

Tips for Writing an Abstract for Your Japanese Research Proposal

(英語アブストラクト執筆のヒントとワークシートプロポーザル版)

To write an English abstract for your research proposal, follow these three steps:

- 1) Read the introduction to writing an English abstract for a research proposal.**
- 2) Write your answers on the worksheet.**
- 3) Refer to the reference pages as needed.**

Table of Contents

Cover page	Page 1
1. Introduction	Pages 2 - 3
2. Worksheet	Pages 4 - 5
3. Reference Pages	Pages 6 - 12
3-1. Sample good abstracts	Page 6
3-2. Sample bad abstracts	Pages 6 - 7
3-3. How to write a title (Including good sample titles)	Page 8
3-4. Common phrases	Page 9
3-5. Common mistakes	Page 10
3-6. Editing	Pages 10 - 11

1. Introduction

An abstract is a short summary of your proposal so readers know what it is about. They can then know if it is important enough for their research to read or to keep looking for more suitable articles. Writing an abstract in English is important so that your research can be understood by people who cannot read Japanese.

アブストラクトは研究報告の簡潔な概要である。その目的は読者に何が書いてあるかを伝えることにある。アブストラクトを読むことで読者は、自分の研究にとって読む価値があるのか、それとも他により適した論文を探す必要があるのかを知ることができる。日本語を読むことができない読者にあなたの研究を理解してもらうためには、英語でアブストラクトを書くことが重要である。

1) ***Make sure your Japanese paper is clearly written.***

日本語の論文が明確に書かれているかどうかを確認しよう。

It is very hard to write a good abstract until you have finished your paper. It is easier to write an English abstract for a well-organized paper written in Japanese.

論文を書き終えるまで、良いアブストラクトを書くことはとても難しい。日本語でうまく構造化された論文を書くことができれば、英語でアブストラクトを書くことは容易になる。

2) ***Know how long your abstract should be.***

アブストラクトの長さを確認しよう。

For the college of Policy Science it should be 45-60 words for 1st year paper proposals.

政策科学部では、1回生は50語前後の研究・プロポーザルを書かなければならない。

3) ***Know what good and bad abstracts look like.***

良いアブストラクトと悪いアブストラクトの違いを知ろう。

Read the many examples in this document.

以下に掲載されている多くの例を見てみよう。

4) ***Writing preparation.***

書く準備をしよう。

Reread your paper, take notes, and write down keywords.

自分の論文を読み直し、ノートを取り、キーワードを書き出そう。

5) ***Write the abstract.***

アブストラクトを書こう。

For first year research proposals write each of the sections. Use the worksheet provided in this document.

1回生の研究・プロポーザルは、以下の各項目について書こう。4-5頁のワークシートを使おう。

Background	<i>What is your general topic?</i>
Purpose	<i>What is the question you are trying to answer?</i>
Literature Review	<i>What does the previous literature say about the topic?</i>
Method	<i>How did you gather your data?</i>
Prediction	<i>What do you predict you will find?</i>

背景	全体の主題は何か
目的	明らかにしようとする問いは何か
文献調査	その主題について先行研究はどう述べているか
方法	データをどのように集めたか
予測	何が発見できそうか

6) **Rewrite the abstract.**

アブストラクトを読み直そう。

Take out unneeded words or add anything missing.

Check for accuracy. **Use English spell check on MS Word!**

不必要な言葉を取り除き、足りないものを書き足そう。

正確かどうか確認しよう。 マイクロソフト・ワードのスペルチェック機能を使おう。

7) **Ask someone else to check your abstract.**

アブストラクトを他の人に確認してもらおう。

A classmate, an older student, a teacher or come to the **Writing Help Desk.**

クラスメイトや先輩、教師に確認を頼もう。ライティング・ヘルプデスクを利用しよう。

2. Research Proposal Abstract Worksheet

Write the information from your paper for each section in Japanese and then English to help you clarify your ideas for yourself and your editor.

