

Difficulties Faced by Second Language Learners of Arabic in Academic Writing

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ABSTRACT

The current study aimed to identify the difficulties faced by second language learners of Arabic in academic writing from the learners' perspectives. For this purpose, a descriptive approach based on an analytical approach was used. A list of academic writing skills necessary for second language learners of Arabic was prepared, along with a questionnaire to identify the difficulties faced by these learners. The study sample consisted of (110) male and female learners enrolled in higher diploma, master's, and doctoral programs at various Saudi universities. The study results showed that the weighted average for the academic writing difficulties scale for second language learners of Arabic was (3.76), and according to the Likert scale, this score is considered "high." The results also indicated no statistically significant differences at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) attributable to the gender variable between the average responses of the study sample members regarding the academic writing difficulties of second language learners of Arabic. However, there were statistically significant differences attributable to the educational level variable. In light of these findings, the study presented a set of recommendations and suggestions to overcome the academic writing difficulties faced by learners of Arabic as a second language.

Keywords: Teaching Arabic, Second language; Academic writing skills; Non-native Arabic learners

INTRODUCTION

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education is critical for equipping students to navigate Writing is one of the most prominent language skills and a vital means of linguistic communication, enabling humans to preserve their history, civilization, sciences, knowledge, and experiences across the ages. It is also a vital necessity for both individuals and society, as it provides a platform for people to articulate their feelings, thoughts, and experiences in a clear and organized manner. Writing also plays a crucial role in shaping public awareness and guiding opinions through various mediums like articles, books, research, and newspapers.

These platforms raise important issues, analyze problems, and propose solutions, ultimately drive positive change and improvement in society. In addition to the above, Al-Shaloul and Ashour (2023) noted that "Writing is a manifestation of the superiority of the human mind". Writing also strengthens intellectual and social ties between people and is intricately linked to other skills, complementing them to advance knowledge and progress. Writing is also "The cornerstone of the teaching and learning processes, and of sound logical thinking among learners. 'Weakness in these skills can lead to stumbling blocks, causing learners to lose confidence and fall behind intellectually and socially'" as noted by Ali et al. (2019). Writing has two primary

forms: creative and functional. Creative writing expresses feelings, emotions, and ideas in an artistic manner, often employing rhetorical devices like imagery, similes, and metaphors. It encompasses various forms, such as poetry, short stories, novels, and plays, aiming to engage readers emotionally and intellectually. Functional writing, on the other hand, focuses on conveying information and ideas clearly and directly, catering to practical life situations. Its purpose is to accomplish a task or achieve a specific goal, making it a vital tool for everyday communication.

According to Hilali (2019, 146), "Academic writing is a branch of functional writing with its own distinct linguistic style, featuring precise structures, clear connotations, and organized formulation". This type of writing is utilized in research, studies, theses, dissertations, reports, summaries, and specialized articles, setting it apart from other writing types due to its unique characteristics. As Ismail (2022, 34) describes, "Academic writing is a type of writing commonly practiced in colleges and universities, aiming to achieve advanced degrees or address specific field problems. It encompasses research for academic degrees, problem-solving, and validating scientific principles or theories". According to Suleiman (2022, 9), "Academic writing is a formal style that adheres to scientific rules and conventions. It involves presenting ideas objectively, employing critical and analytical thinking, and organizing the text according to specific field-based rules. This style requires meticulous attention to detail, ensuring the writing is free from scientific, methodological, and linguistic errors".

Mahapatra (2024) defines academic writing as "A precise and organized form of writing used by university students in scientific contexts. It employs a clear structure, formal language, and adheres to grammatical rules, utilizing appropriate vocabulary to convey ideas and information effectively". Reflecting on the definitions of academic writing reveals its profound significance. It plays a crucial role in providing scientific solutions to field-specific problems, confirming or refuting principles and theories, and advancing knowledge. Additionally, academic writing fosters logical thinking and analytical skills, requiring a precise and systematic presentation of ideas in a clear and structured manner. As Al-Afandy (2022) confirms, "Academic writing plays a vital role in documenting scientific and research production across various fields, serving as a reflection of a nation's progress and advancement in scientific endeavors". According to Schillings et al. (2023),

"Academic writing is a crucial skill for students to complete academic tasks and prepare for lifelong learning. It also serves as a vital means of communication in academic and research settings".

Given its importance for native Arabic speakers, academic writing is arguably even more crucial for learners of Arabic as a second language, particularly those pursuing academic goals. This is especially true in specialized fields like teaching Arabic for specific purposes. According to Al-Haqbani (2024), "Developing academic writing skills in these learners is paramount, as it meets their linguistic needs and enables them to become active participants in their future academic or professional communities". "Moreover, academic writing enhances learners' language skills through the cognitive processes it demands, including selecting precise vocabulary, structuring texts coherently, and presenting ideas in an organized manner. As Al-Jahni (2024) notes, it also "Fosters critical thinking and helps learners connect prior and new experiences, thereby enriching their linguistic capabilities and overall language proficiency". Foreign language learners often struggle with academic writing, facing challenges in several key areas, as highlighted by research from Singh & Kaur (2016), Aldabbus & Almansouri (2022), and Song & Song (2023). These challenges include selecting suitable academic vocabulary, developing and organizing main ideas, crafting cohesive paragraphs, effectively summarizing external sources, and determining the appropriate use of quotations.

