

KASDI MERBAH UNIVERSITY – OUARGLA

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

English Section



Dissertation

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language and Literature and Civilization

Specialty: Applied Linguistics and English for Specific Purposes

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**Incorporating Strategies in Teaching Academic Essay
Writing to EFL Learners**

**(The Case of Second Year LMD Students at University
Kasdi Merbah Ouargla)**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "Incorporating Strategies in Teaching Academic Essay Writing for EFL learners " was carried out by me for the degree of master "applied linguistics and ESP" in English under the guidance and supervision of Dr. BOUSBI ABDELAZIZ, English language and literature, university Kasdi Merbah Ouargla. The interpretations put forth are based on my reading and understanding of the original texts and they are not published anywhere in the form of books, monographs or articles. The other, articles and websites, which I have made use of are acknowledged at the respective place in the text.

For the present thesis, which I am submitting to the university, no degree or diploma or distinction has been conferred on me before, rather in this or in any other university.

Date ()

Dedication

I dedicate this paper to my husband, who was always near and ready for help. He was supportive of me to do this work.

A special feeling of gratitude to my beloved children whose words of encouragement and tenacity ring in my ears.

This work is also dedicated to my beloved colleague Elkouti Malika who always regards me her sister and makes this work easy for me by her advice and support.

Also it is dedicated to Bellbagra Fatima Elzehra who encouraged me to fulfill this paper.

A special gratitude to all my classmates in second year master applied linguistics and ESP class and Anglo -Saxon Literature class.

Messaouda Benzaza

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to this paper production. I owe my gratitude to all those people who have made this paper possible.

My deepest gratitude is to my supervisor, Dr. Bousbai Abdelaziz. I have been amazingly fortunate to have an advisor who gave me the freedom to explore on my own and at the same time the guidance to recover when the steps faltered. He taught me how to question thoughts and express ideas. His patience and support helped me overcome many obstacles and finish this work. I hope that one day I would become as good advisor to my students as Dr Bousbai Abdelaziz has been to me.

I am deeply grateful to all teachers in the department of English at University Kasdi Merbah Ouargla who have been always there to listen and give advice for the long discussions that helped me sort out the practical part of this work. I am also thankful to them for their encouragement, for giving us their time of lectures, and for their great comments and remarks which will help us in the future.

Special thanks to second year LMD students who answered the questionnaire, and who spared no effort to contribute to this work.

I am extremely grateful to all teachers who helped us to perform this work among them Mr Khemiss Abdelaziz.

List of Abbreviations

LT: Language Teaching

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EFL; English as a Foreign Language

TFL: Teaching Foreign Language

EAP: English for academic purpose

L.M.D: License. Master. Doctorat

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Abstract

General Introduction

General Introduction

- 1. Aims of Study**
- 2. Research Problem**
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- 4. Population**
- 5. Means of Research**
- 6. Structure of the Paper**

General Introduction

In teaching EFL, writing enjoys a significant role. In fact, it is the area in which learners are given opportunities to express themselves in adequate time. Certainly, academic writing is the most important component of LT. This importance is due to the fact that writing supports and reinforces grammatical structure, vocabularies, and ideas. Therefore, academic writing should receive more attention in EFL in order to make learners acquainted with the communicative demands of real life situation.

Necessarily, the aim of teaching writing is to ameliorate the student's performance to become better writers through applying the process accurately. Normally, it can be improved when the learners' interests are known, and when they are exposed to real situation to generate authentic piece of writing. One of the major aims of EFL is to learn how to produce a well- organized piece of writing that should be readable and accepted by the audience. As a result, the programme of written expression is expected to be prepared using specific ways to serve the EFL learners requirements, as they suppose to succeed to master degree where they may find writing a difficult task to do.

1. Aims of the Study

After discussion, it seems that most of EFL learners fail to write academically. Written expression course is mainly address writing in general regardless to academic purposes, such as helping students with the right strategies and techniques that can assist them in their academic study, workplace, and their communicative demands in general.

In this case writing is rarely seen as a process. EFL learners are struggling to find a way while they are thinking, and thinking again, or putting ideas on a paper. The teaching programme focus is the final product that is to say, academic writing that focuses on essay writing at University classes is looked at as a cognitive, social, and dynamic one neglecting the strategies and techniques that may help students to determine the topic successfully.

2. Research Problem

Teaching English as a foreign language, specifically writing skill requires integrating particular strategies and techniques that may enhance the students in writing. So, the question is: to what extent can integrating writing strategies increase the learners' essay writing performance? In this research, the prewriting stage was given much important, in relation to summarizing, and paraphrasing techniques based on teaching writing through practising and following certain strategies in the process, better than giving much importance to the final product.

3. Hypothesis

In This study it is hypothesized that incorporating strategies in teaching academic essay writing may foster the EFL learners' level of performance in generating a well- structured piece of writing.

4. Population

This study investigates the situation of teaching writing for LMD students at University classes. It is then carried out on second year LMD students at Kasdy Merbah University.

5. Means of Research

The means employed in this study is a questionnaire, pre and post test. The questionnaire is assigned to second year LMD students to collect data about students' points of view in academic essay writing The method opted for is a quasi-experimental. A pretest was given to examine the level of students' performance after putting them under observation during the academic year 2013/2014. Also two lectures were introduced to EFL students to remedy their work, after that a post test was assigned to check the effectiveness of incorporating the strategies of prewriting stage in teaching academic essay writing.

6. Structure of the Paper

The present work is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters are theoretical and the third one is practical. Chapter one is concerned with the skill of writing in general and the importance of academic writing in teaching English as a foreign language. Chapter two deals with academic essay writing; its characteristics and stages, as well as some techniques. Chapter three is devoted to the practical part and including a questionnaire, two tests components and two lectures, T. Test, comments, and suggestions.

Key Terms

1. Academic essay

Academic essay can be defined as “One of the hardest assignment tasks to get a handle on. They require more than presenting what has happened in a field of work. Typically, they involve you constructing a debate around the different arguments in favour of or not in favour of a particular issue. It is often a good idea to imagine yourself as a lawyer when thinking about how you are going to write your essay. As a lawyer, you have to be able to persuade and convince the jury of your point of view, while also acknowledging the opposition’s arguments, but then downplaying them in some way by mentioning their weaknesses or disadvantages”(Bowker, 2007, p.34)

2. Strategy

The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word *strategia* which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is considered. Learning strategies can also enable learners to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learner (Allright, 1990).skilled teachers help their students develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wider range of appropriate strategies.

3. Technique

A technique is a way of doing something by using special knowledge or skill. It is the way the person performs basic physical movements or skills (The Merriam- Webster unabridged dictionary).

Literature Review

Chapter One: Introduction to Academic Writing

Introduction

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3. Academic Writing within the Classroom

3.1 The Teacher Role

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Conclusion

Introduction

In teaching English as a foreign language the skill of writing in general enjoys a special importance. It intermediates the two participants; the reader and the writer. However, in all levels, the skill of writing is considered as a medium to detect the extent the different components of grammar, syntax, and semantics might be used effectively to produce a cohesive, coherent, structured text. So, it is via writing the message is transmitted, that is why writing as a communicative concept needs to be enhanced and improved throughout the student's purposes of study. Perhaps any one wants to write effectively requires studying and learning about how to write. Therefore, students and teachers should take into consideration that writing is not only to fill the gaps. In fact, poor writing may create a negative first impression to the reader then a negative reaction if the writer fails in introducing the structure or thesis statement in academic essay writing, report or letter.

The present chapter focuses on the skill of writing in general. It deals with the definition of writing skill, spotlights some perspectives within different views. Also, it provides a review of teaching writing and discusses different traditions and studies; (i.e) approaches to teaching writing such as: the product, the process and the genre approaches. In addition, this chapter is a recapitulation of academic writing. It is the major focus in this study; this chapter devotes a long section to academic writing considerations, then it describes the different style of academic writing. Since the teacher and the student are the backbone of learning and teaching process, this chapter discusses their roll in the process of writing academically, as well as the role of reading material as a receptive skill.

1. Introduction to Writing Skill

At university classes, one of the main reasons for students' weak level in English writing is that most of them do not know how to express themselves freely in essay, letter, or report. In fact, they are not acquainted with the notion of writing skill, and the reason they are doing so, that is why most of university students face great problems when writing academically. Further, they have difficulties in choosing appropriate vocabularies, organizing the structure, following the topic chosen, using correct grammar rules, communicating ideas, and presenting them in a good way. To overcome this problem, first of all, students are

supposed to grasp what the skill of writing is in general and their benefits in the learning process.

1.1. The Skill of Writing

Rivers and Temperley (1978) define writing skill as “an art that requires consciously directed effort and deliberate choice in language” (P.262). This means that writing is a skill among others; listening, speaking, reading. In contrast to them, writing demands a lot of energy and higher functions from the writer because it is a productive skill. Writing is a medium of communication that displays language by integrating signs and symbols. It complements speech or spoken mode. Even if speech and written mode are not the same and each one has its properties, they seem to have the same function to be a means of communication. In addition, they rely on the same language system such as vocabulary, grammar, and semantics.

