

## The Academic Writing Experience of Jordanian Postgraduate Students at a University in Malaysia

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### Abstract

Writing in English for academic purpose is a difficult task for many Jordanian postgraduate students (JPS) as English is a foreign language to them. This study aimed to explore academic writing problems encountered by JPS at a Malaysian university and to investigate how they address the problems. Employing a case study approach, a total of 182 online questionnaires were administered via email to registered JPS at UniSZA to which 90 responses were received. In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 17 of the respondents to get further clarification of the questionnaire data and to gain rich insights into the phenomenon being investigated. The findings reveal that JPS faced several problems such as lack of vocabulary, difficulties in expressing the ideas, organizing the sentences and creating paragraphs, paraphrasing, the inability to build critical discussions and ideas, erroneous grammar, spellings, weak referencing and difficulty in finding the article/journal for literature review. In order to address these problems, they acquire help from their classmates, seniors, teaching faculties, participate in educational forums, workshops and lectures, attend paid tuition classes, translate Arabic to English, subscribe to journals and magazines and used online resources. The JPS recommend the provision of extensive language support at the university, regular lectures and workshops on improving academic writing and availability of language enrichment centre at the university to aid JPS to resolve their problems related to academic writing.

**Keywords:** Academic writing, Arab researchers, English as a second language, Jordanian postgraduates, scaffolding theory

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