Research in teaching Arabic as a second language has highlighted significant challenges in academic writing. Studies by Al-Jahni (2024) with advanced-level students and Al-Hathloul (2025) with fourth-level students reveal that learners struggle with presenting and sequencing ideas, linking concepts, and organizing their writing. Both studies emphasize that failing to address these difficulties can hinder students' progress in their future academic pursuits. This study aims to investigate the challenges faced by learners of Arabic as a second language in academic writing from the learners' perspective. It also seeks to propose potential solutions to help overcome these difficulties, ultimately contributing to improved academic writing skills among Arabic language learners.

Study Problem

Through a comprehensive review of relevant literature and sources in language education, both researchers identified a key issue that this study aims to address. The problem is solved by various studies, including:

Results of Previous Studies

This emphasis would enable them to effectively communicate their research through academic publishing, thereby enhancing their credibility within their fields. Furthermore, studies by Al-Jahni (2024) and

Al-Hathloul (2025) revealed that these learners encounter significant challenges in academic writing, which, if left unaddressed, can impede their progress in future studies.

Direct Observation: Through their experience supervising master's theses and research projects for Arabic language learners as a second language at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, both researchers observed notable deficiencies in their academic writing. These shortcomings included poor organization, illogical sequencing of ideas, inconsistent use of Modern Standard Arabic, unnecessary verbosity, weak citation practices, poorly constructed sentences, and ineffective use of linking tools. This direct observation underscores that these learners indeed struggle with academic writing skills.

Study Questions: This study aimed at answering the following questions:

1. What academic writing skills are required for learners of Arabic as a second language?
2. What challenges do learners of Arabic as a second language face in their academic writing, from their perspective?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in the average scores of second-language Arabic learners regarding academic writing difficulties that can be attributed to variables such as age, specialization, or educational level?
4. What proposed solutions can help develop academic writing skills among learners of Arabic as a second language?"

Study Objectives: This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify the academic writing skills required by learners of Arabic as a second language.
2. Explore the difficulties faced by learners of Arabic as a second language in academic writing, from their perspectives.
3. Examine statistically significant differences in learners' average scores regarding difficulties in academic writing, attributed to variables such as age, specialization, and educational level.
4. Developing a proposed framework to enhance academic writing skills among learners of Arabic as a second language.

Significance Of The Study: The importance of this study stems from two main aspects:

A. Theoretical Significance:

- Enriching the Arabic library with a specialized study that explores the challenges faced by learners of Arabic as a second language in academic writing, from their perspectives.
- Developing a comprehensive theoretical framework that clarifies the concept of academic writing, its basic skills, and its importance.

B. Scientific Importance

- Providing proposed solutions for enhancing the academic writing skills of second language learners of Arabic.
- Helping teachers understand and address the academic writing challenges faced by second language learners of Arabic. - Paving the way for future research on academic writing among learners of Arabic as a second language and providing a basis for new studies.
- Raising awareness among learners of Arabic as a second language about the difficulties they face and possible solutions to facilitate their learning experience.
- Raising awareness among Arabic language teaching institutions about the importance of prioritizing the development of academic writing content for learners of Arabic as a second language.
- Directing institutions, research centers, and researchers in the field of teaching Arabic as a second language to conduct studies on the academic writing difficulties of learners of Arabic as a second language, their causes, and possible solutions, ultimately enabling them to take targeted action to overcome these challenges.

Study Limitations: This study was bound by the following limits:

1. Human Limits: A specific group of second-language learners of Arabic, comprising those pursuing higher diplomas, supplementary master's degrees, and doctoral degrees.
2. Objective Limits: The study focused on certain academic writing skills required by second-language learners of Arabic and the difficulties they encounter in academic writing.
3. Temporal Limits: The study was conducted during the academic year 2024/2025.

Study Tools and Materials:

1. A list of academic writing skills required for learners of Arabic as a second language.
2. A questionnaire to identify the difficulties faced by learners of Arabic as a second language in academic writing.

Study Terminology

Difficulties

According to Ismail (2023), difficulties refer to a condition in which an individual experiences weakness or challenges in one or more aspects of language use or understanding, such as listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, or performing basic arithmetic operations. These difficulties may appear intermittently or simultaneously, as the individual may encounter a problem in only one aspect, or in two or more of these areas. In the current study, difficulties refer to: "The set of cognitive, linguistic, and skill-based obstacles faced by learners of Arabic as a second language at the higher diploma and master's levels at some Saudi universities when attempting to produce coherent, clear, and accurate academic texts in Arabic. These difficulties go beyond mere linguistic or grammatical errors to include deeper aspects related to understanding academic discourse patterns and adhering to the cultural and academic standards of the target language.

