



UZBEK STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING CHALLENGES AND THEIR REASONS

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ABSTRACT

One of the hardest things to master while learning a language is always writing in order to achieve language proficiency (Raxmanova, 2023) This article looks into the difficulties Uzbek students have when studying academic writing in the English language. In this study, a questionnaire was used to survey over one hundred pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-level students. Some multiple-choice questions were added in the questionnaire to find out about their writing difficulties. A discussion and clarification of the results were held, and recommendations and solutions were offered.

KEY WORDS : Writing challenges, academic writing, Uzbek students, Academic achievement, language proficiency

INTRODUCTION

Uzbek students encounter several obstacles when it comes to composing academic work in English. These difficulties include the inability to discern between written and spoken English, the inability to create an outline prior to drafting, the identification of the abilities required for successful writing, and the avoidance of terms and phrases that are often used and may result in plagiarism. Furthermore, a lot of Uzbek students don't receive the essential direction and criticism from their professors throughout the academic writing process, which impedes their growth in this field.(2020, Dema) Additionally, Uzbek students who are not natural English speakers and intend to attend British or other Western colleges can have extra difficulties when it comes to academic writing.

Students' ability to think critically (Ngo Phan Anh Nghi,Truong Trong Nhan, 2023)communicate effectively, and grow intellectually is greatly enhanced by academic writing. Nevertheless, despite its importance, learning how to write academically presents difficulties for a large number of pupils globally. For instance, Phuong (Phuong, 2021) points out that Vietnamese students usually struggle with academic writing in English, which might hinder their capacity to write well and achieve academic achievement. As Ngo Phan and Truong mentioned (Ngo Phan Anh Nghi,Truong Trong Nhan, 2023) Proficiency in several areas, including organization, grammar, vocabulary, and critical thinking, is a must for those pursuing academic writing. But there are a number of things that might prevent students from making progress in this area, such as a lack of exposure to academic writing styles, language hurdles, and insufficient pedagogical assistance.

A number of scientists in this field have studied the issue and found out several reasons for the matter. For example, Rubin Akhtar (Rubina Akhtar,Hanita Hassan,Aminabibi Saidalvi, 2020) said that writing is disliked by most ESL students because they view it as a difficult and boring chore. Academic progress is constantly impacted by a student's attitude,

particularly in the first year when it is crucial to complete written assignments. Both internal and external factors have an impact on students' academic progress as it relates to their writing assignments and ESL learning.

Most of the professionals agree that apprehension is the main cause of the poor academic writing skill. To illustrate, Al-Shboul & Huwari (Al-Shboul.Y, Huwari,I,F, 2015) states that Writing apprehension is the basic cause of academic writing challenges among ESL students. Another scientist Zefran suggests that the curriculum, educators, and linguistic characteristics of education are identified as some of the external components in English language learning skills. Individual accomplishment of pupils is influenced by distinct interior factors, including attitude, anxiety, and self-confidence when learning how to write academically.

So, the purpose of this study is to draw attention to the concerns and difficulties that Uzbek EFL students have while writing for academic purposes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It's a difficult undertaking for all students pursuing higher education worldwide to succeed with academic writing in English. Many experts have conducted extensive study to shed light on the issue globally.

Findings indicate that (Mansour, 2021) Saudi international graduate students face many rhetorical writing difficulties such as difficulties in thinking critically, expressing ideas, delivering solid arguments to support research theses, and technical writing difficulties related to grammar and APA citations. These difficulties can be attributed to lack of English proficiency and poor English instruction. Many Malaysian students (Rubina Akhtar, Hanita Hassan, Aminabibi Saidalvi, 2020) face academic writing language challenges. Most students' attitude towards academic writing is anguish and apprehension. Students are taught to write starting from the school but most of first year students are unable to produce a better piece of academic writing. Writing is a crucial skill and tertiary education students face difficulties in academic writing (Barli Bram, Patricia Angelina, 2022). B. Bram and P. Angelina stated that Indonesian tertiary education students faced setbacks or difficulties in academic writing, for example, the setbacks involving parts of speech, tenses, spelling, prepositions, vocabulary, punctuation, cohesion, discourse markers, writing paragraphs with a clear focus, constructing clear and coherent academic essays, paraphrasing, and in-text referencing (Barli Bram, Patricia Angelina, 2022). According to Ersin Gülay and Suat Ungen, The lack of progress for improving writing skills prevents the realization of the perspectives in the issue of writing block. Moreover, the fact that students and academics who have effective writing skills are either not writing enough or not able to write reveals the problem of academic writing block which has not hitherto received enough attention in the relevant literature (Ersin Gülay, Suat Ungen, 2022)

METHODOLOGY

The study aims to provide further insight into the challenges Uzbek students have while writing academically in English so that similar problems may be addressed in subsequent studies. The information acquired was used in this paper. Namangan State University Law students were polled, and undergraduate students' writing assignments were examined.