Title

Japanese _____

English _____

Background

Japanese _____

English _____

Purpose

Japanese _____

English _____

Literature Review

Japanese _____

English _____

Method

Japanese _____

English _____

Prediction

Japanese _____

English _____

3. Reference pages

3-1. Good examples of research proposal abstracts

Example 1: Regional Revitalization

Many cities struggle with regional revitalization. This study will compare how cities tried to revitalize their city through tourism promotion. Fieldwork including surveys and interviews will be done in two towns. The towns have different approaches to tourism promotion so the superior method will be exposed. (46 words)

Example 2: Health and Longevity

Japan has the highest rate of longevity in the world however lifestyle illnesses are increasing. This project will explore the field of life sciences its effect on society. The research method was interviews with experts. The researchers hope the future directions of medical science will be revealed. (47 words)

Example 3: Japanese Foreign Policy

At the present time Japan has several conflicts with its neighbors. This study hopes to find common ground between Japanese and other peoples. The authors surveyed and interviewed Japanese and foreign people about their views on various topics. It is hoped the data will show the commonalities among all people. (50 words)

Example 4: Homelessness

Homelessness has become an increasing problem in Japanese cities. This paper aims to provide a short list of possible solutions. The authors will interview city officials, regular citizens, and homeless people about their ideas on how to help the problem. The authors will present a list of the top five solutions. (51 words)

Example 5: Japanese-Korean Relations

This paper deals with the anti-Japanese feeling in Korea. The goal of this paper is to discover the underlying reasons to these feelings. The authors will do a few in-depth interviews with Korean citizens about this topic and analyze the responses. The authors hope to discover the main source of these feelings. (52 words)

3-2. Bad Examples of research proposal abstracts

Bad example 1: Aging Society and Immigration

Draft of bad example 1

Japan population has been decreasing because of the aging society. In really, it is said that Japan needs 600, 000 people every year to keep the economic level of the current. To cover the lack of workforce, Japan need to accept the foreign labors. There are many ways to accept the foreign workers but I want to study good way can make good teamwork between nations and foreigners. (68 words)

Explanation of bad example 1

There are many small English mistakes. **Japan population** should be *the population of Japan* or *Japan's population*. **In really** should be *actually* or simply cut out. **I want to**

study does not tell the reader what methods will be used or what the goal of the paper will be.

細かな英語の誤りが散見する。"Japan population"は"the population of Japan"とするか、"Japan's population"としなければならない。"in really"は"actually"とするか、すばっと削除すべきである。"I want to study"という曖昧な表現では、この研究が何を目的としており、どのようにこの目的を明らかにしようとするのかというアブストラクトの中でもっとも重要な点を読者に伝えられていない。

Corrections bad example 1

Japan's population is decreasing due to the falling birthrate. Japan will need foreign workers to maintain the economy. This paper explores the various ways to integrate the foreign workers into Japanese society. The authors will interview government, NPO, and foreign workers. The study will suggest 5 ways to achieve the goal of a harmonious society. (55 words)

Bad example 2: Environmental protection and sustainable development in Japan

Draft of bad example 2

Now Japan is promoting "development of beautiful country". The goal of it is formation of various landscapes in region, but present development of town in Japan puts importance on convenience and sometimes destroys natural environment in town. Japan should make sustainable beautiful landscape in town and town people should take part in it. So I want to study "how government promote sustainable development with town people and how they should make use of resources in town" in Ibaraki. (78 words)

Explanation of bad example 2

Development of beautiful country is Japanese English; *landscape and environmental protection* is better. *This paper will explore* is a good way to introduce the topic.

Explaining the methods and goals is better than writing **I want to study**.

英語では"**Beautiful country**"を"**develop**"するとは言わない。また、"**beautiful country**"は抽象的過ぎるので、具体的に言い換えてみよう。たとえば *landscape and environmental protection* はどうだろう。"*This paper will explore*"という表現は、主題を提示するのに良い方法である。"**I want to study**"と書くよりも、研究目的と方法を説明する方が良い。

Corrections bad example 2

Environmental protection and sustainable development are increasingly important issues in Japan. This paper will explore how communities balance these two perspectives. The researchers will interview a variety of "stakeholders" in the town of Ibaraki near Osaka and compare their opinions. The researchers expect to find a variety of approaches to these issues. (52 words)

3-3. How to write a title for your research proposal

The title is the first and most read part of any paper.

