Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Sciences of the language

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Identifying academic writing challenges encountered by EFL learners to develop their academic writing skills. The case of second year Master Two students of sciences of the language at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

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2019

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My dear parents,

My brother,

My aunt Halima for her continuous support,

To my classmate and friend Amine for his never ending support, tremendous help, and patience,

To my friend Salima for making this year memorable

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The current study attempts to identify the academic writing challenges encountered by second year Master students during the preparation of their dissertation, as well as determining the reasons behind these challenges. For this purpose, a descriptive analytic research with qualitative approach was employed. To gather data, a students' and a teachers' questionnaires were devised. The sample consisted of 32 second year Master students and 07 teachers at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The main findings show that students face numerous challenges in academic writing, mainly at the level of word choice, grammar, and paraphrasing. The teachers' questionnaire indicates similar results in terms of the areas of challenges citing critical writing and style as most challenging. Results also reveal that teachers attribute these difficulties mainly to the lack of experience in writing research papers and lack of writing practice. Moreover, the majority of participants believe that the time allocated for teaching academic is insufficient. The recommendations derived from the findings need to be considered by students, teachers, and syllabus designers.

Keywords: Academic writing, challenges, dissertation writing, EFL, master students, UMK, Biskra

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Statement of the Problem

At university, students become a part of the academic community and are thus required to have advanced communicative skills which include adopting a more formal complex style of writing known as academic writing. In almost every discipline, students are expected to write a dissertation as a requisite for finishing their higher education.

Although students are use academic writing to write essays or book reviews, writing a dissertation will be the first time they will have to write and manage such a large amount of text. In EFL context, this is a particularly demanding task as EFL students have to be well acquainted with different aspects and conventions of academic writing. Moreover, it is one of the main criteria on which students' dissertations are criticized and assessed.

Consequently, this study seeks to uncover the difficult aspects of academic writing faced by second year Master students as they write their dissertations from the perspective of students and teacher-supervisors. Attempting to identify these challenges and the possible reasons behind them could help students and teachers to address these difficulties and work together to come at a solution for this widespread problem.

Aim of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to identify the academic writing challenges second year Master students encounter in writing their dissertation. In addition, it will attempt to determine the reasons behind these challenges.

Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the common academic writing challenges and difficulties second year Master students encounter in writing their dissertation   ?

2. What is the reason behind these difficulties?

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that if we identify second year master students' academic writing challenges, students will develop their academic writing skills.

Methodology

In this study, a descriptive analytic method was followed in analysing the questionnaires of second year Master students and teachers at Biskra University, to determine the common writing challenges faced by second year Master students at the level of dissertation writing. Both questionnaires contain open-ended, close-ended, and multiple choice questions. To quantitative data of the study is introduced and illustrated in the form of tables and graphs to which help summarise the qualitative data.

Population and Sample

Population

The current study deals with students and teachers of English language at Biskra University from which our sample was taken. The questionnaires of both students and teachers are used for data gathering and their answers are analysed and discussed.

Sample

Students

From a population of about 120 students of second year Master, 32 students participated in the students' online questionnaire.

Teachers

Five teachers of EFL writing at Biskra University were to answer the given questionnaire. Most of the teachers teach second year LMD students.

Research Instruments

To achieve the purpose of this study, two semi-structured questionnaires were designed and administered, one for students and one for teachers. They consist of closed-questions and open-ended questions, and multiple choice questions.

Research Design

The present study is divided into two chapters. The first chapter comprises two sections. The first section provides an overview on the writing skill and highlights its importance. The second section is concerned with academic writing. It sheds light on students' challenges in writing. The second chapter is dedicated to the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the main findings.

Chapter One:

Academic Writing

General Introduction

Writing has long been established as a powerful means of communication in professional and educational settings. Despite the increasing effect of oral and visual technology on shaping our use of language, writing remains an efficient and a necessary tool for communicating and storing ideas and exchanging knowledge. Writing is a central skill to learn across all educational levels as it is the main means through which learners can exhibit their knowledge and understanding of various subjects. Moreover, writing serves as the basis on which students are assessed. At tertiary level, students are expected to demonstrate discipline specific knowledge and critical thinking skills through writing different types of assignments in a more formal style of writing known as academic writing. For EFL/ESL learners, the writing skill and particularly academic writing is important for all the reasons previously mentioned.

Defining the Writing Skill

Over the years the skill of writing has been the subject of much research which generated numerous perspectives and definitions of writing. Widdowson (1978) sees writing as the act that involves producing correct sentences which then can be transmitted on paper using correct grammar. In Widdowson's view, writing requires a knowledge and mastery of the linguistic aspect and regards writing as an act of encoding speech using graphic symbols yet it fails to shed light on the complex nature of writing which goes beyond knowledge of grammar to put words into paper. Nunan (1989) considers writing as "an extremely complex,

cognitive activity for all which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously" (p.36).

Similarly, Levy &Randsell (2013) view writing as a sophisticated activity in which "writers must change ideas into text, repair organization and mechanics, and monitor their success--all while trying to formulate a coherent message" (p.93). This definition stresses the complex nature of writing which requires going through a series of cognitive processes to produce a meaningful piece of writing.

Among the four language skills, writing is considered to be the most challenging by EFL students. Writing is one of the productive skills; it resembles specific abilities which promote learners to translate their opinions and notions into clear and well organized words, as Flower & Hayes (1981, p.366) state: "writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of composing. Good writers should be aware about the conventions of the language which concern: grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, coherence and cohesion.

Writing is considered as a creative tool as it encourages students to use language in a way that can promote their critical thinking by reflecting on their writing and develop their social development since writing is a social practice which requires the writers to consider their readership. Writing facilitates the revision of ideas and information that appears on papers, as Harris (1993, p.12) maintains "it is almost as the act of writing makes thoughts visible and tangible; this in turn, provides the opportunity for revision and refinement because the thoughts are there on the page to be worked on ".

Writing is the most difficult skill for learners, Byrne (1991) argues that writing is a difficult task for learners because it requires conscious mental effort and takes time to learn it. He classifies the difficulties into three types. The first is a psychological problem where the writer faces the problem of lack of interaction and feedback between the writer and the reader. The second is a linguistic problem because writers have to express their ideas in a grammatical sense. The third is a cognitive problem in that writing has to be taught over formal instructions where the writer masters the organization of his or her ideas in written communication.

The writing skill has a strong relation with other skills, especially speaking and reading. Writing, according to River & Temerly (1978) as different to speaking, is a regulated system of communication and an essential tool in the academic learning. In addition, written topics can be retained for a long time because they are permanent whereas the spoken language is temporary. The same with writing and reading, the extensive reading a good prior knowledge to students and helps them to widen their style, ideas, and accuracy. According to the reading hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1993), reading results developing extensive vocabulary, better writing, better spelling, and having a better control of complex grammatical constructions.

The Importance of the Writing Skill

Good writing is significant and needed in personal, academic, and professional domains. It is considered as the best way for people to express their thoughts, ideas, and views as individuals especially for those who can't express themselves orally as McArthur, et al. (2008, p.01) points out: "writing provides an importance mean to personal self-expression». Writing makes students' thinking observable and clear, it allows them to discover their ways

of reflection rather than keep it in their minds. Skilful students in writing require confident in their lives and have edge over others. Well writing facilitates students' and teachers' tasks in exams, in which learners translate their knowledge in their own styles and that make teachers convinced their answers.

