Academic Writing in English: Approaches, Processes and Challenges in Higher Education

Oktay Yagiz
English Teaching Department
Ataturk University
Turkey
oktayyagiz@hotmail.com

Kemalettin YIGITER
English Teaching Department
Ataturk University
Turkey
yigiter@atauni.edu.tr

Gencay Genc
English Language and Literature
Cyprus International University
ggencay@hotmail.com

Abstract: Writing is pivotal and good language use is marked in higher education throughout disciplines. Self-assumptions, others' arguments, transformed knowledge, and research results are primarily given in written documents including articles, theses, dissertations and books. Though writing is often referred to as a skill or competence, it is widely acknowledged that writing resides in much more than solely being able to communicate what you already know. It rather stands as primary tool for thinking, learning and knowledge construction. Based on the above considerations, the   present study takes a qualitative case study approach to explore writing approaches and strategies of nonnative graduate students' writing academic texts and the difficulties that they encounter in this process in English departments.

Introduction

As a truly international phenomenon English appears overwhelmingly the language of research and publication as well as language of instruction. With this tremendous expansion, there is a parallel growth in the understanding and preparation of non-native English speakers of dissemination of academic knowledge and scholarly findings in higher education.

Disciplinary writing for academic achievement is of vital importance (Benfield, 2007; Benfield & Feak, 2006; Coates et al., 2002) and academic writing in English at advanced level is a challenge for both native and nonnative English speakers. University students are inducted into a particular discipline through lectures, discussions, readings; and achievement of their academic performance is most commonly evaluated through their written assignments. However, when these students embark on graduate studies, writing becomes more complex, demanding and challenging.

As the number of the universities (68 state and 25 private institutions; YÖK, 2003), is increasing, serious academic expectations and requirements concurrently come to the existence including within the reference of scientific output. However, the debates concerned ostensibly confine to quantity but not quality matters. Most of the above mentioned universities have English language related departments, the educational language of some are

English, and finally almost all of the disciplines require their members to write in English prominently, journal article, book review, thesis and dissertation. It is imperative to write in English, as an example, in that Social Citation Index journals do not enfold Turkish journals.

Almost no studies in literature have been focused on Turkish EFL graduate students' writing processes, writing needs and challenges. To the contribute to this lacking field, this study investigated Turkish graduate students' English writing approaches and their difficulties that often affect their academic achievement. In particular, this study explores how these students approach their academic requirements and expectations in terms of producing academic text such as research paper, proposal, thesis and dissertation, how they compose these texts, and how they feel about the writing experience.

Based on the above considerations, the present study takes qualitative case study approach to explore writing approaches and strategies of nonnative graduate students' writing academic texts and the difficulties that they encounter in this process in English departments, and how Turkish EFL graduate students approach to writing, their strategies and their discursive and affective difficulties and challenges were explored.

Background

Given that the major language for the dissemination of academic knowledge, and going further, as the very language for the communication of research findings, English plays a crucial role for students, who must gain fluency in the conventions of English language academic discourses to understand their disciplines and to successfully survive in the academia. The growth of English as the leading language for the dissemination of academic knowledge has had a major impact around the world, binding the careers of thousands of scholars to their competence in a foreign language and elevating this competence to a professional imperative. (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p.2).

This growth has inevitably been at the expense of other languages so that now more than 90 per cent of the journal literature in many scientific domains is printed in English and the most prestigious and cited journals are in English (Hyland, 2006; p. 24). Therefore, for most tertiary level students in many countries, mastering the right English with proficiency in a certain discipline has become a matter of great urgency including the native speakers of English.

In fact, there appears little surprise to see this need even among native speakers of English considering the institutions' expectations as the international norms (Hyland, Hamp-Lyons, 2002). Hinkel (2004) alludes to the power of ability to use language efficiently and accurately stating that no matter the writer has supposedly a remarkable idea there will not be any outcomes if the language is not salient and synthesized in an organized way.

With globalization and marketisation of the academy in an increasingly competitive and intermingled world, the number of nonnative English speakers (NNES) students in tertiary institutes has increased not only in developed countries but also in periphery countries. For the last a few years, due to economic growth and social demands, Turkey has witnessed serious debates pertaining to higher education.

