Teaching Academic Writing to Undergraduate Saudi students: Problems and Solutions – A King Saud University perspective

Nasser Saleh Al-Mansour
Department of Linguistics and Translation Studies
College of Languages and Translation
King Saud University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

This study aims at investigating the effect of academic writing on the writing performance of Saudi EFL university students. The study also reveals and points out the recurring learning problems that undermine the ability and interest of the students at the College in the way of acquiring a good writing skill and becoming successful translators. The sample of the study consisted of 68 students randomly chosen from King Saud University- College of languages and Translation- and assigned to experimental and control groups of 34 students each. Data of the study were collected within two months period via a pre-posttest design for equivalent groups. The control group was taught by the regular teacher with the direct administration of the researcher, however, the experiment group was taught by the researcher. The researcher assessed the effect of teaching academic writing on the writing performance of the Saudi EFL university students. Results showed that the experiment group outperformed the control group on the measure. This indicated that using academic writing may have a significant positive effect on learners' writing performance. Implications and suggestions for further research are reported.

Key Words: academic writing, Saudi EFL university students, writing performance, writing skill

Introduction and Background
What is academic writing?
Academic writing is a genre of writing that represents the views and beliefs of a writer on a given subject. But at the same time it is not a subjective and unsubstantiated set of statements. The writer has the freedom to recount or discuss his personal experiences and that discussion or description must necessarily be supported by considerable observational experiences. Even when it exposes the writer's thinking, this kind of writing does so with a host of references, information, and evidence to support it. These essential and obligatory aids are details and particulars garnered from books, information technologies, academic discussions, or observations. It is never a surreal, subjective description. It is scholarly in its presentation and purport, and this is what makes it academic. In fact the benchmark for academic writing is its systematic presentation of thoughts and experiences, and penchant for logic and reasoning. In this respect, what needs to be elucidated is that academic writing is a quite different form of writing as compared to the other forms that exist concurrent with it.

Though it stresses on a more formal style of writing, according to Hayland (2002):

> Academic writing is not just about conveying an ideational 'content', it is also about the representation of self. Recent research has suggested that academic prose is not completely impersonal, but that writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas. (p. 1091)

What Hayland (2002) stresses on is that academic writing is not a faceless discourse. But what is important is that the discourse is supported by tangible details and information. And in this it protects its formal style. In addition to this, what sets academic writing apart from other genres of writing is its reliance on content and style. In matter of style it abjures the use of personal pronouns to a great extent. Hashimoto et al (1982) believes that academic writing depends on facts and information for its content in contrast with the personal writing which carries personal contents and depends on the writer's personal opinions or experiences.

The audience and organization are other aspects of the differences between academic and non-academic writing styles. In relation to what has been mentioned above, specific types of audience, usually teachers and scholars are considered the audience of academic writing. Conversely, personal writing is written for non-academic purposes and audience. The structure in which ideas are organized is also a recognizable aspect of academic writing. In this style, ideas are well planned and usually put in a specific order in paragraphs and in complete and comprehensive sentences. These ideas, involved in paragraphs, are perfectly connected, whereas personal writing style is less likely to follow any specific structure, therefore no much coherence can be realize in this style.

In order to strike a comparison between academic and other forms of writing it is important to understand the fundamental and structural differences that separate each of them from one another. Vasquez (2013), while striking a comparison between academic and business writing, construes that business writing depends on sheer facts as its content, which is why it has to be concise with short, simple sentences without any elaborate structure, and a limited and core vocabulary. This is because business writing is meant to retell the facts directly and concisely. In contrast academic writing often

uses an elaborate structure and an extensive range of vocabulary. The intent of such writing is the development of thought and not a presentation of facts only.

Likewise, there are some crucial differences between academic writing and journalistic writing. A clarification on those differences is needed in order to understand full well the name and nature of academic writing, and usefulness for students of translation. Knight (2010) likens the structure of journalistic writing to an inverted pyramid, where the essence of the article is placed at the beginning. The first paragraph, in such writing, holds the most important information as the goal of the writing is to attract readers. The other details follow afterwards. And the article stops when the information to be disseminated ends. Not so in academic writing. In academic writing the reader has to fish into the depth of the article to discover the important information, hidden among clusters of out of the ordinary words and complex sentence structures. So journalistic writing has what is generally called a top-heavy style. But Journalistic writing has to be simpler and more accessible to the general public than academic writing. Academic writing is structured and depends on paragraphs that carry topic sentences and supporting sentences.