Writing is a communication tool that translates thoughts, ideas, and feelings into language at any time and at any place as Rogers (2005) mentions: "Writing is one of the most significant cultural accomplishments of human beings, it allows us to record and convey information and stories beyond the immediate moment. It allows communicating beyond the constraints of time and space.

The same idea is emphasized in the book of writing skill success in 20 minutes a day (2005). The importance of writing is summarized in terms of five advantages: 1- In writing, the writer can take it back. It is considered as careful, thoughtful way of communicating.

2- Writing forces writers to clarify their thoughts.

3- Writing is permanent.

4- Contrary to speaking, in writing writers may have many opportunities to revise, change, and correct what they have written before giving it to the intended audience. 5- In writing writers sometimes just sitting down and writing whatever is on their minds, and organize what they think.

Writing is also viewed as a basic means of assessing knowledge of the language since most exams require students to answer in writing. Also, writing is certainly easier to assess than student's speaking. Bacha (2002) stated that writing is important in student's academic

course since most examination, reports, and research work depend on it. Coffin et al (2003) also claimed that writing is important since it is used as means of assessment, improves student's communicative skill, and it trains students as future professionals in particular disciplines. Coffin et al (2003, p. 20) state that students are required to write for several reasons:

- As an assessment.

- As an aid to critical thinking.

- To extend students' learning beyond lectures.

- To improve students communication skills.

Conclusion

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Section Two: Academic Writing

Introduction

In higher education settings, students are required to have advanced communicative skills which involve the ability to write critically and argumentatively. This involves the ability to "understand a range of academic vocabulary in context». It also involves students adopting a more formal complex style of writing known as academic writing. It is crucial for students across all disciplines including ESL/EFL learners to develop adequate academic writing skills as it allows them to organise and interpret knowledge in a more structured manner and build on their argumentative and critical thinking skills.

This chapter is an attempt to define academic writing and identify its characteristics and genres. In addition, it will offer an overview on the academic writing challenges faced by EFL students.

Defining Academic Writing

In a broad sense academic writing refers to a formal style of writing that is produced in an academic setting (Valdes, 2019). That is, it is any writing that entails scientific knowledge for educational purposes. Labaree (2009) proposes a more detailed definition stating that "academic writing refers to a style of expression that researchers use to define the intellectual boundaries of their disciplines and their specific areas of expertise", adding that it is "designed to convey agreed meaning about complex ideas or concepts for a group of scholarly experts".

The academic writing concept can be defined in different ways. Hillard & Harris (2003) do not treat academic writing as a single, monolithic discourse. They especially emphasise the intertextual and citational nature of academic writing. Aitchison & Lee (2006) support this claim by stating that "academic writing involves a network of social, institutional and peer relations –of readers, reviewers, teachers, examiners…" (p. 271). Hillard & Harris also argue that intellectual writing is almost always composed in response to others' texts. In other words, academic writing is not a separate task, it requires considering the audience and their expectations and having a specific purpose in mind. The academic writer considers what is known about the subject and then determines what they think about it. If the writer's paper fails to inform or argue, then it will fail to meet the expectations of the academic reader.

Characteristics of Academic Writing

To further and to better understand the concept of academic writing, it is important to identify and be familiar with its key features. Singh & Lukkarila (2017) considers academic writing as "distinctively different" from other forms of writing in terms of purpose, tone, structure, style, audience, and word choice. The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1994, p.8) for one defines academic English by its features "the register of English used by scholars and scientists; an elevated and often complex style associated with concern for accuracy, objectivity, and dispassionate comment". Monippally & Pawar (2010) assert that academic writing is characterised by detachment of the writer, clarity of text, cautious tone, and rigour. Gillett (n.d) claims that" academic writing in English is linear, that is, it is centered on one point with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetitions". Its objective is to inform rather than entertain. Moreover, he identifies eight

features of academic writing. Namely: complexity, formality, objectivity, explicitness, precision, accuracy, hedging, responsibility, organisation, and planning.

Complexity

Written language is relatively more complex than spoken language. Written language has longer words, it is lexically denser and it has a more varied and specialized vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases. Greater use of nouns than verbs helps to construct meanings and make them compact. Tribble (1996) as cited in (Šimanskienė, 2005) explains that "lexically dense, nominalised styles make it possible to give prominence to certain categories of information and construct a distant impersonal relationship with the reader" (p.21). In addition, written language has more subordinate clauses and more passives.

Formality

Academic writing is also relatively formal. In general, this means that the writer should avoid contractions, colloquial words and expressions, tautology, vague words or phrases and everyday similes. In a similar manner, the use of technical, elevated or abstract vocabulary, complex sentence structures and the avoidance of the personal voice (the use of I, you) are also meant by formality. Hacker maintains that "formal writing emphasizes the importance of its subject and the exactness of its information. Its tone is dignified, and it maintains a certain distance between writer and audience" (Hacker, 1998, p.126).

Objectivity

Moreover, academic writing is in general objective rather than personal. Monippally & Pawar (2010) emphasise the need to refrain from appearing overenthusiastic and the need to

remain distant from the subject being discussed. Writers need to focus on discussing the topic without incorporating their personal feelings, so it is advisable to avoid personnel language and colorful words.

Explicitness

Academic writing is explicit about the relationships in the text. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the writer in English to make it clear to the reader how the various parts of text are related. These connections can be made explicit by the use of different signaling words. Expressing oneself clearly also involves using language accurately and with an appropriate range, writing coherently and cohesively, following the conventions of the particular kind of writing, and writing relevantly and comprehensively.

Hedging

Cautious language or hedging is another central feature in academic writing as it expresses probability rather than certainty (Hyland, 1997). It is necessary for writers to make decisions regarding the strength of the claims they are proposing. Hedges can be expresses through epistemic adjectives, adverbs and lexical verbs. Hyland (1997) also notes that hedges can be achieved by drawing attention to the limitations and short comings of the results. Tentative language; thus; is an indispensable means through the degree of certainty can be reduced or weakened in order to save face and the claims proposed by the writer in relation to the evidence of a particular subject.

Jordan (1997) as cited in (Šimanskienė, 2005) presents the following taxonomy of hedges:

1. Shields, e.g. all modal verbs expressing possibility; semi-auxiliaries like: to appear, to seem; probability adverbs like: probably, likely.

2. Approximators, e.g. of quantity, degree, frequency and time viz. approximately, roughly, often.

3. Expressions such as 'to our knowledge', etc. which express the author's personal doubt and direct involvement.

4. Emotionally-charged language and intensifiers, such as: extremely interesting, particularly encouraging.

5. Compound hedges, i.e. the juxtaposition of several hedges, e. g. It may suggest that..., It seems reasonable to assume..., we might possibly be wrong (though it is not likely), etc.

Evidence

Evidence is another feature that distinguishes academic writing from other forms of writing. Writers need to support their claims and arguments by providing relevant and strong evidence which comes in a form of facts, statistics, empirical research findings and expert opinions (Ng, 2003). Consequently, ideas and paragraphs need to be connected so that arguments flow smoothly using appropriate tone.

Citing

Citing is a distinctive feature that proves writers' truthfulness and responsibility. Citing sources seems to be important because it allows the readers to identify the source material used, and verify the established conclusions of others' works (Ng, 2003). Acknowledging

others' ideas appropriately tends to support the writers' claims on a subject and limit risk of plagiarism.

