

English - Majored Juniors' attitudes towards learning the academic writing course

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ABSTRACT : The study aims to investigate attitudes of Juniors of English as a foreign language (EFL) towards learning the academic writing course at TraVinh University (TVU) and to help these learners recognize what benefits they have got and difficulties they have encountered during the course. The writer uses a quantitative approach with a questionnaire to collect data from 80 third-year English majors, who took part in the academic course at TVU. The findings indicate that all students have positive attitudes about this course and concede the benefits of the academic writing course. One of the most crucial results from this study's data was that academic writing skills were needed for students' graduation thesis. Apart from that, the students encountered challenges throughout the learning process. Particularly, due to the impact of their native tongue on language learning, grammar is regarded as the most prominent difficulty. The study lastly suggests a range of implications for students to enhance their academic writing skills.

KEYWORDS: *academic writing, attitudes, difficulties, EFL Juniors*

I. INTRODUCTION

With the globalization and intercultural communication developing, English academic writing plays a vital role and becomes inevitable during the process of language learning of university students around the world. Non-native speakers should master thoroughly how to conduct academic writing works effectively in terms of their appropriate formality, objectivity, academia and intricacies. In addition to this, Zamel (1983) reveals that scholars discover efficient ideas in the writing process to obtain an accurate use of language during academic writing activities. Thus, it is irrefutable that academic writing skills considered to be one of the most significant facets in university training programs. It is because when students partake in academic writing courses, they can gain a wider range of skills needed to improve their writing such as how to choose pieces of writing to support their points or make references, and how to reflect their thoughts logically and critically.

Nevertheless, the number of graduates who are not still aware of the magnitude of academic writing in the universities is enlarging sharply. One of the most common reasons for this is students' cognitions and attitudes towards learning it. McCarthy, Meier and Rinderer (1985) claimed that the attitudes of an individual, a significant constituent, affect his or her ability to write effectively. Another reason is students' knowledge and academic writing skills, which may support them during learning process at the university. To write academically, students should, initially, understand the writing steps or processes and then apprehend the aspects of academic writing in terms of the content, the form, the vocabulary, the grammar or language use, and the method (Prihatmi, 2017). Specifically, Lea and Street (2006) point out that EFL students in non-English speaking countries incline to have some particular difficulties in academic writing. Many writing contexts are considered to be challenging in the writing process, including literacy perspectives, knowledge, technological aspects of writing, language characteristics, and linguistic and cultural differences.

At TVU, the academic writing course is embraced in the training curriculum for EFL juniors. For this reason, the researcher conducts a study at TraVinh University to explore their attitudes towards learning this academic writing course to find out the advantages and challenges of their learning process.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theoretical background

1.1 Attitudes

In the field of psychology, researchers considered a broad variety of attitude concepts that were discussed in disparate meanings were contingent on circumstances and perspectives (Alhmali, 2007). The definition of attitudes often entails a judgment of one's environment, such as objects, individuals, or institutions. In other words, an individual's positive or negative attitudes towards something represent his or her favorable or unfavorable relationship with a specific aspect of the surroundings (Ajzen, 2005). Gardner (1985) found out that attitude is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude entity is deduced from the individual's credence or opinions about the referent. Thus, a person's attitude is related to his or her principles and convictions and it encourages or discourages selections made in all areas of life. According to social psychologists, attitudes are taken form not only by social backgrounds but also by influence of parents and peers' attitudes as well as early development in childhood (Brown, 2001). The social psychology literature also indicates that specific attitudes in various domains and behavioral intentions or actual actions have a great relationship (Mostafa, 2007). To elucidate more obviously, Wenden (1991) described that attitude consists of three related components namely cognition, affection and behavior. The cognitive component connects an individual's viewpoints, thoughts or beliefs about the object of the attitudes. Then, the affective constituent is relevant to the individual's emotions and sensations with an object whether people like or dislike. Finally, the behavioral aspect concerns the propensity to adopt particular learning behaviors.

