A Study of Academic Vocabulary Use by Advanced EFL University Students

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Abstract

Academic writing is one of the most essential skills for university students' success during and beyond their study. Successful academic writing requires having peculiar grammatical and lexical features. One of the best-known features of academic writing style is the use of academic words. In light of these facts, the current study has been conducted to explore different aspects of academic words use by EFL students. The main aim of the study is to discover how proficient the students are in using academic words in general. In addition, the study aims to know the size and frequency of academic words that students demonstrate in their writing. It is also expected from the study to gain insight into students' vocabulary knowledge through using academic words. Making students' academic word list (hereafter *AWL*) and classifying them based on the Coxhead's sub-lists is the ultimate goal of the study. For this purpose, a specialized corpus of 34 argumentative essays was collected from advanced EFL students. The essays were analyzed and interpreted by a well-established web-based corpus tool, '*Text Inspector*'. An outstanding conclusion drawn from the study is that the Kurdish EFL students of advanced level have a satisfactory proficiency in using academic words in general. Although

the size of academic vocabulary observed in the essays is relatively small, students have proved their determined vocabulary knowledge as most of the used words are among the high frequency ones and contain various derivational forms.

Keywords: Academic Writing, Academic Word List, EFL Essays, Advanced EFL Students

1. Background
1.1 Introduction

Academic writing is one of the most prominent skills in academic contexts. Besides having deep knowledge about the subject content, academic writing makes it necessary for writers to own profound awareness of academic style and high proficiency in writing skills. At university, students need to learn and produce academic writing to fulfill their study requirements. As far as English department is concerned, EFL students at university are exposed to learning academic writing and are expected to complete their writing tasks and assignments accordingly. Mastering academic writing can be a challenging task for Kurdish undergraduate students as they transfer from a Kurdish-medium to English-medium Education once they start college. The case deteriorates for the students whose English is not well enough to keep up with academic study requirements. Hence, the English Department of College of Basic Education at Salahaddin University – Hawler (SUH) provides the students with balanced sets of courses in terms of language and content. The language courses include the instruction of a variety of language skills and areas. Compared to other skills, writing has been given a lion share by in the departments' curricula. Students of English department receive different writing courses throughout all four academic years. This attempt has a two-fold indication factor. On the one hand writing skill

is seen as crucial for success in academic study and beyond; on the other hand, it is widely admitted that writing, especially in a foreign language, is the most sophisticated skill that requires adequate knowledge, training and awareness. Hereby, this study strives to examine how well the students have succeeded in improving their academic writing capacity.

1.2 Academic Register

Academic writing is recognized for its peculiar style and register which respectively entail the use certain grammatical structures and word choice varieties. Academic writing encompasses a number of aspects, and the most focused aspect is the use of academic vocabulary. As Biber (2006) asserts, scholars have been successful in describing the linguistic features of academic language use from different viewpoints. And one of the outstanding linguistic characteristics of academic language is academic vocabulary (Csomay, 2005). According to Addullateef and Amer (2020), the learning of academic words receives priority in order and lion share in amount in academic writing instructional courses.

The choice of words to be taught and learned in EFL formal contexts has been a long-debated issue by many researchers, such as Lu (2013); Myers and Chang (2009); and Schmitt (2008). Based on the findings of their researches, Celce Murcia (2002) and Schleppegrell et al. (2004) back up the fact that, in the context of university, it is significant to focus on the general and field-specific academic words as these words are more likely to be encountered by students. In support of this act of word choices, a principle is being raised: the language instructional materials should contain in-use words of real life (Biber and Reppen 2002). Therefore, Batstone & Ellis (2009) strongly suggest that the classroom activities for

vocabulary practice ought to be charged with functional-situational scenarios.

1.3 Academic Vocabulary

So, it is high time to review what exactly academic vocabulary is before moving on to the further investigation of proposed wordlists. According to Farrell (1990, p. 11), academic words are "formal, context-independent words with a high frequency and/or wide range of occurrence across scientific disciplines, not usually found in basic general English courses: words with high frequency across scientific disciplines". Breaking down the pieces of information provided by this expressive definition, it is understood that academic words should hold certain characteristics, including formality, meaning-maintenance across various contexts, frequent uses, and uniqueness. Teachers and scholars agree that vocabularies entail much more than the collection of mere words; thus, they have to be approached contextualized while studied or taught (Nation, 2013). In relation to this matter, Yang (2015) explains how vocabulary knowledge has a straightforward, positive effect on the English learners reading and writing skills. Vocabulary knowledge particularly refers to the vocabulary size and knowledge depth which all together crucially influences the Learners' performance of writing (Kilic, 2019). That is why researchers have put substantial efforts into studying the significance of language learners' knowledge of academic words.