Elements of academic writing

As opposed to personal writing discourses, academic writing deals with the investigation and analysis of experiences and beliefs howsoever personal they are. With this basic concept in mind, there are certain elements that become necessary ingredients of academic writing. This kind of writing has to follow certain governing rules and practices, and lays stress on the structural aspects of punctuation, grammar, and spelling. Swales (2005) holds the belief that since punctuation and the conventions of grammar are universally known systems within English speaking cultures they are used to express clarity of thought and content and prevent the element of ambiguity from entering into the written text.

Academic writing requires certain amount of planning and organization. Written ideas and experiences must be organized around a formal order or structure, and they must be supported by references. In addition to that the physical structure of the academic writing demands the division of the written discourse into the beginning, the middle, and the end. The beginning works as an introduction and it informs about the topic; the middle is the body that explains, elucidates, and analytically discusses the topic; and the end is the conclusion which summarizes whatever was discussed earlier. A proper outline or summary, formal tone, a precise language, presentation of the point of view in the third person, analysis of the facts presented, deductive reasoning, avoiding slangs and abbreviations, referencing, and shaping ideas and concepts in a concrete language with apt words and phrases are some of the salient features of academic writing. Set against these perspectives the importance of academic writing acquires a twofold value with regard to its instruction to students of translation. This aspect will be discussed in the following pages, and supported by literature studies, and the experimental tests below.

Statement of the problem

From this researcher's personal experience and observation, many university professors complain about EFL students' inability to organize their ideas logically, their lack of suitable information to cover the assigned topics, their poor vocabulary,   their structure and spelling mistakes, and their writing patterns. Moreover, Saudi EFL students also complain about being unable to write efficiently. The researcher also notices that most students get low grades in their writing exams. Therefore, the need arises to investigate this problem that faces those who work in the field of English language

teaching at the university level in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and find solutions to it. The researcher also suggests a technique to develop students' writing ability. He believes that using teaching English academic writing skills may have a significant role in helping students develop their writing skill.

Significance of the study

In the current environment of research-based practices, many educators may be skeptical about allowing the use of a new educational tool until the effects of that tool have been clearly documented through quantitative research. The rationale of the present study is to evaluate the significance and efficacy of teaching academic writing to translation students, to answer questions as to the problems that language teachers and their Arab students face in the teaching and acquisition of academic writing, and to provide a road map for its successful acquisition. To the best knowledge of the researcher, this is the first attempt to determine whether or not Saudi EFL university students' writing performance significantly improves when they are exposed to an academic writing program. Therefore, it is hoped that:

(1)   The students will be able to produce meaningful writing paragraphs, essays, letters, reports, short stories, articles, compositions, and summaries, and the reading program may help to determine students' progress in previously mentioned skills as well as their mastery of the writing sub-skills such as thesis statement, relevance, coherence, cohesion, exposition, quantity, unity, wording, and grammaticality.
(2)   It will help researchers involved in the educational process gain insights into academic writing and its effect on writing skill and seek to improve it overtime.
(3)   It may encourage further research, which in turn, may lead to the enrichment of the field of academic writing and its effect on writing skill in general and language teaching and learning in particular.
(4)   It will help teachers to better understand the issue and integrate it into their classroom routine in general and in the writing class in particular.
(5)   The findings of this study may be able to open the mind of the students towards the importance of academic writing programs to improve their writing performance.

Objective of the study

EFL university learners are required to write reports, research papers, summaries, and essay examinations to show that they know and understand the thoughts of others and can synthesize the new knowledge into their own thinking. Their success is determined by how effectively meaning is conveyed. The ability to produce well-written articles enhances their academic success. Therefore, students should be taught and trained on how to produced well-organized writings.

Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the effects and advantages of teaching English academic writing skills to undergraduate students of English language and translation. The nature of the topic dictates the significance of the subject matter under discussion.