Academic Writing

According to Ismail (2024, 304-305), academic writing is defined as: "A type of functional expression, an expression whose purpose is to communicate with people to organize their lives and fulfill their functional needs, such as writing scientific reports, research notes, preparing summaries, bulletins, and diaries. In the current study, it is defined as: "The set of linguistic and cognitive abilities that enable learners of Arabic as a second language at the higher diploma, master's, and doctoral levels in some Saudi universities to produce written texts characterized by objectivity, accuracy, and clarity, in accordance with the rules of academic construction. These skills include planning the text, organizing ideas, using the appropriate scientific method, adhering to grammatical and spelling rules, employing sources and references correctly, and presenting arguments and evidence in a logical manner that supports the academic content.

Learners of Arabic As A Second Language

Ta'imah (1986, 50) defined them as: "All learners who learn Arabic as a second language other than their mother tongue, as they are native speakers of languages other than the new language." In the current study, they are defined as: "Learners of Arabic as a second language at the higher diploma, master's, and doctoral levels at some Saudi universities, studying various disciplines, such as theology, humanities, and Sharia, and aiming to master Arabic for academic and research purposes that serve their specializations.

Theoretical Framework of the Study:

Considering the objectives of the current study, its theoretical framework addresses two main axes: the academic writing skills required by learners of Arabic as a second language, and the difficulties they face in academic writing. These difficulties are detailed below:

Axis One: Academic Writing Skills Required for Learners of Arabic as A Second Language

1. The Concept of Academic Writing:

Issa, Abdel Qader, Mustafa, and Abu Al-Maati (2017, p. 58) described it as: "A formal and objective writing process characterized by precision, clarity, a clear focus on the topic, careful vocabulary selection, the use of precise grammar, avoidance of colloquial language, abbreviations, and verbosity, the use of references and documents, and other requirements and characteristics necessary for academic writing, such as writing reports, articles, and research papers. Ismail (2022, 143) defined it as: "A style of writing with a scientific character in a particular discipline, in which the writer is motivated by presenting a topic for review or by a question or set of questions that the research requires answering. The writer also relies on their own background knowledge and presents it logically to support their writing with evidence and arguments." Utami & Winarni (2023) also defined it as: "A cognitive process that requires specific methods and techniques to produce an original and organized text. In this process, the student conducts research, observation, and uses various references to address an issue or problem based on the presented data and facts, achieving specific educational and intellectual goals. While Dianastiti, Suwandi, and Setiawan (2024) defined it as: "A basic productive skill aimed at ensuring academic success. It is characterized by its formal and organized nature. It is used as a means of scientific communication between specialists in various fields. It relies

on analytical and logical thinking, requires the use of prior knowledge, and organizes ideas into a precise and clear linguistic structure, free of ambiguity and colloquial language. It focuses on presenting objective evidence and answering specific research questions. Therefore, it can be said that academic writing is not merely a linguistic skill, but rather a complex cognitive process. It is not limited to presenting information but rather is based on a logical structure supported by evidence and answers to discussion questions, as indicated by Ismail (2022) and Dianastiti, Suwandi & Setiawan (2024). In addition, it is a means of learning and problem solving, and a tool for understanding, analysis, and building solutions, as noted by Utami and Winarni (2023). Accordingly, academic writing in the current study is defined as: "A set of systematic cognitive writing skills that take a formal, organized form, aiming to address scientific or research issues, employing analytical thinking, organization, and documentation skills to produce an authentic, evidence-based text that contributes to knowledge building and scholarly communication in academic circles. This skill should be available to learners of Arabic as a second language at the higher diploma, master's, and doctoral levels at some Saudi universities.

2. The Importance of Academic Writing for Learners of Arabic as A Second Language:

Utami & Winarni (2023) summarized the importance of academic writing for learners of foreign languages as follows:

- Developing the learner's research and analytical skills, as they are required to use multiple references, observe phenomena, and solve problems based on data and facts.
- Enhancing critical and systematic thinking through the stages of writing (planning, drafting, editing, and publishing).

- Preparing the learner to participate in the knowledge society by producing organized and authentic texts.

Al-Jahni (2024, 42) explained the importance of academic writing for Arabic language learners as a second language as follows:

- Providing learners with the ability to express themselves in a correct language that takes into account the rules of good use of syntactic, morphological, and semantic language systems.
 - Providing learners with the ability to write correctly with correct spelling.
 - Providing learners with the ability to write a coherent text that is clear in terms of coherence and sequence of ideas.
 - Providing learners with the ability to express ideas accurately, characterized by broad horizons and creativity.
 - Enabling learners to critique and think logically about what they read.
 - Enabling learners to write memos, reflections, and research projects required by the educational situation.
 - Acquiring academic writing skills will significantly enhance the linguistic and academic progress of Arabic language learners who speak other languages.
 - It will also enhance their prospects for acceptance into programs requiring scientific writing assessments.
- Thus, acquiring academic writing skills will notably benefit Arabic language learners as a second language in several key areas, including:

(a) Developing Their Language Proficiency Through:

- Accurately applying grammatical and morphological rules to enhance correct comprehension.
- Enriching the learner's vocabulary by learning new words and expressions and using them in diverse contexts.
- Building complex linguistic structures to express precise and clear ideas.
- Enhancing understanding formal discourse patterns and improving academic communication.