Therefore, the skill of writing is a process in the area of language learning and teaching. It necessitates mastering the basics of grammar rules, lexis and vocabulary then the ability to express ideas in an appropriate way, since learners notably at university classes are struggling to write correctly.

1.2. The Writing Process

According to Brown and Hood (1993) writing process depends on four elements. These are reader; or whom you are writing to, the purpose; why you are writing, and the content; or what you are writing about, at last the situation where and how you are writing. Brown and Hood (1993) see that the main three stages in the writing process are as shown in the following diagram.

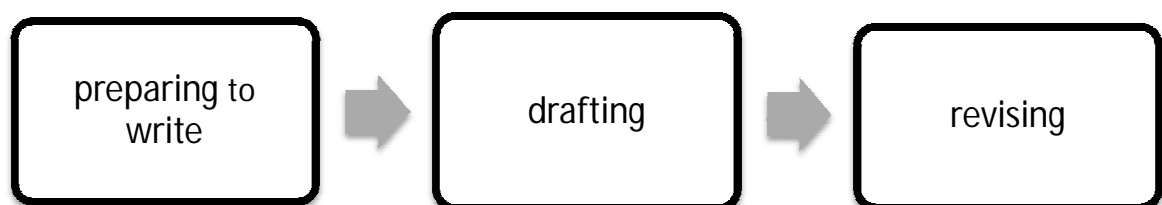


Figure 01: The Three Main Stages of Writing Process

Kane (2000) argues that writing has three steps: “thinking about it, doing it, and doing it again and again” p26 as often as time will allow and patience will endure «that is to

say writing process requires the followings; first, thinking which includes choosing the subject, finding the appropriate ways of discussion and developing ideas. Then, selecting and organizing strategies that tailor the topic. Second, doing or drafting stage which is the starting point of writing, it consists of trying and brainstorming. Third, doing again or revising what should be written so that selecting ideas that seem suitable for the writing stage

2. Approaches to Teaching Writing

In the late of 1960s, a shift was initiated towards teaching writing. The researchers' attempts were focused on techniques and strategies, providing tools, and ideas for supporting students. Writing was explored within several studies, these efforts led to: the process, the product, and the genre based approach. They had grown up over time and in different geographical contexts, but in a greater extent they resulted in how writing is being taught.

2.1. The Process Approach

In this approach the students are obliged to follow the steps of prewriting, revising and editing before fulfilling their ultimate product performance (Badger& White, 2000). This approach tends to focus on the varied classroom activities. The former promote the development of language use. It utilize brainstorming group and rewriting, such approach has various stages. They are briefly scketched below

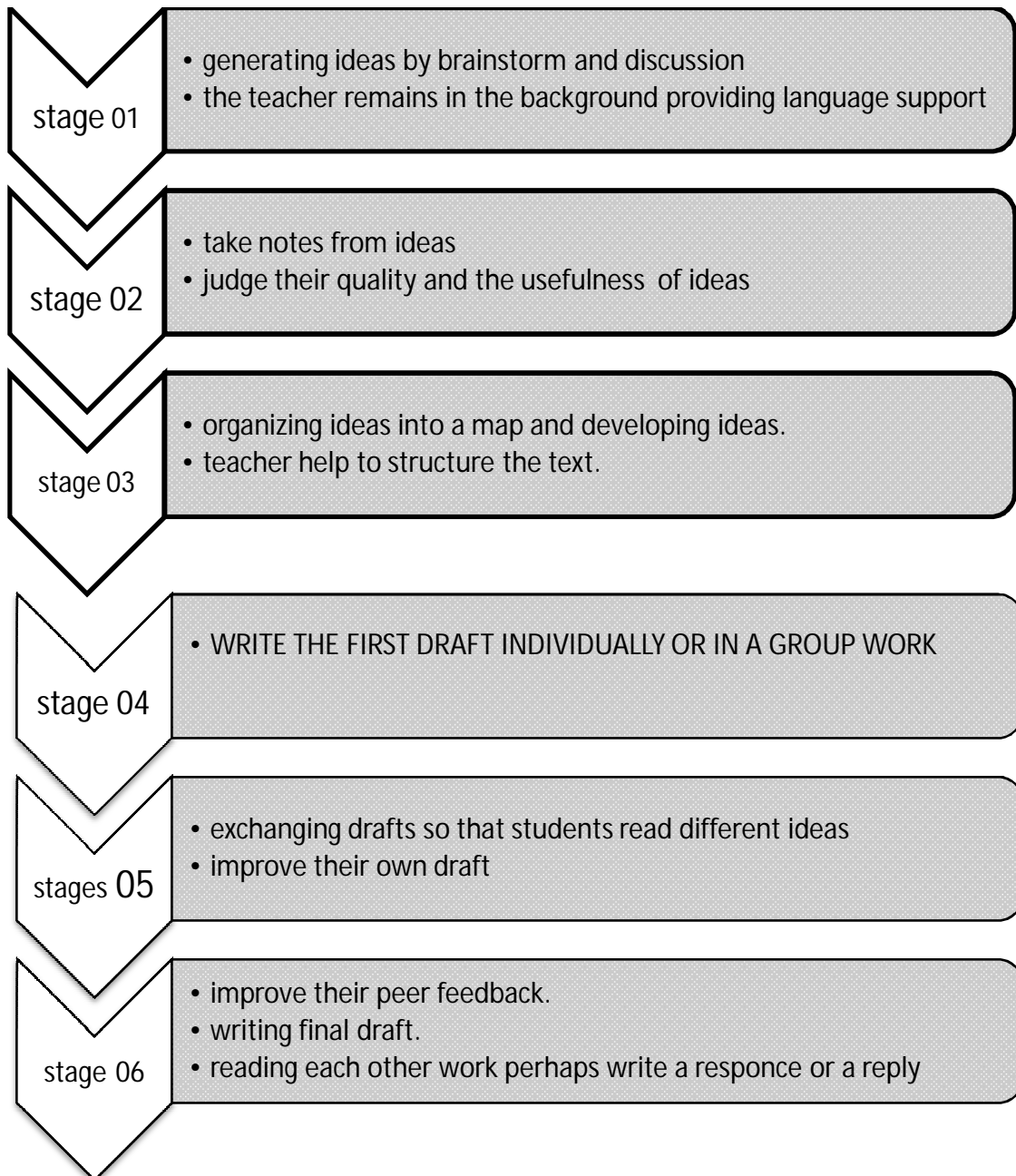


Figure02: Stages of Product Approach

It seems that the process approach is very difficult for EFL students. It requires great efforts and allocated time to follow, but at the same time it represents a practical process that give important to every stage during the writing process.

Therefore this study has typically a great effect on the ways in which writing is understood and taught. Transforming narrowly conceived product models and raising the awareness of how complex writing is. Accordingly, in this process the teacher use brainstorming, group discussion as activities to evaluate the student's creative skill.

Eventually, this approach attempts to enhance the teaching of writing task. The following advantages have been coined with this approach:

1. It focuses on the process that leads to final written product.
2. It helps students to understand their own composition.
3. It encourages students to build repertoires of strategies for prewriting, drafting and rewriting.
4. It gives students more time to write and rewrite.
5. It focuses on revision.
6. It gives students freedom to discover what to say as they write.
7. It gives students feedback, encourages them from both instructor and peers.

Despite the fact that the process approach succeeds to achieve the intended goal. Hyland (2003) argues that the process based study of teaching writing has the following problems:

- 1- It neglects student's communicative purpose.
- 2- It does not give much importance to language use.
- 3- It ignores improving basic language skills competence.
- 4- It disconnects students and the real context.
- 5- Teacher methodology is un-explicit and fails to achieve certain genre.

Badger & Whit (op.cit) maintain " Writing in process approach is seen as predominantly to do with linguistics skills, such as planning and drafting, there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge." P.154

In short, it seems that the main stages proposed are illustrated accurately. they are proceeded from the generation of ideas, and the utilization of recent data through series of activities for planning, gathering information, drafting, revising, then editing ideas, and the following diagram summarize the stages of the process based approach to teaching writing:

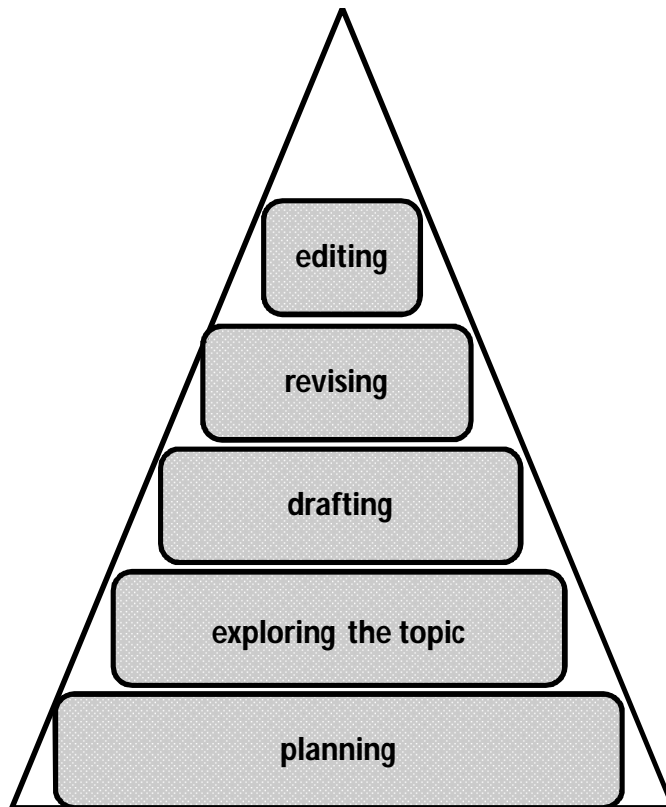


Figure03: The Process Approach

2.2. The Product Approach

It is initiated by the behaviorist theory of learning, and it has been employed to teach writing. So following the behaviorist attitude to teaching language the product approach involves initiating, copying transforming models provided by the teacher, and emphasizing the error-free final product . Consequently, this approach is teacher centered not learner centered because it considers the teacher as active participant, therefore the role of the learner is only to imitate and record teacher input.

