

## EDITORIAL

# “No Abstract Available.” Maybe It’s a Time to Integrate Abstracts into Editorials?

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## ABSTRACT

Abstract of the peer-reviewed article is a short description of its main sections and simultaneously with the title is the most visible part of the paper. Articles of such types as case reports, case series, original research, review, essays, and many other types have their own abstract. Many, except of editorials. Considering the fact that as of 2023, the science unfortunately has been replaced by the pursuit of citations, the insufficient number of citations of editorial articles may be caused by the lack of an open abstract in them. We oppose discrimination of editorials. Editorial articles are permanently evolving and the number of editorials in which the number of pages reaches 9 is increasing. And an article with so many pages should have its own abstract. We demand that editorials be given the right to have their abstracts. The problem of the absence of an abstract in editorials is like a coin—it has two sides. On the one side, scientist, or editor of other journal, especially in the case of closed (i.e., paid) editorial, may not understand from the editorial title alone the details of what the article is about and whether this article can be useful in their research, practice, or editorial office work. On the other side, the article lacks visitors and, as a result, its authors do not receive dividends in the form of citations. Let’s not forget about the publishers, who in turn receive less revenue in the case of closed editorials, which in turn does not allow reinvesting in technological innovations of journals. In this editorial, we analyze and present the advantages of integrating abstracts into such an important type of article as editorial.

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*After publication, the abstract is crucial for the success of your paper.*<sup>1</sup>

—Daniela Ruffell (2018)

Abstract or summary is a primary source of the information for the reader about any peer-reviewed article. About any article, but not about editorials. Someone will say that this type of articles is too short to include the abstracts. And partly these opinions are seemingly true because some editorials have a sum of words comparable with that of a single abstract of a large research or review-type article. What actually happens is that the number of pages in editorial-type articles varies from one<sup>2</sup> or even half of a page<sup>3</sup> to nine<sup>4</sup>.

It doesn't matter how many pages the editorial takes up, because it can contain extremely important data about the evolution/discontinuation/ceasing of the journal,<sup>5–10</sup> specialty,<sup>11</sup> pivotal decisions of the editorial board,<sup>12</sup> summaries of the contents of this specific issue of the journal,<sup>13</sup> and much more.

When the non-editorial article is paid to read, it still has the abstract and thus carries basic information for a potential reader, scientist and person who could cite this article in their works. The importance of the abstract is also confirmed by the fact that in the case of non-English-language articles, journals require authors to prepare a translation of the article title and abstract into English as a language of global science. And if there is no abstract in article like editorial, then a person cannot determine by just one title whether a scientist needs to pay for this paper or even just go to the journal's website – that is, take additional steps and so be overloaded with the scientific work of academic workers.

The abstracts could be short, counting 57 words<sup>14</sup> or even less (49 words)<sup>15</sup> or long, counting 283 words<sup>16</sup>. An abstract is always a part of open information, no matter it belongs to an open access article or to an article with the possibility of access for payment. Editors are emphasizing that a good abstract explains the aims of the research, how these were met, and the main findings.<sup>17</sup>

*The general consensus is that it [abstract] should be 200–300 words in length.*<sup>18</sup>

—Ketcham and colleagues (2010)

Multiple papers describe how to prepare the perfect abstract to the different types of articles.<sup>18–23</sup> Different, except of editorials. It is most interesting

to see and read editorials about how to write the abstracts for research articles, and at the same time not have the abstracts in these editorials themselves.

In our opinion, the abstract in such articles as an editorial can have a couple of sentences. But all the same, it will be more extended and informative than just an article without any abstract.

Moreover, if the paid article does have an abstract and it has taken an interest of a scientist, this increases the probability that the scientist will pay a fee for accessing and downloading the article.

*The abstract is the vehicle used to decide if the study is of sufficient interest to go to the effort of obtaining the full paper...*<sup>23</sup>

—William E. Fisher (2005)

And more disappointing is when a database, like PubMed® (Fig 1)<sup>24</sup> or Scopus® (Fig 2A),<sup>25</sup> contains the title of the article, but neither its summary/abstract nor a direct link to the article itself<sup>26</sup>. Such cases disappoint the seeker and decrease the probability that reader will pay to read that closed paper. And articles with abstracts, like case reports, in same databases (Fig 2B) show how important to include the abstract to facilitate the researcher's search.<sup>27,28</sup>

Crossref Metadata Manager has likewise an option to include an article's abstract (Fig 3). Metadata Manager website demonstrates the textbox for abstract of each article which received such an important tool as a digital object identifier (DOI). This fact is another reason for integrating abstracts into editorial articles.