(b) Developing Their Critical and Analytical Thinking Skills Through:

- Organizing ideas logically to construct coherent arguments.
- Analyzing and synthesizing information, supported by evidence.
- Acquiring effective research skills and evaluating credible sources.
- Expressing evidence-based opinions, objectively and clearly.

(c) Overcoming The Challenges of Transitioning from Their Mother Tongue By:

- Adapting to differences in discourse patterns between Arabic and their native language.
- Achieving precision in punctuation, spelling, and grammatical structures.

(d) Preparing For Academic and Professional Success Through:

- Succeeding in university requirements by writing proficient research papers and reports.
- Integrating into the academic community through dialogue participation and text comprehension.

Axis Two: Difficulties Facing Second Language Arabic Learners In Academic Writing

1. Difficulties In Academic Writing

According to Aldabbus & Almansouri (2022), second language Arabic learners face several challenges in academic writing, including:

Aldabbus & Almansouri (2022) identified the following challenges faced by foreign language learners in academic writing:

- Choosing appropriate academic vocabulary.
- Developing main ideas.
- Organizing ideas effectively.
- Writing coherent and cohesive paragraphs.
- Summarizing ideas from other sources.
- Determining when to use quotations.
- Avoiding plagiarism.
- Crafting effective introductions.
- Writing strong conclusions.

Algburi & Razali (2022) also highlighted the following difficulties faced by foreign language learners in academic writing:

- Using punctuation and grammar correctly.
- Writing coherent and sequential texts.
- Linking ideas into sequential paragraphs and summarizing/ articulating them effectively.
- Identifying and correcting writing errors.

By reviewing the research that addressed writing difficulties, especially academic writing skills, among learners of Arabic as a second language, such as the study of: Al-Tihami (2016), Al-Yahya (2020), Al-Jadaani (2024), Al-Jahni (2024), and Al-Ghamdi; and Al-Farani (2024), these difficulties can be summarized as follows:

- **Difficulty with grammatical structures:** Learner's struggle to construct sentences correctly according to Arabic grammar rules.

- **Lack of vocabulary:** Due to a lack of precise and expressive academic vocabulary.

- **Spelling and morphological errors:** Confusing hamzat al-qata' and hamzat al-wasl, errors in masculine and feminine gender, or incorrect use of verb forms.

- **Weak connection between sentences and paragraphs:** Inappropriate use of conjunctions affects the coherence of the text.

- **Weak organization skills:** Difficulty identifying the main idea, sequencing ideas, and organizing paragraphs.

- **Confusion between literary and academic styles:** Using emotional or rhetorical expressions inappropriate for academic writing.

- **Lack of accurate understanding of academic writing requirements:** Not using an objective style, repetition, and not adhering to scientific methodology.

- **Diverse cultural backgrounds:** Differences in presenting and organizing ideas.

- Weaknesses in specific writing skills: Writing introductions and conclusions, summarizing previous studies, and analyzing results.

2. Previous Studies

The researcher reviewed several studies focusing on the academic writing skills of Arabic as a second language learners. These studies are presented below in chronological order:

▪ **Al-Jadaani's study (2024):** This study surveyed the opinions of 116 learners of Arabic as a second language at King Abdulaziz University regarding the impact of technology on developing academic writing skills. Using a descriptive approach and questionnaire, the study found that integrating technology and training learners in electronic applications and artificial intelligence enhances the effectiveness of learning academic writing in the digital age.

▪ **Al-Jahni's study (2024):** This study aimed to identify the academic writing skills and needs of advanced-level learners of Arabic as a second language, and to present a proposed vision for developing them. The researcher used the descriptive-analytical approach, and the sample included (56) students. The results yielded three main skills and (23) sub-skills, in addition to (20) academic writing needs.

The study presented a proposed vision for developing these skills based on the identified needs and concluded with recommendations and suggestions.

▪ **Al-Ghamdi and Al-Farani's study (2024):** This study investigated the effectiveness of the "Qalam" application (based on artificial intelligence) in improving grammatical and spelling skills in academic writing among female learners of Arabic as a second language.

▪ The study also measured their attitudes towards using the application, using a descriptive analytical approach with 23 female students at King Abdulaziz University's Arabic Language Institute. The results showed that the application was effective in improving writing skills. The students found it easy to use, with a general average rating of 2.70 ("I agree"). The "ease of use" aspect received the highest rating.

▪ **Al-Hathloul's study (2025):** This study aimed to measure the impact of artificial intelligence applications on developing academic writing skills among learners of Arabic as a second language, using the experimental method in its quasi-experimental form on a sample of (33) fourth-level students at the Language Education Institute at the Islamic University. The results showed statistically significant differences in favor of the post-measurement, indicating the effectiveness of artificial intelligence. The study recommended using artificial intelligence to develop academic writing skills.

a. Commentary On Previous Studies

The previous studies shared a common goal of improving academic writing skills among Arabic language learners who speak other languages. However, each study had distinct objectives:

- Al-Jadaani (2024): Explored perspectives on technology use in academic writing. Al-Jahni (2024): Identified skills and needs, proposing a development concept. Al-Ghamdi and Al-Farani (2024): Evaluated the effectiveness of the "Qalam" AI application. Al-Hathloul (2025): Measured the quantitative impact of AI on skill development.

