

التحديات التي يواجهها طلبة السنة الرابعة في كلية الآداب

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المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى محاولة إيجاد حل للصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب السنة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب الاصابة ، عند كتابة المقترحات والمشاريع البحثية في المراحل المبكرة. تتكون المجموعة المستهدفة لهذه الدراسة من طلاب السنة النهائية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية ما يقرب من 60 طالبا ، والذين كانوا يجروا مشاريعهم البحثية باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية (ESL). تتضمن أدوات البحث في الدراسة استبياناً مع طلاب الفئات المستهدفة. استكشفت الدراسة التحديات والصعوبات المختلفة والشائعة أثناء كتابة مقترحات البحث والمشاريع مثل: صعوبة تحديد موضوع البحث، ونقص المعرفة الجيدة بالمنهجية، وعدم القدرة على إيجاد مراجع حديثة ومتخصصة وذات صلة، ونقص الاهتمام بالبحث، ونقص فهم الموضوع، ونقص الوقت، والتوجيه البحثي. تحاول الدراسة أيضاً تقديم بعض الاقتراحات / التوصيات لتطوير عملية كتابة مقترحات البحث والمشاريع البحثية.



**Challenges Faced By Fourth year Students of English Department
in Writing Research Project At Al- assaba College.**

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the difficulties that encounter undergraduate students of fourth year at English Department of Alassaba College, in writing proposals and research projects in the early stages. The target group for this study consisted of final-year undergraduates at the College of Alassaba English Department, The study involved approximately 60 participants from the Department of English, who were conducting their research projects in English as a Second Language (ESL). The Research tools of the study include questionnaire with students of the target groups. The study will explore various and common challenges/difficulties during writing the research proposals and projects such as: difficulty in deciding the topic for research, lack of good knowledge of the methodology, inability of finding modern, specialized and related references, lack of interest in research, lack of understanding of the subject matter, lack of time, and research guiding. The study also attempts to give some suggestions/recommendations for developing the process of writing research proposals and research projects.

1.1 Introduction

Developing writing skills is a challenging process for Arab learners who are studying English as a Second Language (ESL). This project aims to investigate the typical academic obstacles that undergraduate students encounter when they begin writing research projects in English. Students face various challenges in writing research in L2. Some of them might experience internal limitations which includes motivation while for some it would be external, as in related to proficiency in L2, understanding research methodology, experience, motivation. Since the research proposals and projects are in L2 good proficiency and the good knowledge of the specialization helps much in writing good research proposals and projects.

This research attempts to explore whether writing research proposal and projects in English as Second Language (ESL) acts as a challenge for students in the earlier stages of conducting research or not. Another aim is to identify the major challenges undergraduate students face when they are writing proposals and projects as new process to them and to check whether the undergraduate students are familiar and aware of the challenges and difficulties of writing and conducting research proposals and projects.

1.2 Research Problem

This study tends to shed light on the challenges that encountered Fourth year university students of English Department in writing their research project, these problems either from the lack of the knowledge or from a part of teachers or from included the absence of a standard format, lack of knowledge in identifying relevant literature, insufficient feedback from supervisors, inadequate materials related to selected topics.

1.3 Research Questions

a) Is writing research projects in English as Second Language (ESL) acts as a challenge for students in the earlier stages of conducting research or not?

b) What are the common challenges faced by the undergraduate students when they are writing proposals and projects as new process to them?

c) Are the learners familiar and aware of the challenges and difficulties of writing and conducting research proposals and projects?

1.4 Aim of The Study

This study aims to examine the difficulties that encounter undergraduate students of fourth year at English Department of Alassaba College, when writing proposals and research projects in the early stages.

1.5 Methodology

The study involved approximately 60 participants from the Department of English, who were conducting their research projects in English as a Second Language (ESL). The Research tools of the study include questionnaire with students of the target groups.

2.1 Literature Review

The departmental projects known as undergraduate research projects are meant to inspire students to do research, analyze findings, and communicate them in ways that aid in their understanding of the methodologies employed in the field in order to generate original ideas and new information. To find, rewrite, and understand facts and hypotheses, this undertaking need diligent labor, seriousness, and methodical analysis, as noted by Bently and Kyvik (2013, quoted in Simuforosa M. et al. 2015).