Figure 4 demonstrates the laptop screenshots from the website of the *Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery* with the editorial article without abstract and a case report paper article with it.<sup>8,28</sup> Unfortunately, the absence of the abstract completely camouflages the essence of the editorial as an article.

It is true that the work of some peer-review journals may follow the dictates of publishers and they may limit editors in the number of pages for editorials. However, editors should insist on any publishing and editorial steps that can increase the number of visits to the journal website and article citations.

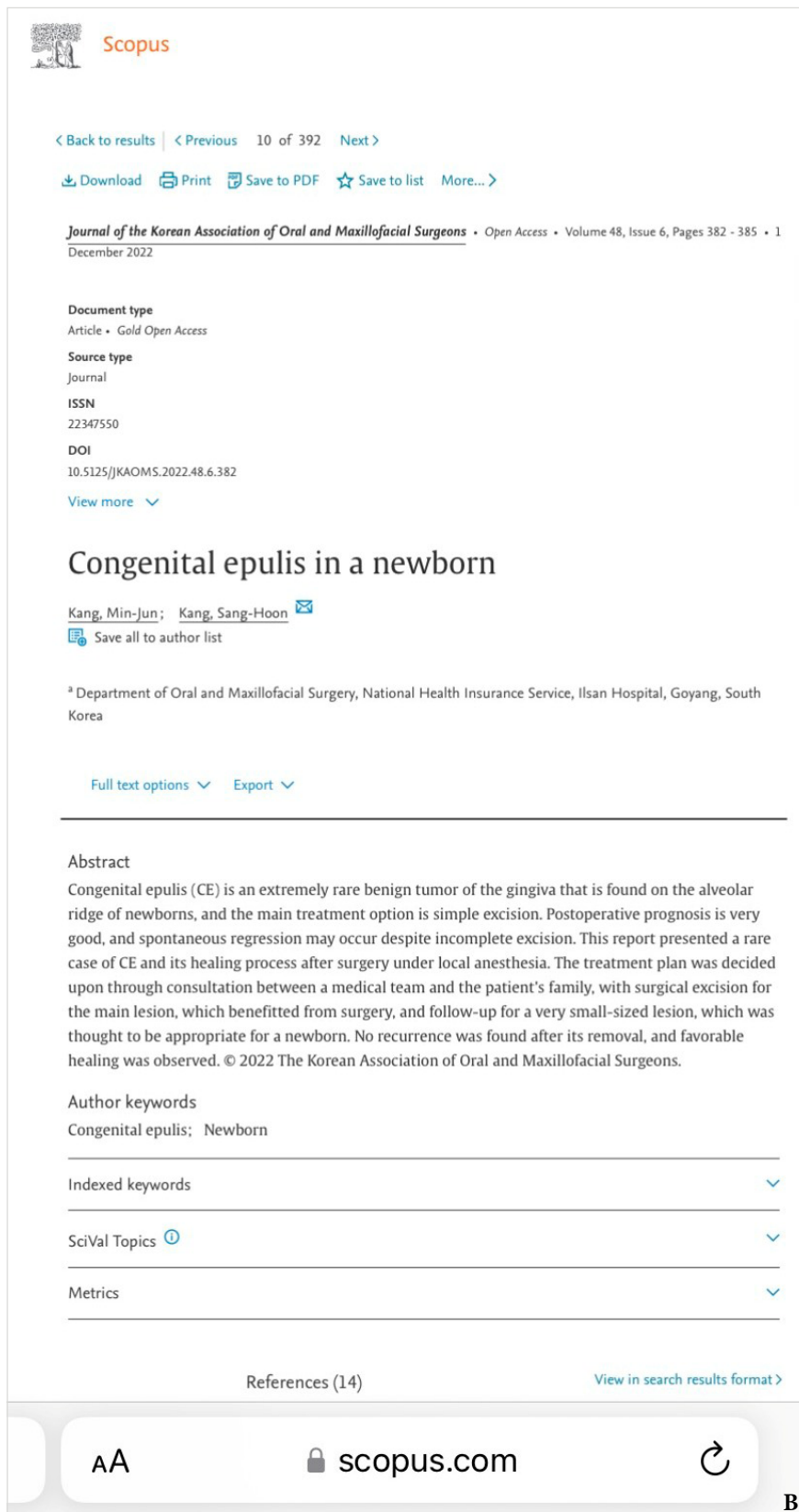
We think that integration of abstracts to such articles as editorials will contribute to increasing the openness of information in various important databases.