1.2 The impact of attitudes on learning

A broad range of linguists and researchers such as Pearson (2007), MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) conducted that learners' attitudes have an effect on language learning outcomes. According to Lightbrown and Spada (1999), attitude is a key to learners' attainment or failure in language learning. Depending on the learners' attitudes, language learning may be a source of enhancement or a source of resentment. Thus, it was believed that attitudes are one of the most vital elements in language learning. If someone does not have an interest or inclination in learning the target language to communicate with others, they will have a negative attitude and not be motivated or enthusiastic about language learning. Kiptui and Mbugua (2009) also mentioned that the most effective and psychological factor leading to students' poor English performance is their negative attitudes towards the language. Furthermore, according to Reid (2003), attitudes are essential to us as they cannot be neatly isolated from study. Achievement in a target language is determined not only by intellectual faculties, but also by the learner's attitudes towards studying the language. It is suggested that language learning should be seen as a social and psychological phenomenon rather than a strictly academic one. Consequently, a positive attitude motivates language learners to put in more efforts which usually lead to greater achievements in terms of overall language proficiency and basic language skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing. Additionally, Kara (2009) claimed that learners possessing optimistic attitudes towards courses of study are able to immerse themselves in courses and endeavor to learn more effectively. Such students are also seen to be more ardent to deal with problems, to acquire useful knowledge and skills that will support them in their daily routine, and engage emotionally. A positive attitude often aids learners in maintaining their language skills after they leave the classroom (Gardner, 1985). Therefore, learners' attitudes play a crucial role in language learning since they may affect their ability to learn the target language.

1.3 Academic writing

It is essential for learners to apprehend academic writing to be capable of writing in this style. Academic writing is a formal writing style used in colleges and universities. It's what professors and academic researchers use to compose scholarly materials and what students are supposed to generate for courses. Moreover, an academic environment is intended to help students be actively engaged in their studies and develop the fundamentals at the primary levels of education to gain a direct effect on scholarly achievement at the tertiary level. Academic writing style sometimes is demanded in certain classes at high schools, and is termed as any writing completed to satisfy a college or university's requirement. Book reviews, essays, and research papers or dissertations and theses, as well as journals, conference papers are examples of academic writing assignments.

Transcending descriptive and persuasive writing, academic writing includes other types such as analytical, evaluative, or critical ones. In a more systematic and organized manner, the writer is entailed to enhance an original analysis, criticism, proposals or elucidation. In body texts, paragraphs appear to adopt more structured and analytical paragraph forms. Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) defined academic writing as the type of writing utilized by academics for academic tasks, such as assignments, research papers, and presentations, as well as for disseminating their work in publications and conferences.

As reported by Torrance, Thomas and Robinson (1992) described academic writing is a complex unification of producing and selecting ideas to create a text. Burke (2010) also pointed out that academic writing is intellectual and cognitive activity because it is an outcome of thinking process. The picture of a person writing

privately in a tranquil atmosphere has contributed to the opinion of writing as a mental and cognitive task. Moreover, it is previously said that writing is able to be viewed through a society's discernment, not through an individual's acuity. Thus, Listyani (2018) revealed that learning to write entails more than just mastering a series of mechanical skills and it also necessitates the acquisition of new cognitive and social relationships. To produce efficient academic writing, students need to master numerous skills such as how to structure a sentence grammatically, how to use words adequately and contextually to enhance coherence and cohesion, and the application of formal writing styles. Above all, it is vital to have a complete, active, and struggling engagement (Singh, 2015). In addition to this, a writer is expected to provide reasoning for the ideas and convey them in simply and academically appropriate terminology in academic writing (Taylor, 2009). Al Fadda (2012) also discussed that one of the fundamental aspects of academic writing is students' ability to access and review relevant sources. This allows them to bring disparate ideas and viewpoints, ultimately helping them develop their own voice.