This approach is concerned mainly with knowledge about the structure of language and writing development as mainly the results of the imitation of input provided by the teacher (Badger &White, 2000).

Badger and White (ibid) argues that learning to write has four stages:

Familiarization	Controlled writing	Guided writing	Free writing
Encourage the students to be acquainted with certain text features	Students practise the skill with increasing freedom until they are ready for the free writing		Use writing skill as a part of genuine activities such as writing story or essay

Table (01): The Stages of Product Approach

Li, j.H(2006), summarizes product based approach principles as follows:

1. It focuses on form rather on meaning.
2. It needs the management of communicative function in a given text and in an academic context.
3. It neglects students' communicative requirements and aims.
4. It focuses only on grammar and error correction.

That is why this approach has been failed in teaching writing. as a result, it failed to explain to the students how to express their ideas and achieve their purposes in a coherent, well structured piece of writing.

2.3. The Genre Approach

In the 20 century a remarkable shift has been noticed toward genre analysis in the area of teaching writing (Hyland, 2002). It has similarities with the product approach. Badger and White (op.cit) point out that genre approach is a "relative newcomers to ELT. However, there are strong similarities with product approaches and, in some ways; genre approaches can be regarded as an extension of product approaches" P.155.

In teaching writing genre is the study that views the text as a crucial component. Knowledge about language is taught in an explicit way, as well as types of text that is utilized as the starting points for the improvement of the four skills Martin (2007, cited in Firkin, 2007, p.1). Additionally, this study develops and fosters the students' awareness towards different purposes. As well as the aim of written communication and the way different information are structured in a written text (Rappen as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 304). Like the product approach, the genre based approach regards writing as predominately. Badger &

White (2000) emphasize that the central focus of the genre approach is writing within a social context in which it is produced. However the prewriting activities require four elements: 1) audience, 2) the generation of ideas, 3) the organization of text, 4) its purpose, that is why there exist a range kinds of writing such as: letters, articles, reports, essays.

In the genre approach, there is a considerable relation between the knowledge of language and the social purpose, and more focus is on the reader attention than on that of the writer. Therefore Writing is mostly regarded as the students rewriting of text based on the genre given by the teacher. It is also noticed that learning takes place through imitation and exploration of different kinds of models. In addition, learners should be exposed to many examples of the same genre to develop their ability to write a particular genre. Through exposure to similar texts, then students can synthesise the specialized configurations of that genre. They also can activate their memories of pre-reading or writing experiences whenever they come across the task of creating a new piece of writing in a specific genre (Badger & White, 2000).

Therefore, linguists have proposed genre approach as an alternative that may be effective and useful in teaching writing skill. The genre approach seems the best one thus it includes context of situation? and the analysis of text type. Specifically, this approach is largely implemented in teaching academic writing, or EAP.

3. Teaching Academic Writing

Anyone who is studying at English, colleges or universities and has to write essays or assignments for tests, exams or any work related to his /her work requires writing academically. That is why this sort is designed to meet certain demand in this area, in fact students who are learning English as a foreign language may find that their written demand courses challenging and complex especially at the level of vocabulary of academic English, so they are obliged to learn about rang of conventions in style, referencing and organization. This is in one hand , in another hand , the flexibility of academic writing allows students to work freely with a teacher or by themselves and also to take time management into account , so this chapter is designed to , structured to allow teacher and student to have an idea about academic writing (Oshima&Hogue,2007p.5).

3.1. An Overview of Academic Writing

Academic writing is a medium to express thoughts in writing about any topic. This topic could be a part of syllabus, research or social topic. Actually, this type of writing has been in use since the primitive human history, however most of recent and early writing was literary works developed and edited by authors, or research based efforts (Oshima &Hogue, 2007).

3.2. Academic Writing

Bowker(2007) defines academic writing as “a special genre of writing that prescribes its own set of rules and practices” (p.3). Hinkel (2004) states that L2 writers require to know more about the rhetorical and discourse features of written English. in fact teaching academic essay writing or any other piece of writing cannot be achieved without them, it is obvious that the grammar, vocabulary are necessary tools for writing academically these rules and structures may be organized around a formal order where ideas presented to ensure that they are reinforced by authors citations in the literature, additionally, academic writing is strongly related with traditional conventions of punctuation, grammar, and spelling. Furthermore, academic writing context is totally different hence it deals with the underlying theories and reasons organizing procedures and practice in real world activities, and exploring alternative explanations for problem situation.

3.3. Characteristics of Academic Writing

In contrast to other kinds of writing academic one requires a particular structure : for instance the beginning , middle and, the end ,and this format is typically of essay writing and other tasks , Bowker (op.cit) points that academic writing is characterized by the followings : .

- a) The introduction informs the reader about the subject or what the reader is going to develop, and to be discussed and analyzed in the body .
- b) the introduction may includes a summary of the subject in short sentence to be developed later
- c) the conclusion summaries the overall ideas or gives certain point of view not every single one

- d) Academic writing needs the use of traditional convention such as: punctuations, grammar and spelling.
- e) Further, theories and conventions are significant as well as cause organizing procedures and practices in real life, academic writing attempts to explore explanations for all these events.
- f) Identifying academic source to avoid plagiarism.

3.4. The Elements of Academic Writing

Baily(2003) argues that Elements of writing are the most important that are needed in the process of writing academically, and for most sorts of academic writing , such as : longer essay, report or a dissertation, lot of essays started by defining a term in the question (title) then make development or generalization of ideas about the subject also provide examples about the topic to justify the recent answer . moreover the students must explain and show the reader what sources they rely on and which style they choose to explore their essay, throughout academic writing student require to discuss numbers, charts , and graph display then analyze them to provide a clear accurate information and findings. In fact there is no fixed order for the elements of writing, Baily (2003, p.53:81) proposes the following elements to be taken into account in the process of academic writing:

- 1- the relation between two situations may be presented in a variety of ways for example : cause and effect
- 2- cohesion or linking phrases together to make the text meaningful and readable throng the use of conjunction such as : he , they , that
- 3- comparisons : comparing between two different objects
- 4- definitions, typically used in introduction to explain words or phrases in the table , or generally to clarify a technique word
- 5- in discussion the writer examine both sides of issue then conclude by favourity or preferring one side
- 6- Examples are used to support the statement and give argument or evidence sometimes illustrations
- 7- Generalizations used to simplify complex and difficult ideas

3.5. Considerations in Academic Writing

At university classes graduate students undergo a variety of writing tasks as they seek their chosen degree. following the program these tasks may vary from one degree to another, but they resemble in two respects; when the task become continuously more complex and when they are demanded to be written academically. Normally academic writing is a product of considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation (Swale 2004).

4. Academic Writing within the Classroom

At university classes the teacher and the learner play a crucial role in the process of teaching and learning writing skill; they are so important because the former role is to transmit knowledge via different ways and the later is active participant in that learners, receive, interpret, analyze, and proceed so as to produce a successful piece of writing.

4.1. The Teacher' Role

Students need to be involved in the process of writing skill. In fact they should interfere in the written tasks to value the learning experience. First of all, by encouraging students' participation as well as refining and expanding the writing skill which requires a particular pragmatic approach, so teachers or instructors should be clear about the skill intended to improve, next they should determine the appropriate material that tailor and facilitate the target area. Generally, teachers role become significant to guide their students work, then practice in the aspects of language and form, different text type and explanations, and provide them with opportunities, then give feedback, and freedom. Indeed, teachers are responsible for students' product in writing essay, reports, or whatever piece of writing (Fowler, aaron, okoomian, 2007).

4.2. The Students' Role

In the process of teaching and learning the skill of writing, students need to be confident. Specifically, they need to be independent although often they avoid writing or take it with less proficiency than the other skills; speaking, reading, and listening, the reason is that the learner is face to face with a white paper, or screen, sometimes they feel they do not have the necessary knowledge, and experience that learning language require, beside the view in the classroom that writing must be correct reinforced the student intention to write effectively.