**FIGURE 1.** Smartphone screenshot from the PubMed® website demonstrates absence of abstract (“No abstract available”) in article of the editorial type.<sup>24</sup>

The screenshot shows the Scopus interface for an article. At the top, the Scopus logo is visible. Navigation links include '< Back to results', '< Previous', '2 of 392', and 'Next >'. Action buttons for 'Download', 'Print', 'Save to PDF', 'Save to list', and 'More...' are present. The article title is 'Role of oral and maxillofacial surgeons in treating oral cancer'. The journal information is 'Journal of the Korean Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons', Volume 48, Issue 6, Pages 329-330, December 2022. The document type is 'Editorial' with 'Gold Open Access'. The source type is 'Journal'. The ISSN is 22347550 and the DOI is 10.5125/JKAOMS.2022.48.6.329. The author is 'Seok, Hyun<sup>a, b</sup>'. The article is indexed under 'Sustainable Development Goals 2022'. The references section shows one reference: 'Lee, C.-H., Chung, C.K., Kim, C.H., Kwon, J.-W. Health care burden of spinal diseases in the republic of Korea: Analysis of a nationwide database from 2012 through 2016 (Open Access) (2018) Neurospine, 15 (1), pp. 66-76. Cited 46 times. https://www.e-neurospine.org/upload/pdf/ns-1836038-019.pdf doi:10.14745/ne-1836038.019'. The browser address bar shows 'scopus.com'.

**FIGURE 2.** Smartphone screenshots from the Scopus® website compares the editorial article without abstract (A)<sup>25</sup> and case report article with it (B)<sup>27</sup>. (Figure 2 continued on the next page.)



**FIGURE 2 (continued).** Smartphone screenshots from the Scopus® website compares the editorial article without abstract (A)<sup>25</sup> and case report article with it (B)<sup>27</sup>.

