

## MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC – METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL



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### STRUCTURAL APPROACH IN WRITING RESEARCH PAPER FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

*Dilrabo T. Ahmadaliyeva*

*Lecturer*

*Andijan State Institute of Foreign languages*

*Andijan, Uzbekistan*

*E-mail: [dilrabo74@gmail.com](mailto:dilrabo74@gmail.com)*

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#### ABOUT ARTICLE

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the Research Writing challenges and possible solution for University's undergraduate students as well Writing teachers. As Writing is one of the complex skills, it requires from learners to read and analyze a lot of academic texts, compare their findings, gather information and develop the idea of the research. To become confident and fluent in writing learners should be familiar with the format and structure of the research Writing. In the way of writing a good research paper students usually encounter questions related to understanding its genre, smooth transition from one evidence to another. Students concerns include how to accomplish accurate, well-structured research paper with appropriate words selection and genre, whereas some English Language Teachers questions themselves how to help student, what materials to read, what activities to practice in the classroom.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Many students agree that research writing is the most complex of all writing tasks. The challenge can make second language writers particularly nervous and frustrated. It takes time to understand the genre of research writing and even more time to carefully research a selected topic. In the process of research writing students must read a great deal of literature and invest immense amounts of time into gathering materials and ideas.

Brown (2007) in *Teaching By Principles, An Interaction Approach to Language Pedagogy* points out that writing is not only the system of signs or “graphic representations of spoken language”, writing requires the abilities completely different from speaking and other skills.

One of the choices for the undergraduate students in Higher Education of Uzbekistan is to produce a graduation qualification paper (GQP). The Graduation Qualification Paper is a written research work that is equivalent to a bachelor’s thesis in other countries. It is suggested for students in PRESETT curriculum on a teaching problems in methodology. . As a teacher who had experience in supervising students’ papers, I would like to address mutual concerns both of educators and students, their mutual need for further learning and development in research writing.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Research paper requires from student proficiency in language and high level of independence. The expected outcome of PRESETT students by the end of Year 4, curriculum demands from undergraduate students to achieve C1 level according to state curriculum which is based on CEFR. ( Writing syllabus, 2012). However being competent in English does not mean performing a good academic writing skills. It should be taken into account that not only EFL students here but generally research writing is considered as something difficult to achieve on undergraduate level for L1 and L2 ESL students as well. Breeze (2012) in *Rethinking Academic Writing Pedagogy for the European University* finds that more than half of European students who are competent in language finds writing challenging because of “new intellectual demands of university coupled with unfamiliar linguistic demands”. To go further into what is the new demands related to academic writing, we can define them as a certain requirements in quality and overall structure of research paper.

In the way of writing a good research paper students usually encounter questions related to understanding its structure and purpose . Students concerns include how to accomplish accurate, well-structured research paper with appropriate words selection and genre in a one year period, whereas some English Language Teachers questions themselves how to help student, what materials to read, what activities to practice in the classroom as they are struggling with research writing skills themselves. Some researchers claims that RW in the Universities should be considered as number one priority, and the classes should be focused more on researching reviewing and presenting techniques. Analyzing the curriculum Writing syllabuses for 1,2,3 and reviewing the writing topics it becomes clear that not many activities and topics related to RP. It should remark for further improving of the be regarded as friendly

### **RESULTS DISCUSSION**

To begin our discussion we have to clearly understand that graduation qualification paper is a research paper (RP). According to Lotte (2013), RP must have the same criteria and requirements as

an academic text which has a format of professional genre that is produced by the teachers for “academic progress and research”. The best model for students can be research article. (Lotte, 2013).