タイトルはどのようなレポートであっても、ほとんどの人が最初に読み、それゆえもっとも読まれる。

A title summarizes the main idea of your paper in the least amount of words possible.

The maximum length of a title is about 15 words but less is better. Subtitles can be used.

タイトルは、できるだけ少ない言葉で論文の主要なアイデアを手短に述べるものである。タイトルの最大語数は約 15 語だが、少ないほうが望ましい。サブタイトルを書くことで、メインタイトルを補足できる。

The title should also catch the readers attention.

タイトルで読者の関心を引こう。

Examples: Japanese Business

This one is too long:

- The Study of the Merits and Possibilities of the Overseas Expansion Style of Japanese Companies Using the Transaction Cost Approach Theory in China and Vietnam

These are too short:

- Transaction Cost Theory
- Japanese Overseas Expansion

This one is just right

- The Expansion Style of Japanese Companies: The Transaction Cost Approach

More Good Title Examples:

- The Nikkei Identity: The Ever-Changing Identity of the Nikkei in North America
- Competitive Advantage: The Direction of Japan's Industrial Policy
- Kinkakuji Traffic study: Universal Design for Bus Stops and Roads for Travellers
- I am Robot: Future Directions of Japan's Robot Industry
- From Russia with Love: Resolution of the Russo-Japanese Territorial Issue
- Social Networking Advantages: The Case of Japan
- The Effect of Women's Increased Economic Independence on the Marriage Rate in Japan
- Low Voter Turnout in Japan: The Case of Young Men
- Populism and Democracy: The Decline of Democracy in the Modern World
- Smart City Keihanna: How One City Saved its Environment
- Using the Internet to improve the Public Relations of a University: A Case Study

Write your title on the worksheet.

ワークシートに研究タイトルを書いてみよう。

3-4. Common example sentences

1. Background

- The major cause of (problem) is (reason).
- (your topic) is an increasingly important area of (general topic).
- A key aspect of (general topic) is (your topic).
- Recently (your topic) has become an important topic in (place).
- (problem) has become important because (reason).
- Many (kind of people) have begun to argue that (problem) is a problem.

2. Purpose

- The purpose of this study is (purpose).
- This paper aims to (goal).
- This essay seeks to (goal).
- This essay examines the solutions to (problem).
- The objective of this research is to (goal).

3. Method

- A 20-question survey was given to 100 people.
- Both surveys and interviews were conducted.
- A case study approach was used.
- In-depth interviews of (people) were conducted.
- (subject/s) was/were observed and notes recorded.
- The researchers used the participant observation method.

4. Literature Review

- The literature so far says (general summary of information).
- There is a lot of literature on (topic 1) but little or no research on (topic 2).
- In recent years there has been an increasing amount of literature on (topic).
- Previous research on this topic says (general summary of information).
- A number of studies have found (general summary of information).

5. Predictions

- The authors hope to show that (hypothesis).
- The authors hope to discover the main source of (cause).
- The authors will present a list of solutions to (problem).
- It is hoped that (cause) will be revealed.
- It is predicted that the data will show (hypothesis).

3-5. Common Mistakes to look out for (and how to fix them)

- 1) **Frankly speaking.** Use *in fact*, or *actually*.
 - X** – Frankly speaking this problem is the most important of the three.
 - O** – In fact this problem is the most important of the three because ...

- 2) **And/So/But to start a sentence.** These are *conjunctions*; they are used to join two simple phrases. Do not use them to start a sentence.
 - X** – Developed countries have problems. And developing countries have problems.
 - O** – Developed countries have problems and developing countries have problems.
 - O** – Developed countries have problems. Developing countries also have problems.

- 3) **Because to start a sentence.** The word *because* is also a *conjunction*; it connects two phrases. The second phrase explains the first. You may see sentences starting with *because* in English media but do not start a sentence with *because* to make sure you do not make this very common mistake.
 - X** – The policy is successful. Because policy makers learned the lessons of the past.
 - O** – The policy is successful because policy makers learned the lessons of the past.

- 4) **And so on.** Use *and some other ...* .
 - X** – The policy affects the community, the residents, and so on.
 - O** – The policy affects the community, the residents, and some others.

