
Strategies of Academic Writing in English

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Abstract

The more you read, the more you will learn about English language. Writing is considered the most difficult skill for first, foreign and second language learners. In acquiring writing skill, the writer goes through some activities such as control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. In addition to the 4 skills, LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing), the fundamental aspects of English grammar, vocabulary and punctuation are also important and very much useful in written and spoken English.

Keywords: Academic Writing, Academic Vocabulary

Introduction

Great writers love to read. Reading helps them develop their writing skills making them more familiar with sentence structure, get to know commonly used metaphors and good vocabulary. The more you read, the more you will learn about English language.

Effective writing is an essential skill for any profession and the purpose of writing any professional document is to communicate specific ideas. Choosing the right words and phrases, constructing grammatically as well as logically correct sentences, and well-developed and coherent paragraphs—all would contribute to enhancing the quality of writing. In this chapter, we will look into the elements that contribute to the effectiveness of writing (Raman M and Sharma S, 2015).

Academic Writing

Writing is considered the most difficult skill for first, foreign and second language learners. In acquiring writing skill, the writer goes through some activities such as control of

content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation and the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraph and text (Nunan, 2000). There should be external features of interestingness in academic writing with a tendency of eye catching titles in order to attract readers' attention. In English academic writing a paragraph consists of many sentences dealing with one main idea. Indentation or the topic sentence of a paragraph informs what it contains.

For good academic writing, researchers should learn the strategies of writing in English through the studies conducted by the experts in the field. According to Stern (1975) there are ten strategies for good practice of writing in English. Here are the strategies to be considered in writing: Planning strategy, Active strategy, Emphatic strategy, Formal strategy, Experimental strategy, Semantic strategy, Practice strategy, Communicative strategy, Monitoring strategy and Internalization strategy.

Grammar and Usage

As a matter of fact, English is not a subject, but skill-oriented language. Language is indispensable to students' learning in order to communicate or understand a subject. EAP (English for Academic Purposes) aims to teach students vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and the four macro-skills which prepare students for tertiary or vocational education. LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) are the 4 basic skills of English Language. In addition to the 4 skills, the fundamental aspects of English grammar, vocabulary and punctuation are also important and very much useful in written and spoken English. The above said skills and aspects play a significant role in order to understand and make use of study materials, to improve the subject related language and vocabulary, to infer the select and appropriate material, to write assignments logically and coherently with plagiarism free, to communicate the needs and to work productively with other students.

Grammar is a set of rules to manage the language for use and to communicate ideas perfectly and clearly. A writer may commit some grammatical errors or punctuation errors which influence the reader to divert his or her attention away from the text of the writing, so that the authors have to pay more attention to grammar while writing their article. The language used for manuscript

should be accurate, concise, clear and objective without mistakes or errors in tenses, grammar, sentences and paragraphs. Writers have to use appropriate tenses for describing or presentation of the research work, analysis and findings of the results to understand easily. Present tense should be used for known facts and hypotheses and past tense for describing experiments how they are conducted and its results.

The Use of Academic Words

Internationally, formal English is often defined in terms of the use of academic language. In an article written for the British Council, David Park defines formal English as “mainly used in writing...academic in tone and...commonly used in academic textbooks, most university essays, business letters and contracts” (n.d.). Nation describes the AWL (Academic Word List) as “to a large degree a marker of formal written language” (2013, p. 294).

Academic English distinguish from everyday’s English as academic writing is characterized by a high frequency of words of classical origin (Greek and Latin). In academic papers writers should use the words derived from Latin, and also, mainly through Latin, from Greek.

The Words Of Everyday English

worry
story
get rid of
a lot of
not enough
trouble
big
way (of doing)
bring together
thing
not much research
not many studies
isn’t any evidence
A couple of
found out

The Words Of Academic English

concern
account
eradicate
considerable
insufficient
difficulty
significant
method
synthesize
object
little research
few studies
no evidence
Several
discovered

Academic Vocabulary

It is to understand that the researchers or academic writers should be familiar with formal / academic vocabulary, such as nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, used extensively in the specific area, in order to read and write academic article successfully. The following are some of the common academic vocabulary/ words - nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and their usage, which are referenced from The Essentials of Academic Writing for International Students- Bailey, S. (2015).

Adjectives	Nouns	Verbs
achievable	achievement	achieve
acquired	acquisition	acquire
analytical	analysis	analyze
contributory	contribution/ contributor	contribute
creative	creation	create
definitive	definition	define
derived	derivation	derive
distributive	distribution/ distributor	distribute
emphatic	emphasis	emphasize
evaluative	evaluation	evaluate
hypothetical	hypothesis	hypothesize
indicative	indication/ indicator	indicate
interpretative	interpretation	interpret
invested	investment	invest
predictive	prediction/ predictor	predict
reliable	reliability	rely
responsive	response	respond
significant	significance	signify
synthetic	synthesis	synthesise
variable	variation/ variable	vary

The following are the adjectives with their opposites for better understanding:

absolute	relative
abstract	concrete
accurate	inaccurate
ambiguous	unambiguous
analytic	synthetic
effective	ineffective
exclusive	inclusive
logical	illogical
metaphorical	literal
precise	vague or approximate or rough

Sentence Structures

Perhaps the best example of writing about scholarly writing, especially dealing with writing style, is provided by Huff, A.S. (1999). Huff gave a few details which are significant to scholarly work. An author should focus his/her style on:

- Short sentences
- Present tense
- Active voice
- Simple constructions
- Little repetition of words (p. 73)

Huff continues by noting that it is important to pay attention to sentence complexity and the length of examples that are used. A basic sentence may contain two parts: subject and predicate. Sentence patterns should be used appropriately to the needs of the information to be conveyed. All types of sentences should be used in order to bring variety to writing. Sentence length need to be adjusted according to the readers, the subject matter, and to the demands of style (Rizvi, M. 2009, p.p.327-330). Sentences are three types as follow:

Simple sentence: A sentence contains only one main or independent clause. For example, 1. In his research article, the author used appropriate academic words.

Compound sentence: A sentence contains two or more main or independent clauses. For example, 2. In his research article, the author used academic words and they are appropriate.

Complex sentence: A sentence contains at least one independent clause and one dependent clause. For example, 3. In his research article, the author used academic words which are appropriate.

Sentence 1 (the author used appropriate academic words.) is a Simple Sentence as it has only one Subject (*the author*) and one Predicate (*appropriate academic words*).

Sentence 2 (the author used academic words and they are appropriate.) is a Compound Sentence as it has two main clauses (*the author used academic words*) and (*they are appropriate*).

Sentence 3 (*the author used academic words which are appropriate.*) is a Complex Sentence as it has one main clause (*the author used academic words*) and one Subordinate Clause (*which are appropriate*).

Conclusion

The more you read, the more you will learn about English language. Effective writing is an essential skill for any profession. Writing is considered the most difficult skill for first, foreign and second language learners. In acquiring writing skill, the writer goes through some activities such as control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation and the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraph and text (Nunan, 2000).

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