Alkhatih (2021) claims that through teaching activities students are intensively exposed to the use correct academic grammar and lexis choices for the various essay types, such argumentative and descriptive, yet it is not guaranteed if the students become capable of employing these academic words effectively in the proper context. Thus, this current research paper is devoted to study the use of

academic vocabulary in Advanced EFL-student argumentative essays in terms of size, frequency order, and word family member sub-lists.

1.4 Academic Word Lists

Based on the quantity, frequency, distribution, meaning, and activeness measures, separate lists of academic vocabulary have been recognized. Common Core Wordlists, commonly known as Academic Word Lists (AWL), was created by Avril Coxhead (2000). AWL is a common list of vocabulary among various study fields, that is, AWL is a general, not a discipline-specific, list of academic words. Gardner and Davies' (2014) collected and published a more recent academic vocabulary list and named it the Academic Vocabulary List (AVL). Specialized Wordlists is another collection that serves the needs of specific academic fields of study (Li and Qian, 2010; Liu and Han, 2015). As its analysis model, the present study has depended on the newly-researched Coxhead's (2011) Academic Word List (AWL) in which the most common academic words have been listed based on their incidence classification from high to low.

Building academic wordlists for students has a long history in English for Academic Purposes (Hyland and Tse, 2007). The relationship between academic vocabulary uses and EFL students' writing quality is significant. Research findings have proved that students' writing quality improves with increased academic vocabulary knowledge and size (Csomay and Prades, 2018). Academic vocabulary is seen to be effective for writing and school performance in general (Schuth et al., 2017).

So far, as mentioned earlier, a number of lists for academic words that supposedly are common and university students are likely to encounter have been created by different scholars. But the Coxhead's (2000) AWL is regarded as the first collection of 570-word families of

academic vocabulary that has been utilized in the development teaching materials. Ranging from most frequent to least frequent, the AWL has been divided into ten sub-lists. The AWL words are considered as an important measure to learners' academic competence. (Gholaminejad and Anani Sarab, 2021). Nation (2015) claims that the AWL, all together with General Service List (GSL) covers almost all words of texts in various academic disciplines.

Since the Coxhead's (2000) AWL is taken as the analysis model for the students' writing in the current study, it is a good idea to describe the significance and nature of these academic words through the following aspects. The size of the corpus from which AWL is built contained 3.5 million tokens. This can be regarded as a relatively large representative data for the acts of teaching and researching. Another advantageous feature is that the corpus texts used in the establishment of AWL covered a range of different academic genres, namely textbooks, book chapters, laboratory manuals, and journal articles. The texts of the AWL included 28 subject fields grouped under seven general categories and four disciplines (Art, Law, Commerce and Science). The source of the corpus texts originated from a number of English-speaking countries, such as the USA, New Zealand, Britain, Canada and Australia. The counting unit of the AWL is set up by word families. In other words, there are 570 word-family items on the list, and the family word members all together make up 3,112 items. For example, the words *approachable, approached, approaches, approaching,* and *unapproachable* all belong to the '*approach*' word family. So, they are all together regarded as various items of a single word family. The 570 word families are arranged based on their frequency in corpus texts. The least frequent word family on the AWL is found 100 times on the whole corpus.

2. Literature Review

There are successful previous studies on various aspects of academic writing, such as lexical characteristics or linguistic patterns (Biber et al. 2002). Scholars, besides studying grammatical features, have paid close attention to the lexical investigation of texts in academic contexts like university. Research on academic vocabulary in non-native writings of EFL students have been the interest of many researchers. For instance, Chen, et al. (2009) carried out a study on academic vocabulary use in management and business journals. Major findings of the study discovered that academic words found in management and business journal abstracts were more frequent than the academic words used in the abstracts of English Journal papers in Taiwan context. Omidian et al. (2017) studied the use of academic words in native and non-native English writings of high school students. In their investigation they found out that EFL school students have demonstrated a remarkably weaker performance and less knowledge of academic words in comparison to L1 students. While their performance at the academic phrase level does not have a significant difference with those of L1 students.

The studies reviewed above precisely address the use of academic vocabulary in various textual materials using different research methodologies. The studies are either conducted in school contexts or have investigated academic words in disciplines such as business and management. The value of this present study belongs to its concentration on examining academic vocabulary use in university context by senior EFL students. The study aims to verify how able the students have become in employing academic words after four academic years of study at university. The study results are expected to be beneficial for understanding students' knowledge of academic words and proposing remedial suggestions for teaching academic writing and vocabulary.

3. Research Aims and Questions

The present study is conducted as part of a greater work - a PhD dissertation on analyzing linguistic writing features of university EFL students. The dissertation addresses a number of prominent linguistic characteristics of non-native writing compared to the writing of native speakers of the relatively same variables. This study is particularly dedicated to investigating the use one of the main writing linguistic features, academic vocabulary.

