



**اللجنة الوطنية للتعليم العالي عن بعد**  
**La commission nationale de l'enseignement supérieur à distance**

# Academic Writing and Writing a Research Paper

## Week 02, Sequence 03: Do's and Don'ts of Academic Writing

### Part b: Focus on the Don'ts

# WHY FOCUSING ON THE DON'TS



**If authors avoid what they should not do while writing academically, this will more likely**

- increase readability, hence, citations,
- avoid desk rejection,
- avoid peer-critiques,
- grow visibility,
- gain reputation and recognition.

# ASPECTS OF ACCURACY



Errors in grammar, syntax, and spelling are frustrating and distracting to the reader (Idri, 2016).



# DO NOT

- address the reader **'YOU'**, use the first pronoun **'I, me, my, we, our, us'**

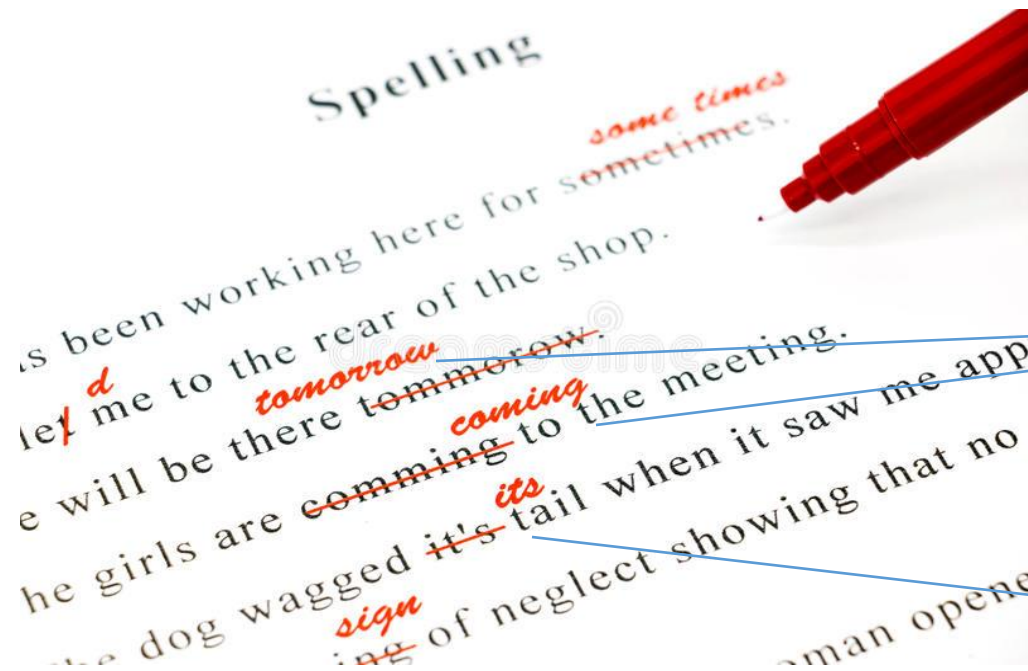
- use **contracted forms**, i.e. **Contractions**, **"It's, that's, can't"**

- use **common vocabulary** of everyday language , **' a bit, kind of, lot of, and so forth, stuff, cool, come up'**.

- conversational opening phrases, that generally figure out in spoken language, **'how if ...?, Here is another example, let us move to'**.

- use coordinating conjunctions; for, and, nor, but, or yet so, the the so-called: **FANBOYS'** at the beginning of a sentence, **"But one should argue ..."**

# EXAMPLE



Spelling errors

Confusing terms

<https://www.dreamstime.com/photos-images/proofreading.html?pg=6>



# DO NOT

- use clichés, proverbs, idioms, slang, jargon, colloquialisms, profanity,



- use **sexist language**, i.e. **gendred** language, '**mankind, he/his/him,**



- use phrases that show **value judgments**, '**I think**', '**I believe**', '**in my opinion**', to avoid giving assumptions,



- Use **assumptions** and **opinions**, These are ***unexamined beliefs*** or ***unsupported statements*** that weaken the strength of the writer's arguments.





# DO NOT

- overgeneralise, advance claims, ‘it is common knowledge that ...’, Algerian scholars do not publish in English”.



Act of writing without a clear purpose, repeating oneself, or using unnecessary words.



- use waffling or repeating words, ideas, and structures, ‘the fact that, the thing that shows that, the table will be given to show that’.







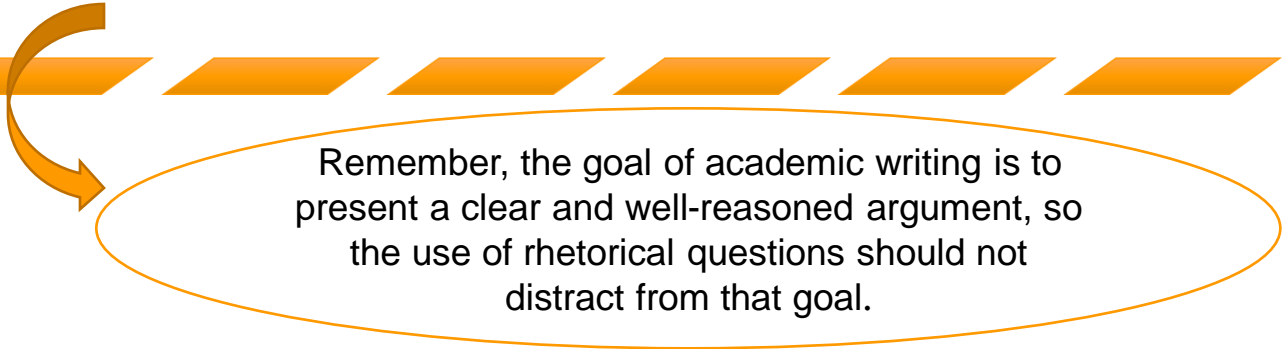
# DO NOT

- use **intensifiers**, 'exceptionally, completely, absolutely, really, remarkably, unusually'

