

IGA – Academic and Project Writing

Seminar 3

Homework Task from seminar 2:

* Research 5 new academic words that you don't know, or use confidently in your writing.

* Give a definition and an example in context, such as what we practiced above:

incidence: how often something occurs in a population, eg the incidence of alcohol use in the under 25 population in the UK has dropped over the past decade.

* Cut and paste your examples into the MS Teams file which I will create: named: **HW2 – Academic vocabulary**

* Be prepared to share and peer review it with the group next week.

ACADEMIC AND FORMAL LANGUAGE

1. Important Research Language

* Discuss with the group the meaning of the terms below. Do they relate to your own research?

- Reliability:

- Validity:

- Recruit:

- Bias:

- Blind:

- Double-blind:

- Drop-out:

- Extrapolation of findings:

2. Reporting Verbs

A common way of referring to the original author in your paraphrase is to use his or her name with a reporting verb.

** What do these reporting verbs mean? Provide a synonym or definition and use it in context:*

propose:

concur:

deny:

purport:

refute:

assert:

demonstrate:

contend:

claim:

classify:

contest:

3. Phrasal verbs in academic English

Although phrasal verbs occur most frequently in more informal spoken and written English, they are also sometimes used in an academic context. This is often for variety of language and to avoid the writing sounding overly complex or academic. You will hear them used in lectures and will read them in serious journals.

Phrasal verbs often have one-word synonyms. These are usually of Latin origin and sound more formal than their phrasal verb equivalent, but both may be appropriate when writing or talking about academic subjects.

* *Replace the verbs below with an appropriate phrasal verb. Also think of other single word synonyms which could be used:*

- The study population *comprises* three separate, but equally sized groups.
- In her latest article Kaufmann *presents* a theory which is likely to prove controversial.
- The primary goal of the study is to *conduct* a number of different experiments.
- Green *observes* that the increase in life expectancy has led to some economic problems.
- In her article Losanova *aims* to prove that...
- In this book the author *discusses* the causes of the civil war in some depth.
- It is always important to *revise* the calculations carefully, prior to interpreting the data.

4. Contractions (shortened forms)

* *Which of the sentence pairs below can be appropriate for academic writing and why?*

a) It's no less important to understand that conversation, so far as it concerns the idea of trusteeship, is principally an European affair: African and Asian voices don't become audible in any substantial way until the onset of decolonisation.

b) It is no less important to understand that conversation, so far as it concerns the idea of trusteeship, is principally a European affair: African and Asian voices do not become audible in any substantial way until the onset of decolonisation.

c) As Salman Rushdie, who became the first Western writer to become the victim of a *fatwa*, said: "It's ridiculous – isn't it? –to have to say, but I *am* a human being, unjustly accused, unjustly embubbled. Or is it I who am being ridiculous, as I call out from my bubble, *I'm still trapped here, folks; somebody, please, get me out?*"

d) As Salman Rushdie, who became the first Western writer to become the victim of a *fatwa*, said: "It is ridiculous – is it not? –to have to say, but I *am* a human being, unjustly accused, unjustly embubbled. Or is it I who am being ridiculous, as I call out from my bubble, *I am still trapped here, folks; somebody, please, get me out?*"

(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007; Bain, W: 2003, p.11; Rushdie. S. in MacArthur, B.: 1999, p. 484)

* *Overall, in formal, academic writing the use of contractions is minimised except in direct quotes, as they have a tendency to make the writing sound more informal, colloquial.*

5. Conciseness and straightforward language.

* Here are some more ideas around language, to help your academic writing:

Conciseness - clichés, redundant words and colloquialisms

Consider the sentence pairs below. Which one may be better in terms of academic language?

► Use the most straightforward term and reduce unnecessary words:

- Therefore we can predict *with a high degree of certainty* that future studies will achieve similar results.
- We can therefore be *quite certain* that future studies will achieve similar results.

- It is evident that with careful, *advance planning*, adequate numbers of subjects may be recruited.
- It is evident that with careful *planning*, adequate numbers of subjects may be recruited.

► Use of more academic reporting verbs:

- Jacob (1998) *says* that the test is not 100% reliable, however it's use was essential in this experiment.
- Jacob (1998) *concedes* that the test is not 100% reliable, however it's use was essential in this experiment.

* **Reporting verbs:** *describe, contend, examine, state, disagree, observe, assert, support, claim, dispute, suggest, purport, persuade, dismiss, refute, propose, concur, recommend, object, contradict...*

► Avoid personal, emotional, informal language:

- Overall I feel that the paper was *pretty awful due to a lack of consideration of other research*.
- It is apparent that the paper was *poorly researched*. Furthermore...

- The idea that primary sequence alone determines tertiary structure in protein folding is *an idea that not everyone agrees with*.
- The concept that primary sequence alone determines tertiary structure in protein folding is *a controversial one*.

Note: *Although you should be aware of these characteristics, it's probably not a good idea to try to completely change your writing style when you first sit down to write a draft of an article or thesis. If you try to remember everything, you may sit for hours trying to perfect the first sentence. Instead, write however you feel comfortable writing, but learn to develop your editing skills, paying attention to the above mentioned characteristics.*

6. Read and Edit this paragraph

** Here is a paragraph that should be written in a more formal and academic tone. Read it through and underline the parts that need to be rewritten and suggest possible improvements.*

Given the general knowledge of the health risks of smoking, it's for sure that heaps of smokers have tried at some time in their lives to quit. However, in most cases, their attempts are unsuccessful. People begin smoking, often when they're adolescents, for lots of reasons, including the example of parents and pressure from peers. If others in one's group of friends are starting to smoke, it can be hard to resist going along with the crowd. Once people start smoking, they're likely to get hooked. The addiction to smoking is partly physiological; smokers become used to the effects of nicotine and experience painful withdrawal symptoms when they give it up. In addition, people become psychologically dependent on smoking as a way of reducing anxiety and coping with particular situations.

(Adapted from Alison Brown, 2007)

Homework Task:

** Find and review a research article related to your topic of interest or research.*

** Write a short 200 – 300 words (2-3 paragraphs max) summarising the article, including the purpose of the study, any significant previous literature, methodology, study findings and relevance, etc.*

** Upload your text onto MS Teams prior to the next class.*

*** Please name it appropriately again, eg. Floyd HW3*

** Be prepared to share and peer review it with the group next week.*