# Interview 8

Speaker 1

Can you describe how you learned English academic writing? How did your teachers teach academic writing?

Speaker 2

OK, as usual in college, I was in King Saud University, there were writing courses. Teachers were good. But actually I think writing skills depend on the person himself, which means that I had to write a lot. It's not only what is required in the course. But I have to read and write at the same time and I actually followed one advice of one of my teachers that you have to write every day. Yeah. And for example, let's say 100 words a day. It doesn't matter what you write, but you just have to write. OK, yes, with the courses with the writing courses in college and actually teachers, there were many. Actually, there weren't many courses, but I think two courses, but with two different teachers. And every teacher has its own technique. It is own way of teaching. All these things integrated with self learning, actually I think this is the way how I how I learned wriitng.

Speaker 1

How did you improve your academic writing?

Speaker 2

As I told you, just to keep writing, you know?. And you have to not quit writing exactly with your all teaching duties and administrative requirements, you have to write. It doesn't matter what you write, you just have to write. Maybe an incident that happened during the day. Write about it. What do you feel about it? I think it's writing. Keep writing all the time, every day. If you have a lot of responsibility, it's not actually every day when you have a lot of responsibility, but writing from once, twice a week. I think that improved my writing and actually reading I think is important skill to improve writing.

Speaker 1

How would you define academic writing?

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think it's you have to follow or you have. To use certain vocabulary, certain standard words keep a good grammar structure. Yes, you have to also keep a standard structure of English or Standard English, you can't use any slang words. And also to learn how to write to let's say official companies or anyone that you want to send emails or letters or any an official way of writing with the proper grammar with a good structure of English sentences and also a good choice of words of standard English words.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for students?

Speaker 2

Yes, of course. It's very important because you can see how they write actually, even in emails, they don't know how to write emails. I think writing even writing emails is one of academic writing that students should learn from the beginning because they use emails just like WhatsApp. They don't use polite official language with their teachers. So I think as they have to, since they are a college student, they have to learn how to write academic writing.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for their academic learning prospects?

Speaker 2

Yes, I think so. Depending on the subject or the course, they are taking the examination. Yes, I think academic writing will keep them on the right track using the proper grammar, using the proper technique of the English structure, proper language. Yes, of course. I think learning academic writing will improve their grades in exams, no matter what is the course.

Speaker 1

How does academic writing impact students’ higher education?

Speaker 2

Of course, I think academic writing skill is the main important condition that universities request to accept students in higher education such as master's or PhD.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

I think yes, they can. I think when you improve your ability or your academic writing, you're actually improving many skills. Yes, you're actually improving your linguistic competence, your storage of vocabulary. If you have a lot of storage of vocabulary, if you have a good structure of English sentences. If you have this good linguistic competence, you'll be able to express anything that you want in a proper way.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Of course there are. We can talk about different challenges. Let's say that maybe the course is not let's say not very clear or maybe the teacher is not using a proper technique or appropriate techniques to convey the message to students. Maybe the students are not actually working hard to improve their academic writing. I think there are many challenges that students face actually. Well, also it depends on the level of the students. Does the level of the course and the level of students match. Is there a proper way to convey the message that is suitable to their students. I think the teacher here, it's the role of the teacher to choose the right technique that is suitable for their students.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

It is one way of academic writing, so to learn academic writing, you have to learn all the aspects that include in a kind of writing and arguments, I think or argumentative essays are one important aspect. So yes, I think it is important to learn arguments in academic writing.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

I think through practical ways are the best ways and for example to divide students into two different amazing groups following two different ideas and give them the choice to go with which group they want and then they start arguments against each other, giving them the time to outline their ideas and then give them the time to discuss these ideas among them and then they play argumentative two players or two roles start to argumentative, giving advantages, disadvantages of their own point of.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

I think ideas, ideas are very important. Organising ideas actually is very important. Teaching student how to start writing argumentative essays, starting for what given steps you should think of what? And then how can you support your idea or your point of view? How can you defend yourself or point of view, and then on the other hand, how to give the disadvantages of the other side point of?

Speaker 1

What makes the text more persuasive? how what words you use to write? Do you think the student think about the readers?

Speaker 2

Well, based on my experience, they don't think of the reader, they just write what comes to their minds. I think they don't think of the reader or how the reader thinks or observe the writing or the writers writing. So they didn't try to pursue the reader about their opinion or that what they write. Actually they need to strong idea to persuasive the readers they need evidence.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Maybe we should from the beginning to pay their attention to the reader and they have to put in their mind that they should be subjective in some ways. Yes, it is their writing, they have to put their point of view there, but actually they have to also think of the reader and how the read is going to. The reader is going to preserve, what they're talking about. How the reader is going to understand that.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Ideas are important, did that actually reaches the point of view of the writing. The most important is grammar mistakes. This is actually always and always attract my attention because they always as Arab student, they always make the same mistakes over and over and over, although you tell them from the beginning of the course you should not do this and that, but they still do it. I think becuse of mother language. I think they always use Arabic structure to the English structure like for example double subjects. They always use for example Reem she said that, Reem and she this double subject. We use the same structure in Arabic, we say for example Reem she said that. So use double subject and we don't use this kind of structure in in English. We don't even use it in a formal Arabic, but because this is the way they're talking, use this structure in local Arabic because I always see this mistake. It's not from one student or two, many students actually, and I'm wondering why are they doing the same mistake, and then when I thought of it, I figured out that we actually use this in Arabic.

It's not only this mistake, there are other mistakes, especially with preposition my students always face problem with English prep. Prepositions like, for example, in or on and they don't use it in the proper English way. They use it the Arabic way.

Speaker 1

I have here, an example of academic writing, can you answer some questions? Which paragraph do you think is better and why? What do think the student needs to improve this paragraph?

Speaker 2

This is an essay a completed essay. I think is a good a model example for essay writing. I liked the introduction it is well structured. Student discuss the topic very well. For me I think this enough for 250 words essay no need to improve this good.

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

It depends on the type of the topic that they are writing about. Sometimes they are very important in some topics or ways of writing or techniques of writing.

Do you think that this your student use a? Lot of these words.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Well, it depends if you're talking about a process, they would use word like first second, finally, or sometimes if you guide them to use them, they would use it sometimes they don't. Although they need it, but sometimes they don't. So it depends actually in the ability of the students if they were good writers, they would use those words in the proper way and in the proper time. But with some students, they won't use it actually. Actually, my students use the most common conjunctions, words, they're using and and but yes. But they did not use conjunctions for contrast such as furthermore, however.

Speaker 1

How do you teach these words?

Speaker 2

Maybe we should group them under one topic for example, if you're talking about a process you should use firstly, finally, for example, if you're talking about a group of related ideas, you should use alternative words like in addition, moreover. And you have to use alternatives and you don't keep just using moreover moreover or and and and you have to exchange between them.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Might be more academic skills course I think students need to improve their academic course since they start university till they graduate.