The previously stated features help distinguish academic writing from other forms of writing ,yet there are other linguistic features ,namely, cohesion that uses linguistic devices to connect sentences; coherence , refers to the way sentences are ordered to make sense. In addition to mechanics, such as: capitalization, spelling, punctuation. All of those features are required for effective academic writing.

Academic Genres

According to Jordan (1997) (as cited in Cited in Šimanskienė, 2005) academic writing should focus mainly on the "academic discourse genres and the range and nature of academic writing tasks, aimed at helping to socialize the student into the academic context" (p.166). During the process of explaining genres, Swales (1986) (as cited in Conolly & Pemberton, 2013) clarifies that: "A genre is a recognized communicative event with a shared public purpose and with aims mutually understood by the participants in that event. … In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience".

The most common types of genre that students are expected to become familiar with and to produce, include the following: abstracts, summaries, analyses, essays, reports, case studies, projects, literature reviews, exam answers, research papers (or term papers), dissertations and theses. Each of these has its own content structure or format, style, and certain conventional requirements.

At the pinnacle of academic writing are dissertations and theses while an essay is a widespread form of academic writing, particularly in the humanities. At advanced levels, it is possible that students expand their range of writing abilities into additional genres and also develop specific skills useful for more demanding academic contexts. This section aims at examining conventional academic genres which are essential for the development of advanced writing abilities.

Essays

An essay is a document that has a defined structure – an introduction, a body and a conclusion. The term "essay" is used in somewhat different ways in different contexts. Crews, a professor of English at the University of California at Berkeley defines an essay as "a fairly brief piece of nonfiction that tries to make a point in an interesting way." An essay is fairly brief. While writers will sometimes refer to book-length texts as "essays," the term usually refers to short pieces that might be published in a magazine or newspaper.

An essay is nonfiction. That means that the writer of an essay is trying to tell the truth, not merely entertain Essays are written to make a point. This is perhaps the most important and most challenging aspect of the essay. An essay is not just a bunch of words, or even a bunch of paragraphs. An essay all fits together; it all points in one direction. An essay leads to one conclusion. This is what makes an essay different from, say, an article in an encyclopaedia, which may be a relatively brief and interesting piece of nonfiction. An essay tries to make a point. It aims to support a single claim. Another way of putting it would be to say that an essay doesn't just have a *topic*; it also has a *thesis*. An essay doesn't just give information about a subject; it supports a statement, a claim.

An essay tries to make a point in an interesting way. An essay is real writing; it is written to someone. And so its goal is to interest its readers, to change their thinking, to get them involved in the ideas it presents and ultimately get them to adopt those ideas. An essay might seek to inform or to persuade or both.

Research Articles

Swales (1990) defines a research article as "a written text (although often containing non-verbal elements), usually limited to a few thousand words, that reports on some investigation carried out by its author or authors". He adds that a research article attempts to relate the findings within it to those of others, and may also examine issues of theory and/or methodology. It is to appear or has appeared in a research journal or, less typically, in an edited book-length collection of papers." (p. 93)

A research article reports the results of original research, assesses its contribution to the body of knowledge in a given area, and is published in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. According to Tacoma Community College, research article is a detailed account of research activity written by the scientists who did the research--not by someone else who is reporting on the research; it is a primary resource, which means that a research article is a primary source that reports the methods and results of an original study performed by the authors.

Abstracts

According to Day & Gatsel (2006), the abstract is "a miniature version of the paper" (p.52). The abstract is a succinct, single-paragraph summary of a dissertation or a research

paper. It includes the purpose, methods, findings, and conclusion. It is often written after the research paper has been completed. Separate components of an abstract vary according to discipline; an abstract of a social science or scientific work may contain the scope, purpose, results, and contents of the work. An abstract of a humanities work may contain the thesis, background, and conclusion of the larger work.

An abstract is not a review, nor does it evaluate the work being abstracted. While it contains key words found in the larger work, the abstract is an original document rather than an excerpted passage. Abstracts may be written for various reasons. A well written abstract facilitates for readers to identify and decide on the most important and relevant information. Also, many online databases use abstracts to index larger works. Therefore, abstracts should contain keywords and phrases that allow for easy searching.

Theses and Dissertations

The thesis and dissertation are both academic papers which focus on the field of study of the student. They are both research focused and explore a topic in depth, bringing together all concepts, theories, and practical applications which have been acquired during the years that a student has been in graduate school, whether it is a master's or a doctoral (PhD) program. Because different countries or continents in general have different educational systems, the definitions of various academic terms will also not be the same and this stands for the dissertation Vs thesis concepts. In Europe, a thesis is a requirement to graduate from a doctoral or PhD program**.** It is a large body of original research that the student does over several years, which also contains references and relations to existing research that has been done by other people. The dissertation on the other hand is a smaller research project that is

done to complete a Master's program. It does not necessarily need to have original research, but the student must take a view and back it up with arguments collected from existing research in the form of literature review. In the United States, The thesis in this case is the research project necessary for graduating from a master's degree program, while the dissertation is done for doctoral degrees.

One of the preeminent forms of academic writing in education, and scholarly writing in general, is that of the dissertation or thesis. The purpose of the dissertation or thesis is to show the ability to effectively communicate the information on a given topic on a professional level. For many; however, writing a thesis will be the first time students have had to organise and manage such a large amount of information. Dong (as cited in Paltridge & Starfield, 2007) argues that writing a thesis or a dissertation is a most formidable task for many graduate students particularly because of the high standard to which the thesis/dissertation is held.

The writing challenge is not only about demonstrating knowledge related to the research but also in arguing the research findings logically and coherently. Brause (2001); however, notes that "many of the participants [in the study] remarked that they had no idea what to expect in the dissertation process" (p.2). Torrance & Thomas (1994) (as cited in Graves & Varma, 1997, p. 105) support this point by noting that although many doctoral students have writing abilities that mirror those of productive academics, there is a significant minority that considers the writing difficulties as a hindrance to the completion of their degrees. Torrance and Thomas found that the biggest problems in student writing included clarity, flow, fact development, grammatical errors, text structure and redundancy. Coffin, Curry, Goodman, Hewings, Lillis and Swann (2003) list what students need to do in academic writing:

- •Take up a position

- •Adopt a particular perspective

- Put forward points for and against a particular position

- Explore possible positions

- Link theory and evidence

- Draw a conclusion

- Analyse

- Be critical

- Develop a central idea

- Use evidence to support an argument

- Express personal opinions

- Use personal interpretations

EFL Students' Writing Difficulties

A study conducted by Cai (2013) in Hong Kong University on the perception of academic writing and its difficulties by English major students revealed that they found the following academic writing tasks problematic: reviewing and critiquing the previous research, designing the research methods, writing commentaries and discussions on the data, summarizing and presenting the data, using proper academic language, and writing coherent

paragraphs. Another study by Al Badi (2015) concluded that students struggle when it comes to language use, coherence, and cohesion, expressing their own voice. It is apparent that academic writing challenges faced by EFL learners at tertiary level concern style and word choice, paraphrasing other scholar' ideas as well as struggling to produce organised, well structured piece of writing. The deficiencies EFL learners are bound to face in written production include: word choice, grammar, spelling, punctuation, coherence and cohesion.

Grammar

Despite the crucial role grammar plays in language teaching and learning, many language experts have failed to provide the field of language teaching with a clear comprehensive definition of this vital aspect of language.

Hartwell (1985) defines grammar as "the internalized system that native speakers of a language share" (p. 111). A more detailed definition was proposed by Harmer (2001) as "the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language" (p. 12). These ways are called 'the grammar rules' that are basic elements in every language, and are also inseparable from writing (Hartwell, 1985).

