

ACADEMIC WRITING AND GENERATION 1.5: PEDAGOGICAL GOALS AND INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES IN THE COLLEGE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Generation 1.5 students are U.S. educated English learners. Often they have limited proficiency in their first language and at the same time have not acquired the academic English necessary for the cognitive and linguistic demands of discipline-specific academic classes in English language institutions of higher learning. This paper addresses some of the unique needs of Generation 1.5 students in the area of academic writing and examines some of the issues college writing teachers must face in terms of providing these students with pedagogically sound, and appropriate and effective writing instruction.

Generation 1.5 Students

The demographics of our colleges are changing drastically today as the number of non-native speakers of English enrolling in community colleges continues to rise. Initially, there seemed to be a homogeneity despite the ethnic diversity. International students often came to the United States to study and returned to their country when they completed their studies. Over time, college-age and adult immigrants began to out-number these international students. As the adolescent children of the adult immigrants finished high school in their new country and began to enter the college, another new dimension was added. Many of these learners or high school graduates are entering American colleges while still learning English. These students are referred to as Generation 1.5 students because they have characteristics of both first- and second-generation immigrants (Rumbaut & Ima, 1988) and because they do not fit into any of the traditional categories of nonnative English speakers enrolled in college writing courses. Many of these students are familiar with U.S. culture and schooling because they came to the U.S. at a younger age. Some may have been born in the U.S., but may have grown up speaking a language other than English at home. Others may have come to the United States at a later age and may be more like a foreign student in terms of language and literacy, and less like an ESL student. Roberge (2003) makes an interesting point when he states that the traditional definition of Generation 1.5 students needs to be expanded to include “in-migrants” such as those groups who migrate from U.S. territories like Puerto Rico, “parachute kids” who come to the U.S. to live with extended family members and attend K-12 schools, “native-born non-native speakers” who are U.S. born students from linguistics enclave communities, and “transitionals” who have complex patterns of back and forth migration. The outcomes of these experiences are that in many cases, these students may become English dominant but without acquiring complete communicative range in English or they may become English dominant but not personally identify with English. In most cases these learners also have limited proficiency in their first language and have not acquired the academic register or academic writing styles of even their native language. Thonus (2003) points out that many of these students are losing their home

languages without having learned their writing systems or academic registers, unlike international students who have fully developed first language skills. Some may not even be able to communicate fully with their family members. Many of these students may become “dual nonnative speakers” because they are not fully proficient in either their L1 or their L2-English. Finally, while they may see themselves as native-English speakers because of their social and verbal skills, they are often less skilled in the academic skills necessary for college-level courses and the cognitive and linguistic demands of discipline-specific academic classes in English language institutions of higher learning. Table 1 provides a snapshot of the general characteristics of Generation 1.5 students.

Table 1: General Characteristics of Generation 1.5 Students

Nontraditional ESL learners	<p>These students were born here or came to the United States when they were very young. They are culturally very much like the average American teenager but to some extent do follow traditional customs, traditions, and expectations at home. Some of these students may be <i>in-migrants</i>, <i>parachute kids</i>, or <i>transitionals</i>.</p> <p>Some Generation 1.5 students exhibit dialect features rather than ESL features because they may identify with a particular racial/ethnic group such as Latinos or African Americans.</p>
Ear learners	For the most part, they have learned English by listening, and not through extensive reading and writing. Many may also be living in home or community environments where English is not the dominant language. Their language may exhibit community dialect features and English learner features.
Limited knowledge of home language	<p>They are often academically illiterate in their home language. Some do not know how to speak, read or write in their home language, even at the very basic level.</p> <p>Some older Generation 1.5 students may serve as “language brokers” or “translators” to facilitate communication between their parents and younger siblings.</p>
Growing knowledge of English	While their knowledge of English continues to improve in college, they tend to lag behind native speakers in reading and writing skills.
Good oral/aural skills	These students may sound like native speakers because they learned English from speaking and listening to it. They have also been immersed in school life and the culture in the United States and are comfortable with that. They can explain ideas clearly through oral communication. Because they are aural learners, non-salient grammatical structures are missing from their linguistic repertoire and because they are also very oral, they tend to have well-developed communicative strategies to compensate for morpho-syntactic problems.
Inexperienced readers and writers	For the most part, these students have read novels and fiction in high school and not familiar with a variety of academic texts. Some have been misdiagnosed and prematurely mainstreamed or placed into ESL classes, and some have been placed in remedial or low track classes and therefore can be described as <i>basic writers</i> . Others may have taken honors classes in high school but they have limited in any academic vocabulary. They have received almost no grammar instruction and are not familiar with parts of speech or the language of grammar.