In the questionnaire, students were asked, "What difficulties do you face when you write in any type of scientific writing?" When asked, the largest percentage of participants, i.e.

43%, stated that they have problems finding the necessary ideas when writing scientific type of essays, official letters or assignments in English. Some students reported that they do not know the structure of this type of writing or cannot form sentences grammatically correctly. Although it showed the lowest percentage, some students cited their lack of vocabulary in English as the reason for not being able to write good academic writing. It was revealed from the survey that several students said that they do not know the scientific words used in the formation of scientific writing in English, and that they need to know which sources to rely on for this. This is explained in the table below

Table-1

Question: What challenges do you usually have in writing any type of academic writing?			
Options	Number of Students	Percent	Total number of students
<i>1.I have problems with grammar structures for writing sentences correctly</i>	11	16%	68
<i>2.I don't understand rubrics clearly</i>	7	11%	68
<i>3.I have difficulties in organizing layout of the essays</i>	12	18%	68
<i>4.I have lack of vocabulary in writing English</i>	8	12%	68
<i>5.It is difficult to find ideas when writing academically</i>	29	43%	68
<i>6.I don't know how to cite the sources that I use in my research</i>	40	60%	68

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Uzbek students face several obstacles when it comes to generating their academic written language. These include mistakes in syntax, vocabulary, and spelling as well as issues with citations, improper composition structure, a lack of understanding for supplying ideas, and an inappropriate style for legal papers.

Thus, let's examine the reasons behind students' writing issues: Why do students consistently make these mistakes?

The primary cause of the pupils' incorrect writing is, first and foremost, a lack of grammatical expertise. The grammar is the foundation for mastering any foreign language, as the majority of specialists acknowledged.

According to P.K.Debata, knowledge of grammar helps the student in the correction of mistakes and improvement of written work. A person can't learn a foreign language accurately only through a process of unconscious assimilation. Grammar is a sure ground of

reference when linguistic habits fail us. So grammar is indispensable for the student (Debata, 2013). Teaching or learning a second language is a long process with multiple stages. Contrary to what some theorists believe, grammar is not merely a set of static rules but rather a body of rules which gives structure to the instructor and the student. It is a crucial factor for one to develop his/her second language properly. The importance of grammar lies in rendering the student self-dependent. Once he/she acquires a decent mastery of grammar, he can use it as a criterion to assess the accuracy of his/her speaking or writing (Dalil, 2013). It is advised that students initially work on improving this mentality, as scientists have claimed that writing and grammar are inextricably linked.

The next and most important factor contributing to writing difficulties is a deficiency of thoughts on a certain topic, which makes it difficult to write academically. Reading scientific books and articles, participating in discussion groups, watching scientific films, and other activities in English are all recommended for students to enhance this competence. As Malorie Blackman said "Writers are like life vampires - we draw inspiration from the real world around us."

According to our study, a significant portion of students struggle with citations—which are used to cite the sources of the information they utilize in their academic work. Some of them are even unaware that using someone else's words without giving reference is against the law and is termed plagiarism. The understanding of plagiarism among students was poor and they thought that plagiarism was not a big deal. They also did not know how to avoid plagiarism by using citations and quotations in which students plagiarized for a variety of reasons. First, pupils have not previously been trained well in plagiarism prevention, especially in citations and quotation (DO, 2022). According to DO(2022) students should be aware of the importance of learning how to avoid plagiarism (citations and quotations). Second, students' English proficiency could be the reason for plagiarism. Some students were not fluent in English - they did not know how to express their opinions in English, so they copied from the Internet.

Because it was a major obstacle for writing effectively, students needed to be taught not to act in such a terrible way in order to get over the issue. Academic lecturers and writing instructors have to offer hands-on workshops and seminars on properly citing and utilizing sources. Teachers are trustworthy individuals that pupils may trust and follow in their academic endeavors, as has been established.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the challenges faced by Uzbek students in academic writing are varied and complex. Despite the difficulties in distinguishing between spoken and written English and the lack of guidance from lecturers, it is important for students to seek out resources and support to improve their academic writing skills. With determination and practice, Uzbek students can overcome these challenges and excel in their academic pursuits. Additionally, institutions and educators should provide more targeted support and resources to help Uzbek students navigate the nuances of English academic writing. By addressing these challenges, Uzbek students can enhance their academic writing abilities and succeed in their educational endeavors. As B.Bram and P.Angelina mentioned Academic writing instructors and relevant department administrators must make sure that all lecturers have proper training, offer an adequate amount of exercises, and provide a variety of comments (Barli Bram, Patricia Angelina, 2022).

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