Hypothesis of the study

This study attempts to test the following hypothesis:
Using academic writing has a positive effect on the writing achievement of Saudi EFL university students and eventually leads to developing all areas of language competence.

Question of the study
The present study attempts to answer the following question:
Is there a statistically significant difference between the achievement of the experiment group and that of the control group due to the treatment?

Variables of the study
The variables of the present study include the following:
- The independent variable is the method of teaching which has two levels, the academic writing program and the traditional method.
- The dependant variable is the students' performance in writing.

Limitations of the study
The generalizability of the findings of this study may be limited by the following:
- This study is restricted to two groups of students at the College of Languages and Translation at King Saud University.
- The findings are bound by the time limit for the period in which the study was conducted.
- Females were not included in the present study.

Review of related literature
Research studies have documented and proved the importance of academic writing in language acquisition, and current studies have explored and focused on the viability and success of teaching academic writing to students of bilateral translation. These studies have invariably and empirically represented how the different structural and contextual elements of academic writing help a student of translation in overcoming language difficulties and produce accurate and faithful translation in second language.

Elucidating the importance of academic writing Koltay (1998) pronounces that academic writing widen translation students' professional horizon. It allows them to become acquainted with the characteristics of a number of new genres and equips them with the necessary skills to produce texts corresponding to these genres. By designing a number of assignments in which they have to decide what is really important in a text and what is not, writing instruction can be formed in such a way that students concentrate on the notion of the importance of information.

Often translators have to undertake such scholastic activities that demand substantial language skills, and their encounter with a new text in a new language they have just acquired develops their vocabulary in the target language. Academic writing makes them capable of using that vocabulary in abstracting the original text in the target language. In fact, abstracting or synopsis is an important element of instruction in all writing courses. By teaching students how to write abstracts we will enrich their reading and writing ability, engaging them in an activity that is communicative and in which students apply knowledge previously acquired (Uso & Palmer, 1998). Abstracting, therefore, develops the students' rhetorical skills critical for a good and meaningful translation.

Smith (1995) believes that academic writing helps students in generating ideas, organizing information, setting writing goals, which in turn facilitate their translating and reviewing skills. The fact remains that academic writing skill may not necessarily help them attain mastery of a foreign language .But if properly taught and understood academic writing can considerably enhance their ability to translate. It is undoubtedly a special skill. People who speak a foreign language well are not

necessarily those who translate most effectively, although there is a correlation between knowledge of the foreign language and the capacity to translate.

Delcambre (2012) states that academic writing is described less as a singular activity than as plural practices, linked to sociological, historical, cultural backgrounds, writing being included in many other practices. Therefore, writing is not described as the very moment of transcribing but is integrated to a before and an after that determine the condition of possibility, the functions, the uses, the meaning and the values of the situation in which the writer is engaged.

Hashimoto (1982) describes academic writing as a "predominantly expository activity" that deals with such basic sentence level problems as dangling modifiers, subject verb agreement, faulty parallelism, or wordiness. These grammar activities are very important as they are basic to the structural and grammatical differences between two languages. The ability to ward off these language errors helps a translation a long way in avoiding like errors from occurring in the target language.

Kobayashi (1992) testes the impact of academic writing on translation performances, translating from Japanese into English, of some 48 Japanese students and discovered that in terms of quality of content, organization, and style, the writers tended to benefit from translation. He also noticed that as regards error frequency their skill in academic writing helped them in making errors less frequently than those who attempted translation without any acquisition of academic writing instructions.

Shih (2012) says that content-based academic writing instruction develops thinking, researching, and writing more realistically than does the traditional instruction that isolates rhetorical patterns and stresses writing from personal experience. It develops multi-skills needed for academic writing tasks and is enormously important for translation activities. It assumes further importance and urgency when the target language is both syntactically and semantically far removed from the translator's first language, as it provides him with a wide range of style and architectonics of language.

Swales (2004) focuses on discourse and genre, exploring the types of organization and characteristic functions found in academic texts. Cognizant of the importance of academic writing and the ongoing changes in the nature of academic writing he believes that L2 writers should be empowered to use language effectively in real-world situations, and that giving them access to academic writing may aid in this process. In fact, it is the formalistic approach inherent in such genre of writing that comes to the help of translators in a big way. It removes the error of abstractions and vagueness from the translators mind and provides him with language tools that make his job palpable and authentic.

