



UNIVERSITY *of the*  
WESTERN CAPE

***AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH ACADEMIC WRITING IN A  
LIBYAN UNIVERSITY***

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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## ABSTRACT

This study explores English academic writing in a Libyan university. The results show a number of challenges and issues that Libyan university students experience in using English for academic writing. The study suggests intervention procedures that may correct students' linguistic academic deficiencies. Using Gee (1999)'s D/discourse theory and Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field, which view writing as a social practice embedded in social activities, the study takes a purely qualitative approach, presenting data descriptions by both students and lecturers. The sample size of the investigation is eight – four lecturers and four students. The data was collected mainly through classroom observation, open-ended interviews and an analysis of students' assignment essays.

The results indicate several areas of challenge for Libyan students with regard to academic writing; a lack of adequate 'scaffolding', a lack of ample time spent on authentic practice, and inappropriate immediate feedback. Findings also show a lack of teaching methods and strategies that correct syntactical and morphological errors, and a lack of skills – research skills. Further to this, results revealed a lack of synthesis and summary skills, referencing skills – and a lack of confidence in tackling academic writing tasks. In addition, the lack of appropriate materials to consult was a contributing factor, as was students' social and economic status.

The study calls for various interventions that may assist students to acquire academic writing skills and hence develop a sense of confidence in taking on academic tasks.

## KEYWORDS/PHRASES

- Academic Literacy
- Academic Writing
- Al-Azzaytuna University
- Challenges
- Discourse
- English as a Foreign Language
- Experiences
- Feedback
- Language Learning
- Perceptions



## DECLARATION

I, Gharnasa Hadia, declare that the work *An analysis of English academic writing in a Libyan University* is my own work and has not been submitted for degree or examination purposes in any other university. All sources I have cited or quoted have been indicated and fully acknowledged by a complete list of bibliographical references.

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Signature

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Date



## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband Hamza, who has given me the strength to start and complete this journey. I also dedicate this dissertation to my lovely children, Lojean, Layth and Zaid.



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First, I thank Allah, the Almighty, for granting me the perseverance to finish my research. I am also grateful to my home institution, Al-Azzaytuna University, for selecting me to carry out this research, to the Department of English Language Studies, and to the Libyan Ministry of Higher Education for their sponsorship.

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I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my parents; to my father who passed away during the last stage of writing this thesis, to my mother whose love and prayers enlightened my path during all my years of study.

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I must also thank the Libyan lecturers and students who took part in this research, as well as the Head of the Department of English Language Studies who not only approved the research and permitted it to be conducted in his Department but also helped with data collection. Special thanks are due to the case participants for making this study possible.

I alone remain responsible for any particular claim and shortcoming that may be found in this thesis. The persons and institutions thanked above should by no means be associated with my assertions and oversights.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

<b>AD</b>	Academic Discourse
<b>AW</b>	Academic Writing
<b>CoP</b>	Communities of Practice
<b>EAP</b>	English for Academic Purposes
<b>EFL</b>	English as Foreign Language
<b>ESL</b>	English as Second Language
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Department
<b>LO</b>	Lecture Observation
<b>NLS</b>	New Literacy Studies
<b>PGA</b>	Process and Genre Approach
<b>SES</b>	Social Economic Status
<b>SIGs</b>	Special Interest Groups
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The present chapter introduces this research work that is concerned with an analysis of the English Academic Writing in a Libyan university. It offers the background to the study, which includes a critical discussion of the historical development of the use of English as an academic language in Libyan universities, and its implications for today. This chapter also provides the aims and objectives of the research, the problem statement, the research questions and the significance and contribution of the study.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

According to a report by Yousif et al. (1996), at the time of independence in 1951 a UNESCO delegation to Libya found that education was not given priority and most primary and tertiary institutions offered English as a second language only. The curriculum, especially for primary schools, was premised on the Italian and Egyptian syllabi respectively (Al-Samdani, 2010). However, from 1975 to 2011 Libya experienced a rapid increase in the number of educational institutions and the number of students, especially in the higher education sector.

Clark (2004) reports that the number of university students was 13 418 in academic year 1975-1976, before it increased to more than 200 000, with an extra 70 000 enrolled in the higher technical and vocational sector by the year 2004, and by the year 2007 Libya had achieved the highest literacy rate in the Arab world (cf. Hamdy, 2007; Rhema & Miliszwenska, 2012: 149). According to the 2013 report of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics, the adult literacy rate in Libya was 89.2% in 2010. This speaks of the importance given to education during the period before the Libyan civil war.

As far as language is concerned, the only official language of Libya is Arabic. The Libyan standard Arabic is the one that is used in the curriculum, which is different from other dialects that exist in other parts of the country. Therefore, when students enrol, those speaking other dialects need to adapt to Libyan standard Arabic. The section below presents an overview of the place of English within the Libyan education system and it serves to explain the backgrounds of those students who were interviewed in this study.

English as a foreign language is a compulsory subject in Libyan schools from preparatory level to university level. It is not used in government or media or in any other social domain. Outside the classroom, the language used for communication is Arabic. Nevertheless, the requirement

for advanced English skills is increasing rapidly as Libya's commercial and other links, with the rest of the world, develop.

The major Libyan universities grant bachelor's degrees in various disciplines. The academic year at university level runs from October until July and the languages of instruction are Arabic and English. Al-Azzaytuna University comprises many faculties, including the Faculties of Science, Engineering, Medicine, Law and Education. The Department of English Language Studies in the Faculty of Education had about two hundred undergraduate and postgraduate students at the time of data collection for this study. As will be shown, the academic staff of the Department is mixed with regards to home language, and includes local (Libyan) staff and foreigners qualified to teach English as a foreign language.

Libyan students typically begin school at the age of six. The Libyan education system comprises four stages which are: primary, preparatory, secondary, and university education. The period of the primary educations lasts six years and English is not taught at this stage. The next step of preparatory education is three years long and it is at this stage that English as a foreign language is introduced. The preparatory education phase offers students four English lessons a week with each lesson lasting forty-five minutes. The Libyan secondary stage of education is three years long and at this level, English is the only foreign language that is taught.

**Table 1** below is an attempt to picture the various stages of the education system of Libya in comparison with the stages in the education system of South Africa. The purpose of this table is twofold. First it gives the South African readership an understanding of the different levels of education in Libya. Second, it shows at what level of schooling the English language is introduced as a subject in the Libyan education system.

**Table 1:** *Stages of Education System in South Africa and in Libya*

South Africa			Libya	
Grade 12	Senior Phase	High School	Secondary School	Year 12
Grade 11				Year 11
Grade 10				Year 10
Grade 9			Preparatory School	Year 9
Grade 8				Year 8
Grade 7				Year 7
Grade 6			Intermediate Phase	Primary School
Grade 5	Year 5			
Grade 4	Year 4			
Grade 3	Foundation Phase	Pre-School	Year 3	
Grade 2			Year 2	
Grade 1			Year 1	
Grade 0/R				

It can be seen that by the time Libyan students enter university, they will have completed only six years of English learning. After those six years, they still do not speak English fluently (El-Hawat, 2006; Orafi, 2009). For this reason, the study of English as a subject has to continue at university level, especially for those in the Department of English Language Studies.

**Table 2** below is an attempt to compare the various levels of higher education in Libya with the levels of higher education in South Africa.



**Table 2:** *Stages of Higher Education System: South Africa vs. Libya*

South Africa		Degrees & Grading	Libya	
Arts & Science	Engineering, Education & Law		Humanities & Law	Science & Engineering
Year 9	Year 10	PhD	Year 9	Year 9
Year 8	Year 9		Year 8	Year 8
Year 7	Year 8		Year 7	Year 7
Year 6	Year 7	Masters Degree	Year 6	Year 6
Year 5	Year 6		Year 5	Year 5
Year 4	Year 5	Honours Degree		
	Year 4	Bachelor Degree	Year 4	Year 4
Year 3	Year 3		Year 3	Year 3
Year 2	Year 2		Year 2	Year 2
Year 1	Year 1		Year 1	Year 1

With the continued influx of students into universities from diverse backgrounds, students are faced with challenges in Academic Writing (AW). This is because much of the academic writing is done in English, a second language for many (Fareed et al., 2016). Various aspects of students' experiences and needs regarding AW have been well documented over the past ten years. Focus has often been on international students in the English speaking countries such as Australia (Terraschke & Wahid, 2011; Phan, 2001), New Zealand (Cotterall & Cohen, 2003; Doyle et al., 2018), the United Kingdom (Abdul-Rahman, 2011; Maringe & Jenkins, 2015) and the United States of America (Bauer & Picciotto, 2013; Chou, 2011; Gao, 2012). Students' poor writing skills at university level is a global challenge (Tran, 2013; Pineteh, 2014; Thesen & Cooper, 2014; Fareed et al., 2016).

Many students face challenges with AW and hence drop out of university because they cannot cope with this specific discourse community (Maher, 2011; McGhie, 2012). Such a state of affairs has been attributed to a lack of proper AW intervention by academic staff (Graham et al., 2001) and to the complex linguistic structures required of students in higher education

(Desai et al., 2010; Pfeiffer, 2018). Several approaches and strategies such as AW as social practice (Ivanič, 1998; Hyland, 2004a; Lea & Street, 2006), the social/genre approach (Tribble, 1996) and the intellectual/rhetorical approach (Langan, 1993), have been suggested to assist students experiencing difficulties with AW.

The present study focuses on English academic writing in one of the major universities of Libya. Apart from the two articles by Hamed (2014 & 2018) and the study by Hadia (2011), there has not been any study focusing specifically on analysing the English academic writing of Libyan students enrolled in a local institution. Both the lack of such studies and the desire to discern the perceptions of English academic writing in the Libyan context motivated the present qualitative study. The study may result in revealing not only the perceptions but also the experiences and challenges of students, as well as the insights and AW teaching approaches of lecturers.

## **1.2. AIMS**

The main purpose of the present study is twofold. First, it explores and seeks to analyse academic writing practices in a Libyan university from the perspectives of both students and lecturers. Second, it investigates how students experience and understand AW in these practices.

The sub- objectives of this study are set out as follows:

- (i) to identify the perceptions, experiences and challenges of students,
- (ii) to determine the perceptions and experiences of lecturers, and
- (iii) to determine AW teaching and learning strategies.

## **1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

English is taught as a general course across all the faculties with the hope of making students proficient in writing, articulation and reading. The universities provide students with two hours of language lessons a week in order to improve their English grammar. The number of hours a week devoted to English is significantly higher in the Department of English Language Studies. Here students receive at least twenty hours of lectures covering various forms of English language training. Each course has its own syllabus and the choice of textbooks depends on the lecturer. The courses offered include comprehension, grammar, composition, literature, applied

linguistics, theoretical linguistics, conversation, translation, phonetics and phonology, creative writing, foreign analysis, varieties of English, project writing and creative writing methodology. Despite these comprehensive efforts to teach a broad range of English language skills, the effects in terms of proficiency in academic writing have been poor (cf. Abosnan, 2016; Hamed & Fadhil, 2019). Thus, this study sets out to explore the practices of AW among fourth-year students at Al-Azzyatuna University and to uncover the reasons for their weaknesses in this regard.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTION AND SUB-QUESTIONS**

The main question that this research study seeks to answer is formulated as follows : How do students and lecturers in a Libyan university experience and perceive English academic writing?

This broad question is underpinned by the following sub-questions:

- (i) What do students say about their experiences and perceptions of English academic writing in the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University?
- (ii) What do lecturers say about their experiences and perceptions of English academic writing in their teaching processes?
- (iii) What are the teaching strategies and resources for AW in the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University?
- (iv) What measures can be implimented should it be found necessary to improve teaching quality and student performance?

#### **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

This research is the first of its kind to address the issue of academic writing challenges and interventions as a university discourse in the Libyan higher education system. Furthermore, being a study focused on challenges faced by students with regard to English as an academic writing tool in Libyan universities, this investigation may provide useful material from which other universities in Libya may benefit. This may help to enhance practices and strategies that best assist students to master the skill of academic writing. In addition, the study findings will arguably contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of academic writing studies.

## 1.6. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Apart from the pre-texts, the main text of this work is divided into seven chapters. The content of each chapter is as follows:

**Chapter 1** introduces the topic of this research. In the study background and rationale, attention is paid to the sociolinguistic situation in Libya leading to an explanation of the profile of language teaching in schools and universities. This is followed by a statement of the study's aims, the problem statement, research question and sub-questions. This introductory chapter also contains an outline of the significance and contribution of the research to the body of knowledge on the topic. The chapter ends with a summary of the organisation of the study and a few concluding remarks.

**Chapter 2** contains a review of the literature consulted during this research. Findings from this literature review are grouped into four themes. The first theme reviews the definition of academic writing not only as a concept but mainly as a discourse. The second theme is about the different approaches to teaching academic writing. The third theme looks at perceptions of both students and lecturers towards academic writing. Finally, the fourth theme is about English writing in the Arab world.

**Chapter 3** presents the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study, explaining the concepts and theories underpinning it. The chapter discusses the application of Gee's discourse theory and Bourdieu's sociological theories of capital, field, habitus and agency in relation to the study.

**Chapter 4** is an overview of the the research methodology. First, the research site and location is described. Then an outline of philosophical underpinnings is given and how they relate to qualitative research methods is shown. The research design is discussed and the qualitative method is clarified in terms of the research design adopted. Next, the validity and reliability of the qualitative research method adopted is discussed. Finally, the selection procedures of the participants are clarified, together with the data collection and criteria for instrument choices. Ethical considerations are also outlined in this chapter.

**Chapter 5** presents the data collected and their analysis. A summary of results indicating the main trends is also given. The results of classroom observation are shown first. Then the results obtained from lecturer and student interviews are presented. These results include lecturers' experiences and perceptions as well as their teaching approaches. Results from an analysis of the students' essays are also presented.

**Chapter 6** focuses on the discussion of findings. The chapter contains sections on how students and lecturers understand and perceive academic writing, the specific challenges and approaches that students have to teaching academic writing. The discussion also considers what the prospects are of improving Libyan students' academic writing in English.

**Chapter 7** concludes this research study. It contains a summary of the study's findings and a list of recommendations derived from the findings. These recommendations are twofold: first, there are general recommendations around teaching academic writing in English, and second, there are specific recommendations.



## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The current chapter undertakes a review of the literature and theoretical underpinnings of academic writing as a social practice. It discusses findings from some Arab countries and in other parts of the world on the characteristics and significance of academic writing. This chapter also discusses the manner in which academic writing is taught and practiced. Another part of the literature review will include the challenges that universities are faced with when it comes to AW. The chapter defines the concepts ‘discourse’, ‘literacy’ and ‘academic writing’ and reviews the views of students regarding academic writing. Three models of academic writing are presented, as used in institutions of higher education.

### 2.1. ACADEMIC WRITING: A CONCEPT AND A DISCOURSE

This first section of the literature review focuses on understanding what academic writing is. Two specific issues will be covered in this section. First, what is academic writing? Second, why is it important? These two questions are answered in the first two sub-sections of this section. The first sub-section deals with understanding academic writing as a concept. The second sub-section deals with academic writing as a discourse from Gee’s perspective. Irrespective of the way it may be defined, academic writing has implications on the scholarly performance and development of students. Thus, the third sub-section in the present section deals with student writing in higher education.

#### 2.1.1. Conceptual Approach to Academic Writing

In order to understand what academic writing is about, it is important to elaborate briefly on writing in general. Writing is viewed as an enhanced and more nuanced manifestation of language than speaking is, abiding by more closely observed principles and conventions (Boltz, 1999; Rogers, 2005; Powell, 2009;). Additionally, writing is usually a process of discovering and constructing meaning, and *‘a means of discovering an individual’s ideas and gaining knowledge through the act of writing alone what these thought processes are’* (Zamel, 1982: 195). Based on this viewpoint, writing, including academic writing, may be regarded as a social practice. Rather than being viewed as the fulfilment of a supervisor’s or tutor’s demands, academic writing may be understood as a ‘social practice’ (Coffin et al., 2003).

Academic writing is a broad term that includes a multitude of genres across disciplines. While its features may vary (Snow, 2010), academic (or scholarly) writing attempts to maintain a specialised overall tone while arguing for or against a particular position or notion (Snow, 2010:450). There are numerous approaches to academic writing (Preece, 2009; Lehman, 2013), considering that every discipline features its own conventions that dictate what sorts of texts and evidence are permissible (Shih, 1986; Khonsari, 2005; Hyland, 2008). Scholarly writing often takes an objective tone, though it argues in support of a particular position or stand. Simply put, qualities of academic writing incorporate a formal tone, use of the third-person as an alternative to the first-person (although rules in this regard are loosening), a clear focus on the issue or subject matter as opposed to a writer's personal views, and precise word choice. Academic writing may achieve a wider target audience than an academic audience only, through being fed into more informal uses and presentations, which include journalism and public speaking.

In addition, Murray & Moore (2006: 179-181) point out that AW describes the probative discussions that are used by university students and researchers to shine the light on empirical studies on a particular topic. According to Irvin (2010), the importance of cogent argumentation in academic writing is fundamental to show someone's understanding and fluency when it comes to conceptualising a phenomenon, interpreting it and analysing it (Irvin, 2010: 8). The author explains that academic argumentation is characterised with some congruency with a discussion among people who have similar or contrasting world views, but all of whom want to better understand the issue under discussion. Students in AW are required to find the components that underpin a topic and then reflect on how these resonate together or contrast with one another, and then to construct an argument that takes cognisance of all these components. Such an exercise requires students to be meticulous with the literature so that they can be competitive in the tenets of AW (Hyland, 2004c). This speaks to the fact that even though writing can be viewed as personal, it could be also perceived to be political because it positions students as contributors to the existing body of knowledge (Lillis & Curry 2010). Montgomery & Baker (2007), state that teachers should classify and emphasise the procedures and techniques of academic writing for their learners. Thus, teachers need to create and encourage learner attitudes towards the basic aspects of academic writing, such as classification, features, methods and problem handling. Moreover, in order to improve the facility of their learners with academic writing, teachers have to help learners to amend their norms, and demand more from learners in terms of requests, improvements and proficiency levels, so that a sense of high academic standards is developed in schools.

Li (2007) argues that what writers produce has to address issues of identity and the development of English as a second language (ESL) in relation to lesson plans for academic writing. Learners should be made aware of beliefs, culture, and identity in their academic writing, to enable them to establish their learning needs.

According to Labaree (2009), academic writing refers to and describes a certain way of expressing oneself that students can use to demarcate the boundaries of their scholarly expertise<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, the definition of academic writing signifies the varieties of expository and argumentative writing employed by university students, faculty and researchers to express a body of knowledge concerning a specific topic (Irvin, 2010). Academic writing is, for the most part, straightforward and to the point, semi-formal, objective and impartial.

In the words of Bussmann (1996:1294), writing in general is a way of documenting voiced language through conventionalised visual sign systems. This broad description focuses on the conventions of writing and describes it as a procedure that emerges from talking or speaking. On the other hand, several scholars such as Richards (1990: 101), Raimes (1983), Mary (1998), Broughton et al. (1980) have argued against this filtered view of writing, contesting that writing is a complex act, and is particularly differentiated from verbal language.

It can be understood from these various authors that academic writing is social in nature in the following ways:

- It is formed during learning and teaching interactions between students and lecturers; these interactions have an impact on the quality of writing at the academic level.
- The conventions and standards that regulate academic writing are socially constructed, given the fact that they have been shaped within academic communities; and
- Student authors, via academic writing, discover ways to write as academics, linguists, scientists and many others portfolios.

Therefore, the narrative here looks at academic writing not in the traditional way but beyond the classroom environment. This perspective views AW as a social practice that can be transferred by academics within social communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/introduction/researchproblem>. Accessed on 8 August 2018.



### **2.1.2. Academic Writing: A Discourse in Higher Education**

A key issue when attempting to understand practices is the notion of discourse. According to Gee (1989a, 1996, 1999, 2015), the term discourse refers to verbal interactions and sequences of utterances between speakers and listeners. As it will be seen in Chapter 3, Gee makes a distinction between Discourse (with capital “D”) and discourse (with small “d”). The latter refers to language-in-use while the former relates to the blend of language and the behaviour of people, their values, basic needs such as food and clothes, as well as social identities (Gee, 1989b, 1992, 1993a, 1996)

In simple terms, discourse refers to a text, collection of texts, conversation or shared ways of talking (Barton, 1994). There are many modalities of discourse, ranging from written to spoken words, which may be characterised by paralinguistic features such as images, signs, drawings, text organisation, layout and font type (in the case of written words) and intonation, gestures, and facial expressions in the case of spoken words (MacLure, 2003).

Discourse transcends language (Crystal, 1992). The language used for discourse represents the individual’s experience of the world. The discourse works not only as a tool to communicate arguments but is also instrumental in forming people’s knowledge and values (Atkinson & Coffey, 2004). Discourse may be viewed as an entity but it is also an intricate set of activities which include interactions using communication among people during writing, talking and communicating with each other in certain ways (Fairclough, 2013).

### **2.1.3. Academic Writing: Ability and Skills**

Academic literacy may be defined as a multifaceted array of linguistic, conceptual and resources skills for investigating, creating and interacting with knowledge in the subject area (Warren, 2003). According to Yeld (2003), academic literacy confers the ability:

- to understand information presented in several modes,
- to paraphrase,
- to present information visually,
- to summarise,
- to describe (e.g. ideas, phenomena, processes, changes of state),
- to write expository prose (e.g. argument, comparison and contrast, classification, categorisation),
- to identify and improve ones own voice,

- to acknowledge sources, and
- to form basic numerical manipulations.

Learning in universities includes engagement and communication through innovative and unique ways of writing, looking at social identities and especially writing. Thus the students have to be cognisant of the particular concepts, conceptualisations, methodologies, specialties and the rules and conventions of writing (Ballard & Clanchy, 1988; Flower, 1990; Gee, 1990; Lea & Street, 1998). ‘Epistemic cognition’, describes having a command of how knowledge about a subject forms and can be critiqued and it is valuable for perusing academic content. For instance, history exhibits epistemic knowledge by invoking the critical thinking of the students as well as writing and reading in the field. The importance of discussing epistemology as part of academic literacy development can be seen in research on student writing.

Lea & Street (1998) recognise that even though learners have been frequently provided with general strategies and rules for writing techniques and procedures, they have struggled to use these at the level required for writing a particular text in a specific disciplinary context. Consequently, where there is a wide gap between learner and tutor notions of writing, non-traditional learners, who enter university with no ‘essayist literacy’ acquired through formal education, are likely to fall behind or to drop out (Lea & Street, 1998). Therefore integrating the improvement of the academic literacy of learners into subject-based teaching and learning may prove to be productive and useful.

#### **2.1.4. Students’ Writing in Higher Education**

In the last few decades, writing has taken centre stage more than the skills associated with speech (Knapp & Watkins, 2005), forming an integral feature of any academic course. This has prompted academics and researchers to explore the discourse on writing skills and examine what counts as good writing (Ivanič, 2004; Wohlwend, 2009). In contrast with the Libyan traditional approaches that tend to view academic writing as a monolithic and homogeneous set of decontextualised skills transferable across domains, academic writing or discourse is considered hugely diverse (Hyland, 2004b). Good writing is the mark of an authoritative scholar immersed in a particular discourse community. Depending on how skilled one is at writing, one’s capacity to participate in a discourse community may be either inhibited or enhanced. The quote below by Foucault (1972) reflects the centrality of skilled discourse when it comes to the expression of any field of study:

Typically in higher education writing, one cannot develop a voice or any authority if one's writing skills do not conform to the writing styles and conventions appropriate for academic writing. Knowing the contours and appropriation of writing skills is a form of knowledge and power that either permits or inhibits a scholar's full participation in the community discourse of higher education. Skill in writing, in other words, determines whether or not a student will succeed in their academic endeavours.

A great deal of literature on the academic writing of first year students illustrates a lack of awareness leading to an ineffectiveness among these students regarding the conventions of academic writing (Leki & Carson, 1997; Krause, 2001; Ivanič & Lea, 2006; Lillis & Scott, 2007). A number of scientific studies have ascribed this ineffectiveness primarily to the inability of students to understand the main difference between the prerequisites of secondary school and higher education. Similar to other universities around the world, Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya understands this lack of appreciation for the differences, and has set up academic literacy programmes to initiate students into the conventions of academic writing.

Despite the existence of such programmes, lecturers throughout faculties continue to be concerned that the writing abilities of students fail to satisfy academic writing standards. This raises numerous concerns, specifically the effectiveness of activities and teaching that are designed to initiate students into academic writing. For this reason, this study explores how lecturers are aware of the teaching they offer to students and also pays attention to the opinions of students concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching they receive.

It is expected that the outcomes of this research may enlighten future designs of learning activities. Ellis et al. (2007) and Taylor & Drury (2007) highlight that teachers ought to be mindful of how their students perceive writing in order to be able to effectively assist them in their writing practices.

## **2.2. APPROACHES TO TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING**

The teaching of academic writing at university level is often a serious undertaking. As opposed to the teaching of writing in primary and secondary schools, at higher education level there is a need to emphasise facets of content knowledge in addition to teaching students to express themselves.

Numerous methods of the teaching of academic writing have been employed. For the present review, a few of these approaches have been selected. These go from traditional approaches,

such as grammar translation method and audio-lingual method, to the scaffolding approach. Specific teaching models such as skills model and socialisation model are also considered in this literature review.

### **2.2.1. Traditional Approaches to Academic Literacy**

Scholars on the traditional dispensation of literacy in the Libyan context felt that it consisted of the old order wherein the teacher was in charge and could transfer their knowledge to learners. This has historically been viewed as effective in an Arabic context where there exists an affinity towards power and power distances, which shape the manner in which the majority of societal aspects operate and that includes communication (Elabbar, 2011).

However some critics have found that this kind of traditional approach was mainly based on the top-down approach wherein the teacher or instructor was perceived to be the bearer of the knowledge and learners were given few opportunities to ask questions in the classroom (Abushina, 2017). It was found that once students were given the opportunity to provide feedback, they disagreed with their teachers' assessments of their performances and were not satisfied with the traditional approach to academic literacy.

Abushina (2017) for instance finds that one of the main concerns has been that learning skills are developed to a lesser extent. His study finds that 50% of the students believe that there is no opportunity to engage with the teacher during learning activities and one could deduce a problematic outcome from this which is that students are not being taught to be critical thinkers, a quality crucial to academic writing.

However, research has also observed that students have preferred the traditional leaning approach which taught them to memorise concepts, because the majority of them were focused on passing the exam or research programme in order to obtain a degree in record time. One criticism of this is that academic writing in the traditional Libyan context seems to be viewed as an event or an experience. However, the contemporary view of academic literacy disagrees with this view and suggests that it is a social practice.

Two of the common traditional teaching approaches in the Libyan context have been characterised as the Grammar Translation Method and Audio-lingual Method.

### **2.2.1.1. *The Grammar Translation Method in the Libyan Context***

This forms one of the traditional learning approaches in the Libyan context. According to Brown (2000) the following form some of the characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method:

- Classes are taught in the mother tongue with little active use of the target language
- Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words
- Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given
- Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words
- Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early
- Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis
- Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue, and
- Little or no attention is given to pronunciation

Elabarr (2011) argues that the grammar translation method is still considered one of the effective ways of teaching academic writing because it has been found to have an appropriate fit with the Libyan culture of learning in the country. The culture of learning has been characterised as silent classrooms and teacher centred, as described in the opening introduction in Chapter One.

One could also argue that the Arab students are more inclined to accept and thrive on this teaching approach because it is reminiscent of the teaching approaches that are utilized in the instruction of the Quran at the Mosque, as well as those that are used for the preparation of some famous poetry recitals, that tend to be characterised by memorisation and low teacher-learner engagement. Elabbar (2011) has argued that this kind of traditional approach shows that there is a predominant belief among teachers that academic writing can be best taught using a behaviourist paradigm.

One critique that could cause further confusion is that there is no clear policy within Libyan education on which teaching theory to follow, whereas everyone just assumes that they are familiar with the approach that is required. Latiwish (2003) finds that academic writing in English has mostly been viewed as a matter of getting the vocabulary and the grammatical rules correct and course books have been produced that exclusively promote memorization to

achieve this. As stated earlier, room for critical thinking is lacking in the classrooms of academic writing, perhaps because the cultural beliefs of teachers force them to adopt a teacher-centred stance, which hinders the contribution of students and any subsequent interaction. Another traditional method that is often applied in the Libyan context is the Audio-lingual Method.

#### ***2.2.1.2. The Audio-Lingual Method in the Libyan Context***

This teaching method presumes that learning a language entails mastering the elements or building blocks of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are joined, from phoneme to morpheme to word to phrase to sentence. As such, it is characterised by the separation of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and the primacy of audio-lingual over the graphic skills (Liu & Shu, 2007).

This method uses dialogue as the chief means of presenting the language and stresses certain practice techniques, such as “pattern” “drills” and “mimicry”. Listening and speaking have been brought into the centre of the stage in this method, tape recordings, and language laboratory drills are offered in practice (Liu & Shu, 2007). However, Abushina (2017) argues that this method is weak because it fails to develop the ability to write comprehensively and articulate messages spontaneously, an outcome it had not originally predicted.

Imssalem (2001) finds that the Audio-lingual Method has been common in the Libyan education system and that students are happy to accept memorization, drilling and repetitive practical learning activities which include grammatical patterns and learning long words. This hindsight presents the weakness of the Audio-lingual Method in teaching academic writing, because academic writing transcends memorizing material and repeating information.

Quality academic writing, it could be argued, is dependent on the ability of the language to be ubiquitous in the recipient or learner’s activities within their long term rather than their short-term memory. However, Sawani (2009:21) finds that Libyan teachers do not share this view, and instead they prefer drilling the academic writing activities, including reading and grammar patterns. It is against such a backdrop that some scholars have sought to investigate how academic writing could be improved using alternative approaches.

### **2.2.2. The Intellectual or Rhetorical Approach**

The intellectual or rhetorical approach is perhaps the most common intellectual framework for academic discourse (Lehman, 2013; Bruss, 2009). The modalities of conventional rhetoric include exposition or description, instead of simply content awareness, and are considered the principal goals in the course syllabus. These modalities are often studied independently and are taught in a specific sequence; they include exposition, description, narration, argumentation and persuasion.

In the particular context of the Arab Spring protests in Libya,

### **2.2.3. Skills and Socialisation Models**

Lea & Street (1998) are of the view that in the skills model, the student's failures contribute to the challenges of academic writing. Whereas proficiency in academic writing is a long-term undertaking, the students are not entirely to blame for the challenges faced and it is necessary to reflect on the approaches that institutions have to teaching. The skills model is flawed because it indicts students and places undue responsibility on them for failure, while the model itself fails to contribute to improving the abilities of the students (Hyland, 2004a).

Students can learn academic writing through implicit induction, argues Ganobcsik-Williams (2006: 15). This means that an individual learns AW skills through their daily interactions and exposure to discourses as opposed to technical transmission (Lea & Street, 1998). This model argues that people gain insights about academic writing through immersion, which is somewhat complementary to Bourdieu's social capital theory, which places the higher education institutions as the habitus.

This view is held by scholars such as Street (2003) who argues that one has to be able to talk in a language in order to learn about it. This view is in sharp contrast to the skills model which places the burden of proficiency on the student. Here, the socialisation model conceptualises AW as a social practice which encompasses the issues of context and culture. The role of academic staff here is to introduce students to writing skills, which allows for the socialisation process where students unravel and participate in the construction of academic language discourse.

#### **2.2.4. The Academic Literacies Approach**

Lea (2004) argues that academic literacies are a gradual progression in academic writing skills that are closely related to the new literacy studies. Literacies conceptualise academic writing as socially and culturally constructed, and can transcend any context in contrast to technical practice (Barton, 1994). The academic literacies view argues that students should be active in the learning process where they are faced with challenges that have to do with academic communication (Barton, 1994). AW is viewed as a social practice in this approach. The objective of the approach is to assess the practices within the context of AW and how these practices affect the student outcomes.

Van Dyk & Van de Poel (2013) note that being academically literate entails more than just the simple ability to read and write. These scholars conceptualise academic literacies in the context of being multi-literate and being able to consolidate a number of skills that are useful for producing meaning as well as for facilitating and transferring knowledge (Weideman, 2006). Carstens (2012) argues that becoming multi-literate through a process of acculturation and integration is important for facilitating a student's understanding and negotiation of knowledge and skills within one context as well as others, and for navigating through a variety of discourse communities.

Van Dyk & Van de Poel (2013) therefore argue that academic literacy is the knowledge and skills required to communicate and function effectively and efficiently in different academic communities and achieve well-defined academic goals. What this kind of description aims to do is to unpack the three dimensions of academic literacy which are:

- (i) social meaning and transfer of information;
- (ii) cognitive, which pertains to comprehending;
- (iii) organizing and reason, about information.

This third dimension is the linguistic dimension which speaks to language. As highlighted in the problem statement of this study, students have challenges with academic writing in English and this is happening at a time when the practice has already become an imperative at institutions of higher learning in Libya. Wiedeman (2006) argues that the academic literacies approach exposes a correlation between how the practices of academic writing and the individual identities of students may experience obstacles due to the nature of the writing that characterize universities or colleges. Therefore, one can observe that the issues of writing and identity are not divorced from each other, much like race, class and gender cannot be separated from writing.



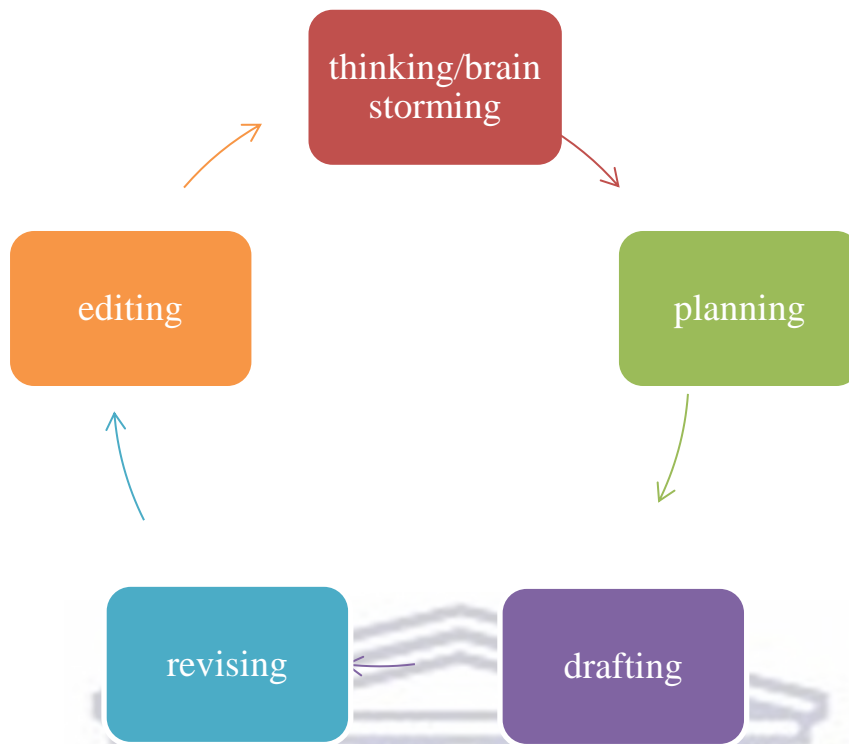
Aspects such as these may in fact end up having the effect of either enhancing or hampering the student's academic achievement (Miller-Cotto & Byrnes, 2016). However, in constructing these arguments, it is significant to note that no single model is superior to another nor solves the issues associated with academic writing (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2006), but that the various models may complement each other, in order to meet the challenges faced by students in their academic writing.

### **2.2.5. The Writing Process Approach**

As the name suggests, the process approach to academic writing involves teaching steps as part of a process to produce a piece of writing. The approach focuses on the written product that students are required to produce. Keen interest is placed on the creative process of writing, the role of each student in the writing act, its social aspect, each student's personality, various discipline-oriented conventions, and the larger social setting (Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999). All these facets need to be engaged in when teaching writing. Other aspects of academic writing involve collaborative writing and peer review (Elbow, 1981).

In any case, whether students respond to set tasks or to broad subjects, writing is a daunting act for most students. Primarily, the process approach focuses on what writers do when they write instead of focusing on textual features, which does not mean that textual features are completely negated. Depending on the writer's task, the approach may also involve looking at text features.

As **Figure 1** below shows, the process approach takes account of various stages of producing a written text. It is important to note that not all writers go through all the steps involved; some may be supportive while others are inessential to certain writing tasks. Figure 1 shows that writing is an iterative process; steps have a basic sequence but may be repeated in any order at any time and stage. Teaching the steps involved in the writing process, as indicated in Figure 1, may assist students to dispel misconceptions about writing (Curry, 1996).



**Figure 1:** Steps in the Writing Process Approach

### 2.2.6. The Genre Approach

One other important approach to academic writing is the genre approach. This is an approach that follows the predominant intellectual thinking on academic writings but utilises academic contexts instead. This approach adopts the idea of discourse communities that have a shared vision (Tribble, 1996). These can be made up of goals that include authorship on new knowledge, experimental processes or knowledge, and the assessments made by students.

The genre approach has been appraised and recognised as one that yields results if used appropriately, giving students an ability to handle diverse genres for specific functions. Swales (1990), describes genres as forms of communicative activities that individuals share for a range of communicative functions. His description provides that conventions exist within particular genres of writing. Each genre has a couple of communicative functions within social situations and every genre features its own ‘architectural attributes’.

On the other hand, Byram & Hu (2000: 235) have described the genre method as ‘*a framework for language instruction*’ that is dependent on instances of a specific genre. The genre structure facilitates student(s’) writing with generic, organised driving principles concerning how to generate meaningful paragraphs. The ‘architectural attributes’ of genres comprise both benchmarks of the organisational framework and various language features. Consequently, the

communicative functions and the structural functions ought to be introduced when genres are employed in written lessons for students.

A Genre-based strategy has been developed out of Halliday's (1978) systemic functional concept or theory and Martin's (1985) work on appraisal. Research in the genre-based method in Australia has been considerable from the mid-1980s, becoming a significant influence on the teaching of reading and writing. The genre-based method has played a very strong part in language teaching reformation in Australia and has also had a unique impact on the teaching of language and science in other nations. This method is designed to assist students comprehend the lexical and grammatical attributes of various rhetoric contexts and to become conscious of communicative functions and interpersonal connections. It is thought that an explicit focus on genre in instruction offers students opportunities to gain conceptual understanding as well as an understanding of social structures necessary for undertaking writing exercises.

### **2.2.7. Scaffolding Approach**

Scaffolding is another approach to teaching academic writing. Basically, it refers to "*the input teachers give to students to assist them to complete tasks that they ordinarily would not be able to achieve on their own*" (Millin 2016: 38). This approach is defined as an instructional strategy, especially in an EFL context (Belland et al. 2008). It can be used by educators when using questions as scaffolds to support learners who are trying to resolve a problem or complete a task, and to create an energetic classroom interaction between students themselves and between students and their teacher (Le & Nguyen, 2010).

EFL students choose to use their primary language to generate words and phrases since this makes ordering thoughts a little easier (Chan, 1988). While thinking in one's local language and then translating thoughts into English may be challenging and time consuming, the study shows that the EFL students are already familiar with making use of their initial language to explain and convey thoughts. The strategy poses a challenge when students try to use English effectively to generate ideas. Students may not be able to cope with this pressure and may suffer from depression, especially when they have been through an excessive amount of stress in English academic writing.

Stress and the resultant depression can cause insufficient self-confidence, this, if exacerbated by a lack of suitable guidance, can together lower the overall performance and learning capacity of students of EFL courses (Fernsten, 2008). Lowered overall performance can in turn affect

students emotionally, thus contributing to a downward spiral both academically and emotionally. This is where the function and role of the instructor is essential to EFL students. Providing opportunities to grow in confidence will positively affect fourth-year EFL students and help their academic writing.

Since the challenges faced by university or college level EFL students are so pervasive, it is essential to prospect approaches such as scaffolding that alleviate the various areas of difficulty. A number of studies have assessed and/or modelled the scaffolding approach to academic writing. For instance, in the study by Abejuela (2014) the instructional aim was to teach advanced writing in a higher education institution. The conclusions of the study reveal that the thesis guides in graduate school at the university maintain a balance of challenges and support. These guides provide a highly engaging and supportive learning research environment. In addition, the strategies of the scaffolding approach occur in different ways providing a variety of means to support students while they finish their theses.

### **2.3. ACADEMIC WRITING: THE PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS**

This section takes a close look at the perceptions that students and lecturers have of academic writing, with reference to the process by which the interviewed Libyan students learned and acquired English as a foreign language.

#### **2.3.1. Students' Perceptions**

In order to understand the views students have of academic writing, it is important to establish that these students are learning in a foreign language. In second language acquisition (SLA), learners are required to assimilate the procedures of academic writing, such as evolving new strategies, using appropriate approaches and discovering insight and explanations for their difficulties (Myles, 2002). Daoud & Al-Hazmi (2002), mention that non-native speakers of English can determine a new world of academic writing. In support of Daoud & Al-Hazmi (2002), Abdulkareem (2013) suggests that this can proceed by “*measuring self-integration of learning and by getting the opportunity to think critically in order to express themselves*” (Abdulkareem, 2013: 1553). In this way, language students are able to make an intellectual commitment to generate something meaningful through writing.

Foreign language learners can develop facility with academic writing by engaging in various programmes within the teaching and learning environment. Learners may achieve their

academic purposes by developing certain cultural skills such as communicative interaction, appreciation of cultural background, and engaging in meaningful and interactive tasks (Thomas, 2017). This may be achieved when lecturers help students to deal with the determinations of academic writing materials, curricula and language skills that are used in classroom activities (Al-Badwawi, 2011; Ferreri & O'Connor, 2013).

Because writing is increasingly preferred in the 21<sup>st</sup> century over oral communication, and is now a central aspect at institutions of higher learning, students need to understand what academic writing entails and what makes a text academic. (Abdulkareem, 2013). Important prerequisites for acquiring academic literacy are opportunities for students to talk about the language of academic discourse and learn academic discourse conventions.