4.3. The Role of Reading Materials

Palmer (1993) argues that reading skill is the backbone of writing. In fact it is regarded as the accomplishment of writing, he states that student who learn English L2 can not write an essay perfectly, but reading others works will help students to have a good background, furthermore, make alert to matters of style, structure and soon, typically the reading task helps learner not to make mistakes, reading helps students to familiarize with the topic and develop ideas. "in the classroom reading with goal in mind can help students focus their writing process"(Fowler, aaron, okoomian, 2007, p.182).

Conclusion

It should be stated that writing skill is very crucial and difficult for ESL learners. in this chapter it has been focused on the skill of writing in general or preliminaries in this aspect of language learning , its emphasizes has been on the importance and the characteristics of academic writing since learners are from university classes. First of all writing is a medium of communication that represents the aspects of English language, the view of writing has been greatly influenced by trends in language learning. Such as: the environmentalist, the innatist and the interactionist approaches, consequently different approaches, and perspectives to teaching writing skill emerged to tackle and give various stages to clarify the process, and attempt to resolve the problem of teaching and learning writing skill especially at colleges and universities where students are obliged to write academically; the process, the product, and the genre approaches. also this chapter has been provided different considerations ,that should be taken in granted

when writing academically such as audience, style and organization, flow, and presentation. However, writing academically requires from the learner to select one style among the following: descriptive, argumentative, analytical and critical styles. Different styles should be used by the teacher and the student; both of them play a crucial role in the writing process, and throughout the reading material, the students may attain a good amount of information that enable them to have a good background in the recent situation, eventually the can write effective academic writing.

Chapter Two: Academic Essay Writing

Introduction

1 . Definition of Academic Essay Writing

1.1. The Reason for Writing Essay

1.2. Academic Essay Writing

2.2. Relevance in Academic Essay

2.3. Structure in Academic Essay

2. Academic Essay Writing Stages

2.1 Interpretation of the Question

2.1.1 Revealing the structure

2.1.2 Learning to Analyse

2.1.3 Brainstorming

2.2. Research

2.2.1 Reading Purposefully

2.2.2 Processing the Ideas

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Introduction

EFL students at university classes are asked by their instructors to write an academic essay. Normally the topic will be about the course itself or from other reading materials, in this case the majority of students may find themselves struggling with a range of tasks that require to be acquainted with throughout the process of writing academically. Moreover, students in the future are going to be orientated to specific branches in master degree; in which they will be requested to write a persuasive essay in a limited time either in a course or assignments that result in a host of problems for both teachers and learners, consequently researchers made a considerable effort to resolve this struggle.

This chapter is designed to highlight three main points in academic essay writing: academic essay, the stages, the structure and the techniques that facilitate academic essay writing. First, an overview of academic essay is given; the definition, the characteristics, and the reason for writing an essay. Second, the different stages are tackled in a range of strategies in the academic writing process. Beginning from the interpretation of the question, and researching that involves the reading materials. Then planning ideas to be ready for writing stage which comprises a particular structure; introduction, body, and conclusion must be respected in academic essay writing. Finally revising what was to avoid mistakes before presenting them to the audience. Thirdly, some techniques for referring to information are briefly provided such as: summarizing, and paraphrasing for the accomplishment of effective academic essay writing.

1. Definition of Academic Essay Writing

According to Schwerin (2007) the word “essay” means a first attempt or practice, in fact essay is a piece of academic writing, normally it has between 500 and 5000 words length. But the word itself reflects an attempt or practice to explore or perhaps to provide suggestions in a problem-solving situation, therefore essays are the mental exploration of a topic which involve the writer’s points of view and look for different arguments or evidence to various perspectives. Essentially it is more concise and precise than report or other piece of writing, in that ideas are deeply developed. Unlike report academic essay writing is composed of: number of paragraphs meaningfully connected and they are not separated by subheading or broken points.

“Essay writing is an instrument of communication, your essay should be a structured treatment of a particular topic”. So essay is a tool that communicates the writer’s intention, despite it may talk about other people’s ideas; at the same time it should reflect the writer’s interest in the topic so as to convince the reader (Schwerin, 2007p2). Further, Zemach and Rumisek, state that “an essay is a group of paragraphs written about a single topic and a central main idea” (2005 p75). It must have at least three paragraphs, but a five paragraph essay is a common length for academic writing.

1.1. The Reason for Writing Essay

According to Greethan (2011) essay writing in general has a great value in that; it has various reasons summarized as follow: It obliges learners to rearrange their thinking and foster their ideas in actual issues, and it provides the opportunity to get feedback from the teachers or instructors. Moreover, it shows students how they have come to understand the topic through revising materials.

1.2. Relevance in Academic Essay

Any piece of academic writing requires paying attention to the content or-what to write. All the content specifically in essay writing should be about the topic, students should not deviate and padded with irrelevant, that is content reflect the topic, using related information. Materials related to the course also need to be included in the essay writing Akwa (2011).

1.3. Structure in Academic Essay

According to Akwa (ibid) for each academic essay, L2 learners need to organize their materials according to the topic and the development of ideas that may provide guidance. So as so the writing will be readable. Generally, a good structure makes a good work; it facilitates both writing and reading tasks. But if students are not acquainted with the criteria of essay structure, they will lose and this is a sign that they have not adequate knowledge about the question or necessarily the topic. Probably solving this problem urges students to focus on reading materials about the topic from the reference given by the instructor.

2. Academic Essay Writing Stages

According to Greethan (2001) to succeed in academic essay writing, it is essential to go through five different stages: 1 interpretation of the question; 2 research; 3 planning; 4 writing; 5 revision. He adds that students will undergo certain difficulties in their writing if they do not go through these steps, such as: “irrelevance, weak structure, insufficient evidence and example to support their argument, lack to fluency between paragraphs, inconsistent arguments, and many others” (Greethan, *ibid*, p2). Typically, they should be separated to save time, and to develop arguments in a good way.

2.1. Interpretation of the Question

(Bowker, 2007 and Greethan, 2001) agree that the most significant step where students may find difficulties is the moment of giving the question. Perhaps students might be anxious to get the right interpretation for the question; consequently, students begin reading sources and taking notes regardless to the relevance of ideas beyond the general idea of the essay writing subject. Bowker(*op.cit*) states that EFL learners are obliged to interpret the topic accurately to have good grades. Instead of using their words in answering the question, student sometimes waste their time and deviate away from the exact topic, thus Bowker(*ibid*) suggests three main elements when interpreting the topic: first command; (or what to do), the topic or the subject under discussion, then the focus or the specific area of discussion. For example, «universities should not be run like businesses. Discuss. In this case, the statement is the topic and the word discuss is the command. The previous statement may be returned to a question: should universities be run like businesses? But here students should answer the question directly.

2.1.1 Revealing the Structure

Greethan (*ibid*) states that any essay writing is not an open-ended writing. In fact, it requires answering certain question that raises a particular topic. Thus, students have to select their materials in research stage then use only what tailor the issue under debate, and seems relevant to the topic. He adds that two elements should be taken into account in this stage; the different parts in the question and which one is most important to give much importance. Therefore, students need to analyse the

key concepts in the question. i.e. to look for the key words that may help interpreting the question, at this stage the importance of key concept appears both in the course, or in the essay the students are expected to write. As well as it gives the essay a relevant structure at the same time good grade will be offered. Also, students will show the ability to analyze and discuss the implementation of these key concepts on the question raised in the topic.

2.1.2 Learning to Analyse

Though analyzing is the most useful to start generating ideas, but it is preferable to learn how to analyze concepts. So that student's capacity to analyse will be integrated to make the problem clear and give a solution or argument and evidence for it, in fact this procedure directs the students work, moreover it explains the purpose behind it. Otherwise, every student will not be acquainted with the question. Greethan (2001) suggests the following techniques to analyse concepts: Step 1, gather the evidence: the examples of the concepts students intend to analyse. Step 2, analyse these examples to come across the common pattern of the concepts features. In this 2 previous students can draw a map to the question concept. Step 3, test the actual concepts, to sharpen and tighten up then typically this is the beginning to see the best way to deal with the essay structure.

2.1.3 Brainstorming

According to Zemach & Rumisek (2005) brainstorming is a very important step in the process of essay writing. In fact, it involves thinking about the topic and activating the brain to generate ideas as possible. Students at this step do not know a lot about the topic of the essay, but it is crucial to think about the content, or to write preliminary thoughts and ideas, as well as, to rely on their back ground knowledge and the information received from the instructors, extra sessions, or reading materials. Via Brainstorming enable student to become aware, conscious of ideas they intend to convince, as well as information they need to attain throughout the research and reading stage. At this stage, students should be open-minded in that, they welcome to new ideas and possible direction the essay might hold, typically it is the starting point of a writing plan, and it allows students of EFL to limit and restrict the topic and to specify the question to answer, further, gives different ideas about what students intended to write.

2.2. Research

After interpreting and having ideas on paper, the research stage comes into account. Bowker (2007) states that writing something about the actual topic will explain the extent students have grasped the subject. Reading the study guide, test book, or lecture notes may facilitate the research, they are regarded as materials in this stage, but the students should draw upon the relevant one to clarify the ideas and connect them effectively to the essay subject.

