to understand text without reference to the paper.

In modern practice, an abstract is close to a summary in its contents, structure, and objectives. This is a brief version of the given paper including the main actual data and conclusions. So, one of the time-proved versions of the paper abstract is a recapitulation of the paper structure. Such way of writing abstracts gained currency in foreign journals, as well.

Besides, it should be noted that abstracts are used for searching through information systems.

Based on the above stated, here are the main requirements to abstracts.

Abstracts of scientific papers

- must be informative (with no descriptive generalizations);
- must be comprehensive (the basic content of the paper and results of work must be presented);
- must be structured (following the logic of describing results in the paper);
- must have 100 to 250 words (12 to 30 lines of text).

An abstract includes the following aspects of the paper content:

- the subject, research topic, and objectives of the work;
- the description of the method, or methodology used to perform the work;
- results of the work performed;
- the application area for results;
- conclusions.

The subject, research topic, and objectives are described, if they are not clear from the paper title. It is not recommended to repeat in the abstract the information given in the paper title.

It is reasonable to describe the method in use, or the research methodology, if they are distinct in their originality, or interesting from the viewpoint of the given research work. Sources of data and the data treatment method are presented in abstracts of papers describing experimental efforts.

The research work results are described at a maximum possible level of accuracy and informativeness. The principal theoretical and experimental results, the established interactions and regularities are presented with the preference given to the new results and data, which are of practical importance, on the author(s) opinion.

The order of representing the paper content may be changed to begin from results and conclusions.

The abstract quality requirements include the following:

- special terms, meaningful words from the paper text should be used in its abstract;
- abbreviations and denotations, except the general-use ones, should not be used;
- unit measures of physical quantities should be given in the SI system. The values of quantities in the system of units used in the paper may be given in parentheses;
- references to publications from the list of publications given in the paper are not allowed.

To conclude, it should be emphasized once again that an abstract fulfills the function of a self-contained source of information presented in a given paper.

* The prepared material is based on the recommendations from the paper by O.V. Kirillova entitled «Getting Russian journals ready for the submission to the foreign analytical database Scopus: recommendations and comments», see its online version <http://hdl.handle.net/10995/20136>