As the student population has become outnumbered and diverse in the field of EFL/ESL in accordance with different linguistic and educational backgrounds, learning needs of students attract particular attention. In this context, diversity has of considerable importance. Marked challenges reside in this distinctiveness of disciplinary communication for students, in that; such disciplines displaying steady change and development requires students to learn to master so as to succeed (Hyland, 2006). The professional and institutional expectations and requirements of academics are in line with developed English-language-speaking countries sharing the same roles and tasks. Yet, writing an academic paper in English for a non-native speaker of English, undeniably, having some disadvantages will be more difficult and time consuming than a native speaker.

Ferguson (2007) asserts that linguistic factors represent a noticeable obstacle to negotiate in academia. Meyer (2008) further emphasized the distinction between non-native English speakers who have spent time in an English-speaking country and/or members of prestigious, internationally known research groups in their home countries, and, on the other hand, being a non-native English speaking academic in a not developed country where English is not used as the native language, or having not a chance work and conduct research under supervision or mentoring of renowned NNES scholars or native English speakers (NES) expatriates, or being NNES scholars who have never left their home country. He, thus, closely correlates both discursive (language related) and non-discursive (non-language related) factors.

Bereiter and Scardamalia's examination of writing process that distinguishes two types of writing that is knowledge telling and knowledge transforming gives more about academic language proficiency (1989). The

Bereiter and Scardamalia model of writing addresses a more psychologically complex type of writing that they called knowledge transforming. It consists of thinking about an issue, obtaining the information needed for definition, analysis and modifying one's thinking (Hinkel, 2004). This form of writing leads writers to expand their schematic knowledge, and develop new knowledge by processing new information taken for the purpose of writing on a topic. Therefore, advanced cognitive and information-processing tasks entail transforming and demonstrating knowledge in writing place, and it might jeopardize L2 writers' achievement of writing.

At this point, language has always been a matter of significance to scholars no matter they are novice researchers or experienced academics, since it is the basis of consciousness, thinking and interaction. Therefore, the 'right' language reveals that a writer is a member of their community towards the audience. The concept of community draws attention to the fact that we use language to communicate with other members of social groups each of whom has own conventions and norms as well as communicate with the world generally.

As for the influence of emotions on the ways in which students interpret, approach and experience the new learning tasks, EFL writers' feelings have significant effect on students' academic writing. When adult graduate EFL students are required to skillfully and productively write about scientific topics under stressful timed or testing situations negative affective reactions become remarkably observable. Thus, many EFL writers demonstrate enhanced writing anxiety, fear of evaluation, writer's block, lack of motivation, and writing procrastination. Conversely, these students may display positive emotional reactions such as excitement, enthusiasm, satisfaction when they perform successful writing.

Both types of feelings affect students' cognitive processes in L2 academic writing development. That is why, L2 learners' emotional mechanism in learning to write academic English, their psychological efforts to cope with the stress of performing to write academically appear to be important. Pomfret and Medford's assertion, hereby, catches attention:

"Academic success is not merely a matter of studying, hard work, and attendance. Emotions can interfere with academic performance. These kinds of impediments are not usually evident to teachers; thus making the process of working with students in the classroom that much more difficult" (2005, p.339).

Method

Interviews

To have a deeper understanding of the participants' writing strategies and processes in line with describing and interpreting their feelings, perceptions and experiences of these graduate Turkish EFL graduate students while writing academic texts in their own voice, semi-structured interview was used. As a powerful tool to provide insights in educational issues through understanding the approaches and processes of the individual interviews were employed in the current study. Interviewing can take indifferent formats and the most common one appears individual face to face verbal interchange

In each interview the participants were posed the questions listed below.

Interview Questions

What do you attach particular importance in your academic paper?

What are your feelings (e.g. motivational problems, anxiety, procrastination, writing apprehension) and beliefs when you are to write an academic text (e.g. conference proposal, research paper or thesis/dissertation?)

What are the prominent difficulties and needs considering the academic expectations and requirements in your graduate studies?(publishing, paper presenting, thesis/dissertation writing)

What language based points do you have particular difficulties and need to pay extra attention?

In addition to the questions, in the course of the conversation, spontaneous follow-up questions relevant to interviewees' responses also occurred. The questions were in English and they asked them to feel free while speaking. Thus, in some part of the interviews, the interviewees preferred to speak in English. Their responses in L1 were then translated into English.

Prior to the each interview their permission were taken and they were given the general nature of the research study. Then each interviewee was asked whether they had any questions or concerns before we got started. Following this procedure, each participant signed a letter of consent to participate in the study All the interviews were tape-recorded, then transcribed and coded categories. During the interviews taking brief notes also helped us with the data analysis.