A closer look at the evidence that even advanced users of language may not always have a good research writing skills shows that writing research paper requires a knowledge of its constructing as well as writing skills. As Brown agrees with Chen that any kind of writing needs special procedure to think, to draft, to revise and skills, which can be developed naturally. Thus second language students engaged in research writing benefit from process led to practicing writing. Brown (2007) argues that there is advantages for students in given time for them to understand the content and message of writing, however in the past teachers oriented on product of students writing and mainly focused on accuracy, vocabulary organization and mechanics. Writing research paper takes place only in Year 4 with other compulsory specialized subjects, between the terms students are engaged in examinations and the last term in teaching Practice, where they should fulfill collecting the data for providing evidence for their research. Curriculum does not judge students very strictly with their performances but I as other my colleagues striving towards: Do they have enough time and practice to understand the process of writing? Are they provided with enough comments to revise and produce drafts of their research writing? How does the universally academic research skills develop and can our students’ research papers match with what students produce internationally. To enter the international academic community or “academic context” or “academic tribes” or “discourse community” (Owtram, 2010) we need to meet the requirements of a good research writing, as good and valuable ideas are available only through writing. In “Evaluating research quality” of Victoria transport Institute the concept of research is presented as “investigated ideas” which explores useful knowledge. “It is personally rewarding and socially beneficial. Good research determines what is overall truth, requires judgments, and carefully evaluates information source and good research is careful to identify uncertainties and avoid exaggerated claims”.

Present standards in higher education in Uzbekistan require teachers, scholars to be prepared for professional academic conversation and also to train future academicians for effective linguistic communication. Historically teaching language even 10 years ago was focused on grammar translation methods. As it widely known, this methods oriented on learning grammar rule and learning vocabulary in isolated context to translate texts from one language into another (Brown, 2007). Grammar translation method had nothing to do with developing communicative skills and therefore writing as a skill was neglected.

Since policy towards teaching foreign languages changed in 2013 in Uzbekistan, primarily it became essential step for accelerating the process of integrating the academicians of our country into the global society.

Bergen (1976) in the article “Why Johnny Can’t Write” argued that it would be not appropriate to blame only English Language teachers for poor writing, initially it lies on the lack of attention given to the requirements of a good writing. He advanced an idea of “incomplete education” which means “not having skills to “move an ideas from one point to another” (Bergen , 1976 ). To make teaching RP more effectively, complete and fruitful we educators should first be familiar with the criteria of what make RP qualified. There are a lot thorough descriptions of a good RP introduced by different scholars, however we limit our paper focusing on one of the criteria. When our students cannot write we, teachers, have to assist them and not having enough training on purpose and adequate materials, not being equipped with proper methodology for research writing leads to misunderstanding of a concept of a good research paper and to other ethical issue like plagiarism, violation the culture of research values and as a result we observe decline in the quality of research writing. Quality of RP according to Thunder (2004), depends on writing purposefully and professionally written work is recognized from top to bottom. Structure of a written work shows where the main idea belongs to and readers can not follow the purpose if it is hidden somewhere in the paper (Thunder, 2004). Concerning a concept of writing Mateos and Sole (2012 ) in " Undergraduate students' conception and beliefs about academic writing" refers to it as " the effort to make things explicit" and in this effort writer should express main idea or what one wants to say and how it should be understood. Thus writing is considered " a means of transforming thoughts" (Mateos & Sole, 2012). According to Dee Broughton to express the main idea writers pick up details and should know how to organize them in academic writing. Though choosing main idea is different in Academic writing and stories, they have some similarities. The ways of how text is arranged are called "structure". Structure shows how ideas and details are put together and linked logically. (Broughton, 2016). Current research indicates when the piece of writing is coherent it turns into well arranged journey and readers can perceive what writer wants to say. Murray in *Handbook Of Academic Writing: A Fresh Approach* introduces the term “flow” and defines it as an essential concept in academic writing related to pleasure and “enjoyable experience” when “thoughts, ideas and words start to flood out” ( Murray, 2006). Kotz (2013) advocates that before writing anything it is worth to separate thinking from writing and suggests to structure “storyline” or to create a skeleton before writing any sentences or paragraphs. Let’s make distinction of the term structure related to RP. We have to distinguish the overall structure of the whole paper and small structure within the paragraph and even visual structure (section, sub section, bullets, italics, margin). In this paper, the discussion centers on the overall organization, not paragraph structure. These descriptions, as well as any discussion of the visual structure, are outside the scope of this paper.