Because of their familiarity with the culture and the schooling experiences here, they do have very different needs from other English language learners, such as immigrants with limited English proficiency and international students who come abroad to obtain a degree. This discussion addresses some of the unique needs of Generation 1.5 students in the area of academic writing and examines some of the issues faced by college writing teachers in terms of providing these students with pedagogically sound, and appropriate and effective writing instruction.

Placement of Generation 1.5 Students in College Writing Courses

Many of these students who have been through American high schools are often placed in ESL writing courses in college because their writing may exhibit some features of second language writers including lack of grammatical fluency, but particularly in terms of displaying a lack of facility with academic language. Most ESL writing courses are designed for students who have limited exposure to English or for students who are literate in their first language and are familiar with the academic writing styles in their L1. Harklau (2003) points out that regular writing classes or freshman composition courses are often not an appropriate choice for these students either because they are often taught by instructors with little or no training in second language teaching methods or by those who have limited experience and training in working with students from non-native English-language backgrounds who are unaware of their needs and how to help them develop their academic writing skills.

Differences Between ESL Students and Generation 1.5 Students

Teachers working with both English language learners such as ESL students and Generation 1.5 students may be aware of the differences between them in terms of their specific needs and their areas of difficulty in the writing class; however, many may see them as a homogeneous group. As Valdes (1992) points out, it is crucial that institutions devise criteria to differ between students who are not fluent in English and therefore need ESL instruction and students who have problems with academic English but do not need ESL classes. According to Valdes (1992) the former are incipient bilinguals in that they are still in the process of learning English while the latter are functional bilinguals in that they are no longer considered English language learners, but they may have learned nonstandard forms of English or have not acquired academic English.

There are also other differences teachers may notice between such learners. For the most part, Generation 1.5 students are not familiar with parts of speech while ESL students are because of their experience in ESL courses and with grammar texts. This becomes important when providing oral or written feedback as many students may not fully understand the kinds of revisions they are being asked to make. A “part of speech” guide sheet may be very helpful to them. In addition, Generation 1.5 students may exhibit fossilized structures or forms such as the systematic absence of the morpheme *-ed* in past participles and lack of subject-verb agreement. Given these differences, it seems logical that functional bilingual students should be placed in mainstream classes in which they are taught to identify and edit such features in their writing through increased opportunities for writing practice, teacher-student conferences, and peer editing (Harklau, 2003, Valdes 1992).

Components of Academic English

Given what we know about Generation 1.5 students and their specific needs, it is imperative that teachers be able to clearly define or conceptualize what is meant by academic English or academic literacy in order to appropriately teach those skills. According to Scarcella (2003), academic English “includes multiple, dynamic, inter-related competencies” (p. 7). Academic English is in essence a variety or a register of English used in professional books and characterized by specific linguistic features associated with academic disciplines and thus it is more useful in institutes of higher education. Academic English is not a static entity, but rather evolves with technological advances and research discoveries within each discipline or area of study (Johns 1997; Schleppegrell & Colombi, 2002). But despite the dynamic nature of academic

English, as Scarcella (2003) points out, there are several features of academic English that are both definable and teachable.

Academic English requires the mastery of academic literacy. Literacy, as used today, refers not only as the ability to read and write, but as the ability to use critical thinking or higher-order thinking skills, communication skills, and research skills. To be able to communicate in a range of academic situations, it means advanced proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Academic literacy may also be discipline-specific since academic English includes many sub-registers, for example, registers of English that are specific to fields such as science, humanities, and economics. Kern (2000) suggests that regardless of discipline, academic literacy involves specific dimensions including linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural/psychological components. He states that it is not possible to understand or study literacy without analyzing it from the above perspectives. Kern argues that “reading and writing are communicative acts in which readers and writers position one another in particular ways, drawing on conventions and resources provided by the culture” (p. 34). Scarcella (2003) uses this conceptual model to provide an even more detailed framework for defining academic literacy. Each of these areas must be taught and learned to successfully acquire academic literacy.