All previous studies have agreed that academic writing skills are important for second language learners of Arabic, and they seek to provide solutions for developing them.

- The positive results of these studies indicate that integrating modern technologies, particularly artificial intelligence applications, into the teaching of academic writing is not only possible, but also effective and creates stimulating learning opportunities. They also emphasize the importance of training learners and encouraging them to use these tools effectively, and the need for teachers to leverage artificial intelligence in the classroom.

- The current study draws on all previous studies to identify the difficulties facing second language learners of Arabic in academic writing.

- The current study agreed with Al-Jahni's (2024) study on the need to present a proposed vision for overcoming the difficulties facing second language learners of Arabic in academic writing.

Study Methodology and Procedures

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive method, since the subject of the study and the nature of its variables largely determine the choice of an appropriate study methodology. The descriptive method is used to accurately describe phenomena as they exist, expressing them qualitatively and quantitatively.

This leads to an understanding of the relationship between this phenomenon and other phenomena, aiming to diagnose it and reveal its aspects by monitoring its frequency and focus. The resulting information is of scientific value, supporting existing practices or focusing on changing them as they should be. This leads to an understanding of the relationship between this phenomenon and other phenomena, aiming to diagnose it and reveal its aspects by monitoring its frequency and focus.

Study population: The study population consists of non-native Arabic language learners enrolled in graduate programs at Saudi institutes and universities, specifically those pursuing master's and doctoral degrees. According to Ingres (2008, 90), this population shares common characteristics determined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher, allowing for generalization of the findings.

Study Sample: The study sample is a subset of the original research population, chosen using specific methods (Atwa, 2021). A random sample of 110 male and female learners was selected. The distribution of the sample is based on variables such as gender and educational level.

Table (1): Distribution of the study sample according to (gender- educational level)

Gender	Number	Percentage	Educational Level	Number	Percentage
Male	95	86.36%	Higher Diploma	30	27.27%
			Master's degree	30	27.27%
Females	15	13.64%	Doctorate (Ph.D.)	50	45.45%
Total	110	100%	Total	110	100%

It is clear from the previous table that the number of learners from the basic research sample is (110) male and female learners, the number of male learners is (95) learners at a rate of (36.86%), and the number of female learners is (15) at a rate of (64.13%), and according to the educational level the number of learners with a higher diploma degree was (30) at a rate of (27.27%), and the number of those with a master's degree was (30) at a rate of (27.27%). As for the number of those with a doctorate degree, it was (50) at a rate of (45.45%). A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed via an electronic link prepared by the researcher using Google Forms. After four weeks, 110 questionnaires were retrieved. Ten questionnaires were excluded from statistical analysis due to incomplete or incorrect responses, resulting in a final study sample of 110 male and female learners.

Study Variables

- Independent variable: Second language learners of Arabic (gender, educational level)
- Dependent variable: Academic writing difficulties

Study Materials and Tools:

A- A questionnaire to determine the academic writing skills required by second language learners of Arabic:

This questionnaire aims to determine the academic writing skills required by learners of Arabic as a second language. To prepare this questionnaire, the researcher followed the following procedural steps:

Reviewed the available relevant research and studies on academic writing skills.

- Reviewing the educational literature that focused on academic writing skills.
- Reviewing experts and specialists in curricula and methods of teaching Arabic to second language arbitrators.
- Reviewing the objectives of teaching Arabic to second language learners.
- Studying the linguistic needs of second language learners.

- Considering the above, the researcher prepared a preliminary list of academic writing skills necessary for second language learners of Arabic. The list comprised (5) main skills: planning and information gathering skills, organization and format skills, language and style skills, proofreading and reviewing skills, and idea-building skills. The list included (40) sub-skills. These skills were developed in a questionnaire to be presented to a group of specialized arbitrators.

The questionnaire was reviewed by 13 arbitrators, specialists in Arabic language curricula and teaching methods, to obtain their opinions on whether these skills were appropriate for learners of Arabic as a second language.

- The percentage of importance of each skill was calculated by assigning a score of one for each skill if appropriate, and zero if not, for each arbitrator individually. The scores obtained by the skill were then summed for all arbitrators. Based on this, the skill was accepted with a consensus score of (80%).