- use bullet points and lists,

**LIST**

- use rhetorical questions this is an informal style never use it as a thesis statement -

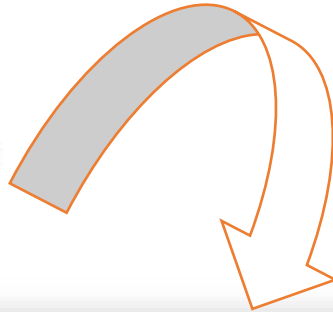


Remember, the goal of academic writing is to present a clear and well-reasoned argument, so the use of rhetorical questions should not distract from that goal.

# COMMON INCONSISTENCIES IN ACADEMIC WRITING

1. Inconsistent citation styles: To mistakenly cite sources using different styles, which can lead to confusion and ambiguity.
2. Inconsistent formatting: Maintain the same formatting style across the paper, following the requirements.
3. Inconsistent tense usage: Do not switch between past and present tense (see 'shift in tense').
4. Inconsistent voice: Do not mix between passive and active voices, leading to inconsistency.
5. Inconsistent capitalisation: Proper nouns, titles, and headings must always be capitalised in academic writing.
6. Inconsistent grammar: Inconsistencies with grammar include verb agreement, subject-verb disagreement, and misplaced modifiers.

... Conversely, applying M-AMBI the explained variability reaches until 43.4%, for linear regression, and 53.8% for logarithmic regression, and the highest explained variability was found in high and low mesohaline and polyhaline areas (53-63%), whilst the lowest explained variability was in the oligohaline area (6%), being the mismatch in the comparison of both methods in terms of degraded-undegraded equivalences was of 16.4% of the cases in M-AMBI, and 12.7% in B-IBI, with a high spatial level of agreement. ...



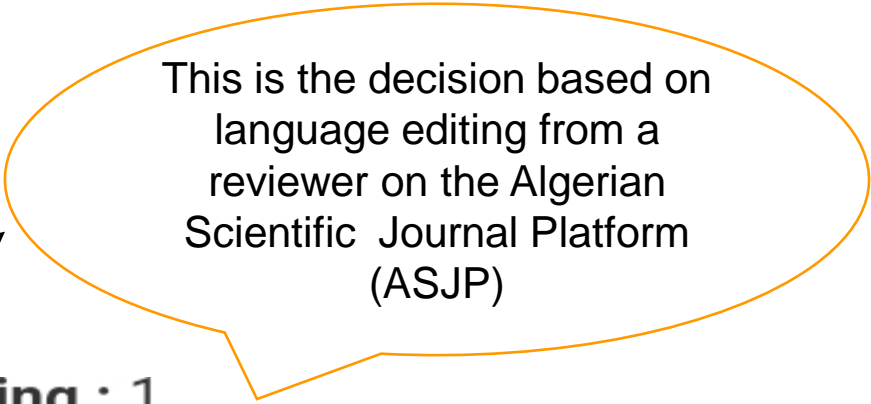
You must save your readers the trouble of guessing what you mean. Look at this complaint from an editor:

(This) paper fell well below my threshold. I refuse to spend time trying to understand what the author is trying to say. Besides, I really want to send a message that they can't submit garbage to us and expect us to fix it. My rule of thumb is that if there are more than 6 grammatical errors in the abstract, then I don't waste my time carefully reading the rest.

<https://www.elsevier.com/connect/writing-a-science-paper-some-dos-and-don>

# TIPS TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC WRITING

- Avoid direct statements of primacy (“This is the first report of...” or “This has not previously been described...”).
- Avoid statements of purpose that simply restate what you are describing. E.g. “We describe our experience with ...”. Add a statement that describes why the reader should care about your experience



This is the decision based on language editing from a reviewer on the Algerian Scientific Journal Platform (ASJP)

**6. Quality of writing : 1**

**7. Confidential comments to the editor in chief :** The document is full of grammatical and structure errors of all sorts. I do not recommend this paper to be pulished.

**8. Comments to the author :** The document is full of errors of all sorts. I recommend you rewrite the whole paper and ask someone else to proofread it before you send it again for publication.

# TIPS TO GO BEYOND THE TEXT

- **Adhere** to the standards required from you,
- **Consider** formatting styles,
- Use the **Word** document formatting appropriately.

# CONCLUSION

- Make the manuscript clear, logical, and easy to read  
**'A good style must first be clear'** (Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, 350 B.C.E.)
- **Follow** directions
- **Know** the audience
- Be **accurate** and avoid faulty syntax (Search engines/indexing databases depend on the accuracy of the title, plain language summary, and abstract - since they use the keywords to identify relevant articles.)

# FINAL NOTES

It is worth noting that **academic** English is not just about grammar and vocabulary, but also about understanding the **conventions** of academic writing. This can include things like citation styles, formatting, and the expectations of different disciplines.

We will go to the next level and deal with the **stages of academic writing** in our subsequent week.



# REFERENCES

- Bordja, B. (2015). Writing the first draft of your science paper — some dos and don'ts - Elsevier Connect. <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/writing-a-science-paper-some-dos-and-donts>
- Idri, N. (2016). Methodological Aspects to Consider in Academic Writing, Workshop presented to Setif 2 University Teachers.



**Thank you  
for your  
attention**