Participants

As for the criteria for selecting participants for interviews, three prominent sets of criteria were set forth: first, all of the interviewees had to pursuing the same academic degree (i.e. doctoral students), working in the same discipline (i.e. English language teaching and learning) and have had some writing experiences including writing conference proposal, attempting to write research article for publishing (whether their manuscripts hade been published or not was ignored) and writing thesis or dissertation. However, they might be at the different stages of their degree studies.

For instance, some of them were in their second year or beyond of doctoral studies, others were either on the verge of finishing or had just finished their doctoral studies. All of them had their master degree having a thesis writing experience. At the very outset of the design of the qualitative phase of the study, though some master students were invited to participate in the interviewing, the further period of the study required to exclude the master students' participation

It was considered that the more experienced they were in writing in the academia, the more they could provide the study with deeper insights as for the writing processes and difficulties. Selecting participants at the similar stages provided the study with relatively fair comparisons and generalizations. Therefore, only doctoral students were included in the interview part of the study.
Nevertheless, the gender difference was not taken into consideration for sampling the interviews since the comparing differences or possible language use tendencies and preferences or particular challenges and needs between males and females were not the purpose of the current study.

The four general themes that 8 interviewees touched in the study with some extracts are given below, pseudonyms for the participants were only provided.

What was the same feature of all interviewees is that none of them have taken academic writing course throughout their tertiary level education. When they were undergraduate students, their writing classes did not include formal academic writing both in L1 and L2.

Students' Remarks about Constructing Their Academic Text

Each interviewee was asked how they write academic text according to the disciplinary rules and conventions, and what they mostly attached importance while writing, at both macro and micro levels.
Participants initially saw writing as an important tool to produce original ideas, generally emphasized originality and creativity stating that main idea and the topic which might be useful in their field would be the most important feature. They highlighted that even if they, according to them, were not so competent in writing as novice writers, and they may somewhat dislike writing they had to gain the ability to construct new knowledge and show themselves according to the norms of their disciplines. The fundamental compensation towards this demanding and often difficult process is to be able to create new ideas and contribute to their fields. The following extracts from the view of an interviewee exemplifies the relevant idea about the nature scientific writing. Below Matrix (pseudonym) points out:
... What is more important to me is the original idea and if the writer's ideas can contribute to the field. The language related issues are most probably manageable. If your study does not serve to your field and original and inspiring then your graduate studies means nothing, because it is not scientific to me...
In accordance with Matrix assumptions, Ufuk's view attracts attention. Thus she states that "I don't want to study what others have already studied, at least from their findings I want to do something new and original."

When they insisted on the originality of the topic, the flow of the conversation passed into the integration of writers' own knowledge and others' ideas. As mentioned earlier, academic writing consists of thinking about an issue, obtaining the information needed for definition, analysis and modifying one's thinking.
What was significant that the integration of the self knowledge with others' knowledge was directly connected to the issue of citation rules and the ethical dimension of writing in higher education particularly the concept of plagiarism. All the participants' agreed on the sensitivity towards plagiarism. The following extract summarizes the common point of view of the interviewees.
Serdar: We should as a researcher, we should respect for the others ideas and efforts, and we should cite them... I regard plagiarism as a crime, a serious crime in terms of academic studies. I am quite respectful of others' thoughts and I do not copy their ideas, I just benefit from their ideas and cite the author... I care about it because it is quite a sensitive topic, you should avoid it...
Ufuk: Ethics and giving credit to the studies that I use is also another part that I am highly sensitive about.
Yigit: ...I want to underline that it is a serious and important issue, unfortunately in our country ethical sensitivity is not given to the students from earlier period, and the current situation is quite bad in the universities, even in higher

education. Also I believe that integration of the ideas only in terms of citation rules is not so simple. It means more than APA guide…

However, as for the obtaining this academic literacy in other words, going beyond from knowledge transferring to knowledge transforming, each interviewee indicated that they had never taken explicit instruction or made practice about the motivation of knowledge transforming and citation rules. In the course of the each interviewee they pointed out they had never taken academic writing course, participated or made detailed practice with any experienced academics. In contrast they inevitably try to acquire this necessary ability by their own efforts, without getting any feedback and practice but in their own academic texts, i.e. in their research proposals, research studies or theses/dissertations manuscripts, they could only assess their achievement at the very final stage receiving the response from the advisors, referees or the jury, "it is accepted or rejected". Thus, Dolphin's view appears to be important:

…While writing, I have many times I examined the articles on my own and tried to replicate what I have seen…

