# Interview 9

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

OK as a student I think writing is that the most difficult part when you are learning a language or a second language because it's the higher thinking process. So students needs to put effort. I remember, like my professor was doing starting with brainstorming like when you have an interesting topic you or you choose your own topic and then you brainstorm about it and you try start it by free writing and this is just release the stress out of the students. So if you start by writing, and not worrying about the spelling, not worrying about the grammar, not worrying about anything just writing free writing, then afterwards you start building on this you start building step by step on how to organise your writing. Organise your thoughts, then write a paragraph or to write a full essay. Then after that you start editing and caring about your spelling, your grammar.

Speaker 1

How did you improve your academic writing?

Speaker 2

I think reading the more you read, the more you get exposure to the world, it improves you in in many aspects, including your writing. So your writing skills improves with first reading and being exposed to the language and the knowledge, second of all, practise. Practise, practise, practise. And then editing and my own recommendation don't edit it at the same time, because once you finish writing, you are tired. You already used all your mental effort in putting this information together, so it's a good idea just to keep it aside for a while. An hour or so take a break. If you have time, you can leave it for a day or more. Then go back to it and you're going to find many things that you need to change and edit, and sometimes you will be shocked like did I write this really, is that me? and then you can edit it and the more editing you do is the is the is better and I think it improves you even if you do your own writing. Also, peer review and reading others papers and like collaborating with others it improves your writing as well because you're exposing to different ideas, different writing styles, as well as reading, like reading, either reading books or reading your the papers from your colleagues from your peers in the in the field.

I feel that my mistake is mixing the Arabic style with the English writing is my main problem until now like I've been learning English for a long time, maybe for 20 years or more now, but still when I write I think in Arabic, especially if I'm talking about traditional things, things that is related to Arabic culture, just my mind switch like that and I start thinking in Arabic and then I find my paragraph is it needs editing now this is not this is not English this is Arabic.

Speaker 1

How would you define academic writing?

Speaker 2

I think to be formal and to be able to present your ideas in organised way. To follow of course, like the rules of writing to write in a correct way the formal way.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for students?

Speaker 2

I think it's the most important thing. They need to learn it other ways how they going to communicate in their homework and write their papers and research in the future if they want to go pursue their higher education.

Speaker 1

Is academic writing important for their academic learning prospects?

Speaker 2

I think it should be. IThey should be told that their way of writing will reflect on their marks. If they are really able to write very well, they will get high mark if not they will get low mark.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

To some point, yes, but they need more training on how first, how to express their opinion and how to debate, and we're working on this. Our curriculum is doing this for. But students need training. Because they everybody needs training on how to debate and how to express their opinion. They need more training on how to express their opinion number one and how to write it down number two.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

As I said students need training and this might take more time in teaching class and we are as teachers do not have enough time we need to finish the course we cannot give the students more training. But honestly the need it.

Speaker 1

How you define arguments in academic writing?

Speaker 2

It is argumentative essay that students discuss two issues or more.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Well, it is important to give point of view, and if they are claiming and talking it like about opposite thing or tell their opinion about it.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

I mean, again, it's subjective. It depends on the students themselves and their level. So if we're talking about if they are lacking, let's say based on the skills that they are lacking. I follow my book guides. But as I said before, like I would say that I teach them how to organise their essay and make it clear how to start, how to end, how to put the body paragraph. I am teaching them essay paragraph structure such as start with the introduction and ending with a conclusion. I teach them how to set their point of view, and their supporting information, and maybe teach them some words. Give them words that they can use in their writing. I think words very are very important and also the words that related to the opinion how to express your opinion. For example, in my opinion, I think it's. My point of view, from my point of view so. But, students they don't use them even in high level.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

First of all, the ideas if the ideas are organised and going like in order step by step. Second of all, the form. Students need to learn how to form or how to write it in a correct form. Like when to start thesis statement, they said their thesis statement very well. They write them in the introduction. Then they go paragraph by paragraph supporting details. Then they end up with conclusion. I think this is going to make it more clear that they understand and be able to express it that way.

Speaker 1

What makes the text more persuasive? how what words you use to write.

Speaker 2

I think knowledge is important here. They need to know and search about the topic before they're talking before they write about. It so if they have a strong knowledge and if they are persuaded with their point of view, then can improve their language, if they search and be aware of the topic they're going to get more vocabulary and they going to enrich their learning and they're writing.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

As I said with more reading and rich information.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Yeah, usually I give them feedback. But it depends on the students themselves. Some of them they have a problem with grammar, so their grammar is like they're good at words, but when writing words, their words are good vocabulary, have rich vocabulary, but the grammar is common mistakes. Sometimes there are spelling mistakes. But some students do not care about my feedback.

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

I read it and I think this is a high-level student’s writing. I think students might need to check for grammar mistakes.

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

I think I think they're important. This is part of the academic part, I think. Because she's using the words to express her ideas and the linking words especially firstly, however, moreover, in my opinion, furthermore they are important. The essay makes sense for the reader, it links the words together. It's. Yeah, it is important to make it more organised, and to make your reader comprehend, understand what you want to say, follow you easily. Not getting bored, not getting get distracted. So these words very important.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

Honestly, I don't think that my student use a lot of them, they do use linking words such as firstly, secondly, thirdly, OK, I was like OK, thank you that's good.

Speaker 1

How do you teach these words?

Speaker 2

I think in practise. I might give them a text with it and text without it, and let them compare and which one makes more sense for them. I also give them a paragraph missing of these conjunctions and then ask them does it make sense for you? What do you think? So you can add them make it more sense. And let them just go and see and try to judge how important are these words.

Speaker 1

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

Speaker 2

The workshop is more about developmental, but now we are very busy as now we have three academic terms so no time.