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Institution:

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Biography

Since beginning to teach at the FAU in autumn 2008, Peter has been responsible for designing, establishing and coordinating the FAU's program of subject-specific English courses for students of the natural sciences. He teaches courses to students from a variety of scientific subjects at various stages of their academic careers as well as providing individual English language training, conference preparation and editing/proofreading assistance to teaching staff. The ongoing drive to internationalize Bavarian universities' science departments and research base has created an ever-increasing demand for students capable of presenting, writing and publishing high quality scientific work in English. This has led to the continual expansion of the course programs being offered at the FAU's natural sciences faculty as well as the numbers of students attending them. This trend looks set to continue for at least the near future and provides a significant part of the motivation behind this presentation.

Presentation:

Editing to ensure conciseness in abstract writing for scientific papers

Abstract:

The tight restrictions imposed on the length of abstracts for scientific publication require authors to write concisely while maintaining a high degree of specificity and accuracy as regards content. Authors who wish to engage readers and convince them of the value of reading the body of an article must be able to convey a great deal of information succinctly within a strictly limited text (typically with a maximum of between 200 and 300 words).

The command of language necessary to condense the essence of a paper detailing several months or years of work into such a short piece poses several challenges for the author. This presentation will address one such challenge, which is particularly difficult for L2 writers of English abstracts, namely editing a draft abstract to reduce its length.

Sample abstracts produced by students attending scientific writing courses at level C1 will be used to highlight specific issues connected to text length in L2 abstract writing and techniques for assisting students in recognizing and addressing them will be proposed.