2.2.1 Reading Purposefully

following Greethan (op.cit) doing research urges students to decide which reading strategy would best suit their purposes, in other word reading with a clear aim in mind, make students need to choose the appropriate strategy; word for word reading is applicable when the passage or the text have a central importance to the intended work, student is likely to extract points in terms of notes and details. Contrary, skinning the text should be done to extract the general impression of the contents, the key ideas and the structure of a text, or an article.

He adds that to scan in reading strategy is to look for an answer to a certain question, a date, a name, a point of view of a writer in a particular subject. Generally, what is important is to read with a clear purpose not to read haphazardly.

2.2.2 Processing the Ideas

Normally, the quality and value of the written work produced by students should be measured according to the quality of the internal processing of the idea students have read. In fact students who have poor recall of what they read, and they are limited to only to describing ideas, they are passively processing ideas, and no active analysis or organizing thoughts, moreover without criticizing and evaluating the author arguments and evidence. Greethan (2001) proposes to avoid such problem; students should be able to read in depth. Necessarily, processing ideas needs multiple readings, in other words to do two or three reading of the text, then reading for comprehension, or to be familiar with the author's argument. Next, reading for analysis and structure, in which students have to analyse the passage into sections and subsections, to deduce how to organize them in the organization stage,

finally reading for criticism and evaluation that involves criticizing and evaluating the author's arguments.

2.2.5 Note – Taking for Analysis

Lot of issues may be raised in the stage of taking notes. It is not important to have various strategies, however for different forms of processing there are a certain strategies that seems suitable for note taking. For instance: linear notes for analysis and organization, as well as, patterns notes for criticism and evaluation. In reality choosing the most appropriate strategy of note taking helps in extracting the students intellectual abilities, as well as best notes organize students own thoughts, and helps them recalling their ideas, arguments and evidence so as to be used accurately in a particular time Greethan (ibid). He adds that the student may face many problems in not taking. Sometimes they take too much notes that obscure the structure, or making it difficult to understand and to recall, so note taking should be clear and simple but at the same time more precise in order to be discussed, as well as to criticize and evaluate an author arguments. In fact many students have deficiencies to construct ideas of their own, whatever they read and take notes from anther sources.

2.2.4 Organizing Time and Retrieval

Starkey(2004) and Greethan (2001) agree that if students don't choose and organize their retrieval system and its various components, they will lose much more best ideas, Starkey states that organization are critical and play an important role in the process of writing academic essay. Typically organization provides guidance and direction during the writing process, specifically if students are restricted with limited time, in addition to these it helps students see how lot of ideas developed within a particular framework, also it benefits the reader to be guided from the first to the last sentence, so the reader will detect how different ideas are connected to each other and work together to support the students thesis. According to Starkey(2004) going into timed writing situation urge students to make efforts to think through what they are going to say, and what is the best way to say it, he suggests the following perfect timing, without paying attention to how much time they are obliged to finish their essay.

2.3 Planning

According to Greethan (2001) planning in writing academic essay means to give the appropriate structure to written product. However, planning will not be reached only if students arrange their notes into a logical way and order. Basically a well structured essay contains an introduction, main body, and conclusion, generally they are crucial and each section has a distinct aim, for each paragraph students have to structure their argument and evidence, taking into account the appropriate framework such as claim, justify, support.

2.3.1 The Importance of Planning

Following Bowker (2007) writing university essay takes much time, and sometimes students have not allocated enough time to give to every stage outlined. Typically students require dividing their works into 3 or 4 weeks depending on the length of the topic, that is to say all the stages should be equal in terms of time, for each week a certain stage takes place.

2.3.2 Editing and Ordering Material

A good essay should have a coherent structure that helps the reader to interpret the content. After gathering information, students should consider the order of these ideas and their development. The main idea should be explained and supporting ideas with details need to be identified. The outline also is very important in organizing materials; it gives a clear picture of the final essay, as well as, allows developing and supporting the thesis statement. Particularly this is used in long academic essays. (Greethan, 2001)

2.4 Writing

This stage as Greethan (2001) points out is regarded according to students as the beginning of essay writing. But Bowker (2007) explains that the writing step is not easy, it involves getting ideas down on a paper after that, in the first draft students can begin refining their ideas. The process will be easier, if students are ready preparing their summaries and notes. Typically relying on summarizing, paraphrasing, taking notes may help students to have a good background.

2.4.3 Getting Ideas Down

Kane (2000) states that free writing is the same as getting ideas on a paper. He argue that “Free writing simply means getting ideas on paper as fast as you can. The trick is to let feelings and ideas pour forth. Jot down anything that occurs to you, without worrying about order or even making much sense”p.25.in the drafting stage free writing is required to meet certain needs. So ideas should be written quickly and jotted according to relevance and structure. The reason is to let student free and confident Kane (ibid) suggests some ideas for students to cope with getting ideas down: First, a pause is needed; otherwise students will suffer from stuck. Second, using the pencil and neglecting whatever kind of mistakes. Students in this case are writing for themselves. Getting ideas on paper comprises jotting the first not the final version. That mean that ideas are speculative and still generated in other words, the majority of ideas contains bias, superficial ideas probably some of them will be rejected to gather information (kane,ibid).

2.4.2 The Introduction

Schwerin (2007) and Greethan (2001), agree that the introduction is the starting of academic essay writing. It makes the reader get in to the topic and explains what the essay is going to deal with, essentially it consists of one paragraph depending on the length of background information about the context of situation, as well as a key sentence that shows the essential idea of the essay topic; it is called the thesis statement and in academic writing it considered as the backbone or the most important components.

Just as your essay topic had a focus (which you discovered through analyzing the topic), your essay answer needs to have a focus, which is the main position you're developing and towards which all your arguments lead this main position in your thesis(Rao, Chanock, Krishnan , 2007,p.32).

2.4.3 Paragraphs and Body

Schwerin (2007) points out that “the main body deals with the major ideas that support the thesis statement” p5. However one academic essay may consist of different main ideas presented in a separated paragraph dealing with one major idea which supports the thesis statement, in a paragraph all sentences are related to the major idea which is called the topic sentence, the paragraph also should contain a transition words helps in connecting between sentences or ideas.

2.4.4 Conclusion

Schwerin (ibid) explains that the conclusion in academic essay writing is the last written step. it involves drawing ideas and observations together to formulate the last point of view, sometimes it requires repeating ideas so that to remind the reader with the student goal and intention behind the discussed point and clarify the purpose, as well as to summarize the topic sentence of each paragraph and conclude the overall concept.

in short, it is noticed that all paragraphs in an academic essay share the same principles, but they vary in character according to the function they meet. Whether introductory, developmental, or concluding paragraphs. Also they resemble the feature of relating between ideas within and between them, eventually, if the paragraphs achieve the needs of reinforcing the thesis as they should, the essay will be readable, clear, and well structured academically.

2.4.5. Summarizing

Bowker(2007) states that every student when writing academically an essay he/she requires to follow some steps to express their ideas or to extract author ideas, so it is likely to select or pick out some keys and then use them to create a short version of the others work. Therefore, students need to substitute the author words with their own words without altering the meaning .i.e. student should write a short version in their own word. so as to ensure that there exist a difference in the form between the original and their own summarized version. In fact he (ibid) suggests some procedures to achieve it.

- Making ideas simple

- Using different sentence structure signifies them.
- Identifying some key words and relating them with other words.
- Selecting or specific ideas and dropping other
- Reorganizing ideas following the student framework

2.4.6. Paraphrasing

Unlike, summarizing, paraphrasing “means to restate information using different words” (Bowker, 2007, p.13). So it is to build up the students own idea of the information, its objective is to write again ideas using different words and phrases. Also it has techniques should be applied that summarized by Bowker (ibid) as follow:

- Helping the process of author’s ideas
- Replacing the author’s words by the student words within their framework.
- Using linking words to help the flow of writing.

2.5 Revision

Bowker (2007) claims that this stage in academic essay occurs directly after the drafting step. It gives a general picture to the essay because students in this stage try to look with fresh eye to the best ideas, the structure, and the content as Greethan (2001) points out.

2.5.1 Revising the Best Ideas

According to Greethan (2001) revision step should be done by students on purpose. This stage allows students to generate ideas, and make student’s minds explore and detect all connected ideas, that gives the student performance a great impact. Without affecting the best ideas student have to shift the focus from the writer to the editor, in this case.

2.5.2 Revising the Structure

According to Bowker (2007) when the students is aware of revising the structure this means that the essay is well performed. Essentially students should know the position of the following: key position, introduction, body and, conclusion.

Also the ideas are ordered according to the thesis statement and each topic sentence in each paragraph. Bowker (ibid) says to the students “look over your essay to make sure that you have answered the essay question. have you stuck to the topic, have you left anything vital you may have to revise your essay several times before it effectively addresses the topic and question” p33

2.5.3 Revising the Content

According to Bowker (ibid) students require to answer several questions in the revision process. Generally they should be certain and confident that they have answered all sections of the essay question, as well as if is there other knowledge needed in the other parts. then, students should see if each point in all parts of the essay is connected and agree with another, also if there are information that are not relevant to the topic and the ability to write the appropriate information accurately and clearly, finally students at this stage need to know if the main ideas are concluded briefly.