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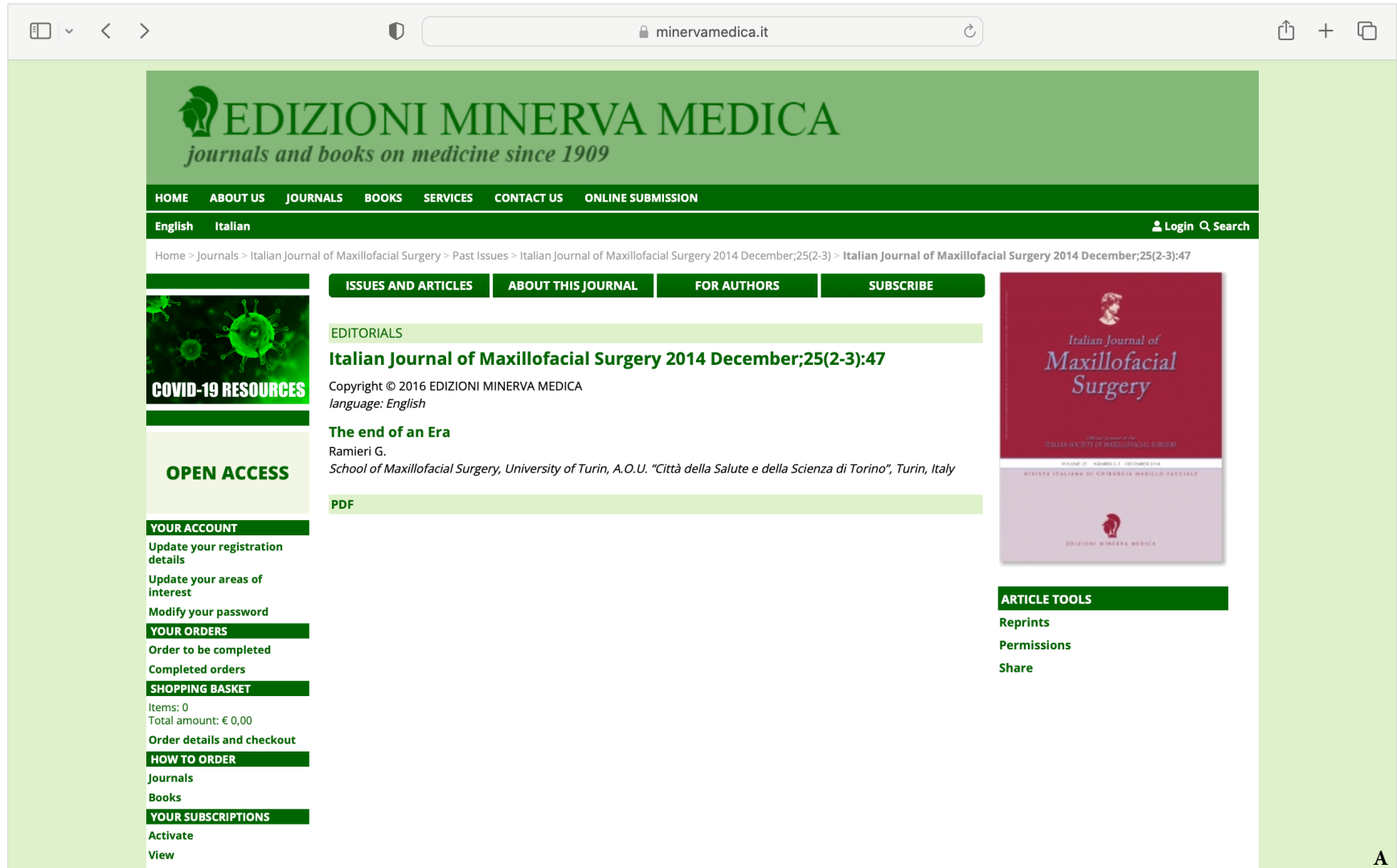
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**FIGURE 3.** Smartphone screenshot from the Crossref Metadata Manager website demonstrates the textbox for the abstracts of each article which received digital object identifier (DOI).



**FIGURE 4.** Laptop screenshots from the website of the *Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery* compares the editorial article<sup>8</sup> without abstract (A, B) and a case report paper article<sup>28</sup> with it (C, D). (Figure 4 continued on the next page.)

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**FIGURE 4 (continued).** Laptop screenshots from the website of the *Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery* compares the editorial article<sup>8</sup> without abstract (A, B) and a case report paper article<sup>28</sup> with it (C, D). (Figure 4 continued on the next page.)



The screenshot shows the website for EDIZIONI MINERVA MEDICA. The main navigation bar includes links for HOME, ABOUT US, JOURNALS, BOOKS, SERVICES, CONTACT US, and ONLINE SUBMISSION. Below this, there are language options (English, Italian) and a search bar. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current page is an article from the Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery, December 2014 issue.

The article title is "Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery 2014 December;25(2-3):81-4". The authors listed are Spotti S. 1, Gervasoni C. 1, Valsecchi S. 1, Di Francesco A. 1, Colombo L. 1, Tronchet A. 1, and Ussia A. 2. The article is categorized as a "CASE REPORTS" and is available as a "PDF".