Grammar rules mainly include various rules such as tenses, prepositions, word class, voice and many others. These rules stand as a problem for many students in writing. In investigating the effect of teaching grammar, Hartwell (1985) cited different studies which concluded that formal grammar instruction made no improvement on students writing ability nor on their ability to avoid errors.

Word Choice

For EFL learners, word choice errors in academic writing can have a serious impact on the student's overall academic success, often resulting in misinterpretation or incomprehensibility Leech (1994). The reader's native or near native sense of "wrongness," even where comprehensibility is not affected, may result in a negative evaluation of the overall quality of the written work, in terms of its scholarship, clarity, or both. Moreover, when such a reader is an academic instructor with the power to judge and hence determine academic achievement, the consequences for the second language learner can be a misunderstanding of the student's scholarly achievement or communicative ability.

Spelling and Punctuation

Spelling and punctuation are two commonly shared writing difficulties among EFL students. Learning to spell words correctly is expected to occur during the earliest stages of language teaching, yet it is not always the case for spelling may become difficult in some instances. Moreover, spelling is said to be closely interrelated with reading; Frith (1980) argues that "Learning to read should imply learning to spell, and learning to spell should imply learning to read" (p. 496). However, this is not always the case, for there exist people with excellent reading abilities, but struggle when it comes to spelling words (Frith, 1980, p. 497).

Writing difficulties of relevance to spelling mainly include the misspelling of words which are a result of the irregularities of the English spelling system (Bancha, 2013). This related to the similarities of vowels, for instance, that can be decoded in different spelling. Additionally, Bancha further explained that spelling mistakes may occur when students are

less concentrated due to tiredness or carelessness about the correctness of words (p. 4). While Harmer (2001) states that "…the correspondence between the sound of a word and the way it is spelt is not always obvious" (p. 256).

Furthermore, he indicates that the reason spelling is difficult for students is "…the fact that not all varieties of English spell the same words in the same way". For instance, the way American English pronounce the word 'behavior', differs from British English 'behaviour'. In this sense, Harmer (2001) proposed extensive reading as a remedy for students to overcome spelling difficulties. On the other hand, punctuation presents an obstacle in writing.

According to Caroll & Wilson (1993), there are three problems linked to punctuation. The first is that punctuation rules are not totally exact, punctuation is complex, and it depends on one's style to determine the meaning. The way a student punctuates writing can change the meaning completely, because each punctuation mark is a distinctive way of interpreting the meaning. Therefore, students need to pay attention to the way they punctuate, which is in most cases a problem for them.

Spelling and punctuation mistakes do not necessarily hinder the reader's understanding of the text but they may create a negative impression of the writer.

Coherence and Cohesion

In order to produce a clear, seamless, and a well-structured piece of writing, students need to be able to employ certain organisational skills which mainly involve cohesion and coherence. Bachman & Palmer (as cited in Ruegg & Sugiyama, 2013) maintain that

knowledge of cohesion is demonstrated by "producing…explicitly marked relationships among sentences in written texts" (2010, p. 45).

Problems in cohesion may occur as the result of inconsistencies in the writing. These inconsistencies or shifts usually involve tense, tone, voice, person, number, style, or viewpoint. The shifts may result in the reader missing key points because of the unclear connection between the ideas. Ahmed (2010) reports that a number of research papers in the Arab world have shed light on students' coherence problems in English writing. For example, Arab students' written texts revealed that repetition, parallelism, sentence length, lack of variation and misuse of certain cohesive devices are major sources of incoherence and textual deviation. Additionally, other studies asserted that Yemini and Moroccan students have some weaknesses, in terms of coherence and cohesion, manifested in the students' written texts.

Informal Language

Authors should avoid the use of slang and colloquial or regional expressions in scholarly and academic writing. Such wording is seldom clear to all readers because slang expressions become dated quickly and may have different meanings based on the regions and cultures in which the terms are used. If such language is important to the understanding of the topic being discussed, be sure to define these terms or expressions. Imprecise Words Authors should always aim for the most precise language possible in writing. In academic and scholarly writing, that principle is even more important. Authors should avoid the use of incorrect, inexact, and ambiguous wording or of wording that evokes inappropriate feelings in the context in which the wording is used.

Word Choice in Discussing Results

In discussing research results, students should avoid using decisive and definitive words such as prove. Results of studies support or fail to support the author's hypotheses or the findings of previous researchers. Most research disciplines hold that nothing can be proven beyond doubt. In the same vein, hypotheses are never accepted. While the results of statistical analyses can cause a hypothesis to be rejected, they can never cause a hypothesis to be accepted. Rather, they support a hypothesis, may (rarely) strongly support a hypothesis, but never prove a hypothesis. For these reasons, results should always be discussed using qualifying terms. If a study on the math abilities of children had an equal number of boys and girls, and 80% of the girls scored higher on a math-skills test than all of the boys, the researcher cannot say that girls are better at math than boys are. The results must always be qualified: Girls tended to score higher on the math-skills test than boys did. Gillet (n.d) points out that precision are crucial to academic writing. Students should use dates and figures to present information precisely and accurately.

Conclusion

Academic writing is proved to be an indispensable skill at tertiary education. Students at college level are expected to become constructors of knowledge and most importantly, they are required to produce research papers using academic language. However, academic writing comes with its own rules and conventions which vary from one discipline to another making academic writing challenging and even confusing for a lot of students, thus creating many issues for students who are not familiar with the notion of academic writing, and especially EFL learners as it requires advanced knowledge and usage of vocabulary, grammar, and the

development of argumentative and analytic skills. It is important; therefore, for students to have a good grasp of academic writing, its characteristics, and the different genres that exist in the academic discourse.

Chapter Two
Fieldwork

Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the practical part of the study. It aims at identifying the academic writing challenges faced by second year Master students while writing their dissertation. In doing so, a students' and a teachers' questionnaires were administered to identify these common difficulties and challenges. The chapter also deals with the description of the research method, population and sample, and the data gathering tools. Moreover, it will attempt to discuss the main findings. Finally it will attempt to provide suggestions and recommendation for further research.

Research Approach

The current study seeks to identify and establish the common challenges of academic writing which second year Master students run into during the preparation of their dissertations; therefore, a descriptive analytic study is used. A qualitative approach is employed to obtain the data needed for the completion of this study. The quantitative data collected through the questionnaires helps to provide a summary of the qualitative data.

Population and Sample of the Study

The current study deals with a sample of thirty two second year Master students population concerned with this study includes second year Master students and teachers at Mohamed Kheider Univeristy of Biskra. Out of about 120 students, 32 responded to the students' questionnaire. As for teachers, seven were selected on the basis that they are teachers of academic writing module as well as being second year Master supervisors.

Data Gathering Tools

To conduct this study, one data collection tool is used, which is a questionnaire. Two questionnaires were designed for the purpose of gathering qualitative data.

Students' Questionnaire

Description of the Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is comprised of nine items which are divided into close-ended, open-ended, and multiple choice questions. The close-ended questions aim to find out general information regarding their writing level and writing activity. The open-ended question attempts to elicit answers and justifications regarding which elements of the dissertation is do the students find most difficult to write.

Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was designed with Google Forms. Due to time constraints and the lack of presence and unavailability of second year Master students, the questionnaire was administered online via "Facebook" on second year Master students' group. The questionnaire received thirty two (32) responses.