Uzawa (1996) compares second language learners' L1 writing, L2 writing, and translation from L1 into L2, focusing on writing and translating processes, attention patterns, and quality of language use. He found that (a) most students used a "what-next" approach both in the L1 and L2 writing tasks and a "sentence-by-sentence" approach in the translation task, (b) attention patterns in the L1 and L2 writing tasks were very similar, but quite different in the translation task. Attention to language use in the translation task was significantly higher than in the L1 and L2 writing tasks and, (c) scores on language use in the L1 and L2 writing tasks were similar, but scores on language use in the translation task were significantly better than in the L2 writing task.

In his research paper on 'The Effect of an Extensive Reading Program on the Writing Performance of Saudi EFL Students, Saudi students' Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman (2014) stresses upon the significance of teaching writing, academic writing to be sure as it appears from his remarks, and writes,

> Writing is a powerful means of communication by which students learn better to express themselves. Teaching and learning to write in any language is an essential area that influences student performances and language learning. Moreover, learning to write in English as a foreign language has been an essential professional educational issue that serves various educational purposes and meets certain learning needs upon which the foreign language learner's progress depends. (p. 248)

Such phrases as "various educational purposes" and "learning needs", in the above passage, are logically indicative of the skill of translation. And the essence of the observation is academic writing skill empowers students and L2 learners to perform multi-layered language tasks.

Al-Fadda (2012) observes that academic writing addresses the intellectual community and therefore it follows certain rules and regulations as regards its structure and content as also its discourse. Its success depends on the students' ability to access, evaluate, and synthesize the words, ideas, and opinions of others. These are exactly the set of rules and technicalities that a student of translation has to follow in order to make his translation meaningful and reliable.

The literature study undertaken in the above pages shows clearly the close knit bond that exists between the skill of academic writing and that of translation. It is, therefore, quite safe and not quite out of place and tune to build upon the above observations and findings and establish the thesis that teaching of academic writing is of paramount importance for those students who are studying their translation courses.

The present study is similar to the reviewed studies in the general aim of investigating the effect of academic writing on the writing performance of Saudi EFL university students. However, the effect of academic writing on Saudi EFL university students has not received much attention in the literature. Therefore, this fact empowered the researcher to focus the attention of the study on the effect of academic writing on the writing performance of Saudi EFL university students.

Method, sample, instrument and procedures

The subject of this applied research based study to assess, signify, and quantify the importance of teaching academic writing to and its usefulness for prospective translators, were the students of translation courses at the College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University. These students were selected following a randomized control-group pretest-post test design. The subjects of the study were then randomly divided into two groups, i.e. control group and experimental group. The teaching, instruction, and testing of both the groups were carried out with blending the use of technology along with the traditional approach, computers and classrooms. The experimental group was imparted instructions using the two approaches simultaneously. The control group was not exposed to any specific academic writing program. The experimental group used the computers for three 45-minute periods a week for the six-week duration of the experiment. Both groups were subjected to a pretest immediately before starting the experiment and the same test was administered as a posttest immediately after it.

The population of the study consisted of all students who studied the English language undergraduate course in translation, in the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015. The sample of the study consisted of 69 students who were chosen randomly through the random sampling techniques in the statistical package SPSS. Then the 69 students were randomly assigned into experimental group (34 students) and control group (35 students).

In order to collect the data of the study, the researcher used two instruments: an instructional program and an achievement test.

A-The instructional program

Instructions

Task 1 – Brainstorming

A spontaneous group discussion to produce ideas and ways of solving writing problems which is called brainstorming was held in two ways: students were put into small groups, given the topic and a time limit and told to write their ideas down – then all the groups ideas were pulled together; and then the brainstorming was held as a whole class activity with students shouting out their ideas and the teacher writing these ideas on the board.

This brainstorming technique was utilized to ensure that most students participate, and that the pace remains high.

