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BRIDGE FROM FREE WRITING TO ACADEMIC WRITING: ATTENDING TO STYLE

This article examines certain peculiarities of the academic style distinguishing a scientific text from texts of other genres. Such an approach is particularly topical in teaching English to graduate students in view of preparing them for scientific and professional interaction on a global scale.

Referring to the title of this article, we feel it necessary to disclose the inwoven metaphor. Namely, when we think of a bridge, our imagination pictures not merely a device connecting two sides of a road or river. A mental image of this link inevitably suggests something rather narrow, associated with a set of restrictions to be accepted in order to be let across. These very restrictions, applied to academic writing, are the focus of our further consideration.

A relevant clarification should also be made concerning the basic term of this paper, as academic

writing is treated differently in the available sources. Specifically, we adhere to the opinion that academic writing possesses the following features: formality, complexity, objectiveness, explicitness, balance, and evidence.

Examining the first feature more thoroughly, we should mention that written language can be seen to vary on a continuum of formality from extremely informal text **which** is reminiscent of spoken language to highly formal or academic texts. Many factors contribute to the formality or informality of

a text; major influences include the degree to which academic words, academic structures and academic conventions are used.

Particularly, in the academic texts we are expected to use formal language rather than the relaxed conversational language we use in everyday situations. One way in which we can make our language more formal is by using sophisticated or formal words in place of colloquial ones. Consider the following two examples:

T. V. and the movies got more and more dependent on each other in the 1980 s as T.V. companies put a lot of money into making movies.

The relationship between television and cinema grew increasingly symbiotic in the 1980s as television companies invested heavily in feature film making.

The examples above say the same thing but differ widely in the degree of formality used to do this. The more formal of these versions is the style required for academic purposes.

We find it worthwhile to enumerate the main rules to be observed in academic writing [1]:

Checklist of language to avoid in academic writing

1. Do not use contractions.

Contractions are the words formed from two abbreviated words, such as "don't", "can't" and "won't".

2. Do not use colloquial vocabulary.

Colloquial vocabulary includes words and expressions that are used in everyday spoken language. They do not provide the exactness needed in an academic setting. An example is: *Retirement is something most of us must face sooner or later.* This could be replaced by the more formally worded: *Retirement is inevitable.*

Also avoid other types of conversational language such as figures of speech, cliches and idioms; for example:

Colloquial Expression	Formal Alternative
above board reached a happy medium	legitimate reached an acceptable compromise
get through it part and parcel easier said than done beyond a shadow of doubt in recent years pay lip service to	survive, penetrate intrinsic to more difficult in practice definitely recently support through words but not through actions
got out of hand	was no longer under control
a stumbling block explored every avenue	point of contention investigated alternatives

3. Avoid using run-on expressions.

Run on expressions include phrases such as 'and so forth', 'and so on' or 'etc'. The sentences should be completed properly, for example:

Informal (includes run on)	Formal Alternative
Nurses must take into consideration patients' dietary needs resulting from allergies, edication, medical conditions and so on.	Nurses must take into consideration patients' dietary needs resulting from allergies, medication and medical conditions.
Public transport includes vehicles for public use on the roads, airways, waterways etc.	Public transport includes vehicles for public use, such as buses, trains and aeroplanes.

4. Do not use rhetorical questions.

A rhetorical question is a question for which no answer is expected. A rhetorical question is one in a written text where the writer assumes the reader knows the answer, or where the writer goes on to answer the question in the text. Such questions are inappropriate for academic writing: readers might not know the answer and the point being made could be more strongly and clearly expressed as a statement. You should not risk your point being misunderstood: make your point clear and 'up front'; for example:

Informal (includes rhetorical question)	Formal
Industrial sites cause vast amounts of environmental pollution, so why do we still use them?	The question surrounding the continued use of industrial sites, given their vast pollution production, still remains.
What is a team? A team can be one person but will usually end up including many more.	A team can include one person but usually involves many more.
The question is, however, does the "Design School Model" provide a practical solution to the problem of how to formulate strategy?	It is questionable whether the "Design School Model" provides a practical solution to the problem of strategy formulation.

Notice that you can change your rhetorical questions into statements and still use them effectively in an essay.

5. Place adverbs within the verb.

Adverbs should be placed within the verb group rather than in the initial or final positions. In informal English, adverbs often occur as clauses at the beginning or end of sentences; for example:

Informal	Formal Alternative
Then the solution can be discarded	The solution can then be discarded
The blood is withdrawn slowly	The blood is slowly withdrawn

The language of academic texts is also objective and complex. Objectivity and complexity can be achieved through the use of structures such as nominalization and extended noun phrases. Nominalization is the expression of actions as noun phrases instead of verbs. This allows the text to focus on objects or concepts rather than actions, so it sounds more abstract and objective. This language structure also allows more information to be packed into less space and increases the complexity of the writing. Extended nominal groups increase the amount of information provided about the people, places or concepts described in the text. Consider the following example [2]:

Many Australian plant species produce seeds with <u>fleshy appendages</u> called <u>elaiosomes</u> . Using two species, <i>Acacia linifolia</i> and <i>Dillwynia juniperina</i> , the function of elaiosomes was investigated .	<u>Discipline specific terminology</u> Passive voice. This is one
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1. Language to Avoid Check-list. <<http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/academic/2e.html>>

It was hypothesised that elaiosomes are involved in the dispersal of seeds by ants. *To test this hypothesis*, the removal of seeds with elaiosomes was compared to seeds from which the elaiosome **had been removed** and observations were made to confirm that the agents of seed removal were indeed ants. *It was found* that the removal of seeds with elaiosomes was significantly greater than those without elaiosomes for *D. juniperina* but not for *A. linifolia*. Observations of seed removal confirmed that ants were the only removers of seeds.

way to avoid using personal pronouns such as I and we.
Impersonal language
Use of nominalisations and extended nominal groups.

To summarize, the formal and impersonal nature of academic texts can be achieved by avoiding certain types of language such as slang terms and contractions as well as strong expressions of opinion and attitude. In addition, the use of the passive voice allows writers to foreground what was done, rather than who did it, thus making the writing less personal. A more objective, impersonal tone is achieved through the use of formal and impersonal language. The considered factors taken in complex contribute to a high level formality of a scientific text.

2. Academic writing style. <<http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/report/1d.html>>

Я. Федорів

ПЕРЕХІД ВІД ВІЛЬНОГО ДО АКАДЕМІЧНОГО ПИСЬМА: ОСОБЛИВОСТІ СТИЛЮ

Стаття зосереджена на тих особливостях академічного стилю, які відрізняють науковий текст від текстів інших жанрів. Такий підхід є особливо актуальним під час викладання англійської мови для студентів магістерських програм з погляду підготовки їх до обміну науково-професійним досвідом на міжнародному рівні.