Conclusion

Teaching academic essay writing is a part of teaching writing skill in EFL. The essay is considered as assignment in university classes that students cannot learn without it. However, EFL students cannot write an academic essay unless they are familiar with its purpose and its stages, and they are able to use different strategies and techniques to write effectively. These stages that comprise certain steps and techniques play a great role in the acquisition of language as well as in enhancing the student performance. So they can generate ideas and express themselves in an appropriate way.

Practical Part

Chapter Three: Practical Part

Introduction

1. The Sample

2. Method

3. Means of Research

4. The Students' questionnaire

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Conclusion

Introduction

In order to collect data about students level in academic essay writing; two instruments were employed from the EFL learners. All the items in the questionnaire were gathered and divided into four sections to meet the structural requirements of the research question. Later it has been answered by 20 students. Two tests and two lectures were given to students. The first test is pretest and the second is a post test.

This chapter deals with analysing and interpreting data gathered to confirm or refute the proposed hypothesis; incorporating strategies may foster second year LMD student's level of performance in academic essay writing at Ouargla University

1. The Sample

A total of 20 students took part in this study. They are selected randomly from second year LMD students. The participants were homogeneous; in other words age, sex, and English learning back ground are not taken into account. They share the same learning background because they are EFL learners.

2. Method

The selected method for conducting this study is quasi-experimental. In fact, a questionnaire was administered to gather data also the state of essay writing at University classes, then an experiment was conducted through pre- test , two lectures and post-test. As it is longitudinal because it involves the observation of the sample over a long time such method allow researcher to track changes and trends in individual behavior, it studies the level of students performance in academic essay during the academic year (2013/2014)

3. Means of Research

In this study two instruments were administrated to 20 students that learn EFL from second year LMD at Ouragla University. The use of questionnaire was chosen to collect data. This questionnaire helps to get findings either quantitative or qualititative that is to say; a good amount of data will be gathered in a short time. Two tests and two lectures were assigned to 20 students in an experiment, then the comparison of the two test was done.

4. The Students' Questionnaire

The study is conducted using a questionnaire administered to students who are studying English as a foreign language within ESP context. The sample chosen of this study was 20 students from 2nd year LMD students at Kasdi Merbah University. Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using percentages and frequencies. The instrument comprises four sections; they are related to the proposed hypothesis. It presents the students points of view on the strategies that may be incorporated to enhance the students' level of performance in academic essay writing

4.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Section one: Students and Academic Writing

Q01: Do you know how to write academically?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	7	35%
No	13	65%
Total	20	100%

Table 01: Student's knowledge about Academic Writing

Table (01) displays that the majority of students (65%) do not know how to write academically, only few of them (35%) said (yes).since students are taught relying on the traditional method, they seem to feel unaware of the academic writing skill. Here the students are given instructions on a mode of written discourse .Then, they are given a particular topic and requested to write about it,;however students need to be motivated and encouraged from their teachers.

Q02: Have you been taught the fundamental characteristics of academic writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	4	20%
No	16	80%
Total	20	100%

Table 02: Teaching the Fundamental Characteristics of Academic Writing.

Table (02): shows that only few of the respondents said that they study the fundamental characteristics of academic writing. But most of them (80%) do not agree. Teachers are obliged to teach features of academic writing from the beginning to make students acquainted at least with the most important ones to decrease/reduce some deficiencies in learning academic writing.

Q2.1: Which aspects of writing your teachers give more importance to?

Option	numbers	Proportions (%)
Audience	0	0%
Purpose	4	20%
Organization	14	70%
Style	07	35%
Flow	06	30%
Presentation	05	25%
All	02	10%
No one	01	5%

Table (03): The most important features of Academic Writing

Table (03): reveals that students have different views when selecting which aspect of writing the teachers give much important. Only (10%) student agreed that, audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, presentation. (i.e) all aspects of writing are given much important by teachers. But (70%) of the students opted for the aspect of organization, while (35%) selected style and (30%) agreed that their teacher focused on the aspect of flow to direct the academic essay writing meanwhile (25%) of student chosen the aspect of presentation. (20%) agree that teachers focus in academic writing is the purpose. N one mentioned that the audience is taken into account.

Since students are EFL learners they are obliged to write academically. This type of writing is characterized by specific style. The organization, the purpose, the flow, the presentation and the audience to whom the message is directed to.

Q03: Do you know features of academic writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
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Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%
Total	20	10%

Table 04: Features of academic writing

The results display heavily that the majority of students (75%) are not conscious of the different features of academic writing; whereas only (25%) said (no) as shown in the table (04). Students are studying written expression in general without pay attention that academic writing is an important skill for learners EFL.

Q04: Do you know the stages of academic writing process?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	04	20%
No	16	80%
Total	20	100%

Table 05: Stages of academic writing

Table (05) explains that the majority of students (80%) strongly agreed that they do not know how to deal with a piece of academic writing; while a few of students (20%) said yes. Teachers who teach EFL have the responsibility to help students and guide them in the process of writing.

Q05: Which of the following stages are difficult?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Preparing	6	30%
Drafting	8	40%
Revising	6	30%
All	12	60%
N one	0	0%

Table 06: Students' Difficulties in Academic Writing Stages.

The table (06) represents that students differ in their difficulties in all stages of academic writing. Meanwhile (40%) agreed that do not know how to draft their work, (30%) agreed that the preparing and the revising stage represent a big problem for them.

Q06: Do you know about the elements of academic writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%
Total	20	100%

Table 07: The elements of academic writing

Table (07) represents a significant convergence in ratios. (55%) of students said that they know the different elements of academic writing. (45%) of them are not acquainted with the different elements, and this is a contradiction. student have different views about this topic.

Q07: Which of the following elements you mostly use in your academic writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Cause and effect	20	100%
Comparisons	15	75%
Definitions	20	100%
Examples	20	100%
Generalization	1	5%
Number	4	20%
Synonyms	19	95%
Visual information	3	15%

Table 08: The use of the elements of academic writing

The results show that there exists a contradiction in students opinions. all students (100%) agreed that cause and effect, definition, examples are mostly used by students, while (95%) of them are using synonyms. (75%) of students said that they rely on comparison, and

(20%) of students used numbers. visual information is almost used (15%) of students draw upon this elements of academic writing.

Section Two: Academic essay writing

Q08: Do you know how to write an academic essay?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	3	15%
No	17	85%
Total	20	100%

Table 09: Writing an academic essay

Table (09) shows that the majority of students (85%) agree that they do not know how to write an academic essay, and (15%) of them said that they are acquainted with academic essay writing

Q09: Have you been explicitly directed on how to write academic essay in written expression or other modules?

option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%
Total	20	100%

Table 10: Teacher’s explanation of the way academic essay is written

The results reveal that student do not know how to write academic essay. It seems that students have the same teacher but they have different views, these variations lead to different statistics.

A large number from the respondents (45%) said no, so they do not understand teacher explanations, the others (55%) said that they appreciated their teachers work and they said yes they are directed explicitly on how to write academic essay in written expression on in other module.

Q10: Which of these can make the parts of academic essay writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportion (%)
Introduction	11	55%
Body	5	25%
Conclusion	0	0%
All	4	20%

Table (11): Parts of academic essay writing

this table reveals that (55%) of students agreed that the introduction is crucial in academic essay writing. It seems that students are not acquainted at all with the teacher explanation in the classroom because the academic essay writing includes the (3) main parts. (25%) of students chose the body as a part while no one opted the conclusion as a part in academic essay, only (20%) of students appreciated that essay writing comprises three parts connected with each other to make the essay readable.

Q11: Which of the following parts do you find most difficult in essay writing?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Introduction	11	38%
Body(development of ideas)	11	38%
Conclusion	5	17%
All	18	90%
No one	0	0%

Table (12): Students difficulties in Academic essay writing.

The results show that all students have difficulties in academic essay writing whether they appreciated the teacher explanation or not; (55%) had difficulties in writing the introduction and the body while.

Q12: Have you been guided on how to write the different parts of an essay?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions
Yes	12	60%
No	8	40%
Total	20	100%

Table (13): The teacher's guidance

The results show that almost the half of the respondents (60%) agree that their teachers guide them to learn as they help them to produce an effective writing. (40%) pinpoint that their teachers do not do so. Normally, guiding students in their learning is the ultimate task of any teacher. In fact without teacher's observations and advices, students cannot accomplish their objectives especially EFL learners who need teachers' direction toward the different parts of academic essay writing.

Section Three

Q13: Do you know how to refer to information from other sources in an academic essay?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions
Yes	3	15%
No	17	85%
Total	20	100%

Table (14): Student's knowledge about referring to information

Table (14) shows that the majority of students (85%) are not acquainted with the way they should refer to information from other sources; whereas only (15%) said no. EFL learners should be taught the different techniques and strategies that may help them to express information.