Data analysis

Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Item one: How would you rate your writing skills?

Table 3.1. Students' Writing Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Good	8	65.6%
Average	21	25%
Low	3	9.4%
Total	32	100%

This question aims at identifying students writing skills through self rating. Most students (65.6%) rate their writing skill as average. Others (25%) claim to have good writing skills while the remaining students (9.4%) think their writing skills level is low.
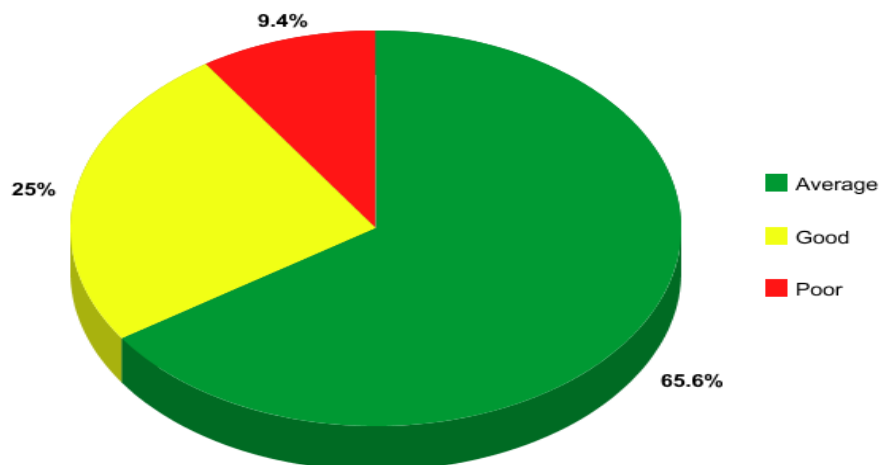
Figure 01: Students' Writing Skill Level

Item two: How often do you write inside the classroom?

Table 3.2. Writing Frequency inside the Classroom

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Always	1	3.1%
Sometimes	23	71.9%
Rarely	7	21.9%
Never	1	3.1%
Total	32	100%

This question is concerned with the frequency of writing the students do in class. The results obtained reveal that the majority of students (71.9%) occasionally write in class while (21.9%) claimed that they rarely do. A minority of one respondent (3.1%) revealed that they always write in class while the remaining (3.1%) report that they never write in class.
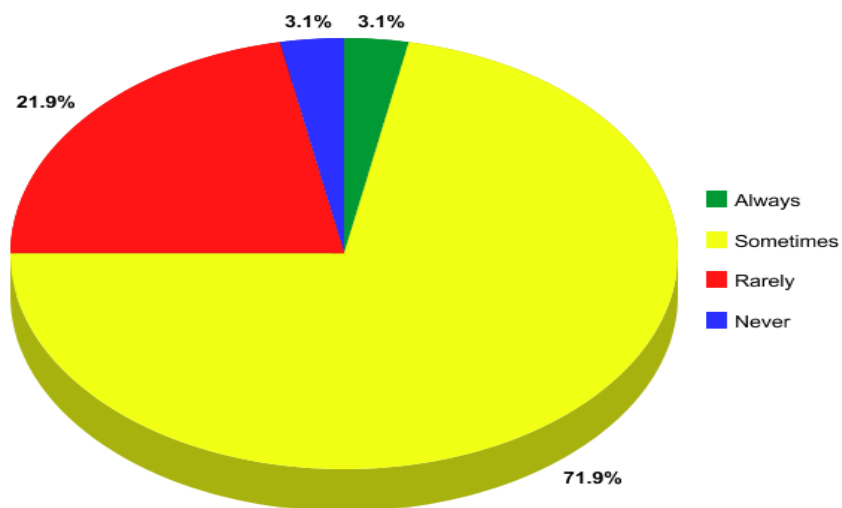
Figure 02: Writing Frequency inside the Classroom

Item three: How often do you write outside the classroom?

When inquired about how often they write outside the classroom, more than half of the respondents (53.1%) reveal that they rarely write outside the classroom while some (28.1%) claimed that they write occasionally. A smaller portion of the respondents (15.6%) expressed that they never write outside the classroom while a remaining of one student (3.1%) state that they always write outside the classroom.

Table 3.3. Writing Frequency outside the Classroom

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Always	1	3.1%
Sometimes	9	28.1%
Rarely	17	53.1%
Never	5	15.6%
Total	32	100%
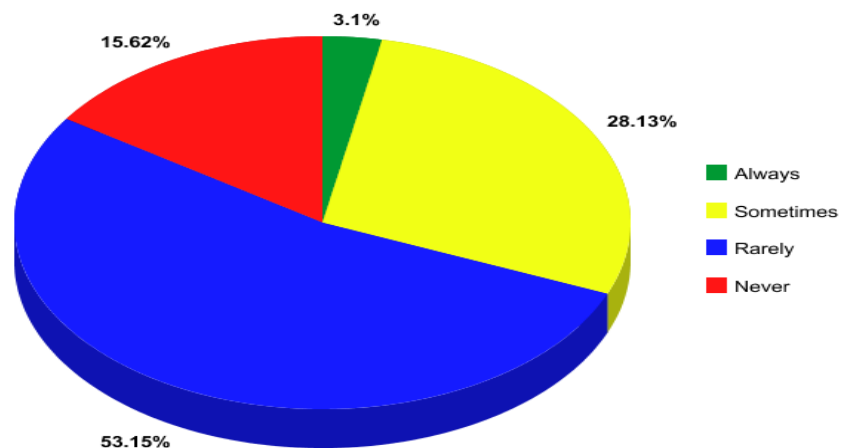
Figure 03: Writing Frequency outside the Classroom

Item four: How Often Do You Receive Feedback on your Writing?

Table 3.4. Frequency of Classroom Feedback

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Always	2	6.3%
Sometimes	14	43.7%
Rarely	13	40.5%
Never	3	9.4%
Total	32	100%

The results in the table below reveal that (43.7%) of students reported that they sometimes receive feedback on their writing while a large portion (40.5%) state that they rarely receive feedback. A small percentage claims that they have feedback on their writing in the classroom. As for the remaining (6.29%), classroom feedback occurs consistently.
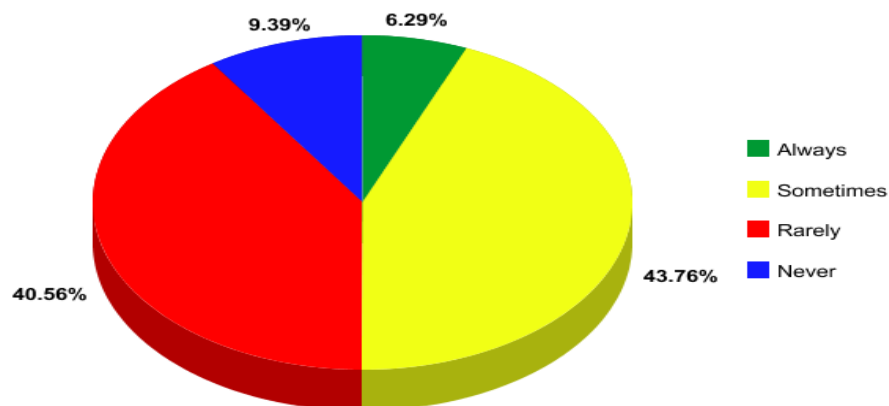
Figure 04: Frequency of Classroom Feedback

Item five: Have you had any explicit exposure to academic writing prior to last year?