- In light of the arbitration results, the researchers made some adjustments indicated by the arbitrators. Skills that did not receive an approval score of (80%) or more were excluded, as this score has been accepted by numerous educational studies. Thus, a list of academic writing skills necessary for learners of Arabic as a second language and the relative weight of each skill were arrived at, as illustrated in the following table:

Table (2) Academic writing skills in their final form

SN	Key Skills	Sub-skills	Percentage
1	Planning and Information Gathering Skills	5	15.62%
2	Organization and Format Skills	7	21.87%
3	Language and Style Skills	8	25%
4	Proofreading and Reviewing Skills	6	18.75%
5	Idea Building Skills	6	18.75%
Total	(5) Key Skills	(32) Sub-skill	100%

B. A questionnaire to identify the difficulties faced by second language learners of Arabic in academic writing

The current study used a questionnaire as a data collection tool. The purpose of this questionnaire was to identify the academic writing difficulties faced by second language learners of Arabic. To develop this tool, the researcher reviewed previous studies and research related to the topic of his research, as well as surveying the

opinions of a number of specialists through personal interviews, benefiting from their input in formulating the questionnaire's phrases.

The researchers converted academic writing skills into measurable performances for learners of Arabic as a second language to identify the difficulties of such writing. The questionnaire was prepared in its initial form, consisting of 32 performances. Clear instructions and guidelines were formulated at the beginning of the questionnaire to facilitate learners' understanding and avoid ambiguity. These instructions included the purpose, nature, and response guidelines for the questionnaire.

The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale: always (1 point), often (2 points), sometimes (3 points), rarely (4 points), and never (5 points). The scores ranged from 32 to 160 points, calculated by summing the scores for each item. This scoring system implies that lower scores indicate fewer difficulties, while higher scores indicate more difficulties.

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The researcher chose this method because it is characterized by connectivity with the availability of a few alternatives from which the learner can choose according to what he sees as appropriate from his point of view. This range also indicates the degree of stability of the tool used in the measurement. In return, the response level to the items is calculated within three levels of relative weights as follows: Items that obtain an arithmetic mean ranging between (41.3 - 20.4) are high, items that obtain an arithmetic mean ranging between (61.2 - 40.3) are average, and items that obtain an arithmetic mean ranging between (80.1 - 60.2) are low. After the researcher completed the questionnaire design stage, he entered the stage of working on the procedures necessary to make the questionnaire in an objective form, **and these procedures are:**

Ensuring questionnaire Validity: To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, two validity methods were followed:

- Content validity: This involved reviewing the questionnaire's content and ensuring its consistency with the theoretical framework and previous studies.

- Apparent validity: This involved presenting the questionnaire to arbitrators specializing in Arabic language curricula and teaching methods. Necessary modifications were then made considering their observations.

Exploratory Experiment: The researcher conducted an exploration experiment by applying the questionnaire to a small sample of 7 learners, separate from the main study sample. The results were then analyzed to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

- **Internal consistency validity:** To verify the internal consistency validity of the study tool, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the score of each statement and the total score of the questionnaire. Pearson's correlation coefficient showed statistically significant relationships between each statement's score and the total questionnaire score.

- **Reliability of the research tool:** The reliability of the study tool was tested using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.77 to 0.84 for individual items, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.88, indicating high reliability. This indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of reliability.

The final questionnaire consisted of 32 items, demonstrating strong validity and reliability.

Study Procedures and Data Collection:

After finalizing the questionnaire, the researchers performed the following procedures:

- The researchers were careful to clarify the purpose of the questionnaire, which is presented to learners of Arabic as a second language. They emphasized that it was intended to conduct a scientific study to identify their academic writing difficulties. The results will be used for scientific research purposes and treated with complete confidentiality. These results have not related to evaluating students' job performance or achievement.

- Implementation began in the second semester of 2024.

- Data was collected and entered into SPSS for processing using appropriate statistical methods.

Statistical Methods Used: The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyze the data collected. The following descriptive statistical methods were used: frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and Cronbach's alpha to calculate the reliability of the study instrument.

Study Results and Discussion

This section presents the study's findings, obtained through statistical analysis of the data. The results are then discussed and interpreted within the context of the theoretical framework and previous research and studies, and **the details are as follows:**

1. The results for the first question which read "What are the academic writing skills required for learners of Arabic as a second language?" are as follows:

The researchers prepared a preliminary list of the academic writing skills required for learners of Arabic as a second language. The list included (5) main skills, under which (40) sub-skills were included. These skills were included in a questionnaire presented to a group of specialized arbitrators. The percentage of importance and relevance of each skill was calculated, and the skill was accepted with a consensus score of 80%.

2. The results for the first question which reads "What are the difficulties that learners of Arabic as a second language face in academic writing skills from the learners' perspective? The following procedural steps were followed:

The questionnaire for identifying the difficulties of academic writing among learners of Arabic as a second language from the learners' point of view, which was prepared by the researcher, was applied to the study sample, which consisted of 110 male and female learners. The arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated, and the phrases were arranged according to the weighted mean, and the degree of fulfillment of each phrase was calculated based on the Likert scale.

