Assignment 4 - The Introduction

Linguistics 381 - Written English for Non-Native Speakers

Spring, 2001

Okay, you've finished an outline. Now you should be ready to start writing the actual paper itself, and where better to start than at the beginning! You should write an introduction that helps the reader know exactly what your project is about and the context in which it is relevant, what is the main question to be answered, how you will go about answering the question, and basically, what the answer is. Now, you might be asking yourself a good question here, "What's the difference between an introduction and an abstract?" First and foremost, it is important to realize that an abstract is usually very brief and extremely dense: it condenses much information in a very small space (150-200 words). An introduction does not have such constraints and usually includes much more contextual detail that answers such questions as, "Why are you doing this work?" and "What relevance does it have to which areas of study?" In this sense, the introduction motivates the reader to see the necessity of reading the whole paper (if they want only the gist then they'll read only the abstract).

So, you should write an introduction to your project which seeks to answer these questions (and others you may deem relevant to your project). Nominally, 500 words should be plenty. If your introduction is longer than that, you are either giving too much contextualization, or you're writing an introduction to a dissertation.

You may wish to look at the following in *WACH5* to help you.

- Chapter 5 "Planning and Organizing Your Text", pp. 64-80 (especially, Section 5.5, "Introducing an Essay")

- Chapter 8, "Style: Using a Community's Language", pp. 127-155

Submit your introduction via the "Digital Dropbox" in order to complete this assignment.