By looking into the EFL context of College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University, one can easily notice that great importance has been attached to language skills, especially writing. The students who study in the English department experience a series of writing courses throughout the four academic years. Writing courses range from building sentences to writing essays. In addition to these, writing in the academic style is studied as a separate course to enhance the students' writing performance for academic success. Vocabulary and reading modules are also available in the departments' curriculum to provide adequate vocabulary size to the students for late writing purposes. Hence, the rationale behind this study stems from the above facts. The study wants to explore how proficient the students have become in using academic words in their writing after their exposure to such a plenty writing and vocabulary courses. The implications of the study will finally indicate the size of the academic vocabulary they have learned, and the effectiveness of the teaching quality they have received. What academic words have been used and how they are used will be analyzed, as well.

Simply put, this study aims at investigating the writings of Advanced college EFL students for analyzing academic vocabulary use in terms of size, frequency and manner. The analyses of EFL students' academic words in writing is done in accordance with the

Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List (AWL). In the light of the study aims, the researcher has developed below research questions to be answered by the study:

1. How proficient are the Advanced EFL students at the College of Basic Education in using academic words in writing?
2. Is the size of the used academic words adequate compared to their essay length?
3. How frequent are the used academic words according to the frequency sub-lists of AWL?
4. What are the most common academic words used in their writing?

Based on the research design factors as sample students' language level and their past learning exposure (as explained before), the researcher hypothesizes that the students will demonstrate a substantial command of English academic words use in their writing. It is also expected that the students will use of the top five frequent sub-lists on AWL of varying word family forms.

4. Methodology

In the pursuit of achieving research aims and arriving at solid answers for the research questions, the researcher followed a corpus-based methodology for designing the data collection method and for conducting the analysis of the data. Therefore, it was made necessary to collect samples of EFL student academic writing. For doing so, an adequate number of essays were separated from the non-native corpus texts originally compiled for writing the doctorate dissertation – as explained in section three. An overview of the research design procedures is explained below.

Scope and participants

This study is particularly devoted to examining academic vocabulary use in non-native essays. For this, high-level EFL students were decided upon to become the subjects of the research. The research population targeted the English Department students of College of Basic Education at Salahaddin university to fulfill the study on. Since the aim was to discover how well the EFL students perform in academic writing and vocabulary, the study was made more restricted to the participants who have experienced learning these skills. Thus, only senior students were considered. The number of sample students in the last stage was still more than necessary for this study, so only 34 senior students at English department were selected based on non-random sampling criterion. That is, the students' levels were identified through administering a comprehensive 70-item general English placement test to them, then the target subjects were separated for the research action.

Data Collection

For collecting the data required for the study, a task of argumentative essay writing was created for the sample students to respond to. Provisionally, the task included ten various topics (writing prompts) for the students to write on, but after checking both the validity and reliability measures of the prompts the prompts were narrowed down to four well-built writing instructions. The quality check of the writing prompts was achieved by three experienced writing tutors at university in accordance to an established checklist – see 'Appendix IV'. The checklist was comprehensively evaluative to miscellaneous aspects of essay writing instructions, including difficulty level, context-suitability, familiarity, sensitivity, clarity, essay type-compatibility, and topic-equity (bias free). All these

aspects of the prompts were evaluated in comparison to students' learning context, information background, and socio-cultural characteristics. After modifying and improving instructions, the students were asked to write an argumentative essay type of no less than 500 words on one of the given topics. So that the students are capable of producing an essay according to the aforementioned qualities, no time limit was regulated for them. That is, the students had the advantage of untimed writing task to dedicate their ultimate possible performance to the task, and have adequate time and space for showing their optimum vocabulary use proficiency. In total, 100 essays were collected, yet small corpus of only 34 essays of the Advanced EFL students have been devoted to be examined by the present study.

Corpus Analysis

The type and nature of the data collected for the present study have been considered and treated as a specialized corpus. A specialized corpus, as described by Koester (2010), works with one specific genre of text, be it research essays, speeches, newspaper articles, or business publications. The size of a specialized size is relatively small as it is of a narrowed focus of researchers. Therefore, one single researcher can build and work on a specialized alone and with ease. Thus, the researcher has followed the corpus linguistics methodology in the data analysis, a small corpus a of EFL student essays. Corpus linguistics has been defined by Baker (2010, p. 93) as an outstanding discipline that deals with analyzing a corpus (a collection of texts) by using related computer software. The derivation of certain textual aspects, which were difficult to be conducted by a human, is now facilitated thanks to corpus linguistics. More specifically, Breyer (2011, p. 1) points out that empirical analysis of

corpora "has enabled researchers to discover patterns of language usage that had previously remained hidden from view". He also moves on to the analysis part and reassures that such language patterns can be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively since specific language function performance is to be analyzed.

Keeping up with the above description and procedures, 'Text Inspector' - one the best web-based corpus tools for the analysis of writing lexical features – has been used. Text Inspector is a great analysis tool that works on large texts using more than 200 metrics benchmarked to CEFR. As far as this study is concerned, the researcher has utilized Text Inspector's AWL feature that enables the researcher to analyze and categorize the academic words in given texts based on the Coxhead's (2000) AWL database.