Table 3.5. Students' Exposure to academic writing prior to last year

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	50%
No	16	50%
Total	32	100%

The academic writing module in the syllabus of the English division at Mohamed Kheider University is normally introduced in the Master's program which lasts two years. Half the students (50%) stated that they had explicit exposure to academic writing before last year while the other half (50%) revealed that they had no exposure to academic writing module prior to last year.
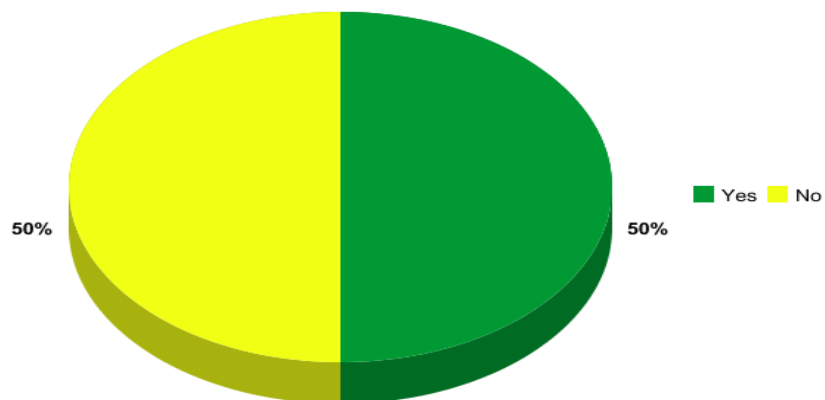
Figure 05: Exposure to academic writing prior to last year

Item six: How often are you required to write assignments using academic language?

Table 3.6. Frequency of Writing Academic Assignments

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Often	12	43.7%
Sometimes	16	37.5%
Rarely	6	18.7%
Total	32	100%
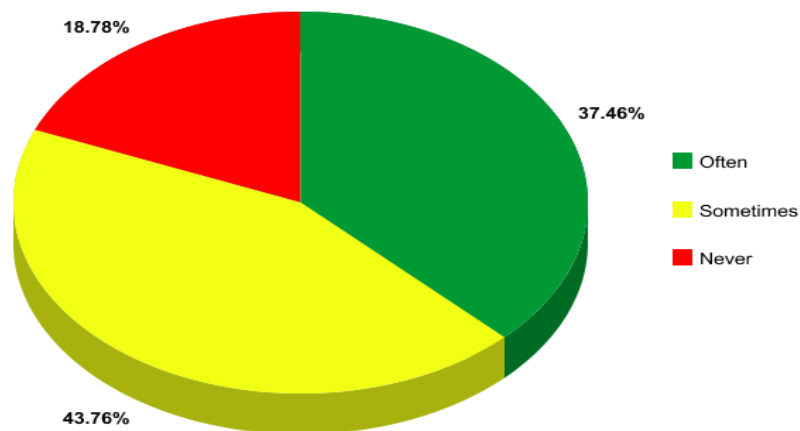
Figure 06: Frequency of writing academic assignments

Item seven: Which aspect of academic writing do you find most difficult? You may choose up to three aspects.

Table 3.7. The Most Difficult Academic Writing Aspects for Students

Aspect of academic writing	Frequency	Percentage
Punctuation	12	37.5%
Grammar	14	43.8%
Organisation	8	25%
Word choice	17	53.1%
Paraphrasing	12	37.5%
Citing	11	34.4%
Other (critical writing)	1	3.1%

As the tabulated results above show, students seem have many multiple difficulties in common. Word choice is by far the most challenging aspect of academic writing as claimed by more than half of the students (53.1%), followed by grammar (43.8%). Punctuation and paraphrasing are found to be equally as difficult by some students (37.5%). These two aspects are considered one of the basic yet most challenging aspects of writing. Therefore, students still need more instruction and practice of these two aspects.

Item eight: Which element of the dissertation do you find most difficult to challenging, and why?

Students were required to identify the aspect(s) of the dissertation which they find most difficult to write and provide a justification for their answers. Out of thirty two students (32), five (05) reported having difficulties writing introductions. Only two (02) students provided a justification. One (01) student attributed these difficulties to having too many ideas which they

are unable to express in full sentences. As for the other student, the use of the students 'own

words is what they think is most difficult. The abstract proved to be as equally difficult to

write as claimed by five (05) students. The reason for this as stated by one student is the

condensed nature of the abstract which requires including much information while remaining

concise. Other students express having difficulty with the reference list, claiming that it

includes too many details and nuances.

Item nine: Do you think that two years of academic writing instruction is enough to be

effective at academic writing?

Table 3.9. Academic writing instruction time

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
No	26	81.3%
Yes	6	18.8%
Total	32	100%

As demonstrated by the table above, the majority of students (81.3%) believe that two

years of academic writing instruction are insufficient to become affective at academic writing.

The remaining (18.8%) think that it is sufficient. To clarify, the module of academic writing at

the English division of Mohamed Kheider University is first introduced at the Master level

which lasts for two years.
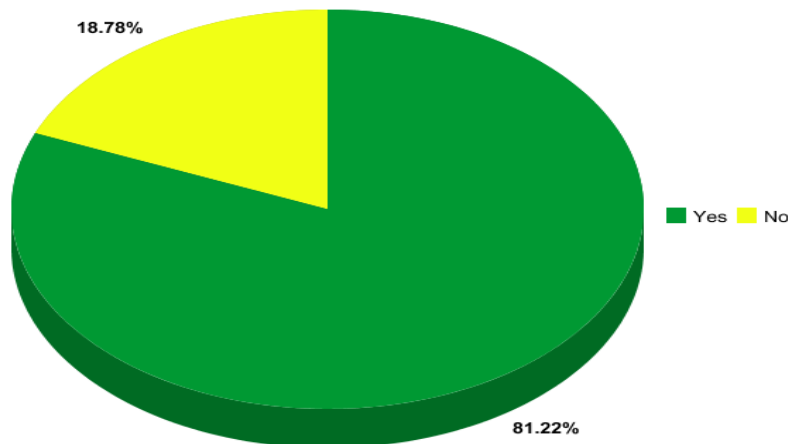
Figure 07: Academic Writing Instruction Time

Teachers' Questionnaire

The second section is concerned with the description and analysis of the teachers' questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed for teachers of academic writing module and supervisors. The data gathered from this questionnaire provides more input and information which help to establish the main difficulties from the perspective of academic writing teachers and of supervisor of second year Master students.

Aims

This questionnaire was designed with the purpose of gaining further information and insight into the challenges second year Master students face in writing their dissertation from the perspective of academic writing teachers and supervisors. Additionally, it sought to identify the common difficulties these students encounter in writing their dissertations.

Administration

A total of seven questionnaires were distributed to teachers of academic writing module who are also supervisors of Master two students in the English Language division at Mohamed Kheider University during the academic year of 2018/2019. Out of the seven questionnaires, four were handed out in person while the remaining three were administered online. The data gathered from the teachers' questionnaire helped in providing important information and valuable insights which contributed to the enrichment of this study.

Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 10 items which include close-ended and open-ended questions. The close-ended questions require teachers to select either select one answer or check multiple answers depending on the question requirements. The open-ended questions require full answers and justifications of the teachers' choices. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section is concerned with background information about the teachers' including their academic qualifications and teaching writing experience. The second section is concerned with the teachers' views and attitudes towards the academic writing challenges faced by second year Master students. The questionnaire also includes a small section for teachers to add further comments or suggestions.

