**ЛЕКЦІЯ 6**

**WRITING CONFERENCE ABSTRACT**

**PLAN**

**1. Writing conference abstract**

**2. Outlining the research field**

**3. Justifying a particular study**

4.**Introducing the paper**

**5. Summarizing the paper**

**6. Highlighting conclusions**

**7.Useful Phrases for Conference Abstract**

**WRITING CONFERENCE ABSTRACT**

A conference abstract is a short account of an oral presentation proposed to the organizers of a conference. It is a widespread and important genre that plays a significant role in promoting new knowledge within scientific communities, both national and international.

Nowadays, Ukrainian scholars often try to submit abstracts to international conferences. For many of our academics, the conference abstract is a kind of a “pass” to the world research communities that provides, if accepted, various opportunities for professional contacts and communication.

The abstracts submitted for international and major national conferences are usually reviewed (sometimes blind-reviewed, i.e. considered without seeing the names of the authors) by conference committees. A certain number of abstracts are, as a rule, rejected. Conference abstracts, therefore, participate in the competition for acceptance and need to impress reviewing committees; that is why they may be written in a somewhat promotional, self-advertising manner. As Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) indicate, a dominant rhetorical feature of conference abstracts is "interestingness" created by the novelty of a topic and its presentation in an interesting for the potential audience way.

As conferences in Western countries are usually planned considerably in advance (abstract deadlines may sometimes be one year before the actual conference), abstracts may propose uncompleted research , which is planned to be finalized before the beginning of the conference. Due to such circumstances, English conference abstracts may provide only some outlines of the investigation rather than fully report it.

Conference abstracts have certain textual characteristics. They are usually one-page length (200-300 words) and consist of three paragraphs on average. Some conferences require in addition a shorter version ofan abstract for inclusion in the conference program. Such versions do not normally exceed 50 words.

As one study of conference abstracts has shown (Yakhontova, 2002), the conference abstract tends to have **five basic rhetorical moves** [parts] (although certain deviations from this structure are quite possible). These moves, which may be realized by certain rhetorical strategies, are as follows:

1. Outlining the research field (by reference to established knowledge/ importance claim/previous research).

2. Justifying a particular research/study (by indicating a gap in the previous research/by counter-claiming/by question-posing/by continuing a tradition).

3. Introducing the paper to be presented at the conference.

4. Summarizing the paper (by giving its brief overview).

1. Highlighting its outcome/results (by indicating the most important results or

their possible applications and/or implications).

Most typically, the first and the second moves are realized in the initial paragraph of a text, while the following paragraph introduces and summarizes the paper, and the concluding one highlights the outcome.

Conference abstracts from various research areas may be somewhat different due to the influence of disciplinary factors. For example, abstracts in hard sciences tend to be more specific about their findings. They may also provide a brief description of the research framework in the summarizing the paper move. Furthermore, the abstracts in this fields generally favour the use of the personal pronoun we for representing a single author, in contrast to their counterparts in humanities. Notwithstanding these possible discrepancies, conference abstracts in many fields seem to have more similarities than differences insofar as they share generally the same rhetorical organization and textual format (Yakhontova, 2002).

*Study the following example in the field of international law:*

**Truly Humanitarian Intervention**

**(1. Outlining the research field)** In the standard, just war theory, use of this term, "humanitarian intervention" refers to the use of military force by one nation or group of nations to stop genocide or other gross human rights violations in another sovereign nation.

**(2. Justifying a particular study)** Discussions have always been raised about the following two problems. First, such purportedly humanitarian intervention, often ends up killing innocent civilians, violating the principles of just war theory, and making matters worse. In this sense the word "humanitarian" hardly seems justified by the outcome, and the conditions that just war offers for such intervention appear too lenient. Second, only the most horrible, massive, and violent violations of human rights can justify the use of military force against a sovereign nation, and therefore many serious evils go uncounted, unnoticed, and unmitigated. Thus, the term as bounded by just war theory seems too constricted.

**(3. Introducing the paper)** To find a solution to these problems I begin with the very basic questions: When are violations of human rights sufficient to require an international response? What should that response be? These questions quite plainly raise the danger of ethnocentric and nationalistic bias. Although less noticed, they also risk androcentric or sexist bias. For example, does mass rape rise to the level that would license international intervention? What about massive civil rights violations aimed specifically at women?

**(4. Summarizing the paper)** The gendered nature of a part of this emerging political philosophy, namely that portion that concerns intervention for humanitarian ends was investigated. I argue that massive women's rights violations can license intervention, but military intervention is often counter-productive to the aim of achieving women's human rights.