Q13.1: Have you been sufficiently trained on using those techniques?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	3	15%
No	17	85%

Total	20	100%
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Table (15): Student's use of techniques

These results show that most of the students (85%) do not use techniques for referring to information. However a few of them (15%) used them in their academic essay writing, EFL learners require to be trained in their writing on using those techniques to make their essay writing effective according to their needs.

Q13.2: Do you master these techniques in writing an academic essay?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Yes	3	15%
No	17	85%
Total	20	100%

Table (16%): Student's level and the techniques of an academic essay

Table (16) displays that only a few of the respondents (10%) said that they mastered the techniques of academic essay writing. While almost all the students agreed that they did not master those techniques. Although teachers of EFL make efforts to convey the ideas of using different techniques in successful academic essay, but students still have deficiencies.

Q14: Which technique of the following do you find the most difficult?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Summarizing	20	100%
Paraphrasing	19	95%

Table (17): Difficulties in using the techniques of academic essay writing

The results in table (17) show that all students undergone difficulties when they were summarizing the ideas of another writers. Also (95%) agreed that paraphrasing is not an essay task to do. Academic essay writing requires some techniques should be taken into account,

without them, students cannot master this kind of writing, it helps students support their ideas and reinforce them by including other people opinion about the topic under discussion.

Section Four

Q15: What do you suggest to solve the problems of academic essay writing by university students?

Option	Numbers (n)	Proportions (%)
Focusing on academic essay in the programme	4	20%
Adding extra session at all levels	0	0%
Designing academic essay writing module	0	0%
All	16	80%
No one	0	0%

Table (16): Students' suggestions

All the students answered the question and they selected one option from five. More than half of students (80%) suggested all the options; in other words, focusing on the academic essay writing and adding extra session in the program of written expression, and designing academic essay writing module at all levels may help the students to be adequately acquainted with the basics of academic essay writing.

4.2. Findings and Discussion

Section one deals with EFL students and academic writing. The majority of students (65%) opted for (no). This affirms that they do not know how to write academically despite the teachers efforts which seems inadequate. Only (80%) of respondents agree that they did not learn the fundamental characteristics of academic writing. While only (10%) agree that audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, presentation- all the aspects of academic writing – were given much importance by teachers. The majority of students (75%) said that they are acquainted with features of academic writing. And the overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) strongly agree that they do not know the writing process. Students have different difficulties in the writing stages, while (60%) of them selected all the stages to be difficult for them. There exists a contradiction in the students' answers. (55%) said (yes) they knew about

the elements of academic writing, and (100%) of students chose cause and effect, definitions, examples, synonyms, that are mostly used in their academic writing.

The results obtained from section two: students and academic essay writing. Show that (85%) of the students did not know how to write academic essay. Though (55%) of them said that their teachers directed them explicitly on how to write academic essay. Only (20%) agreed that introduction, body, conclusion is the different parts of academic essay. While (90%) of the participants strongly agreed that all these parts make difficulties for them. Despite (60%) of them said (yes) they were guided by their teachers to write these parts of academic essay.

Section three which speaks about referring to information in academic essay represents that the majority of students (85%) did not know how to refer to information. Moreover, they did not practise those techniques in their academic writing. Consequently, they did not master them. All students agreed that summarizing and paraphrasing are the most difficult tasks in this process.

The last section is devoted to students' suggestions. (80%) of the students proposed to give much importance to academic essay writing in the programme of written expression, adding extra sessions, or designing academic essay writing module for all levels.

5. Description of the Experiment

The experience is implemented through 3 stages: a pre-test was assigned to the students of second year LMD (20). It seeks to evaluate the level of students under observation during the beginning of academic year until stopping courses. In the pre-test, students were asked directly to write an academic essay about the advantages and disadvantages of the internet that is used by teenagers in a limited time.

After correcting the pretest, two lessons were planned focusing on the prewriting stage. Some strategies added to students such as: How to interpret the question, how to extract key concept, to facilitate the process of analysing then getting ideas down. Students interact during the lecture and they were helpful. The objective of the first lesson plan was to make students aware of prewriting stage and its strategies. It focuses on the process not the product as the traditional method did. The second lesson plan dealt with the techniques of writing an academic essay. It is planned to involve the students by giving much important to practice than presentation.

5.1. Experiment

The experiment has done using two lectures and two tests. Pre test is given to students. They were restricted by time but most of students gave their answers on time. A lecture is planned, and then introduced to the students. The lesson is prepared according to the new proposed way; that is by focusing on the prewriting stage and integrating the students in the process of prewriting. The lecture lasts nearly fifty minutes; students were given a topic and they were asked to try to interpret the topic and extract the question after that to analyse this topic then to brainstorm the topic to extract their background knowledge. Time was limited for each step. Students were helpful and they asked for support and guidance.

The second lesson plan is regarded as a supplement to the first one. I includes some techniques required in writing academically; the ultimate objective of this lesson was to train the students how to use summarizing and paraphrasing in their writing through giving them some paragraphs then asking them to summaries or paraphrase them, time to time they were guided in order to explain the principles of those techniques.

After one week, the same students were given a post test. They were restricted by time, but most of them gave their test too early. They were very happy and helpful.

5.2. Procedure

The steps of scores analysis that were followed in this study are: gathering, identifying, and describing data. In the identification stage, the analysis is done through accurate interpretation and the correction of both tests. Whereas in the description stage, the comparison is made between the students' scores in both tests; the pre test and the post test. After the implication of the two lesson plans in the classroom by incorporating strategies and focusing on the prewriting stage in the first lesson, and training the student on integrating summarizing and paraphrasing techniques, it is remarked that the levels of the students are seen to be different when comparing the two tests.

5.3. T.Test

N	Pre - test	Post - test	d	D ²
1	15	16.5	-1.5	2.25
2	12.5	12.5	0	0
3	12	14	-2	4
4	11.5	12	-0.5	0.25
5	11	14	-3	9
6	10	12	-2	4
7	9	11	-2	4
8	8.5	11.5	-2	9
9	8.5	12	-3.5	12.25
10	9	14	-5	25
11	7	13.5	-6.5	42.25
12	7.5	7.5	0	0
13	7	8	-1	1
14	7	8	-1	1
15	6	7	-1	1
16	6	8	-2	4
17	5.5	8	-2.5	6.25
18	5	9	-4	16
19	5	8	-3	9
20	5	7	-2	4
			-45.5	154.25

$$d = \frac{\Sigma d}{N} = \frac{-45.5}{20} = -2.27$$

$$Sd = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma d^2}{N} - (d^2)} = \sqrt{\frac{154.25}{20} - (2.27^2)} = \sqrt{7.71 - 5.15}$$

$$Sd = 2.56$$

$$t_{n-1} = \frac{d}{sd/\sqrt{N-1}} = \frac{-2.27}{2.56/\sqrt{20-1}} = \frac{-2.27}{2.56/\sqrt{19}} = \frac{-2.27}{2.56/4.35} = \frac{-2.27}{0.58} = -3.91 t_0 = -3.91$$

As observed t_0 is greater than 3.91. it is unlikely that the results could have arisen by chance. Therefore, incorporating strategies may foster the students' level in academic essay writing. The probability that the difference between the two means arose by chance is less than 2.25 i.e 95% sure.

Conclusion

Incorporating strategies of the prewriting stage and integrating some techniques such as: summarizing and paraphrasing implicate positively on the EFL students' levels of performance in writing academic essay. Therefore, using those strategies and techniques foster their level of writing academically.

Pedagogical Recommendations

From the previous discussion, it is observed that EFL students are of different levels; each one has his own energy and capacity to reach knowledge. However, and because of specific reasons, the writing skill is taught generally without paying attention that those learners are going to be selected in the master degree that requires a specific academic writing. Certainly, instructors are going to request students to write an academic essay, in this situation students should be acquainted at least with the different strategies and techniques that might be used when writing academically. Teachers may forget this variety of students' levels. This means that some university teachers of written expression do not follow a specific method when teaching the academic writing skill, or sometimes no method is used at all. This fact affects the students' performance negatively and leads to a deterioration in their levels. Our task is to think of advices, and to suggest some strategies that may help teachers to alter the students' level and to make their academic essay writing effective and readable.

1. Teachers should give much importance to the stages of writing, especially the prewriting because it consists of all the starting points of an essay.
2. Since the students' levels in academic writing at university are weak, it would be better to integrate the techniques that seem efficient.
3. Teachers also need to focus more on the practical parts when writing essays rather than giving definitions and examples.

4. Teachers should take into their consideration that they are teaching the skill of writing in general, and asking to write academically. That is why it seems better to include academic essay writing module in the programme and at all levels, to help EFL learners practice academic essay writing before their graduation to their specific branch.

General Conclusion

In teaching English as a foreign language, the skill of writing plays a great role. In fact, it facilitates language acquisition through acquiring several competences, also it allows students to communicate their message successfully with clarity and ease to a group of audience than through face to face or telephone conversation.

At university classes, students might be called to write academic essay. In this case, students are communicating ideas to each other. Essentially a well structured piece of writing is demanded to meet certain requirements. As long as students are going to graduate in the future, they are supposed to be acquainted with the basic strategies for writing academically. Moreover they are recommended to follow particular techniques when they are writing essays.