1.4 The significance of academic writing

Academic writing plays a crucial role not only in finding students' scholarships, but also in teaching and learning at universities, according to Lillis and Scott (2007). Thereby, Tuck (2012) claimed that it will encourage students to improve their ability to write for global journals by pursuing their research interests. Academic writing, according to Irvin (2010), evaluates competence and proficiency in certain skills such as thinking, reading, and presenting. Torrance, Thomas and Robinson (1992) stated that academic writing allows scholars to acquire new knowledge when they research deeply any disciplines. Furthermore, Giridharan and Robson (2011) claimed that good academic writing gives rise to academic performance. According to Arkoudis and Tran (2007), academic writing as a mode of argument is critical for international students' progress. Additionally, Aberg, Stahle, Engdahl and Knutes-Nyqvist (2016) also concerned that academic writing assists learners to enhance their metacognitive skills like reflection and critical thinking. Akcaoglu (2011) also commented that academic writing is an indispensable part of a good academic career as it prepares the amount of specialized knowledge for learners. Thanks to academic writing, students are able to develop their research skills as well as sharpen their academic vocabulary. It also enables them to improve their academic articulation skills as academic writing is merely reliant on the students' ability to obtain, evaluate, and synthesize vocabulary, ideas, themes, and perspectives from others (Mohammad Almatarneh, Ab Rashid & Yunus, 2018). Daoud & Al-Hazmi (2002) declared that non-native English speakers will discover a new world of academic writing by assessing self-integration of studying and having the ability to think critically in order to express themselves. According to Bjork and Raisen (1997, p.8), the soul of academic writing reclines upon the fact that it is thinking instrument. It's a platform for language learning, critical thought and learning in various areas. Abdulkareem (2013) certified that it has a significant effect on learners' development in a second language. Chou (2011) discovered that learners highly value academic writing as it serves as a springboard for publishing their research and a means of allowing others know about their passions. As a result, they are likely to conduct an intellectual dedication to get and create something worthwhile by writing. Likewise, learners may accomplish their academic goals by evolving cultural components such as communicative engagement, cultural awareness, and participation in meaningful and collaborative activities.

1.5 The challenges of academic writing

Without a doubt, undergraduate students in non-English speaking countries have tendency to encounter particular obstacles in academic writing. Salager-Meyer (2014) exposed that non-native English researchers have to face numerous challenges when writing scholarly papers in English, which is a prerequisite for publishing in standard journals.

According to Braxley (2005), learners' lack of intimacy with academic writing conventions is the most significant challenge faced by international scholars since what they study and what they are required at university are strongly disparate. It is obvious that to write successfully in the social sciences requires a various range of academic vocabulary as a limited vocabulary source will severely restrict one's ability to communicate ideas sufficiently (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992). For academic writing, grammar has its own set of significance in creating the success of a research paper. However, Suryani, Kamaruddin, Hashima, Yaacob, Rashid and Desa (2014) bared that they waste a lot of lectures' time and effort to correct students' written assignments because of having so many grammatical errors, ranging from local to global spelling ones. These errors in L2 writing reflecting their lack of the target knowledge. Besides, Kendall (2005) stated that learners also struggle with citing and referencing bibliographic references in their scholarly writing pieces. The most common problem is their dependence on an incorrect source for guidance on how to reference. According to Karimnia (2013), students struggle with how to present their findings precisely and effectively to support an argument. Also, they find it hard to coordinate and progress their ideas in a systematic manner (O'Connor & Cargill, 2009). Even after reading an article several times, students still have difficulties in declaring what the authors' key points are

in the article, Mauranen (1993). Similarly, Swales (1990) pointed out that it is difficult to understand culture of other countries over the world so that their writing can be culturally accepted by readers from various cultures.

1.6 The relationship between learners' attitudes and academic writing

The relationship between students' attitudes and their academic writing has gotten relatively little recognition. The way people think about it has a great influence on how successful they are and it either develops or obstructs them. Writing attitudes, according to Graham, Harris and Mason (2005, p. 518), is an affective temperament concerning how the act of writing makes the author feel ranging from content to dissatisfied. However, not entirely all students have positive attitudes towards academic writing skill. To put it another way, some students refuse to write and display a lack of interest in this skill. Academic writing apprehension was described by Daly and Miller (1975) as a general evasion of writing and circumstances picked out by a person to require some amount of academic writing and escorted by the potential for assessment of academic writing.

2. Related studies

A range of research has been conducted to find out learners' nature attitudes towards learning academic courses and their challenges during studying process.

Yeh (2010) carried out a research to learn about new graduate students' perceptions and obstacles of academic writing taught in their curriculum. The researcher conducted an interview with 4 Taiwanese EFL graduate students completing their first semester of a master's program. During the interview, the students were asked questions about their writing experiences, the most critical factors in academic writing, challenges that they faced when writing a research paper and their problems in writing process that they wanted to know more. The results declared that the students had concerns about issues like choosing a subject and reviewing the literature. Nonetheless, one of the most surprising findings was the EFL students' apparently unconcerned attitudes towards language challenges of research writing. They were dissatisfied with the writing instructions they got because the course seemed to concentrate on general writing skills rather than the research writingskills.