5. Findings and Discussion

In this section, the linguistic analyses of the EFL students' essays are presented and the findings are discussed. In accordance with the study's main aims and methodology, a quantitative approach has been taken in analyzing and interpreting the data obtained from the target corpus. The findings of elicited from the analysis are then reported in detail in a way that responds to the research questions.

Since the main purpose of the study is to explore the use of academic words, the researcher found it reasonable to first examine the length of the essays in order to calculate the ratio of unique words to the total number of words in an essay. This calculation procedure is called 'Type-Token Ratio (TTR)'. *Type* indicates the number of unique words used in the text without repetitions. While *Token* includes the overall words in a text with all the repetitions being included. To explain this, the first sentence of this paragraph has the definite article "*the*" repeated eight times; accordingly, they are

regarded as eight *tokens*, but only one *type*. According to the *Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition - 'CARLA'*, TTR is a complexity measure that records the richness of a text in terms of lexical feature and vocabulary variety. TTR is useful to discover whether the EFL students have used identical words recurrently or have employed a range of different vocabulary in their essays. This type of ratio is calculated through dividing the total number of unique words (types) by the total number of all words in a given piece of writing. A text I said to have a great lexical richness when its TTR is close to 1.

The table below depicts the essay length of the Advanced EFL students who were supposed to write a 500-word argumentative essay. Using 'Text Inspector' corpus analysis web tool, the token count, type count and type-token ratio of all the essays were calculated. These descriptive statistical data help us understand how proficient the advanced students of English department are in writing an essay having a rich lexical quality. The number of the unique words (types) can be quite beneficial in identifying the exact number of unique academic words as well.

Table 1: Type-Token Ratio of the EFL Essays

Essays	Token Count	Type Count	Type/Token Ratio	Essays	Token Count	Type Count	Type/Token Ratio
1	346	158	0.46	**18**	476	183	0.38
2	212	120	0.57	**19**	403	151	0.37
3	527	214	0.41	**20**	356	169	0.47
4	473	225	0.48	**21**	544	191	0.35
5	334	177	0.53	**22**	566	236	0.42
6	386	156	0.40	**23**	351	142	0.4
7	458	207	0.45	**24**	437	219	0.5
8	344	186	0.54	**25**	406	211	0.52
9	785	277	**0.35**	**26**	288	155	0.54

10	361	168	0.47	27	438	218	0.5
11	221	130	0.59	28	345	193	0.56
12	154	101	**0.66**	29	413	190	0.46
13	465	225	0.48	30	355	150	0.42
14	491	176	0.36	31	221	116	0.52
15	400	149	0.37	32	**746**	**274**	**0.37**
16	338	178	0.53	33	408	170	0.42
17	517	188	0.36	34	303	128	0.42

By having a close look at the values illustrated in the above table, a few essential implications are observed. Firstly, only five students have written up to 500 hundred words. Secondly, the students have used many of the same words repeatedly in their essays. Considering the data in the second column (type count), it is apparent that the number of unique words used by the sample students is mostly half or less than the number of tokens. The result is best explained in the last column which demonstrates the Type-token Ratio. The highest TTR result recorded by this study is 0.66. this is interpreted in the way that only 66% of the words used in this student's essay is unique and the rest are just repetition of these ratio. The other 33 students have shown lower performance in this regard. The TTR results gradually lower from 0.66 until reaches 0.35. In *Table 2* the total token and type counts of all 34 essays are shown. As it appears, the average TTR of overall essays is too small (less than half). The value (0.44) means that only 44% of the words used are unique, the rest of them (that is 66%) have just been repeated repeatedly. This raises serious questions for what might be the causes of such an unsatisfactory outcome of vocabulary variety in Advanced EFL students' writing.

Table 2: Overall Type-Token Ratio of the EFL Essays

Total Token Count	Total Type Count	Total Type/Token Ratio
13868	*6131*	*0.44 (44%)*

For examining the academic words used by the students, only the type of the words has been considered. This way, the unique academic words found in each essay separately are counted. The table below shows the statistics of academic words found in the total types of all essays collectively. It seems that the result is not interesting as academic words constitute a very low percentage of the total type words.

Table 3: Ratio of Academic Words to Total Type Words

Statistics	Total Type Words	Overall Used Academic Words
Count	**6131**	**386**
Percentage	**100%**	**6.29%**

In *Table 3*, the total number of academic words used by the students is calculated, which is 386 words. But Table 4 presents more detailed data in which the words are subclassified into ten smaller lists according to their frequency from the most common to the least. It is worth remembering that this classification is based on the Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List (AWL).

It is great to have discovered that the students have used words from all ten sub-lists. more importantly, the first five AWLs contain the majority of words which means that students are aware and capable of utilizing the common and active words. Similarly, the words that are not that frequent have been seldom used by the students, which is a positive indication of students' vocabulary knowledge.

