# Interview 4

Speaker 1

How did your teachers teach academic writing?

Speaker 2

I learn English basically from TV shows and movies. Schools, to be honest, didn't help that much as I used to get Zeros. But when I get to King Saud University, at this stage I learned how to write academically.

Speaker 1

How did your teachers teach academic writing?

Speaker 2

Well, she was really strict, and she used to give us like topics to write about, but she didn't give us the correct tools how to write, but at least I learned how to write with her and almost like it was better than high school and middle school. But with her I didn't remember that she gave us tools or told us how to write or how make the essay structure, or the topic sentence I didn't learn about the topic and I think she assumed that we already know about these things. She would just like, give us a topic, generating some ideas, discussing some ideas and that's it.

Speaker 1

How did you improve your academic writing?

Speaker 2

It just self-learning. Basically, I moved to Ireland and also I learned somethings there. In abroad I didn't get any courses, but my doctors helped me how to write. They were really they good at explaining things to me because I was writing my master thesis and they were really helping me in giving me the right tools. And then when I came back here, I hire tutor and he helped me.

Speaker 1

How would you define academic writing?

Speaker 2

I would say is writing the correct structure using academic words. This is what I saw. This is academic writing.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for students?

Speaker 2

Yes, I believe that.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for their academic learning prospects?

Speaker 2

Yes, of course we teach them skills and we give them like, grammar, , variety of grammatical structures and variety for academic words. If they are using informal way of writing and they don't use the structures and the words it's not going to do anything good for them. So I was training them to use them. I try to emphasise that this structure, we can use it here, and we have amazing books here. Unlock it was it's it's really clear which structure and which words we can use them in a paragraph.

Speaker 1

How does academic writing impact students’ higher education?

Speaker 2

Yes, it is because that in class I gave them every everything. I tell them what to do and they have to follow. It is not something new. So sometimes they write, let's say long sentences using or good structure, but missing verbs and or subjects. When they start using compound sentences and they didn't learn it, it's fine, It will not affect their grades, of course. But the things they have learned? In class they should at least use it.

Speaker 1

Do you think students are able to express their opinion in their academic writing? why or how?

Speaker 2

Not at all. There are two main issues, the first one: they don't have enough vocabulary. OK, sometimes they have the ideas in their mind, but they can't put it in words because they don't have the words.

Speaker 1

What kind of words that you mean?

Speaker 2

They do have the words because the other I told you that we have two things that are related to each other. For example, if we give them topics, for example about global warming. The students don't have enough information about global warming. Even though if they have some information they don't have the words about global warming. So this is a struggle they can not write because they didn't have enough information. They didn't have enough words to express their feeling. If I give them something, let's say about schools, about things they like fashion, let's say like simple topics they can. They can manage to write. Express their opinions, but as long as, as long as we have academic topics now, they can't express their opinions or their ideas at all. They struggle.

Speaker 1

Are there any barriers to teaching academic writing? What are they?

Speaker 2

Yes, according to my class, They don't have enough information. So I tried in class to discuss with them and at least so they can have some idea what is global warming about some types of sport. It's. I don't remember the other topics, but they were really new to them. Technologies, so they didn't have any idea about this topic. So when they write the paragraph and even speaking, they can't express their ideas because of this issue. I think their book not enough.

Speaker 1

How you define arguments in academic writing? How would you describe the importance of the arguments in academic writing?

Speaker 2

The argument that when we teach them arguments of like paragraphs where they have to discuss both opinions or different opinions and then they state their own opinion. Yeah, like we talked about this last week and they didn't understand, to be honest. My students at the beginning they were like what do you mean? So I have to relate this to their to their lives, If you go to your mom and to you try to convince her, you know, she has her own opinion and your dad has his own opinion. So you need to adjust both opinions and then after that after adjusting their concerns, you give them your own opinion and yes.

Speaker 1

What do you focus on when teaching writing arguments in academic writing?

Speaker 2

Argument writing, we teach them again. We have amazing books. I tried that, which stage we write essays. So we have 4 paragraphs basically, so it is easier for them to divide their opinions or to divide their paragraph style. So one paragraph is one argument, the other paragraph, the other argument, and the conclusion will be about their opinion. Then we give them tools like to use the phrases that will help them to introduce opinions and of course not in my opinion, but they use this. In my opinion, the other persons' opinion. But basically, we give them, we give them more academic way, but they don't use them. they use the simple ones.