Writing in general has the same strategies, but academic one requires some characteristics that should be taken into account. The present study highlights the stages of academic essay writing using specific techniques, and strategies especially in the area of TEFL where students are expected to write academic essays in a limited time.

In this study the results of the questionnaire, the pre- test, and the post test show that students need to be acquainted with academic essay writing. Moreover they need to integrate some strategies in the pre- writing stage such as: interpreting the question, eliciting key concepts, and then analyzing the topic. They seem difficult for them because they did not deal with them in their writing courses. Further, students need to practise those strategies within the classroom that is why it is suggested to add academic essay writing module in the programme of written expression so that students can build a strong background to be used in their assignments.

In short, it is obvious that incorporating strategies in teaching academic essay writing fosters the students' performance, and helps them in the future in their specialization stream.

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Appendices

Appendix: 01

Dear Students,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire about academic essay writing. So please, mark (√/ ×) in the appropriate box (es) or give full answer(s).

May I thank you in advance for your cooperation and the time devoted to answer the questionnaire.

Section one

1. Do you know how to write academically? yes no

2. Have you been taught the fundamental characteristics of academic writing?

yes no

2.1. Which aspects of writing your teachers give more importance to? (You may opt for more than one choice.)

- a. Audience b. Purpose c. Organization d. Style e. Flow
f. Presentation g. All h. No one

3. Do you know the characteristics of academic writing

5. Do you know the stages of academic writing process? yes no

6. Which of the following stages do you find most difficult in academic writing process? You may opt for more than one choice.

- a. Preparing b. Drafting c. Revising d. All e. No one

7. Do you know about the elements of academic writing ?

yes no

8. Which of the following elements you mostly use in your academic writing?

- a .Cause and effect b .Comparisons c. Definition d . Examples
e .Generalizations f. Number g. Synonyms H .Visual information

Section Two

9. Do you know how to write an academic essay? yes no

10. Have you been explicitly directed on how to write academic essay in written expression or other modules? yes no

11. Which of these can make the parts of academic essay writing?

- a- Introduction b- Body c- Conclusion d- All

12. Which of the following parts do you find most difficult in essay writing? (You may opt for more than one choice.)

a. Introduction b. Body c. Conclusion d. All e. No one

13. Have you been guided on how to write the different parts of an essay?

yes no

Section three

14. Do you know how to refer to information from other sources in an academic essay?

yes no

14.1. Have you been sufficiently trained on using those techniques?

yes no

14.2. Do you master these techniques in writing an academic essay?

yes no

15. Which technique of the following do you find the most difficult? (You may opt for more than one choice.)

a. Summarizing b. Paraphrasing

Section Four

16. What do you suggest to solve the problems of academic essay writing by university students? (You may opt for more than one choice.)

- a. Focusing on academic essay in the programmes of written expression
- b. Adding extra sessions of written expression at all levels
- c. Designing 'academic writing' module at all levels
- d. All
- e. No one

Thank You

Appendix: 02

Lesson planning 1

Time: 11:20 p.m to 13:05 p.m

Module: Written Expression

Topic: Strategies of pre writing stage

Class: 2nd Year English L.M.D

Objective: At the end of the lecture students will be able to understand the question, determine essay focus, elicit key concepts and practise summarizing and paraphrasing.

Step	Time	Teaching points	Ss's tasks	purpose
1	5mins	T distributes handouts. T introduces the topic then tries to explain briefly strategies to move through each stage of the essay.	Ss listen.	To make Ss follow with the T.
2	20mins	Teacher write in the board the following interpreting the topic: Eg: <u>Universities</u> should not be <u>run like businesses</u> . Discuss Teacher explains that to interpret the topic students should determine 3 elements: the topic, the focus and the command. Universities: is the topic Should not : is the focus <u>run like businesses</u> : topic Discuss: is the command Teacher adds that the statement may become a question: <i>Should</i> universities be run like businesses? Teacher gives some instruction as examples	Ss follow. Ss follow on the handout. Ss follow on the blackboard.	To make Ss understand.
3	10mins	Account for: To give reasons, explain why something has happened. Analyse: To break the subject up into its main ideas, and evaluate them. Assess: To judge the value of a subject critically. Comment on: To discuss, explain, and give your opinion on the ideas expressed. Compare: To show the similarities and differences between two or more subjects. Criticise: To make your judgement about the views expressed and support your judgement with evidence Teacher asks the students to do the same in the provided statements after 10 m teacher make a collective correction.	Ss write the meaning of difficult words. Ss do the task Ss try to give correct examples	To check the students comprehension To make Ss correct their mistakes

4	15mins	<p><u>Techniques in academic essay writing</u> <u>1. Summarising :</u> Teacher gives the following examples <i>Examples</i> “Children spend a very large proportion of their daily lives in school. They go there to learn, not only in a narrow academic sense, but in the widest possible interpretation of the word – about themselves, about being a person within a group of others, about the community in which they live, and about the world around them. Schools provide the setting in which such learning takes place.” Leyden, S. (1985). <i>Helping the child of exceptional ability</i>. London: Croom Helm, page 38. <i>Summaries</i> <i>Author citation in the body of the sentence</i> As Leyden (1985) points out, schools are places for children to learn about life, themselves, other people, as well as academic information. <i>Author citation in brackets</i> Schools are places for children to learn about life, themselves, other people, as well as academic information (Leyden, 1985). Teacher explains to the students that they will notice that in the examples above relied on some of the same key words that were used in the original version from Leyden, <i>such as schools, children, learn, other(s), themselves, and academic</i> <u>2. Paraphrasing:</u> <i>Examples</i> “Children spend a very large proportion of their daily lives in school. They go there to learn, not only in a narrow academic sense, but in the widest possible interpretation of the word – about themselves, about being a person within a group of others, about the community in which they live, and about the world around them. Schools provide the setting in which such learning takes place.” Leyden, S. (1985). <i>Helping the child of exceptional ability</i>. London: Croom Helm, page 38. <i>Paraphrasing</i> <i>Author citation in the body of the sentence</i> As Leyden (1985) points out, schools are</p>	<p>Ss participate</p> <p>Students try to answer</p>	<p>To test Ss understanding.</p>
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		<p>places where children spend a significant amount of time.</p> <p>Beyond merely going to school to learn academic information, Leyden argues that learning occurs within a far wider context as children also learn about who they are, by being in groups, their local community, as well as the wider world which surrounds them. Hence, schools offer the settings to facilitate children's learning about a great many things.</p> <p>Teacher asks the students to notice what happened in this step, then explains: you may notice that in the paraphrased examples above, the version I have created is very detailed, compared to the one-sentence, summarised version</p>		
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Appendix: 03

POST TEST

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to help in fulfilling a dissertation about academic essay writing, so please write an academic essay about the use of technology in the classroom. You can use the following information:

Question: How can schools make the best use of information technology in the classroom?

Topic – schools’ use of information technology in the classroom.

Command – how can

Focus – the best use

Word limit: 200

Analysis: This question requires you to go beyond merely identifying schools’ use of information technology in the classroom, in order to develop an argument around how schools can make the best use possible of such technology in the classroom. There may be many uses of information technology in the classroom, and you may wish to acknowledge this in the beginning of the essay. However, the focus of your essay needs to be based on examining and explaining the best usage of information technology. It may be that there are several best methods available. Hence, you could then proceed to explain each of these and how they can be implemented in the classroom. Alternatively, there may be one overall best method amongst a group of very good methods, in which case you will need to highlight why one method is better than the others, and how this method can be implemented in the classroom

Abstract

Writing skill is crucial specifically in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. This paper specifically explores the status of writing skill in foreign language learning and teaching, it is established on the basis of the students' marks that show heavily the weak level in producing effective academic essay. Therefore this problem will create a great danger to both learners and teachers. The means chosen to help in gathering and interpreting data is the quasi- experimental method, and the descriptive method to explain the steps of the experience which was done accurately relaying on a questionnaire, and two lectures' plans and two tests to make the comparison between the scores of the group under study. Eventually it is detected that incorporating strategies in teaching academic essay writing fosters the students' level in producing an effective essay.

Key Words: Academic Essay, Strategy, Technique. Skill, Writing.

Résumé

L'écriture compétences est essentielle en particulier dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. Cet étude explore spécifiquement le statut de compétence en écriture dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères et l'enseignement, il est établi sur la base des notes des élèves qui montrent fortement le niveau faible dans la production de dissertation. Par conséquent, ce problème va créer un grand danger pour les apprenants et les enseignants. Les moyens choisis pour aider à la collection et l'interprétation des données est la méthode quasi- expérimental, et la méthode descriptive pour expliquer les étapes de l'expérience qui a été fait le relais avec précision sur un questionnaire, et les plans de deux conférences et deux essais de faire la comparaison entre les scores du groupe. Finalement, il est détecté que l'intégration de stratégies dans l'enseignement de l'écriture d'essais académiques favorise le niveau des étudiants à produire un essai efficace.

Mots Clés: Essai Académique, Stratégie, Technique, Compétence, Ecris