Table 4: Frequency of Academic Words Used by EFL Students According to AWL Sub-lists.

Essays	AWL All	AWL1	AWL2	AWL3	AWL4	AWL5	AWL6	AWL7	AWL8	AWL9	AWL 10
1	16	6	5	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
2	5	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
3	11	0	0	1	3	3	2	1	1	0	0
4	23	8	4	1	3	3	2	1	0	0	1
5	6	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	0
6	7	1	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
7	23	2	5	2	2	8	1	1	0	0	2
8	16	6	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
9	20	3	5	3	4	0	0	2	2	1	0
10	11	2	2	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	0
11	12	0	7	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
12	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	12	5	0	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
14	16	4	1	3	3	3	0	1	0	1	0
15	15	5	3	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	1
16	11	0	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
17	10	1	2	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
18	5	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	5	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
21	13	3	2	1	2	4	0	1	0	0	0
22	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	18	2	3	5	3	1	0	0	0	3	1
25	20	4	2	1	6	3	0	0	3	1	0
26	7	2	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0

27	21	2	4	4	2	3	0	3	0	3	0
28	14	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	1	0	1
29	7	1	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
30	12	2	4	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
31	8	2	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
32	8	2	1	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0
33	9	3	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
34	6	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
Total	*386*	*74*	*91*	*44*	*60*	*54*	*11*	*21*	*10*	*11*	*10*
%	*100*	*19.17*	*23.58*	*11.40*	*15.54*	*13.99*	*2.85*	*5.44*	*2.59*	*2.85*	*2.59*

The data above represents the statistics of the unique words used by each student separately (386 words). Yet, if all the students' essays are analyzed collectively, the number of academic words lowers to only 200. This is because the aggregation of the same words repeated in two or more essays are disregarded. This number is less than half the number of words on Coxhead's AWL which contains 570 words. Nevertheless, for such type of study and number of essays, 200 of the most common academic words by EFL students should not be underestimated. Hence, the list of the academic words used by the EFL students are presented in the following two tables. The words are listed according to their frequency rank from high to low.

Table 5: List Academic Words Used by EFL Students (Ranked from most to least frequent words)

Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.
committing	13	individuals	3	sources	2
normal	12	majority	3	summary	2
conclusion	11	obvious	3	academic	1
commit	10	obviously	3	accessing	1

aware	7	psychologists	3	achieving	1
generation	7	role	3	adults	1
authority	6	style	3	alternatively	1
impact	6	symbol	3	ambiguous	1
negative	6	tradition	3	apparently	1
alternatives	5	traditional	3	appropriate	1
community	5	traditions	3	areas	1
consequences	5	aspects	2	assure	1
source	5	authorities	2	author	1
sum	5	benefit	2	authors	1
affect	4	brief	2	automatically	1
alternative	4	concentrate	2	awareness	1
culture	4	consequence	2	capacity	1
exposed	4	contact	2	cease	1
interact	4	convince	2	chapter	1
involved	4	convincing	2	circumstances	1
option	4	definitely	2	clarify	1
period	4	experts	2	clarifying	1
positive	4	factors	2	comment	1
released	4	hence	2	commitment	1
reliable	4	illustrate	2	commits	1
affected	3	jobs	2	communication	1
appreciate	3	mental	2	conclude	1
beneficial	3	mentality	2	confirm	1
benefits	3	periods	2	constant	1
committed	3	process	2	contribute	1
contrary	3	psychological	2	contribution	1
create	3	psychology	2	convinced	1
created	3	regulations	2	creating	1
individual	3	reluctant	2	creative	1

Table 5: List Academic Words Used by EFL Students (Ranked from most to least frequent words) - Continued

Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.
cultural	1	lectures	1	relevant	1
cultures	1	logical	1	reliance	1
cycle	1	logically	1	requiring	1
definition	1	major	1	researches	1
demonstrate	1	media	1	resident	1
demonstrated	1	mentally	1	reverse	1
depressed	1	motivate	1	secure	1
diminishes	1	motives	1	select	1
economic	1	nonetheless	1	sequence	1
environment	1	normalize	1	significant	1
environmental	1	norms	1	specific	1
expose	1	obtain	1	specifically	1
exposing	1	obtained	**1**	stable	1
exposure	1	occur	1	status	1
focus	1	outcome	1	survey	1
foundation	1	outcomes	1	survived	1
guarantee	1	overall	1	symbols	1
highlight	1	paragraphs	1	task	1
highlighting	1	participate	1	temporary	1
ignore	1	participated	1	topic	1
illegal	1	perspective	1	transfer	1
illustrates	1	phase	1	trigger	1
impacts	1	phenomenal	1	unstable	1
insight	1	phenomenon	1	varied	1
institution	1	physically	1	violate	1
instructors	1	plus	1	violated	1
interacting	1	predict	1	violating	1
interaction	1	prior	1	violation	1

involve	1	priority	**1**	whereas	1
issue	1	psychologist	1	whereby	1
issues	1	range	1		
journals	1	rejected	1		
justified	1	rejects	**1**		
justify	1	releasing	1		