Organizational concern is another issue that mostly interviewees underlined. While they want to put forward original ideas and constructing new knowledge, they at the same time tend to pay attention to the organization and unity of the text. Their common concern appears to be building a coherent text. As coherence is the implicit and quite abstract links in a text, they stated that they tend to use transitional devices as much as they can. Ufuk's statement exemplifies this emphasis:

I pay a great deal of attention to the format, coherency and organization. It is really important to me if what I am saying makes sense to the reader, or if the reader can see what I suggest. I also like creating clear links and transitions among my thoughts…

But all of the interviewees had agreed on they knew little about logical sequencing or clear progression of the ideas. Thus, in the following extracts Yigit and Alex summarize the common perception:

Yigit: We have always read in the books while I was an undergraduate student in writing books and the writing guidebooks now in my graduate studies that I must provide coherence, I should use cohesive devices. But I have never been taught about these concepts and taken some recommendations from professional academics or writers. It has remained at surface level. Still, I am doing my best and paying attention to this issue…

Aex: I think there is a close relationship between form and meaning and this relationship is an arbitrary relationship between form and meaning which is inseparable. In our academic studies, to me, we cannot focus on only form or merely meaning. Certainly both of them must be integrated…

As for the writing process, most interviewees indicated their approach to revising their texts both directly and implicitly. Besides, the changes that these writers make remain at minor level. When they were asked their revision strategy most of the interviewees, most of them regard revision as having their texts proof read or editing on their own. They generally do not prefer rewriting and revising. The extract from Alex's transcription illustrates this situation

Alex: I believe that a text should be read and read again and at the end of the writing the whole text should be examined more than once but not by yourself, someone else who is known as good in the field. Because you probably miss some points and cannot see your errors. And I make some corrections in the text such as grammatical rules, citation rules or punctuation.

Though they believed that revision is an important phase of writing they tend to do it at minor level and this process is largely disliked. Baris's statement can be attributed to the overall participants' views about revision:

…when I am to finish the work, I don't like last revisions much…

Graduate academic writers' feelings and their affective difficulties when they write and their needs during their graduate studies. Interviewees' affective difficulties including motivational problems, anxiety, writing procrastination and their psychological perspectives were explored. At the very outset of the interview Serdar's assumptions deserve particular attention:

I think while writing   an academic paper such as proposal, thesis or research article the major problem is motivation. It is one of the biggest issues in the modern world of academia today. The level of your motivation is quite important in our stressful years of graduate studies. For example, I am quite a sensitive person and I am easily affected by any kind of treatment, behavior even eye contact though I work hard and read many books or articles, anything in my field. I sometimes feel that I do not know anything about my field, applied linguistics to say or write. It is a great obstacle for a researcher. It is not totally related to my feelings, emotions my inner world. It is also related to my environment you should be supported by your environment colleagues, advisors and lecturer in order to minimize this obstacle. We, the researchers, should be encouraged and motivated by the others especially our experienced instructors and supervisors…

In the course of the interviews though seemingly they did not want to explicitly state that they were not satisfied with the current advisor-advisee relationship, and the graduate students tend to need more encouragement and guidance by the other academics. Yigit could share his comment about his mood:

They always tell us write articles and make them publish, send a proposal to present for the x conference, I expect a good thesis, it should be something and it should not be something. But no one teach us how to be able to write a paper, a proposal or construct a good thesis or dissertation. And sometimes even their expectations turn into lower than they give to us, that is worse, I think.

The participants, the graduate students, also mentioned the issue of procrastination. Most of the interviewees tend to procrastinate their writing tasks. The extract taken from Baris' statement exemplifies writers' mood that can influence their writing performance:

…I cannot use the days or weeks before the presentation of the papers effectively. On the other hand, when I feel that I might not complete my study before the deadline I get over-anxious and it makes me feel sick…

Lack of motivation and burden of life appear to be their justification for delaying writing. When they were asked whether they were satisfied with their writing performance, they clearly indicated that they had no self confidence about their product's desirability. They appeared not to have a perfectionist approach towards what they produced rather they seem to have fear of evaluation, since they have no adequate experiences and have not taken guidance from others. Hasan's perspective is relevant to fear of evaluation:

If I have to be understood by the readers that is in order that my manuscript or thesis could be accepted I have to clear and coherent. The days while we are waiting for an answer and their, for example advisor, referee, committee are really tough. It makes me very nervous. It is our profession I have to be successful.