A number of studies have explored the perceptions of university students regarding academic writing, and these suggest that students find academic writing challenging and difficult. In an investigation of 46 school leavers and first year mature-age students of Educational Psychology at an Australian university, students expressed their perceptions of their major academic writing challenges (Krause, 2001). The challenges were classified as either writing-process related or university-context related. For instance, locating appropriate references through the library computer database is one of the most difficult challenges, especially because it is both writing-process related and university-context related. In addition, students said that selecting salient points for essay writing and organising ideas from different sources was another challenge for them.

Similar findings were uncovered by Asaoka & Usui (2003), who conducted a longitudinal qualitative study to investigate the perceptions of ten Japanese students regarding academic writing. Students cited difficulties in searching for relevant sources, choosing relevant information, summarising, organising information from different sources and paragraph development as the most difficult tasks to do. Earlier, Leki & Carson (1994) identified and classified these challenges into three types, i.e.

- i. research and information skills, such as library research skills, gathering materials, sifting, interpreting;
- ii. selection of relevant content and referencing; and,
- iii. skills such as brainstorming, planning, outlining, drafting, and editing and proofreading.

Scholars such as Evans & Green (2007) and Bitchener & Basturkmen (2006) highlight writing problems as closely associated with student experiences. It is equally the case in a study by

Giridharan (2012) on students registered in a writing and research skills foundation course in Malaysia. Giridharan (2012) investigated the perceptions of 206 English second language (ESL) students concerning academic writing difficulties. The study revealed that paraphrasing and correctly handling in-text citations were among the most challenging features of writing for students.

In another study, Kalikokha et al. (2009) investigate the views of first-year Malawian students who have completed a mandatory English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course at Chancellor University. Of the 200 students from the Humanities and Social Sciences faculties sampled in the study, 70% speak native languages at home, 28% speak English and native languages and only 2% speak English as their first language. The study shows that students viewed academic essay writing as a challenging experience as they feel inadequately trained (Kalikokha et al., 2009). Students are concerned about their own lack of skills for searching relevant information, and their inability to express thoughts succinctly, to summarise and to paraphrase information from texts using the necessary academic style. Students further reveal that instructions for essay writing, the accessibility of resources, various discipline-oriented requirements and insufficient time allowed for essay writing are other challenges they face (Kalikokha et al., 2009). The study moreover shows that lecturers and students views academic essay writing requirements for the various disciplines quite diversely. As a result, there remains a need to familiarise students with fundamental and discipline-specific writing skills.

In a longitudinal interview-based research of 28 undergraduates, conducted via a comprehensive questionnaire of beginners at an English-medium university in Hong Kong, Evans & Morrison (2011) find that students require guidance on academic writing. A few of the primary difficulties are comprehending and utilising discipline-specific language, being familiar with academic needs, and generating work suited to the discipline (Evans & Morrison, 2011). This research highlights that the main obstacle experienced by first-year students in academic writing is the number of discipline-specific academic genres and language features that they have to learn.

In another study conducted in an English-medium university in Egypt, Lewko (2012) assesses the views of undergraduate science and engineering students and those of their professors regarding the standard of student writing. The investigation shows that four professors observe deficiencies in student writing, specifically with regard to citation, plagiarism, organisation, suitable style and development of an argument (Lewko, 2012). They ascribed these difficulties to substandard undergraduate training and inability of students to make use of skills learned.

From the studies above, there appears to be unanimity that students perceive academic writing as difficult and challenging. What is also evident is that these challenges are not solely due to the failures of students and their lack of skills, but also to crucial factors outside the control of students. (Fraser & Killen, 2003). These can be of a number of natures, forms and origins, such as the unavailability of textbooks or quality learning resources, family crises, unsatisfactory accommodation, etc. (cf. Fraser & Killen, 2003: 257-258).

### **2.3.2. The Perceptions of Lecturers**

Just as students have clear views about the challenges they face with academic writing, lecturers, too, have views about writing skills of students and the associated challenges (Wiedeman, 2006). Studies that have been conducted regarding lecturers' opinions of students' academic writing skills reflect that they perceive similar challenges to those perceived by the students themselves (Thomas, 2017). This has led to a number of suggestions regarding approaches to academic writing.

For example, Lea & Street (1998) opt for the academic literacies approach in a bid to carry out case study research within a broad institutional context. The researchers have studied the views and practices of students in two universities in the United Kingdom (UK). According to the Lea & Street (1998) study, lecturers say that students lack elementary writing skills and the capacity to write well-structured and argued papers. The researchers point out, however, that several factors are at play, apart from students lacking skills; these included institutional practices and miscommunication between tutors (Lea & Street, 1998).

Ganobcsik-Williams's (2004) study, conducted amongst a broad cross-section of United Kingdom universities and higher education college staff members from various professions, reveals that a substantial proportion of staff members believe that the standard of writing by students in higher education has dropped. Most staff members (65%) are dissatisfied with students' use of language (sentence structure, spelling and punctuation). The Ganobcsik-Williams's (2004) research warns against drawing incorrect conclusions from perceptual data about student writing and points out that there is a need to comprehend the framework for learning and teaching in higher education. The research highlights the limitations associated with reviewing student writing from a deficit perspective and suggests an 'entire-establishment' approach to assisting students with their writing (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2004).

In a study carried out to investigate the academic language learning requirements for Canadian students, where English is a second language, Huang (2010) finds that course instructors felt student writing lacked skills in summarising, paraphrasing, structuring and establishing a sense of order. The researcher says that not all students are able to self-diagnose their difficulties within the academic environment and that course instructors might not be the best judges of the ways in which students experience difficulties (Huang, 2010). This conclusion is drawn because of the divergent opinions of instructors and students that have emerged in this particular study.

In a study that examines various elements of English second language (ESL) writing in content programmes, Ramoroka (2012) focuses on tutors' views of what constitutes good writing in two writing contexts - the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme and the Media Studies programme at the University of Botswana. The researcher finds that instructors in both programmes mention similar attributes of *'originality or creativeness and synthesis of thoughts from other sources'* (Ramoroka, 2012:40) as essential in student writing. Instructors in English for Academic Purposes point out that essay organisation, extensive vocabulary and the ability to shape and extend thoughts are important. The research indicates that writing at university is discipline oriented and that writing abilities are often situational.

As can be seen, studies generally show that the views of lecturers concerning the nature of student writing are similar worldwide. Evident also is the fact that challenges facing first-year academic writers are varied and intricate, and cannot be laid solely at the feet of the students themselves. A focus on the students, context, institutional practices, discipline oriented requirements and lecturers yields a broader understanding of the challenges students face and is a more useful foundation for addressing the problems than a focus on students alone.

#### **2.4. ENGLISH ACADEMIC WRITING IN THE ARAB WORLD**

This section gives a short review of the English academic writing situation in the Arab world. It focuses on a few countries where the challenges faced by EFL students have been identified. These countries are Saudi Arabia and Jordan for instance.

As has been noted earlier, students for whom English is not their mother tongue face numerous challenges when using English for academic writing purposes. Academic writing, as a skill demanded by most universities, requires students to master specific ways of presenting ideas, which ought to conform to academic writing standards. Studies that have been conducted in



various countries, including those in the Arab world, indicate that students whose home language is not English face several challenges in using English for academic purposes.

For example, Ankawi (2015) investigates the challenges faced by Saudi Arabian students enrolled in mainstream academic programmes in New Zealand using a qualitative approach involving 65 students. The findings from this study show that most students are ill-prepared and hence their attitudes towards English are negative. Most of the errors students commit are related to syntactical and morphological aspects of language such as tenses, spelling and sentence structure. Difficulties with referencing, and with distinguishing between formal and non-formal language, are also noted (Ankawi, 2015). The study finds that the Saudi Arabian educational system is still employing an obsolete traditional transmission method of instruction. This method is not in keeping with current trends in an information-dominated world.

A study that has been conducted at Taif University in Saudi Arabia shows similar results. The study which attempts to investigate the problems with using English encountered by English-major undergraduates shows that most students have weak linguistic abilities when writing. According to Al-Khairi (2013) the students commit numerous language errors in academic writing because they have only been exposed to writing practice at sentence and paragraph skills levels. Among the recommendations of the study is that language courses should be improved in order to enhance all aspects of a student's language skills, including grammar. However, the study does not suggest to what extent existing language courses should be altered, or how (Al-Khairi, 2013). What is worth noting, is that the students are willing to engage in group and paired discussions in which lecturers are not willing to participate.

Mudawy & Mousa (2017) have conducted an investigation aimed at exploring the problems English language students face at the College of Education in Zulfi, Saudi Arabia. The goal of the study is to find interventions that might address the problems. Using a quantitative approach, the researchers find that the majority of students are not able to express themselves in writing (Mudawy & Mousa, 2017). The study observes that students commit errors of spelling, incorrect preposition use and poor vocabulary. While the study notes the findings, it failed to explain how the problems should be remedied. One could argue that finding practical solutions should not end at merely suggesting ideas, but should include some attention to how, when and by whom the ideas might be implemented (Mudawy & Mousa, 2017).

A similar study has been conducted by Ibnian (2017) at one of the Jordanian universities. The study, which focuses on exploring the difficulties that students face when they use English as

a foreign language, reports that several students lack ideas when writing academic essays. Furthermore, students make numerous errors regarding the mechanical grammatical structures. According to Ibnian (2017), there is a lack of clear assessment instruments that might help with detecting the difficulties students face – and in addition, they are exposed to unsuitable teaching methods. Vocabulary is poor, and there is a lack of appropriate materials to consult in order to remedy this.

As can be seen, students in the Arab world face the same challenges as students all over the world for whom English is a second or third language, and who have to use English for academic writing. These difficulties range across grammar and vocabulary restrictions, lack of proper teaching methods, and inadequate preparation, among others. It seems that more effort ought to be placed on strategies to adequately prepare and ‘scaffold’ students so that they acquire academic literacy in a relatively short period of time.

It is important to note that no difficulty or challenge specific to the use of the Arabic language or Arabic writing system has been reported in any of the studies reviewed above.

## **2.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER TWO**

The present chapter has reviewed the relevant literature and highlighted the key concepts relating to academic writing. Among others, it has touched on students’ perceptions regarding academic writing in higher education and the various associated concepts and theories. Different approaches to academic writing have been reviewed, which all have established, in one way or another, that academic literacy is a social process, although some tended to lean towards the acquisition of technical skills as an important component of this social process.

From the wide range of consulted literature, it has become clear that academic writing presents a challenge to most students globally. As a result of language difficulties, many if not most students, end up failing to excel in their academic endeavours. The literature indicates that students’ observations of academic writing are that it is a problematic venture and a hurdle they have to scale at university. The literature also reveals that lecturers are not teaching this important skill very well partly because of the inappropriate approaches and strategies that they use to address these challenges. According to the literature, lecturers neglect many aspects of language teaching, failing to provide adequate ‘scaffolding’ and therefore students feel ill prepared to write with confidence.

## CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter deals with two theoretical frameworks both of which not only underpin the current study but also view academic writing as a social practice. The two theoretical frameworks are Gee's theory of D/discourse and Bourdieu's sociological theory of capital, field, habitus and agency. These theories have been chosen because they are widely accepted theories in education and because they support the principle of learning as a socially embedded (as opposed to decontextualised) practice. The following section gives details of Gee's Theory as it applies to English as Second Language and English as Foreign Language (ESL/EFL).

### 3.1. GEE'S THEORY OF D/DISDISCOURSE AND ESL/EFL

An exploration of James Gee's Theory of Discourse Analysis and its relevance to second language acquisition is discussed in this section. The concept of Gee's D/discourse is looked at as well as how D/discourse is learnt. This will help to illustrate parallels between Gee's theory and the present research in second language acquisition (SLA) and TESL/TEFL. This is done through highlighting the requirements needed in order for D/discourse acquisition to align with Gee's theory. The aim is to employ Gee's theory and TESL/TEFL research to propose how classrooms and schools, whose learners come from marginal linguistic backgrounds, may be more mindful of the social contexts of these learners.

In this discussion of Gee's theory, the intention is to demonstrate how this theory and TESL/TEFL research enable an understanding that pedagogical interventions targeted at first-language speakers of English are key for effective and enhanced language learning and academic achievement. This approach helps ESL/EFL learners fit easily into the classroom and enhances their opportunities to learn.

Linguistic theory has been key in explaining second-language acquisition (Ellis, 1985; Beebe, 1988; Spolsky, 1989; Gersten & Hudelson, 2000). In the field of TESL/TEFL, various language acquisition theories have contributed invaluable insights. Thus, the objective in this section is to critically appraise Gee's D/discourse theory and its relevance to TESL/TEFL. As a tool that draws on sociolinguistic theory and cognitive science and philosophy, Gee's theory facilitates an investigation of discourse as embedded in social practices, and the interplay between language learning, identity and social setting (Knobel, 1999). Recent research in TESL/TEFL has acknowledged that the complex interplay between language, learning, identity and context

requires a theory to explain the intricacies (Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997 & 2000; Gunderson, 2000; Duff, 2001 & 2002). This rationale is enough to justify that TESL/TEFL aligns with Gee's D/discourse theory.

In elucidating his theory, Gee (1989b, 1992, 1993b & 1996) distinguished between two concepts; that is 'Discourse' and 'discourse', represented by capital 'D' and small 'd'. In linguistics, discourse refers to a spoken series of utterances between utterers and hearers (Matthews, 1997: 100; Renkeme, 2004; Bloor & Bloor, 2013). However, Gee's aim is to reveal how context, identity and social relations are implicated in the use of a specific language (Gee, 1989b, 1992, 1993b & 1996).

Discourse involves the manner in which conversations are made, through listening, writing and reading. Furthermore, it involves integrating, acting, interacting, believing, cherishing, and sensing patterns that relate with one another in a perceptible collective network (Gee, 1996, 1999 & 2001a). Discourses may also be understood as identity toolkits or ways of life (Gee, 1996, 2001a & 2001b; Knobel, 1999) which enable people to share their worldviews. Discussing this phenomenon in this manner is important because the literature found that some teachers as well as students viewed academic writing as an event as opposed to a social practice. This theory thus helps the enquirer to understand common worldviews, normal or typical, through the Discourse lense(s) (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Gee, 1999). Ideally, Discourses are sub-cultures within a culture or society with individuals belonging to any of many sub-cultures.

In this sense, a person may belong to many sub-cultures or Discourses at any one time. These sub-cultures or Discourses differentiate their participants with respect to other Discourses and through what is recognised as appropriate for the sub-culture or Discourse, in embedded common identities, perceptions, values and ways of thinking. With this in mind, the participants of a Discourse are able to determine who is an insider of the Discourse and who is not. Accordingly, to be an effective and recognised participant of a Discourse entails individuals displaying the beliefs and identities of the Discourse. In short, one's way of life in general must reflect and speak of the identity that sustains and unifies a particular discourse. Students and teachers cannot therefore be successful academic writers if they practice academic writing in order simply to pass exams, as opposed to wishing to sustain academic writing as a long-term life or professional skill.

In addition to the suggestion that individuals are either members or not members of a Discourse, Gee suggests that individuals may be initiated into a Discourse. Such members are

easy to identify, because their way of life mimics only that particular Discourse. However, Discourses which constitute who we are evolve, and this evolution imparts variations to all Discourses, which in turn creates tensions among members with regard to beliefs, values, perceptions, ways of life, language use and sense of being in the world – all represented by the specifics of the various Discourses (Gee, 1989a: 7).

From what has been described above, it is possible to infer that language is an component of Discourse, and no component makes sense without the other components of the same Discourse. It may be understood that meaning making in language is context, consciously woven into people's perceptions and experiences in relation to the particular Discourses of which they are a part (Gee, 1990 & 1996). This means that mere words mean nothing except insofar as they are defined and embedded in a particular Discourse. This challenges in part the Grammar Translation Method and Audio-lingual traditional learning methods common in Libya, which was deemed weak in the literature because it failed to develop the ability to experience academic writing comprehensively and articulate academic writing messages spontaneously. Elabbar (2011) has argued that these traditional methods are not enough to serve as standalone approaches. In addition to this, Gee also argues that meanings may also be influenced by other Discourses if they are not appropriately situated. In this respect, it is important to bear in mind the notion of sub-cultures within larger cultures and their differentiated verbiage, popular expressions and the range of manners in which these are expressed.

From Gee's description of Discourses, one can infer that Gee views language as a social practice (Gee, 2001b). Thus, full participation in any social Discourse requires knowledge of the rules (grammatical and lexical) that govern the language use of that particular Discourse. Students cannot simply learn academic writing to pass exams or to take part in research paper projects. Abushina (2017) finds that teachers and students in Libya view academic writing as an event, but in his conceptualisation of academic writing, Gee argues that in order to be fully recognised as part of the Discourse, students need to internalise the rules that govern academic writing (Gee, 2001b). Thus students need to engage in academic writing beyond the classroom and beyond the requirements of the course or project.

Earlier in this discussion of Discourses, it was mentioned that it is possible for an individual to participate in plural Discourses. These Discourses may be categorised as primary and secondary Discourses. The first language encounters that individuals have at home constitute the primary Discourse, while further encounters beyond the family, set up through social

groups, organisations and institutions, are all secondary Discourses. According to Gee (2001b), there are dominant and non-dominant Discourses. Dominant ones may be secondary Discourses that are often linked to social roles and status and attract social benefits. Non-dominant Discourses demand individuals to be participants within the Discourse for no anticipated benefits.

Thus, in order for one to be functionally sound in the secondary Discourse, one needs additional primary Discourses. Students hoping to master academic writing have to extend their practical experiences beyond the comfort of campus. However, adequate secondary Discourse skills are best acquired through socialisation and apprenticeship in a Discourse's particular social practices, rather than through overt instruction (Gee, 1992; 1996; 1999; 2001a; 2001b). This requires the help of 'expert others' through whom modelling and instructional guidance in meaningful and authentic ways may be provided to students (Gee, 2001b). This means that students may learn better when learning a language through tasks that enables them to use language appropriately, thereby forcing them to produce the language themselves. This approach would require students to engage an instructor (external to the school environment) and be critical of what they are learning, a notably different approach compared to the traditional top-down approach that has been revealed to be common in Libyan education. This in fact becomes the social communicative approach that introduces students into a particular Discourse (Gee, 2001b). One could deduce from this and argue that it is for this reason that some academic institutions may strive to provide tutors or coaches who orient new students into various aspects of academic Discourses, which may vary according to the discipline. However, new students must be willing themselves to take part in and be a part of these Discourses.

This requirement for D/discourse acquisition, as described by Gee, draws heavily on Vygotsky (1987)'s view of supported language interaction through identification of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and the provision of 'scaffolding' (Cazden, 1988; Heath, 1983). Both are crucial for Gee's theory of D/discourse analysis. The problem statement of this study argues that there are poor academic writing outcomes among Libyans because of a top-down approach that is teacher centred. This kind of context has, in fact, blurred the participatory role of students in the process of learning academic writing. Gee's theory is important in providing an alleviation for this scenario, because it recognises and fits well with constructivist theory, which argues that learners must be active constructors of knowledge using experiences in their own environment (Cambourne, 2002; Palincsar, 1998).

To sum up, what this means for all new students is that they have a responsibility to acquire and nurture their identity within a particular D/discourse without causing damage to their own sense of being which they bring to every task (Gee, 2001a). If this does not happen, tensions may arise that prevent students from acquiring the D/discourse fluency that they so desperately need in order to progress academically, and cause them to remain outsiders of that D/discourse. Thus, Gee's theory of D/discourse posits that language should be understood within the larger context of Discourse, in which patterns of perceptions, beliefs and behaviour are shared and tied directly to the identity of a particular social group (Gee, 1989c; 1992 & 1996).

Meaning is attained through negotiations entered into by a Discourse's participants within a given context and situation. The integration of a language's use, meaning and substance into meaningful, unified units is called its 'discourse'. To be part of the discourse, everyone is obliged to become immersed in it through apprenticeship or by other experts within the group so that each member acquires the necessary fluency, values and beliefs that constitute the identity of the members and of the discourse itself.

In the next section, Pierre Bourdieu's social cultural theories are presented.

### **3.2. PIERRE BOURDIEU'S SOCIAL CULTURAL THEORY**

This study aims to argue that academic writing is not an event but rather a social practice and as such, a second theory underpinning this study, Bourdieu's (1986a & 1986b) theory of practice, resonates well with academic writing as a social practice. As a French sociologist and philosopher, Pierre Bourdieu's research left its mark in the education sphere as well as in cultural sociology (Ozbilgin & Tatlin, 2005). His understanding of society was based on ideas of domination and the relative power relations that stem from unequal distribution of a society's resources (Reckwitz, 2003).

Reckwitz (2003) describes Bourdieu's theory of practice as a grand theory. Skinner (1985:1) agrees with Mills (1959) that a grand theory is '*an abstract and normative theory of human nature and conduct*'. According to Skinner (1985), the theory is multifaceted and can be employed in various circumstances and research areas. For example, Bourdieu's theory of practice has been applied in various disciplines such as marketing (Holt, 1998) and human resource management (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). One might argue that Bourdieu's theory of practice attempts to explain seemingly different yet interlinked social structures; for example, the international market. This sociological theory could in fact be used to explain and highlight

social life patterns that are not reducible to individuals but resilient enough to withstand an individual's whim of wanting to change them. (Hays, 1994).

Arguably, structures act as guidelines that determine the conditions, thoughts and behaviours of individuals. In other words, structures regulate the individual's way of relating to or conducting themselves in respect to other agents within and outside of social structures. A contrasting view of this is that individuals are not bound by structures. In fact, from a voluntarism perspective (Hays, 1994), individuals have the freedom to choose what fits them. This duality is explained by Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and capital's interplay. This suggests that the theory of practice by Bourdieu is not in itself a unified theory. It is rather a flexible concept whose seemingly distinct elements must never be perceived as detached from each other. In other words, it is practically impossible to explain one element in isolation from the other.

### **3.2.1. Field**

As a life metaphor, Bourdieu uses the term 'field' to attempt to explain our daily life activities. As one may infer, our daily lives are involved in and determined by endless volumes of interactions such as discussions, negotiations, differences and conflicts. Social fields (Iellatchitch et al., 2003: 732) are systems of shared meaning established historically. Social fields may be fields of art, literature or any other area of endeavour, and may be subdivided into subfields. Social fields (Bourdieu, 1997: 654) are '*universes or macrocosms*' where agents and institutions are integrated and interact while observing specific field rules. However, these rules are tacit in nature and not formalised and fixed (Wacquant, 2011). Agents internalise these rules for the purpose of demonstrating appropriate conduct and practices (Bourdieu, 1998a).

The field is relevant to this study and in particular, academic writing (AW) because it denotes the various AW spaces in an institution of learning. In this case, the higher education institutions and their agents, i.e. lecturers and students, interact in a bid to socialise students in specific disciplinary discourses in order for them to participate in the academic discourse (AD) with appropriate practices and strategies. If these ADs are appropriately administered to students, students' internalisation of ADs will enable them anticipate future tendencies and opportunities. In other words, students will then be able to anticipate success in their academic endeavours and will already 'be' where they anticipate being, even before they are successful. According to Bourdieu (1975:19), the social field is therefore a '*locus of struggle*' which



represents a web of positions (Bourdieu, 1972). Success in negotiating this ‘locus of struggle’ is determined by how students are socialised in AW and how they add to and improve their AW skills. In this respect, this study argues that fields (academic fields) are spaces of power relations where the practices of agents (students and lecturers) are not arbitrary. In other words, it must be understood that interactions are socially embedded (fields) and as such, it is important to explore how success or authority (positions in the field) is gained in specific AW fields (discipline-specific skills).

### **3.2.2. Social Capital**

Since the social field is a playground in which rules apply (Bourdieu, 1972), agents need to acquire specific resource structures that they may use in order to access a particular social field (Julien 2015; Bottero 2009). Of course, specific fields prefer specific sorts of resources (skills) (Bourdieu, & Wacquant, 1992), identified by Bourdieu as ‘capital’. According to Bourdieu (1986), there are various sorts or forms of capital, e.g. symbolic, social, economic and cultural capital. Agents mobilise these forms of capital to access and participate in a particular social field.

Although they appear distinct, all forms of capital are closely linked to one another and have the capacity to be converted (Julien, 2015; Bottero, 2009). Details of these forms of capital may be found in Bourdieu (1986: 86). However, cultural capital is one that is acquired through family as well as through education and socialisation. Through education, cultural capital is institutionalised and attained through the acquisition of academic certification or qualification. Bourdieu argues that cultural capital is the primary conferred status as well as one’s relative stance in a particular social field. Cultural capital manifests in three forms:

- the incorporated or embodied state
- the objectified state
- the institutionalised state.

The incorporated state of cultural capital withstands dispositions of the body and mind while the objectified state manifests itself in the form of cultural goods such as cars, pictures, books and many other items. The institutionalised state manifests in the form of educational qualifications conferred on someone by institutions of education. The focus of the current study is on the incorporated and institutionalised state.

The incorporated or embodied state is an indestructible dispositional system (Bourdieu, 1986a & 1986b) and a presentation of one's intellectual qualifications (Becker, 1964). This involves investing time to inculcate and assimilate concepts (Bourdieu, 1983b). In academic writing, this implies that it is in a sense the responsibility of the student to labour for proficiency in academic writing skills, as this cannot be delegated to anyone else. In other words, the acquisition of academic writing skills is the work and sole responsibility of an individual student. Thus, when one invests time in mastering the skills of academic writing, the result is a certificate of cultural competence known as the institutionalised state of capital. This comes in formalised academic qualifications such as a degree, socially sanctioned by an institution. It becomes part of the primary endowed status of the individual and this forms part of the resources that position that individual in various social fields (i.e. it confers social capital).

### 3.2.3. Habitus



Bourdieu's concept of habitus is understood as the physical embodiment of cultural capital, to the deeply ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions that an individual possesses due to our life experiences (Wacquant, 2004; Hilgers, 2009; Maton, 2012). Habitus is mostly generated through social contexts, instead of resulting from distinct procedures. Habitus is usually long lasting and transferrable from one particular social context to another; however the habitus also shifts over time. Habitus is not predetermined or permanent, and could be altered under unpredicted circumstances or over an extended historical period (Navarro, 2006: 16).

Habitus is neither a consequence of free will, nor dependent on structures, but develops by interaction between the free will and structures over time. Dispositions that are equally fashioned by previous activities and structures, and that shape present practices and structures, condition our very thoughts of these (Bourdieu, 1984: 170). According to this particular perception, habitus is generated and reproduced subconsciously, without any purposeful pursuit of coherence, with virtually no cognisant concentration (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).

Largely, habitus is a combination of different forms of capital manifesting as different sets of skills from a range of fields.

In other words, students rely on different resources they might possess to succeed in a given setting. Regarding academic writing, there is no doubt that Bourdieu (1989; 1991) viewed academic literacy as a situated practice in a given context linked to time and space. This is in stark contrast to views held by scholars such as Abushina (2017) who found that students and teachers in Libya viewed academic writing as an event. In Street's (1984) depiction of literacy,

literacy practices in time and space include social conventions and concepts, and literacy is closely related to history and background. Thus, the Bourdieusian conceptual framework locates habitus and practice within these contexts. Literacy, according to him, would always be understood within a context.

Therefore, this study argues that academic literacy from the above perspective of habitus and academic literacy as practice is that academic literacy is a succession of socially embedded dispositions, connected to an individual's background and to past and current experiences. This understanding enables the best practices, since it fosters an appreciation of literacy in its socio-cultural context.

From what has been discussed above, it is clear that Bourdieu's theory in relation to academic writing means that students must be helped to acquire skills and knowledge through lectures and interactions (the field) to acquire both the written and verbal requirements or skills (the capital) relevant to academic conventions in order to arrive at academic success (the habitus). These reflect a sociocultural approach to academic writing. A key concept in socio-cultural theory is that individual behaviour is shaped by social and cultural factors.

In Bourdieu's study of power relations in a social location, the manner in which society is stratified has largely to do with culture playing a part in shaping relationships. In a discussion of academic writing therefore, the concepts of social capital are crucial for developing a student's linguistic capital, which enables them to communicate with authority in higher institutions of learning (Hyland, 2004c). Hyland (2004c) argues that academic writing should be seen as a form of social interaction, among not only learners but among instructors too, who in this case help students gain the required linguistic capital. In other words, academic writing calls for explorations of the ways in which academic instructors interact with students, and the manner in which they represent knowledge of their disciplines through communication of values and literacy practices to students.

Bourdieu, as a sociology theorist, approached power relations within the context of the larger society. Bourdieu (1986) saw power as a product of culture, as symbolically created, and as constantly legitimised by the interplay between agencies and structure (Bourdieu, 1986). Social practices are socially situated and are made authentic through agency and structure. Bourdieu was concerned primarily with the dynamics of power in society, and the manner in which power is shared and how social order is thereby maintained from generation to generation. Thus, in this research, Bourdieu's theory as explained earlier should help to explain how power dynamics in a higher education institution affect the manner in which the curriculum is

administered, and how this affects the progress that students make in academic writing, especially in the light of field and habitus. Through education, students acquire academic writing skills that form part of what may determine their position in society (Pigg, 2014).

It is worth noting that Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is an idea that stems from the Marxist theory of economic capital tied to issues of class. The concept was originally intended to be used to analyse the political economy in order to expose the economic designs behind the capitalist means of production (Dumais, 2002; Sullivan, 2002; Saraceno, 2014). In other words, for Marx, class is defined through the concept of who owns the means of production. Thus, Bourdieu conceptualised class as it is traditionally conceptualised in Marxist economic capital theory. For Bourdieu, this concept (capital) was seen through the lens of social class. The different forms of capital (linguistic or academic literacy) may be converted to monetary terms, becoming economic capital, and therefore may be seen as forming part of the structure that upholds the class system.

Economic capital may refer to the prosperity of an individual, by inheritance or self-made from connections between the individual and the economy (Bourdieu, 1986). This includes 'convertible properties' converted into money, as mentioned above. In relation to language and literacy, therefore, students need to acquire the conventions of academic writing and literacies in order to develop legitimated 'ways of being' (Gee, 2015: 3) from their higher learning institutions.

The idea behind social capital is that it is created through the family's social processes in the broader society, in which social networks play a major part. Social capital is the position one holds in society's social hierarchy. Cohen et al. (2013: 4) explain that social capital refers to *'conventions among people; the trust, mutual understanding as well as the shared values and behaviours that connect the members of human networks and communities and make comparative action possible'*. These forms of capital are interconnected in that no one capital can stand on its own but is always experienced in relation to other forms of capital. The strength of these forms of capital lies in the way they complement each other.

Bourdieu (1986a & 1986b) argues that reality is a social concept, thus to exist in this case is to exist socially in relation to other people. In other words, individuals are who they are because of the other people who are close to them in time and space. Furthermore, it means that the environment in which individuals find themselves shapes all their behaviour and perceptions (Navarro, 2006). This environment is what Bourdieu (1986a & 1986b) refers to as a 'field'. The field (in this case, the university) exerts forces upon the 'players' and to some extent

determines their positions. For example, the educational institution could be viewed as a field in which different participants, each with a unique disposition, try to negotiate their status through interactions. The concept of field helps to explain the different power relations that people experience with each other. The power differences encountered in the field may be attributed to the differences between the various fields in which a person finds themselves (Gaventa, 2003). In other words, context as well as environment is important, as both influence habitus.

Habitus manifests itself as a physical incarnation of cultural capital, with extremely rooted behaviours, skills and dispositions, acquired through life experiences. A number of things determine the positions taken by agents; one of these is what Bourdieu calls habitus. Habitus is a '*structuring structure*' (Bourdieu, 1986a & 1986b). In other words, it is concerned with organising practices and the perceptions of practices, because structure affects action and actions affect structure. Bourdieu (1986a & 1986b) further explains that a person's personal history, preferences and positions, placed in the context of the surrounding social world, determine that person's potential courses of action (Bourdieu, 1986a & 1986b). In this case, social class, education, upbringing and past choices form part of the habitus, and the determining part of the behaviour of the agent in the field. These can include habits that might clash with the requirements of academic writing, such as questioning authority (Boughey, 2008).

Regarding academic literacy, students may possess power if their language is seen as legitimate. Thus, the institution's practices regarding the academic orientation of students play an important role in forming students' academic literacy prowess, helping or hindering them in acquiring the cultural capital they need. How lecturers and students relate, and how lecturers help their students to become enculturated (inducted) in the discourse of academic writing can all determine whether students will be comfortable with academic literacy or not.

Critics of Bourdieu's capital theory, which seems to have stemmed from the sociology of education (from which Bourdieu may have developed the theory of cultural capital) contend that the theory was relevant during his time (Goldthorpe, 2007). At the time, his theory addressed problems that were current and widely recognised by many researchers who were interested in how cultural and subcultural factors influenced the development of a child's educational attainment. As Lareau & Weininger (2003) describe, the cultural capital theory is Bourdieu's '*watermark theory*', as it contributes to how we may understand most of the current educational social class disparities, or inequalities in the educational field, using the wider lens

of social reproduction. Originally proposed by Marx for the concept of capital, social reproduction is founded on the structures and activities of society that perpetuate inequalities from one social group to another across generations (Kvasny, 2009).

Other scholars such as Goldthorpe (2007), Rikowski (2008) and van de Werfhorst (2010) point out that Bourdieu's cultural capital lacks conceptual clarity. This, they argue, has resulted in many scholars interpreting his original ideas in diverse ways and drawing diverse conclusions. Particularly, the notion of habitus has been criticised for its seemingly deterministic position, thereby not lending any credence to the idea of individual consciousness or agency (Swartz & Zolberg, 2005). While these criticisms have some validity, some other scholars (Brandão, 2010; Claussen & Osborne 2013; Edgerton & Roberts, 2014; Kamphuis et al., 2015) have drawn interesting and valid conclusions based on how they interpret Bourdieu's ideas. All scholars seem to acknowledge that Bourdieu was an influential sociologist whose theories, including the idea of cultural capital, help us to explain current trends in education and goal attainment. Explaining these trends requires sound research methods in order to obtain authentic data, and therefore authentic findings.

### **3.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER THREE**

In this chapter, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks upon which this study is premised were elaborated on. The chapter discussed both Gee's D/discourse and Bourdieu's conceptual theories of capital, fields, and habitus (1986), in relation to academic writing as a socially situated and context-bound field of endeavour. These theories reinforce the idea that social interactions in the construction of competencies are key in academic literacy practices.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In the previous chapter, the theoretical framework was set in terms of the research questions. The current chapter describes the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research and how it relates to methodology, the research site of this study and the methods used. First, the location of the research is introduced. Second, the research design is explained. Third, the selection of participants for this study is presented. Fourth, the research instruments are highlighted. Fifth, the data collection procedures undertaken for this research are described, indicating the strategy and how it was implemented. The chapter concludes with a data analysis section. Using the data, this final section indicates how each of the subsection and research objectives was achieved.

### 4.1. THE RESEARCH SITE AND LOCATION

In order to appreciate why the qualitative approach to the study was chosen, it is important to give a brief description of the research site. In general, qualitative research studies are carried out at the research site or location. This is done because qualitative researchers usually establish personal contact with participants via prolonged discussions such as interviews or observations (Creswell, 2008).

The research site denotes the location where data is gathered. In this research study, data was gathered at Al-Azzaytuna University's Department of English Language Studies. The study involved four lecturers and four students who were interviewed and observed. The research site is worth mentioning in the study in consideration of the philosophical underpinnings of the researcher's ideas about the nature of reality and how we come to know knowledge (ontology and epistemology).

The Department of English Language Studies is a well-resourced and reputable language department which offers a wide range of English language courses to both Libyans and foreign language learners. That is to say, it offers full-time academic English courses and some other courses, which focus on one or two of the four language skills. The Head of the Department was very helpful and enthusiastic about the research. He indicated that the Department welcomes and embraces all ambitious attempts to improve the teaching and learning of academic writing. The observations in this study took place over a period of three months. Participants were drawn from this Department.

## 4.2. PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Understanding research may mean identifying participants' worldviews or their philosophical stance about the world. These are referred to as models or paradigms. A model or paradigm may be either an entire worldview or some assumption regarding how things function. Rossman & Rallis (2003: 36) define paradigm as '*shared understanding of reality*'.

There are several philosophical traditions. The three major ones, commonly debated, are positivism, and the critical and interpretivist models. Positivists believe in the objectivity of knowledge and knowledge testing (Kaboub, 2008) while the critical approach views ideas in relation to ideology, whereby no knowledge is devoid of bias. The interpretivist believes in the subjectivity of knowledge and multiple spontaneous realities (Guba, 1990). Guba (1990) suggests that paradigms may be used to reflect on matters that are ontological (what reality is), epistemological (how we come to know reality) and methodological (how we go about finding out reality). These characteristics of reality appear to be necessary in constructing rounded perceptions of how knowledge ought to be viewed; how we perceive ourselves in light of knowledge, as well as what methodological strategies we use to uncover knowledge.

### 4.2.1. Interpretivist Approach, Ontology and Epistemology

In this study, an interpretive approach was used to find answers to the research objectives. An interpretive approach fully acknowledges the views and interests of the researcher in interpreting human experiences. The underpinning assumption is that that reality is socially constructed through interactions. This approach to research is a strong shift away from the positivist approach, which views reality as a matter of mathematical manipulation to arrive at objective answers (Blaikie, 2010).

Associated with interpretivism is the philosophical standpoint of idealism, which includes diverse approaches such as social constructivism and phenomenology, among others. It reflects the objectivist view that knowledge and meaning making reside independently of human consciousness (Collins, 2010). Focusing on meaning making, the interpretivist approach suggests that investigators are social actors; therefore, individual differences in researchers are appreciated and acknowledged. Based on this, researchers are able to employ various strategies and methods to collect data that will reflect these differences.



The other philosophies that were available to the researcher were ontology and epistemology. In discussing ontology, De Gialdino (2011) describes it as a means of viewing the research's philosophical underpinning. Ontology can be defined as the study of being, which concerns the nature of truth or reality, as mentioned earlier (Blaikie, 2010: 93). In other words, an individual can view ontology as a system of beliefs reflecting an interpretation of what constitutes truth or fact. Epistemology, on the other hand, is explained by Hofer & Pintrich (1997: 88-140) as the way we perceive our relationship with the knowledge we have; whether we are part of the knowledge, or outside of it. Whichever the case, how we view knowledge frames our interaction with what we are investigating, and depends on our ontological standpoint. From this perspective, knowledge is personal and subjective. Viewing knowledge in this way influences our selection of the methodology of the study at hand. Notwithstanding, interpretivism was viewed as the most appropriate approach for this study.

#### **4.2.2. Methodology**

Phenomenological methodology was used to investigate the experiences of Al-Azzaytuna University undergraduate students and their lecturers with regard to academic writing. The approach fits well with this study. Phenomenology is a scientific approach in which the goal is to explain specific phenomena, or the overall 'look' of issues, as lived experiences (Streubert & Carpenter 2002: 56). The lived experiences of students in academic writing practices continue to pose a challenge for students as they transition from secondary schools to universities.

Nevertheless, the phenomenological study methodology is difficult to describe because it lacks clearly defined steps. There is no one direct way of conducting a phenomenological study, and the approach may differ considerably from one scholar to another. In fact, many phenomenologists are of the opinion that the apparent definition of methodology has a tendency to restrict the researcher's creativity (Burns & Grove 2003: 360). However, these views do not in any way render this approach impractical; instead the method remains a great window for lived experiences, which manifest naturally if the approach is well handled. What is important to note at this stage is that knowing one's methodology and problem statement determines, to a large extent, the researcher's choice of research design. The section that follows explains more about the research design used in this study.

### 4.3. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

The current research is an interpretive, detailed and contextual, phenomenological, qualitative investigation into academic writing as a social practice among fourth-year students in a Libyan university. Groenewald (2004) describes the focus in phenomenological qualitative research as the lived experiences of people in a particular situation and what they make of their particular experiences. In other words, a phenomenological approach to an inquiry aims to unravel and comprehend the perceptions and perspectives of people in a given situation. This is consistent with a qualitative study, which represents an inductive, holistic, emic, very subjective, and process-oriented strategy to comprehend, interpret, illustrate and establish an hypothesis on a phenomenon or situation. It is a methodical, very subjective strategy employed to describe people's lived experiences and provide them with meaning (Burns & Grove, 2003: 356; Morse & Field, 1996).

Investigators who use qualitative study methods adjust to utilising holistic viewpoints to comprehend a person's experience, without paying undue attention to particular ideas. An original, natural context provides a distinctive and vibrant understanding for generating comprehensive, lively images of the participants' reality and social framework. These occasions and situations are essential for the investigator (Holloway, 2005:4). Concerning the generation of data, qualitative studies acknowledge the role that intensive interactions play in answering the research questions (Holloway, 2005:4-6). They demand the collection and evaluation of very subjective accounts in an organised yet intuitive fashion to determine the characteristics of a specific human experience (Holloway, 2005:47-51).

From the above perspective, the term 'qualitative' signifies a focus on the qualities of entities as well as on procedures and meanings which are not experimentally analysed or assessed with regards to variety, quantity, strength or consistency. Since academic writing is regarded as a social practice, the qualitative investigator in this study stresses the culturally constructed design of truth, the relationship between the investigator and what was studied, and the situational limitations that contour the inquiry – all of which are features of the qualitative approach.

Thus, qualitative research seeks solutions to questions that stress how social, practical experiences are generated and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In comparison, quantitative research highlights the measuring and evaluation of causal connections among factors, not procedures.

This study used a qualitative research design that was premised on the nature of the data collected from Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya. Qualitative research was deemed suitable for this study, as it was an ethnographic study, with research questions directed to descriptive constructs of 'what and how' experiences, such as 'what are' and 'how is'. The research questions were of course, closely linked to the research objective, which was to investigate how academic writing was practised in the Department of English Language Studies within the Faculty of Education at a Libyan university. Problematized around such a conceptual framework, the study involved looking at how the researched participants (students and lecturers) constructed meanings through academic writing. These meanings were more easily uncovered through descriptive than quantitative data and analysis. For this reason, the qualitative research design was employed.

In making use of the qualitative method, the researcher recognises that one of the major limitations of qualitative studies is that the findings are not generalisable (Henning, 2004; Holliday, 2005; Holloway, 2005). All the subjects of this study were participants in a specific social situation; the Libyan Al-Azzaytuna University was the social situation in which the students and the lecturers interacted.