Linguistic Components of Academic English

The first main component of academic English is the linguistic component. The linguistic component includes the phonological, lexical, grammatical, sociolinguistic, and discourse component. Reading academic English requires knowledge of the phonological component, in other words, mastery of graphemes and their arbitrary sound-symbol correspondences. Learners must also have knowledge of the lexical component which refers to knowledge of frequently occurring vocabulary. Students must learn when and how to use these words, parts of speech, and the grammatical constraints governing these words. Research also illustrates the need to acquire a large number of academic words to succeed in upper-level writing courses and to master academic English (Nation, 2001). These words include general words used in academic settings but also discipline-specific words. The grammatical component, that morphological, semantic, and syntactic knowledge is imperative for the mastery of academic English. Grammatical knowledge also includes knowledge of the rules of punctuation that enables students to make sense out of and use the grammatical features associated with different rhetorical modes and writing purposes such as describing, defining, analyzing, and synthesizing. The sociolinguistic component includes the knowledge of appropriate language production associated with different contexts and for different purposes, an understanding of language functions such as apologizing, making requests, or asking for information, an understanding of genres such as argumentative or expository texts, and finally, the ability to write cohesively. Sociolinguistic competence also includes knowledge of the various rhetorical modes and genres which commonly appear in academic fields. Some of these include argumentative papers, research papers, abstracts, annotated bibliographies, summaries, and dissertations. Finally, academic English includes the discourse component which enables students to use linguistic forms and meanings to communicate coherently in an organized way (Canale & Swain, 1980). This requires knowledge of discourse devices, transitions and transitional expressions used to create logical relationships. In writing, these kinds of devices lead to coherence and increased comprehensibility.

Cognitive Components of Academic English

The second component of Academic English is the cognitive component which includes both knowledge and higher-order thinking skills. Knowledge in this case refers to the accumulated information, ideas, concepts, definitions and content that learners have acquired over the years. Those who have acquired academic English have a larger knowledge base because of their exposure to the above through extensive reading. Higher-order thinking involves the ability to think critically. *Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains* has proven to be a useful framework for describing these critical thinking skills and for increasing cognitive responses through language. According to Bloom there are six progressively complex domains of thinking which include *Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation*.

Table 2: Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains

Competence	Demonstrated Skills
Knowledge (recalling previously explicitly encountered information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation and recall of information • knowledge of dates, events, places • knowledge of major ideas • mastery of subject matter • <i>Question Cues:</i> list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc.
Comprehension (recalling basic meaning and understanding what is read)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding information • grasp meaning • translate knowledge into new context • interpret facts, compare, contrast • order, group, infer causes • predict consequences • <i>Question Cues:</i> summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend
Application (using learned material in new situations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use information • use methods, concepts, theories in new situations • solve problems using required skills or knowledge • <i>Questions Cues:</i> apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover
Analysis (making connections among details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing patterns • organization of parts • recognition of hidden meanings • identification of components • <i>Question Cues:</i> analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer
Synthesis (combining elements into a new coherent whole)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use old ideas to create new ones • generalize from given facts • relate knowledge from several areas • predict, draw conclusions • <i>Question Cues:</i> combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite

<p>Evaluation (judging the adequacy of materials or ideas for a given purpose)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compare and discriminate between ideas • assess value of theories, presentations • make choices based on reasoned argument • verify value of evidence • recognize subjectivity • <i>Question Cues</i> assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize
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Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain*. New York ; Toronto: Longmans, Green.