Task 2 – Speed writing

For this activity, students were given a limited time period to collate their ideas write them down. They were warned to concentrate on ideas, not on language, grammar or punctuation. They were then asked to write without pausing or correcting their mistakes. Next, as a group the students were asked to work through the text correcting mistakes, changing punctuation, translating words or phrases into English, or fill in the blanks.

Task 3 – Loop writing

It was discovered during the speed writing that students had produced lots of ideas, but they needed to be looped into a complete coherent text. Loop writing is a way of ensuring paragraphs link together forming a coherent text. They were asked to summarize the each paragraph in a sentence and were then trained to start the next paragraph with that sentence. Use the sentence that summarizes the second paragraph as the start of the third paragraph. They were instructed to continue the activity until they completed the writing.

Task 4 – Translating Formal Texts

After the writing instructions students were asked to translate small formal texts into L2 with the techniques and tools they had learnt in their writing lessons. They were asked to follow the rules for both vocabulary and grammatical differences between formal and informal English, which they could take away with them and apply elsewhere. They were encouraged to do their translation assignments as homework and present them in the next class for another brainstorming and error analysis. They were given the following features of language and asked to follow the Anglo Saxon words and sentence constructions which endow both writing and translation with concrete cohesive meaning. Table 1 shows some features of formal and informal English.

Table 1

Some Formal and Informal English

Formal features	Informal features
Vocabulary items	
Latin based words	Anglo Saxon words (phrasal verbs)
Uncommon words	Common words
Punctuation	
Full words	Abbreviations
	Contractions
Grammar	
Passive constructions	Active constructions
Noun phrases	Verb phrases
Complex sentences	Simple sentences

Alternatively, after the lesson, give out a list like the one above and get students to find examples from the text for homework.

B.   The achievement test
The Achievement test commonly referred to as norm referenced test (NRT) was used to measure student achievement. These are standardized tests and therefore have a specific set of criteria that must be followed in order to classify as such a test. A time limit of two hours was enforced for each test, and the subject matter tested was the same for all students taking the test, providing the same directions for all.

The questions on the standardized achievement tests were written by professional educators and teachers. A pilot test was given to specific groups of students in order to determine if test items were too easy or too difficult. Pilot studies were carried out to make certain that test items were suitable and that student scores spread on a continuum from low to high. This was conducted to ensure that tests reflect the curriculum taught in the classroom as closely as possible.

A cut-off point of sixty percent was defined at which students either pass or fail a standardized test. The cut-off point was used to provide a means to compare between individuals and groups of students. Much careful consideration was given to assessing the placement of the cut-off point.

Findings
This study aims at investigating the ability and competence in translation of undergraduate students of translation who had received formal instructions in academic writing skill. This section represents the findings as guided by the hypotheses of the study.
The data were collected through a pretest-treatment-posttest design for equivalent groups and analyzed via the statistical package SPSS. An independent-samples t test was carried out to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the achievements of the two groups on the pretest. Table 2 represents the results.

Table 2

Results of the t Test of the Means of the Achievement of the Two Groups on the pretest

	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig.
PRETEST	**Control Group**	34	78.80	16.89	-0.161	0.873
	Experimental Group	34	79.52	14.76		

Table 2 shows that the difference between the achievement of both groups on the pretest is not statistically significant at α = 0.05. Thus, since there is no statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups on the pretest, the two groups were assumed equivalent. Another independent-samples t test was conducted to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups' achievement on the posttest. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3

Results of the t Test of the Means of the Achievement of the Two Groups on the posttest

	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig.
POSTTEST	**Control Group**	34	79.92	16.39	-2.058	0.045
	Experimental Group	34	89.00	10.80		

Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference at α = 0.05 between the achievement of the experimental group and that of the control group on the posttest in favor of the experimental group. This indicates that using the computer in English language instruction to the university students has a positive effect on students' achievement. The mean score for the experiment group on the posttest was 89.00 while that of the control group was 79.92.

Moreover, in spite of the fact that the difference between the achievement of the experimental group and the control group on the pretest was not statistically significant, to eliminate initial differences, a one-way ANCOVA was carried out. Table (3) shows the results.

Table 4

Results of the Test of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Means of Squa	F	Sig.