However, one interviewee regarded his anxiety as a positive trait to concentrate on his writing task. He was very pleased with his anxious mood otherwise he thought he could fail in his graduate studies. Along with this, one of the two female participants pointed out that she did not experience high level of anxiety though she said she is not much comfortable since she studies what she is interested in and tries to create new knowledge or findings she feels excited.

Discursive Difficulties that Graduate Students Encounter in Writing Process

Appropriate use of the core words and the technical terms in academic discourse are good indicators of both professional or novice texts. Almost all of the interviewees centered their concern on the lexical difficulties. They frequently emphasized the mandatory of formal vocabulary use. However, the interviewees' sensitivity to the formal and appropriate vocabulary and phrase use in their texts does not display direct proportion to correct and appropriate vocabulary use. The major reason of this low performance could be attributed to the answers that posed during the interview about how they tried to maximize the use of formal and appropriate lexical units in their texts were largely based on their personal efforts to learn these conventions focusing on the text from the books and articles they read.

 For example, their prominent strategy appear to focus on unfamiliar or unknown terms or phrases in an academic text. If these unfamiliar units can attract their attention, they look up a dictionary and learn; finally they try to use these terms and phrases in their own texts at the appropriate places of the discourse. The following statements of the interviewees can be given as examples for their perceptions of academic writing difficulties:

Baris: One of the biggest problems is that I often feel that I use similar expressions in different parts of the paper. I also feel that I have to shorten my sentences. Sometimes I cannot be sure if there are good transitions across paragraphs. I feel I cannot express my thoughts directly and briefly enough. I know I have to read more…

Yigit: I don't believe that we write consciously and creatively with the integration of conventions. I think I don't have serious problems about structure but to able to reach the formality in my text, I haven't enough experiences and no guidance.

Alex: To be able to use the right vocabulary at the right context is much more difficult than grammar.

Familiarity with technical and correct vocabulary meanwhile affect their fluency of their text; that is why, their second problematic area in writing appears to be coherence and cohesion based issues. In fact, they have already indicated that they pay considerable attention to provide unity and transition between sentences and paragraphs. The term coherence is basically recognized implicitly and seen as a quite abstract concept, for EFL/ESL writers, it becomes more complicated and difficult. They were all aware that their texts had to be coherent, in other words there must be clear and smooth links between sentences and paragraphs. But they were not sure about how to make their text "well organized" or "logical sequenced". Their initial strategy to maximize coherence in their text appears to employ cohesive devices, particularly, as observed, the initial elements were conjunctive adverbs (e.g. however, moreover and furthermore), and transition phrases (e.g. in addition, on the other hand and in contrast).

Discussion

The in-depth interviews aimed to explore graduate students' strategies and their major difficulties both affective and discursive while constructing academic texts and thus capture a clearer scene of their experiences and perceptions. The findings of the current study saliently indicated that there is an overall lack of awareness and knowledge abut academic writing and its subtitles. This inadequacy also contributed to the participants' general feelings of anxiety and lack of achievement in writing outcomes in their own disciplines.

The participants' L1 academic writing experiences seem to be correlated with their English academic English development. As one of the interviewees stated that students wrote essays in Turkish in a style (introduction-body-conclusion) that was rather different than English academic essay that currently they are required to write in their academic lives, and they were not taught any particular academic writing style or genre. The findings of this study supported the Cummin's (1981) Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency theory in the development of adult L2 learners' academic writing. The results of the research studies can be quite related to current study, especially in terms of how the participants'' L1 literacy exposure and experience influence the mastery of L2 academic language.

Adult EFL/ESL learners' positive or negative attitudes and approaches towards their native language can influence their attitudes, approach, and motivation while they are writing in a second language. Their attitudes are formed in the early periods of cultural and school experiences; ultimately an adult EFL/ESL student may transfer the attitudes into his/her academic English writing in both positive and negative ways. As Cummin (1981) in Interdependence Hypothesis asserts that "there is a basic cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages which allows the transfer of literacy –related skills across languages (cited in Kroll, 1990, p.95).

Many Turkish students until embarking on their graduate studies appear not to have learned how to write systematically except being instructed to be grammatically correct and writing in certain number of paragraphs. Graduate students' lack of awareness in a foreign language, English, can be attributed to the same reason. Given the graduate programs of many institutes do not include or require academic writing course, it will be seen that students know not much about the nature and the critical instruments of academic writing in certain styles and genres. This little schematic knowledge contributes to the assumption that the expectations of academic writing rules and conventions can be met by means of commercial proofreading and rewriting websites, and as two out of eight participants indicated, academic writing conventions are allegedly confined to the mechanical aspects editorial style in any (e.g. APA and MLA) manual. These findings tend to support the premise which highlights the significance and influence of native language literacy skills in the development of second language writing and academic success.