- 5) **Especially.** Rarely used at the beginning of sentences.
 - X** – Especially, this article emphasizes on the following facts.
 - O** – This article emphasizes on various facts, especially the following facts... or : ...
 - O** – In particular, this article emphasizes on the following facts: ... or ...

- 6) **Something wants to ...** . People and animals have wants not things.
 - X** – This research wants to
 - O** – The authors intend to
 - O** – The researchers want to

- 7) **Make a claim.** Rarely used in English the same way that クレーム is.
 - X** – The customer made a claim.
 - O** – The customer complained.

- 8) **It is said that ...** . By who? When? Where? This is too general for an academic paper.
 - X** – It is said that Japanese food is delicious.
 - O** – 87% of tourists to Japan in the 2009 survey said Japanese food is delicious.
 - O** – In recent years there have been many references to the high quality of Japanese food in the international press, for example

3-6. Editing your research proposal abstract

After writing your abstract and including all the parts, you must edit it for length and correct the English. See the student abstract examples below:

アブストラクトとその他の部分をすべて書き終えたら、語数を調整し、英語の誤りを正さなければならない。以下に挙げた学生のアブストラクト例を見てみよう。

Example: Tourism for Regional Revitalization

First Draft

Today, although a lot of entities are grapple with regional revitalization, there are just a few successful cases. This study picks up “community development by tourism” which is new community development with their community residents and visitors who want to go sightseeing. I want to research the demands of people toward tourism spot and the way of how to correspond to tourist from host people’s view. (66 words)

Explanation

Native English speakers rarely say, “pick up”. It is better to say “will study”, “will explore”, “will examine”. Repeating the same word like “community” three times in the same sentence is strange, use synonyms or make more than one sentence.

英語では“pick up”とはあまり言わない。“will study”, “will explore”, “will examine”などが好ましい。“community”のように、同じ言葉が同一センテンスに3回繰り返して使われていると、違和感がある。類義語を用いるか、センテンスを分けよう。

Second Draft

Since the burst of the Japanese economic bubble of the 1990s many cities have struggled with regional revitalization. One common route to community development is through tourism. This study will compare how cities approach their tourism development. In addition to media and theoretical research, fieldwork will be done in the towns including surveys and interviews. The towns are all in different regions and different people run the towns so likely they all will have different methods. The best town will be shown as having the best plan. (87 words)

Explanation

This version’s main problem is that it is too long. The background section is two sentences so it is too long. Notice the most of the verbs are future “will ...” because this is a proposal and the research will be done in the future. The prediction is also too long; only one sentence is ideal to keep the word total to about 50 words.

第2ドラフトの大きな問題は、長すぎることである。背景が二つのセンテンスにわたって説明されているが、あまりに長い。リサーチ・プロポーザルで使われる動詞のほとんどは未来時制であり“will”を用いるよう気をつけること。この英文は提案であり、研究は将来なされるものだからである。予測もまた長すぎる。おおよそ50語以内とするために、予測もワンセンテンスでまとめるのが理想的だ。

Final Version

Many cities struggle with regional revitalization. This study will compare how different cities tried to revitalize their city through tourism promotion. Fieldwork including surveys and interviews will be done in two cities. The various strategies will be described. The authors will make general recommendations for cities that want to revitalize their tourism industry. (53 words)

Explanation

To keep the word total to about 50 words one sentence for each section is best. Only give the essential information in the proposal. Use the future tense about the research goals, method, and prediction of results.

約 50 語で書くためには、アブストラクトの要素ごとにセンテンスを分けるのがもっともよい。リサーチ・プロポーザルのなかでもっとも重要な情報だけを書こう。研究目的、方法、結果の予測については未来時制を使おう。

Last step: Give your final draft to someone else to check. It is common for students to skip this last step. This results in many unnecessary mistakes. Don't forget to do this last step before you hand in your abstract.

最終ステップ: 最終版のドラフトを誰かにチェックしてもらおう。学生は、他人にチェックしてもらおうという最後のステップを省略しがちである。だから、誰かに見てもらえば修正できたであろう多くの誤りが残ったまま、アブストラクトを提出してしまうことになる。提出する前に必ず誰かに読んでもらおう。