The qualitative research method, that was based on interviews, observations and document analysis, was chosen as the foremost research tool for this research study. Since the procedures of qualitative research were used, the researcher appreciated all data and findings when collecting information. They all contributed to recognising the situation of teaching academic writing. According to Davis (1995) qualitative research is developing rather than 'tightly prefigured' and is interpretive. Holliday (2005) argues that there is a belief that qualitative research is open-ended and will enable the researcher to look sincerely and deeply into the participants' experiences within specific social settings. In addition, Best & Kahn (1988) mention that qualitative research comprises watching and asking, and aims to define happenings, activities and persons in detail without the use of any numerical or statistical data.

In the case of the current study, triangulation was achieved through multiple data collection sources, namely, textual material, interviews with students and lecturers, and classroom observation. Techniques such as good listening were employed to minimise and prevent researcher bias. Good listening involves the lowest degree of researcher contribution, with the only researcher involvement being the recording of the subject(s)' responses objectively and accurately. These were the objectives, which the current study sought to achieve methodologically, through a qualitative design.

#### 4.4. SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Participants were selected purposefully. According to Coyne (1997: 623), *'Purposeful sampling, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, is a type of non-probability sampling technique'*. In other words, the researcher selects those participants whom he or she deems knowledgeable enough to give him or her the information necessary to fulfil the purpose of the study. In order to tackle the issue of *'fitness for purpose'* (Cohen et al, 2017: 361), the researcher selected four academic writing lecturers and four fourth-year students from the department as participants. The lecturers graded these students as the top four students. Participants were both male and female and all were Libyan. The four students were undergraduate students taking English as a major course. The four lecturers had all been teaching English modules at undergraduate level for some years.

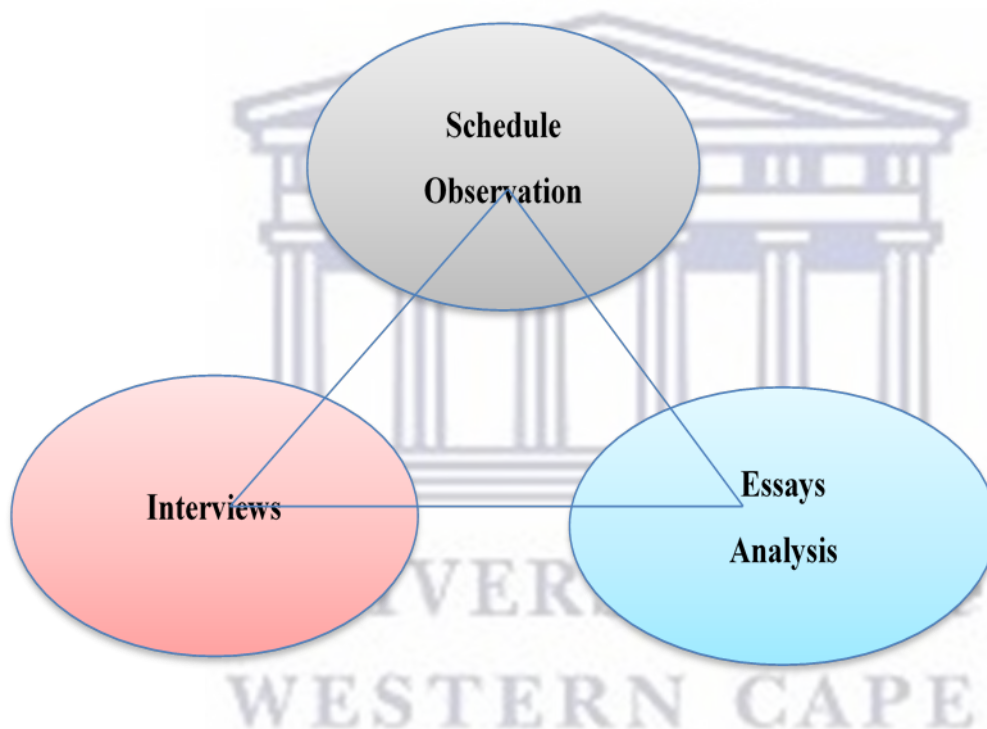
**Table 3:** *Research Participants' Profiles*

Name	Occupation	Age	Gender	Mother-Tongue (Home Language)
A1	Student	23	Male	Arabic
A2	Student	26	Male	Arabic
H 1	Lecturer	30	Female	Arabic
H2	Lecturer	28	Female	Arabic
K	Student	23	Female	Arabic
N1	Lecturer	31	Male	Arabic
N2	Lecturer	35	Male	Arabic
S	Student	24	Female	Arabic

**Table 3** above displays the participants' profiles and linguistic inventories. The profile shows the diversity of the participants. It can be seen that all participants were Libyan and shared a mother tongue, Arabic. They differed somewhat in age lecturers were older than students, as would be expected. Since all the participants in the study worked for or studied in the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University, it was necessary to get the Head of the Department's permission for their participation.

#### 4.5. DATA COLLECTION, INSTRUMENTS AND CRITERIA

Interviews, scheduled classroom observations and students' written essays were the data collection instruments used in this study. Interviews were administered to both students and their lecturers and then followed by observations in a classroom and an analysis of academic essays together the feedback from lecturers. Data collection methods were thus mixed. The main reason for using mixed methods was to obtain a large volume of detailed data on the subject of the awareness and practices of ESL students and their lecturer regarding academic writing (Bell, 2005).



**Figure 2:** *Triangulated Data*

This triangulated data collection approach was adequately followed. The approach reflects the view of Lea (2008), who states that *'[t]he academic literacies approach generally uses qualitative and ethnographic methods to obtain data. Accordingly, interviews, students' writing samples and feedback on student's writing were identified as the common methodological approaches used in academic literacies research'* (Lea, 2008: 232). In this study, classroom observations were also used as a data collection instrument.

The selection of the period for interviews and observations depended on many factors related to the political instability that has been in Libya since the Arab uprising in 2011. These include the country's state of civil war and safety conditions. Although this researcher had the strong

intention to travel to Libya for data collection (interviews and observations), she was faced with the above issues and no airport was available in which to safely land. These challenges were however minimised when assistance was requested from the Head of Department (HoD) of English Language Studies in Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya. The HoD positively responded to a request to make himself available to collect data from the participants on the researcher's behalf and to send it via Facebook messenger. It should be noted that since the Libyan popular uprising which resulted in a civil war and in the current multi factions conflict, it has become a common trend among scholars of the Libyan diaspora to collect data via a third party based in Libya. This is clearly reflected in studies such as Rhema (2013), Nsir (2014), Etbaigha (2017) and Tika (2018).

Interviews were conducted via Skype. Iacono et al. (2016) argue that Skype can be justified due to challenges that a researcher may experience such as financial challenges and geographical inaccessibility.

#### **4.5.1. Interviews**

The interviews used in this study had multiple facets and took the form of face-to-face/individual interviews that allowed respondents space to express their thoughts and provide credible, considered answers that provided insight to the researcher on the issue of interest (Cohen et al., 2017). According to Zucker (2009), interviews may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The semi-structured interview affords the researcher first-hand information (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). In the current study, semi-structured interviews were planned for data collection. Four students and four lecturers participating in this study were interviewed individually, face-to-face, via Skype and social media. The interviews were held in June and October 2016, after their classes.

The field interviews included asking, listening, expressing and recording what was said (Neuman, 2006). The discussions with the participants in this study were audio recorded for analysis. The purpose of the individual interviews was to acquire an understanding and awareness of the challenges faced by the 4<sup>th</sup> Year students of the Department of English Language Studies and their lecturers in terms of academic writing (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2002). Although interviews are considered corporate data collection instruments in qualitative research, they were supplemented by observations inside a classroom and by an analysis of marked students' essays, which provided rich, trustworthy data. The interview guide was

comprised of 22 questions, which were an expansion of the four main research questions highlighted in Chapter 1. Some of the questions in the interview guide were:

- (i) What are your experiences of learning academic writing?
- (ii) Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university?
- (iii) What are the differences and similarities between academic writing in Arabic done at school and academic writing in English done at the university?

Interviews were conducted in the English language. Answers and responses of the participants to the questions asked were not edited.

#### **4.5.2. Observation**

Scheduled observation, as one of the instruments used to collect the data for this study, was conducted in the 4<sup>th</sup>-year class of the Department of English Language Studies. It is shown in Marshall & Rossman (1989: 139-140) that carefully formulated observations can lead to a logical description of occasions, behaviours and artefacts, such as students' graphics or writings in the social setting chosen for the study. Observations afford the researcher an opportunity to describe existing situations using the five senses, in which a mental image of the prevailing problem under investigation is created (Erlandson et al. 1993).

Due to the difficulties encountered in trying to return to Libya, once again the Head of the Department (HOD) of the English Language Studies was called upon to stand for the researcher. The HOD was briefed in advance with the aims and purposes of the observation. Observation was needed in order to ensure that there was focus and consistency in the data. The scheduled observation had been designed and was sent to the HOD so that this person could observe the classes<sup>2</sup> using the schedule of the planned observation. The observation schedule was structured to allow for two academic writing classes per lecturer once a week for two hours in each class, since academic writing is taught for two hours per week.

Due to the political and safety situation with the ongoing civil war of the time, pictures and videos were not allowed during the classroom observations. Similarly, due to the lack of facilities such as camera-equipped computers, projectors and Internet in classrooms, it was not possible to conduct classroom observations via Skype.

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<sup>2</sup> Eight classes were observed – two for each lecturer.

Note-taking was then the only way to collect and record data during the observation process. While observing, the observer took notes within the framework of the observation schedule. The main reason for conducting observations across several classes was to enable the observer to have the same focus as the researcher. Carrying out observations across eight classes proved to be particularly challenging. Observation notes were handwritten and then typed onto a computer word processor for easier reading. Artefacts produced during the course of student interactions yielded details of the nature of academic practices to supplement classroom observations. The emphasis was on investigating student interactions regarding the acquisition of academic literacy.

#### **4.5.3. Document Analysis/Essay Writing**

Document analysis is a reliable method that complements other methods in order to increase the reliability and validity of the study findings. Documents in research might include written theses, assignments, research papers, schoolbooks, workbooks, letters, newspapers, journals, themes or reports (Neuman, 2006). According to Neuman (2006) and Ary et al. (2002), content analysis is a technique for collecting, investigating, understanding and analysing the content of text, and may be used to yield data in research.

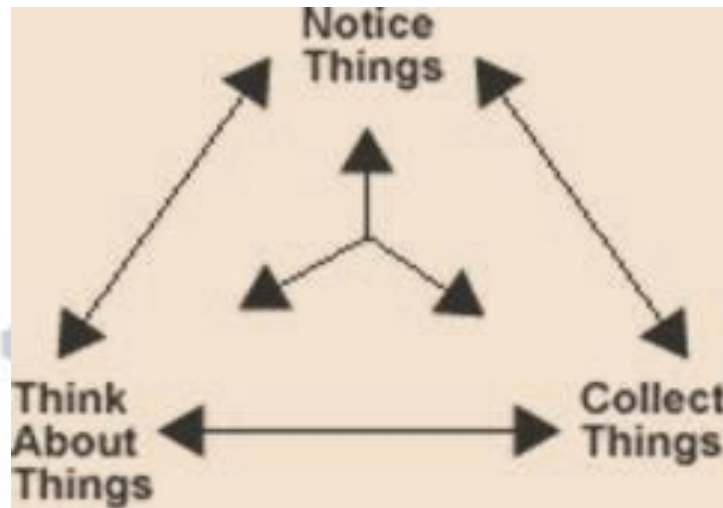
Document analysis concentrates on investigating and examining recorded materials to learn about human behaviour. In this study it was important to examine students' written essays to gain data from them. The researcher analysed a total of sixteen essays, comprising four essays from each of the four students: two essays were mid-term essays and two were final term essays. All of them were sent to me by email so that I could examine the tendencies and changes, if any, in their academic writing practices. Both textual analysis and discourses analysis was used to examine language aspects such as grammar, structure and coherence within the texts. Additionally, the nature of the problems they faced were identified together with the overall coherence and cohesion in their writing. Purposeful sampling of essays for analysis was done because it enabled the researcher to get specific information that speaks to the study at hand (Appleton & Cowley, 1997).

The essay analysis in this study follows Seidel's model of data analysis (Seidel, 1998; Seidel & Kelle, 1995). Seidel (1998) designed a valuable model to describe the fundamental procedure for qualitative data analysis. The model is made up of three components: noticing, collecting, and thinking about interesting things. These components are interconnected and cyclical. For instance, whilst thinking about things, one discovers other things and incorporates them. Seidel



(1998) likens the procedure to assembling a jigsaw puzzle. One notices fascinating elements within the data and assigns ‘codes’ to them, depending on subject or theme, which possibly breaks or cracks one’s data into particles. Codes that have been given to the data then act as sorting and collecting devices.

Seidel’s model for the data analysis process is summarised below in Figure 3 (cf. Lewins et al. 2010).



**Figure 3:** *Seidel’s Data Analysis Process (Seidel, 1998<sup>3</sup>)*

For the present study, student essays were written individually in the English language and were not edited at all.

#### 4.6. DATA QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Two research principles, namely dependability and credibility, were considered with regards to the quality management of the data. McMillan & Schumacher (2010), state that dependability denotes the degree of correspondence between the descriptions and clarifications of phenomena and the realities of the world. Dependability determines the quality of the data collection processes and whether the findings from the data can be replicated. Lincoln & Guba (1985: 45) state that ‘dependability’ in qualitative research may be attained by an ‘*inquiry audit as one measure which may enhance the dependability of qualitative research*’. Dependability in this study was ensured through the involvement of the research participants in the evaluation of the findings, their interpretation and some input concerning the recommendations emanating from the study.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. <http://www.qualisresearch.com>

Another element that must be considered for data management is credibility. Denzin & Lincoln (2008) describe credibility as the degree to which the results are satisfactory. This study ensured credibility through frequent correspondence with the respondents. Respondents were asked follow-up questions and the researcher managed to clear any ambiguity with participants. Data was also triangulated with the employment of both observations and interviews. This study contains copies of data readily available for review. The researcher has tried to keep information as reliable and honest as possible by following the best practices in qualitative research, such as reflexivity, to support her position as a researcher.

#### **4.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The present study adhered to the following ethical considerations.

##### ***UWC Ethical Clearance***

First, ethical clearance was sought and obtained from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research and Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the University of the Western Cape (UWC). This ethical clearance was sought and obtained via an application made to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Education (EDURC). The EDURC recommendation and approval were necessary for the ethical clearance application to proceed to HSSREC.

##### ***Permission***

Second, the researcher sought permission from both the Registrar of the Al-Azzaytuna University and from the Head of Department of English Language Studies in the same institution. These permissions were obtained before any data collection commenced, in adherence with the guidelines of Collins (2010).

##### ***Informed Consent***

The researcher strived to abide by the University ethical guidelines and asked for the informed consent of the participants. The participants provided written consent to the researcher. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

### ***Confidentiality***

The researcher assured the research participants of confidentiality in writing. The participants were assured that their communications with the researcher would remain private and none of their feedback would be used in any manner that would be to their detriment (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher stored the data collected on a computer that is password protected. Pseudonyms were also used during data presentation in order to protect the identities of the participants.

### **4.8. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER FOUR**

This chapter discussed the research method and design, the research approach epistemology, the theoretical perspective, and the methodology and method. In addition, the location of the research, the selection of the participants, the research design, and the research instruments for data collection and their various procedures were presented in some detail.

In the next chapter there is a focus on the data collected through interviews, classroom observations and the analysis of written essays.



## CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data collected through interviews, students' written assignments and classroom observations in the Department of English Language Studies at the University of Al-Azzaytuna in Libya. Thus, this chapter presents the students' experiences of AW as witnessed in classroom observation and in interviews. Furthermore, the section shows how group interactions help as a strategy for AW practice. Lecturers' experiences and perceptions are also presented in this chapter.

### 5.1. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF AW – CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The present section intends to present the students' experiences of AW. These experiences are data gathered through classroom observations. The following questions should find answers in this section:

- (i) What is the nature of the students' contact with AW?
- (ii) What is the level of students' exposure to AW?
- (iii) What is the level of students' engagement to AW?

#### 5.1.1. Nature of Students' Contact with AW and Level of Exposure

The nature of the students' contact with academic writing at the level of higher education is mainly through learning. Students are exposed to academic writing only in the process of their university studies. In the Department of English Language Studies, it was observed at the time of the fieldwork, that students have to attend four hours of AW classes per week.

It was observed that the lecturer would begin with a broad introduction to the main topic of the lecture. Then, she would proceed by clearly explaining the purpose of each lesson. In one classroom observation, the focus of the lesson was paragraph writing. The lecturer highlighted the most essential components of paragraph writing as part of AW. The following extract in (1) shows an excerpt of the lecturer's explanation:

(1)

'Our lesson today is how to write a paragraph. Because we are here to learn how to write academically, so we have to learn the most important elements on writing

a paragraph before we start learning how to write an academic writing essays  
.....'. **H1-LO1**<sup>4</sup>

The lecturer proceeded by activating prior knowledge about academic writing. This was done by asking questions and presenting ideas about AW. The lecturer told the students to start writing a piece of work from a general idea about the topic. This was undoubtedly a strategy for helping students to write strong paragraphs. There was also room for students at this stage to share their own ideas about the topic, which was writing an appropriate academic paragraph. Then, the lecturer went on to present her topic, giving examples and answering questions from students.

Thereafter, the lecturer gave the students a model essay, which they were asked to analyse, correcting any errors regarding the organisation, structure, vocabulary and spelling, and to suggest ways in which the essay could have been written better. At this point, the students engaged in a collaborative discussion with each other. The students were also asked to share responses to their homework and what they had taken into consideration before they started writing their essays. After the discussion, the lecturer took a few questions and contributions from the students before giving them an AW task to work on individually.

The extract (2) is an excerpt of the classroom observation report.

(2)

Students discuss and share their previous homework with the whole class. Everyone tells what his /her homework was about. Everyone tells the class about the steps they took before writing a first draft. After that, the lecturer asks the students to work in pairs and write their paragraphs. Then, one of the students reads the paragraph to the class and all the students share and correct the mistakes.

**H1-LO1**

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<sup>4</sup> H1-LO1 stands for the first lecture observation (LO) of the first lecturer whose name initial is H.

### 5.1.2. Students' Engagement to Academic Writing

The *Glossary of Education Reform* defines student engagement as “*the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education*”<sup>5</sup>.

In one classroom session where observation took place, the lecturer presented a lesson on how the students could develop the essay's main body. The aim was to show how to write good paragraphs in the main body of a text. The lecturer drew the students' attention to hedging, grammar, vocabulary, transitions within and across paragraphs and discourse markers. Then students were shown examples of good and bad paragraphs for developing main ideas. In pairs, students were asked to discuss topics of their own and develop paragraphs for the main body, which they then shared with the rest of the class by reading drafts to each other. The following extract is a short summary of what the lecturer did.

(3)

Lecturer asks students to share their writing in a two-hour long session. She asks individual students to read their draft to the whole class. Then she asks the others to identify their mistakes and discuss them as a whole class. Then the lecturer helps with her feedback. What are some of the mistakes seen we see in this draft? There are spelling, grammar mistakes. **H1-LO1**

Lecturer 2 started the lecture by explaining the purpose of the lesson for that particular day. In the explanation, the lecturer reminded the students how important it was to write appropriately in academic works. The lecturer furthermore demonstrated academic writing by projecting a model piece of AW through PowerPoint slides to the whole class.

(4)

The lecturer explains the topic and the significance of that day's lesson ... Takes the register. Then presents the title of the academic writing lesson: 'Today we are going to learn how to write academic writing essays.' Then gives the students a model of a written academic essay. **H2-LO1**<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.edglossary.org/student-engagement/>. Consulted: 08 Nov. 2019. Last updated: 18 Feb. 2016.

<sup>6</sup> H2-LO1 stands for the first lecture observation (LO) of the second lecturer whose name initial is also H.

The students were given time to read the model essay presented to them in PowerPoint slides. The lecturer reviewed the previous academic writing lesson, linking it to the lesson of the day by explaining how both lessons were related. The purpose of this previous lesson review was to refresh prior knowledge. At this point, the lecturer also reminded the students about following the process approach, giving the steps required to compose a piece of AW.

The students were now told to work in small groups to practise the process approach with others. During this time, the lecturer walked around the room, helping with any issues or challenges the students faced, and attending to any new ideas, which arose. The lecturer then had time to analyse the model essay with the class the following day, drawing students' attention to a deeper understanding of academic essay writing requirements vis-a-vis planning, organising, editing and writing the final draft.

Lecturer 3 gave the students a text to practise on. She asked them to analyse it, identifying all errors or anything they could possibly see that was noteworthy, and to take notes. In groups, the students analysed the text and were then asked to re-write the text in order to produce a new, improved version of the same. Previously in the lesson, students had already been taught how to analyse and identify what constitutes a good piece of academic writing. Thus, tasks in this lesson were done partly to remind the students of the steps involved in the pre-writing stage while getting them to internalise the steps of the process approach. The following extract gives the observer's words:

(5)

Lecturer provides students with a text. She asks them to work on it. Then she asks them to rewrite a new text using the four steps of process approach, to be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process. **N3-LO1**<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, as the students were discussing the text with each other, the lecturer went around checking on what the students were doing. The lecturer also stimulated the students' discussions by asking further questions as they discussed in their small groups. The students appeared to be enjoying the discussions, and to be making good progress in constructing new paragraphs that reflected the steps and rules of good paragraph writing. Most of the lecturers

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<sup>7</sup> N3-LO1 stands for the first lecture observation (LO) of the third lecturer whose name initial is N.

focused on writing good paragraphs because, as will be noticed in the lecturers' interviews, students find it difficult to start a paragraph with an eye-catching opening sentence, then to develop it and back it up with evidence, using an academic style.

Whether the students were engaged in pair work or group work, clear instructions were paramount in all the sessions. The lecturer gave explicit instructions about what the students were required to do in each task. Moreover, most of the lecturers seemed prepared in each session. From the way classes were conducted, the lectures appeared to follow in an enabling way for the students. However, in some cases, the students were not given sufficient time to practise or to hold extended discussions.

There were four sessions for each teacher. In one of Lecturer 4's sessions, she gave the students random sentences and asked them to rewrite them into a well-written and logically organised paragraph. Students were expected to identify the order of the sentences to form a new, structured paragraph. Using the PowerPoint projector, the lecturer explained to the students the purpose of the lesson by giving clear instructions about what students were expected to do in an academic paper. However, the teacher believed that it would work. In this case, sentences in a paragraph were supposed to flow in a logical way. The following extract depicts what was given to the students:

(6)

Lecturer 4 gave the students a text that contained unorganised sentences and asked to organise the texts into well-written paragraphs. Lecturer gives a clear declaration of the lesson aims. She explained to her students how to write a correct text with punctuation by using the projector. She also provided them with a spread sheet and asked them to read the sentences; arrange the sentences and write a text.

**N4-LO1<sup>8</sup>**

Accordingly, students were engaged in group work where they were able to interact and discuss the work given to them. In their groups, as mentioned earlier, the lecturer played the role of facilitator. As the teacher moved around the room, the lecturer would pause and participate briefly in the group discussions, checking on what the students were doing in their groups and modelling AW skills and strategies. H1, here taken as lecturer number one, exhibited this

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<sup>8</sup> N4-LO1 stands for the first lecture observation (LO) of the fourth lecturer whose name initial is also N.



strategy as she went around guiding the students in their groups. The following text excerpt shows what she did:

(7)

Students were engaged in academic classroom discussion using group work. Their lecturer would go round participating in their discussion and modelling the AW skills and the strategies she was teaching. **H1-LO1**

In their group discussions, students used both Arabic and English. In other words, students switched their code/language in order to express themselves in a language they knew but also so that they could understand concepts more deeply. In the discussions in which the lecturer participated, it was observed that the lecturer reminded students to try to depart from everyday language and use formal academic language. When the lecturer read one of the students' paragraphs, she advised the group to summarise what they had written in their own words. In the following extract, this is what was demonstrated:

(8)

Students seemed to use their everyday language more often. The lecturer would advise the students. *“You don't seem to distinguish between everyday language and academic language, why?”*, she asked. Then, she recommended: *“This passage must be summarised and paraphrased into your own words, otherwise this will be a plagiarised passage, remember.”* **H1-LO1**

In addition, the lecturer further guided the students by telling them to make sure they followed the steps of the process approach when writing paragraphs. The process approach appeared to include some pre-writing steps and some techniques for writing. While they were still in their groups, the lecturer addressed the whole class after discovering the mistakes that some were making, wanting all to take note of certain things and thus pre-empt problems. She reminded them to ensure that they were arranging sentences to properly structure the paragraphs, so that the text reflected their own critical thinking.

## 5.2. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF AW – INTERVIEWS

The students involved in this study all had in common certain positive experiences of academic writing in the institution. The students acknowledged that AW assisted them with writing in a way that conformed to the academic writing requirements of the university. The interviews demonstrated that students are able to improve their writing skills when and if they are exposed to AW skills in class in an intensive, learning-oriented way.

In the current study, students made reference to strategies that helped them cope with AW. Research skills, especially how to use the Internet to find appropriate materials, and improved vocabulary, were two areas in which students indicated they had benefitted from the AW class. In the following extract, the student indicates that AW was a necessary skill that assisted them to produce good academic work:

(9)

‘They help how to write and how to write in English, but this semester I took academic writing class. It was kind of really helpful and improves my skill in writing. It guides me how to write academic essays and research papers.’

**Interviewee A**

Furthermore, when the students were asked about their experiences of learning academic writing, they enumerated aspects of what AW had helped them to do. They said that AW classes had been able to assist them in writing research papers and other academic tasks. The students further explained that AW helped them paraphrase materials from any source and write them logically. This is expressed in the following extract by interviewee A:

(10)

‘Alright, as I said before, it helps me express or write down my thoughts before I start writing, and how to write academic essays and about a research paper. It was kind of helped me how to write and take outside sources and paraphrase them. Paraphrasing, quote and summarising them with citation. It’s really helpful.’

**Interviewee A.**

Another student expressed a similar view of the AW course, reflecting a positive view. The student’s exposure to AW gave him the ability to organise his thoughts and write well in

assignments. With regard to organisation, the student indicated that AW enabled him to write apt introductions and conclusions and to develop organised paragraphs in the main body of the essay.

The extract below shows the student's opinions of his AW experiences:

(11)

'I know now in this semester how to write academically and how to express or write down my thoughts in a right way. I also, know how to do perfect introduction and perfect conclusion and how to manage the body paragraphs of the subject in my writing very well'. **Interviewee B.**

Moreover, interviewee B indicated that AW also exposed him to other skills such as research methods. The research methods are used to source information on the Internet, which the student indicated helps them to extend their vocabulary.

(12)

'Actually I feel I learned a lot of academic vocabulary. Because when I write and research and when our teacher asks us to write an essay about something, I have to research the Internet and check some books here and there. Then I will face many new academic vocabulary and too many different words that I did not know before. So I normally check the meaning of the words and manage them in my essay writing. Yes I learned a lot of academic vocabulary in this course.'  
**Interview B.**

These views were shared by interviewee C, who also confirmed that in AW lectures, students learn research skills that help them find information on Google.

(13)

'The experiences are that in academic writing I have to do Google search, so that I gain a lot of new academic vocabulary. I also learned how to make new sentences, and I now can improve my speaking with AW knowledge because I have to look for new sentences and think about them.'  
**Interviewee C.**

Interviewee C further established that they learned many words and memorised them for future purposes.

(14)

‘In this course I have learned academic words and memorised them. I also learned how to write with good spelling and correct grammatical structure. I also learned how to write phrases.’ **Interviewee C.**

All the interviewees confirmed that AW was an important aspect of success in their studies. They all indicated that learning AW in class meant organising their thoughts and acquiring the skill of constructing good sentences. Good sentence construction, according to them, is not only for writing essays but for general future use as well. They were asked why AW was important, generally, and gave varying but congruent answers. The views reflect the fact that skills in AW determined one’s success at university and in working life. This is exhibited in this study because even if the levels of fluency in English among the students were low, students did not undervalue the importance of AW, considering the position of English as the language of economics. The extract below shows a student’s response about the importance of AW:

(15)

‘Because it is needed to know how to write academic essays and the academic papers. So, I think students have to have at least a little bit information on how to write academic writing before the academic courses.’ **Interviewee A.**

The lecturers, as confirmed by the students, used group work as a strategy to enable the students to practice academic writing. Various tasks included sentence construction, sentence organisation, editing, and general essay structural arrangement. They also summarised paragraphs and gave each other feedback on one another’s essays, in addition to the feedback that the lecturer gave. Students appeared happy when they were actively engaged in the group discussions. According to the students, they were put in groups where each of them had an equal opportunity to contribute. In these groups, students also expressed the fact that they were able to talk freely without any obstruction or sense of shyness, since they were among their own peers as they interacted.

### 5.3. GROUP INTERACTIONS AS A STRATEGY IN ACADEMIC WRITING

Interactions are in most cases helpful when people want to deepen and broaden their knowledge about a topic. In the case of language teaching and learning, and academic writing and discourse, interactions are particularly helpful because students can pick up language conventions and related discourse competencies from those who are more proficient than they. Peer interaction in this case plays a crucial role in facilitating informal knowledge construction and acquisition among the students.

During the interviews, students indicated that interaction, particularly in groups, helped them to discuss freely and correct each other's mistakes. The extract below illustrates this, in response to a question on whether they were given group discussion, what they did in group discussions and whether they felt confident in group discussions:

Interviewee B mentioned that group discussions opened avenues for verbal dialogue which gradually gave them confidence in front of others:

(16)

'Group discussion make you more confident and you will share your ideas with your friends and you will be not afraid from anything, just speaking. I mean your discussion with your friend is not like your discussion with your teacher. Yeah, group discussion is the best strategy in academic writing course.' **Interviewee B.**

Similarly, student interviewee A made similar comments but added even more insight; she saw group discussions as a platform for giving each other feedback which in turn allowed them to make corrections and improve versions of their earlier work. In this case, the student recognised the value of interaction in a group. This feedback was further supported, augmented and validated by the lecturers. The following is the student's response:

(17)

'Yes. I think group discussion and feedback is important for students to improve themselves. So, interacting in group discussion regarding our academic writing improves our skills and the teacher will guide us how to write and correct our mistakes and how to manage them to write in the right way.' **Interviewee A.**

In addition, students appeared to be more comfortable sharing notes and editing each other's work in small groups. Students viewed editing each other's work within their clusters as an opportunity for them to begin improving their own reading and writing skills, and to develop critical thinking skills. The students shared the sentiments from the literature and reported that sharing notes and engaging in dialogue with others shapes their own thinking skills, as they constantly revise and refine their own thinking and writing to attain higher standards:

(18)

'Yes, because when I work in group I learn many things that I cannot learn on my own. When I participate with my partner, I can learn from her or him new ideas that I can also use. Therefore, we have to exchange knowledge and ideas with each other ... It is OK because in the beginning we also make mistakes and when the others correct our mistakes we will see why we make them, and how to avoid them.' **Interviewee C.**

As mentioned earlier, students indicated that they felt comfortable when they were given activities that helped them meet deadlines. Among other activities, they indicated that they organised sentences that had been disarranged, paid attention to the structure of their own essays, and so on. Students also submitted that among other activities, they were encouraged to participate in sharing their findings by writing them on the whiteboard or any other platform. According to them, this gave them confidence, and each time they sensed they were doing well, their appreciation for the AW course increased.

Regarding the attitude of students to AW, all students expressed a positive attitude to it. Students indicated that prior to taking the AW course at university, they were totally lost and did not know where to start when it came to academic writing. It was observed that each time students expressed their views about AW they affirmed the fact that AW had enhanced their writing skills. They knew that success in their study at university lay in whether they had a good command of writing skills. This is clear in the following extract.

(19)

'My overall attitude about academic writing when I write my text in English, I feel confident toward English because I love it. That is why I choose to specialise in it. I love writing but I have some weak points in it. Overall attitude

I think I love academic writing course and Miss Hawa makes it a lot easier for us. She made us love this course very much than we used to.’ **Interviewee D.**

Those who felt confused at the beginning of the AW course found a sense of perspective with regard to the skills they were gaining, even though their English fluency was still lacking. Some could hardly believe how well they had progressed in AW because in the beginning, they had been unable to do what they now did with greater ease, such as writing appropriate introductory paragraphs. For example, interviewees A and B said that while at first they felt daunted by AW, they were now able to organise and manage their thoughts much better. The perception of interviewee A was as follows:

(20)

‘I think at the beginning of my writing I feel confusing and those ... so I start to manage my thoughts ...’ **Interviewee A.**

Interviewee B expressed the same sense through the following extract:

(21)

‘I feel I did something I did not expect myself to do, because when I started the first day I made an introduction and the first paragraph. You would say it is good but the second day you find many errors and you would wonder what you did yesterday. You will start changing over and over with time, until you get exactly what the lecturer told us. She said when we write something we must revise it again and again. Then, you will add something new because every day we have something new to add, especially when doing research assignments.’  
**Interviewee B.**

Students were aware that AW made them work hard in their continued efforts to better their AW skills. Students felt that the entire AW course helped them to think better and to write better academic texts. Students also felt that high schools did not help them enough in mastering how to write while at university. Hence students felt that more of these courses would enable them to grow in their writing skills and eventually become experts at writing, both for university purposes and beyond the walls of the university. Interviewee D thought that the academic writing programme was good.

(22)

‘I used to have some feeling that attach academic writing. When I heard the word ‘academic writing’ I thought it is difficult, especially when I was in high school. At the university when I took academic writing course I overcame it. I know that I am good at writing – at least I am better than some other students. And I try to read a lot because, as you know, reading helps to improve and develop our writing a lot. So I keep reading books, academic articles, and e-books. Therefore, I have been interested in academic writing since then. My overall impression of the entire academic writing course is I love this course and I wish to repeat it.’ **Interviewee D.**

Other students such as interviewees B and C expressed similar views when they said the academic writing course had contributed greatly to their writing endeavours. Among other things, the students indicated that AW had helped them garner and master rules of writing academic papers. The students indicated that good writing had good word order, correct punctuation and grammatically correct sentences. This is expressed by interviewee C below:

(23)

‘I have learned a lot, especially the rules of academic writing, because when you write with good rules in your academic writing, like correct word order, punctuation and grammatical structure, you will develop your academic writing very well.’ **Interviewee C.**

Interviewee B was of the same view, as is evident in the following statement:

(24)

‘Academic writing skill is a comprehensive subject. It includes everything that we need in our writing such as structure, organisation, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion.’ **Interviewee B.**

To sum up, students felt the course in academic writing had assisted them to write well. In their encounters with their lecturers, students appeared comfortable and valued feedback. Provided the feedback was constructive, students felt they were fine with other students giving them feedback. For example, one of the students indicated that a friend would point out some of the



mistakes he did not see, enabling him to correct and fix those mistakes. Harsh feedback, according to student interviewee A, did not help them to improve their writing skills in any way.

(25)

‘I actually feel it depends. If a person gives constructive feedback of course I feel happy. It improves me. I think it is most important for students. But if the one who gives feedback is quite harsh, it does not improve me. I am just saying this is my work and make discussion.’ **Interviewee A.**

From the students’ responses about the group interactions, it is clear that peer interaction plays a role in the acquisition of AW skills. Most students expressed positive perceptions about the group interaction activities conducted during the lectures. In the following section, attention is given to the responses of the lecturers.

#### **5.4. EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LECTURERS**

Four lecturers were interviewed to obtain their views on the experience of teaching academic writing to students for whom English is a second or foreign language. Their responses, as with the students, were varied and insightful. All four lecturers appeared to have a deep understanding of academic writing and teaching.

The overall agreement was that a student should be able to use a good range of academic language skills to write within a set of rules required from a university student. In other words, AW needs to help them (the students) to express their understanding and opinions in a formal and academic style. It should provide them with essential skills for their future careers, such as analysing texts, being aware of gender bias, writing lucidly and interpreting and presenting graphic information.

It was agreed that AW helps students to complete their assignments in other courses more successfully. In addition to clearly knowing what AW is, the lecturers were also clear about what it should achieve.

For example, when Lecturer 3 (henceforth L3) was asked about her understanding of academic literacy, she gave the following answer:

(26)

If I talk about academic literacy in relation to teaching writing 3 at the Faculty of Education in the Department of English Language, students, for example, should distinguish between texts that express opinions from arguments, and process and descriptive writing ... cause and effect, the language used in each type. They should be able to understand for instance what makes the text coherent ... **L3**

Lecturer 1 (L1) was asked, “Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?” In her answer, she explained that students should be able to recognise a wide range of texts after their exposure to AW. This view is expressed in the following extract:

(27)

Understanding and use of a good range of academic vocabulary, being able to identifying the text genre. I think that academic writing is essential for academic success for students because they are required to compose different types of writing, including essays and research papers. **L1**

In their submissions, it was also evident that successful AW instruction requires careful preparation on the part of the lecturers. According to them, whenever one is teaching academic writing, it is important to understand the target features of AW you would like the students to learn. Apart from understanding the target features, the lecturers also indicated that clear instructions and directions are important. Students must be clear about what they are required to do.

Furthermore, it was clear that modelling a text prior to allowing the students to write on their own was another important aspect of teaching AW. Therefore, in the current study, students could be given model texts and be allowed to discuss these, then attempt to write their own; or the lecturer could write a text on the board or show it on PowerPoint, and allow the students to write a similar text afterwards. The lecturers indicated that what was important was to provide plenty of opportunities for the students to practice writing in authentic ways. Providing plenty of opportunities also meant that the lecture shifts from being lecturer centred to student centred. Lecturers were asked to explain ways in which they assist students in developing academic literacy. They acknowledged that their role was to facilitate and not to direct all learning. The following extracts indicate the lecturers’ views.

Lecturer 1 stated:

(28)

‘First providing them with instructions and then asking them to work together in class and then work individually plus extra exercises at home ... then providing them with constructive feedback.’ **L1**

Lecturer 2 stated:

(29)

‘I can play the role of a facilitator when it comes to teaching students how to write a well-developed piece of writing, as I insist on teaching them each part of an academic text and how to connect them together.’ **L2**

The view of Lecturer 4 was expressed as:

(30)

‘First I address the whole class. Then I give examples of academic writing related to the practices. After that I ask students to work in pairs. And I give them feedback before involving students in a whole class discussion, There is a high level of poor students regarding academic writing skill in the department.’ **L4**

Lecturers were clear about the various ways for giving feedback to students. For example, **L3** indicated that whether feedback is written or verbal, it is important to be careful of how it is given, to avoid discouraging students from making further attempts. Therefore, one could deduce that feedback is a crucial aspect of AW, but has to be given sensitively; students should become aware of the flaws in their writing and how they may improve on those flaws, but not feel discouraged.

(31)

‘For example in the last lecture, we learned how to make and evaluate an outline for an essay. I asked student to prepare one and then students took turns to receive feedback about their work. Other ways could be verbal comments I provide while lecturing or analysing examples of written work to improve their understanding about the item or issue being studied. But it is important how lecturers give that feedback. It can either make them or break the students.’ **L3**.

The rationale and need for teaching academic writing was unmistakably clear from lecturers’ responses. However, not all lecturers understood the idea of AW as a social practice. Out of the four lecturers interviewed, only one had an idea of teaching AW as a social practice. Lecturers were asked to share their understanding of academic literacy development as a social practice in developing critical thinking. Three lecturers said that they had ‘no idea’ or simply put ‘I don’t know’ or gave no answer at all. This is illustrated in the following extracts.

Lecturer 3 simply said the following in **(32)** as an answer:

**(32)**

‘I don’t know. No answer.’

Lecturer 2 said only:

**(33)**

‘No answer.’

Lecturer 4 was the only one who did not know about AW as social practice as shown in extract **(34)** below.

**(34)**

‘The providing of feedback of students’ written work presents a brilliant chance to contribute to developing students’ writing.’

Lecturer 1 had the following in **(35)** to say about AW as a social practice:

**(35)**

‘Sharing different experiences and making reflection in a more effective way. By seeing academic writing as a means of communication, students will be aware of the importance of sharing and expressing their thoughts effectively

using academic style and appropriate vocabulary to fulfil their intended meaning.’ **L1**.

Based on their comments about AW as a social practice, lecturers were asked about what approaches they use when teaching AW. Most of the lecturers appeared to prefer using the process approach to teach academic writing. The following section focuses on their approaches to teaching AW.

### **5.5. TEACHING APPROACHES**

In the interviews, lecturers were also asked about their approaches to academic writing. The purpose of the questions about the approaches was to figure out the teaching approaches commonly used by the participants. Regarding the approaches to academic writing, L1 and L4 indicated that the process approach was viable in this regard. According to L1, students are given opportunities to work in groups, where they discuss and give each other feedback to shape their own writing skills.

Lecturers were asked: “What are the different approaches to academic writing development?” They were then requested to explain and provide reasons for their preferred approach. The following were their responses:

**(36)**

‘I prefer the process approach where students are asked to perform several tasks before accomplishing the final draft of their assignments. This can develop other skills in thinking, editing, proofreading. Working in small groups and communicate with other colleagues and providing peer feedback in class activities and exercises can help students understand academic writing assignments and skills.’ **L1**

Similarly, L3 also indicated that he/she used the process approach to AW:

**(37)**

‘I provide students texts with examples, and then analyse them. After that I ask them to write a new text using the four steps of the process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.’ **L3**

L3 expressed his preference to use the genre approach as well as the process approach. With this approach, L3 expressed that texts are given to the students to work with. Students analyse the text systematically and use the steps to write their own work. The extract below shows L3's own words:

**(38)**

'I use both process approach and genre approach. I provide students texts with examples then analyse them. After that I ask them to write a new text and using the four steps of process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.' **L3**

Lecturer 3 expressed his/her common areas of practice in extract (39) below.

**(39)**

'As this is the first time for me to teach AW writing, I would prefer to teach the structure of sentences because students have difficulties to construct a single sentence. I would like to start teaching writing one and then to see the result of my teaching. With this weak level of the students, I am not satisfied.' **L3**

Lecturer 2 indicated the following in extract (40).