The abstract text reads: "Authors refer to last 20 years international literature and present a case report of intraoral schwannoma. This neoplasm is a benign, slow-growing, epineurium-encapsulated tumor and 1% only demonstrate an intraoral origin against the 25%-45% that occurring in the head and neck derived from neuroectodermal cells of the myelin sheath. Schwannoma had been initially described by the German anatomist and physiologist Theodor Schwann (1810-1882). It can develop at any age, more often in adults than in children and commonly in the third and fourth decades, there is no predilection for sex. We describe the case of a young female patient presented to our department in late 2014 presenting an asymptomatic swelling with slowly growing round lesion localized in the right cheek. The patient underwent surgery with general anesthesia with intraoral approach; the treatment of choice was a careful blunt dissection and conservative exeresis and the histopathological report after surgery confirmed the diagnosis of schwannoma. The postoperative course and follow-up were uneventful. The recommended treatment is a conservative surgical removal with preservation of the associated nerve by careful dissection when possible and an intraoral approach should be always performed; on this condition, recurrence is extremely rare. The prognosis is good and malignant transformation of benign schwannoma is controversial, although a few isolated cases have been documented."

The sidebar on the left contains sections for "COVID-19 RESOURCES", "OPEN ACCESS", "YOUR ACCOUNT" (with links for registration, password, and orders), "SHOPPING BASKET" (showing 0 items), and "YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS".

On the right side, there is a cover image of the journal and an "ARTICLE TOOLS" section with links for Reprints, Permissions, and Share.

**FIGURE 4 (continued).** Laptop screenshots from the website of the *Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery* compares the editorial article<sup>8</sup> without abstract (A, B) and a case report paper article<sup>28</sup> with it (C, D). (Figure 4 continued on the next page.)

The screenshot displays the website interface for EDIZIONI MINERVA MEDICA. The header includes the logo and tagline 'journals and books on medicine since 1909'. A navigation menu contains links for HOME, ABOUT US, JOURNALS, BOOKS, SERVICES, CONTACT US, and ONLINE SUBMISSION. Below the menu, there are language options (English, Italian) and a search bar with 'Login' and 'Search' buttons. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home > Journals > Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery > Past Issues > Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery 2014 December;25(2-3) > Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery 2014 December;25(2-3):81-4.

The main content area features a sidebar on the left with sections: COVID-19 RESOURCES, OPEN ACCESS, YOUR ACCOUNT (with links for registration details, areas of interest, and password modification), YOUR ORDERS (with links for completed orders), SHOPPING BASKET (showing 0 items and a total amount of € 0,00), HOW TO ORDER (with links for Journals and Books), and YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS (with links for Activate and View). The main content area has tabs for ISSUES AND ARTICLES, ABOUT THIS JOURNAL, FOR AUTHORS, and SUBSCRIBE. Under the 'ISSUES AND ARTICLES' tab, there is a 'CASE REPORTS' section with the article title 'Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery 2014 December;25(2-3):81-4'. The article details include copyright information (© 2016 EDIZIONI MINERVA MEDICA), language (English), and the title 'Schwannoma: review of the literature and case report' by Spotti S. 1, Gervasoni C. 1, Valsecchi S. 1, Di Francesco A. 1, Colombo L. 1, Tronchet A. 1, Ussia A. 2. An 'ACCESS OPTIONS' section provides links for 'Purchase access' (€ 40,00), 'Subscribe to this journal', 'Regain access', 'Personal subscriptions', and 'Institutional access'. On the right, there is a cover image of the journal and an 'ARTICLE TOOLS' section with links for Reprints, Permissions, and Share.

FIGURE 4 (continued). Laptop screenshots from the website of the *Italian Journal of Maxillofacial Surgery* compares the editorial article<sup>8</sup> without abstract (A, B) and a case report paper article<sup>28</sup> with it (C, D).

Here is a list of the benefits of such integration:

1. Reduction of time to search for information.
2. Increasing the probability of citation.
3. Increasing the productivity of scientists.
4. It will help peer-reviewed journal to grow its revenue in case of receiving payment from readers for access to the articles.

Also, the integration of a abstracts may be appropriate in other abstractless articles, for example in the perspective-type articles.<sup>29</sup>

So, this is just a humble analysis. But it is possible that the editorial teams of the peer-reviewed journals will find our opinion interesting or even important for the development of the journals and surgical science. Anyway, starting this very issue of our open access *Journal* we are happy to make the editorials a more complete paper, initiating the tradition of publishing the editorials of all types (editorials, guest editorial, and postscript editorials) with abstracts.

*Now, get writing that abstract!*<sup>30</sup>  
*Social Sciences & Humanities Open* > Policies and guidelines > How to write a great abstract for your academic manuscript (2020)

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