Ismail (2011) conducted the research to learn more about students' perspectives on academic writing and writing in general. The study enlisted the participation of 64 female students from an ESP program. A set of questionnaires and a group interview were employed to collect data. Overall, the students' attitudes towards the academic writing course in particular and ESL writing in general were positive. The main results revealed that the students were conscious of their own needs as well as the requirements of academic writing. Specifically, the value of academic writing skills for academic study and future career was highly regarded by students.

Rushidi (2012) examined the significance of academic writing skills in English for academic purposes courses and assess students' reactions to their own academic English writing needs, aptitude to succeed, and precedence in foreign language writing. This paper introduces quantitative and qualitative research based on a questionnaire and written compositions from students. The participants were 50 EFL students attending academic and advanced academic English courses at the Language Center from various departments at the South East European University of Tetovo in Macedonia. This study found that the students did not value their written success and academic writing did not take precedence over other language skills. However, it suggested that the students are able to do very well in academic writing. Furthermore, their academicwriting skills especially their reflection and critical thinking skills were improved by the end of the courses.

Alhojailan (2015) performed a study to examine the perspectives of some Saudi graduate students on academic writing and plagiarism. The study involved interviews with 12 Saudi students enrolled in diverse programs at various American universities. The findings indicated that these students had limited understanding of the definitions and objectives of academic writing. However, they acknowledged the importance of academic writing for various reasons. As graduate students, they were expected to develop strong academic writing skills, which aided them in publishing papers and achieving success in their courses. The study also revealed that the students encountered challenges related to grammar and organization when engaging in academic writing.

Azizah and Budiman (2018) conducted a study with the objective of examining the issues and challenges that university students face while writing scholarly articles in English for international journals. The study also aimed to gain insights into the students' perspectives on the significance of academic writing. The investigation involved twenty students from a university in Indonesia, which was utilized a questionnaire to assess the students' difficulties and perceptions of academic writing for publication in English. The results of the research revealed that the most challenging aspect of academic writing was related to knowledge; however, it highlighted the significance of academic writing for international publication in students' academic training process. They also agreed that participating in academic courses would help them enhance their knowledge and skills in this area.

Borozdina (2019) investigated Russian university EFL students' perceptions of academic writing course with 13 participants attending an online academic English writing class at Kursk State University. The study's

results basing on learners' pre- and post-questionnaires, and individual and group interviews about course assignments showed that all of them had good attitudes about this proposed academic course, thought it would be helpful for their future and helped enhance their academic writing skills. Particularly, they believed they necessitate an academic English writing course as such courses are uncommon at Russian universities and shared their satisfaction with the course's material.

III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter comprises five parts: the research design, the participants of the study, the research instruments, the research procedures, and the data processing method.

3.1 Research design

In this study, a quantitative approach in nature was adopted, especially descriptive and inferential. As a result, a modified questionnaire was employed as a measurement tool to explore TVU third-year English majors' attitudes towards learning the academic writing course and their challenges throughout the learning process.

3.2 The participants

In this research, the sample consists of eighty (80) EFL students studying in three different classes at the School of Foreign Languages at TVU with 62 females (77.5%) and 18 males (22.5%). The reason for researcher's choice was that all of these students had finished the academic writing course of a four-year bachelors' program and could prove their proper proficiency in academic writing skills.

3.3 Research instruments

To investigate TVU EFL juniors' attitudes towards the academic writing course and challenges during the learning process, a questionnaire was used for this paper. Adapted from the questionnaire of Nazmiye (2017) and Saglameland Kayaoglu (2015), the researcher created an appropriate questionnaire for the aims of this paper. It consisted of three sections: questions about students' demographic information, 14 items asking about attitudes of respondents towards learning the academic writing course, and 12 questions about their difficulties during the course. Moreover, the statements were created using a five-point Likert scale with value: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree). Participants were given 7 minutes to take the survey.