**(40)**

'Yes, I would like to say that academic writing teachers should always bear in mind that the individual differences between students play a major role in all kinds of teaching especially writing. Students need to submit more than one draft and teachers should be patient in checking those drafts.' **L2**

He/she further added the following in extract (41).

**(41)**

'I will choose the most problematic one: paraphrasing and summarising. According to my experience as an instructor of academic writing, students find it difficult to practise these two aspects of academic writing and they need

several classes to be able to master them.’ L2

Lecturer 1 was of the following view in extract (42).

(42)

Writing short paragraphs based on their reading or previous experience (analysis and reflection). I feel this can help students improve their academic skills by focusing on developing their academic skills and expressing their view in an academic style.’ L1

Lecturers were also clear that instructions needed to be explicitly given, to help students understand their tasks. The lecturers said that with clear and explicit instructions, students could engage in writing with a clear picture of what they were supposed to do. The lecturers were responding to a question about the quality of the learning materials, textbooks and activities used in their teaching of fundamentals of academic writing. The following extract by Lecturer 1 expresses an opinion common amongst all interviewed lecturers:

(43)

‘Giving clear and direct instructions before asking students to perform or write any assignments. Giving them models of compositions written by students and ask them to evaluate them and giving feedback to each other. Classroom and homework assignments are often my own concern in teaching any writing course.’ L1

## 5.6. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter has presented the most salient features of the data collected. These features were presented to align with the objective of this research, which was to uncover the challenges experienced by Libyan English majors in academic writing at Al-Azzaytuna University. It now remains to interpret and infer meaning from the data, and to discuss what this data might mean for teaching AW in universities.

## CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND PROSPECTS

This research set out to investigate the perceptions and understandings of students and lecturers regarding the teaching and learning of academic writing in English at a Libyan university. Discussion in this chapter focuses on the interpretation of data gathered through interviews, written essay assignments and classroom observation. As mentioned earlier, the data analysis in this study follows Seidel's (1998) model for data analysis.

This chapter contains five sections. Section 1 presents the students' and lecturers' understanding and perceptions of academic writing. Section 2 is a review of students' challenges. Section 3 deals with the approaches to teaching academic writing. Section 4 highlights the prospects of helping students to improve their academic writing skills. Finally, section 5 draws a conclusion to the chapter.

### 6.1. STUDENTS' AND LECTURERS' UNDERSTANDING AND PERCEPTIONS

The first questions to be answered in this study concern the students' and lecturers' understanding and perceptions of academic writing in English. The participants were asked to share on their understanding of academic writing. It was also expected that their responses would indicate how important and necessary they viewed AW. In addition, students were asked to explain their view of academic writing for the continuation of their student career.

Responses to these questions can be classified into three categories, i.e.

- (i) the English language on its own is a needed discourse in Libyan higher education
- (ii) AW is a tool for overall performance, and
- (iii) the lecturers see AW as an academic experience

#### 6.1.1. English, a Needed Discourse in Higher Education.

As expected, the responses to these questions vary depending on whether the respondent is a student or a lecturer. Both groups, however, understand why learning AW is important and necessary. Their reasons do not miss the fact that English is a growing socio-economic global language (cf. Crystal, 2012). The results indicate that lecturers and students understand the nature and the necessity of AW, especially when it comes to the English language. Both



students and lecturers in Libya are aware that contexts that require speaking and writing abilities in English appear to be growing in number.

In addition, it is now worldwide common knowledge that general proficiency in communicating in English, particularly through writing, seems to be a growing demand. If this proficiency is required of students immediately after they graduate then a skill in this area has a direct effect on career prospects. English is increasingly present online, a fact which has been affecting native languages (Potowski, 2013).

This shift towards English globally is particularly pronounced in workplaces, where communication with immigrants and foreign investors is largely conducted in English. Thus, while the effects of English as a global language are yet to be felt fully in Libya, the ‘smell’ of it is profusely and gradually blowing across the country more than ever before. However, efforts to enhance students’ AW skills at university level is not directed only towards workplace success, but towards immediate and tangible benefits in the academic arena, enabling success (and hence higher marks) in all subjects of study in the university.

Students who study the English language at university or college level are known as English as a foreign language (EFL) students. EFL has been adopted in the Department of English Language Studies for academic writing purposes. Several EFL students who attend this course at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya claim to have a good understanding of English and of academic English writing requirements. An extract of students’ comments in this regard is provided below.

(44)

‘Before I had chance to start and learn in academic writing course, I was thinking about the hard stuff about academic writing. Because as you know writing is the hardest skill compared to English skills speaking, listening and reading. Writing is the hardest skill because academically we do not have enough background on how to make our writing academic. I was so afraid about this course but when I got a chance to learn and participate in it with my teacher, Miss H, I got over that fear. I know that without proper writing skills you cannot do well in your studies.

**S4.**

This in essence speaks to the D/discourse acquisition as described by Gee (1989a, 1990, 1996, 1999 & 2015), which is said to have been drawn heavily from Vygotsky (1987). The responses from the students in this study can therefore be described in the context of language interaction

through identification of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and the provision of ‘scaffolding’ (Cazden, 1988; Heath, 1983). Using Gee’s theory, the students can be viewed as the lead agents in constructivism and are essentially the constructors of academic writing using experiences in their own environment (Cambourne, 2002; Palincsar, 1998).

The implication of this in the present study is that all new students have a responsibility to acquire and nurture their identity within the setting of academic writing without causing damage to their own Arabic/Libyan sense of being which they bring to every task (Gee, 2001a). Failure to do this will culminate in a cultural clash which in effect has the potential to prevent students from being proficient in academic writing, a quality that they need to progress academically, and also to fit the long-term requirements of a constantly evolving Libyan workforce. Thus, Gee’s theory of D/discourse in this context prescribes that academic writing should be understood within the larger context of Discourse, in which patterns of perceptions, beliefs and behaviour are shared and tied directly to the identity of Libyan students (Gee, 1989c; 1992 & 1996).

### **6.1.2. Understanding a Tool for Overall Performance**

It can be argued from the extract (44) seen earlier that bringing students to an understanding of academic writing skills is crucial for their success in academic endeavours. Success in academic writing is success in communicating, arranging texts and positioning oneself as the holder of a point of view, aware of one’s identity and attitude in any given context (Hyland & Polly, 2004).

Data from the current study suggests that a lack of understanding of the importance of AW has a bearing on the success of students in essay writing irrespective of the language used. Students who lack this understanding might not write academic papers successfully, which would affect their overall academic performance. It is the view of this study that proficiency in AW should transcend exams; it should also be viewed as a path to success in the long-term, for example, in the work place and business market. Data shows that students appreciated the fact that they were able to learn AW, and expressed similar views to those of S4 in comments. According to these students, AW helps them to organise their thoughts in an orderly way and to present their ideas in an academic style. They further indicated that AW skills would help them to fit in at workplaces when they finally graduate from university. From this, it is very clear that students associate English proficiency with success not only in the academic field but also in the workplace.

Therefore, students who are not able to master AW in that context become exposed to the description of spectators of D/discourse according to Gee. Interpretations of academic writing are attained through negotiations entered into by university students where English is a second language. The integration of the English language's use in AW, meaning and substance into meaningful, unified units is the 'discourse' that students appear to grapple with according to the data presented in Chapter 5. To be successful in AW, every student is obliged to become immersed in it through apprenticeship or by interaction with other experts within the group so that each member acquires the necessary fluency, values and beliefs that constitute the identity of the members and of the discourse itself. However, Gee's conceptualization complicates strategies for academic literacies in the Libyan context and also contradicts some of the liberal, student centred views promoted in the literature.

### **6.1.3. An Academic Experience**

The expert in teaching AW in the Libyan context is the lecturer. The lecturers view AW as an experience instead of a social practice. In fact, there is no agreement among scholars when it comes to the nature of academic writing in higher education. For a number of decades, AW has been viewed as an experience that students should go through during their academic career (cf. Krause 2001, Whitehead 2002, Maringe & Jenkins 2015). Krause (2001: 147) goes as far as to call it as a "transition and integration" experience. In contrast, AW has been perceived as a social practice (Brodkey 1987, Mohamed 2006, Kostouli 2009). Mohamed (2006: 29) is of the view that making meaning in text production "*necessitates that students' ESL writing be viewed as social practice in context*".

Therefore, when Gee suggests the intervention of "experts", there is a potential for the perpetuation of redundant traditional approaches to teaching AW to some extent. This study argues that it is preferable for power differences to be minimised. Bottom up approaches through the use of group work, which received a positive response from students in Chapter 5, should be employed instead in order to deformatize AW pedagogy.

## **6.2. STUDENTS' CHALLENGES**

The previous section has shown that both lecturers and students have a clear understanding of academic writing. However, the majority of students experience challenges with communicating their thoughts in academic writing (Adas & Bakir, 2013). In fact, while all

respondents agreed concerning the importance of AW, the endeavour was not without challenges. It is first important to recall that the student body at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya is diverse in terms of race, culture, linguistic ability and mental development. The university cultural landscape or academic discourse appears to favour certain students and not others – specifically, those from less privileged backgrounds. English is not the native language of any of the students, and so language barriers appear to be first among many major challenges. It is noted that the issues related to the English language are regarded in the present work as language challenges. Further issues among others include cognitive and conceptualisation challenges. These issues are presented one by one in the discussion below.

Prior to entering the discussion below, it should be understood that in Bourdieu's study of power relations in a social location, the manner in which society is stratified has largely to do with culture playing a part in shaping relationships. In a discussion of academic writing, therefore, the concepts of social capital are crucial for developing students' linguistic capital, which enables them to communicate in institutions of higher learning (Hyland, 2004c). The data show that students lack this capital and yet they are expected to use English in their academic papers, having little in their background to facilitate a smooth transition from social English use to academic English use. As a result, they struggle to live up to the institutional literary discourse or culture<sup>9</sup>. Thus, the challenge looming over university students is the nightmare of using middle-class literacy practices for thinking and writing (Archer, 2010; Leibowitz, 2004; Bacha, 2004).

### **6.2.1. Language Challenges and Cultural Differences**

It should first be noted that in terms of language most of the challenges observed and analysed in students' essays centred on grammar, structure and sentence construction. Lecturers pointed out that most EFL university students have challenges in the rhetorical and linguistic elements of writing. These challenges were attributed to their preceding education and linguistic backgrounds. *'It is not easy for them to adjust to new linguistic customs'*, one lecturer commented.

According to Jinx (2004) and Zapper (2006), research demonstrates that students have learned the conventions of writing in the subject area they are researching, and can read and write

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<sup>9</sup> Although the Department has been enforcing English as medium of instruction for all subjects, a number of students still show a poor competence in the English language.

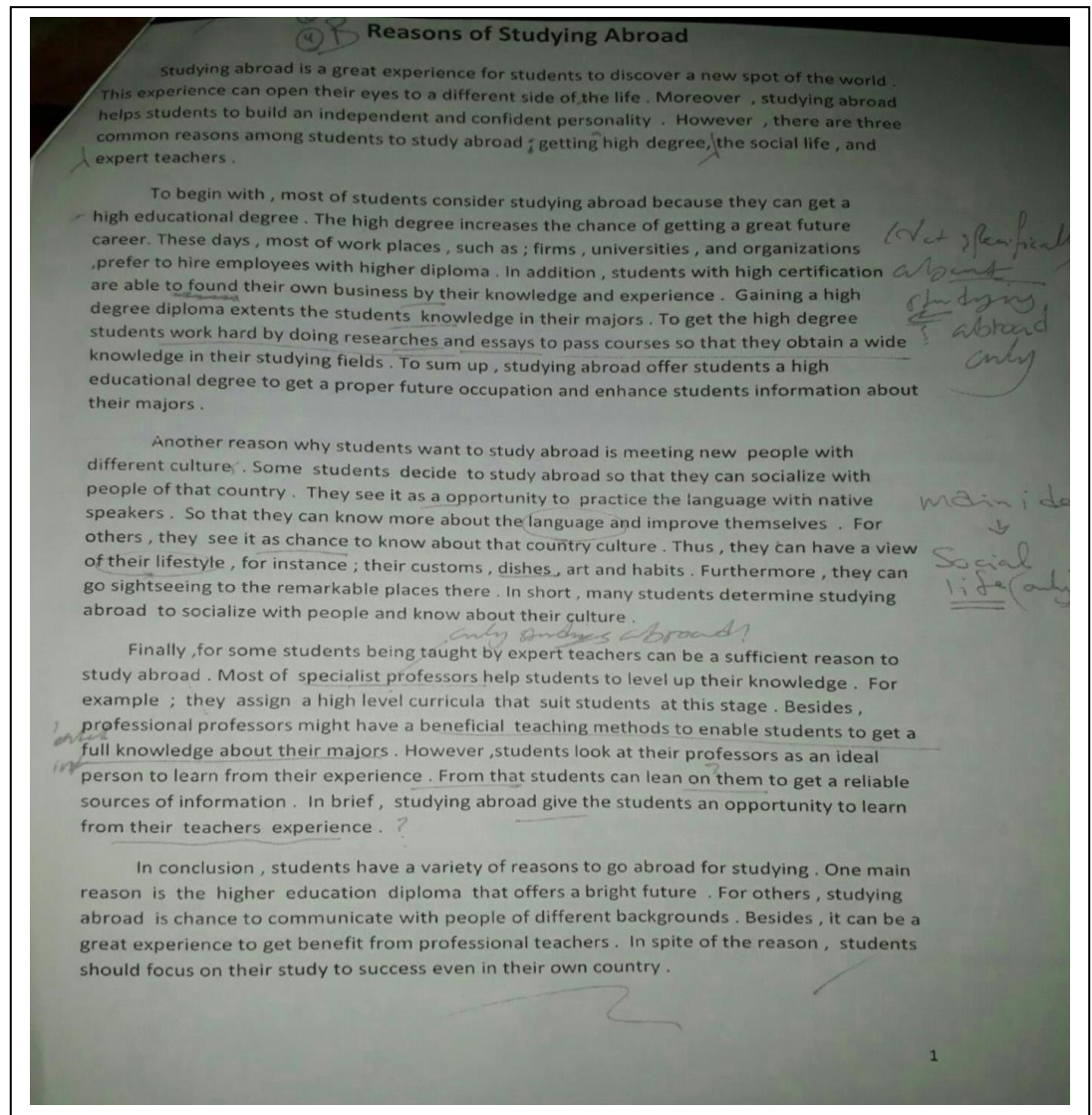
appropriately for their particular discipline. When they do writing-related activities, they begin to ‘crack the code’ of the specific academic discourse (Bloggs, 2003: 44). Consequently, when students write, they are learning the content of the subject matter as well as the skill of writing in a particular discipline. This is theoretically interpreted by Bourdieu as *‘habitus’*. With respect to these findings, students rely on the writing skill they might possess to succeed in a given setting (AW). Regarding academic writing, there is no doubt that Bourdieu (1989; 1991) views academic literacy as a situated practice in a given context linked to time and space. In Street’s (1984) depiction of literacy, literacy practices in time and space include social conventions and concepts, and literacy is closely related to history and background. Thus, the Bourdian conceptual framework locates habitus and practice within these contexts.

Moreover, the essays are filled with various error types, ranging from common spelling errors to syntactic and semantic errors. This led one lecturer to state that “*one four-paged script or essay takes more than 30 minutes to mark*”. It may be hypothesized that, despite the fact that these Libyan students have been learning English since high school, most of their errors are still due to mother-tongue interference. As Khuwaileh & Al Shoumali (2000: 174) put it, “*the same appears to be the case in other Arab countries*”. Three cases can be mentioned for illustration in the present study. The three cases relate to student writing at university level. First, in a study with students at Jordan University of Science and Technology, the same Khuwaileh & Al Shoumali (2000: 174) reveals that “*the poor writing in English correlates with similar deficiencies in the mother tongue*”. Khuwaileh & Al Shoumali (2000: 179) also note that tense, as a grammatical feature, constitutes on its own 73% of all errors committed in English by the students.

Second, in an analytical study of syntactical errors committed by Jordanian students of English language at Mutah University, Ngangbam (2016) finds 15 categories of errors mostly emanating from mother-tongue interference, misuse of sentence fragment, overuse, lack of grammatical knowledge, and formation and developmental errors.

Third, in the specific case of Libyan students in the Language Centre at Omar El-Mukhtar University, El-Beida, Libya, the findings of the study by Hamed (2018) reveals 331 substance errors, 150 grammatical errors, 54 syntactical errors and 29 lexical errors. “*Spelling, capitalization, tenses, punctuation, articles, varied words, subject-verb agreement, and prepositions were the most common types of linguistic errors found*” (Hamed, 2018: 219). The same Hamed (2018: 2019) notes that these “*errors could be due to overgeneralisation in the target language, resulting from ignorance of rule restriction and incomplete application of*

rules and interference resulting from first language (Arabic) negative transfer”. According to Al-Zoubi & Abu-Eid (2014: 561), “Mother tongue interference is one of the major causes leading to learner’s committing errors”. **Figure 4** below displays the student script A2, i.e. the second script collected from the same student A.



**Figure 4:** Student Script A2

Furthermore, because of the variations in educational and linguistic backgrounds, aspects of writing such as language comprehension, psychological understanding and framing textual content are extremely difficult for students (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016). As was pointed out in the literature review regarding writing as a social practice, the majority of EFL students’

writing and reading abilities are influenced by the social norms of their culture. They assume the writing conventions of the diverse cultures in which they live (Reynolds, 1993).

Thus, cultural differences constitute an additional element to the writing challenges faced by fourth-year university EFL students. This can also be surmised with an extract from one of the students who said that, *'I know now in this semester how to write academically and how to express or write down my thoughts in a right way. I also, know how to do perfect introduction and perfect conclusion and how to manage the body paragraphs of the subject in my writing very well'*.

As noted in a review by Steinman (2003), there is always a collision of cultures when it comes to academic writing by L2 learners. In fact, as Steinman (2003: 80) explains:

Learning to write in English for academic purposes presents a significant challenge for non-native speakers. Not only must they deal with the obvious linguistic and technical issues such as syntax, vocabulary, and format, but they must also become familiar with Western notions of academic rhetoric. (West or Western in this article refers primarily to North America.) Collisions of cultures are experienced when the discourse practices L2 writers are expected to reproduce clash with what they know, believe, and value in their L1 writing. (Steinman 2003: 80)

Therefore, most of the language challenges by student participants in this study and the language errors that emanate from these challenges can certainly be comprehended within the cultural collisions the students are experiencing in the language transition from Arabic to English.

### **6.2.2. Text Production Challenges**

It was observed that issues related to text production relate to three domains, i.e.

- (i) paraphrasing,
- (ii) paragraph structure, and
- (iii) referencing

As seen in the literature review with studies such as those by Giridharan (2012), Huang (2010) and Kalikokha et al. (2009) in the African context, paraphrasing seems to be one of the greater challenges in AW. In the present study, the interviewee's feedback on aspects such as paraphrasing is consistent with findings from scholars such as Giridharan (2012). It is therefore

interesting to find that this same challenge, as experienced in the Libyan context, is alleviated by AW exercises.

Through writing and becoming familiar with the writing of the discourse, students get to know how to integrate the thoughts of other writers into their essays. In line with what participants indicated, students need more explicit sessions on paraphrasing, citation and referencing. All the students indicated that they consider paraphrasing, citations and referencing as a challenge to their success in their essay writing tasks. As was observed by lecturers, this particular challenge could be as a result of a lack of explicit lectures on the topic and minimal feedback from both lecturers and peers (Wallace et al., 1999). Even though students may be exposed to the topic in a class on paragraphing, referencing and citation, such classes may be the first time since secondary school that learners have engaged with the topic, if they have engaged at all, so learning proves to be slow. For example, students expressed difficulties with paraphrasing ideas after researching them. This study indicates that these skills are still a major challenge to most students.

Further challenges were related to students' inability to arrange paragraphs logically. Students exhibited challenges in the structure of their essays. The essays analysed also showed that students had few problems putting ideas across in an orderly way. In fact, a sense of orderliness is the one thing the essays did exhibit. There was evidence of clear structures in the use of introductions, body of the argument, and conclusions, as well as cohesive devices such as 'First', 'second', 'third', 'however', 'in conclusion', 'finally', 'another reason why', etc. all of which are indicators of structure as shown in Figure 4. However, one of the greatest weaknesses of their text composition was in superficial language use.

It can also be argued that proper paragraph organisation is directly linked to how ideas ought to flow within an academic paper. Inability in this regard may be linked to a lack of general research and a shortage of source materials on the part of students. This speaks to the conceptualisation of field by Bourdieu which implies that for students to perform better at AW, the environment (field) in which they are functioning must provide the necessary resources that allow them to thrive. Furthermore, the students had problems with referencing, both in the text and in the reference list.



### 6.2.3. Cognitive and Conceptualisation Challenges

Quite a number of cognitive and conceptualisation challenges were found from the data examined. These refer to the following:

- (i) critical thinking, conceptualisation and organising ideas
- (ii) ability to read, and to gather, interpret and summarise thoughts

Critical thinking as it relates to academic writing is a prerequisite for academic writing proficiency. Applying myriad human abilities for thought organisation is imperative in every discipline-specific discourse. Students had complaints about academic writing, which appeared to intimidate them. Some of the students said that they always found problems with constructing their thoughts coherently. This presented challenges when it came to understanding and conceptualising a proper essay.

Issues of critical thinking, conceptualisation and organizing ideas can be said to be typical of students in a number of Arab countries due to language and culture. For instance, as mentioned earlier in the literature review, using a quantitative approach in a study on students at the College of Education in Zulfi, Saudi Arabia, Mudawy & Mousa (2017) found that the majority of students were not able to express themselves in writing.

Therefore, providing more opportunities for deep text analysis is crucial in the Arab context. According to Vygotsky (1986), learning takes place on different planes. This claim forms part of the sociocultural model of learning. The sociocultural model states that society itself plays the biggest role in an individual's knowledge acquisition trajectory. Emphasis is placed on the interaction between developing individuals and the social context in which they are situated (Lantolf, 2000). In other words, the process of learning is to a large extent a social process.

The sociocultural approach links with Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, employed in this study as a conceptual framework. Bourdieu advances the concept of habitus, which represents the permanent internalisation of the social order in the human body (Bourdieu, 1980; Harker, 1990). Like the sociocultural approach, the process of knowledge internalisation is highly premised on the context in which one is immersed, and in particular the cultural practices of that context. In Chapter 2, mention was made of this approach in the discussion on various approaches to learning academic writing. These approaches, if followed closely, can give the lecturers insight into how to overcome students' academic writing challenges.

Quality academic writing in higher education reflects a student's ability to read, gather, interpret and summarise thoughts critically, and to use sources in their writing as a discursive

practice for social identity construction (Perin et al., 2003; Kelder, 1996; Kinsler, 1990). More often than not, student writing tasks do not meet these requirements. According to Jacobs (2007), universities should develop intervention programmes that meet the diverse backgrounds of students, so that gaps are closed, because a high academic standard is non-negotiable.

From this perspective, one might argue that students fail to conceptualise tasks that they are given and do not apply knowledge transfer. Students' scanty enquiry skills, as well as the absence of metacognitive capabilities to gather, synthesise and interpret information, usually leads to essays that depict a paucity of logical thinking and often lack evidence (Lea, 1994 & 1998). Besides the paucity of ideas, several students hand in essays that need both proofreading and underlying structure. Certain students do not appear to grasp the idea that academic writing is complex and multi-layered, and involves drafting and redrafting before one produces a satisfactory result.

#### **6.2.4. Further Comments on Challenges**

To conclude with regards to student challenges, it can be argued that theoretically the challenges experienced by Libyan students are caused by the fact that they belong to both Arabic and English sub-cultures or Discourses at any one time. In this aspect, the present study therefore contributes to the body of knowledge by associating Gee, social practice theory and Bourdieu with the interpretation of EFL findings. Indeed, the abovementioned Arabic and English sub-cultures or Discourses define their a student's participation in Arabic, which they are mostly fluent in as against English AW Discourses. What is recognised as appropriate for each sub-culture or Discourse is embedded in common identities, perceptions, values and ways of thinking. This explains why some students thought their teachers did not take English as a serious medium of instruction.

The description of challenges above yields immense insight into the situation with which students must contend. A closer look at the feedback from students suggests a number of things for classroom practice, some of which have been discussed. For instance, students are not given sufficient time to practise dialogic situations that might allow them to use English to discuss and share discipline-specific conventions. Although an element of texts analysis is apparent, the time devoted to this appears to be inadequate for most students. Academic writing instruction goes beyond providing a simple text to analyse, and then asking students to start writing an essay immediately.

A number of students complained that the two hour class did not allocate them enough time to conduct tasks nor give them enough opportunities to discuss instructions associated with activities. Interestingly, Kalikokha et al. (2009) observed this as well and found that students felt that the challenges they faced with academic writing were insufficient time allowed for essay writing, lack of instructions for essay writing, the inaccessibility of resources and other various discipline-oriented requirements.

However, students who lag behind in AW are likely to be disenfranchised because according to Gee, the students who are proficient in AW are able to determine who is an insider of the Discourse and who is not. Those who are not insiders are viewed as outsiders. Accordingly, to be an effective and recognised participant of a Discourse entails individuals displaying the proficient qualities in AW. Going back to the theory of social practice, the student's way of life in general must reflect and speak of AW.

These challenges, also noted by lecturers, suggest that more individual attention and adequate feedback would enhance student skills in academic writing. In particular, lecturers noted that self-correction and regulation strategies would greatly help students to improve their writing skills. Thus, as stated by Williams (2005), students need feedback at both the content and form levels. In whatever form, feedback ought to be meaningful, constructive and clear enough so that students are encouraged to go further in their search to improve and refine their writing.

### **6.3. APPROACHES TO TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING**

An interpretative analysis of these interviews shows that there are two main approaches (were mainly) used in the teaching of AW, i.e. the process approach and the genre approach. In this section, the two approaches are discussed and the common areas of practice are presented as far as the teaching of AW is concerned in the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya. The information about the approaches to AW is not derived from notes on this aspect from the class observation process since none were made. Thus, the presentation in this section relies mainly on the statements made by the participants.

#### **6.3.1. The Process Approach**

As already shown and defined earlier in the literature review, the process approach is '*an approach to writing, where language learners focus on the process by which they produce their*

*written products rather than on the products themselves*' (Onozawa, 2010: 154). This approach is *'focused on improvement of the written product'* (Bayat, 2014: 1133).

Regarding the approaches to teaching academic writing, lecturers L1 and L4 indicated that the process approach was viable in this regard. According to lecturer L1, students are given opportunities to work in groups, where they discuss and give each other feedback to shape their own writing skills.

Lecturers were asked to highlight and explain their preferences in terms of the different approaches to academic writing development. The following extracts in (45) and (46) were the responses the lecturers gave to the question.

(45)

'I prefer the process approach where students are asked to perform several tasks before accomplishing the final draft of their assignments. This can develop other skills in thinking, editing, proofreading. Working in small groups and communicate with other colleagues and providing peer feedback in class activities and exercises can help students understand academic writing assignments and skills.' L1

Similarly, lecturer L3 also indicated that he/she used the process approach to AW:

(46)

'I provide students texts with examples, and then analyse them. After that I ask them to write a new text using the four steps of the process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.' L3

### **6.3.2. The Genre Approach**

As presented in Chapter 2, the genre approach is *'an approach to teaching and learning writing is a matter of mixed approach between process and product approach'* (Dirgeyasa, 2016: 50). This genre approach has proven effective in developing students' writing performance and attitudes towards writing (cf. Elashri, 2013; Kongpetch, 2006).

Lecturer L3 expressed a propensity to use the genre approach as well. With this approach, L3 expressed that texts are given to the students to work with. Students analyse the text

systematically and use the steps to write their own work. The extract (47) below shows L3's own words:

(47)

'I use both process approach and genre approach. I provide students texts with examples then analyse them. After that I ask them to write a new text and using the four steps of process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.' L3

### 6.3.3. Regular Practical Assignments Practice

The lecturers explained that some of the themes and techniques that were problematic for most students in AW were the following:

- (i) proper paragraph writing, and
- (ii) using sources effectively i.e. paraphrasing, summarising when giving citations.

All the lecturers appeared to agree that students need to be allowed many opportunities to practise writing. According to them, a number of writing opportunities as regular practical assignments forced students to revise and refine their earlier versions of writing. This was based on the well-known principle which claims that "Practice makes perfect". Thus, the more students practiced paraphrasing and summarising, the better their citations became.

This also helped with the students' motivation, willingness and attitudes as they could see their own improvements. In fact, students' motivation, willingness and attitudes have, in a few Arab countries, been highlighted as some the most important factors that can influence the success or failure in second language learning. For instance, while investigating the relationship between willingness to communicate (WTC) and foreign language achievement of Arabic students Mahmoodi & Moazam (2014) indicate that the correlation was significant between WTC and foreign language achievement of Arabic students. According to Mahmoodi & Moazan (2014: 1074), "*students who were more willing to communicate were rather high at L2 achievement*". The present study concurs with Mahmoodi & Moazam (2014: 1070) that "WTC influences not only speaking mode but also listening, writing and reading modes", and academic writing is included within the "writing mode".

Alqathani (2015) who examines willingness among Saudi students towards learning English as a second language reveals several factors such as motivation level, social and cultural factors that affects Saudi students' willingness to learn and communicate in English as their second

language. Alqathani (2015)'s study concludes that these Saudi students' willingness was instrumental in enabling them to carry out their studies successfully. In a different study, Alkaabi (2016) also reports on how Saudi students' types of motivation, attitudes and willingness for learning English as a second language could affect their academic endeavours.

Furthermore, the findings from the present study contribute to the existing body of knowledge as the lecturers admit that academic writing is a daunting task for students but that they try to be patient with students. This is achieved by making sure that all students' work is checked and that all students receive candid feedback and comments for each assignment or assessment.

Lecturers recognise the fact that students have individual differences in learning style and pace. These differences need to be taken into consideration when teaching AW. This is illustrated in the following extracts from the respective lecturers' interviews.

Lecturer 3 expressed his/her common areas of practice in extract (48) below.

**(48)**

‘As this is the first time for me to teach AW writing, I would prefer to teach the structure of sentences because students have difficulties to construct a single sentence. I would like to start teaching writing one and then to see the result of my teaching. With this weak level of the students, I am not satisfied.’ **L3**

Lecturer 2 indicated in the following in extract (49).

**(49)**

‘Yes, I would like to say that academic writing teachers should always bear in mind that the individual differences between students play a major role in all kinds of teaching especially writing. Students need to submit more than one draft and teachers should be patient in checking those drafts.’ **L2**

She further added the following in extract (50).

**(50)**

‘I will choose the most problematic one: paraphrasing and summarising. According to my experience as an instructor of academic writing, students find it difficult to practise these two aspects of academic writing and they need

several classes to be able to master them.’ **L2**

Lecturer 1 was of the following view in extract (51).

**(51)**

Writing short paragraphs based on their reading or previous experience (analysis and reflection). I feel this can help students improve their academic skills by focusing on developing their academic skills and expressing their view in an academic style.’ **L1**

Lecturers were also clear that instructions needed to be explicitly given, to help students understand their tasks. The lecturers said that with clear and explicit instructions, students could engage in writing with a clear picture of what they were being asked to do. The lecturers were responding to a question about the quality of the learning materials, textbooks and activities used in their teaching of the fundamentals of academic writing. The following extract by Lecturer 1 expresses an opinion common amongst all interviewed lecturers:

**(52)**

‘Giving clear and direct instructions before asking students to perform or write any assignments. Giving them models of compositions written by students and ask them to evaluate them and giving feedback to each other. Classroom and homework assignments are often my own concern in teaching any writing course.’ **L1**

The insights given above regarding students’ areas of difficulty are apparent in the completed assignments written by students. Assignments were taken from four randomly selected students. Students exhibited a lack of skills in academic literacy. This is consistent with findings from other studies which found that students face challenges with AW and in the worst situations, it forced them to drop out of university because they could not cope with this specific discourse community (Maher, 2011; McGhie, 2012). Scholars have argued that these challenges have been attributed to a lack of proper AW intervention by academic staff (Graham et al., 2001) and to the complex linguistic structures required of students in higher education (Desai et al., 2010; Pfeiffer, 2018).

#### **6.4. PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' AW: STRATEGIES AND FACILITATION**

The previous sections of this chapter have focused mostly on the findings and the discussion thereof, of this study. A speedy and simple conclusion from these findings is that the standard of academic writing of students in the Department of English Language Studies at the Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya is not so good. In this section, therefore, the intention is to put an emphasis on what the prospects are of improving and/or developing the student's academic writing. The first discussion is on the importance of feedback before introducing writing facilitation as a strategy. I also suggest ways of improving students' vocabulary and grammar in the process of AW teaching are also suggested.

##### **6.4.1. Feedback as an Important Aspect of the Writing Process**

In this section, feedback on students' writing is seen as a significant aspect to be considered when it comes to students' writing skills. Van Dyk & Van de Poel (2013) conceptualised AW as a social practice and in terms of feedback, they argue that feedback is important to AW because it leads to a process of acculturation and integration, which is important to facilitating students' understanding and negotiation of knowledge and skills within one context, helping them to move into a separate other and navigate through a variety of discourse communities. From the students' comments, it can be understood that feedback should not primarily be given simply to justify why a student scored a certain grade. In other words, feedback should pay attention to the process of giving comments based on the students' work, regardless of whether it is in draft or final form, as opposed to the paper grading process. This is not to suggest however that the two are not intricately linked. In fact, commenting on students' essays and commenting on their grading is fundamentally linked.

This study suggests that feedback on students' work should be done in such a way that it 'scaffolds' students' skills and enables them to perform better. This requires many hours of dedicated perusing, commenting on, and grading students' writing. Lecturers may wonder whether this huge investment of time into students' work translates into good writing on the part of students. As was noted during the interviews with lecturers, the process of giving feedback to students can be frustrating for the lecturer, while students complain about a lack of explicit feedback that might give them the will to work on their mistakes.



Students reported that they find unconstructive feedback or comments on their work puzzling; the comments lack clarity or are too brief. This is consistent with the study by Evans & Morrison (2011) mentioned earlier in Chapter 2. The kinds of comments or feedback given to students have a strong influence on their next attempts, depending on what their experiences are with writing. Hanna (1976) argues that students with low writing abilities benefit far more from feedback that is elaborate, rather than on the correctness of the work only. Clariana (1990) supports this argument when she says that detailed feedback helps low-ability students. The other extreme is the high-ability student. Hanna (1976), reports that such students benefit most from un-elaborate feedback, or mere verification of work generated. Clariana (1990) finds that students with advanced writing abilities gain the most benefit from working individually and at their own pace. Their work ought not to be disturbed by unnecessary feedback. Such a category of student does not need elaborate feedback (Clariana, 1990). This study concurred that advanced and low-ability students ought to be treated in different ways. It was also observed that enabling writing through feedback must be satisfactorily associated with the prior writing experience.

In addition, it was found that students want and need more comprehensive, specific feedback, if requested. This may enhance and accelerate learning in AW. As mentioned earlier, feedback is an important element of the academic writing process, but a lot depends on the nature of it. Such an observation is consistent with findings by Abejuela (2014) who says that groups provide a highly engaging and supportive learning and research environment.

#### **6.4.2. Writing Facilitation Strategy**

As mentioned earlier, the success of students in their academic endeavour to some extent depends on whether they master academic writing.

Overall success may well depend on how academic writing and academic success relate to a student's ability to fit in the wider social context when they leave university. Theoretically, this speaks to Bourdieu's "*field*" which denotes the various AW spaces in an institution of learning. In this case, the higher education institutions and their agents, i.e. lecturers and students, interact in a bid to socialise students in specific disciplinary discourses in order for them to participate in the academic discourse (AD) with appropriate practices and strategies.

If these ADs are appropriately administered to students, students' internalisation of ADs will enable them anticipate future tendencies and opportunities. In other words, students will then be able to anticipate success in their academic endeavours and will already 'be' where they

anticipate being, even before they are successful. While there are a number of approaches to improving academic writing, this study indicates, from the lectures, that there has been an attempt to advance writing skills through the cognitive approach, although this approach was not explicitly stated. Subjecting students to tasks that stretch their thinking expands their mental capabilities. For example, written texts were on several occasions given to the students where they were required to analyse and point out the mistakes they saw. In groups and sometimes in pairs, students brainstormed and then shared their findings with fellow students while the lecturer commented on what they said.

From the data analysis and the students' responses during interviews, it may be inferred that this approach to academic writing opens opportunities for students to think and re-think their ideas while engaged in the process of writing. This researcher argues that the enhancement of students' writing abilities may depend on what approaches or strategies are used in the academic writing training process, where explicit instruction, practice and feedback are consistent.

Furthermore, excellence in academic writing may be enhanced and refined by modelling a text structure technique such as summarizing (cf. Brown & Day, 1983; Adas & Bakir, 2013; Wischgoll, 2016). Focusing on text structure helps the writer to make connections by relating main propositions to one another, through a genre-based structure which provides some form of outline with which to work (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Elashri, 2013). Focusing on structure helps the writer to make links between ideas by relating central propositions to an element in the structure, which involves selecting and organising information.

Understanding the text structure can enable students to use information from other texts through selection and summary skills. After all, academic writing involves the selection of information from diverse sources for essays and using that information to develop a new text (Spivey, 1990). Skilled essayists erase the redundant information while generalising associated propositions and constructing new topic sentences for the presentation of organised information (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). Selection of information also implies identification of superficial skills in grammar, spelling, comprehension, etc. In this study, lecturers attempted to give the students these kinds of skills when they gave students texts in which to identify mistakes – and then asked them to re-write the text. This required students to use the skills of paraphrasing, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Students are able to recognise and do away with redundant information, although what still hampers precision in this skill are language difficulties and failure to make generalisations and

constructions. Lecturers give input on the skills of selecting and paraphrasing information, emphasising its importance and the fact that the skill needs continued practice. This is consistent with what Hidi & Anderson (1986) report. In their study, Hidi & Anderson (1986) establish that veteran writers write summaries by selecting pieces of information and reconstructing them in their own way, while still conveying the essence of the original text's message. It is argued that once a student masters the skill of summarising, the text recipient is better able to grasp the main thread of an argument, and reading the text becomes a more enjoyable experience (Graesser et al., 1994; Li, 2014).

The 'veteran writers' in this study are the lecturers. Expert writers have the capacity to use stowed strategies of writing not yet acquired by students to revise texts diversely (Sommers, 1980; Hayes, 2004). The lecturers are therefore able to detect more errors in the text associated with content and with structure; thus they are able to be mindful of their audience (Hayes et al., 1987). On the other hand, students, as novice writers, mainly detect errors on the surface and their focus is chiefly at the word and sentence levels of writing (Sommers, 1980; Fitzgerald 1992; Cho & MacArthur, 2010).

Incorporating writing and reading offers essential practice in examining various types of textual content so that learners begin to see the features of various genres (cf. Grabe, 2001a & 2001b). These sorts of activities generate possibilities for additional sophisticated tasks; for example, outlining and synthesising ideas from several sources. A curriculum that brings together writing and reading shows learners the visual organisers for reading comprehension, which a college student may re-use for pre-writing tasks (Grabe, 2001a & 2001b).

Lastly, learners need to have much exposure to similar tasks to be able to grasp the intricacies of academic writing and develop self-confidence with their skills. However, this exposure means that students need to be given adequate feedback to help them revise and transform their work into acceptable pieces of writing.

#### **6.4.3. Facilitation and Feedback Combination Strategy**

It has been noted that some students need more than one approach to enhance their writing skills. Lecturers exhibit fixed methods at times. Some of the methods outlined in the literature review such as process approach, genre approach, etc., are implicitly followed. Giving students a sample text for analysis appears to be insufficient. In other words, the teaching of writing strategies needs to be a bit more eclectic with regard to approaches. Researchers have

documented some of the ways in which lecturers may be eclectic. Various reported meta-analyses show that combining strategies such as the cognitive approach and the feedback approach for enhanced writing experiences are quite effective for certain writing activities. These activities include giving students texts to summarise, and constant monitoring to enhance and improve the acquisition of writing abilities and resultant textual quality (Graham & Perin, 2007; Kellogg & Whiteford, 2009).

Unfortunately, little is known about how to combine these strategies optimally for enhanced writing development at higher education level. Wischgoll (2016) tests a combination of these strategies to enhance the quality of texts written by undergraduates. The combination involves the text structure application, which is a cognitive writing strategy, with the summary strategy and the self-monitoring strategy. The results indicate that undergraduates benefit more from the cognitive writing and the metacognitive writing strategy when these are used singly, than when the two strategies are combined. This suggests that the combination of a cognitive strategy with a metacognitive strategy could be less effective than when focused on separately.

Lu & Chen (2010) appraise the metacognitive strategy for how it may help students to evaluate and monitor their own progress in writing. This study notes that combining support to encourage both cognitive writing and metacognitive writing activities has the potential to improve the quality of texts submitted by students. From the studies mentioned above, it may be argued that these strategies evoke related cognitive writing abilities, if there is feedback that supports the rigorous process of writing. Some lecturers indicate that whether feedback is written or verbal, it is important to be careful of how it is given, to avoid discouraging students from making further attempts. A complement to these strategies and the feedback mentioned earlier, is peer assessment.

#### **6.4.4. Improving Vocabulary and Grammar**

The academic writing class offers an opportunity for individuals to fine-tune their sentence structure and broaden their academic expressions and vocabulary. Efforts to improve vocabulary and grammar have been observed during classes. Generally, the students have diverse linguistic backgrounds<sup>10</sup> and exhibit grammatical properties in their written English language that may be derived from other languages (e.g. the total tense system, and the use of

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<sup>10</sup> Libyan Arabic, the only official language of Libya, is the first language of the students. However, a few students also have some knowledge of local Berber (Amazigh) languages such as Tamasheq, Ghadamis, Nafusi, Suknah and Awjilah. English is the language of instruction in a number of schools and universities for certain subjects and modules.

sophisticated constructions involving relative clauses and conditionals). Students still needed to learn to integrate the correct forms of these structures into their writing.