**(5. Highlighting conclusions)** Thus, a range of responses to human rights violations that includes military intervention as only one end of the continuum, and to combine this with a greater understanding of the scope of human rights violations that require international response should be suggested. The research has shown a new conception of truly humanitarian treatment within and beyond international borders, applicable to all kinds of human rights violations, not only those of women, or of men, but of any or all human beings.

*(minor editing)*

**Useful Phrases for Conference Abstract**

### Establishing the Importance of the Topic:

One of the most significant current discussions in (field) is ...  
It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the …  
X is the leading cause of …  
X is an important component in … , and plays a key role in Y.  
In the new global economy, X has become a central issue for ...  
In the history of development economics, X has been thought of as a key factor in .   
In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in ...  
Recent developments in the field of X have led to a renewed interest in ...  
Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in ...  
The past decade has seen the rapid development of X in many ...

**Highlighting a Problem or Controversy in the Field of Study:**

However, a major problem is ...  
There is increasing concern that some Xs are being disadvantaged ...   
This concept has recently been challenged by recent studies demonstrating ...

One of the most significant current discussions in (field) is ...

Questions have been raised about ...

The issue of X has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of ...   
The issue has grown in importance in light of recent ...

One major issue in early X research concerned ...

### Highlighting a Knowledge Gap in the Field of Study:

So far, however, there has been little discussion about ...  
However, far too little attention has been paid to ...  
Most studies in X have only been carried out in a small number of areas.  
In addition, no research has been found that .  
So far this method has only been applied to …  
The issue is rather controversial, and there is no general agreement about ...

### Focus and Aim:

This paper will focus on/examine/give an account of ...  
This paper seeks to address the following questions:   
This essay/abstract critically examines/discusses/traces ...  
The purpose of this paper is to review recent research into ...  
This paper will review the research conducted on ...  
In this paper I argue that ...  
The aim of this paper is to determine/examine ...  
The aim of this study was to evaluate and validate …

### Outline of Structure:

The main questions/issues addressed in this paper are: a), b and c).  
This paper has been divided into four parts. The first part deals with …  
This paper begins by .... It will then go on to ...  
The first section of this paper will examine ...  
Finally, ...

**Describing Methods:**

A variety of methods are used to assess X. Each has its advantages and drawbacks.  
Data were gathered from multiple sources at various time points during the 2007–2008 academic year.

Case study approach was chosen to allow a ...  
The X method is one of the more practical ways of ...

**Highlighting the Outcome:**

The paper has explained the central importance of ...  
The paper has investigated ...

The paper will conclude by ….  
The following conclusions can be drawn.   
This study/research has shown that ...   
An implication of this is the possibility that ...  
Further research might explore/investigate ...

A reasonable approach to tackle this issue could be to ...

**Exercise 1.** *Study the following conference abstracts in the field of law and analyze them according to Yakhontova’s “* ***moves****” or parts.*

**Abstract 1 Prevention of Organized Crime in Europe**

The goal of this project is to present the phenomena of "organized crime" and to suggest some answers to related questions often raised by the public. A significant element of combating organized crime is prevention, therefore a special section of this project is intended to finding out how to prevent organized crime and corruption, its most dangerous aspects in the countries in transition, in particular.

Organized crime is a major problem in most European countries. It is essential to systematically collect and analyze information and experiences of organized crime. For this purpose we need to devise an appropriate policy to fight it and arrive at its internationally recognized definition. What is common so far is the understanding of the features that characterize the way in which organized criminal groups operate.

Criminal activities in organized criminal organizations (e.g., drug trafficking, illicit trafficking in firearms, money laundering, etc.) will be discussed, offering a description of some of the most notorious criminal organizations ranging from the "traditional" Mafia to new groups with growing influence in the world of organized crime.

Due to the danger which organized crime represents to a democratic society, special emphasis is given to the issues of national and public security. We stress the importance of an effective criminal policy and law enforcement operations in response to organized crime. Establishment of preventive measures is the most important part of any criminal policy. Nowadays, organized crime is crossing national borders and becoming an international problem, so international co­operation in suppressing it within INTERPOL, EUROPOL, Schengen Accord, and

other international bilateral and multilateral agreements will be discussed.

Generally speaking, the real victim of corruption and organized crime is society at large. Therefore, preventive measures are the first step in combating this evil, particularly in the countries in transition.

*(minor editing)*

**Abstract 2 Judicial Enforcement of Social and Economic Rights:**

**Why does the American Constitution Lack Social and Economic Rights?**

It is well-known that civil and political rights and social and economic rights are interdependent. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights has been ratified by majority of countries in the world. Some constitutions of these countries recognize social and economic rights. The Bill of Rights proposed by Madison was the first ten amendments to the American Constitution. The second Bill of Rights first proposed by FDR in 1944 includes some social and economic rights, such as the right to a job, the right to a decent home, and the right to a good education. But the second Bill of Rights has not been recognized by the American Constitution. Why does the American Constitution lack Social and Economic Rights?