Knowledge refers to observation and recall of information knowledge of dates, events, places, knowledge of major ideas, and mastery of the subject matter. *Comprehension* involves understanding information, grasping meaning, translating knowledge into new context, interpreting facts, comparing, contrasting ordering, grouping, inferring causes, predicting consequences, summarizing and so forth. The third competence, *Application*, refers to being able to apply or use information, methods, or concepts and theories in new situations, and being able to solve problems using required skills or knowledge. *Analysis* involves being able to see patterns, organize parts, recognize hidden meanings, identify components, and connect and classify information. *Synthesis* involves using old ideas to create new ones, generalizing from given facts, relating knowledge from several areas, predicting and drawing conclusions, and integrating information. Finally, *Evaluation* refers to comparing and discriminating between ideas, assessing the value of theories and presentations, making choices based on reasoned argument, verifying the value of evidence and recognizing subjectivity. Critical thinking involves numerous types of activities such as determining the credibility of evidence, reading between the lines and inferring information, determining how claims and evidence in readings can be accounted for in different ways, analyzing issues and information to decide what constitutes valid and logical evidence and arguments, and recognizing relevant information and research and synthesizing and arranging it effectively to create a cohesive and coherent whole.

Language Discovery Components of Academic English

A final component of academic English includes the language discovery component which includes the discovery of information as well as strategic awareness and metalinguistic awareness. In part, the successful acquisition of academic English involves the recognition of one's own intellect as well as the mastery of strategies and tools available for expanding and expressing that intellect. This includes such things as locating and extracting information from standard sources, including print and electronic; and understanding the writer's responsibilities of attribution to avoid plagiarism; and accurately document primary and secondary sources. Strategies can refer to language comprehension strategies used by learners to enhance comprehension. They are specific steps, techniques, or behaviors used to improve progress in a language. Some of these strategies include notetaking, highlighting, paraphrasing, summarizing, outlining, or using a dictionary. Students should be able to utilize appropriate study skills and reading strategies and techniques to improve their understanding of material and to further their existing knowledge through research. And lastly, metalinguistic knowledge or awareness, that is the ability to think about language use, plays an important role in the acquisition of academic English. Linguistic performance and language proficiency is improved when learners understand how their use of language affects the outcome of a text. The teaching and understanding of the

process of writing, that is pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing, explicit practice with language in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes, and overt discussions about texts and close analysis of texts can enhance metalinguistic awareness.

Pedagogical Goals and Instructional Issues

Given the above discussion, it is clear that students learning academic English should have effective communication, critical thinking, and language discovery skills. For example, a main goal writing instructors have for students includes being able to compose a research essay using a multistage composition process and the rhetorical and grammatical conventions of Standard North American English that demonstrates inquiry and logical reasoning of sufficient depth, which in turn allows the student to meet the writing demands of other academic disciplines. A second goal instructors have is that their students should also be able to read college-level literature critically with sufficient comprehension and strategic reasoning to achieve proficiency in college placement reading examinations and to be able to comprehend the reading demands of other courses and programs. A third main goal is that students acquire communicative competence and confidence in the four skills of communication in Standard North American English allowing them to participate fully in college-level courses, in professions and in the global marketplace. For some students who are placed in ESL courses rather than English courses, mainstreaming by accomplishing the above is essential. In sum, students in academic writing courses need to acquire the ability to make one's thoughts and ideas clearly understood in academic and professional contexts, they need to develop the higher-order thinking skills that support college-level achievement, and they need to recognize their own intellect as well as the mastery of strategies and tools available for expanding and expressing that intellect. Despite these considerations, the question of how best to accomplish this in the college composition classroom still remains. The following section examines three essential skill areas within the three main components of academic English discussed above and how these areas can be addressed in the writing classroom.

Essential Skill Areas as Related to Academic English **Communication Skills**

One of the main skill areas related to academic English is communication skills. One cannot speak of communication skills without addressing the four skill areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It is essential that the writing classroom emphasize each of these areas to make students more aware of language and how it is used. Communication skills in the classroom can include, but are not limited to, identifying and applying to oral and written communications the major grammatical conventions of academic English meaningfully and accurately, reading and comprehending English prose passages of the sort typically appearing in textbooks and other assigned readings in various academic fields of study, listening with good comprehension to and taking rapid, comprehensive notes on classroom lectures, comprehending figurative and idiomatic language as used in academic discourse, comprehending various rhetorical modes/styles, summarizing accurately, writing focused, coherent, and substantially supported multi-paragraph essays in correct, formal, grammatical English appropriate to the college level, recognizing the value of tailoring what they write to the specific audience for which they are writing, and applying conventional rhetorical forms to write on subjects related to academic courses and topics of current interest.