In the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya, lecturers indicate that they try to engage the students in building vocabulary and using general grammar rules. They also try to teach students to match up textual content with the types of grammatical structures required for each. For instance, to be able to write a cause and effect essay, students are required to use subordinate clauses, using transitional expressions like ‘consequently’ and ‘therefore’. Gee’s Theory of D/discourse and ESL/EFL argues that in order for one to be functionally sound in the secondary Discourse, one needs additional primary Discourses. However, adequate secondary Discourse skills are best acquired through socialisation and apprenticeship in a Discourse’s particular social practices, rather than through overt instruction (Gee, 1992; 1996; 1999; 2001a; 2001b). This requires the help of ‘expert others’ through whom modelling and instructional guidance in meaningful and authentic teaching may be provided to students (Gee, 2001b).

This means that students may learn better when learning a language through tasks that enable them to use language appropriately, thereby forcing them to produce the language themselves. This is the social communicative approach that introduces students into a particular Discourse (Gee, 2001b). Thus the aim of Al-Azzaytuna University is to provide tutors who are able to orient new students into various aspects of academic Discourses, which may vary according to the discipline. However, students must be willing themselves to take part in and be a part of these Discourses.

As evident in the essays analysed, undergraduates have sometimes discovered AW constructions in isolation, but require substantial practice and feedback to make use of them effectively in their writing. With regards to academic language, students need to distinguish between the kinds of expressions used in daily practice (e.g. the verbs ‘meet’ and ‘get’) and their more formal academic counterparts, ‘encounter’ and ‘obtain’ (Zimmerman, 2009). Making this type of distinction may involve practice in epistemic writing aimed at constructing and transforming knowledge (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987), especially in this information age. Facilitating writing processes that make use of cognitive writing strategies could be a viable way to improve students’ academic writing skills.

## 6.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER SIX

There is no doubt that students face challenges in writing essays in English. These challenges are as a result of diverse, often under-resourced educational and social backgrounds, inadequate teaching time and inadequate feedback that targets specific areas of difficulty. The fact that English may be a second or even a third language for students needs to be taken into consideration when designing programmes for academic writing skills. Many students come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Sound academic writing involves an intricate set of skills and practices, which take time to develop. Academic writing may be seen as a complicated, specialised form of language use that needs to be acquired by people from all linguistic backgrounds, which can only be done after English for daily interpersonal and communicative functions has been mastered. It is, in the end, essential for vocational, educational, and other specialised settings.

The teaching of academic writing has been referred to as a product or service – introducing an aspect of writing that has a unique style and a set of conventions of ‘correctness.’ Familiarity with the conventions is acquired through a process – a journey which takes writers through levels of learning, in which they discover that they may have something to talk about, and need to locate their own ‘voice’ to say it. From the psychological standpoint, AW can be regarded as a collection of knowledge and skills that exists inside the individual writer; from the sociocultural viewpoint it may be viewed as a culturally situated range of literacy practices embraced by a specific community (Weigle, 2014). Using these viewpoints as a backdrop, all teachers of writing ought to ask: ‘How may I assist my learners enhance their writing, and precisely what would be the best techniques within the educational setting?’

Most students indicate that, in contrast to indigenous speakers, they have a constrained proficiency in English (Hu, 2000). The students at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya are in greater need of teaching than of superficial feedback. They need programmes and interventions that will really assist them to acquire much-needed writing skills for their academic success.

## CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the main findings of the investigation are summarised in relation to the aims of the study and the research question previously set out in sections 1.2 and 1.4 of Chapter 1. This chapter also draws conclusions from the study after providing specific recommendations.

### 7.1. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The research question was aimed at discovering the experiences and perceptions of students and lecturers with regard to the English academic writing course in the Department of English Language Studies at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya. The study investigated fourth-year students' experiences of AW, and the strategies that the lecturers used to teach it. The study further sought to answer questions relating to the challenges that the students faced and what interventions lecturers were putting in place to address these challenges.

The research question was investigated within the framework of Gee's theory of D/discourse and ESL/EFL as well as the framework of Bourdieu's theory of habitus, field and social capital. Habitus, field and social capital are key concepts in describing the process by which students are socialised into and eventually internalise the conventions of academic discourse. Although limited evidence of the great variety of teaching approaches was observed, the genre and process approaches were investigated to determine their influence on the teaching of academic writing.

This study was conducted to attain the following specific aims:

- (i) to identify students' perceptions, experiences and challenges,
- (ii) to determine lecturers' perceptions and experiences, and
- (iii) to determine AW teaching and learning strategies.

The study shows that most of the students perceived academic writing skills as an important element not only for academic success but also for success in the social and professional world. The results further indicate that students need more opportunities to practise English, as they encountered it almost solely in lecture theatres.

English has become the global language of instruction and a subject for educational endeavours, even though it is a foreign language for many students. Many lack access to English materials and have limited exposure to the language socially. The study notes that this

limited exposure to the language is the biggest challenge faced by most students, who are expected to express themselves in sophisticated forms straight after emerging from high school. English proficiency may be greatly enhanced if the universities were to open up avenues for students to form special interest groups (SIGs), as this might enhance the prevalence of the language's social practice.

This researcher further submits that more frequent tutorials would be another way of enhancing students' participation in English and facilitating their socialisation into English-speaking communities of practice (CoP). This might provide a platform for students to improve and enhance their English proficiency. In this case, improved levels of proficiency in English are directly linked with the ability not only to write academically but also to read and discuss in English. Promoting SIGs would promote English as a social language. The current situation is that in Libya, Arabic is still dominant on university campuses. English is less valued and its status is staggeringly low; teaching in school is premised on parrot fashion learning and teacher-centred teaching. English as a foreign language has relatively little status in students' eyes; they perceive it as relatively insignificant, until they become part of an academic community and realise that in fact it dominates academic discourse.

A close look at what students have written reveals that students lack key skills in writing in English, a lack they seem acutely aware of, from their comments. The results suggest that this is because teaching and learning is still teacher oriented; students lack exposure to using the language and do not get adequate opportunities to hone their communicative skills through practice. Several students have acknowledged that the lack of exposure to adequate English practice has undermined their attempts to perform better in all areas of their studies. Students have shown a great willingness to be active participators in the learning of English. Some have felt a lack of explicit teaching which has led to lost opportunities to discuss and critique sentences or readings. As observed and the results indicate, rather than focusing on the rules that govern academic writing skills, students need first to be exposed to more the type of English that helps them start and sustain a conversation.

The implication of this is that the English syllabus in the first three years of higher education does not adequately prepare students to speak and write in English. There is a lack of focus on the methods that might help students to develop writing skills. Many English syllabi prescribe the communicative approach to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Within this approach, lecturers still may exercise an eclectic approach using insights from the process and the genre approaches. This study has revealed that only two of these approaches that were used.



It was also found that there was a limited use of the student-centered approach, which is recommended when teaching EFL, where engagement, collaboration and learning-by-doing are key (Reese, 2011). Both the lecturers and the students reported that the university did not provide much-needed support in terms of facilities, such as prolonged library hours and access to the Internet, much less did they consider the opinions of the students. This hindered students and did not provide an enabling environment for English practice, a necessary prerequisite for proficiency in AW.

Students felt that the atmosphere or school environment prevented them from taking part in academic literacy practice beyond classroom confines. Students further felt that there was a need for the university to develop a comprehensive, all-encompassing view of English acquisition, to benefit the practice of AW. This might be possible if the university environment were more proactive and supportive and facilitated young Libyan students in the development of English for academic purposes in their setting.

Moreover, the results indicate that there were limitations in the nurturing of English for academic literacy in the first two years of studies at Al-Azzaytuna University of Libya. One of the most common challenges for these students is the correct use of grammatical rules both at word and syntax levels in their essays. This is typical of the outmoded grammar drills used in school that seem to have occasioned deficiencies regarding the use of language among pupils, robbing students of opportunities to build a repertoire of social language. Applying the genre approach in schools might expose pupils to specific language structures, both in homework and in classroom practice. Currently English writing appears not to feature much in classroom practice, so that most students enter university quite unprepared for AW.

At the centre of the comments elicited from the students was a concern that learning activities were significantly inadequate. Although they appreciated the learning they received, they felt that more opportunities for supported learning were needed, such as group work, pair work, and plenary dialogues.

Furthermore, the students indicated that homework activities that encouraged them to exercise individualised learning were also insufficient.

The absence of the above necessary 'building blocks' in the acquisition of English appears to have contributed to the low level of development in students' academic writing in their first few years. In the light of this, the study shows that an active research study might help in balancing theory with practice; it might engage students through the provision of learning by 'instalments', with more manageable chunks of learning offered, and opportunities for learning

by doing. This might give students a more comprehensive understanding of EFL and why it is important.

According to the students, improved academic literacy skills for students are only possible within the context of extended opportunities for social practice in the classroom and in their homes. Students believed they could enhance their English language skills, and therefore, eventually, their academic writings skills, through developing their language repertoire socially and in natural settings. The genre approach that was occasionally used in observed classes offers opportunities to develop proficiencies and competence, especially if students are guided to make the link between writing and reading by exploration (Lin, 2006a).

This approach might familiarise the students with the specific grammatical features required for a specific type of text creation. At almost at every stage of the learning process, students had a dire need of varied EFL learning activities and enhanced participation in class sessions. In addition, students wanted lecturers to take cognisance of their diverse individual learning abilities. Their willingness to offer general remarks as well as to criticise their educational experience indicates the value they attach to both school and university teaching. If their suggestions are taken seriously, they might usher in a new dispensation of learning and student participation, and eventually re-shape the way of teaching English at university level.

Students as stakeholders hope to be directly and indirectly involved in making educational decisions that will be conducive for EFL students. The provision of better amenities, such as the latest technologies, e-libraries and access to the Internet, would improve the learning environment just as considering the views of students in decision and policy making processes would. Creating an encouraging and motivating educational ambience was seen as vital for creating a truly supported English academic literacy-learning mood.

Although most students did not know what methods were used by the lecturers, they did mention that being introduced to specific genres of texts was helpful to them. They highlighted that the step-by-step or systematic approach was quite informative and had tangible benefits for their writing skills. The students' descriptions of this method fit the process genre approach (PGA) to teaching writing. PGA is a mix of the process, product and genre methods to teaching writing (Badger & White, 2000; Carstens, 2009). As a combination of the three, its central idea is that writing is a socially situated act with some purpose to fulfil (Badger & White, 2000).

As has been mentioned above, the strategies of teachers and lecturers should include the promotion of activities that get pupils and students talking English in school at university and at home. It is when students talk in a language that they learn the language. In other words,

they must use language to learn the language. Hence, according to the observations made, lecturers should begin to re-think their approaches. Previously, lecturers have used less social methods of teaching writing. These approaches have not oriented students into the communicative and functional aspects of writing.

Decontextualized, the previous approaches used for teaching academic writing English, such as the drill, have done little to enhance the students' skills in writing. When exposed to the process genre approach, students get to know how to formulate questions for their essay topics, construct thesis statements and defend their positions through well-reasoned arguments. Exposure to specific genres, such as reports, discursive and persuasive writing, and opportunities to practise these forms in groups and alone, allow students to master the various types of writing and to master the process of drafting, editing and refining (Lin, 2006a).

The practice of 'scaffolding' students' writing exposes them to critical skills and everyday written problem-solving skills. The students should be given opportunities to edit both their own as well as their peers' written work for peer feedback, as mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4 (Lin, 2006b). Using peer feedback can come within the framework of Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field. In fact, peer feedback may constitute an enabling environment created by lecturers (cf. Cassum & Gul, 2017; Carless & Boud, 2018). In such an environment, students would be able to position themselves in the discourse field and eventually internalise the conventions of the discourse, which will serve them well beyond the school walls of their educational establishment.

Well-structured coursework and instructional sessions have the potential to redefine classroom practice and boost engagement. As seen from the observations in Chapter 5, students ought to be involved in lively, communicative discussion with one another as they explore and develop their writing and reading skills. In fact, the students' involvement in the discussion was one of the strengths of the study programme. Furthermore, monitoring and giving feedback, as earlier mentioned, should be done consistently, and not only when the students submit their tasks or when they write their examinations. The students noted that the skills they were learning, such as note taking, summarising, organising thoughts and reading between the lines, were slowly shaping them into independent writers.

This study contributes to the ongoing research in the field of teaching and learning English academic writing. Other studies have focused on the challenges students face in their quest to hone academic writing skills without suggesting how to address these challenges. This study is the first to explore EFL students' perceptions and understanding of AW, together with a

presentation of methods and strategies that can be used for teaching academic literacy development. If the process genre approach were used more extensively, it might raise students' appreciation for AW, making them feel part of the larger CoP. This study assists in deepening an understanding of students' opinions, academic needs and challenges, in a way that includes general observations about academic literacy.

This study investigated three approaches to teaching academic literacy skills, namely, the product, process and genre approaches. The results indicate that a combined approach (the process genre approach) was more in use than the others. This approach appears to have appealed to the students, who commented that when lecturers gave them a text to analyse, they benefitted from correcting all the syntactic and morphological errors and re-writing the essay to enrich its semantic impact.

The AW course slowly imparts confidence to students enabling them to deal with any text. However, the course has insufficient time allocation and intensity. Far more sessions are needed. Exposure to more texts and more practical assignments, both spoken and written, might accelerate students' learning. According to Hyland (2007), the process genre approach to teaching academic writing is a novel approach, at least in Libyan universities, in that its focus is on the learning needs of students and it emphasises the students' active role in manipulating language. The process genre approach orients students with regard to a text, enabling them to comprehend setting, overall communicative aspects and purpose, before they embark on an exploration of language and grammatical aspects (Lin, 2006b). This study admits that enabling the writing process via drill work, in which students repeatedly apply the skills of summarising or working with text structure, should be more conducive and more accommodating for struggling students. Academic writing sessions should incorporate writing and reading capabilities, and, as stated, sentence structure and vocabulary must be included in guided practice. Cumming (2006), highlights that a greater focus on reading might lead to writing advancements and a chance to master discipline-specific language<sup>11</sup>. Additionally, it provides learners something to write about.

From the observations of this study, it became apparent that students appreciated the process genre approach whenever it was employed in their academic writing sessions. For example, students confirmed in the interviews that they enjoyed being given different types of texts to analyse and to report back on to the whole class. In the process genre approach, this is called

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<sup>11</sup> It is in fact commonly agreed that the more reading a child does the better they write and the larger their vocabulary becomes. This applies in every language and at all levels of learning.

modelling, because students are engaged with a target genre and do not just replicate old mistakes made in dialogues with friends of the same ability level as themselves. Analysing and discussing texts is a way for students to shape the way they learn and to conceptualise the principles of AW through social events – i.e., discussion. When students take learning in their own hands and determine their own pace, student-centred learning is taking place.

If the process genre approach is implemented, and other suggestions put in place such as increased tutorials, the people involved would be responsive. The process genre approach, through the process of ‘scaffolding’, allows students to have agency, to create their own discourse identity and to find their own voice in academic writing. One might ask whether this has any implications for education and in particular academic literacy development or for the policy decision makers in a country where empirical research does not inform policy. Small as this study might be, and purely qualitative in nature, the few elements discussed below might nevertheless inform a researcher who wants to do quantitative research in this field.

The principles of the habitus, field and general sociocultural or socio-constructive theories suggest that at whatever stage of development a person might be, the social context plays a dominant role in their process of acquiring knowledge (Bourdieu, 1985; Lantolf, 2000). Learning, and therefore the learning of academic literacy, is a shared responsibility that is rarely achieved in the absence of community. This observation has implications for students; students need to be aware that acquiring academic literacy entails a great responsibility on their part, requiring them to engage in functional English language practice wherever and whenever they can. A language cannot be learned in a classroom setting alone. On the other hand, the university management could play a greater role by providing not only a conducive environment for English practice, but also by installing infrastructure that would assist to foster such social practice.

Since this is the information age, technology should be available so that disadvantaged students who cannot access information from home may access it while in school. When information is at the fingertips of students in whatever form (Lea & Street, 2006), students are able to interact with and explore various genres with greater ease. This may motivate students to spend longer hours honing their writing skills. Technology has a way of drawing out students’ interest in what they are doing. Content does not always matter; what matters is whether the student is able to use social media and other platforms to write about anything in English, because all exposure feeds into their learning and indirectly improves their writing.

## **7.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made, both for further research and the practical improvement of teaching practice.

### **7.2.1. Recommendations for Curriculum and Teaching Procedures**

This study recommends the creation of tutorials and other related clubs or groups where students are encouraged to freely discuss issues and to dialogue in small groups. The creation of such groups will help to create more contact hours for students who require both more time and more guidance, like participants of the Hong Kong study by Evans & Morrison (2011).

Furthermore, the literature review showed that teachers should classify and emphasise the procedures and techniques of academic writing for learners (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). In essence, teachers are required to create and encourage learners' attitudes towards the basic aspects of academic writing, such as classification, features, methods and problem handling. Moreover, in order to improve learners' facility with academic writing, school teachers have to help learners to amend their norms, and demand more from learners in terms of requests, improvements and proficiency levels, so that a sense of high academic standards is developed in schools.

### **7.2.2. Recommendations for Further Research**

Further research may be conducted in other universities in Libya to make comparisons with the results of this study regarding the efficacy of the process genre approach. In addition, replicating this study might allow both policy makers and teachers to consider employing broader strategies so they become more responsive to students' needs and create a student-centred educational experience at university. As the study targeted fourth-years students, other studies might target the first year students and perhaps the pupils at secondary and high schools.

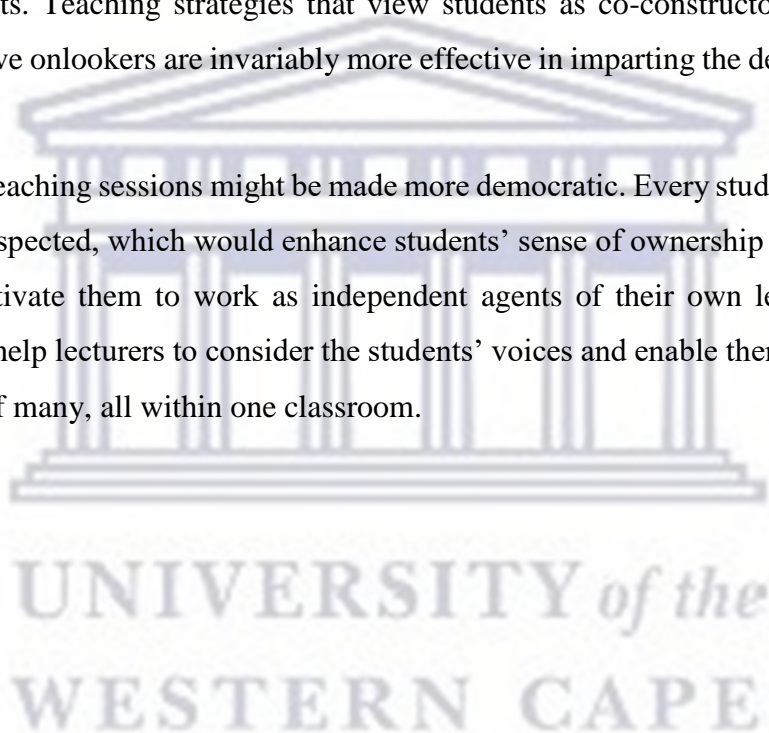
## **7.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CHAPTER SEVEN**

This research study was carried out in Libya at one university and investigated the experiences of students and lecturers with regard to academic writing. The results of the study suggest that students have a good understanding of academic writing and its value beyond the university walls. However, most students were still grappling with academic writing skills because of a

lack of exposure and to English generally. They needed more communicative activities that encourage participation and discussion.

In addition, the results indicate that while the lecturers tried to use various methods to teach academic writing, the methods used in schools mostly reflected the traditional drill method. This way of teaching appeared not to be effective, from the responses given by the students. The process genre approach was more evident in the university than any other strategy. The process genre approach seemed to be enjoyable and to be appreciated by students, who said that when they were given texts to analyse and re-write, they gained more insight than when the lecturer used PowerPoint presentations. If this approach were used a little more, lecturers and tutors might be able to provide a more holistic approach to academic literacy teaching, and gain better results. Teaching strategies that view students as co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive onlookers are invariably more effective in imparting the desired knowledge or skill.

In other words, teaching sessions might be made more democratic. Every student's voice might be valued and respected, which would enhance students' sense of ownership over the learning process and motivate them to work as independent agents of their own learning. Such an approach might help lecturers to consider the students' voices and enable them to facilitate the learning styles of many, all within one classroom.



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## APPENDIX 1: CONSENT LETTERS

608 The Centurion Main and Frere Road  
Sea Point  
Cape Town  
6008  
Republic of South Africa

### Information and Consent Letter

The Head of Department  
English Language Department

Dear Sir

#### **Re: Request for permission to conduct research from the Department of English Language**

I am a Libyan full-time PhD student in the Department of Language Education at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. To fulfill the requirements of the degree, I am undertaking research into An Analysis of academic writings in the Department of English Language at the Azzaytuna University of Libya. This research study is granted by the University of Western Cape. I have chosen your department as my suitable research site.

Data generation for the study will consist of observing the fourth year lecturer's academic classes which will be video recorded and audio-recorded interviews with 4 lecturers and purposive sample consisting of 4 top students and 4 assignments for each student for document analysis. Research participants will be asked for their permission for the data collection.

I further undertake that my study will cause no harm to the lecturers' work or participants' study. The name of the participants namely the lecturer and the students will not be revealed. Their names will remain anonymous and confidentiality is ensured. Participation in the research is voluntary and participants withdraw at any time without incurring any negative consequences. There will also be no gains or benefits to individuals who elect to participate in the study.

If you require any information about this research study please do not hesitate to contact me through the following addresses.

I would be very grateful if you could allow me to conduct this research at your Language Department.

Yours sincerely  
Gharnasa Hadia  
+27620200577  
[galmargeni@gmail.com](mailto:galmargeni@gmail.com)

If you give consent please sign the declaration below:

### DECLARATION

I have read the above information regarding this research study on an analysis of academic writing practices across Department of English Language: A case study of a Libyan university and consent to allow Gharnasa Hadia to conduct her study at English language department.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)



UNIVERSITY *of the*  
WESTERN CAPE

608 The Centurion Main and Frere Road  
Sea Point  
Cape Town  
6008  
Republic of South Africa

### Information and Consent Letter

Dear student

#### **Re: Request for permission to conduct research from the student participants**

I am a Libyan full-time PhD student in the Department of Language Education at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. To fulfill the requirements of the degree, I am undertaking research into An Analysis of academic writings in the Department of English Language at the Azzaytuna University of Libya. This research study is granted by the University of Western Cape.

Data generation for the study will consist of observing your academic classes which will be video recorded and audio-recorded interviews with you and 4 of your English assignments for document analysis.

I further undertake that my study will cause no harm to your studies. Your name will not be revealed. You will remain anonymous and confidentiality is ensured. Participation in the research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without incurring any negative consequences. There will also be no gains or benefits to you if participate in the study.

If you require any information about this research study please do not hesitate to contact me through the following addresses.

Yours sincerely

Gharnasa Hadia

+27620200577

[galmargeni@gmail.com](mailto:galmargeni@gmail.com)

If you give consent please sign the declaration below:

#### DECLARATION

I have read the above information regarding this research study on an analysis of academic writing practices across Department of English Language: A case study of a Libyan university and consent to allow Gharnasa Hadia to conduct her study at English language department.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

608 The Centurion Main and Frere Road  
Sea Point  
Cape Town  
6008  
Republic of South Africa

### Information and Consent Letter

Dear Sir

#### Re: Request for permission to conduct research from the lecturer

I am a Libyan full-time PhD student in the Department of Language Education at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. To fulfill the requirements of the degree, I am undertaking research into An Analysis of academic writings in the Department of English Language at the Azzaytuna University of Libya. This research study is granted by the University of Western Cape.

Data generation for the study will consist of observing your academic classes which will be video recorded and audio-recorded interviews with you.

I further undertake that my study will cause no harm to your teaching. Your name will not be revealed. You will remain anonymous and confidentiality is ensured. Participation in the research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without incurring any negative consequences. There will also be no gains or benefits to you if participate in the study.

If you require any information about this research study please do not hesitate to me through the following addresses.

Yours sincerely

Gharnasa Hadia

+27620200577

[galmargeni@gmail.com](mailto:galmargeni@gmail.com)

If you give consent please sign the declaration below:

#### DECLARATION

I have read the above information regarding this research study on an analysis of academic writing practices across Department of English Language: A case study of a Libyan university and consent to allow Gharnasa Hadia to conduct her study at English language department.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

## APPENDIX 2: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

### Type of Activities

#### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin)*

#### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

#### Other Comments

## Content and Purpose

### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc.)*

### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc.)*

### **What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc.)*



**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc.)*

**Participants Roles**

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

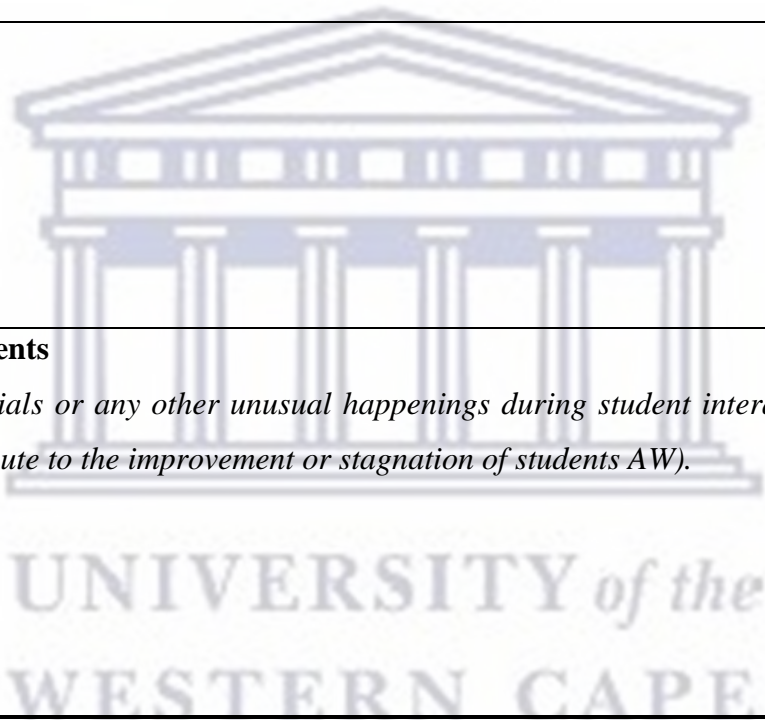
*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc. if any)*

**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Cite examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*



**Other Comments**

*(Leaning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

## H1 LECTURE 1 WRITES A PARAGRAPH

### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin)*

The lecturer explains the topic and the significant of today`s lesson a clarify speech.....

*‘Our lesson today is how to write a paragraph. Because we are here to learn how to write academically so, we have to learn the most important elements on writing a paragraph before start learning how to write an academic writing essays.....’*

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer gives students a presentation, start general idea about the topic (strategies for helping students to write strong paragraphs).

Activates students` prior knowledge asks them to share if they have any ideas about the topic. After getting the answers from the students, lecturer starts present her topic and giving examples.

When finish she asks students if they have any questions about the topic.

Students raise their hands for questions and she answers their questions.

### **Other Comments**

Lecturer gives her presentation papers to her students to take copies from it.

### **Content and Purpose**

#### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

Lecturer disturbs pages to her students. It is a group of questions. Asks students to read and answers them then the get topic sentences from their answers and start write paragraphs using the process from start to finish.

#### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

Lecturer gives clear model, analysis the structure, organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion with her students after that the do practices.

#### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Students discuss and share their previous homework in a whole class.

Everyone tells what his /her homework was about.

Everyone tells the class about the steps that made in his/her mind before starting writing a first draft.

After that lecturer asks the students to work in pairs and write their paragraphs.

Then one of the students read the paragraphs to the class and all the students share and correct the mistakes.

#### **What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*

structure, organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion

### **How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc)*

Increase academic writing chances, exercise, and all students share with their work, correct their mistakes to each other. Their lecturer shares them and takes notes on a piece of paper for their participations and encourages the quiet students to share and speak.

## **Participants Roles**

### **What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

Lecturer plays an assistant role, explains to the whole class how to write paragraphs help students to develop their academic writing and encourages students to express and share their ideas.

### **What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Some students find it difficult to start the paragraph and write the topic sentence.

Some students concentrate on the using of academic vocabulary and academic style and face mistakes in grammar.

Lecturer faces problem in dealing with the students because of their academic educational levels.

### **What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc. if any)*

Lecturer tries to encourage the students to overcome their difficulties and diminish their academic writing mistakes by writing practices, share their writing and working on their teacher's feedback.

**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

Lecturer gives students verbal feedback on their writing in the classroom. Like 'well done, good, yes, no....'

She also gives them chance to correct their mistakes individually first and then with the class.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

Students work in pairs discuss their academic writing

Interact with their lecturer and among themselves and express their thinking.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

At the end of the class lecturer collects students' work to give them written feedback next lecture.

**H1 LECTURE 2 FIRST DRAFT WRITING ESSAY**  
**OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING**

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

**Type of Activities**

**Description of Activities**

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer starts the class, opens the power point and speaking with the students.

**How is the writing task introduced?**

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer introduces the academic writing lesson using an explicate statement of the academic lesson objectives. She links a previous academic writing lesson to a current lesson. Lecturer activating prior knowledge.

**Other Comments**

Students are active, there are classroom interactions

**Content and Purpose**

**What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

Lecturer shows students how to write short paragraphs and writing academic essays both descriptive and narrative.

**How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

Lecturer provides examples, asks open closes questions, explains how the AW lesson would be helpful and modelled the process of using AW skill.

Lecturer provides clear instructions and asks students to do practices and work individually starting short paragraphs or fist draft.

**What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Students do academic classroom discussion using small group work then do plan to write a first draft.

Lecturer engages in their discussion and modelling the AW skills and the strategies she was teaching.

Lecturer provides their students a time to practice the relevant AW skill and posted open-closed questions and elicited student's responses.

Student work in small group

Student work on paper

often give oral response on their teacher`s questions.



**What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?** (*Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*)

This lesson focuses on formal academic writing. Lecturer asks students to write academic essays using clear academic vocabulary, be able to write opinion and informational pieces that establishing a clear supporting point of view.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc)*

By writing a draft first

### Participants Roles

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

When the students engage in the classroom their lecturer often circulated around the classroom. She often stops to engage with individual students and address the whole classroom.

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Students try to read their first draft to other students and their lecturer and if there is any mistakes or problems they face correct them together.

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc. if any)*

Lecturer asks their students to share their writing. She asks individual students to read their draft to the whole class.

Then asks the others to recognise their mistakes and do discussions in it as a whole class.

Then the lecturer helps with her feedback.

**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

During the academic writing class lecturer gives feedback to students about their academic writing. This feedback mostly verbal, sometimes giving it individual and sometimes to whole class. Lecturer very rarely giving written or a formal grades feedback to students during the AW lesson.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

They do classroom group discussion

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

No academic handbook used by the lecturer,

Lecturer uses just instructions and gives students models of academic writing task

Ask students to evaluate it.

The closure of the lesson came to a formal end with the lecturer summarizing of the key ideas that were covered and provide them homework.



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## H2 LECTURE 1 FIRST DRAFT ESSAY

### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer greeting the students

Takes the attendance and the absent of the students.

Then presents the title of the academic writing lesson 'today we are going to learn how to write academic writing essay.'

Then gives the students model of written academic writing essay.

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

The lecturer uses a clarify speech of the academic writing task objectives. *'this model will help you know how to write first draft essay....'*

She also links a previous academic writing lesson to a current lesson and explains how previous academic writing lesson is related to today's lesson and activating prior knowledge with the today's lesson. *' in your writing practices you can follow the steps of process approach to write your essay'*

Then lecturer analysis the model with her students. Starting with a deeper understanding of academic writing essay requirements planning, organizing, editing and write the final draft essay.

Then asks students to use the model of academic writing and start writing their first draft.

### **Other Comments**

Students allow asking their lecturer questions if there is anything is not clear.

### **Content and Purpose**

#### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

Lecturer teaches students how to write first draft academic writing essay.

#### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

Lecturer provides her students a model of academic writing essay during the lesson, explains how the model will help them to write with academic style and demonstrate the process of using academic writing skill.

Lecturer provides clear instructions and asks her students to do practices and work individual start writing first draft of academic writing essays following this model.

#### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Students do academic classroom discussion, analysis the model using small group work then do plan to write a first draft individually.

Lecturer engages in their discussion and modelling the academic writing skills and the strategies she was teaching.

Lecturer provides their students a time to practice the relevant academic writing skill and posted open- closed questions and elicited student's responses.

Then Students work in small group and discuss their first writing, exchanges their papers, editing their writing, giving oral responses to each other`s questions, and write notes on their papers.

**What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*

The lesson focuses academic writing essays. Lecturer asks students to write first draft academic essay following the model using clear academic vocabulary, correct grammar and write opinions to establish a clear supporting point of view.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc).*

Classroom interaction, lecturer asks students to work in small group and do plan before start their writing independently.

**Participants Roles**

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

When the students engage in the classroom activities their lecturer often circulated around the classroom. She often stops to engage with individual students and address the whole classroom.

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Students find it problematic to use formal language. Lecturer faces some difficulties in some of her students' writing as they usually use 'I, you, we' in their academic essays which might be unsuitable to use in academic writing.

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How does the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc if any)*

Lecturer asks their students to share their writing. She asks individual students to read their draft to the whole class. Then asks the others to recognise his mistakes and do discussion in it as a whole class. Then the lecturer helps with her feedback.

**What sort of feedback does the lecturer provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

During the academic writing class lecturer gives feedback to students about their academic writing. This feedback mostly verbal, sometimes giving it individual and sometimes to whole class.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained.*

*Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

First students write their first draft essay on the piece of paper individually and then work in groups share their ideas and correct their mistakes.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

No academic handbook used by the teacher,

Lecturer uses an instructions and gives students models of academic writing task

The closure of the lesson came to a formal end with the lecturer summarizing of the key ideas that were covered and provide students homework.





## H2 LECTURE 2 SECOND DRAFT ESSAY

### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer seems prepares carefully for this class. Here preparation is clear. She invests a great energy with her students in the classroom. She simply raising some of interesting questions related to the previous lesson (fist daft essay).

She also let her students know that this lesson is connects to the pervious lesson.

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

The lecturer hand-out the syllabus and go over it with the class.

##### Other Comments

Lecturer is ready to answer all students` questions.

## Content and Purpose

### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

Lecturer asks show student how to write second daft academic essays both descriptive.

### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

A lecturer asks her students to write descriptive second daft academic essay based on visual information in their first daft essays. The information is most commonly presented in the first daft.

### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Students do academic classroom discussion using group work, and their lecturer participates in their discussion and modelling the AW skills and the strategies she was teaching.

**What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?** (*Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*

They present the four bases in effective writing unity, support, coherence and sentence skills. They also look for each word, punctuation mark, sentences, and the ideas in the paragraph or text.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc)*

It facilities by a plenty of hand-out examples and excises activities.

## Participants Roles

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

When the students engage in the classroom their lecturer often circulated around the classroom.

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Students seem used their everyday language. I have noted that they find it difficult to distinguish between formal and inform writing. Also it is clearly noted that some students find it very difficult to summaries, paraphrasing and using their own words.

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc if any)*

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**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

During the academic writing class lecturer gives verbal feedback, no written feedback is given.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained.*

*Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

They do classroom discussion among themselves and with their lecturer.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

No academic handbook used by the lecturer,

No written feedback.

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### N3 LECTURE 1 TEXT WRITING

#### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer greeting her students.

Provides them a text related to academic writing with examples. Then asks students to read the content of the text.

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer provides students a text. She asks them to work on it. Then she asks them to rewrite a new text and using the four steps of process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.

##### Other Comments

Not all the students share in the activity, some of them read the text silently and some read it loud then taking turns response to their lecturer.

## Content and Purpose

### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

Text with three paragraphs.

### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

All the students read a content of the text individually in a silent way. Then the lecturer asks them to share. She discusses and analyses the text with her students. They read the text more than once and some of the students participate in answering the text's questions. I have observed also, students check if there are any new academic vocabularies in the text they have not already learned. Lecturer recognises it and asks other students to assistance and explains the meaning of the new vocabularies from the text. Then the lecturer helps and explains those in the examples.

### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Lecturer provides her students a sample of written text and work on its types. They analyse them in terms of how the introduction written, how the main idea is controlling and developing in the body paragraphs. They also examine coherence and cohesion.

### **What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc. )*

Structure of sentences, layout of the paragraphs and grammatical structures.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc.).*

By using the prewriting practices and follows the steps of the writing process.

**Participants Roles**

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

Lecturer works as a monitor. She encourages her students to participate and makes recommendations about their contributions in the activity. She also moves around and supports students when required.

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

When students submit their writing to their lecturer, she recommends they pay more attention on their writing style. 'Don't think in Arabic when you write in English' I have seen this is a problem most of the students do. Students are struggling to create new text without mistakes.

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How does the lecturer assist student overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc. if any)*

Doing more practices and working on the lecturer's feedback and peer feedback. They write down short notes of what a feedback was to use it when revising their writing.

**What sort of feedback does the lecturer provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

Lecturer gives immediately verbal feedback to improve their work 'this is a great start, but you can develop it more by using supporting sentences,,,,,' Then student connect the feedback with his writing and start developing it in the same time.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

Although students work individually they communicate with each other and providing peer feedback. They do classroom activities and exercises with some interactions with their lecturer.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

Lecturer deals in very good way with her students. She provides one by one feedback. She speaks with one student and gives him a feedback while the other students are working on their writing. She gives him very specific information about his writing. She also tells her students about their writing level.

She also pay more attention on the time, she last five minutes with each student.



### N3 LECTURE 2 WRITING AN ESSAY

#### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer starts her class by taking attendance and checking the absentees and write personal notes.

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer starts to introduce self-introduction about how to write essay.

Then give them a sample of well written content essay for review in the class. Then, encourages them to read and check the structures and the content beside grammar in the provided essay silently.

##### Other Comments

The entire time lecturer is talking and her students are silent. There is no interaction in the class. She just invites her students to ask to speak to work then wait for responses.

## Content and Purpose

### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

This lecture just for writing an essay.

### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc.)*

When the lecturer presented a self- introduction to her students, she explains and offers the students with the four bases in effective writing unity, support, coherence, and sentences skills.

Students also give some exposure to content, structure and grammar.

### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc.)*

I have not seen any classroom communication. Students work individually and sometimes engage with their lecturer and answer her question when she asks.

**What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc. )*

This lesson focuses on formal academic writing. Lecturer asks students to write academic essays using correct grammar, clear academic vocabulary, be able to write opinion and informational pieces that establishing a clear supporting point of view.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc.)*

It's facilitated by proofreading and revising the written essay before start writes their own essays.

**Participants Roles**

**What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

Lecturer plays control role. She sometimes plays monitoring role when ask and encourage her students to speak and answer her questions.

**What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Students do know how to use academic vocabulary they struggling when they try to use it in their writing.

**What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc. if any)*

Lecturer helps them to improve their sentences and discourse, their level of grammar and encourages them to be better proof reading for their on writing and add reading silk besides writing skill to improve their getting of academic vocabulary.

**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

Verbal feedback gives to every student when answer a provided questions.

No written feedback.

She uses utterances as yes. No it's wrong. That is right, yes that is correct.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

There is no classroom interaction what I have seen lecturer does not let students to work in pairs or group she also does not give them chance to share opinions about the writing essay topic in the class.

### **Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

Students are silent.

Lecturer asks question directed to one student and wait for an answer

Lecturer does not give students plenty of time to do practices before start writing their essay she gives students as essay assignment in this day to collected it next week.



## N4 LECTURE 1 WRITING A TEXT

### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

#### Type of Activities

##### Description of Activities

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer gives her students a text which is not organized. It is just sentences and they have to organize in a logical style first.

##### How is the writing task introduced?

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer gives that clear declaration of the lesson aims. She explains to her students how to write a correct text with punctuations by using the projector. She also, provided them a spread sheet and asks them to read the sentences arrange the sentences and write a text.

##### Other Comments

The lecturer explains the lesson and then if the students have any questions she provides them a time to feel free to ask. They can raise their hand and ask and share their ideas about the course.

Students work alone and work on the paper during the lesson.

#### Content and Purpose

**What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

They do write academic writing a text in English. This lessons emphases on formational writing text.

**How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

Students work individual. They are annoying to use accurate structure, organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion of their writing. I mean they trying to constitute the text with an important number of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

**What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Students work alone in their papers and rarely give response to their teachers` questions.

**What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?***(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*

Students work on academic text that obsoletely covers of these patterns.

**How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc)*

Teacher provides her students text with some sentences and clauses and then ask them to work, organize and discuss that by themselves in a logical style.

## Participants Roles

### **What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative).*

I have seen that the lecturer stops and engage with her students individually. She often addresses and works with the whole class.

### **What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Students seem encounter some difficulties in paraphrasing and using their own words to rearrange and reorganize sentences in the text grounded on their own critical and organize sentences and clauses to be more effective academically.

### **What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How do the lecturer assist students overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc if any)*

A lecturer encourages students to think and write in English, don't use interferences from Arabic language to English language that stops the use of critical thinking and the process of paraphrasing making new words structure founded on their own viewpoints without changing the meaning of the work.



**What sort of feedback does the lecture provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

Lecturer gives her students individually feedback. She very rarely gave written feedback or any formal grades to her students during the lesson.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

I have not seen any classrooms interaction. Students work unaccompanied. There are no interactions even with their lecturer. They rarely answer her questions and do interaction among themselves.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

*I have seen that the lecturer summarize some of the key ideas that were covered the lesson but she does not provide her students with instruction homework for net lecture.*

**N4 LECTURE 2 OBSERVATION SCHEDULER**  
**OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC WRITING**

Based on Social Practice Approach (SPA) and Genre Approach (GA), the objective of this schedule is to describe the interactions upon which the mediation of academic writing (AW) skills teaching course depends. An important issue here is to what extent are the underlying processes of AW as a social practice approach is practiced to facilitate and enhance students learning experiences of AW. In order to gain deep insight, attention is paid to what sort of genres are given to students as based on the GA. Social interaction in AW is said to be more effective than a focus on drilling students with technical AW skills.