Pretest	8149.454	1	8149.454	349.352	0.000
Group	700.591	1	700.591	30.033	0.000
Error	1096.386	47	23.327		
Corrected T	10061.920	49			

Table 4 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group on the posttest. The achievement of the experiment group, measured by the difference between the pretest and the posttest, was significantly better than that of the control group.

All of these studies invariably established the research aim that academic writing instructions went a long way in motivating and improving the translation abilities of students undertaking the undergraduate translation courses at the College of Languages and Translation.

Discussion

Students taking a course in translation are often faced with the difficulty of facing the social and cognitive challenges related to second language acquisition. It is a known fact that L1 models of writing instruction have been the theoretical basis for using the process approach in L2 writing pedagogy. However, language proficiency and competence essentially motivates the writing skill in the L2. And this is what helps the translated text in L2 appear as credible and original. It is, therefore, important that L2 writing instructors take into account both strategy development and language skill development when working with students. This paper explores the utility and effectiveness of the knowledge and expertise of academic writing in relation to second language translation. It can be argued that a focus on the academic writing process as a pedagogical tool is only appropriate methodology for preparing and honing the translation skills of students of translation if attention is given to linguistic development, and if learners are able to get sufficient and effective feedback with regard to their errors in writing.

Translating academic discourses in a second or foreign language seems to be the most difficult skill for language learners to acquire in academic contexts. While explicit instruction of strategies is not a usual practice in foreign language classrooms, it could be beneficial for students of translation. The findings in this study have some pedagogical implications for teaching translation skills and designing strategy-based syllabus leading to successful translation performance. The syllabus designed for teaching academic writing should correlate with the successful translation skills which would make language transfer an interesting and not-so-difficult task.

At the outset academic writing skill teaches explicit organization of ideas and arguments which gives it an explicit structure. This ability helps in the act of translation making it more meaningful and practical. Another aspect which was observed during class instructions and tests was that teaching academic writing helped students in writing clear, punchy, and compact sentences, removing fogginess which often occurs during the act of translation. The essence of academic writing is to explain cause-and-effect inactive voice avoiding the use of passive voice. That is, someone does something to something or someone for reasons you need to explain. A normal active voice sentence contains all elements of that causal chain. Here you have a clear causal relationship and some added information besides.

Academic writing lays considerable stress on avoiding awkward run-on sentences. It was discovered during class instructions that Saudi students were prone to translate word by word in the Arabic structural form into their English translation. For example, they heavily used the noun-adjective order of their L1 into the L2. This hampers the sentence structure in L2. This results in run-on subordinate clauses, and a missing antecedent, creating confusion about the referent. Another factor that interferes in translating Arabic text into English is the wordy prose – prose of excessive length. Academic writing, because of its stress on precision and brevity, teaches how to write crisp, effective sentences, just by substituting a vivid verb or noun for clunky adverbs, adjectives, or whole phrases. Another factor that interferes in the translation from Arabic into English is the repetition of ideas and arguments to make them sound stronger. It is accepted in Arabic but in English repetition is counted as redundancy. Academic writing teaches the translation students to avoid this error which was found recurrently in students of the Translation courses at the College of Languages and Translation.

One very interesting feature that occurred during this research and which underscores the basic difference between Arabic and English sentences structures was that indefinite article does not exist in Arabic, leading to its omission when English requires it. There is a definite article but its use is not identical with the use of the definite article in English. In particular, Arab learners have problems with genitive constructions such as the boy's dog. In Arabic this would be expressed as Dog the boy, which is how such constructions may be conveyed into English. Students of translation were found to commit the error off and on. Instructions and training in Academic writing tuned them to the structural formalism of the English language which helped them approach their translation assignments with care and consideration. Also, Arabic requires the inclusion of the pronoun in relative clauses, unlike English, in which the pronoun is omitted. This results in mistakes like: Where is the pen which I gave it to you yesterday? The training and instruction in removal of the referent in the relative clause in English, during the academic writing teaching sessions, helped translation students get over the error in good time.