The above long list of the students' words is arranged according to their frequency rank from the highest to the lowest. So, in order to have a better picture of where these words fit and how common they are, they have been classified into the10 sub-lists on Coxhead's AWL. Sub-list one (conventionally tagged as AWL1) includes the most common words used in academic settings across various disciplines, whereas sub-list ten (AWL10) contains the least common ones though. This classification is shown in the 10 successive tables that follow. Letter *F* on the right of tables represents the frequency of the words on each sub-list. While *N* is the number of unique academic words of each sub-list. The Percentage value refers to the portion dedicated to each sub-list of words from the used 200 words. To explain, let's take AWL1 in *Table 6* an example in which the number of unique words that fit into this class is 37. Compared to the overall list of the 200 words, the percentage of 37 to 200 gives out the result of 18.5%. The results can be finally interpreted as simply as that 18.5% of the words used by Advanced EFL students belong to the most common class or sub-list of the AWL. The tables following show the same analysis, thus can be interpreted the same way.

Table 6: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 1				Count and Percentage
authority	majority	creative	occur	
source	role	definition	requiring	
involved	authorities	economic	researches	
period	benefit	environment	significant	**F = 74**
beneficial	factors	environmental	specific	**N = 37**
benefits	periods	illegal	specifically	
create	process	involve	varied	**18.5%**
created	sources	issue		
individual	areas	issues		
individuals	creating	major		

Table 7: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 2				Count and Percentage
normal	traditional	cultures	range	
conclusion	traditions	focus	relevant	
impact	aspects	impacts	resident	
community	consequence	institution	secure	**F = 91**
consequences	regulations	journals	select	**N = 37**
affect	achieving	normalize	survey	
culture	appropriate	obtain	transfer	**18.5%**
positive	chapter	obtained		
affected	conclude	participate		
tradition	cultural	participated		

Table 8: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 3				Count and Percentage
negative	contribute	outcomes		
alternatives	contribution	physically		
alternative	demonstrate	reliance		
interact	demonstrated	sequence		**F = 44**
reliable	illustrates	task		**N = 25**
illustrate	interacting			
alternatively	interaction			**12.5%**
circumstances	justified			
comment	justify			
constant	outcome			

Table 9: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 4				Count and Percentage
committing	obviously	apparently	phase	
commit	concentrate	commitment	predict	**F = 60**
sum	hence	commits	prior	**N = 22**
option	jobs	communication	status	
committed	summary	cycle		**11 %**
obvious	accessing	overall		

Table 10: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 5				Count and Percentage
aware	mental	expose	psychologist	F= 54
generation	mentality	exposing	rejected	N = 28
exposed	psychological	exposure	rejects	
psychologists	psychology	logical	stable	14 %

style	academic	logically	symbols
symbol	awareness	mentally	unstable
contact	capacity	perspective	whereas

The above five sub-lists contain the most common words used in academic writing in various university contexts. The EFL sample students of the current study have been successful in using these words most frequently as opposed to the less common ones. At a glance, it is observed that the percentage of common words used by students starts from 11% to 18%. Whereas the less common words percentage range from 3.5% to 7.5%, as listed in the below five sub-lists.

Table 11: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 6				Count and Percentage
brief	authors	instructors	motivate	**F = 11**
experts	ignore	lectures	motives	**N = 9**
author				**4.5 %**

Table 12: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 7				Count and Percentage
released	confirm	phenomenal	reverse	**F = 21**
contrary	foundation	phenomenon	survived	**N = 15**
definitely	guarantee	priority	topic	
adults	media	releasing		**7.5 %**

Table 13: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 8				Count and Percentage
appreciate	clarify	highlight	paragraphs	**F = 11**
ambiguous	clarifying	highlighting	plus	**N = 9**
automatically				**4.5 %**

Table 14: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 9				Count and Percentage
assure	insight	trigger	violating	**F = 11**
cease	norms	violate	violation	**N = 11**
diminishes	temporary	violated		**5.5 %**

Table 15: Classification of EFL Students' AWL.

AWL: Sub-list 10				Count and Percentage
convince	reluctant	depressed	whereby	**F = 10** **N = 7**
convincing	convinced	nonetheless		**3.5 %**

Up to this point, academic words used by EFL students have been analyzed independently. In other words, the study has worked on the count of academic words for each single essay, the count of typical academic words found from all essays collectively, and the

classification of these words depending on their ranks from most common to least common. Now, since the analysis of the essays was based on the Coxhead's (2000) AWL as its model, let us compare the AWL of Advanced EFL students to the Coxhead's to see the differences between them and gain an insight into the students' proficiency in using academic words.