**Type of Activities**

**Description of Activities**

*(Observers Own Comments, e.g. what sort of things does the lecturer do as the class begin).*

Lecturer hand out separate passages to all the students. Then provides warm up questions about the lesson topic to activate students` prior knowledge about the topic before the read the passage.

**How is the writing task introduced?**

*(Any prewriting techniques to activate prior knowledge what specific items does the lecturer draw students attention to?)*

Lecturer presents group of words and asks students to evaluate the knowledge of each word both before and after they work and read the passage.

Then gives them exercises and asks to answer the questions.

**Other Comments**

## Content and Purpose

### **What kinds of genres are taught for AW practices?**

*(Reports, discursive, Narratives?)*

academic passages with exercises.

### **How is the writing task of AW presented?**

*(What instructions/steps are given? Comment on specific aspects the lecturer draws attention of students to, i.e. grammar, style, structure etc)*

When getting started lecturer asks the students to answer the provided questions.

She also, asks the students to look at the group of words in the page and use the scale to give them a score of each word before read the passage.

### **What sort of activities are students engaged in the AW lecture?**

*(In terms of writing, how are they engaged in writing a piece of academic writing? Notice if there is any modelling of academic text, writing, editing, re-editing etc)*

Lecturer asks students to start reading the passage loudly. Each student read one paragraph. They start reading one by one. When they finish, their lecturer ask them to look to the group of target words in the page and score themselves again to check the improvement of their knowledge of the academic words in the passage.

### **What specific aspects of particular genres are students exposed to in the AW lecture?**

*(Basic AW style, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Citations, active/passive Voice, grammar, structure style etc; )*

Academic word meaning, such as the word (element) means (a basic or important part of something).

Word family such as technology (N), technological (adj) and technologically (adv.).

Collection patterns as N+V (birds sing).

### **How are the AW activities facilitated?**

*(Prewriting- any attention on linguistic features etc).*

By practices, work and answer many exercises

## **Participants Roles**

### **What is the role of the lecturer in these activities?**

*(Comment on anything the lecturer does that position them in terms of their role in AW lecturing. How does their role affect AW-positive/negative)*

Control the classroom.

### **What challenges do both the lecturer and students when learning AW face?**

*(Comment on specific constraints as observed. Do some of these constraints relate to the role the lecturer assumes in AW? Give brief comments on this)*

Some students feel shy and afraid to read the passage and work on the exercises. They found it difficult to participate and exchange their ideas.

### **What interventions are put in place to ameliorate these challenges?**

*(How does the lecturer assist student overcome AW challenges? Relate to how specific styles, structure, grammar to AW are modelled etc if any)*

Lecturer assists students to gain academic vocabulary by reading the passage and answer its questions.

### **What sort of feedback does the lecturer provide to students in AW lessons?**

*(How does the lecturer give feedback? What specific comments does the lecturer give to students? Give examples. Are there any specific or general comments?)*

No lecturer feedback, students explore their mistakes from each other.

**How do students interact in their AW activities?**

*(Are they arranged/grouped with others? Are there instances of students own initiated interactions? Comment on how that happens in any and how such interactions are sustained. Comment on what kind of talks are at play and how they are carried out)*

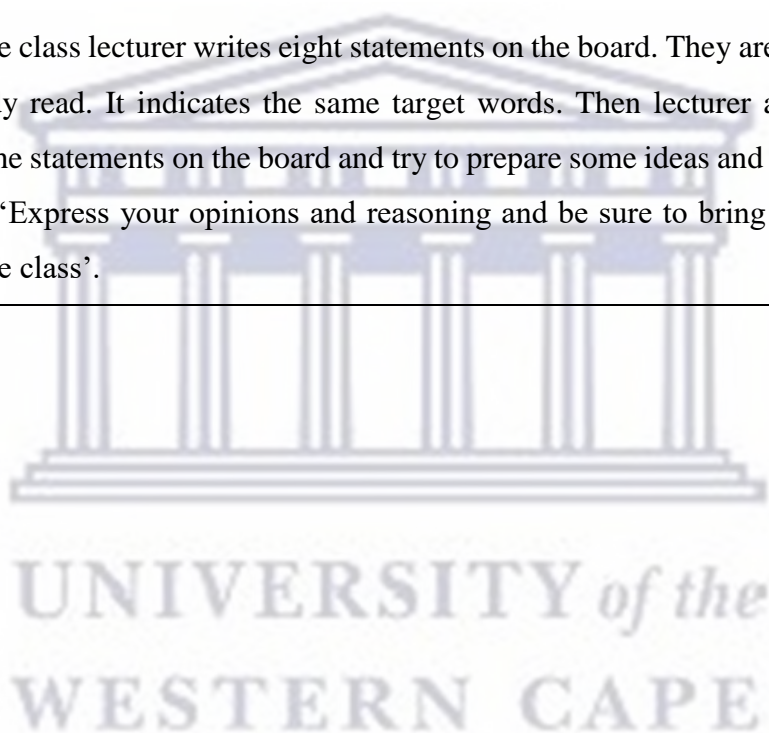
Just reading the passage and answer the exercise.

**Other Comments**

*(Learning materials or any other unusual happenings during student interactions in AW that can contribute to the improvement or stagnation of students AW).*

There is no classroom interaction. If the lecturer does not ask her students to read their role will be passive.

At the end of the class lecturer writes eight statements on the board. They are about the topic the have already read. It indicates the same target words. Then lecturer asks students to choose one of the statements on the board and try to prepare some ideas and write a personal essay about it. 'Express your opinions and reasoning and be sure to bring it next week to work on it in the class'.



### APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS' INTERVIEWS

#### Interview Sample for Students

1. What are your experiences of learning academic writing?
2. What do you learn from your academic writing course?
3. What is your motive behind studying academic writing?
4. How do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university
5. Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university? Please explain.
6. Do you feel confident to interacting and take part in group discussions regarding your writing? Please explain.
7. Which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?
8. How does it contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?
9. What are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it?
10. Would you like to add anything?
11. Please comment on the way how the lecturer managed the classroom?
12. Did you do academic writing at school?
13. In what language was academic writing done?
14. What forms of academic writing did you do at school?
15. What were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?
16. Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resembles academic writing done at the university?
17. What are the differences and similarities between academic writing in Arabic done at school and academic writing in English done at the university?
18. What are some of the steps followed by lecturers in developing academic writing skills in English at university?
19. What is your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text in English?
20. What are the gaps in your academic writing and how do you manage to close these gaps?
21. Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic essays helps to develop your academic writing skills?
22. In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?

## STUDENT 1: SOMAIA'S INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

**Interviewer:** Alright, Good morning Somaia

**Interviewee:** Good morning.

**Interviewer:** It's very nice to have you as one of the participants in this research which investigates academic writing and the learning techniques that the teachers use to explain academic writing inside the class. Here I have some questions for you to answer. The first question saying, what are your experiences of learning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Actually there are some techniques in writing classes in secondary school. There were helpful. They help how to write and how to write in English, but this semester I took academic writing class. It was kind of really helpful and improves my skill in writing. It guides me how to write academic essays and research papers.

**Interviewer:** so what do you learn from your academic writing course?

**Interviewee:** Alright, as I said before it helps me first how to manage my thoughts before I start writing and how to write academic essays and about a research paper it was kind of help me how to write and take outside sources and paraphrase them. Paraphrasing, quote and summering them with citation. It's really helpful.

**Interviewer:** Good that is fine. So what is your motive behind studying academic writing? Motive means motivation.

**Interviewee:** what motivate me to study academic writing?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Alright, it was kind of something that I have to do in the course, but I am really interesting in writing. I start to write but academic writing course is more helpful for me to write better and to write in the right way.

**Interviewer:** okay. How do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university? Do you think it is important to study something about academic writing at secondary school before coming to the university?

**Interviewee:** Yes

**Interviewer:** do you feel it is necessary?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** In what way.

**Interviewee:** because it needs to know how to write their academic writing essays and their academic papers. So, I think they have to have at least a little bit information on how to write academic writing before the academic courses.

**Interviewer:** alright. Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university?

**Interviewee:** Alright, I think in Arabic we do not have something calls academic writing course but in other way we have something else. Teachers taught us how to express our thoughts but without to manage it in a right way. However, in academic writing in English here at the university they teach us how to write in the good way and the right way. They teach us how to start the topic, organize our thoughts and how to manage to write them. Also, they teach us how to do first draft, correct our errors. So, I think in some way I don't know it's different and better at English.

**Interviewer:** OK. Do you feel confident to interacting and take part in group discussions regarding your writing?

**Interviewee:** Yes. I think group discussion and feedback is important for students to improve themselves. So, interacting in group discussion regarding our academic writing improves our skills and the teacher will guide us how to write and correct our mistakes and how to manage them to write in the right way.

**Interviewer:** I see. Usually inside the classroom when you do group discussion you do it for which purpose?

**Interviewee:** To improve my writing, to know what my mistakes are and how to fix them.

**Interviewer:** to give feedback to each other.

**Interviewee:** yes.

**Interviewer:** Which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?

**Interviewee:** What they are?

**Interviewer:** the activities for example the teacher uses inside the classroom.

**Interviewee:** Oh. Alright, our academic teacher gives us after approximately every lecture a paper that includes some questions about the lecture and we try to answer them. I think its better way so we can understand more and apply what we have understood and then the teacher gives us time to write our answers and then our teacher collect them, correct them and give us feedback. So, we understand



better and if we do mistakes, she comes to us and asks to write them better or to re-correct.

**Interviewer:** Do you mean when the teacher franchise her class and explains the lesson, she asks you to write a paragraph, essay or something like this?

**Interviewee:** No. it's usually not about paragraph it's usually about questions and if the lesson about paraphrasing, she gives us some texts and she asks us to paraphrasing it or to summering it. And if the lesson about quotation, she asks us to quota and give her correct citation.

**Interviewer:** Good. Good. So, what is your overall attitude towards English academic writing when write a text in English?

**Interviewee:** I think at the beginning of my writing I feel confusing and those ,, so I start to manage my thought....

**Interviewer:** when you write a text and finish this text how do you feel about this text?

**Interviewee:** I think all the time I feel I would like to ask about a feedback. I need someone asks him or her what should I do?? Is it ok or not?

**Interviewer:** Do you ask the others to read your writing?

**Interviewee:** Yes. I ask my friend and she tells me how she understands the text and she asks me what you mean by this and that. Then I know where my mistakes are and try to fix them.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel about it? Do you feel happy to get a feedback from them or upset?

**Interviewee:** I feel actually ..... it depends. If a person gives constrictive feedback of course I feel happy. Its improve me. I think it is most important for students. But if the one who gives a feedback is quite harsh, it does not improve me. I just saying this is my work and make discussion.

**Interviewer:** How you contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?

**Interviewee:** Actually I took the academic writing course recently. So I think I found myself improved when I wrote my last research paper. I found myself write in better way. I know how to write and I know how to manage my thoughts and I think academic writing course help me how to write in more academic way not in normal way but how to write in high level.

**Interviewer:** What are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it? The academic writing course itself what you think about this course?

**Interviewee:** I think its real research course for students. They need it because it helps them to know how to write their academic essays and are expose to how to write especially graduation students or what they have to write. So, I think academic writing course helps them and guides them better.

**Interviewer:** Can you tell me a little bit about the way in which how the lecturer manages the classroom in academic writing classes?

**Interviewee:** ok. It was kind of presentation. She gives a presentation. She first starts the topic. Then she asks us about the topic if we know anything about it to fresh our backgrounds information. Then she starts to present her topic and gives examples. After she finishes her presentation, she asks us if we understand the whole presentation and if we did not understand, she asks us to ask her any question or anything anything and she then answers us and gives us time to think. Then sometimes not on all he classes she gives us a paper. It was about questions about the topic and that help us to improve our positions and our understanding.

**Interviewer:** Good, Good. Would you like to add anything?

**Interviewee:** I would like just say that academic writing course with really an interesting and at the same time important experiences for me. It was like improvements. I was like something I need it. I know how to write but was not writing in the right way but academic writing course helps me how to write, how to manage my thoughts in everything.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much on your participation and wish you all the best in your study and your exams.

#### **Answers of Additional Interview Questions by Somaia**

**Interviewer:** Did you do academic writing at school? If yes in what language was academic writing done?

**Interviewee:** Yes I did for three years. It was in both languages. L1 and FL.

**Interviewer:** what forms of academic writing did you do at school?

**Interviewee:** I did complete sentences, short paragraphs

**Interviewer:** what were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?

**Interviewee:** There was like sheet with questions, we read the questions, answer them and combining them together to write a topic with three or four paragraphs.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resemble academic writing at university?

**Interviewee:** In school we just write paragraphs but at the university we learn to write essays. The only resemble was write paragraphs.

**Interviewer:** What are the differences and the similarities between academic writing done at school and academic writing done at university?

**Interviewee:** In high school we did write introduction, body and conclusion but at the university we did write essays

**Interviewer:** What are some of the steps followed by lecturers in developing academic writing skills in English at university?

**Interviewee:** There was like sheet with questions, we read the questions, answer them and combining them together to write a topic with three or four paragraphs

**Interviewer:** Whats your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text In English?

**Interviewee:** My overall understanding is not too bad. I can understand in good way.

**Interviewer:** What are the gabs in your academic writing and how do you manage to close these gabs?

**Interviewee:** I face problems in starting the paragraphs and write excellent conclusion.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic writing essay helps to develop your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** It helps to improve my writing, to know what my mistakes are and how to fix them.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** I think all the time I feel I would like to ask about a feedback. I need someone asks him or her what should I do? Is it ok or not? I ask my friend and she tells me how she understands the text and she asks me what you mean by this and that. Then I know where my mistakes are and try to fix them.

## STUDENT 2: ALI'S INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Interviewer:** ok. Alright. Can I know your name?

**Interviewee:** yes. My name is Ali.

**Interviewer:** I highly appreciate your participation in this research.

**Interviewee:** ok. I glad too and ready to help with everything.

**Interviewer:** Thanks. So, here I have some questions about your academic writing course and the first question saying what are your experiences of learning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** actually at the first three semesters I studied academic writing one and academic writing two but, they are different from each other and the teachers were different as well. They were about writing paragraphs. I learned just the basic on how to write a paragraph not in full details whereas here in this semester our teacher adds something different. I know now in this semester how to write academically and how to manage my thoughts in a right way. I also, know how to do perfect introduction and perfect conclusion and how to manage the body paragraphs of the subject in my writing very well.

**Interviewer:** ok good. So, what do you learn from your academic writing course in the fourth semester?

**Interviewee:** actually I feel I learned many academic vocabulary because when I write and research and when our teacher asks us to write an essay about something, I have research the internet and check some book here and there then I will face many new academic vocabulary and too many different words that I do not know them before so, I normally check the meaning of the words and manage them in my essay writing. Yes I learned a lot of academic vocabulary in this course.

**Interviewer:** what about the structure of the essay and these things?

**Interviewee:** what you mean?

**Interviewer:** I mean did you learn more about how to structure or complex sentences in your writing to use academic style in your writing?

**Interviewee:** oh, yes we have to manage the head of the title and start step by step from more general to more specific.

**Interviewer:** ok. What is your motive behind studying academic writing?

**Interviewee:** actually the semester has a lot of work and I have to work all the semester. Every week I have to do and submit one assignment. Also sometimes, we have to

research for the participation in the class and learning academic vocabulary. All these things give me motivation.

**Interviewer:** Do you mean a semester involves a lot of work?

**Interviewee:** yes a lot of work and each single research need at least three days to write and finish it.

**Interviewer:** mum I see. How do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university?

**Interviewee:** properly, in the school they focus actually on how to write small paragraphs not how to manage our write and express our ideas. In the school it was more about exercises and the teacher did not ask us to write an academic essay like what happening now in our academic writing course. She just gave us a steps of writing like introduction, body and conclusion but not participation in the writing itself.

**Interviewer:** do you mean the steps that you follow in your writing like a plan and the organization?

**Interviewee:** yeah but just the steps.

**Interviewer:** Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university? Please explain.

**Interviewee:** I think it is the same in Arabic and English, because when you know both of languages Arabic and English then it will be just about your mind and your imagination of writing. So, if you are going to write about the university for example, it will be the same ideas that you have in Arabic and in English just the way of expression I think may be different.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel confident to interacting and take part in group discussions regarding your writing? Please explain.

**Interviewee:** yes I made a research this semester and I was about strategies of learning more about academic writing. So the best strategy group discussion and work in group because group discussion make you more confident and you will share your ideas with your friends and you will be not afraid from anything just speaking. I mean your discussion with your friend is not like your discussion with your teacher. Yeah group discussion is the best strategy in academic writing course.

**Interviewer:** what tasks do you usually do when you organize in groups inside the class?

**Interviewee:** yes sometime our teacher give us essay which is not organize. Just sentence for example sentence number one should be sentence number six and sentence

number for should be sentence number ten and .....and we have to organize and discuss that in the group in a logical style.

**Interviewer:** Which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?

**Interviewee:** I feel more confident and comfortable when work together and discuss our ideas in a group.

**Interviewer:** What is your overall attitude towards English academic writing when write a text in English? how do you feel when you finish a text and your academic writing essay?

**Interviewee:** I feel I did something I did not expected myself to do it because when I started the first day I do introduction and the first paragraph you will say it is perfect but when you come to the second day you will found many bad things and you will say what I did yesterday and you will start change and change with the time until and this one of the things that our teacher told us about she said when we write something we have to revise it again and again and you will add something new because every day we have something new to add especially at the reseach.

**Interviewer:** How does it contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?

**Interviewee:** academic writing skill is comprehension subject. It includes everything that we need in our writing such as structure, organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion.

**Interviewer:** What are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it?

**Interviewee:** the benefit of entire academic writing course is that we know how to organize out thoughts and how to do creative writing using academic writing methods how to express what we have in our mind and also how to do a research and check the important points. In that we need to look for an important things and a number of resources. So the benefit involves many vocabulary, grammar, organization and writing structure.

**Interviewer:** Good. Would you like to add anything?

**Interviewee:** about the courses?

**Interviewer:** yes about the courses about teaching academic writing at the fourth year anything you would like to add.

**Interviewee:** May be academic writing must have more branches. I mean Like academic writing 1, academic writing 2, and academic writing 3 to improve ourselves better.

**Interviewer:** So, Please comment on the way how the lecturer managed the classroom?

**Interviewee:** oh yes. She explains the subject or the lesson that she is giving using the projector which is very clear. Here way to explain to the class is very good for me. She explains and then if the students have any questions she gives them a time to ask her if they want. They can raise their hand and ask and share their ideas about the course.

**Interviewer:** Does she encourage you to talk in the class or not?

**Interviewee:** yes sometimes we have to talk because she will ask us what we think about this and what we think about that.

**Interviewer:** Does she try to include every student? I mean even the weak students?

**Interviewee:** Yes. Every student have to share especially after doing an assignment. Everyone must tell and say what was his/her assignment about and tell us about the steps that made in his/her mind before starting writing a first draft. We have to give a first draft check it and have a feedback about it and then we grow up our mistakes.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Thank you very much on your participation. I really appreciated thanks and wish you all the best.

### **Answers of Additional Interview Questions by Ali**

**Interviewer:** Did you do academic writing at school? If yes in what language was academic writing done?

**Interviewee:** yes I did, it was in both English and Arabic languages.

**Interviewer:** what forms of academic writing did you do at school?

**Interviewee:** They were short paragraphs, free writing, advertisements, CVs, letters and the structure of how to write an essay.

**Interviewer:** what were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?

**Interviewee:** There was nothing used to develop it apart from assignments and exams.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resemble academic writing at university?

**Interviewee:** Academic writing done at school and university are both centered on teaching students how to write in an academic way. And the main feature resembling what is done at university compared to school was structure.

**Interviewer:** What are the differences and the similarities between academic writing done at school and academic writing done at university?

**Interviewee:** Similarities: They are both done in the same, very basic, structure, with the same steps.

-Differences: Each one is given in a different way; academic writing done at school is given in brief, very simple and broad. Consequently very different in terms of tone, language, and point of view (third person).

-Arabic academic writing done at school was generally personal writing (subjective), but English academic writing done at university was objective.

**Interviewer:** What are some of the steps followed by lecturers in developing academic writing skills in English at university?

**Interviewee:** Giving a lot of assignments, answering the sheets' exercises, tasks and exams.

**Interviewer:** What's your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text In English?

**Interviewee:** When writing any text in English, an appropriate style of writing must be maintained. By paying attention to the audience to whom the text is addressed and making an effective communication between the ideas and the information.

**Interviewer:** What are the gaps in your academic writing and how do you manage to close these gaps?

**Interviewee:** Grammatical and syntactic errors made when writing.

I tried to manage these problems by working hard to overcome these gaps. I started evaluating and checking my writing many times. As well as learning new things about English language in general and reading more books about grammar and syntax.



**Interviewer:** Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic writing essay helps to develop your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** It makes me think more clearly and deeply, and it makes me have a positive impact on every aspect of my academic work not just assignments.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** Mistakes can be easily corrected by learning some simple rules, and it is never too late to learn.



### STUDENT 3: ABADALHAKEM'S INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

**Interviewer:** Right, first what is your name?

**Interviewee:** my name is Abadalhakem. I am studying academic writing here in the faculty of Arts. It is good course I learned from it a lot especially in my academic writing and I learned so much academic vocabulary as well.

**Interviewer:** Good. I am glad to have you as one of the participants in this research. Here I have some questions and the first question is saying what your experiences of learning academic writing are?

**Interviewee:** the experiences are that in academic writing I have to make Google research so I find too much new academic vocabulary. I also learn how to make new sentences and I can increase my speaking in academic writing because I have to research for new sentences and think about them.

**Interviewer:** OK. What do you learn from your academic writing course?

**Interviewee:** in this course I have learned academic words and memories them. I also learned how to write with good spelling and correct grammatical structure also, I learned how to write phrases.

**Interviewer:** Good. So, what is your motive behind studying academic writing?

**Interviewee:** well, because academic writing will help me a lot in the future especially in my project so I have to learn a rules of academic writing. I mean it is very good to learn academic writing for my future.

**Interviewer:** I see. So, how do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university? Do you think it's important to study academic writing before you come to the university?

**Interviewee:** yes it's important, because when you study academic writing at school from the beginning you become ready to study it at the university. Yeah it's very important to study it at school.

**Interviewer:** Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university? Please explain

**Interviewee:** well. I think yes it is different.

**Interviewer:** in what way please?

**Interviewer:** academic writing in English is very different from your writing in Arabic especially in the order of the words. In Arabic they are not as same as in English. I mean when you read something and translate it to Arabic word by word it will be different especially in the order of the words.

**Interviewer:** ok I understand. So, do you feel confident to interacting and take part in group discussions regarding your writing? Please explain.

**Interviewee:** yes because when I work in group I learn many things that I cannot learn them when I work alone by myself. When I participant with my partner I can learn from her/him new ideas and I can see how I can come with these ideas and see how he/she have these ideas and not me so I have to exchange our knowledge together.

**Interviewer:** so do you feel its ok if your teacher ask you give your writing to your classmates to correct it for you?

**Interviewee:** it is ok because in the beginning we also make mistakes and when the others correct our mistakes we will see why we make them and how we overcome them.

**Interviewer:** Which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?

**Interviewee:** writing a researcher is think is more practical way because I learn from it a lot especially in the term of time for example when a teacher ask you to write a research and push you by giving you a limit time to write it you will work hard and get the benefit quickly.

**Interviewer:** do you mean you like to work under a pressure of time?

**Interviewee:** yes under the pressure because the pressure makes me learn and achieve very good writing.

**Interviewer:** you usually doing different kinds of activities when doing academic writing, for example; collect information, making a plan, organize your ideas which one do you feel confident about it?

**Interviewee:** I think the activity from our teacher itself for example collecting paper and put sentences in correct order is the most confident activity.

**Interviewer:** ok. So, what is your overall attitude towards English academic writing when write a text in English?

**Interviewee:** I am very glade to take this course with our teacher because she asks us to make a lot of researches and doing homework I like this because its help me to work hard and learn more about academic writing.

**Interviewer:** How does it contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?

**Interviewee:** I have learned a lot especially the rules of academic writing because when you write with good rules in your academic writing like a correct word order, punctuations and grammatical structure you will develop your academic writing very good.

**Interviewer:** do you mean what you have learned from your academic writing helps you to write good project for example?

**Interviewee:** yes of course that is right.

**Interviewer:** good. So, what are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it?

**Interviewee:** yes in the beginning I thought academic writing is very hard course but since I download it on the paper I found it very simple but I have to study hard. It needs too much time to study. I really develop my writing in this course.

**Interviewer:** so if you compare your writing now with your writing at the first or the second semester do you feel some kind of different?

**Interviewee:** yes I revise my writing last semester it was very over but now in this semester I see how much I was silly in writing.

**Interviewer:** how do you feel about it?

**Interviewee:** I feel very confident now because I am very appreciating with this course.

**Interviewer:** Good. Good. Do you like to add anything about your academic writing course?

**Interviewee:** I want just say if you want to achieve your writing you have to push your time because the hard you study and push your time the more you achieve and improve your academic writing.

**Interviewer:** ok ABADALHAKEEM, can you tell me about the way how the lecturer managed the classroom?

**Interviewee:** well our teacher has good experience. I have learned a lot from her. She gives us a story in separate sentences and asks us to write them together.

**Interviewer:** does she organize you into groups or pairs to make discussion and write texts?

**Interviewee:** yes we did that a lot. We organize and write some papers together. We work in groups and make discussion about some things and make new ideas among ourselves.

**Interviewer:** ok. Does your teacher give you feedback on your writing?

**Interviewee:** yes of course she gives us. We also communicate with our teacher especially online on the Facebook. We have close group. It was very beneficial. Our teacher gives ask Pdf at the end of the class. For me I bought the course book but I did not use it.

**Interviewer:** why?

**Interviewee:** because the Pdf is very clear and useful with separate titles. Everything was organized very well.

**Interviewer:** Do you mean it is a text book but in Pdf format?

**Interviewee:** yes it is a text book in Pdf format. It was very useful because any time an idea comes to your mind even when I drive a car or doing anything and forget something and I will to check I quickly revise my phone and check the information in the Pdf. It is very useful way.

**Interviewer:** it's good. Yeah it's good technique.

**Interviewee:** yes.

**Interviewer:** alright. This brings our interview to the end. Thank you very much on your participation and wish you all the best.

**Interviewee:** ok. I am really appreciated.

### **Additional of Interview Questions**

**Interviewer:** Did you do academic writing at school? if yes in what language was academic writing done?

**Interviewee:** no, because I was not a regular student, I just do the final exam in high school.

**Interviewer:** what forms of academic writing did you do at school?

**Interviewee:** I think it was how to form phrase and the structure of how to write sentences.

**Interviewer:** what were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?

**Interviewee:** There weren't any particular steps; we depended on our self-comprehension

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resemble academic writing at university?

**Interviewee:** At school we was just required to write words properly or maybe phrases but in university we are dealing with essays with 1200 word at least and we have to follow several rule to make it legible to the reader ,which make academic writing at university more difficult.

**Interviewer:** What are the differences and the similarities between academic writing done at school and academic writing done at university?:

**Interviewee:** they are quite the same, the structure, steps but the differences is that the academic writing at school was giving in a very simple way and more likely you are talking about yourself in short sentences . But at university we are dealing with broad topic which demand a large introductory and explanation in detail with evidence by following restricted steps .

**Interviewer:** What are some of the steps followed by lecturers in developing academic writing skills in English at university?

**Interviewee:** Our teacher Give us a lots of assignments, homework and we have to deliver it in a limited time, I think the pressure in the time makes us good in this subject.

**Interviewer:** what's your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text In English?

**Interviewee:** When writing any text in English, the academic writing must be consistent, and it must have the right level of formulating ideas that must be the ideas must be expressed precisely, and they need to be concise and objective. And the best ways of producing these effects are through grammar and vocabulary, as well as the way information are presented.

**Interviewer:** What are the gabs in your academic writing and how do you manage to close these gabs?

**Interviewee:** The lack of gathering ideas and the grammatical mistake .I am trying to learn ways that can help me to talk about a particular topic and gathering ideas in a short time. And for the grammatical mistake, I revise and check my writing more than ones

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic writing essay helps to develop your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** Our teacher organize a closed group on Facebook and she give us the class outline for every lecture before the lecture , that was very helpful because we come prepared with our question , as she explain every chapter on the data show during the lecture which makes us pay attention in class

**Interviewer:** In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?

**Interviewer:** A lots of homework and deliver it in a short time the PDF downloads from the closed group on Facebook was very useful.



#### STUDENT 4: KADEJA'S INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Interviewer:** Good afternoon Kadeja it's nice to meet you.

**Interviewee:** Good afternoon it's nice to meet you too.

**Interviewer:** before to start I would like to thank you for your participation in this research.

**Interviewee:** thank you.

**Interviewer:** as you can see I have here some questions and I have a kind of an interview of you, first tell me what is your name?

**Interviewee:** my name is Khadja.

**Interviewer:** Alright you are welcome, so now let us start with the question number one what are your experiences of learning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** before I had chance to start and learn in academic writing course, I was thinking about the hard staff about academic writing because as you know writing is a hardest skill between the English skills between among speaking, listening and reading writing is the hardest skill because academically we don't too much background how to make our writing in academic so, I was so afraid about this course but when I got chance to learn it and participant it with my teacher Miss Hawa I got over that scare and I overcome it.

**Interviewer:** alright. So, the second question is what do you learn from your academic writing course?

**Interviewee:** I did learn a lot of staff. For instance I learn about how to change my style of writing. It was run like speaking style. I was think and speak and then write like speaking style no like academic style, so I progress myself and improved my writing a lot with teacher Hawa. She did a lot of things that improved our style of writing like writing first draft, correct first draft, feedback and give us a chance to correct our writing by writing another draft. She was very helpful with these things. I actually want to repeat this course.

**Interviewer:** Alright, the third question is what is your motive behind studying academic writing?

**Interviewee:** the motive is my intention to improve myself guides me to study or to take academic writing course. I want to know if I can improve myself or if I can do a prior writing than it was. Because in high school we do not do that much academic writing texts or paragraphs or essays or we just did simple sentences and phrases



not in full texts so as you can see since I heard a words academic writing course I was expected something I was not able to overcome it but I did. So, my motivation is to push myself to know my hard points and weak points so I can overcome them.

**Interviewer:** OK. Good. The next question is how do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university? Is it important to have a kind of academic writing before coming to the university?

**Interviewee:** yes in my opinion I think it is important but since they did not do it in high school a lot I mean now in the first semester, first writing course one we had a lot of problems.... Yeah especially with the express some subjects we did not know much about them.....Yeah we need to write about essay like for example the first day in the university. Write an academic essay about it in academic way. So, the first thing is that Miss Hawa knows us about it we all wrote the same way as we speak.

**Interviewer:** mmmm, I see. You tend to use spoken language in your writing.

**Interviewee:** yeah. We did use a lot of clear less contracting forms with our mistakes, also with punctuations but we improved after this.

**Interviewer:** good I glad to know that. Ok. Alright, next question does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university?

**Interviewee:** yeah, different a lot. Actually I will express my funny fact. I did not write the subject in TABEAR I mean in school. I was writing a subject in school in English and then translate it to Arabic. I follow that I want to express myself in English more than in Arabic. So, I took a lot of time not like the others usually take I would like to write in English then translate into Arabic because my feeling and my expression were better in English than they were in Arabic.

**Interviewer:** I see yeah so, do you feel confident to interacting and taking part in group discussions regarding your writing? Do you like to show the others your writing?

**Interviewee:** I would like to show my friends my family to give me a feedback so I can improve myself but I did not like to disuse my work in group work like the discussion in classroom because I feel I made a lot of mistakes.

**Interviewer:** why do you have such feeling?

**Interviewee:** I do not know may be I hesitate to show them my writing so, I don't feel confident to show them or discuss my writing especially my mistakes, my weak points. I don't like to show them. I like to keep them hidden.

**Interviewer:** but you still have an idea of asking some people particular specific people to read your writing.

**Interviewee:** yes, specific people hand I hope they will give me a feedback because I am care what they think about me.

**Interviewer:** and when you give them your texts are you waiting for positive more than negative or.....

**Interviewee:** I am waiting about the worst more than the best feedback, because I do care about them about their words because their words make me change some things that I did wrong especially the good student like one of my classmate in the course.

**Interviewer:** Good. I see. So, which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?

**Interviewee:** activities, the once which the teacher share our facts like when we draw in the board and she tells us to brain storm our ideas and collect them I like to share my ideas because we all have different ideas because when we brain storm my own may be I think about something the others did not think about it or may be the other think about something I did not think about it. So we share and improve our writing in this way. We did one of the essays like that and I get the best essay.

**Interviewer:** Good, interesting. You do it at class is it right?

**Interviewee:** yeah.

**Interviewer:** you bring up your ideas and the teacher writes on the board.

**Interviewee:** No. she tells us to groups ourselves into five persons. I think five groups and she divides the board into A,B,C,D groups and she fixes one of our group as to write on the board and we bring up our ideas and he or she write on the board when we share.

**Interviewer:** I see. So, what is your overall attitude towards English academic writing when write a text in English?

**Interviewee:** my overall attitude about academic writing when I write my text in English I feel confident toward English because I love it that is why I choose to specialize in it. I love writing but I have some weak points in it. Overall attitude I think I love

academic writing course and Miss Hawa makes it a lot easier for us. She made us love this course very much than we use to.

**Interviewer:** ok. So, how does it contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?

**Interviewee:** it makes me once to push myself to do my best showing where I am good at and where I am not good at. I actually do care when I do my mistakes and do care about what my teacher think. So, my overall attitude is some hesitation and some excitement.

**Interviewer:** so, what are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it?

**Interviewee:** I use to have some feeling that attach academic writing. When I heard the word academic writing I thought it is difficult especially when I was in the high school. In the university when I take academic writing course I overcome it. I know that I am good at writing at least I am good than some other students and I try to read because as you know reading helps to improve and develop our writing and a lot. So, I keep reading books, academic articles, and eBooks. So, I am being interesting in academic writing since that. My overall impression of the entire academic writing course is I love this course and I wish to repeat it.

**Interviewer:** Do you study academic writing for one time before this course?

**Interviewee:** yeah.

**Interviewer:** do you think you need more academic writing courses?

**Interviewee:** yes, we need more academic writing courses especially I creative academic writing I think it will be great for me to improve my short stories.

**Interviewer:** but creative writing is related to the literature.

**Interviewee:** Yes short stories and imagination because I love writing I exciting for anything that have writing.

**Interviewer:** Can you tell me about the way how Miss Hawa manages the classroom?

**Interviewee:** she manages it very good. She uses a lot of technology for example slides. She uses also all school techniques like correct our writing mistakes by replacing our papers. like I give my paper to my classmate and she gives me her paper and we correct each other`s writing and revise it and we add some notes and advises like which your punctuations I also write this which your because punctuations are important and the weak point in my writing is punctuation. She manages it very nice. We all love her a lot.

**Interviewer:** do you mean you have a good relationship with your teacher?

**Interviewee:** yeah.

**Interviewer:** this is the key for the good learner.

**Interviewer:** alright Kadeeja thank you very much again and wish you all the best in your study.

### **Additional Interview Questions**

**Interviewer:** Did you do academic writing at school? if yes in what language was academic writing done?

**Interviewee:** Yes. For the three years of high-school I took writing classes.

**Interviewer:** What forms of academic writing did you do at school?

**Interviewee:** We did for the first and the second year short texts and paragraphs. The third year we did essays and we did it in English language.

**Interviewer:** What were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?

**Interviewee:** We did lots of writing in primary and high-school for instance, short stories, letters, paragraphs, texts, short essays, and five paragraphs essays.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resembles academic writing done at the university?

**Interviewee:** There were some steps followed in order to develop some of our writing skills like brain storming ideas individually and in groups, free writing, drafting and feedback, and creative exercises.

**Interviewer:** What are the differences and similarities between academic writing in Arabic done at school and academic writing in English done at the university?

**Interviewee:** In one way both writing courses we did in high-school or university are similar to each other, the difference is only in the style. In high-school we did introductions and conclusions in a different way than the way in university and the body paragraphs were in the same way we did in both.

**Interviewer:** What is your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text in English?

**Interviewee:** My overall understanding of English when writing texts is excellent whether in grammar or vocabularies.

**Interviewer:** What are the gaps in your academic writing and how do you manage to close these gaps?

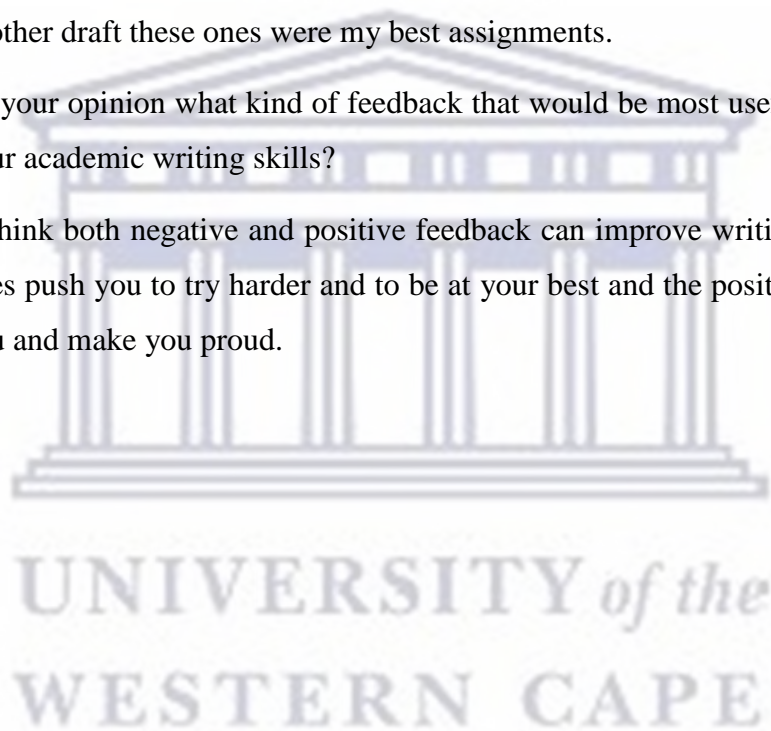
**Interviewee:** I face a difficulty whenever I write about unfamiliar subject especially if it has lots of terminologies. I also face another problem with sufficiently supporting every idea in my writing but when I read and write more drafts I find solutions for this problem.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic essays helps to develop your academic writing skills?

**Interviewee:** The feedback I receive from my teacher can be very helpful as I noticed the writing assignments that the teacher evaluated and gave back and asked for another draft these ones were my best assignments.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?

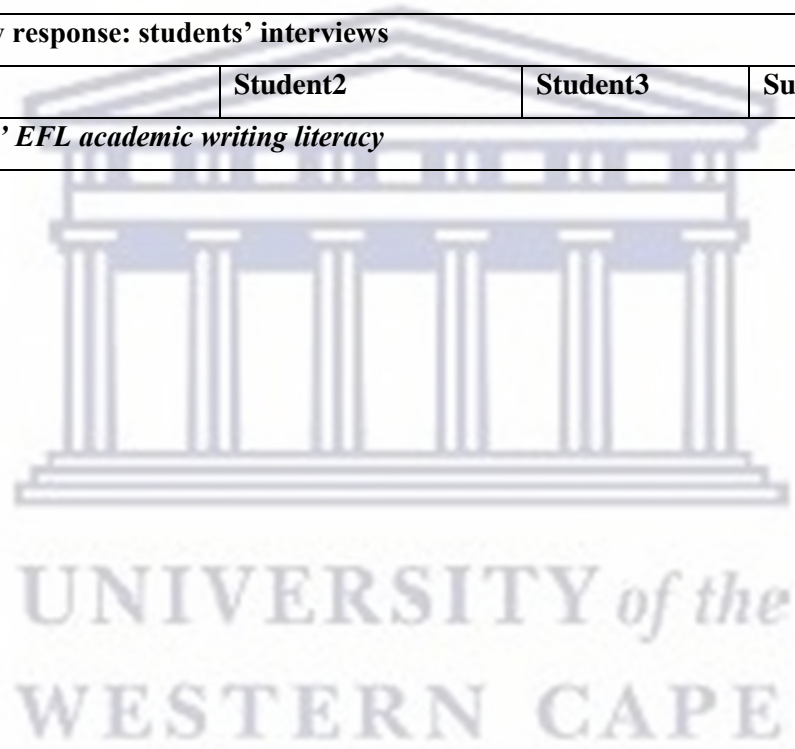
**Interviewee:** I think both negative and positive feedback can improve writing. The negative ones push you to try harder and to be at your best and the positive ones comfort you and make you proud.