Analysis of the Teachers' Interview

Item one: Please specify your degree

Table 3.10. Teachers' Degree

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Magister	4	57.1%
Master	2	28.3%
Doctorate	1	14.3%

Concerning the academic degree(s) obtained by the teachers, four (04) assert having Magister degree, while two (02) teachers hold Master degree. The remaining teacher (01) reports holding a doctorate

Item two: How long have you been teaching EFL writing at university?

Table 3.11. Teachers' Experience in Teaching Writing

Years of teaching writing	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	04	57.1%
5-10 years	01	14.3%
More than 10 years	02	28.3%
Total	07	100%

As indicated in the table above, four teachers have been teaching EFL writing from one to five years, while one teacher's teaching writing experience expands over five years. The two remaining teachers revealed that they have been teaching EFL writing for over ten years. The teachers' varying teaching experience in writing can provide us with different insights and

opinions concerning students' academic writing level, what they consider as effective academic writing, issues facing students in academic writing and such.

Item three: How long have you been supervising Master dissertations?

Table 3.12. Teachers' Supervision Experience

Years of supervision	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	04	57.1%
5-10 years	02	28.3%
More than 10 years	01	14.3%
Total	07	100%

Item four: How would you rate M2 students' academic writing skills?

Table 3.13. Teachers' Rating of M2 Academic Writing Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Good	01	14.3%
Average	04	57.1%
Poor	02	28.3%
Total	07	100%

When asked to rate second year Master student's academic level, most teachers (57.1%) rate it as average while some (28.3%) rate it as poor. The one remaining teacher (14.3%) think that second year Master students have a good level in academic writing.

Item five: Which aspect(s) of writing do second year Master students struggle with most when writing their dissertation? (You may tick more than one box)

When inquired about the writing aspects that second year Master students struggle with most when writing their dissertation, four out of seven teachers reveal that students struggle mainly in terms of grammar, organisation, and paraphrasing. Word choice and mechanics are mentioned twice as other area of difficulty for students.

Teacher 01: grammar, organisation, mechanics

Teacher 02: organisation, paraphrasing

Teacher 03: paraphrasing, word choice

Teacher 04: grammar, paraphrasing

Teacher 05: mechanics, paraphrasing

Teacher 06: grammar, organization

Teacher 07: grammar, organisation, word choice

Item six: According to you, what characterises effective academic writing?

Teacher 01: it is direct, simple, straightforward, based subordination, objective.

Teacher 02: effective academic writing needs a lot of reading so as to have a good style and a better way to analyze and synthesize all reading tasks.

Teacher 03: many characteristics, yet the two major ones: precision and formality.

Teacher 04: simple and straightforward language, relevant terminology

Teacher 05: good organization, good mechanics use, good paraphrasing, good referencing, correct grammar, coherence, appropriate vocabulary

Teacher 06: it has many aspects: 1.ideas and content which are the heart of subject matter.2.Oraganisation: the skelton.3.Word choice: Wording. 4. The voice: style. 5. Sentence fluency. 6. Convention

Teacher 07: no answer

Most teachers seem to have similar views on what qualifies as effective academic writing. For some teachers, clarity, directness, and relevant terminology are key components to effective academic writing. Other teachers believe that organisation, good style, and analytic skills is what makes academic writing effective.

Item seven: In your opinion, Master dissertations lack: (you may tick more than one box)

The elements mentioned in the table represent some of the most common features of academic writing that should be present in academic papers. As indicated by tabulated results, teachers seem to have different opinions on what they think lack most in Master dissertations. Out of seven teachers, six believe that Master dissertations lack critical writing. Four teachers consider appropriate citing as another area of deficiency. Style is seen as equally lacking by four teachers. Style in writing usually refers to the way writers use words, tone, and grammar to present and connect different ideas and arguments. It can be subjective and varies from one discipline or teacher to another. Formality, structure, and objectivity are mentioned once, while the aspect of clarity is left unselected.

Table 3.14. Aspects of deficiencies in Master dissertations

Options	Frequency	Percentage
a. Appropriate citing	04	57.4%
b. Clarity	00	00%
c. Critical writing	06	85.7%
d. Formality	01	14.3%
e. Objectivity	01	14.3%
f. Structure	01	14.3%
g. Style	04	57.4%
a+c+g	01	14.3%
a+c+d+g	01	14.3%
c+g	01	14.3%
c+e	01	14.3%
c+f	01	14.3%
a+c	01	14.3%
a+g	01	14.3%
Total	07	100%

Item eight: Which element in the dissertation do second year Master students find most difficult to write?

Teacher 01: literature review data analysis

Teacher 02: theoretical chapters, abstract

Teacher 03: literature review

Teacher 04: literature review, discussion of results

Teacher 05: introductions

Teacher 06: abstract

Teacher 07: introduction, data analysis

Item nine: In your view, what could be the reason behind these difficulties?

Most teachers attribute the difficulties facing second year Master students at the level of using academic style in dissertation writing to lack of practice and lack of experience in writing research papers. One teacher mentions lack of reading and other teachers says that it is caused by lack of feedback. Lack of reading prevents students from being introduced to the different structures of written academic English resulting in poor grammar and organisational skills, and limited vocabulary. Insufficient feedback does not permit the students to reflect on their writing mistakes and deficiencies.

Teacher 01: lack of reading, lack of feedback, lack of practice, lack of experience in writing research papers

Teacher 02: lack of reading, lack of practice

Teacher 03: lack of experience in writing research papers

Teacher 04: lack of experience in writing research papers

Teacher 05: lack of experience in writing research papers

Teacher 06: lack of practice

Teacher 07: lack of experience in writing research papers

Item ten: Do you think the time allocated for teaching academic writing is sufficient for students to become familiarised with and good at academic writing?

Table 3.15. Teachers' View on the Time Allocated for Academic Writing Instruction

Teacher	Answer	Justification
01	Yes	If he practices extensively on his own
02	Yes	No justification
03	No	Practicing in academic writing needs frequency of practice and feedback
04	No	Students need more practice and more feedback. Time is not enough for the teacher to correct all students' work and provide effective correction and remarks (feedback).
05	No	They need more practice. Theory alone is not enough.
06	No	The student is expected to start writing research papers from second year at university.
07	No	No justification

Discussion and Interpretation of the Main Findings

Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire

The main findings reveal that the majority of second year Master students clearly face many challenges in terms of writing their dissertations using academic English. The students' questionnaire revealed that most students rated their writing skills as average. This might suggest that students are aware of their own writing level. Second year Master students may have a good grasp of certain aspects and conventions of writing while lacking in other areas.

As such, the term "average" may carry different interpretations depending on who is rating and based on which standards. The findings also showed that most students rarely write outside the classroom. Lack of writing practice negatively affects students' writing performance as practice is one of the most effective ways students can improve their writing. This raises the issue of feedback. When inquired about how often students receive feedback on their writing, almost half the students stated they occasionally received feedback while the other half admitted to rarely receiving feedback in the classroom. Consistent feedback is important for students' writing as it raises their awareness of the mistakes they make and gives them the chance to reflect on their writing. Classroom feedback; however, is not accessible at all time due to lack of time and overcrowded classes.