Various types of activities and tasks can be included in the composition course curriculum to emphasize the linguistic component of academic English. For example, students

can work on mini-grammar lessons drawing their attention to the grammatical features of English. They can be exposed to readings emphasizing academic vocabulary. The academic word list for example is a good starting point. Students should also be taught the importance of the writing process and how each part of the process is essential in contributing to the development of one's ideas. Time should be spent on teaching writing strategies and the construction of effective sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Instructors should also place an emphasis on using models to demonstrate effective language use, sentence and paragraph structure, and overall organization. In addition, the oral component should be emphasized in these courses as well. Students in writing courses should be provided with opportunities to improve their communicative language skills by writing for specific purposes and audiences after discussing readings. These discussions can allow students to express diverse viewpoints, respond to exercises, and ask for explanations. Discussing and critiquing story or film elements such as character profiles, character portrayal, plot, theme, symbolism, historical, social and political contexts, and so forth improve language, promote cultural understanding, emphasize the value of film and other media as a source of knowledge, provide an opportunity for reflection and personal growth. Students in writing classes should also be encouraged to communicate in small groups while engaged in other cooperative learning activities or peer editing.

Critical Thinking Skills

The second skill area related to academic English is critical thinking. Critical thinking or higher-order thinking skills emphasize the cognitive component of academic English. By acquiring such skills, students for example should be able to demonstrate the ability to apply higher order critical thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to college-level speaking, reading, and writing assignments, distinguish between fact and opinion; identify objective and subjective expressions; detect bias in thinking, speaking, and writing, make generalizations, inferences, predictions, and draw conclusions from a variety of sources, and respond analytically and critically to readings and academic lectures.

Writing instructors try to design courses that sharpen students' thinking skills. This is done by presenting students with interesting reading material, lectures, and class discussions. It is logical to assume that as students read more and hear more, they will gain knowledge and discover new contexts for their ideas and in turn will come to think more critically. This alone, however, does not fully ensure that students will acquire the critical thinking skills needed in higher level academic studies. Students may listen to information or read passively without challenging ideas. Very often they fail to challenge their own ideas in writing or choose a simplistic way of defending or conveying their ideas. Students cannot remain passive in their writing. Even a simple task in writing requires that students make important choices requiring critical thinking. For example, summary writing requires students to read, comprehend, distinguish between less important and important ideas, main ideas and supporting ideas, make decisions about logical organization and make judgments about what is relevant and what is not. It is therefore essential that instructors employ a critical thinking pedagogy in the classroom. This does not refer to teaching them how to construct an argument, although this is certainly a part of critical thinking, nor does it refer to thinking more carefully than they do. Rather one who espouses a critical thinking pedagogy is providing students with discrete activities that break down critical thinking into parts so that students can carefully reflect on each of these activities.

For example, Gocsik (1997) provides a useful framework for categorizing the various elements of critical thinking. For example, as thinkers we begin with observations and from a series of observations, we can come to establish facts. Either through a series or facts or absence of fact, we make inferences. These inferences are then tested for validity which allows us to

make assumptions. Assumptions are used to form opinions and taking our opinions, principles of logic are developed to form arguments, and finally, to challenge the arguments of others, we employ critical analysis. Teachers need to encourage this type of logical progression and thinking to help students develop critical thinking. Gocsik's (1997) main point here is that writing assignments should therefore require students to move back and forth between observation and inference, facts and assumptions -- all the while marking where they are in the critical process. In other words, students should be able to understand and recognize the difference between facts and opinions, and reliable and unreliable information, observe objectively and thoroughly, see patterns and relationships in texts, infer and make careful assumptions, form opinions and make evaluations, and contribute to and create arguments they can support. By understanding these elements of critical thinking, students can begin to benefit from the kinds of critical thinking activities teachers provide.

Furthermore, as stated earlier, while a number of theorists have attempted to categorize the various types of critical or cognitive thinking skills, *Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains* has proven to be a consistently useful framework for increasing cognitive responses through language. As previously discussed, these cognitive domains include *Knowledge* (recalling previously encountered information); *Comprehension* (recalling basic meaning); *Application* (using learned material in new situations); *Analysis* (making connections among details); *Synthesis* (combining elements into a new coherent whole); and *Evaluation* (judging the adequacy of materials or ideas for a given purpose). Students learn to extract information from text, extrapolate ideas and/or solutions, and establish a coherent progression in thinking and problem-solving using literary analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Writing courses that employ critical thinking pedagogy take Bloom's theory into account, giving students practice in a range of critical thinking skills through a variety of activities. In sum, critical thinking is an on-going process in which all learners should engage. Critical thinking involves the use of information, experience, and world knowledge in ways that allow learners to seek alternatives, make inferences, pose questions, and solve problems, which are skills needed by all college students across the curriculum.

