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ACADEMIC WRITING IN HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

PREDICAMENTS AND PROSPECTS

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Conference Abstract

Academic writing for University Students: Between the Challenges of the Craft and the Urging of its Mastering.

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Abstract

It is not surprising to think of writing as a challenging task even for everyday life needs. The need to communicate through a written text for people is not only essential but also challenging, since they are expected to get the message through via the use of solely verbal aspects of the language without aiding the transmission of ideas with body movements and facial and non-verbal expressions. In this respect, Academic writing becomes even more challenging, especially for novice university students, because of the unique requirements of the task. Academic writing is a formal type of writing in which the writer is expected to address a given topic or theme in an organized manner. The form of the piece of writing varies according to the type and purpose of the Academic writing task (For example writing an Essay is not the same task as writing an email). University students are required to fulfill certain writing tasks in order to make progress in their learning paths. Nevertheless, most university students in the different English departments find it both difficult and nerve-wracking to execute Academic writing tasks. The reason is traced to the student's lack of and deficiency in the essential Linguistic competence, especially that English is a foreign language to them (Algerian context). Furthermore, the psychological factor of the need to write "well" or there will be the risk of failing the module, adds to the student's anxiety to perform better that instead of having a positive motivating effect on them it will drive students to "avoid" writing all together, since writing becomes an uncomfortable annoying task for them. As such, the present paper seeks to address the issue of the different Linguistic and Psychological challenges that face novice university students in Academic Writing and as a result affects their performance. It also seeks to provide some practical solutions for university students in terms of writing academically most effectively.

Keywords: Academic writing - University students - Linguistic competence - Psychological factors.