3.4 Research procedures

To collect data, the researcher designed a questionnaire based on those of Nazmiye (2017) and Saglameland Kayaoglu (2015) to investigate EFL juniors' attitudes towards the academic writing course and challenges during the learning process at TVU and distributed the questionnaire to the participants. When the data was collected completely, the research started analyzing the data by employing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

3.5 Data processing method

The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using the SPSS version 20. One of the key advantages of SPSS is that it aids in the simplification of data, provides methods for executing the algorithm and generates outcomes that can be calculated using quantitative techniques.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

From the data collected, the findings indicated that the majority of learners had gratifying attitudes when taking the academic writing course. All of them recognized that learning academic writing brought various benefits. Specifically, they entirely agreed that the course of academic writing was essential for their graduation theses. Moreover, they thought that this course is helpful because its aim is to give juniors some solid foundations in the basics of conducting a scientific research at the university although it is not a mandatory subject in their training program. They also asserted that it aided them in the development of their reasoning and critical thinking skills, and taking part in academic writing not only helped them write better but also allowed them to improve the ability to convey opinion better and enhance their specialized knowledge. Besides, most of the participants believed that the academic writing course was somewhat vital for their future jobs that requires them to write, so the course enabled them to increase their perseverance and concentration, widen their academic vocabulary and develop their research skills. The survey also revealed that the students expressed a neutral sentiment when being asked about their level of interest and enjoyment in the course as well as the enhancement of their professionalism.

The junior students, on the other hand, confronted with a few challenges in addition to the benefits they gained while taking the academic writing course. Overall, the majority of students strongly agreed that they had

difficulties in using appropriate grammar, which often led to their occasional mistakes. Other factors that hinder their ability to write effective research papers include a lack of academic vocabulary and difficulty in presenting their ideas in a logical way and paraphrasing to avoid plagiarism. One more problem is that their new research results often differ from the related studies they previously mentioned in their papers, making it challenging to determine the reliability of articles and decide which ones they should cite. The last difficulty is that the juniors are short of the knowledge on how to successfully outline each chapter and select relevant content for their papers. In addition to this, the students said that they did not have any other difficulties in learning academic writing.

In conclusion, the findings from the questionnaires revealed that the students displayed positive attitudes towards the academic writing course, highlighting the numerous advantages they achieved. However, it is also important to shed light on their difficulties during the learning process.

4.2 Discussion

It is clear that a number of studies have been carried out to examine students' attitudes towards learning academic writing and the challenges that they may encounter while taking such courses. As a result, this study has some parallels as well as some differences compared to the current researches.

4.2.1 The attitudes of EFL Juniors towards the Academic Writing Course

Basing on the findings of this study, it can be assumed that the students had positive attitudes towards the academic course, aligning with some previous research in this area. Likewise, the participants in this study, as well as the respondents in the articles written by Alhojailan (2015), Ismail (2011) and Azizah and Budiman (2018), not only highlighted the importance of academic writing in their graduation theses but also emphasized the significance of the course in enhancing their academic education at the university level, as it provided them with crucial skills and a comprehensive understanding of thesis writing. This assumption is also mentioned in the study of Azizah and Budiman (2018). Other studies, such as Borozdina (2019) and Ismail (2011), also support the findings of this study regarding the beneficial impacts on students' future careers and development of research skills. Students are able to evaluate which information is applicable to their study context. This helps develop their intellectual ability and enable them to think critically and logically about different topics after such courses.

On the other hand, the study identified some differences from the related studies. Specifically, while this research sheds light on the significance of the academic writing course for students' future careers, some respondents in Alhojailan's (2015) study claimed that strong academic writing skills are not mandatory for their career paths. In addition to this view, some participants believed that academic writing courses are not necessary since they cannot anticipate its need in their prospective careers. Such students probably regarded the course solely as a way to obtain their degrees rather than as a skill that were able to be applied outside of the classroom. Alhojailan (2015) also noted that all students in his study were self-assured about their writing skills, but the students in this study showed a feeling of apprehension of their writing skills and denied their proficiency in them. The findings also differ from those of Yeh (2010), who discovered that learners were dissatisfied with the writing guidance they received because the course seemed to prioritize general writing skills rather than focus on academic writing skills. In contrast, the participants in this research presented their satisfaction with the academic writing course as it mainly focused on research skills, enabling them to reap a number of benefits from it. Additionally, Rushidi's (2012) study stated that students did not put a high priority on their written accomplishments and did not prioritize academic writing skills over other language skills. However, the participants in this study highly appreciated the importance to the academic writing skills.