**APPENDIX 4: SUMMARY OF TRANSCRIPTS OF STUDENTS' INTERVIEWS**

**Table 4:** *Summary of Transcripts of Students' Interviews*

S/N	Topic / question	Summary response: students' interviews			
		Student1	Student2	Student3	Sudent4
A	<i>Experiences of students' EFL academic writing literacy</i>				



1	<b>What are your experiences of learning academic writing?</b>	<p>Actually there are some techniques in writing classes in secondary school. There were helpful. They help how to write and how to write in English, but this semester I took academic writing class. It was kind of really helpful and improves my skill in writing. It guides me how to write academic essays and research papers.</p>	<p>Actually at the first three semesters I studied academic writing one and academic writing two but, they are different from each other and the teachers were different as well. They were about writing paragraphs. I learned just the basic on how to write a paragraph not in full details whereas here in this semester our teacher adds something different. I know now in this semester how to write academically and how to manage my thoughts in a right way. I also, know how</p>	<p>The experiences are that in academic writing I have to make Google research so I find too much new academic vocabulary. I also learn how to make new sentences and I can increase my writing in academic writing because I have to research for new sentences and think about them.</p>	<p>Before I had chance to start and learn in academic writing course, I was thinking about the hard staff about academic writing because as you know writing is a hardest skill between the English skills between among speaking, listening and reading writing is the hardest skill because academically we don't too much background how to make our writing in academic so, I was so afraid about this course but when I got chance to learn it and participant it with my teacher Miss Hawa I got over that scare and I overcome it.</p>
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			<p>to do perfect introduction and perfect conclusion and how to manage the body paragraphs of the subject in my writing very well.</p>		
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2	<b>What do you learn from your academic writing course?</b>	<p>Alright, as I said before it helps me first how to manage my thoughts before I start writing and how to write academic essays and about a research paper it was kind of help me how to write and take outside sources and paraphrase them. Paraphrasing, quote and summering them with citation. It's really helpful.</p>	<p>Actually I feel I learned many academic vocabulary because when I write and research and when our teacher asks us to write an essay about something, I have research the internet and check some book here and there then I will face many new academic vocabulary and too many different words that I do not know them before so, I normally check the meaning of the words mad manage them in my essay writing. Yes I learned a lot of academic vocabulary in this course.</p>	<p>In this course I have learned academic words and memories them. I also learned how to write with good spelling and correct grammatical structure also, I learned how to write phrases.</p>	<p>I did learn a lot of staff. For instance I learn about how to change my style of writing. It was run like speaking style. I was think and speak and then write like speaking style no like academic style, so I progress myself and improved my writing a lot with teacher Hawa. She did a lot of things that improved our style of writing like writing first draft, correct first draft, feedback and give us a chance to correct our writing by writing another draft. She was very helpful with these things. I actually want to repeat this course.</p>
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<b>B</b>	<b><i>Impression and motivating students' progress in EFL academic writing</i></b>				
<b>3</b>	<b>What are your overall impression of the entire academic writing course and the benefits of it?</b>	I think its real research course for students. They need it because it helps them to know how to write their academic essays and are expose to how to write especially graduation students or what they have to write. So, I think academic writing course helps them and guides them better.	the benefit of entire academic writing course is that we know how to organize out thoughts and how to do creative writing using academic writing methods how to express what we have in our mind and also how to do a research and check the important points. In that we need to look for an important things and a number of resources. So the benefit involves many vocabulary, grammar, organization and writing structure.	Yes in the beginning I thought academic writing is very hard course but since I download it on the paper I found it very simple but I have to study hard. It needs too much time to study. I really develop my writing and know how to write academically in this course.	I use to have some feeling that attach academic writing. When I heard the word academic writing I thought it is difficult especially when I was in the high school. In the university when I take academic writing course I overcome it. I know that I am good at writing at least I am good than some other students and I try to read because as you know reading helps to improve and develop our writing and a lot. So, I keep reading books, academic articles, and eBooks. So, I am being interesting in academic writing since that. My overall impression of the entire academic writing course is I love this course and I wish to repeat it.

4	<p><b>What is your motive behind studying academic writing?</b></p>	<p>Alright, it was kind of something that I have to do in the course, but I am really interesting in writing. I start to write but academic writing course is more helpful for me to write better and to write in the right way.</p>	<p>Actually the semester has a lot of work and I have to work all the semester. Every week I have to do and submit one assignment. Also sometimes, we have to research for the participation in the class and learning academic vocabulary. All this things give me motivation</p>	<p>Well, because academic writing will help me a lot in the future especially in my project so I have to learn a rules of academic writing. I mean it is very good to learn academic writing for my future. (no motivation)</p>	<p>The motive is my intention to improve myself guides me to study or to take academic writing course. I want to know if I can improve myself or if I can do a prior writing than it was. Because in high school we do not do that much academic writing texts or paragraphs or essays or we just did simple sentences and phrases not in full texts so as you can see since I heard a words academic writing course I was expected something I was not able to overcome it but I did. So, my motivation is to push myself to know my hard points and weak points so I can overcome them.</p>
C	<p><i>Academic writing at school</i></p>				

5	<b>Did you do academic writing at school?</b>	Yes I did for three years. It was in both languages. First language and Foreign language.	Yes I did, it was in both English and Arabic languages.	No, because I was not a regular student, I just do the final exam in high school.	Yes. For the three years of high-school I took writing classes. it was in both English and Arabic languages
6	<b>Does your academic writing in Arabic at school differ from your academic writing in English at the university? Please explain.</b>	Alright, I think in Arabic we do not have something calls academic writing course but in other way we have something else. Teachers taught us how to express our thoughts but without to manage it in a right way. However, in academic writing in English here at the university they teach us how to write in the good way and the right way. They teach us how to start the topic, organize our thoughts and how to	I think it is the same in Arabic and English, because when you know both of languages Arabic and English then it will be just about your mind and your imagination of writing. So, if you are going to write about the university for example, it will be the same ideas that you have in Arabic and in English just the way of expression I think may be different.	Academic writing in English is very different from your writing in Arabic especially in the order of the words. In Arabic they are not as same as in English. I mean when you read something and translate it to Arabic word by word it will be different especially in the order of the words.	Yeah, different a lot. Actually I will express my funny fact. I did not write the subject in TABEAR I mean in school. I was writing a subject in school in English and then translate it to Arabic. I follow that I want to express myself in English more that in Arabic. So, I took a lot of time not like the others usually take I would like to write in English then translate into Arabic because my feeling and my expression were

		<p>manage to write them.</p> <p>Also, they teach us how to do first draft, correct our errors. So, I think in some way I don't know it's different and better at English.</p>			<p>better in English than they were in Arabic.</p>
7	<p><b>How do you think it is important to do academic writing at school before coming to the university</b></p>	<p>Yes, it is important, because it needs to know how to write their academic writing essays and their academic papers. So, I think they have to have at least a little bit information on how to write academic writing before the academic courses.</p>	<p>Properly, in the school they focus actually on how to write small paragraphs not how to manage our write and express our ideas. In the school it was more about exercises and the teacher did not asked us to write an academic essay like what happening now in or academic writing course. She just gave us a steps of writing like introduction, body</p>	<p>Yes it's important, because when you study academic writing at school from the beginning you become ready to study it at the university. Yeah it's very important to study it at school.</p>	<p>Yes in my opinion I think it is important but since they did not do it in high school a lot I mean now in the first semester, first writing course one we had a lot of problems.... Yeah especially with the express some subjects we did not know much about them.....Yeah we need to write about essay like for example the first day in the university. Write an academic essay about it in academic way.</p>

			and conclusion but not participation in the writing itself.		So, the first thing is that Miss Hawa knows us about it we all wrote the same way as we speak.
<b>9</b>	<b>What forms of academic writing did you do at school?</b>	I did complete sentences, short paragraphs.	They were short paragraphs, free writing, advertisements, CVs, letters and the structure of how to write an essay.	I think it was how to form phrase and the structure of how to write sentences.	We did for the first and the second year short texts and paragraphs. The third year we did essays and we did it in English language.
<b>10</b>	<b>What were some of the steps followed in developing academic writing skills at school?</b>	There was like sheet with questions, we read the questions, answer them and combining them together to write a topic with three or four paragraphs.	There was nothing used to develop, it apart from assignments and exams. Giving a lot of assignments, answering the sheets' exercises, tasks and exams.	There weren't any particular steps; we depended on our self-comprehension. Our teacher Give us a lots of assignments, homework and we have to deliver it in a limited time, I think the pressure in the time makes us good in this subject.	We did lots of writing in primary and high-school for instance, short stories, letters, paragraphs, texts, short essays, and five paragraphs essays.

<i>D</i>	<i>Difference and similarity between academic writing in L1 at school and academic writing in FL at university.</i>				
<b>11</b>	<b>Please explain how the academic writing you did at school resembles academic writing done at the university?</b>	In school we just write paragraphs but at the university we learn to write essays. The only resemble was write paragraphs.	Academic writing done at school and university are both centered on teaching students how to write in an academic way. And the main feature resembling what is done at university compared to school was structure.	At school we was just required to write words properly or maybe phrases but in university we are dealing with essays with 1200 word at least and we have to follow several rule to make it legible to the reader ,which make academic writing at university more difficult	There were some steps followed in order to develop some of our writing skills like brain storming ideas individually and in groups, free writing, drafting and feedback, and creative exercises.
<b>12</b>	<b>What are the differences and similarities between academic writing in Arabic done at school and academic writing in English done</b>	In high school we did write introduction, body and conclusion but at the university we did write essays.	Similarities: They are both done in the same, very basic, structure, with the same steps. Differences: Each one is given in a different way; academic writing	they are quite the same, the structure, steps but the differences is that the academic writing at school was giving in a very simple way and more likely you are talking about yourself in short sentences . But at	In one way both writing courses we did in high-school or university are similar to each other, the difference is only in the style. In high-school we did introductions and

	<b>at the university?</b>		<p>done at school is given in brief, very simple and broad. Consequently very different in terms of tone, language, and point of view (third person).</p> <p>Arabic academic writing done at school was generally personal writing (subjective), but English academic writing done at university was objective.</p>	<p>university we are dealing with broad topic which demand a large introductory and explanation in detail with evidence by following restricted steps</p>	<p>conclusions in a different way than the way in university and the body paragraphs were in the same way we did in both.</p>
<i>E</i>	<i>Students' attitude, understanding and gaps of academic writing in EFL writing practices</i>				
<i>I2</i>	<b>What is your overall attitude towards English academic</b>	<p>I think at the beginning of my writing I feel confusing and those , so</p>	<p>I feel I did something I did not expected myself to do it because when I</p>	<p>I am very glade to take this course with our teacher because she asks us to make a lot of</p>	<p>my overall attitude about academic writing when I write my text in English I</p>



	<p><b>writing when write a text in English?</b></p>	<p>I start to manage my thought....</p>	<p>started the first day I do introduction and the first paragraph you will say it is perfect but when you come to the second day you will found many bad things and you will say what I did yesterday and you will start change and change with the time until and this one of the things that our teacher told us about she said when we write something we have to revise it again and again and you will add something new because every day we have something</p>	<p>researches and doing homework. I like this because its help me to work hard and learn more about academic writing.</p>	<p>feel confident toward English because I love it that is why I choose to specialize in it. I love writing but I have some weak points in it. Overall attitude I think I love academic writing course and Miss Hawa makes it a lot easier for us. She made us love this course very much than we use to.</p>
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			new to add especially at the research.		
13	<b>What is your overall understanding towards English academic writing when write a text in English?</b>	My overall understanding is not too bad. I can understand in good way.	When writing any text in English, an appropriate style of writing must be maintained. By paying attention throwers the audience to whom the text is addressed and making an effective communication between the ideas and the information.	When writing a text in English, the academic writing must be consistent, and it must have the right level of formulating ideas that must be the ideas must be expressed precisely, and they need to be concise and objective. And the best ways of producing these effects are through grammar and vocabulary, as well as the way information are presented.	My overall understanding of English when writing texts is excellent whether in grammar or vocabularies.
15	<b>What are the gaps in your academic writing and how do you manage to close theses gaps?</b>	I face problems in starting the paragraphs and write excellent conclusion.	Grammatical and syntactic errors made when writing. I tried to manage these problems by working hard to overcome	The lack of gathering ideas and the grammatical mistake .I am trying to learn ways that can help me to talk about a particular topic and	I face a difficulty whenever I write about unfamiliar subject especially if it has lots of terminologies. I also

			these gaps. I started evaluating and checking my writing many times. As well as learning new things about English language in general and reading more books about grammar and syntax.	gathering ideas in a short time. And for the grammatical mistake, I revise and check my writing more than ones	face another problem with sufficiently supporting every idea in my writing but when I read and write more drafts I find solutions for this problem.
<i>F</i>	<i>Feedback to students' academic writing</i>				
<b>16</b>	<b>Please explain how the feedback you receive from your lecturer on your academic essays helps to develop your academic writing skills</b>	It helps to improve my writing, to know what my mistakes are and how to fix them.	It makes me think more clearly and deeply, and it makes me have a positive impact on every aspect of my academic work not just assignments.	Our teacher organize a closed group on Facebook and she give us the class outline for every lecture before the lecture , that was very helpful because we come prepared with our question , as	The feedback I receive from my teacher can be very helpful as I noticed the writing assignments that the teacher evaluated and gave back and asked for another draft these ones were my best assignments.

				she explain every chapter on the data show during the lecture which makes us pay attention in class.	
17	<b>In your opinion what kind of feedback that would be most useful in developing your academic writing skills?</b>	I think all the time I feel I would like to ask about a feedback. I need someone asks him or her what should I do? Is it ok or not? I ask my friend and she tells me how she understands the text and she asks me what you mean by this and that. Then I know where my mistakes are and try to fix them.	Mistakes can be easily corrected by learning some simple rules, and it is never too late to learn.	A lot of homework and deliver it in a short time the PDF downloads from the closed group on Facebook was very useful.	I think both negative and positive feedback can improve writing. The negative ones push you to try harder and to be at your best and the positive ones comfort you and make you proud.
<b>G</b>	<b><i>Classroom activities and group discussion</i></b>				

18	<p><b>Do you feel confident to interacting and take part in group discussions regarding your writing? Please explain.</b></p>	<p>Yes. I think group discussion and feedback is important for students to improve themselves. So, interacting in group discussion regarding our academic writing improves our skills and the teacher will guide us how to write and correct our mistakes and how to manage them to write in the right way.</p> <p>To improve my writing, to know what my mistakes are and how to fix them.</p>	<p>Yes I made a research this semester and I was about strategies of learning more about academic writing. So the best strategy group discussion and work in group because group discussion make you more confident and you will share your ideas with your friends and you will be not afraid from anything just speaking. I mean your discussion with your friend is not like your discussion with your teacher. Yeah group discussion is the best strategy in academic writing course.</p>	<p>Yes because when I work in group I learn many things that I cannot learn them when I work alone by myself. When I participant with my partner I can learn from her/him new ideas and I can see how I can come with these ideas and see how he/ she have these ideas and not me so I have to exchange our knowledge together.</p>	<p>I would like to show my friends my family to give me a feedback so I can improve myself but I did not like to disuse my work in group work like the discussion in classroom because I feel I made a lot of mistakes. I do not know may be I hesitate to show them my writing so, I don't feel confident to show them or discuss my writing especially my mistakes, my weak points. I don't like to show them. I like to keep them hidden.</p>
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19	<p><b>Which kind of activities in academic writing do you feel more comfortable and confident?</b></p>	<p>Oh. Alright, our academic teacher gives us after approximately every lecture a paper that includes some questions about the lecture and we try to answer them. I think its better way so we can understand more and apply what we have understood and then the teacher gives us time to write our answers and then our teacher collect them, correct them and give us feedback. So, we understand better and if we do mistakes, she comes to us and asks to write them better or to re-correct.</p>	<p>I feel more confident and comfortable when work together and discuss our ideas in a group.</p>	<p>writing a researcher is think is more practical way because I learn from it a lot especially in the term of time for example when a teacher ask you to write a research and push you by giving you a limit time to write it you will work hard and get the benefit quickly. I think the activity from our teacher itself for example collecting paper and put sentences in correct order is the most confident activity.</p>	<p>activities, the once which the teacher share our facts like when we draw in the board and she tells us to brain storm our ideas and collect them I like to share my ideas because we all have different ideas because when we brain storm my own may be I think about something the others did not think about it or may be the other think about something I did not think about it. So we share and improve our writing in this way. We did one of the essays like that and I get the best essay.</p>
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20	<b>How does it contribute towards the development of your academic writing skill?</b>	Actually I took the academic writing course recently. So I think I found myself improved when I wrote my last research paper. I found myself write in better way. I know how to write and I know how to manage my thoughts and I think academic writing course help me how to write in more academic way not in normal way but how to write in high level.	Academic writing skill is comprehension subject. It includes everything that we need in our writing such as structure, organization, vocabulary, grammar as well as cohesion.	I have learned a lot especially the rules of academic writing because when you write with good rules in your academic writing like a correct word order, punctuations and grammatical structure you will develop your academic writing very good.	It makes me once to push myself to do my best showing where I am good at and where I am not good at. I actually do care when I do my mistakes and do care about what my teacher think. So, my overall attitude is some hesitation and some excitement.
<i>H</i>	<b>Managed classroom</b>	WESTERN CAPE			
21	<b>Please comment on the way how the lecturer</b>	Ok. It was kind of presentation. She gives a presentation. She first starts the topic.	She explains the subject or the lesson that she is giving using the projector which is	Well our teacher has good experience. I have learned a lot from	She manages it very good. She uses a lot of technology for example slides. She uses also all

	<p><b>managed the classroom.</b></p>	<p>Then she asks us about the topic if we know anything about it to fresh our backgrounds information. Then she starts to present her topic and gives examples. After she finishes her presentation, she asks us if we understand the whole presentation and if we did not understand, she asks us to ask her any question or anything anything and she then answers us and gives us time to think. Then sometimes not on all the classes she gives us a paper. It was about questions about</p>	<p>very clear. Here way to explain to the class is very good for me. She explains and then if the students have any questions she gives them a time to ask her if they want. They can raise their hand and ask and share their ideas about the course. sometimes we have to talk because she will ask us what we think about this and what we think about that. Every student have to share especially after doing an assignment. Everyone must tell and say what was his/her assignment about and</p>	<p>her. She gives us a story in separate sentences and asks us to write them together. We did that a lot. We organize and write some papers together. We work in groups and make discussion about some things and make new ideas among ourselves.</p>	<p>school techniques like correct our writing mistakes by replacing our papers. like I give my paper to my classmate and she gives me her paper and we correct each other`s writing and revise it and we add some notes and advises like which your punctuations I also write this which your because punctuations are important and the weak point in my writing is punctuation. She manages it very nice. We all love her a lot.</p>
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		the topic and that help us to improve our positions and our understanding.	tell us about the steps that made in his/her mind before starting writing a first draft.  We have to give a first draft check it and have a feedback about it and then we grow up our mistakes.		
22	<b>Would you like to add anything?</b>	I would like just say that academic writing course with really an interesting and at the same time important experiences for me. It was like improvements. I was like something I need it. I know how to write but was not writing in the right way but academic writing course helps me how	May be academic writing must have more branches. I mean Like academic writing 1, academic writing 2, and academic writing 3 to improve ourselves better.	I want just say if you want to achieve your writing you have to push your time because the hard you study and push your time the more you achieve and improve your academic writing.	No, thanks

		to write, how to manage my thoughts in everything.			
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## APPENDIX 5: LECTURERS' INTERVIEWS

### INTERVIEW SAMPLE FOR LECTURERS

**Dear lecturer could you please answer the following questions.**

1. What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?
2. Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?
3. Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?
4. As a lecturer in academic writing in the Department of English Language, could you share with me your understanding of the need to develop students' academic literacy and in particular academic writing?
5. What are the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching of academic literacy in the Department of English Language and at the university?
6. What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?
7. How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?
8. What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?
9. Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?
10. How does the students' prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?
11. Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it were taught.
12. Is academic writing in English and academic writing in other disciplines also taught?
13. What is your own view about the development of academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?
14. Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?
15. Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university of is it an issue of concern in Department of English Language?
16. Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?
17. What is the duration of the module or modules?

18. How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?
19. Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?
20. Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are envisaged from it.
21. In your opinion are the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.
22. Please explain how the development of academic writing is sustained in the Department of English Language.
23. What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?
24. How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?
25. How do student learn to write the various academic genres?
26. If you had to choose one area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?
27. What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?
28. What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?
29. How is academic writing as social practices important and helpful?
30. Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?
31. What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?
32. Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?

## INTERVIEW WITH LECTURER 1 (H1)

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?

**Interviewee:** Understanding and use a good range of academic vocabulary, being able to identify the text genre.

**Interviewer:** Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?

**Interviewee:** first providing them with instructions and then asking them to work together in class and then work individually plus extra exercises at home... then providing them with constructive feedback.

**Interviewer:** Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?

**Interviewee:** It helps them express their understanding and opinions in a formal and academic style. It provides them with essential skills for their future career such as analyzing text genre, interpreting and presenting graphic information ..etc)... it helps them to complete their assignments in other courses successfully.

**Interviewer:** As a lecturer in academic writing in the Department of English Language, could you share with me your understanding of the need to develop students' academic literacy and in particular academic writing?

**Interviewer:** What are the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching of academic literacy in the Department of English Language and at the university?

**Interviewee:** Understanding the purpose of assignment students are asked to perform and giving students clear instructions concerning the question issue.

**Interviewer:** What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?

**Interviewee:** working in small groups and communicate with other colleagues and providing peer feedback in class activities and exercises can help students understand and academic writing assignments and skills.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** They need more practice and clear instructions,, they need to improve other language skills to improve writing skills such as reading and listening

**Interviewer:** What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?

**Interviewee:** finding appropriate academic vocabulary...formal style ... lack of reading skill which can help improve writing skill ...

**Interviewer:** Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?

**Interviewee:** No, they haven't

**Interviewer:** How does the students' prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?

**Interviewee:** I don't think they have such prior knowledge. However, they might be influenced by the use of Arabic vocabulary and style.

**Interviewer:** Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it were taught.

**Interviewee:** No it would not.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing in English and academic writing in other disciplines also taught?

**Interviewee:** No it is not

**Interviewer:** What is your own view about the development of academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?

**Interviewee:** Actually I have no idea.

**Interviewer:** Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Actually I have no idea.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university of is it an issue of concern in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** It could be,,,, I can see several meetings among university instructors including Department of English Language staff concerning general issues in education and society.

**Interviewer:** Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes they have.

**Interviewer:** What is the duration of the module or modules?

**Interviewee:** almost 3 months

**Interviewer:** How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** two modules

**Interviewer:** Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes, there are

**Interviewer:** Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are envisaged from it.

**Interviewee:** To develop the students into university-caliber writers capable of exploring their opinions, discussing their ideas, and sharing their experiences through written communications particularly expository and argumentative essays. It also equips students with practical and efficient writing strategies necessary for the development of an academic and sophisticated prose style.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion is the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.

**Interviewee:** In the end of the semester, some students can write effectively however, majority of them cannot. This might be because of the old fashioned view of writing courses. Students are always thinking of passing exams and the department views the course like any other course: delivering lectures and then doing exams.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the development of academic writing is sustained in the Department of English Language.

**Interviewee:** having this course each semester,,,,, asking different teachers teach this course,,,,, updating the course outlines after several semesters ,,,,

**Interviewer:** What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Only essay. Basically expository and argumentative essays

**Interviewer:** How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?

**Interviewee:** essays ... short paragraphs (descriptive and narrative)

**Interviewer:** How do student learn to write the various academic genres?

**Interviewee:** Perform class activities and exercises.. and homework assignments.

**Interviewer:** If you had to choose one area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Writing short paragraphs based on their reading or previous experience (analysis and reflection) .I feel this can help students improve their academic skills by focusing on developing their academic skills and expressing their view in an academic style.

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?

**Interviewee:** Sharing different experiences and making reflection in a more effective way.

**Interviewer:** What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?

**Interviewee:** I prefer the process approach where students are asked to perform several tasks before accomplishing the final draft of their assignments... This can develop other skills in thinking, editing, proofreading....etc

**Interviewer:** How is academic writing **as social practices** important and helpful?

**Interviewee:** By seeing academic writing as a means of communication, students will be aware of the importance of sharing and expressing their thoughts effectively using academic style and appropriate vocabulary to fulfill their intended meaning.

**Interviewer:** Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Academic writing has a nature of sharing thoughts and experiences among students. This can go beyond the classroom environment by writing about their life experiences and people around them.

**Interviewer:** What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?



**Interviewee:** Giving clear and direct instructions before asking students to perform or write any assignments.. Giving them models of compositions written by students and ask them to evaluate them and giving feedback to each other. Classroom and homework assignments are often my own concern in teaching any writing course.

**Interviewer:** Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** It is important to encourage students practice writing in classroom and at home.... setting clear purposes and objectives can help a lot ... Practice makes perfect.



## INTERVIEW WITH LECTURER 2(H2)

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?

**Interviewee:** It is the ability to recognise the different parts of a text and be able to achieve coherence via an academic text parts.

**Interviewer:** Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?

**Interviewee:** I can play the role of a facilitator when it comes to teaching students how to write a well-developed piece of writing, as I insist on teaching them each part of an academic and how to connect them together.

**Interviewer:** Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?

**Interviewee:** I think that academic writing is essential for academic success for students because they are required to compose different types of writing including essays and research papers.

**Interviewer:** As a lecturer in academic writing in the Department of English Language, could you share with me your understanding of the need to develop students' academic literacy and in particular academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Students in the department of English need to be academically literate as they are required –as I mentioned above- to accomplish academic assignments. However, academic literacy cannot be the need of university students only, it might be important when working in a company for writing business letters or reports for example.

**Interviewer:** What are the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching of academic literacy in the Department of English Language and at the university?

What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?

**Interviewer:** How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Academic writing in the department of English starts when lecturers teach students how to write paragraphs, then they start learning how to write academic essays including sub-skills as citing information from outside sources and paraphrasing.

**Interviewer:** What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?

**Interviewee:** As an academic writing instructor, the most common problem in the teaching process is that students find it difficult to separate the informal language and the formal language. Also, I faced some difficulties in teaching them how to be objective, as they usually infer 'I, you, we' in their academic essays which might be inappropriate to use in academic writing.

**Interviewer:** Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?

**Interviewee:** Actually no. They are specialized in English from the first semester and enrolled in the Arabic language course as a general subject.

**Interviewer:** How does the students' prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?

**Interviewee:** Students might have been taught how to write academically in Arabic in high schools. Even though the style of writing might be different in both languages, students will keep inferring their first language when writing academic essays in English.

**Interviewer:** Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it were taught.

**Interviewee:** If academic writing skills were taught in Arabic, students might be influenced by the way of writing essays in Arabic when it comes to writing in English. One aspect of that influence might be starting an introductory paragraph in an essay with a very general sentence. This is used in Arabic academic writing, while in English academic writing the opening sentence shouldn't be too general, yet it should directly refer to the topic.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing in English and academic writing in other disciplines also taught?

**Interviewer:** What is your own view about the development of academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?

**Interviewee:** Sorry, I have no idea about the way of teaching in other departments.

**Interviewer:** Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?

**Interviewee:** If those departments are LANGUAGE departments, yes they must have a view about academic writing in their major.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university or is it an issue of concern in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** I think they might have a little idea about the way to write academically in their major.

**Interviewer:** Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes, of course academic writing is an essential module taught in the faculty of Arts, Alzzytuna, Libya for the fourth semester students. It is a pre-requisite for an advanced course, taught in 6<sup>th</sup> semester, which is creative writing.

**Interviewer:** What is the duration of the module or modules?

**Interviewee:** The duration of the module depends on whether it is divided into two parts or just one part. If the module is only one part then the duration of which is one semester. Otherwise, the duration of the course is two semesters.

**Interviewer:** How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** For this semester, I teach one course 'academic writing' as there is a big number of students enrolled in the course (actually four groups). I experienced teaching two modules in the same semester, this depends on the number of students and the availability of teaching hours.

**Interviewer:** Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sometimes two teachers co-teach the same course.

**Interviewer:** Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are envisaged from it.

**Interviewee:** By the end of the course, students will be able to write academic essays effectively, learn how to include relevant materials from outside sources, quote and paraphrase using reporting verbs, and to write research papers about several topics.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion are the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.

**Interviewee:** For me, most of the outcomes are achieved if the course plan was done in the appropriate way. A copy of the course description is submitted to the department at the beginning of each semester. Students should be informed that there are basic aims to be achieved during the duration of the semester.

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the development of academic writing is sustained in the Department of English Language.

**Interviewee:** This can be done when teachers try to vary the course contents in every semester according of students' specific needs as we can never know whether ALL the students enrolled in the course are of the same level and whether they have the same needs.

**Interviewer:** What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?

The most focused genres taught in the department are writing essays, formal letters and reflective diaries.

**Interviewer:** How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?

**Interviewee:** The way of teaching differs according to the teacher. The assessment might be of two kinds, either via exams of producing written assignments for different genres.

**Interviewer:** How do student learn to write the various academic genres?

In my point of view, the most effective way is practising writing any kind of the writing genre taught several time and producing more than one draft.

**Interviewer:** If you had to choose one area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?

**Interviewee:** I will choose the most problematic one: paraphrasing and summarizing. According to my experience as an instructor of academic writing, students find it difficult to practice these two aspects of academic writing and they need several classes to be able to master them.

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?

**Interviewer:** What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?

**Interviewer:** How is academic writing as social practices important and helpful?

**Interviewer:** Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?

**Interviewer:** What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** I usually try to use materials as interesting as possible, and the activities vary according to the type of the course.

**Interviewer:** Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I would like to say that academic writing teachers should always bear in mind that the individual differences between students play a major role in all kinds of teaching especially writing. Students need to submit more than one draft and teachers should be patient in checking those drafts.



### INTERVIEW WITH LECTURER 3 (N3)

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?

**Interviewee:** If I talk about academic literacy in relation to teaching writing 3 at the faculty of education in the Department of English Language, students, for example, should distinguish between texts that express opinions from arguments and process and descriptive, cause an effect, the language used in each type. They should be able to understand for instance what makes the text coherent....etc.

**Interviewer:** Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?

**Interviewee:** For example in last lecture, we learned how to make and evaluate an outline for an essay. I asked student to prepare one and then students took turns to receive feedback about their work. Other ways could be verbal comments I provide while lecturing or analyzing examples of written work to improve their understanding about the item or issue being studied.

**Interviewer:** Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?

**Interviewee:** Writing is important to assess students' learning, it also encourages their creativity. When students write, they learn new vocabularies, new styles and genres.

**Interviewer:** As a lecturer in academic writing in the Department of English Language, could you share with me your understanding of the need to develop students' academic literacy and in particular academic writing?

**Interviewer:** What are the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching of academic literacy in the Department of English Language and at the university?

**Interviewee:** I couldn't understand the question

**Interviewer:** What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?

**Interviewee:** I have no idea

**Interviewer:** How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Some students have a good command of writing in English language, however, the majority, are weak.

**Interviewer:** What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?

**Interviewee:** The level of students who passed the previous semester is to some extent weak. They have difficulty constructing a single sentence.

**Interviewer:** Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** How does the students' prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?

**Interviewee:** When it comes to writing paragraphs and essays for example, students generally translate from Arabic to English. This can be clearly seen from their writing styles.

**Interviewer:** Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it were taught.

**Interviewee:** Although the Arabic modules which are taught during their university

**Interviewee:** study has no relationship with writing in English, the way the student's write, their form and the use of vocabulary is clearly affected by their native language which is Arabic.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing in English and academic writing in other disciplines also taught?

**Interviewee:** I'm afraid I have no idea if it is taught.

**Interviewer:** What is your own view about the development of academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?

**Interviewee:** This is the first time I teach academic writing. I am afraid I have no answer to this question.

**Interviewer:** Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?

**Interviewee:** To be honest, I don't know.



**Interviewer:** Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university or is it an issue of concern in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** I believe it is an issue of concern.

**Interviewer:** Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** What is the duration of the module or modules?

**Interviewee:** 3 months

**Interviewer:** How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Two modules.

**Interviewer:** Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are envisaged from it.

**Interviewee:** They will be writing academically and share other in the academic discussing.

**Interviewer:** In your opinion are the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.

**Interviewee:** I don't think the outcome are fully achieved because a lot of students who were supposed to have passed learning how to write a paragraph are still struggling to construct a single sentence so the gap I believe is in the previous semesters. How students pass their exams? were the questions so easy or they cheated in the day of the exam? As I have recently move to this faculty, I myself trying to figure out WHY?

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the development of academic writing is sustained in the Department of English Language.

**Interviewee:** Provide a course syllabus and materials and change them from time to time.

**Interviewer:** What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Just writing essays

**Interviewer:** How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?

**Interviewee:** The main purpose of teaching my module is for students to learn how to write essays and know types of essays. As far as I am concerned, I give them sample essays from books and we analyze them in terms of how the introduction written, does it have a thesis statement. Is the controlling idea in the thesis statement fully developed in the body paragraphs. Of course we examine coherence and cohesion as well and the connectors depending on the essay type. Considering assessment, We have three examinations. First mid-term exam, second mid-term exam and a final exam. In addition to classroom assignments.

**Interviewer:** How do student learn to write the various academic genres?

**Interviewee:** Each semester focuses on specific areas of learning writing.

**Interviewer:** If you had to choose one area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?

**Interviewee:** As this is the first time for me to teach writing, I would prefer to teach the structure of sentences because students have difficulty to construct a single sentence. I would like to start teaching writing one and then two to see the result of my teaching. With this weak level of the students, I am not satisfied.

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?

**Interviewee:** No answer

**Interviewer:** What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?

**Interviewee:** I use both process approach and genre approach. I provide students texts with examples then analysis them. After that I ask them to writing a new text and using the four steps of process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.

**Interviewer:** How is academic writing as social practices important and helpful?

**Interviewee:** No answer

**Interviewer:** Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** I don't know.

**Interviewer:** What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** The Department of English Language assigned a book to teach the module but the book doesn't cover the course description, accordingly, I am collecting materials from various writing books to cover the course objectives.

**Interviewer:** Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Writing is not an easy skill to learn. It is a gift and a talent from God. Therefore, teaching this skill requires patience.



#### INTERVIEW WITH LECTURER 4 (N4)

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?

**Interviewee:** It is the ability to understand a range of academic vocabulary in context, interpret and use them in the context.

**Interviewer:** Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?

**Interviewee:** First I addresses with a whole class. Then offer examples of academic writing related to the practices. After that ask Students work in paper. And give them feedback then involves students in whole class discussion The high level of poor students regarding academic writing skill in the department.

**Interviewer:** Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?

**Interviewee:** Academic writing is necessary for students to learn to improve their ability to write academically, when they to write a text in a forging language. Help students feel more confident while write in English.

**Interviewer:** As a lecturer in academic writing in the Department of English Language, could you share with me your understanding of the need to develop students' academic literacy and in particular academic writing?

**Interviewer:** What are the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching of academic literacy in the Department of English Language and at the university?

**Interviewer:** What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?

**Interviewee:** What students write and how they write and interact in social setting.

**Interviewer:** How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** It develops students` abilities to write essays, reports, presentation and research peppers in academic style.

**Interviewer:** What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?

**Interviewee:** The high level of poor students regarding academic writing skill in the department.

**Interviewer:** Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?

**Interviewee:** No they have not

**Interviewer:** How does the students' prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?

**Interviewee:** They immediately translate their writing from L1 to L2.

**Interviewer:** Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it were taught.

**Interviewee:** I think when students write thing in L1 and write in L2. yes language one affects their writing in foreign language.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing in English and academic writing in other disciplines also taught?

**Interviewer:** What is your own view about the development of academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?

**Interviewee:** So, I am not sure about them

**Interviewer:** Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?

**Interviewee:** No idea sorry.

**Interviewer:** Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university of is it an issue of concern in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes it is.

**Interviewer:** Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes

**Interviewer:** What is the duration of the module or modules?

**Interviewee:** 3 semester each semester three months.

**Interviewer:** How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Two modules

**Interviewer:** Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Yes

**Interviewer:** Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are envisaged from it.

**Interviewee:** During the course students have the ability to communicate and interact among each other, do work together and write their writing activity.

and at the end they learn how to write their academic essays

**Interviewer:** In your opinion are the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.

**Interviewee:** Its depends some students pass the exams and get the benefit whereas other no. its depends on the student`s attitude in studying the course

**Interviewer:** Please explain how the development of academic writing is sustained in the Department of English Language.

**Interviewee:** Supporting AW teachers in a variety of academic writing materials to set goals to track of development. And design the resources to support undergraduate level academic writing skills.

**Interviewer:** What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?

**Interviewee:** Academic writing essays.

**Interviewer:** How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?

**Interviewee:** Teaching students the steps of how to write academic paragraphs first, then teach them how to write essays. The assessment giving on their participation in the class and their writing inside and outside the class. Two exams and on their writing essays.

**Interviewer:** How do student learn to write the various academic genres?

**Interviewee:** Actually with students` classroom interaction among themselves and with their teacher, doing academic discussion in different topics, homework and feedback.es the will learn.

**Interviewer:** If you had to choose one area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Writing a texts and get the feedback to improve their writing.

**Interviewer:** What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?

**Interviewee:** The providing of feedback of students' written work presents brilliant chance to contribute to development students' writing.

**Interviewer:** What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?

**Interviewee:** Just process approach to give students more feedback to improve their AW.

**Interviewer:** How is academic writing as social practices important and helpful?

**Interviewer:** Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** Student share their interpretations and understandings regarding specific topic in a classroom.

**Interviewer:** What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?

**Interviewee:** There is no specific book recommending using in the department, I also check outside resources to provide students with useful activity

**Interviewer:** Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?

**Interviewee:** No no thank you

**APPENDIX 6: SUMMARY OF TRANSCRIPTS OF LECTURER'S INTERVIEWS**

**Table 5:** *Summary of Transcripts of Lecturers' Interviews*

S/N	Topic / question	Summary response: lecturers' interviews			
		lecturer1	lecturer 2	lecturer 3	lecturer 4
<b>A</b>	<b><i>Lecturers' understanding and important of academic literacy</i></b>				
<b>Q1</b>	<b>What is your understanding of academic literacy and its value and importance?</b>	Understanding and use a good range of academic vocabulary, being able to identifying the text gender.	It is the ability to recognise the different parts of a text and be able to achieve coherence via an academic text parts.	If I talk about academic literacy in relation to teaching writing 3 at the faculty of education in the Department of English Language, students, for example, should distinguish between texts that express opinions from arguments and process and	It is the ability to understand a range of academic vocabulary in context, interpret and use them in the context.



				<p>descriptive, cause an effect, the language used in each type.</p> <p>They should be able to understand for instance what makes the text coherent....etc.</p>	
<b>Q2</b>	<p><b>What do you or your colleagues understand by the notion of academic literacy as a social practice?</b></p>	<p>working in small groups and communicate with other colleagues and providing peer feedback in class activities and exercises can help students understand and academic writing</p>	<p>Students working together in a classroom and share and express their ideas.</p>	<p>Students play together in classroom activity, share their thinking and discuss them.</p> <p>Correct their feedback in small groups.</p>	<p>What students write and how they write and interact in social setting.</p>

		assignments and skills.			
<b>Q3</b>	<b>How would you describe the academic writing skills of the students in the Department of English Language?</b>	They need more practice and clear instructions,, they need to improve other language skills to improve writing skills such as reading and listening	Academic writing in the department of English starts when lecturers teach students how to write paragraphs, then they start learning how to write academic essays including sub-skills as citing	Some students have a good command of writing in English language, however, the majority, are weak.	It develops students` abilities to write essays, reports, presentation and research peppers in academic style.

			information from outside sources and paraphrasing.		
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Why in your view is academic writing an important skill for students to command?</b>	It helps them express their understanding and opinions in a formal and academic style. It provides them with essential skills for their future career such as analyzing text gender, interpreting and presenting graphic	I think that academic writing is essential for academic success for students because they are required to compose different types of writing including essays and research papers. Also they need it to improve their ability to write coherent essays.	Writing is important to assess students' learning, it also encourages their creativity. When students write, they learn new vocabularies, new styles and genres. Also, help them to develop strategies for writing different rhetorical modes.	Academic writing is necessary for students to learn to improve their ability to write academically, when they to write a text in a forging language. Help students feel more confident while write in English.

		information ..etc)... it helps them to complete their assignments in other courses successfully.			
B	<i>Developing academic writing</i>				
<b>Q5</b>	<b>Please explain how the development of academic writing is</b>	having this course each semester,,,,, asking different teachers teach this course ,,, updating	This can be done when teachers try to vary the course contents in every semester according of	Provide a course syllabus and materials and change them from time to time.	Supporting AW teachers in a variety of academic writing materials to set goals to track of

	<b>sustained in the Department of English Language.</b>	the course outlines after several semesters ,,,,	students' specific needs as we can never know whether ALL the students enrolled in the course are of the same level and whether they have the same needs.		development. And design the resources to support undergraduate level academic writing skills.
<b>Q6</b>	<b>What is your understanding of the development of academic literacy as a social practice in developing critical thinking?</b>	Sharing different experiences and making reflection in a more effective way.	Students in the department of English need to be academically literate as they are required – as I mentioned above- to accomplish academic assignments. However, academic literacy cannot be the need of university students only, it might	No answer	The providing of feedback of students` written work presents brilliant chance to contribute to development students` writing.

			be important when working in a company for writing business letters or reports for example.		
<b>Q7</b>	<b>What are the different approaches to academic writing development? Please explain which one you prefer and why?</b>	I prefer the process approach where students are asked to perform several tasks before accomplishing the final draft of their assignments... This can develop other skills in thinking, editing, proofreading....etc	I prefer process approach to see students` improvement of writing.	I use both process approach and genre approach. I provide students texts with examples then analysis them. After that I ask them to writing a new text and using the four steps of process approach. To be able to use the prewriting techniques and follow the steps of the writing process.	Just process approach to give students more feedback to improve their AW.
<b>Q8</b>	<b>If you had to choose one</b>	Writing short paragraphs based	I will choose the most problematic one:	As this is the first time for me to teach writing,	Writing a texts and get the feedback to

	<p><b>area to concentrate on for developing academic writing which would you choose and why? What are the areas that you would choose to develop in students' academic writing?</b></p>	<p>on their reading or previous experience (analysis and reflection) .I feel this can help students improve their academic skills by focusing on developing their academic skills and expressing their view in an academic style. Also at the end of the course student will be able to write different types of paragraphs with different format.</p>	<p>paraphrasing and summarizing. According to my experience as an instructor of academic writing, students find it difficult to practice these two aspects of academic writing and they need several classes to be able to master them.</p>	<p>I would prefer to teach the structure of sentences because students have difficulty to construct a single sentence. I would like to start teaching writing one and then two to see the result of my teaching. With this weak level of the students, I am not satisfied.</p>	<p>improve their writing.</p>
<p><b>C</b></p>	<p><b>Assist student and difficulties encountered by lecturers in teaching academic writing</b></p>				

Q9	<b>Please explain ways in which you assist students in developing academic literacy?</b>	first providing them with instructions and then asking them to work together in class and then work individually plus extra exercises at home... then providing them with constructive feedback.	I can play the role of a facilitator when it comes to teaching students how to write a well-developed piece of writing, as I insist on teaching them each part of an academic and how to connect them together.	For example in last lecture, we learned how to make and evaluate an outline for an essay. I asked student to prepare one and then students took turns to receive feedback about their work. Other ways could be verbal comments I provide while lecturing or analyzing examples of written work to improve their understanding about the item or issue being studied.	First I addresses with a whole class. then offer examples of academic writing related to the practices. After that ask Students work in paper. And give them feedback then involves students in whole class discussion
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Q10	<p><b>What are the difficulties faced by Libyan university EFL lecturers in teaching academic writing?</b></p>	<p>finding appropriate academic vocabulary...formal style ... lack of reading skill which can help improve writing skill ...</p>	<p>As an academic writing instructor, the most common problem in the teaching process is that students find it difficult to separate the informal language and the formal language. Also, I faced some difficulties in teaching them how to be objective, as they usually infer 'I, you, we' in their academic essays which might be inappropriate to use in academic writing.</p>	<p>The level of students who passed the previous semester is to some extent weak. They have difficulty constructing a single sentence</p>	<p>The high level of poor students regarding academic writing skill in the department.</p>
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<b>D</b>	<b>Teaching academic writing in Arabic L1 in the university and prior knowledge of academic writing in Arabic</b>				
Q11	<b>Have the students in the Department undertaken any academic modules in Arabic during their period of study at the university?</b>	No , they haven't	Actually no. They are specialized in English from the first semester and enrolled in the Arabic language course as a general subject.	No	No they have not
Q12	<b>How does the students' prior knowledge of academic</b>	I don't think they have such prior knowledge. However, they might be influenced by the use of Arabic vocabulary and style.	Students might have been taught how to write academically in Arabic in high schools. Even	When it comes to writing paragraphs and essays for example, students generally translate from Arabic to English. This	They immediately translate their writing from L1 to L2.