According to MacKeogh (2016), students can demonstrate their writing skills by undertaking a research project. As a consequence, students acquire useful research abilities, such as the capacity to recognize researchable topics, resolve issues, exercise critical thought, and use analytical and statistical methods. the main characteristics of an undergraduate research project are subject selection, independent learning, proposal preparation, data collection, data analysis, research

ethics, and writing up findings. Consequently, the study project might be utilized as an assessment tool or as a learning tool.

Ndhlovu and Mwanza (2015) conducted a study on the mistakes and challenges encountered by postgraduate students in the school of education. The study included 100 participants, consisting of 80 students and 20 lecturers from the University of Zambia. The research revealed that students' mistakes in writing proposals included broad and unclear topics, methodological failures, terminology issues, and problems in reporting the literature review. The challenges faced by students in writing research proposals included the absence of a standard format, lack of knowledge in identifying relevant literature, insufficient feedback from supervisors, inadequate materials related to selected topics, and insufficient time allocated for writing proposals, and another study which had been done by Al-Qaderi I. (2016) at Ibb University in Yemen when they write their graduation research projects. English is taught as a Foreign Language (FL) in Yemen, and it was found that the main problems encountered by students were: 1) The students' weak academic proficiency in English as a medium of instruction and research or in their specialization. 2) The lack of a well-equipped library with open access to electronic resources and websites. 3) Students' difficult circumstances and their negative attitudes towards research projects.

According to Ahmed and Mahboob (2016) presented an indispensable contribution work to analyze the research proposals and challenges faced by a set of 32 postgraduate students in the Department of medicine, Lady Reading Hospital in Pakistan. In this study, they found many challenges including: research methodology, formulating research questions and hypotheses, setting the background and introduction section, gathering information and data collection, objectives and references citation. In this study, the quantitative ground theory approach was implemented. The study concluded that a high rate of graduate students had challenges in preparing research proposals, particularly the lack of proper guiding and supervision, and suggests some points to strengthening supervision and guiding skills.

Kikula and Quorro (2007), Kombo and Tromp (2011), and Repoa (2007) have consensus to find many crucial problems students face while they are writing their research proposals in Tanzania. Some common mistakes include writing broad titles with no clear and focused content in the introduction.

3.1 Methodology

Participant

The study includes Thirty undergraduate students from Fourth Year in English Department at Alassaba College in their early stage of writing research Project.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data is collected from the study sample using questionnaires and informal interviews. The questionnaire covers five different areas, each including several sub-parameters, such as language challenges, specialization and discipline, methodology, references and resources, and language motivation and interest. To ensure accurate responses, the questionnaire has been translated into L1. Additionally, interviews with several supervisors and guides were conducted to diagnose problems and find a solution. In general the variables are divided and categorized and given values, (Agree=3, Disagree=2, and neutral =1).

4.1 Results and Discussion

Table (1) will explain Writing Research Project in L2 and in L1

Facing Challenges in Writing Research in L2	Number of students	Agree	disagree	Neutral
Facing less challenges in Writing research in L1	60	40	15	5

The Previous table shows that students face more challenges when they are writing in L2. Around 70 % of the students experience and encounter challenges when they write in L2 (English as Second Language (ESL) and more than 50 % prefer to write their research in L1 and during discussion with students, they said that they would perform better if the research proposals and projects are in L1. that the ability of conducting research proposals and projects itself as not a challenging process in L1 but writing in L2 is the common obstacle facing students in the early stage of writing research.

This shows that some students have low proficiency in English which affects negatively their performance in writing their research projects. The open-ended question in this regard shows that challenges in conducting research in L2 for the undergraduate students is because of the lack of enough vocabulary in L2, not able to form sentences in coherent and correct way, less experience in arranging information in a written texts, lack of understanding of the complex and new terminologies in L2.