Table (3) Arithmetic average and standard deviations of academic writing difficulties among learners of Arabic as a second language from the learners' point of view (total sample = 110 male and female learners)

SN	Academic Difficulties	Writing	Sample as a whole (n = 110)		Difficulty Level	Skill Rank
			weighted average	Standard Deviation		
1	Planning and Information Gathering Skills		3.40%	1.26%	Medium	4
2	Organization and Format Skills		3.29%	0.833%	Medium	5
3	Language and Style Skills		4.16%	0.90%	High	1
4	Proofreading and Reviewing Skills		3.90%	1.12%	High	3
5	Idea Building Skills		4.07%	1.05%	High	2
Overall Difficulty Level			3.76%	1.25%	High	

The results from the previous table indicate the following:

- The overall weighted average for the Academic Writing Difficulties Scale for Second Language Learners of Arabic was 3.76, which was considered high according to the Likert scale, and the questionnaire's components were ranked as follows:

- Difficulties with language and style skills came first, with a weighted average of 4.16, a high score.
- Difficulties with idea-building skills came second, with a weighted average of 4.07, a high score.
- Difficulties with proofreading and reviewing skills came third, with a weighted average of 3.90, a high score.
- Difficulties with planning and information gathering skills came fourth, with a weighted average of 3.40, a medium score.
- Difficulties with organization and formatting skills came fifth, with a weighted average of 3.29, a medium score.

The researchers believe that the reason for the academic writing difficulties of second-language learners of Arabic may be due to:

- The traditional methods used by second-language learners of Arabic and the failure to design appropriate strategies for them to acquire writing skills based on activity, interaction, simulation, and integration into learning.
- Limited training programs for teachers teaching academic writing to non-native speakers
- Diverse cultural backgrounds affecting idea presentation and organization
- Weak written expression in Arabic during interactions
- Insufficient understanding of academic writing requirements
- Inadequate content in Arabic language curricula for non-native speakers.

These findings are supported by previous research, including studies by: Al-Tihami (2016), Al-Yahya (2020), Al-Ghamdi and Al-Farani (2024), Al-Juhaini (2024), and Al-Hathloul (2025).

The results for the third question which reads "Are there statistically significant differences between the average ratings of Arabic language learners as a second language in the difficulties of academic writing skills attributable to the variables (gender - educational level)?" The following procedural steps were followed:

A- Gender: To determine whether there are statistically significant differences between the viewpoints of the study sample regarding the difficulties of academic writing among learners of Arabic as a second language, attributable to the gender variable, a t-test was used for two independent samples, as shown in the following table:

Table (4) Results of the (t) test for the significance of differences between the responses of the study sample members regarding the difficulties of academic writing according to the gender variable

Tool	Sex	Number	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Value	P-Value
Academic Writing Difficulties	Male	95	3.68	0.62	0.903	0.481
	Female	15	3.83	0.56		

Findings From The T-Test

The results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) attributed to the gender variable in the responses regarding academic writing difficulties. This applies to the overall tool and its 32 phrases. The significance values in the t-test (p-value = 0.481) are not statistically significant. The similarity in language programs and educational environments may contribute to these findings.

B- Educational level: To find out whether there are statistically significant differences between the viewpoints of the study sample regarding the difficulties of academic writing among learners of Arabic as a second language, attributable to the educational level variable, the (One-Way Anova) test was used, as shown in the following table:

Table (5) Results of the (t) test for the significance of differences between the responses of the study sample members regarding the difficulties of academic writing according to the educational level variable

Tool	Educational Level	No.:	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	P-Value	Function value
Questionnaire	Higher Diploma	30	3.95	0.37	6.407	0.009	Statistical Function
	Master's degree	30	3.66	0.56			
	Doctorate (Ph.D.)	50	3.42	0.63			

The results indicate that: There are statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in academic writing difficulties attributed to the educational level variable. The F-value is 6.407 with a p-value of 0.009, indicating significant differences between educational levels. The average values show that:

- Higher diploma learners face the most difficulties (95.3)
- Master's degree learners face moderate difficulties (66.3)
- Doctorate (Ph.D.) learners face the least difficulties (42.3)

This may be due to the increased experience and proficiency in academic writing skills among learners at higher educational levels.

3. **The results for the fourth question which reads " What is the proposed approach for developing academic writing skills among learners of Arabic as a second language?"** The proposed approach follows the following steps:

Proposed Conceptual Objectives:

- Developing learners' ability to use specialized academic vocabulary and structures correctly and accurately.
- Helping learners understand and apply the organizational structures of different types of academic writing.
- Train learners to analyze information, formulate arguments, and present evidence logically and coherently.
- Addressing grammatical, morphological, and spelling errors that learners frequently make.
- Introducing learners to academic writing styles in the Arabic context, including citation and referencing rules.
- Helping learners feel comfortable and confident expressing their ideas in Arabic in academic contexts.

Foundations For The Proposed Concept

The proposed concept is built on:

- Integrated Approach: Academic writing is integrated with other language skills (reading, listening, speaking) for comprehensive linguistic proficiency.
- Communicative Approach: Writing is a process of conveying ideas and information to a specific audience.

- Active and Collaborative Learning: Encourages learners to participate through practical tasks, peer feedback, and projects.
- Constructive Feedback: Provides detailed feedback to help learners identify strengths and weaknesses for continuous improvement.
- Learner Needs: Offers relevant materials and topics aligned with learners' interests, needs, and academic specializations.