	<b>writing in Arabic influence their academic writing in English?</b>		though the style of writing might be different in both languages, students will keep inferring their first language when writing academic essays in English.	can be clearly seen from their writing styles.	
Q13	<b>Please comment how academic writing skills taught in Arabic would influence academic writing in English, if it</b>	No it would not.	If academic writing skills were taught in Arabic, students might be influenced by the way of writing essays in Arabic when it comes to writing in English. One aspect of that influence might be starting an	Although the Arabic modules which are taught during their university study has no relationship with writing in English, the way the student's write, their form and the use of vocabulary is clearly affected by their native language which is Arabic.	I think when students write thing in L1 and write in L2. yes language one affects their writing in foreign language.

	<b>were taught.</b>		<p>introductory paragraph in an essay with a very general sentence.</p> <p>This is used in Arabic academic writing, while in English academic writing the opening sentence shouldn't be too general, yet it should directly refer to the topic.</p>		
E	<i>Teaching academic writing in other departments in the university</i>				
Q14	<b>What is your own view about the development of</b>	Actually I have no idea.	Sorry, I have no idea about the way of teaching in other departments.	This is the first time I teach academic writing. I am afraid I have no	So, I am not sure about them.

	<b>academic writing and academic writing in other Departments?</b>			answer to this question.	
Q15	<b>Do other Departments have a view about academic writing?</b>	Actually I have no idea.	If those departments are LANGUAGE departments, yes they must have a view about academic writing in their major.	To be honest, I don't know.	No idea sorry.
<i>Academic writing modules and the Concerning about it in Department of English Language</i>					

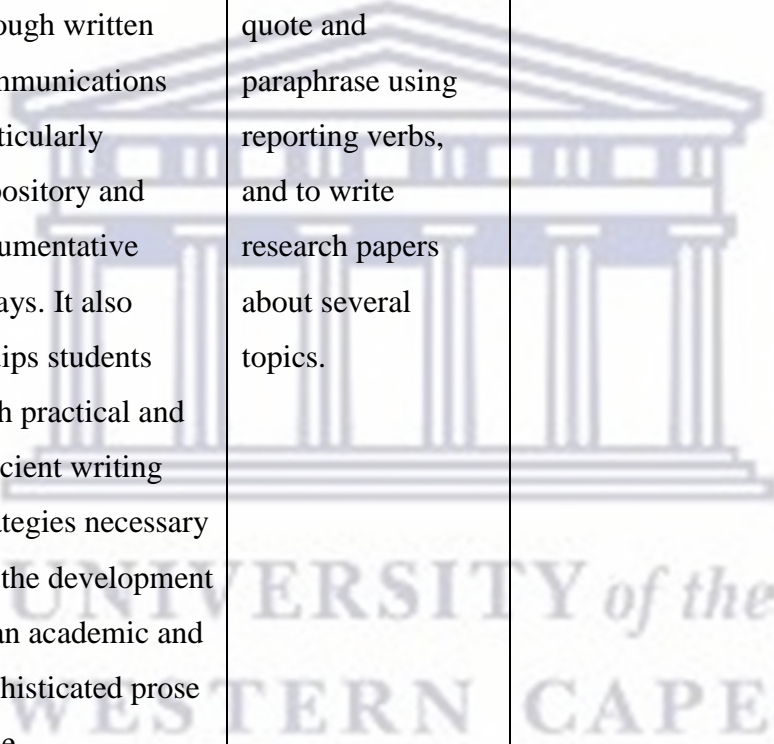
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Q16	<b>Does the Department of English Language have a module or modules on Academic writing offered to students in the Department of English Language?</b>	Yes they have.	Yes, of course academic writing is an essential module taught in the faculty of Arts, , Libya for the fourth semester students. It is a pre-requisite for an advanced course, taught in 6th semester, which is creative writing.	Yes.	Yes
Q17	<b>What is the duration of the module or modules?</b>	almost 3 months	The duration of the module depends on whether it is divided into two parts or just one part. If the module is only one part then the duration of	3 months	3 semesters each semester three months.

			<p>which is one semester.</p> <p>Otherwise, the duration of the course is 3 semesters.</p>		
Q18	<p><b>How many modules do you teach in Department of English Language?</b></p>	two modules	<p>For this semester, I teach one course 'academic writing' as there is a big number of students enrolled in the course (actually four groups). I experienced teaching two modules in the same semester, this depends on the number of students</p>	Two modules.	Two modules

			and the availability of teaching hours.		
Q19	<b>Are there other colleagues that teach academic writing in the Department of English Language?</b>	Yes, there are	Yes, sometimes two teachers co-teach the same course.	Yes.	Yes
Q20	<b>Please describe the purpose of the modules and outcomes that are</b>	To develop the students into university-caliber writers capable of exploring their	By the end of the course, students will be able to write academic essays effectively,	They will be writing academically and share other in the academic discussing.	During the course students have the ability to communicate and interact among each other, do work together



	<p><b>envisaged from it.</b></p>	<p>opinions, discussing their ideas, and sharing their experiences through written communications particularly expository and argumentative essays. It also equips students with practical and efficient writing strategies necessary for the development of an academic and sophisticated prose style.</p>	<p>learn how to include relevant materials from outside sources, quote and paraphrase using reporting verbs, and to write research papers about several topics.</p>		<p>and write their writing activity. And at the end they learn how to write their academic essays</p>
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Q21	<p><b>In your opinion is the module outcomes achieved or not. Please explain how you think these are understood by the Department and by the students as a whole.</b></p>	<p>In the end of the semester, some students can write effectively however, majority of them cannot. This might be because of the old fashioned view of writing courses. Students are always thinking of passing exams and the department views the course like any other course: delivering lectures and then doing exams.</p>	<p>For me, most of the outcomes are achieved if the course plan was done in the appropriate way. A copy of the course description is submitted to the department at the beginning of each semester. Students should be informed that there are basic aims to be achieved during the duration of the semester.</p>	<p>I don't think the outcome are fully achieved because a lot of students who were supposed to have passed learning how to write a paragraph are still struggling to construct a single sentence so the gap I believe is in the previous semesters. How students pass their exams? were the questions so easy or they cheated in the day of the exam? As I have recently move to this faculty,</p>	<p>Its dependents some students pass the exams and get the benefit whereas other no. its depends on the student`s attitude in studying the course .</p>
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				I myself trying to figure out WHY?	
G	<b>academic writing a social practice</b>				
Q22	<b>Is academic writing a social practice within the entire university of is it an issue of concern in</b>	It could be,,,, I can see several meetings among university instructors including Department of	I think they might have a little idea about the way to write academically in their major.	I believe it is an issue of concern	Yes it is.

	<b>Department of English Language?</b>	English Language staff concerning general issues in education and society.			
Q23	<b>How is academic writing as social practices important and helpful?</b>	By seeing academic writing as a means of communication, students will be aware of the importance of sharing and expressing their thoughts effectively using academic style and appropriate vocabulary to fulfill their intended meaning.	No answer	No answer	

<b>Q24</b>	<b>Please try and explain the social nature of academic writing?</b>	Academic writing has a nature of sharing thoughts and experiences among students. This can go beyond the classroom environment by writing about their life experiences and people around them.	AW as a social practices means students communicate and interact and express their thoughts in a social context.	Students express their opinions and views dealing with themselves and within their teachers in a classroom.	Student share their interpretations and understandings regarding specific topic in a classroom.
<b><i>Academic writing genres and materials of teaching academic writing</i></b>					
<b>Q25</b>	<b>What are the different writing genres taught in the Department of English Language?</b>	Only essay. Basically expository and argumentative essays	The most focused genres taught in the department are writing essays, formal letters and reflective diaries.	Just writing essays	Academic writing essays.

<p><b>Q26</b></p>	<p><b>How are the genres taught and assessed in the Department?</b></p>	<p>essays ... short paragraphs (descriptive and narrative). Assessment (classwork+homework) first exam and final exam.</p>	<p>The way of teaching differs according to the teacher. The assessment might be of two kinds, either via exams of producing written assignments for different genres.</p>	<p>The main purpose of teaching my module is for students to learn how to write essays and know types of essays. As far as I am concerned, I give them sample essays from books and we analyze them in terms of how the introduction written, does it have a thesis statement. Is the controlling idea in the thesis statement fully</p>	<p>Teaching students the steps of how to write academic paragraphs first, then teach them how to write essays. The assessment giving on their participation in the class and their writing inside and outside the class. Two exams and on their writing essays.</p>
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				<p>developed in the body paragraphs.</p> <p>Of course we examine coherence and cohesion as well and the connectors depending on the essay type.</p> <p>Considering assessment, We have three examinations.</p> <p>First mid-term exam, second mid-term exam and a final exam.</p> <p>In addition to classroom assignments.</p>	
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<b>Q27</b>	<b>How do student learn to write the various academic genres?</b>	Perform class activities and exercises, and homework assignments.	In my point of view, the most effective way is practicing writing any kind of the writing genre taught several time and producing more than one draft.	Each semester focuses on specific areas of learning writing.	Actually with students` classroom interaction among themselves and with their teacher, doing academic discussion in different topics, homework and feedback.es the will learn.

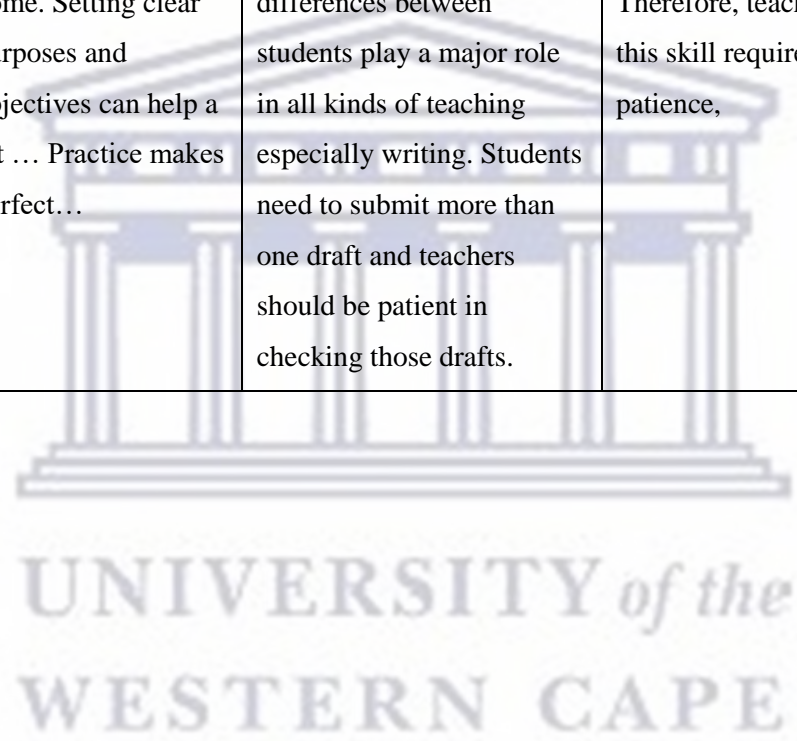


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WESTERN CAPE



<p><b>Q28</b></p>	<p><b>What is the quality of the learning materials, manuals and activities used in your teaching of fundamentals of academic writing?</b></p>	<p>There is no specific academic writing book from the department. I am Giving clear and direct instructions before asking students to perform or write any assignments.. Giving them models of compositions written be students and ask them to evaluate them and giving feedback to each other. Classroom and homework assignments are often my own concern in teaching any writing course.</p>	<p>There is no handbook available for academic writing, I usually try to use materials as interesting as possible, and the activities vary according to the type of the course.</p>	<p>The Department of English Language does not assign a book to teach the module accordingly, I am collecting materials from various writing books to cover the course objectives.</p>	<p>There is no specific book recommending using in the department, I also check outside resources to provide students with useful activity.</p>
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Q29	<b>Would you like to add anything concerning academic writing?</b>	It is important to encourage students practice writing in classroom and at home. Setting clear purposes and objectives can help a lot ... Practice makes perfect...	Yes, I would like to say that academic writing teachers should always bear in mind that the individual differences between students play a major role in all kinds of teaching especially writing. Students need to submit more than one draft and teachers should be patient in checking those drafts.	Writing is not an easy skill to learn. It is a gift and a talent from God. Therefore, teaching this skill requires patience,	No no thank you.
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## APPENDIX 7: STUDENTS' SCRIPTS

### Disadvantages of working part-time job for university students

Nowadays, most of university students take a part in part-time jobs. The life conditions drag them to seek for jobs to afford their tuitions. In spite of the benefits of part-time jobs for students, there are some negative consequences. Here are the most common disadvantages of part-time job for university students; the low salary, stress, and time consuming.

One disadvantage of working part-time job for university students, is the low payment. Most of part-time jobs do not pay sufficient salary to their employees. Because of that, students might struggle from financial problems such as; rent, electricity, and food supply. In addition, some students try to find another source of money to pay for the bills. Therefore, they either work extra hours or look for another work. So they spend more time at work rather than studying. To sum up, part time occupations do not offer the needed income to students, as result they spent over time working neglecting their courses.

Secondly, part-time job is the main cause of stress among college students.

Spending most of the day at work, students would be mentally stressed. They would be worried about their grades all the time. Even if they were in their classrooms, they would be anxious about their courses. Besides, students would be also physically stressed. Since they have to study and work nearly the whole day, they would come exhausted and fragile at the end of the day. And sometimes, they would have to stay late to revise for exam or do an assignment, so that they would be so tired the next morning. To recap, students who are working part-time job can be a victims of mental and physical stress.

Finally , working part-time job for university students is considered as time consuming. Since they have to spend half of day at work, students would not have appropriate time to study. They might not be able to do their homework or revise before the examinations. And that could be a main reason for their marks to start falling gradually. To add, being busy at work restrict students spare time. Therefore , they would not have time for themselves to go out with friends and family. Or to practice a hobby, watch a movie and learn new skills. In all , working part-time job distract students from their college study and narrow their free time.

In conclusion, part-time job has a variety of drawbacks for university students. First, the low salary that force students spend more time working rather than studying. As well, the stress that affects their health conditions and exhaust their minds. Besides , work consumes students time by diverting them from study and occupying their spare time. Any ways, university students should find the balance point between school and work to do well in both.

## 4B Reasons of Studying Abroad

Studying abroad is a great experience for students to discover a new spot of the world . This experience can open their eyes to a different side of the life . Moreover , studying abroad helps students to build an independent and confident personality . However , there are three common reasons among students to study abroad : getting high degree , the social life , and expert teachers .

To begin with , most of students consider studying abroad because they can get a high educational degree . The high degree increases the chance of getting a great future career. These days , most of work places , such as ; firms , universities , and organizations , prefer to hire employees with higher diploma . In addition , students with high certification are able to found their own business by their knowledge and experience . Gaining a high degree diploma extends the students knowledge in their majors . To get the high degree students work hard by doing researches and essays to pass courses so that they obtain a wide knowledge in their studying fields . To sum up , studying abroad offer students a high educational degree to get a proper future occupation and enhance students information about their majors .

let specifically about studying abroad only

Another reason why students want to study abroad is meeting new people with different culture . Some students decide to study abroad so that they can socialize with people of that country . They see it as a opportunity to practice the language with native speakers . So that they can know more about the language and improve themselves . For others , they see it as chance to know about that country culture . Thus , they can have a view of their lifestyle , for instance ; their customs , dishes , art and habits . Furthermore , they can go sightseeing to the remarkable places there . In short , many students determine studying abroad to socialize with people and know about their culture .

main idea  
↓  
social life (only)

Finally , for some students being taught by expert teachers can be a sufficient reason to study abroad . Most of specialist professors help students to level up their knowledge . For example ; they assign a high level curricula that suit students at this stage . Besides , professional professors might have a beneficial teaching methods to enable students to get a full knowledge about their majors . However , students look at their professors as an ideal person to learn from their experience . From that students can lean on them to get a reliable sources of information . In brief , studying abroad give the students an opportunity to learn from their teachers experience . ?

only studies abroad?

In conclusion , students have a variety of reasons to go abroad for studying . One main reason is the higher education diploma that offers a bright future . For others , studying abroad is chance to communicate with people of different backgrounds . Besides , it can be a great experience to get benefit from professional teachers . In spite of the reason , students should focus on their study to success even in their own country .

## Advantages of joining a university organization

Why should students consider joining a university organization? University is not only a place to get college diploma; it is a place where students can improve in both educationally and practically. Students can make college years as a forward step towards a successful life. During their time in the campus, they can gain experiences and enjoy themselves, too. They have the opportunity to join clubs or organizations to be a part of their university. There are a variety of benefits of joining a student university organization, the social life, self-improvement and the practical experience.

First, university organization is helpful for students social life. This experience is beneficial for students to gain social skills. By interacting with other members and work together as team. Furthermore, being a member of a university organization offer students the chance to take a part in social activities. Students can have a look at the wide world around them and know more about their society. That can give them the experience before they get involved in this type of life after graduation. In short, joining a student organization give them the opportunity to gain social skills and be more engaged in society activities.

Another advantage of joining a university organization is the self-improvement. Students can gain some communicative skills. For instance; they can learn how to talk and relate with other people of different cultures and countries. Besides, university organizations teach students how to manage their time to do their duty in proper way. So that, they would be able to balance between their school and organization responsibilities. To sum up, these organizations enable students to improve themselves, by training them on the communication skills and value each moment.

Finally, a university organizations provide students with the practical experience. For that, students can learn about their future career. These organizations give their members the chance to work and improve their abilities. So that they would be skilled in their fields. In fact, students can practice a hobby as well. Such as; drawing logos for a campaign or writing an advert for the organization. That help them to improve and become more creative. To sum up, with the membership of a campus organization, students can acquire enough experience of their future profession as well training their hobbies.

In conclusion, the university organizations offer students a great deal of advantages. It improves their social life by acquiring some skills of how to work with others as joining local activities. Beside to, the self-improvement for students by socializing with other mates and members as well as teach them the value of time. Moreover, joining such organizations give students the practical experience to practice a future career or free-time activity. College is really a significant experience in every student's life, so they should not attend it but they have to be a part of it.

What!

### Factors in choosing a university

Although some of high school students decide not to go to college, others do their best to figure out which university suit them after graduation. This is a serious lifetime decision that affects their future. So they have to think about all aspects to make the right choice. Majors, location, and the university qualifications are three main factors that students consider while selecting a university.

First, students go to a particular university that provides their majors. Mostly, students study their academic interest to be prepared for their future career. Thus, the graduation license in certain field, such as; medicine, law or politics, can determine what type of occupation to practice after graduation. In addition to, students go to the college where they can get an extensive knowledge in their fields. So that, they can practice and become more experienced in their majors. For instance; students who are interested in arts can attend art faculties to improve themselves. Nevertheless, majors are essential element to regard when choose a college, in order to get the occupation they want to work as fulfilled with practical experience.

Another factor that plays a part in the students decision to which university to go is the location. Some students decide to go to the nearby college. So that they can be surrounded by their family and friends. Or maybe they cannot commute to the university they wish to attend. However, others prefer to attend colleges away from their home. Probably, they are seeking for a higher degree that abroad universities can offer. Besides, they would like to be more independent and live by themselves. In short, the university location has an impact on students choice whether to go home or away university.

Finally, the qualification of the university is an essential factor to consider when decide which university to go. Universities are different from one another of their qualified teaching staff. In general, students are looking for better education. Therefore, they try to do research on which university can provide them the best. Besides to, the courses are significant reason that attract students attention. Apparently, there are a variety of different courses among universities. For students, it is important to know what are the subjects they are going to study at college. So that they can choose the university that offers the courses they are interested in. Such qualifications offered by a university, like; trained teachers and specialized courses both can guide students to where they like to get their diploma. *Concluding part*

In conclusion, there are three factors among students to regard when they select the faculty they want to attend. At first, they consider their majors to become what they like to work as and get a wide knowledge in that field. Then, the college location make them choose whether to study at local or overseas university. In addition, universities with qualified teachers and courses are definitely preferred by students. However, high school students should be aware to all these factors to make it worthy to study four years in the university they chose to go.

## Factors of choosing university

Students have a load of decisions to make during their senior year of high school. In this period they most often must decide what they are doing for career or how to get to career. A typical student will start think for a college or university to attend during this time. Planning for college can be one of the most exciting time in a young person's life, but it can also be stressful. There are many factors students consider before going to university such as the university reputation, graduate employment rates and the quality of the academic facilities.

At first the reputation of the universities. It's one of the most fateful times when students make a decisions, being studying in a bad reputation colleges means nothing but wasting a time. for many students the college reputation is very important in making that decisions. For smart students it would be difficult to find their way in colleges of bad reputation. Real students who want to concentrate on their study want to feel comfortable while studying. They also need to be surrounded by security and safety. Otherwise, they will not choose to study in to a particular university. One more reason is particularly related to the girls especially in our culture. Families usually consider the reputation of the colleges in the first place to allow their daughters to study in certain colleges. In addition reputation of universities means a lot to the students and families in making a fateful decision in the field of study.

Secondly, Coming to the most important factor for choosing colleges according to 2014's USA <sup>research</sup> people of different backgrounds rated 73% for the graduate employment rates as a main reason for students to choose a university. As we know students study and keep studying only to guarantee a bright future career and to build their way to success. Once students graduate from high school they will reach the point when they have to choose and decide the future. And in what field they are going to participate. Either languages, engineers or computer and so on. Normally almost of the students will be looking for the most rated employment field to study in. to sum up students in normal way will think about the future before going to a particular university.



## Ways technology helps university students

Can you imagine studying in 19<sup>th</sup> century without technology? throughout the history of education, technology has played a very important role in the students convenience-out of the many benefits, technology mainly consumes time, helps in group discussion and research.

To start with, technology has been invented to consume time and energy in the first place. It might be fun to imagine studying with a large number of books lying around on a table, but it is much harder to apply, instead of scanning a specific term in books, googling it is always time consuming and it provides us with different options. Also, a single message on mobile can inform you about the exam or lecture time, instead of troubling yourself and going to the college. in short, technology plays an important role in consuming students time.

What's more, technology introduce the idea of group studying via social networking. For example, it is seen even in our college that almost all the students share their thoughts and any important notes in a specific group for university students. Not only that, you do not have to know a person to get educational benefit, you can always enter even a foreign university to get knowledge. To sum up technology help students to share their thoughts easily in the nowadays.

Furthermore, research studies are much easier now to conduct with advanced technology. Nowadays, it's obligatory in almost all big universities to conduct a research paper and with internet. It has become easier than the traditional way, for instance, related studies can be found on the internet from all over the world, it can help you in the research because you: can take help from their ideas. In short, using technology help students to find their targets easily.

In conclusion, with time technology has taken over the world especially in terms of university education. It does not only consumes the time for the students, but also allows them to discuss their problem with other students and do the researches in much organized way.

Not Labeled

Finally, the quality of the academic facilities. For many students this is a main reason in choosing a university. As student you will not think about a college teacher, as only a teacher. They should consul with their students about career goals, offer advices and learning based on their professional experience. Help students to develop their strength and identify opportunities. Here is the point when the quality of teachers show up. So when students choose a facility they must take a good hard look into the quality of teachers. If the student already know what you are going to major in, then he/she should scrutinize the teacher that influence and support their abilities. Students should reveal and ask about the quality of teachers into particular university in order to get better educational career.

To sum up, The factors of choosing particular university is quite different from one student to another depending on whether or not students focusing on his/her study. Only the smart students will take their time thinking carefully about the decisions of choosing a university. Reputation of colleges, quality of teachers and rate of gradulators employments are common reasons for students in choosing universities. I recommend students to evaluate what aspects of college are needed in order to be happy as they go through colleges.

Three  
factors  
to summarize  
The three  
points

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H

## Studying abroad

Studying abroad may be one of the most beneficial experiences for a collage Too Short  
students. By studying abroad, students have the opportunity to study in a foreign  
nation and take in allure and culture of new land. Three main ideas.

The biggest reason you should consider a study abroad is the chance to see the Topic Set  
world. By studying abroad you will experience a brand new country with incredible  
new outlooks, customs and activities. One of the benefits of studying abroad is to  
see a different nature, museums and landmarks of your host nation. In addition,  
when you're abroad, you can travel to see neighboring countries as well. Conclusion

Another reason you might consider studying abroad is for the chance to experience  
different styles of education. By enrolling in a study abroad program, you'll have the  
chance to see a side of your major that you may not have been exposed to at home.  
Education is the centerpiece of any study abroad trip, it is after all a study abroad  
program, and choosing the right school is very important factor.

Finally when you finish your abroad program and return home, you will return with a  
new perspective on culture, language skills, a great education, and a willingness to  
learn. Needless to say, all of these are very attractive to future employers. If you can  
relate, you will find that a local education will be very valuable when searching for a  
potential job in that country.

To sum up, while studying abroad offers great opportunities for a better future, it  
also has the challenges that we must try our best to overcome what happened to  
make our dream come true. Therefore, if you have a chance I think you should take  
that chance to study abroad.

Don't take  
you !!

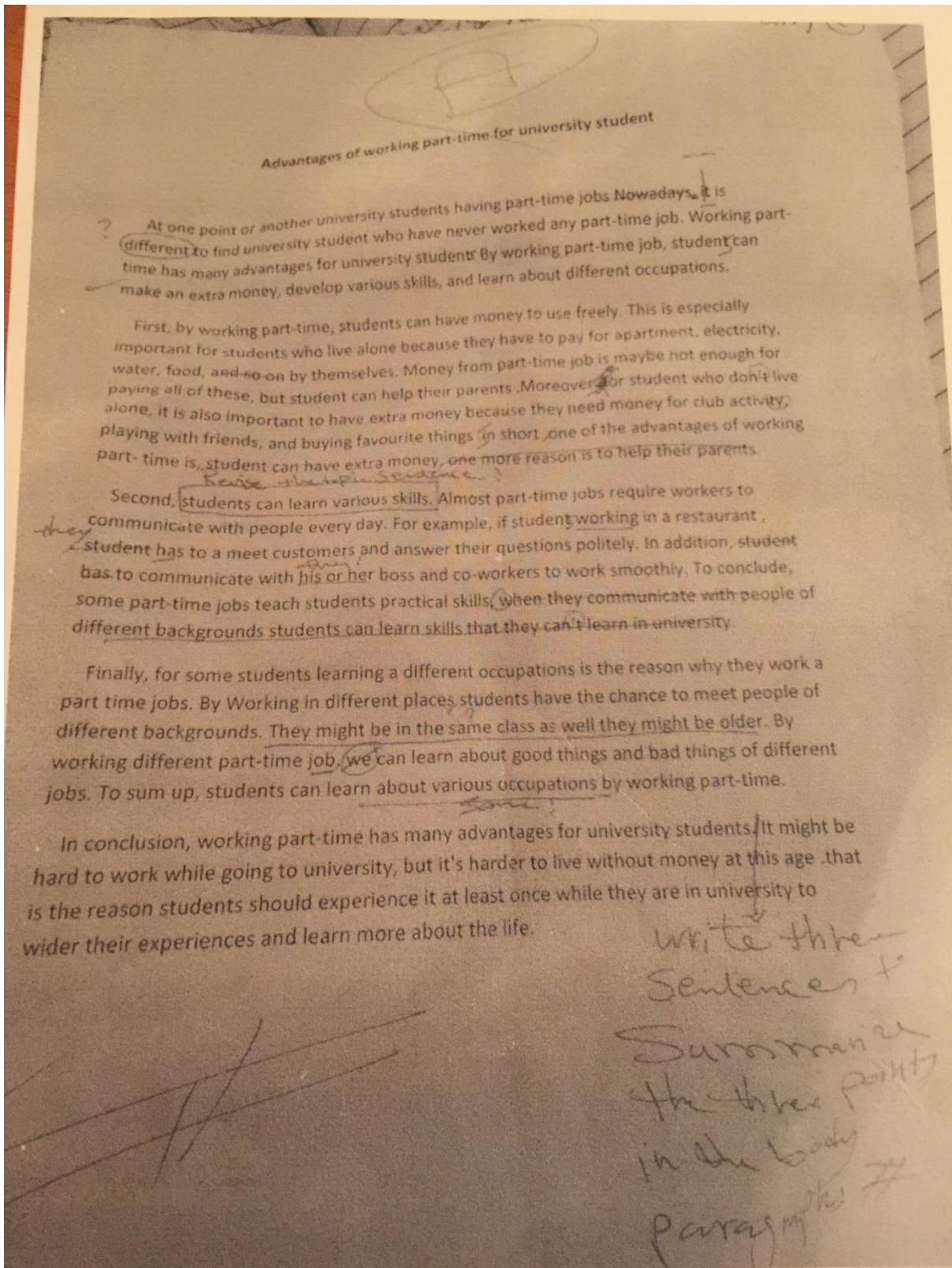
A very good essay, but you needed to write a closing sentence. Reasons for studying abroad  
For each body paragraph

Studying abroad is one of the most beneficial experiences for a student. By studying abroad, students have a chance to get a high education, change their social life, find new interests.

The first reason why students prefer studying abroad is that they can get highly education and they also can learn a number of languages and learn new education system.

Another other reason which is one of the benefits of studying abroad is <sup>the</sup> opportunity to meet new friends from different backgrounds. By <sup>? where?</sup> studying there, ~~the~~ student will live and study with many students from many countries with different language.

The last reason is to find new interests and discover their talents, studying in a different country offers many new activities and interests that <sup>students</sup> you may have had never know, it before.



## Reasons for studying abroad

Studying abroad is mostly important for a better CV but there are also personal reasons that can change a person. Many students learn new things and live a different lifestyle when they are abroad than when they were home. Many moments are cherished during the years of studying abroad. It is an exciting experience that many people wish to fulfill. Students making new friends, being self-reliant and trying out new cultural foods are three of the ~~best~~ reasons for students to study abroad.

First, making new friends is one of the exciting reasons for students to study abroad. They will meet other students from university. Like their class mates that they can get really close with and help each other with any class work. Students usually have a roommate during the time when they are studying abroad. Most students will get really close with their roommate and will have lots of memories together and are commonly still be in contact after they get back home. In short, students will enjoy meeting the variety of different people during their time abroad.

Another reason for students to study abroad is it increases them to be self-reliant. They will rely on themselves to do house chores. For example they will do their laundry, wash their dishes and clean their apartment by themselves. They will arrange and organize everything on their own. For example, setting their alarm clock, making appointments, paying their bills and many more. To sum-up, the students will change to depend on themselves and not others.

Finally, a reason for studying abroad is it will give the student an opportunity to try out new cultural foods. They will try the different cultural foods from around the world. For instance, Italian, French, Mexican, Chinese and different more. And they will know how each food is different from the other. They will understand how it tastes, smells and the texture of different cultural foods and how they eat their food. Thus, the students will find that the delicious foods from different countries is the best reason for why they should study abroad.

In conclusion, studying abroad is a really good way for them to experience new things. They will meet new people and make friends. They will change to be personally independent. And they will try out a variety of cultural foods. So despite the changes that happen, studying abroad will always be the best years of any students life.

## Advantages of joining a university student organization

Many students do not realize the importance or value behind joining student organization. The point is students organization are worthwhile and give a significant list of benefits. Hence students should pursuit the opportunity and join those organizations. There are many positive advantages for students by joining a university student organization social skills, networking skills and leadership skills.

Gaining social skills is one of the benefit that students can provide from university organization. To be clear social skills are skills that allow the students to effectively interact with other people such as communication skills. Students communication skills will improve because they are interacting with different people. In addition, students get a chance meet new people and build good friendships and also be part of social activities for example to be part of a work group club. To illustrate joining a university organization can improve students communication between people and making new friendship

make  
up  
not  
quite  
clear

Another advantages form joining a university organization for students is networking skills. Networking is not about asking for job, it is about gathering information, discussing ideas and finding out about opportunities that have not been advertised. For example some university have particular active networking group for alumni, where students can practice with superior alums who want to help them to succeed in using their networking skills like project management. In brief the benefit of networking in organization is to gain practical skills that might help them in their studies.

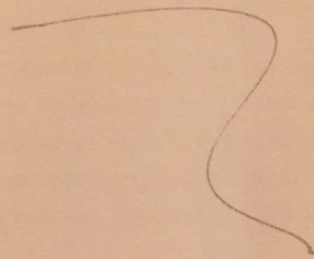
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Finally, joining a university organization allow students to develop their leadership skills. Students will be able to learn from their fellow students and establishing their leaderships abilities through planning and implementing different activities such as working in a group. To be more specific, throughout working in a group students come greater understanding about other group member and seeing things from other

①

people point of view . Further more students learn about who they are and their strengths and weakness trough comparison with other group member .To sum up leadership skills is one of the benefit to develop from university organization . Working in a team can improve students self confidence *is the main point about team work ?*

In conclusion, students may acquire different advantages from joining a university student organization . First gaining social skills is one of the benefits in term of improving their communication skills between different people . The other benefit is networking skills , students can learn practical activities that can help them in their project assignment . Finally students can improve their leadership skills from these organization by being a member in a group and take responsibility for their decision . getting involved in university organization is the best thing that students can do to know more about their personality .





- 1 D
- 2 D
- 3 F
- 4 F

## REASON OF STUDING ABROAD

Studying abroad may be one of the most beneficial experience for a college student . By studying abroad , students have the opportunity to study in foreign nation and take in the allure and culture of new land, students may travel and studying abroad to live their new life and to try to independent on themselves . There are many reason the that make the students to study abroad which are, personal development , education and new culture .

First, A benefit to studying abroad is the opportunity to discover yourself while gaining an understanding of different culture. Being in a new place by yourself can be overwhelming at times, and it tests your ability to adapt to diverse situation while being able to solve the problem . There is nothing quite like being on your own in foreign country . They might find that studying abroad really bring out their independent nature and good way to prove their personality and chance to get the right career. *many different points in one sentence*

Second , another reason you might consider studying abroad is for the chance to experience different style of education. The students will in flounce in the new education system is great way to really experience and understand the people , its traditions , and its culture . After all , study abroad is the useful way to learn new language . In addition student will acquire the language just from daily life , and sometime their university will likely offer language courses to provide them with more formal education. *Concluding sentence*

*Topic sentence*  
Third , any students who choose to study abroad are leaving their home for the first time. When they arrive in their new host country, they are fascinated by the distinct cultural perspectives. When you study abroad you will find incredible new foods, Customs, You will find that you have a better understanding and traditions, and social atmospheres appreciation for the nation's people and history. You will have the opportunity to witness a completely new way of life.

In conclusion, student may have different reason for studying abroad . For many of them is to devolve their personality and understand themselves . However, some students study abroad due to education and to gain the language . Others choose to study abroad to know more about new country culture . After all that , students who have the opportunity to study abroad should learn from this useful experience .

*You have good ideas but need to be revised and organized #*

ASIP

## Disadvantages of Having Part-time Job for University Students

Today, students everywhere have to cope with a great deal of expensive costs while studying in university. Students spend four years at university, consequently they need large sum of money for tuition, study materials, and living expenses. Therefore, many students earn extra cash by working part-time jobs while attending university. It is well known that part-time works have positive impacts on the students for instance: they can have a glimpse of their future job and determine whether they actually like that particular career path. Also, part-time jobs can help students improve time management skills and become more efficient. Despite of the many advantages of which part-time jobs offer for students, part-time jobs sometimes have negative impacts on the students mentally and physically. There are three main disadvantages of having part-time job for university students: sometimes the work diverts the students' attention away from studies, they occupy a lot of students' precious time and tension students to balance between part-time job and school work. *Three main i*

One of the main disadvantages of having part-time jobs for university students is the work divert students from their studies. For instance, If students start earning money they get attracted towards money. This means, they start to feel independent and prefer to work for more extra income. As a result, this effects their academic performance and grades leading them to failure. Eventually, they will lose their interest in studying and drop out of their studies so as to become financially independent. Financial dependency resulted from part-time jobs will decrease the number of university students studying. *concluding sentence*

*in/br ideas*  
Second main disadvantage of having part-time jobs for university student is the work occupy most of students' time. Students having part-time jobs will face a decline in their studies as they have not got enough time to study. Because part-time job will occupy students' valuable time for college work, they will no longer have the enough time to finish homework assigned or widen their knowledge through reading

books. Consequently, they will fall behind the class schedule. If the part-time job fills most of the students' time, it will cause problems for the students with class attendance and skip some classes in order to work.

*Conclusion future*

Third main disadvantage of having part-time for university students is the pressure of balancing time of work with the time of study. If students participate in jobs for a while, then it results in an extra heavy load on them. Because jobs have various responsibilities like attendance and extra work hours, this results to stress, tension and tiredness. For an example, if a student does not have strong management skills and ability to restrict hours of work, their academic performance will fall behind. In addition, they will not be able to get proper time of relaxation and sleep. Thus, stress would affect their mental and physical health leaving them under great pressure to manage time.

*think (de)*

*if this it would be better to focus on health problem here!*

In conclusion, part-time jobs have three main disadvantages for university students: sometimes the work distract students from their studies, they fill the students' time, and leave them stressed to balance between part-time job and school work. Combining work and study can also have negative effect on the students' mental health such as stress and fatigue, leading to worsening performance in class and sometimes lead to tiredness and depression. This can have wide ranging consequences including, loss of financial aid, being put on academic probation, or stress related illness resulting from a student's struggle to balance the demands of work and studies. As money and resources become more scarce for university students, jobs become more necessary. Any changes to students' routines will lead to changes in academics, whether they are positive or negative.

*Summary of idea?*

27th of Oct 17/16

Ethiopia will do similar

Group (D)

This is an excellent Ways Technology can Help piece of writing which University Students has been a joy to read. Thank you Effi ~~Bas~~ i

In the 21st Century, the human life has become heavily dependent on technology. It is a normal part of everyday life, and this is no exception to the field of education, especially for university students. Over the past years, technology is considered to be an important part of university students' life, it gives them access to a greater amount of information in a short time, it boosts understanding and it helps the students to stay informed with the latest news about their courses.

Technology allows university students to access tons of information in a short notice. A part of every university student's life, is doing research. This is normally a process a lot of time and effort from the student, but with the help of technology it could be done within few hours maximum. It also gives them an unlimited number of resources and references to use while doing their research. Not to mention that technology provides tons of books to choose

from when looking up information for their study courses or assignments. Therefore, technology is very important to ease and speed up the process of accessing information.

Using technological aids improves the understanding process. Because university students study complex material, using technological aids such as pictures and videos while explaining helps the students to get a grasp of the idea much faster. Also using presentations and data stems boosts understanding, because the brain is exposed to a more fun and interactive material which the student can relate to and remember much easier. Also using the technological methods allows the student to record a lecture, or take a copy of the pictures, videos, presentations presented during the lecture time, and then repeat them at home as much as he/she needs or wants, until they get a good grasp of the information presented at hand. There is also the matter of using technology to create simulation programs that completely imitates reality in the educational process. The usage of such programs allows the students to practice and learn in a safe way, but at the same time in a realistic way as well with zero chances of errors and life threatening problems. This leads us to conclude that it is fatally important to use the technological aids as means of boosting and bettering the understanding of the students.

Technology helps university students stay tuned in with the latest news and updates. Technology provides means of communication that university students use to the fullest potential. For example, when students want to check out the announcements and schedule updates, they can do that online, instead of coming all the way to the university just for this reason. This saves them time. Another benefit is students can use the technological advancements in communication to stay connected with their instructors 24 hours. Teachers and instructors can give them information about their courses. They can notify them for coming exams or give them assignments. Teachers can also start up an online class room, or web page for a more suitable setting for communication when away from the actual class room. This is not only good for student-teacher communication, it also gives the chance to students to interact with their classmates, share ideas opinions, or discuss the subjects they are studying.

To sum up, no one can deny the importance that technology is playing in the lives of university students. It saves them time by providing all the information needed to conduct a research, it enhances their ability to understand and allows students to stay informed and updated.

## Factors in choosing a university

Students have a lots of decision to make during their senior year of high school. In this time period they must decide what university they should join. University vary a lot and during the search for the one that fits perfectly, many things should be considered. Students choose university for many factors, the location of university, academic interest, and future career.

One of the most important factor to consider when choosing a university is the location. If the students live far away from university location it may end up with miserable experience such as missing classes or even exams. In addition students must know that they are likely to attend university for four or more years before they earn their degree. Therefore, students have to make sure they are comfortable with the location of university. In short, students must consider the location important to avoid unnecessary distance problem.

Another factor for students choose university is academic interest. Students attend university to study a specific education in particular. For that reason, students choose their subject in point of their interest. For example, students who are interested in learning new language will probably take courses about foreign language in depth. In brief many students choose university to study a particular subject following their interest.

Finally, future career is a common factor for students in choosing a university. Many students choose a specific subject that often leads to better career in the future such as law, engineering, medicine. Moreover those specialization the students can work with individually in the future. For example, a doctor can open and manage his own clinic. In conclusion many students choose university to fulfill their future career.

To sum up, there are many factors for students to choose university. For many of them, the main reason is the location of university and how it will affect on their education. However some students choose university to follow their academic interest. Other go to university to gain a future career. choosing a university is not an easy decision for students, therefore they have to be wise selecting the appropriate one to open more opportunity their the future life.