The comparison between Coxhead and EFL Students' AWLs are summarized and presented in *Table 16.* Taking overall count of academic words, the students have demonstrated the use of 35% from the well-established AWL. This rate appears to be low for advanced students when considered as a mere number. Nonetheless, for such a limited sample of students, essays length, and writing topic variety, one can get convinced by having found 200 unique academic words of the most common type. As for the AWL separate sub-lists, it is perceptible that the majority of the words that students have used fall into the top five lists which are the most common ones. These results can be considered quite satisfactory performance on the part of the students.

Table 16: Statistical Comparison of Coxhead and Advanced EFL Students' AWLs.

AWL Type Tag	Coxhead's (2000) AWL	Advanced EFL Students' AWL	Ratio Percentage of EFL Students' AWL to Coxhead's AWL
ALL AWL count	**570**	**200**	**35.09%**
AWL1	60	37	61.67%
AWL2	60	37	61.67%
AWL3	60	25	41.67%
AWL4	60	22	36.67%
AWL5	60	28	46.67%
AWL6	60	9	15%
AWL7	60	15	25%

AWL8	60	9	15%
AWL9	60	11	18.33%
AWL10	30	7	23.33%

The following figure shows the correlation between academic words used by EFL students and the Coxhead's AWL in both frequency account and percentage for ease of noticing.
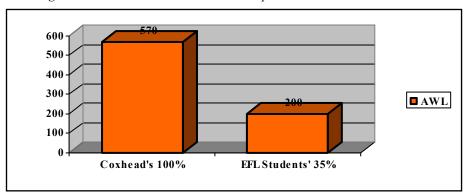
Figure 1: EFL Students' AWL Count Compared to Coxhead's

6. Conclusions and Implications

The purpose behind conducting the present study was rooted in the significance of using academic words in essay writing for EFL students. Therefore, the study aimed at exploring various aspects of academic words in non-native essays at university context. Particularly, the subjects of the study were advanced students of English department at College of Basic Education. Utilizing a corpus methodology, the essays were linguistically analyzed, then statistically calculated. Putting the analysis and results all together, certain relevant interpretations become indispensable. All in all, the EFL students suffer from a lack of vocabulary variety as their lexical richness ratio is markedly low. This has probably led to the minimal rate academic words used by the students compared to the overall

word types. Nonetheless, the number of academic words used is quite satisfactory if considered independently (regardless of the Type-Token Ratio results), and in comparison, to the sample essays number and length. More importantly, it was found that the students have had adequate exposure to a wide range of writing-related learning and teaching materials since they have used words from all frequency-based classes of AWL. This can be attributed to their vast academic vocabulary size. Another inference drawn from the classified words employed by the students is that they seem to have vocabulary knowledge. This last conclusion is backed by the evidence that various derivational forms of words have been used; additionally, the size of common words exceed the size of uncommon ones. That is, the use of academic words decreases gradually from the most to the least frequent sub-lists (AWL1 – AWL10). Last but not least, less than half of the words on Coxhead's AWL were found in the EFL essays, which entail the necessity of serious pedagogical and didactic intervention on the part of both teachers and English depart headship. Students' performance, in this regard, can be enhanced through incorporating newer, authentic and more effective teaching materials and via required reform in writing teaching methodology.