Table (2) will show Motivation to write Research projects

Interested in Writing research projects	Number of students	Agree	disagree	Neutral
Not interested in writing research projects				
Students write research projects because they are mandatory				
	60	33%	38%	26%

Students have varying motivations for writing and conducting research projects. According to the data, 33.3% to 37% of students are interested in writing research proposals and projects, while 28.37% are not interested, and 38.33% have neutral

views. The table (2) clearly shows that students are more concerned with writing research proposals and projects because it is mandatory as part of their study. Additionally, 40% of the participants stated that they conduct research because it is obligatory in their study curriculum. On the other hand, 33.33% of the participants disagree and are interested in conducting the research, and 26.37% of the participants are neutral.

When students asked about the reasons for not being interested and motivated in the research process, they gave various explanations: 1. Generally, the research is in L2. 2. The participants did not select their research topic early. 3. Research affects concentration on other subjects. 4. Lack of encouragement and recognition. 5. Lack of experience in writing research. Moreover, some students are interested in writing research due to the following reasons: 1. There is a good academic atmosphere to gather participants with teachers. 2. Participants feel they can gain valuable experience in new things and feel that they have achieved something crucial and substantial. 3. Acquiring in-depth knowledge while conducting research projects is also one of the reasons to motivate the participants. 4. Getting high marks and prizes motivate undergraduates to write proposals and projects. Therefore, teachers should take this into account and motivate learners by conducting competitions and giving awards for the best research proposals or projects

Table (3) Explains Specialization and its influence in Writing research

Good knowledge of Specialization helps in writing Research	Number of students	Agree	disagree	Neutral
lack of good in Specialization affects in writing research	60	(43.50%-46.6%)	(26.50 %-30%)	

The majority of participants (43.50%-46.6%) believe that their specialization greatly contributes to their success in research projects. However, some participants (26.50%-30%) disagree, citing reasons such as insufficient knowledge in writing in L2 and research methodology. Having a deep understanding of the terminologies related to their specialization may also positively impact their ability to write research proposals and projects effectively

Table (4) Will show The Time and Guiding responses

	Number of students	Agree	disagree	Neutral
Time is short No sufficient time for guiding				
	60	63%	48.33%	

The challenges facing students while writing research projects is the duration or the time given for writing and conducting research proposals and projects is comparatively less and supervisors do not give an adequate time for discussing research projects. 63% of the participants agreed that they do not have sufficient time to do their research projects well and 48.33% of the participants believed that they are not getting enough time to discuss their research proposals and projects with their supervisors. Students are worried about scoring good grade in all the subjects including their research projects. Possible solutions to motivate the participants to do well in writing their research proposals and projects in this stage are making them feel secured about grades (evaluation).

Table (5) Identify Challenges related to the references in writing research

	Number of students	Agree	disagree	Neutral
Having knowledge how to quote from references				

Being able to make use of online references and resources				
Having knowledge of the well-known, modern, and specific references which help in writing research proposals and projects				
lack of references and resources in the surrounding libraries				
	60	35%	30%	31.67%

In Table 5, examined the challenges that undergraduate students faced when writing their research projects, particularly in quoting and obtaining good references and resources. Approximately 30% of the participants stated that they did not know how to quote from references, while 35% reported no challenges in quoting from references. The remaining 31.67% took a neutral position when asked about the challenges of quoting from references. Not surprisingly, with the prevalence of technology, the majority of students (51.67%) utilize online references rather than hard copy references, while a smaller number of students use hard copy references when writing their research proposals and projects

5.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

After examining the opinions of the students, the researcher found that when it comes to writing and preparing research projects, students face several obstacles. Writing in a second language is the most prevalent early-stage difficulty (L2). The

following succinctly describes the primary difficulties: a) Composing studies in English as a second language. b) Picking an appropriate topic. c) Selecting the best approach to proposal writing. b) Insufficient drive to write initiatives and proposals. e) Not knowing enough about their area of expertise.

There are a number of ideas and tips to assist students overcome obstacles and be successful when they are just starting to write research proposals and projects. Academic writing in English should be given more attention, with more assignments, exercises, and training sessions. Participants might feel less stressed, more confident, and more inspired to do well in research writing at this point when they work in groups or research teams. Supervisors should provide students with the right direction and help them choose subjects that will provide them with a wealth of information. A student's motivation to do excellent research projects might also come from their grades.

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