Conceptual Foundations: The proposed framework is built on:

- Identified difficulties: Challenges faced by Arabic learners in academic writing, gathered through a questionnaire.
- Previous research recommendations: Studies (Al-Jadaani, 2024; Al-Jahni, 2024; Al-Hathloul, 2025) emphasize developing academic writing skills for second language learners.
- Modern language teaching trends: Integration and complementarity of language skills in foreign language instruction.

Vision of the Proposed Concept: The vision is to create a supportive learning environment that's interactive and enabling for second language learners, allowing them to develop academic writing skills effectively and independently. This aims to overcome difficulties in accurate scientific expression, ultimately enhancing the quality of their research output.

- Content of the proposed concept: The proposed concept includes several axes, which can be explained below:

Axis One - Diagnosis and Initial Evaluation, which includes the following:

- Placement test: To assess learners' general language proficiency and their initial academic writing skills.
- Learner needs analysis: Through questionnaires and interviews, learners identify the specific difficulties they face.
- Learning objectives setting: Based on the assessment results, customized objectives are set for each learner or group of learners.

Axis Two - Building Educational Units: This axis is concerned with designing educational units in a sequential and cumulative manner, targeting academic writing components includes the following units:

A-Academic Language Units

These units focus on:

- Specialized Vocabulary: Mastering academic words, synonyms, antonyms, and contextual usage across disciplines.
- Advanced Grammatical and Morphological Structures: Reviewing complex grammar rules, such as conditionals, passive voice, and clause linking.
- Punctuation and Formatting Techniques: Correctly using punctuation and formatting in academic texts.
- Academic Expression Techniques: Learning idioms and sentence structures common in academic writing, such as: "This research aims to," "In addition," and "In light of the above."

B-Academic Text Types And Structure Units

These units cover various academic text types, including:

- Research Article: Analyzing components like introduction, methodology, and conclusion.
- Abstracts: Writing clear and concise summaries.
- Reports: Crafting technical and scientific reports.
- Critical Reviews: Developing critical analysis and evaluation skills.
- Academic Presentations: Integrating writing and oral presentation

C- Critical Thinking And Research Skills Units

These units cover essential skills, including:

- Formulating Hypotheses and Research Questions: Defining research problems and crafting questions.
- Collecting and Documenting Information: Finding reliable sources and documenting information accurately.
- Citing Sources: Mastering documentation systems (APA, MLA, etc.) and applying them correctly.
- Avoiding Plagiarism This unit covers: Understanding plagiarism, techniques for avoiding plagiarism, and correct rephrasing and summarizing.

Axis Three: Teaching Strategies And Learning Activities

These strategies include:

- Modeling: Analyzing examples of good academic texts.

- Comparative Analysis: Comparing texts in different languages (the learner's native language and Arabic) to highlight differences.
- Guided Writing: providing detailed templates and guidelines for learners in the early stages to help them construct texts.
- Collaborative Writing: Working in groups to exchange ideas and feedback.
- Process Writing: Focusing on stages like (brainstorming, planning, first draft, revision, editing, and publishing).
- Writing Workshops: Intensive practical sessions focused on specific skills or text types.
- Peer Feedback: Training learners to evaluate each other's work.
- Feedback from the Teacher: Directed comments on language, structure, and content.

Axis Four: Technology Integration

This axis leverages technology to enhance learning, including:

- E-learning platforms: For resource sharing, assignments, and discussions.
- Language and grammar checkers: As writing aids to support learning.
- Digital libraries and databases: For resource searching and research skills.

Axis Five: Continuous Assessment

This axis includes:

- Formative Assessment: Ongoing evaluation with immediate feedback.
- Summative Assessment: Comprehensive evaluation at the end of the program through an integrated academic writing project.
- Portfolios: Collection of learners' works to track progress.

Study Recommendations

Study Recommendations: In light of the findings, the current study recommends the following:

- Including regular academic writing exercises within the curriculum, covering various skills, such as summarizing texts, presenting ideas, writing introductions and conclusions, and constructing an argument.
- Providing detailed feedback to learners after each writing assignment, focusing on linguistic, organizational, and stylistic aspects.
- Integrating writing skills with reading and analytical skills, contributing to the development of critical thinking skills and the formulation of ideas.
- Designing progressive writing activities that take into account individual differences and transition students from general writing to academic writing.
- Organizing workshops and training courses that focus on research writing skills, such as writing an abstract, research proposal, and discussing results.
- Preparing simplified booklets or guides that explain the elements and templates of academic writing, provided in intermediate languages if necessary.
- Employing technology, such as autocorrecting platforms and plagiarism detection tools, to train learners.
- Allocating independent courses or special study units to develop academic writing skills, such as: research writing skills, scientific editing.

Study Suggestions

Potential research topics:

- Analyzing academic writing errors among second language learners of Arabic.
- A training program based on interactive writing to develop academic writing skills among second language learners of Arabic.
- Evaluating the academic writing level in research by non-native Arabic master's students.
- The effectiveness of the flipped teaching strategy in developing academic writing skills among second language learners of Arabic.
- Analyzing grammatical structures in the writings of second language learners of Arabic: A field study in light of academic writing.

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