One of the most effective ways to help students to write research paper may be to raise their awareness of its structure. As a teachers, we can do that by first, introducing them to a simple, but appropriate one.

The following structure of RP is presented in the form of 5 WH questions and they were introduced by Dee Broughton during a 2015-2016 teacher training project in Uzbekistan:

1. What are we talking about?
2. What do they talk about?
3. What do I think about ?
4. Why do I think this?
5. What you should think about? Broughton (2011).

We can interpret the five part structure in the following way. The first part can comprise background, and describe the problem by providing explanation, data information, definition of terms and context of problematic area. The second part sees the theoretical part of the problem and consists of literature review including synthesis and summary. In the third part writer introduces his claim, main idea (thesis), hypothesis and the novelty of the inquiry. The fourth part contains evidence and structurally it may be considered as the largest part of the research. However, the length of each section might depend on the research scope, i.e some topics need broader description of the context or problem, and some paper requires thorough explanation of the main idea. The fifth part should leave readers with recommendation and call for action (Broughton, 2011).

We Language Teachers in Uzbekistan during trainings became familiar with the global structure of RP and found that through understanding the organization of research writing we had an experience how to read research paper effectively, quickly and get the main idea. I am not alone in my view for example Murray, (2006) also suggests that students through analyzing structures of the articles compare them and use it as a sample to improve their own papers.

Hesselbach (2012) indicates 5 predominant sections in scientific papers: Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. Author states this structure is widely accepted and allows the scientist “to tell a clear, coherent story in a logical format, essential to effective communication”. Being familiar with standardized structure helps readers to come up easily with needed information and especially students in a short time will be able to read a good deal of sources required for their research paper. (Hesselbach, 2012). In this research I found some similarities with what has been claimed above, though not all parts coincide, we can omit Abstract and start with Introduction which can fit the part *what are we talking about* and *what do they talk*.

While researching the issue of organization of RP I came across IMRAD formula i.e Information, Methods(Materials), Results, and Discussion. Researchers indicate some missing parts of that pattern as Title, Author, Keywords, Abstract, Conclusion, and Reference in some cases

Acknowledgements and Appendix. (Nair, 2014). Despite this format followed by the most of the article writers Stephen Lock argues that there is disadvantage with IMRAD since it limits writers abilities and as a results it isn't possible to see "personality or sparkle" of an author. Consequently this can be a way for teachers to explain structure to new writers. Because the labels like "Introduction" and "Discussion" are not descriptive enough for students to know what goes in there.

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the evidence, it seems fair to suggest that for beginner research writers it is important to understand above used structure and a good practice will enhance their research writing skills. In the article "Inventing the University" written by Bartholomew there is a good idea about inspiration which comes from keeping writing "in spite or against of language". Concerning too much about the word choice, accuracy may stop us from being enthusiastic about writing. Through revising and tutors comments language issues can be corrected.

To respond for the teachers questions how to write RP and how to help students I am offering a simple way for educators to show students what goes into their research paper and in what order. Knowing this will help not only with writing but with comprehending academic writing of others. *B2 Ready* by Dee Broughton is a wonderful example to practice task as a foundation of academic writing. It can be used with college and higher educational institution learners to develop their research writing skills. There is an example of activities devoted to raising learners awareness of writing summary, making referencing, understanding synthesis. The texts and information in the textbook help learner to understand the structure of research writing, and through analyzing the texts it is available to see some structures of a RP in practice. The main focus of the book encourage learners to think critically by engaging them in open ended tasks which develops high order thinking skill. This paper wouldn't be exist without educational program supported by US embassy's grants and enthusiastic trainers Svetlana Han, and certainly professional supervisor of the project "Academic Research Writing" Dee Broughton whose great commitment bring its harvests. Project within two month encourages teachers to produce professional articles and develops their awareness of a good research paper. By sharing what was learnt and achieved through the project I believe to encourage other my colleagues and undergraduate students to be confident in writing their research papers and to practice reading academic research articles without any concerns of misunderstanding its content .

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