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پوختەی لێکۆڵینەوە

لێکۆڵینەوەیەک لە بارەی بەکارهێنانی وشەی ئەکادیمی

لە لایەن فێرخوازانی زمانی ئینگلیزی لە زانکۆدا

نووسینی ئەکادیمی یەکێکە لە توانا هەرە پێویست و گرنگەکان بۆ سەرکەوتنی قوتابی زانکۆ، چ لە ماوەی خوێندن یان بۆ دوای تەواوکردنی خوێندن. بۆ ئەوەی نووسینی ئەکادیمی بە شێوەیەکی سەرکەوتوو بێتە بەرهەم، زانین و پێڕەوکردنی ڕێزمان و وشەی تایبەت بە خۆی پێویستە. یەکێک لە خەسڵەتە هەرە باوەکانی نووسین بە شێوازی ئەکادیمی بریتییە لە بەکارهێنانی وشەی ئەکادیمی. لەبەر ڕۆشنایی ئەم ڕاستییانە، ئەم لێکۆڵینەوەیە هاتۆتە ئەنجامدان بە مەبەستی دەرخستنی لایەنە جیاوازەکانی بەکارهێنانی وشەی ئەکادیمی لە لایەن قوتابیانی بەشی زمانی ئینگلیزییەوە. مەبەستی سەرەکی ئەم لێکۆڵینەوەیە بۆ زانینی لێهاتووویی قوتابیانە لە بەکارهێنانی وشەی ئەکادیمی لە نووسیندا بە شێوەیەکی گشتی. لێکۆڵینەوەکە، مەبەستییەتی قەبارە و دووبارەبوونەوەی ئەو وشانەی قوتابیان بەکاری دێنن دەربخا. هەروەها ئەمەش لەم لێکۆڵینەوەیە چاوەڕوانکراوە کە تێگەیشتنێکی قووڵ بەدەست بێنێ لە بارەی زانست و زانیاریی قوتابیان لەسەر ئەو وشانەی بەکاری دێنن. دروستکردنی لیستی وشە ئەکادیمییەکان و پۆلێنکردنیان لەسەر بنەمای ئەو دابەشکارییەی کۆکسهێد کردوویەتی ئامانجی کۆتایی ئەم لێکۆڵینەوەیەن. بۆ ئەم مەبەستانە، ٣٤ قوتابی زمانی ئینگلیزی کە لە ئاستی پێشکەوتوودا بوون داوایان لێکرا وتارێکی ئارگیومێنت-ئامێز بنووسن لەسەر یەکێک لەو ناونیشانانەی پێیاندرابوو. دوای تەواوبوون و کۆکردنەوەیان، وتارەکان شیکرانەوە و لێکدانەوەیان بۆ کرا لە ڕێگای یەکێک لە باشترین بەرنامەکانی ئینتەرنێت بە ناوی 'پشکنەری دەق'. یەکێک لە دیارترین دەرەنجامەکانی ئەم لێکۆڵینەوەیە ئەوەیە کە قوتابیانی (کورد)ی ئاست بەرز لە زمانی ئینگلیزی، بە شێوەیەکی گشتی، توانایەکی دڵخۆشکەریان هەیە لە بەکارهێنانی وشەی ئەکادیمی. یەکێکی دیکە لە دەرەنجامەکان ئەمەیە کە سەرەڕای ئەوەی ژمارەی ئەو وشە ئەکادیمییەی بەکارهاتوون لە لایەن قوتابیان تا ڕاددەیەک کەمە، بەڵام قوتابیان سەڵماندوویانە کە زانیارییان هەیە لەبارەی ئەو وشانە، چونکە زۆربەی وشە بەکارهاتووەکان ئەوانەن کە زۆر باون، هەروەها ڕوونانی جۆراوجۆریان بۆ کراوە.

وشە سەرەکییەکان: نووسینی ئەکادیمی، لیستی وشە ئەکادیمییەکان، دەقی ئینگلیزی وەک زمانی بێگانە، قوتابیانی ئاستبەرزی زمانی ئینگلیزی.

الملخص

دراسة استخدام المفردات الأكاديمية

من قبل طلبة الجامعة المتقدمين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

تعد الكتابة الأكاديمية إحدى أهم المهارات الأساسية لنجاح طلبة الجامعة أثناء الدراسة وبعدها. بحيث تتطلب الكتابة الأكاديمية الناجحة وجود سمات نحوية ومفردات خاصة بها. ومن أهم هذه السمات؛ أسلوب الكتابة الأكاديمية بمعنى استخدام الكلمات الأكاديمية. وفي ضوء هذه الحقائق، تم إجراء الدراسة الحالية لاستكشاف جوانب مختلفة من الكلمات الأكاديمية التي يستخدمها طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. الهدف الرئيس من الدراسة هو الكشف عن مدى إتقان الطلبة لاستخدام الكلمات الأكاديمية بشكل عام. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تهدف الدراسة أيضاً إلى معرفة حجم وتكرار الكلمات الأكاديمية التي يستخدمها الطلبة في كتاباتهم. ومن المتوقع أيضًا من الدراسة اكتساب نظرة ثاقبة عن مدى معرفة الطلبة للمفردات بشكل عام من خلال استخدام الكلمات الأكاديمية. يعد إنشاء قائمة الكلمات الأكاديمية للطلبة وتصنيفها بناءً على القوائم الفرعية لـ Coxhead هو الهدف النهائي للدراسة. لهذا الغرض، تم جمع مجموعة متخصصة من 34 مقالة جدلية لطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من المستوى المتقدم. وتم تحليل المقالات وتفسيرها بواسطة واحدة من أهم البرامج الموجودة على الانترنت المعروفة بـ"مفتش النص". وكان الاستنتاج المتميز المستخلص من الدراسة هو أن طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من المستوى المتقدم لديهم كفاءة مرضية في استخدام الكلمات الأكاديمية بشكل عام. على الرغم من أن حجم المفردات الأكاديمية التي لوحظت في المقالات صغيرة نسبيًا، إلا أنّ الطلبة أثبتوا معرفتهم المحددة للمفردات، لأن معظم الكلمات المستخدمة هي من الكلمات العالية التردد وتحتوي على أشكال اشتقاق مختلفة.

الكلمات الدالة: الكتابة الأكاديمية، قائمة الكلمات الأكاديمية، مقالات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالمستوى المتقدم.