Professor Cass Sunstein explored this question and considered four possible answers in a new book. I am trying to resolve this question by assessing Sunstein's four possible answers. I will contend that the answer lies in the judicial interpretation to the Constitution.

The first explanation is chronologica1. The American Constitution is too old to create social and economic rights. Sunstein questions this explanation: it faces a problem that the American Constitution is not frozen. The key question is why the exciting document has not been interpreted to include social and economic guarantees. In my opinion, a constitution's meaning changes through textual amendments and judicial interpretations. It is possible for the American Constitution to be amended or interpreted to include social and economic rights. But it didn't happen. So there is no direct relationship between a constitution and its age.

The second explanation pays attention to the absence of a strong socialist movement. Sunstein points the fact that nations that have a socialist movement lack social and economic rights. And nations that lack a strong socialist movement may include in their constitutions. It is true. FDR argued for social and economic rights, but he was not a socialist.

The third explanation emphasizes the enforcement of rights. Judges cannot enforce these rights. Then they are not a set of rights but goals. Sunstein argues that courts can in fact enforce social and economic rights. I think there is no sharp difference between economic rights and political rights. Both of them can be enforced by courts.

The fourth is Sunstein’s own realistic explanation. He says the answer lies in the 1968 election, as Nixson narrowly defeated Humphrey. Nixon appointed four justices who insisted that the Constitution did not include social and economic guarantees. Sunstein is willing to believe if Humphrey has won, he would have appointed justices who would protect the social and economic rights.

It can be concluded that in Sunstein’s opinion the president is most important to constitutional change. I contend the meaning of American Constitution depends on the justices. It changes because of new interpretations. For example, when the bill of rights was first ratified, it was not applicable to the States. It is in a long process for the court to make new interpretations to hold that the bill of rights is binding on the American states. The second bill did not become part of the American Constitution through amendment but through interpretation. In the 1960s, the Supreme Court came very close to ruling that the Constitution protects important parts of the second bill of rights by interpreting the existing constitution. The court in some cases protected the poor through interpreting fourteenth amendment. But this trend was reversed by later justices. I insist that it is not presidents but justices who play an important role in constitutional change. Justices can enforce social and economic rights by interpreting the existing constitution.

**Exercise 2.** *Consider the abstract in the field of taxation and rewrite it using useful phrases for conference abstract.*

**Taxes and Growth in Europe**

The effect of taxes on aggregate economic activity is one of the least contested areas in theoretical macroeconomics. Both neoclassical and Keynesian theoretical models, for example, predict that higher taxes reduce economic activity, even though there is less agreement on the exact mechanisms that generate this result.

The issue has not been pursued empirically with anything like the dedication that has characterized the much more vigorously debated effects of monetary policy. A recent important exception has been the study by Romer and Romer (2007) who construct a novel measure of "exogenous" tax shocks and estimate its short-run and long-run economic effects.

The present paper contributes to the empirical side of the question using a panel methodology that analyzes annual data from the 1965 to 2003 period for 26 OECD economies. Our empirical findings show that higher taxes do indeed result in a reduction of GDP per capita that is sizable and persistent. While the exact size of the effect depends on how the "tax shock" is measured, our estimates suggest that an increase in the total tax rate by 1 % of GDP will have a long-run effect on GDP per capita of -0.5% to -1%. This is smaller than Romer and Romer's (2007) rather large estimated effect (approximately -3%), but much closer to the effects obtained by Karras (1999) for a smaller OECD sample, and by Blanchard and Perotti (2002) and Romer and Bernstein (2009) for the U.S.

We also look at the effects of four of the largest types of taxes: taxes on income, profits, and capital gains; taxes on property; social security contributions; and taxes on goods and services. They all have negative effects on GDP per capita, and that an increase in social security contributions or taxes on goods and services has a larger negative effect on per capita output than an increase in income tax.

Section 2 discusses the sources of the data and defines the variables to be used in the estimation. Section 3 outlines the estimation methodology, derives the main empirical results, and implements a number of robustness checks. Section 4 discusses the findings and some possible extensions, and offers a conclusion.

*(minor editing)*

**Exercise 3.** *Compare your Ukrainian abstracts with the English ones. Are there any similarities/differences in the rhetorical and textual organization of the texts?*

**Exercise 4.** *Write your own conference abstract of 200-300 words based on your field of research.*

**CONTROLLING QUESTIONS (UNIT 8)**

1. What is a conference abstract?

2. What is the length of a conference paper?

3. How is a conference abstract organized?

4. Are there any differences between English conference abstracts and the Ukrainian ones.