Research Skills

In addition to communication and critical thinking skills, students need to acquire discovery or research skills that will allow them to locate and extract information from standard sources, including print and electronic; distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information, or reliable and unreliable information, understand the writer's responsibilities of attribution to avoid plagiarism; and accurately document primary and secondary sources. Skills such as searching for information, evaluating Internet sources, judging the adequacy of content, and incorporating and citing online sources are an essential part of college composition courses. Because of the hyperlinked formats of information and greater interactivity possible through technology, critical thinking skills are also further refined, comprehension is facilitated, concepts reinforced, and learning consolidated, thus better enabling students to articulate knowledge and understanding through various modes of writing. The electronic resources made available through Internet technology also present students with a diverse collection of authentic English language texts and genres dealing with a wide array of interdisciplinary topics allowing them to further expand their background knowledge as related to concepts, as well as local and global developments such as environmental, political, and social issues. However, while these skills are essential, it does not mean that if students are computer literate, they are able to collect and analyze research or the information obtained. For example, students must be taught how to carry out a search on the Internet and in the library. They must be made familiar with concepts such as

credibility, validity, and reliability as it relates to the writer of the text and the text itself. In addition, they must be taught how to judge the appropriateness of secondary sources and research, and properly include secondary sources in their writing and how to cite this information. Internet detective activities and research activities can be very helpful in familiarizing students with the nuts and bolts of obtaining, including and citing information, but also the notions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. It is imperative that these kinds of skills be taught explicitly through activities that provide hand-on experiences and critical thinking exercises. Through such instruction and experiences, students can acquire academic literacies that are both applicable across the curriculum and necessary for life-long learning.

Academic Writing Pedagogy

The above discussion has addressed the three main components of academic English, namely the linguistic, cognitive, and language discovery components, and the three main skill areas, specifically communication, critical thinking, and research skills, as they pertain to a college writing class. The focus of any such class is on developing competent writers and critical thinkers who understand that academic writing is multifaceted and involves considerable time and effort. Table 3 outlines how the above components might fit into the design of an upper level writing course for students.

Table 3: Outline of an Upper Level College Writing Course

The Writing Process		
What to Do Before Writing	What to Do While Writing	What to Do After Writing
Choose a topic Research the topic Brainstorm for ideas related to the topic Narrow the topic Decide on a focus Develop an outline or plan for organizing ideas Decide on the purpose for writing Determine the audience Talk to others to get different perspective/point of view	Draft a topic sentence Organize supporting ideas – primary and secondary Determine the rhetorical mode/organization of ideas Decide how best to present supporting ideas (rhetorical mode or combination of modes) Be alert to sentence structure and variety Consider the most effective word choices Pay attention to grammar and syntax Employ appropriate transitional words and phrases	Check for meaning, logic, and organizational problems Edit to improve clarity of idea expression Talk to others about the composition Give and receive constructive criticism Fine tune meaning: word choices, grammar, syntax Rewrite/polish
Writing Aids and Writing as Communication		
Prewriting activities such as Listing, Brainstorming, Cognitive mapping, Clustering, and Freewriting Techniques to Connect and Organize Ideas Utilizing Internet Resources Understanding Rhetorical Modes Understanding Writer Perspective and Point of View Selecting an Audience	Outlining Drafting Unity and Coherence Individual and Peer Editing Effective Use of Transitions, Repetition of Ideas, and Sentence Variety	
Language, Structure, and Style		
Topic Sentence/Thesis Statement Supporting Sentences/Paragraphs (primary and secondary support) Concluding Sentence/Paragraph	Revising for clarity, coherence and unity Wordiness, Unbiased language Expression Grammar Spelling	
Research and Using Sources		
Library and Internet Research Critical Reading Analyzing Content Extracting ideas and taking notes	Using quotations Paraphrasing and summarizing Avoiding plagiarism Standard documentation formats	