Speaker 1

Can you explain how students build strong arguments with the readers in academic writing?

Speaker 2

Uhhh, they can't they can't, so they can't. They can't, they can't. I would say that argumentative paragraph or any type of paragraph, they need time. This semester was really really short. And they are packed with many things they have to do at the same time, so they have to do presentations, assignments, projects, at the same time, while we give these lessons. So their mind is busy and this is all about the academic writing English course. I don't know about what is happening with. The other courses. So they need the time and the correct tools.

Speaker 1

Do you have any recommendations that help students to build strong arguments?

Speaker 2

Well, if I had time. I would ask him to read about the topic first, and try to do a discussion. So they can try to discuss the other person or convince or the other person about their own opinions and ideas. OK and try to see other people's opinions. OK, and this within the if they practise that then at least they have some idea, because they don't know how to share opinions. They didn't know how to adjust, opinions they didn't know how to be persuasive at all. They can't , I was surprised that although they are young students young adults, but I thought that they are really strong and their opinions is matter, but they don't express their opinions, they struggle to do that.

Speaker 1

Do you think that when they write, they think about the readers?

Speaker 2

They just write, I do not think they think about the readers.

Speaker 1

Do you think that they can persuade their readers? Or make strong arguments.

Speaker 2

I think my students this year can not my students last year were better

Speaker 1

What is your focus when you give students feedback on their academic writing?

Speaker 2

I would say the main focus of their ideas, I would say that because the grammar we kept correcting it, since like, ever. But the idea they are struggling how to write them and express them and the idea.

Speaker 1

What are the common mistakes in your students’ writing?

Speaker 2

For example, when they give me whenever they write a paragraph, they tell me that I think that global warming is really, let's say, the easiest one for them to write is Global warming has disadvantages. They put subject, verb, object and that's it. They didn't expand the sentence. So, I said why? and they will stop here. Here they have to go to the book, and then they don't understand, and then I try to address like to tell them what is happening around the world. Do you know something around the world? And then I bring their attention to that we had, like a lot of storms, a lot of floodings, and these things. Do you notice that it is happening a lot and then they can understand? But they still struggle how to put them in a sentence in a sentences.

Speaker 1

What do you think makes a text more organised and coherent?

Speaker 2

OK. I would say mind mapping helped a little bit. So I would say to them, because I know they jump from idea to idea. So I say when you write your main idea, you have three ways to go from it. OK, you give me a reason, example or more information. Then go to the other circle until you finish one of these. At least two or one. And it's it's become easy. It became easier for them to be honest with these steps.

Speaker 1

I have here, an example of academic writing, can you answer some questions? What is your focus when you give students feedback on their academic writing? Which paragraph do you think is better and why?

Speaker 2

I would say this is a really good. Comparing to my students, this is really good. If she was, my student would give her ten out of 10 because I don't have the same this essay at all. I don't have this. She's really, she's really good. She's like, addressing different opinions. She's giving, like reasons, examples reducing. I would say this is really good comparing to my students. All paragraphs are good for me.

Speaker 1

Can you explain the importance of using these words in academic writing; however, finally, such as, to sum up, I agree?

Speaker 2

Yes, they are important. We teach them so they can inform the readers they are going to present either reason or present either example or list of things. Or organising the text, yes. She has some grammatical mistakes.

Speaker 1

To what extent it is important to correct the students' mistakes in regard of use conjunctions words in academic writing?

Speaker 2

Yeah, I believe so. Yes, to make it more academic and to organise the facts, that's it. Because we do the same thing here, we give them transitional words. They need to use it in academic writing.

Speaker 1

How do you teach these words?

Speaker 2

Actually, I follow the book if we have a lesson about transition words I give my students examples about them otherwise I did not teach them because my students will keep make mistake on them.

Speaker 1

Do you recommend any training course that might help improve teaching EFL academic writing?

Speaker 2

Might be make a writing competition, or extra classes