

# Academic Writing Workshop, 20 October 2020

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# Presenter background

- James Pilbrow
- BA (Hons) in Sociology
- MA in Social Policy
- Working in a research centre at an NGO called the Brotherhood of St Laurence; my work has focused on social justice, welfare and the translation of ideas from academia and policy into effective practice
- My writing and opinions about writing are informed by my work as a researcher working with policy for policy makers – so I tend to favour simple and concise written communication. Others may give very valid opinions that are different to mine.

# Introduction

- This presentation outlines some of the common problems I have seen in not all but many of the articles from UIN writers I have read.

# Discussion points

1. Article structure
2. Argument structure

1. Tenses (past/present/future etc)
2. Word choice

# 1. Article structure (1)

- An effective article needs to have a clear thread of argument running the whole way through it, from the title through to the conclusion.

# 1. Article structure (2)

- The abstract must give a very concise overview of all of the most important aspects of the aims, findings and relevance/value of the article.
- The introduction needs to elaborate on the aims of the article, identify the context in which the article is being written (for example, social or culture settings relevant to the article) and give a brief overview of the article's structure. If relevant it can be
- The conclusion should reiterate the article's key findings and identify how/why/where future research on the same subject could be explored.

Question: how have you been taught to structure your articles?

## 2. Argument structure

- You're probably familiar with the TEEL paragraph structure:
  - Topic sentence – subject; the main idea of the paragraph
  - Explain – articulate the idea
  - Evidence/example – give at least one example
  - Link – link to the topic sentence, or to the next paragraph, or back to an aspect of the article's main aims
- This is useful for discussion, and for background/literature review paragraphs if the article has them.

# Question: how well does this paragraph follow the TEEL structure?

Discussed above, the discourse of Orientalism is a social practice that is molded by political, religious, or economic ideologies, it is highly helpful to treat it as a biased practice (Wodak, 2004). This discourse of selectivity really excludes the alternative discourses of reality; it claims the only access to reality and truth. Because these discourses of power are either plausible or implausible, it is necessarily inevitable to employ Ruth Wodak's Discourse Historical Model (2004) to expose their ideological bias. Hence, the research assignment is assessing Bernard Lewis' essay by using Wodak's model of critical discourse analysis.

# Argument structure (2)

- Individual sentences need to clearly relate to what comes before and after them.

Question: is the first sentence below clear to you? Could it be clearer?

In English language teaching (ELT) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL/ESL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts, there is also a shift of learning success from accuracy to communication (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006). This brings a trend of communicative language teaching (CLT) in speaking class which, then, strengthens the position of English as a language for international communication. In speaking class, for instance, it is common that teachers have their

# 3. Tenses

- Fundamentally, tenses need to be consistent with the context in which they are being used,
- Tenses will often vary within a sentence or a single idea, for example, 'this researched *examined* (past) x and *will argue* (future) in favour of its relevance to y'
- In an analyses there are often multiple correct answers, for example,

## ABSTRACT

*This study analyzed the feminist analysis of children fairytale "The Lazy Girl". In this case, the researchers selected the children's fairytale from the perspective of modern feminism framework analysis and identified the moral values of this story. This study focused on the main character of the story drawn as a brave and hardworking character. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive analysis with an ideational meta-function approach in analyzing the data. The data collected from the synopsis of the "The Lazy Girl" fairy tale. The researchers analyzed the text of the story from a YouTube channel based on the feminist approach. The finding showed that there were four main processes existed in fairytales' synopsis entitled these are material (44%), mental (20%), verbal (28%), and relational process (18%). While in feminism literal analysis, the researcher found that the second and the third wave of feminist characteristics were used in this story. The main character of this story showed the brave and hardworking of the young girl which related to the feminist framework. Besides, this story has good moral values for children and provides a positive impact on children.*

In an analyses there are often multiple correct answers, for example, 'analyzed' (past tense) is correct, but, the author could also say 'analyzes' (present tense) to convey what the reader will read about in the article.

Question: what do you find most difficult about tenses when writing in English?

## 4. Word choice

- Avoid colloquialisms in what you are saying, unless they are relevant to your argument
- Check definitions of words if you are unsure about the meaning, and check the synonyms for that word

Question: how do you choose words when you are unsure of the best word to use?