	Documenting electronic sources
Rhetorical Modes and Formats	
Ordering of Ideas Time Place Importance-Least to Most, Most to Least, Equal	Description, Narrative, Analysis, Example Classification, Definition, Comparison and Contrast, Cause and Effect, and Argumentation Essays, Summaries, Abstracts, Annotated Bibliographies, Reports, Book Reviews, Article Critiques, and Research Studies
Evaluation	
Planning and Organizing Ideas, Determining Outcomes/Effects of Writing Upon Audience, Charting Progress in Developing Writing Skills-logs, portfolios, and Evaluating Ideas- Fact and Opinion, Logical Reasoning, Writer Technique, Style, Tone, Mood, Purpose, Point of View, Editorializing	

Learning academic English is imperative for succeeding in school settings and for career advancement. Academic English includes the complex features of English and is characterized by a specific writing system and particular academic conventions that can be taught. Table 4 summarizes the features of academic language as related to words, structures, and conventions.

Table 4: Features of Academic Writing

Words	Structures	Conventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of formal or sophisticated words. -Increased level of formality in language and tone. -Discipline specific terminology used in text. -Use of less personal and more impersonal language achieved through the avoidance of personal pronouns and judgmental words. -Avoidance of contractions (can't), colloquial (everyday spoken) language, rhetorical questions, and run-on expressions (<i>etc, and so on</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greater use of the passive voice. -Use of nominalizations to turn verbs into nouns (<i>We walked for charity – the charity walk</i>). -Use of nominal groups (groups of words that provide more information about people, places or concepts such as the <i>Depression era</i> or <i>the rate of economic growth</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Does not usually contain personal language, judgmental words, or emotive language. -Arguments and opinions that are expressed are done by incorporating the objective and impersonal style -a significant feature of academic writing. -Use of supporting evidence to support the arguments being presented. -Evidence must be integrated effectively and expertly, and must be referenced.

Academic writing pedagogy should also include explicit instruction and practice in the above areas so students understand the nature of academic language and writing. Writing should be cohesive and coherent and should include a logical flow of ideas. Arguments should be supported with evidence. The language used should be clear, concise, and formal, and academic conventions should be followed.

In a nutshell, students in college should be able to identify and apply the major grammatical conventions of academic English meaningfully and accurately to oral and written communications; read and comprehend English prose passages appearing in textbooks and other assigned readings in various academic fields of study; listen with good comprehension to and take rapid, comprehensive notes on classroom lectures; comprehend figurative and idiomatic language as used in academic discourse; comprehend various rhetorical modes/styles; summarize accurately; write focused, coherent, and substantially supported multi-paragraph essays in correct, formal, grammatical English appropriate to the college level; recognize the value of tailoring what they write for a specific audience; value and employ a multi-stage process in writing essays (planning, writing drafts, revising, editing); and apply conventional rhetorical forms to write on subjects related to academic courses and topics of current interest. In addition to the above, students should be able to demonstrate the ability to apply higher order critical

thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to college-level speaking, reading, and writing assignments; distinguish between fact and opinion; identify objective and subjective expressions; detect bias in thinking, speaking, and writing; make generalizations, inferences, predictions, and draw conclusions from a variety of sources; and respond analytically and critically to readings and academic lectures.

And finally, students should comprehend the role of cultural literacy, attitudes, and assumptions in extracting and expressing meaning in written text; utilize appropriate study skills and reading strategies and techniques; locate and extract information from standard sources, including print and electronic; understand the writer's responsibilities of attribution to avoid plagiarism; and accurately document primary and secondary sources.

Teachers of English should recognize that acquiring academic English is a challenge for both English language learners and native speakers. Very few children arrive at school competent in this register and unfortunately, academic English has been under-emphasized in public school instruction (Scarcella, 2003). For the most part, academic English is learned over the course of schooling through frequent engagement in class discussions, and through reading and writing. Instructors need to recognize that students need support to acquire the conventions, features, and vocabulary associated with academic English, and they need to know how to provide it. It is essential for educators to fully understand the multidimensionality of academic English and the important role it plays in students' lives both in school and beyond.

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