The study's findings revealed that creating and organizing ideas to write in a text is the common concern of the graduate student writers. As they attach significant attention to create new knowledge they meanwhile confront organizing their ideas in a coherent and well-written way. The participants appeared to be much less worried about expressing their ideas in accurate English. The emphasis on structural accuracy in L1 is seen also in L2 in students' educational background; therefore they appear to have self confidence to achieve linguistic correctness.

To provide the right words in English to express ideas appropriately and accurately is a pervasive difficulty for many EFL/ESL writers due to partly L2 writers' dependence on the translation of their native language into the English or cultural differences between two languages' modes of expression. The EFL writers' lack of English vocabulary in terms of formality, rhetoric and technical aspects is partly due to inadequate opportunity to develop a robust English lexicon through reading and writing activities.

Though mastering surface-level aspects of English grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics is of considerable importance, writing at the academic level in a foreign language requires L2 writers to learn to think and write in new ways including knowledge transforming, voice and identity that may be quite unfamiliar and challenging. However, their awareness and experience due to lack of explicit instruction and affective reasons such as low self-confidence.

Interviewees' ethical sensitivity is seen to be quite high, they frequently mentioned the original and creative thought in their writings, In addition while using others' ideas they highlighted the notion of correct citation. However, it is not clear enough whether their knowledge and experience about transforming others' ideas and findings can discriminate the paraphrasing and patchwriting. As they have indicated they were not totally sure about the performance and quality of their outcome about using others' ideas most probably due to lack of practice much about formal writing both in their native and English languages. That is why, originality and citation appear to be regarded merely around the manuals' citation format.

Fear of evaluation and procrastination seem to be the most common emotion among all the participants, particularly when they are anxious about receiving negative reactions to what they have written and under time pressure. The participants' affective difficulties and negative feelings toward constructing academic text could be

basically attributed to the motivational needs. In fact they indicated that motivation has an important place in their academic studies. However, they generally manifested lack of self confidence and fear of evaluation; 6 of the 8 interviewees exhibited this low self self-confidence at various levels. If they could be supported both explicitly and met their motivational needs in the axis of institution and supervision, they can be expected to achieve the mastery of academic English writing expectations.

Among these adult EFL students, the study shows that motivation plays a crucial role in their English academic writing development. The majority of the participants were considerably motivated to learn to write within disciplinary conventions and norms. Although their intrinsic motivation in learning to write academic English appear quite low, they seem to recognize the practical need of learning academic writing for largely extrinsic reasons.. Their comments suggest that they are basically instrumentally motivated to learn to write academic English because of both benefit and mandatory that it eventually gains in their academic careers and they seem not intrinsically interested in learning to write academic English for its own sake.

Gender did not reveal different response tendency among the participants, thus the participants ideas and their affective difficulties did not exhibit significant differences. However, what was important that, in line with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, the female student indicated that her anxiety affected her positively; in this case she thinks she can be more successful.

A general writing challenge that makes all students concerned that putting their thoughts in good rhetoric, appropriate style and coherent way still need to be resolved . However, they seemed to be motivated to learn about academic writing being aware of their lack knowledge and experience. What was another positive result can be they all acknowledge that writing in their academic discipline is crucial for their survival in the academia and are eager to improve them. In this case, it is possible to strengthen their enthusiasm, minimize the current gap and enhance their achievement.

Conclusion

As English uninterruptedly expands as the leading language for dissemination of academic knowledge, the question of writing effectively and in expected ways causes considerable challenges to students requiring graduates to learn to master and so as to succeed in the academia. Yet, novice writers cannot be taught by only means of cautions and threats, but they should be socialized into disciplinary ways of writing so that they can more easily acquire discipline specific discourse concerned. Especially advisor-advisee relationship attracts serious attention for the graduate student to be able to take part in the community. Supportive attitudes towards the students can strengthen their self-esteem and confidence; moreover, it can help the students internalize their community.

At language level, the enhanced awareness of scholarly writing leads novice writers to selections at the appropriate degree and phase. To achieve this awareness, explicit academic writing instruction both in L1 and L2 from early periods of education life should be integrated. More specifically, like the developed countries' universities do, particularly North American universities, writing centers can assist students and academics about their discursive needs of writing and can encourage their efforts and thus enhance their self-confidence with professional support prior to their the evaluators (i.e. course instructors, thesis advisors, or article referees).

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