Moreover, it is discovered that most students encounter common difficulties at the level of their academic writing, particularly in grammar, word choice, organisation, and paraphrasing. When inquired about the elements of dissertations students struggle most when writing, the majority of students expressed having difficulties writing the introductions, abstracts, general conclusions, and literature review. Another important finding is concerned with the students' view on the number of years they have been learning academic writing. As mentioned before in the analysis of the students' questionnaire, the majority of students showed their disapproval about the two years of academic writing instruction stating that it was insufficient to become effective at academic writing,

Discussion of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The data gathered from the teachers' questionnaire provided more in depth information regarding the issue tackled by this study. Teachers revealed that second year Master students

struggle in terms of grammar, organisation, paraphrasing, and mechanisms. They also reported that students' dissertations lack appropriate citing, critical writing, and style. From the teachers' experience and perspective, students find it challenging to write the abstract, literature review, and data analysis. The results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire also reveal that most teachers believe that two years of academic instruction is insufficient for students to become good at academic writing.

According to most teachers, the issues and difficulties regarding writing in academic style arise mainly from lack of practice and lack of experience in writing research papers.

In a separate section dedicated to further insights and suggestions, one teacher pointed out that although feedback is an important stage for effective academic writing, overcrowded classrooms render it difficult for teachers to provide feedback. Another teacher believed that the integration of students into research should begin before master level.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the practical aspect of the study. It dealt with the description of research method, data collection tools, and mainly with the analysis and interpretation of the findings. When it comes to the main purposes of this study, the students' and teachers' questionnaires resulted in important perspectives and information. One of the major findings revealed that students and teachers seem to have the same view and opinion concerning the academic writing difficulties which second year Master students encounter in writing their dissertation. The chapter further addressed these findings in the interpretation section.

General Conclusion

The complex nature of the writing skill poses a serious challenge for EFL and even for native English students. In higher education, students witness a shift in roles where they go from being the receivers of knowledge to being constructors of such knowledge. This shift includes students preparing a dissertation at the end of their academic career. While many elements go into dissertation writing, such as research and computer skills, the process of writing remains a challenging task.

The present study focuses on identifying students' academic writing challenges, and the common areas of difficulties in writing dissertations. In doing so, two questionnaires have been administered to students and teachers at the University of Mohamed Kheider. The results of this study revealed that the majority of students face many common challenges that mainly concern word choice, grammar, punctuation, paraphrasing, and citing.

Based on the findings, some recommendations should be considered. Students should write more outside the classroom and actively seek feedback in the classroom as it is crucial to the development of their writing skills. Reading is also crucial to improving the writing skill as it exposes students to different structures and usages of written English and most importantly, enriches their vocabulary. Therefore, it is highly advisable for students to read academic material relating to their domain of study and interest.

Syllabus designers and teachers of academic writing should consider incorporating this academic writing module and assigning academic papers during the License level as this will familiarise students with the concept and conventions of academic writing.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations can be derived:

- Syllabus designers need to consider incorporating academic writing module during the License level as this will give more time students to become familiarised with the concept and conventions of academic writing.

- Teachers have to allocate more time to teach this module and most importantly, ensure to provide students with constant feedback on their academic writing.

- Students may be exposed and encouraged to read academic material such as research articles, books relating to their domain of their study in order to enrich their lexicon with academic vocabulary and famliarise themselves with the different structures and styles of the English academic language.

- Future researchers are advised to carry out an in-depth investigation on the difficulties of academic writing within a larger population.

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Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

1. How do you rate your writing skills?

   Good   ☐

   Average   ☐

   Bad   ☐

2. How often do you write inside the classroom?

   Always   ☐

   Sometimes   ☐

   Rarely   ☐

   Never   ☐

3. How often do you write outside the classroom?

   Always   ☐

   Sometimes   ☐

   Rarely   ☐

   Never   ☐

4. How often do you receive feedback on your writing in the classroom?

   Always   ☐

   Sometimes   ☐

   Rarely   ☐

   Never   ☐

5. Have you had any explicit exposure to academic writing prior to last year?

Yes   ☐

No   ☐

6. How often are you required to write assignments using academic language?

Often   ☐

Sometimes ☐

Rarely   ☐

7. Which aspect of academic writing do you find most difficult? You may tick more than one box.

Punctuation   ☐

Grammar   ☐

Organisation ☐

Word choice   ☐

Paraphrasing ☐

Citing   ☐

Other   ☐

8. Which element of the dissertation do you find most challenging to write? (e.g., introductions, abstract...etc) and why?

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9. In your opinion, do you think that two years of academic writing instruction is enough to be effective in academic writing?

Yes

No

Appendix B

<u>Teachers' questionnaire</u>

Dear teachers,

The present study is conducted to identify academic writing challenges that Master 2 students encounter in writing their dissertations. Your responses will greatly contribute to the accomplishment of this dissertation. All information provided will be treated confidentially and will be used for research purposes only.

Note: M2 refers to Master Two.

Thank you for your time and collaboration.

Prepared by: Filali Sarah

Supervised by: BecharMaamar

Q1. Please specify your degree

a)Magister ☐

b)Master ☐

c)Doctorate ☐

Q2. How long have you been teaching EFL writing at university?

a)1-5 years ☐

b)5-10 years ☐

c)More ☐

Q3. How long have you been supervising Master dissertations?

a)1-5 years ☐

b)5-10 years ☐

c)More ☐

Q4. How would you rate M2 students' academic writing skills?

a)Excellent ☐

b)Good ☐

c)Average ☐

d)Poor ☐

Q5. Which aspect(s) of writing do M2 students struggle with most when writing their dissertation? (You may choose two)

a)Grammar ☐

b) Organisation ☐

c) Mechanics ☐

d)Paraphrasing ☐

e)Word choice ☐

Other

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………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q6. According to you, what characterises effective academic writing?

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………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q7. In your opinion, Master dissertations lack: (you may choose two)

a)Appropriate citing

b)Clarity

c)Critical writing

d)Formality

e)Objectivity

f)Structure

g)Style

Other

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Q8. Which element in the dissertation do M2 students find most difficult to write?

a)Theoretical chapters

b)Literature review

c)Abstract

d)Introductions

e)General conclusion

f)Data analysis

Other

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Q9. In your view, what could be the reason behind these writing difficulties?

a)Lack of reading

b)Lack of feedback

c)Lack of practice

d)Lack of experience in writing research papers

Other

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q10. Do you think that two years of academic writing instruction is sufficient for students to become familiarised and good at academic writing?

a)Yes   b)No

Justify in either case
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-Any further comments or suggestions are highly welcomed
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Summary in Arabic   الملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التعرف على تحديات الكتابة الأكاديمية   التي يواجهها طلبة سنة ثانية ماستر أثناء

تحضير مذكرة التخرج. تحتوي هذه الدراسة على فصلين الفصل الأول يشمل الجزء النظري بينما يتعلق الجزء الثاني

بالجزء التطبيقي. لجمع المعلومات، قمنا بطرح   استبيان لطلبة سنة ثانية ماستر و آخر للأساتذة. نتائج تكشف أن الطلبة

يواجهون صعوبات خصوصا على مستوى قواعد النحو و الاستخدام الصحيح و الدقيق للمفردات و المصطلحات و الكتابة

النقدية و الاستعمال الصحيح لقواعد الاقتباس. بالإضافة قد كشف استبيان الأساتذة أن هذه الصعوبات و التحديات عائدة إلى

قلة الطلبة لممارسة الكتابة الأكاديمية و قلة الخبرة في كتابة البحوث .

كلمات مفتاح : تحديات الكتابة الأكاديمية, متعلمي الللغة الانجليزية, كتابة مذكرات, محمد خيضر, بسكرة