4.2.2 The difficulties of EFL Juniors during the learning process

To investigate challenges that university students faced during the learning process of the academic writing course, several researchers have carried out surveys on this aspect and obtained similar results to the objective of this study. First and foremost, 88.8% of the participants in this study asserted that grammar was one of the most challenging aspects they faced, which aligns with the findings of Alhojailan's (2015) research. The frequent mistakes in using English grammar due to the effect of their mother tongue in the writing process lowered their research quality. Furthermore, 70% of the students in this study reported their difficulty in choosing the research topics, as several subjects were inappropriate to their current knowledge and comprehension. Consequently, it took them a considerable amount of time to determine the research field they could pursue. Both this study and Alhojailan's (2015) research indicated that organizing ideas in their writing pieces was another challenge that two thirds of the research's respondents faced. This proportion was the same in the results of Cennetkusu's (2017) and Yeh's (2010) study with vocabulary problems. In fact, to write effectively in the research paper, they need to acquire more academic words, so a limited range of vocabulary will severely restrict their ability to communicate ideas smoothly and effectively. Less than three-quarters of the involved students, in addition, agreed that plagiarism was another challenge, which is similar to the findings of Alhojailan (2015). Similarly, the participants in Yeh's (2010) study, as well as 61.3% of the respondents in this research, presented their difficulty in searching related studies because the typical nature of their research within

their specific contexts made them not likely to find relevant studies. Likewise, due to some copyright reasons, they were not able to search it.

By contrast, some disparities were investigated among the current researches. Specifically, Alhojailan (2015) and AzizahandBudiman (2018) contended that learners found it easy to cite or make references to articles while 65% of the students in this study stated that it was hard for them to make decisions about citing literature because the source of citations was plentiful. Moreover, there are various types of writing citations based on APA styles so it is difficult for them to memorize them precisely. In addition, more than half of the students in this study pointed out that choosing appropriate words to convey their ideas to the readers was also one of the difficulties but related studies did not refer to this issue. This challenge arose from the fact that all of them were non-native speakers and were learning to write in a foreign language. As a result, they faced obstacles in using the appropriate words to effectively express their opinions to the readers, indicating a lack of mastery in language use.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, it presents the conclusion of the study and recommendations for both students and further research.

5.1 Conclusion

The study aims to investigate third-year EFL students' attitudes towards the academic writing course at TraVinh University in order to emphasize advantages and challenges of the course. Based on the findings of the study, it was evident that all learners had positive attitudes towards the academic writing course and recognized its constructive benefits. One of the key findings from the data analysis was that the academic writing skills were indispensable for their graduation thesis. However, it was also ascertained that students encountered obstacles during the learning process, with the lack of grammar knowledge being the most notable challenge due to the influence of their native language.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Recommendations for students

Although the study still has some limitations, it conduces to the current literature about EFL juniors' experiences in the discipline of academic writing in terms of their attitudes towards the academic writing course and their challenges during this course. According to the results, some suggestions are made for learners. First, as previously indicated, the academic writing course enables them to achieve numerous advantages for their present and future academic education. As a consequence, they should prioritize to choose this subject when selecting the electives even though it is a non-mandatory subject in the training program of TraVinh University.

Next, the findings of the research also highlighted students' ubiquitous obstacles when learning academic writing, grammar in particular. In order to improve grammatical errors, students are able to review grammar structures on their own or by asking their peers or professors for help. Similarly, if they do not have a deep knowledge of collocations, they can check the dictionary carefully before writing to avoid basic grammatical mistakes. It is crucial for students to avoid translating directly from Vietnamese to English while writing, as the grammatical structures of the two languages differ remarkably. Thus, they may easily make more grammatical mistakes if they translate word by word. Lastly, they should seek help from their professors, peers or senior students when encountering other difficulties.

5.2.2 Recommendations for the school

To gain better teaching outcomes, academic writing courses should ideally include materials that assist students in composing scientific papers. Those courses should be organized in stages, progressing from general ideas to specific ones, covering some key areas like how to write thesis statements and supporting descriptions, and how to divide sections of scientific writing. The courses should cover some of the genres of academic writing that are often used in scientific work presentations such as description, comparison and contrast and argumentation. Apart from that, the academic writing classes should cover topics like paraphrasing, drawing conclusions, and creating reference lists.

5.2.3 Recommendations for further research

As this study only focuses on third-year EFL attitudes towards the academic writing course, the further research can be conducted on both juniors and seniors' attitudes towards this course to find out and compare the disparities of attitudes among them. In addition, future research can be carried out to explore teachers' attitudes towards teaching this subject and their difficulties during their teaching process. Moreover, further research can investigate other challenges that students have to face when learning academic writing. Finally, to maximize the scope of their analysis, the study should conduct both questionnaires and interviews.

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