As regards the use of punctuation marks, it was found out that students, while translating, used too many commas, often where not needed. This breaks the sentences at too many places and does not help in meaningful transfer of ideas. Academic writing courses train students to use punctuation marks thoughtfully so that they facilitate understanding. It is imperative that translation students need to learn why punctuation is important in English, as well as when, and how, to use it, since Arabic written texts often omit punctuation entirely. Arabic has less limitation in the use of commas and periods than English. Consequently, many students use infinite number of commas in their English running-on sentences. Semi-colons almost have no existence. A course in Academic Writing and its rules of punctuation serves the translation students well in making their L2 translation meaningful and effective. So while teaching Academic Writing to students of translation it was observed how translators must do a course in writing to get acquainted with the semantic, syntactic, and diacritical marks of the L2. This reinforces their ability to translate and makes their translation acceptable and honest.

Conclusion

In view of the discussions and the date presented there were some conclusions that were reached regarding the effectiveness of teaching Academic Writing to students of translation with their Arab language perspective. The examples from English phrases and structures along with their English variants underscore the value of bilingual translation in translating from Arabic. In fact, bilingual translation, in the form of paraphrasing,

summarizing, rephrasing, simplifying, editing, rewriting, etc., seems to be unavoidable as language is breaking all boundaries to reach places far and wide.

However, training Arab translation students in transferring their original language texts into the target language, English language, in this context, explicitly is an important part of preparing them to deal with different levels of language learning. And Academic Writing instructions are significantly important in the sense that these instructions inform students about language differences, and enhance their understanding and skill in their efforts to become effective translators.

About the Author:
Dr. Nasser Saleh Al-Mansour is an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at the Department of Linguistics and Translation Studies, College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**.**

References
Abdulkarim, Mustafa N. (September, 2013). An Investigation Study of Academic Writing Problems faced by Arab Postgraduate Students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). Theory and Practice in Language Studies, *3*(9), 1552-1557.
Al Fadda, Hind (March, 2012). Difficulties in Academic Writing: From the Perspective of King Saud University Postgraduate Students. English Language Teaching. Canadian center of Science and Education, *5*(3),123-130.
Al-Khasawneh, F., & Maher, S. (2010) Writing for Academic Purposes: Problems faced by Arab Postgraduate Students of the College of Business, UUM. ESP World, 9, 1-23.
Al-Mansour, Nasser Saleh & Al-Shorman, Ra'ed Abdulgader (2014). The Effect of an Extensive Reading Program on the Writing Performance of Saudi EFL University Students. International Journal of Linguistics, *6* (2) ,247-264.
Delcambre, I. & Donahue, C. (2012). Academic writing activity: Student writing in transition. In: M. Castelló & C. Donahue (Eds.). University writing: Selves and texts in academic societies (p. 151-175). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
Fulwiler, Toby. (2002). A personal approach to academic writing. College Writing: Third edition. Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc. Heinemann.
Hashimoto, I., Kroll, B., & Schafer, J. (1982). Strategies For Academic Writing: A guide for college students. USA: Michigan UP.
Hayland, Ken. (August, 2002). Authority and Invisibility, Authorial Identity in Academic Writing. Journal of Pragmatics, *34*(8) , 1091-1112.
Kobayashi, Hiroe & Rinnert, Carol (June, 1992). Effects of First Language on Second

Language Writing: Translation versus Direct Composition. Language Learning**,** 42(2), 183–209.

Koltay, Tibor (April, 1998). Including Technical and Academic Writing in Translation Curricula. Translation Journal: translation Education, 2(2) .

Knight, Robert M. (2010). Journalistic Writing: Building the Skills, Honing the Craft. Marion Street Press, LLC; 3 edition.

Shih, May (2012). Content-Based Approaches to Teaching Academic Writing. TESOL Quarterly, 20(4), 617–648.

Smith, Veronica (September, 1995). Thinking in a Foreign Language: An Investigation Into Essay Writing and Translation by L2 Learners. Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies, 45(3), 539–545.

Swales, John & Feak, Christine (2004). Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential tasks and skills. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Uso, J.C., & Palmer, A. (January 1998). Product-Focused Approach to Text Summarization. The Internet TESL Journal. *IV*, (1).

Uzawa, Kozue (September, 1996). Second language learners' processes of L1 writing, L2 writing, and translation from L1 into L2. Journal of Second Language Writing, *5*(3), 271–294.