

Academic writing: the author and the audience assignment



However, how about directly “ in this paper I will focus on one specific feature” ... If one were to look at just one aspect Of academic writing, like the relationship between the author and the audience, one would gain a better understanding on how: the relationships between the author and audience is formulated, the different techniques that writers can use to successfully communicate successfully their thoughts to the audience, and what the relationship means to different people. Section I: My Personal Experience with Academe ICC Writing Writing has always been an enjoyable experience for me.

From the summaries that wrote in High School, to the academic essays wrote last quarter in Core, have seen that ideas flow from one point to the other quite easily for me. Find that writing is my tool to deliver information and communicate my thoughts and opinions to my audience, the reader. However, like any new student taking a college course for the first time, when I was asked to produce a strong academically written paper, quivered. Never before had been asked to produce a written document that presented the information and the materials in an objective manner. It was difficult.

In gig school, I was or I and my classmates we were taught never to use the first person pronoun ‘ I’, in Core this guideline was reinforced but with more leeway. We were allowed to express our opinions on the matter as long as we presented both sides adequately. Writing never becomes easy. One might become good at writing but the process never becomes simpler. During Core last quarter, my professor always gave me excellent feedback on my strengths and weaknesses. Using his advice I would revise my essays, polishing up the slips and mistakes to produce a revised final draft.

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My professors comments would usually revolve round grammatical or syntax errors, and developing my ideas in more depth. As a student in his class I would always write lengthy papers, extending six to seven pages in length. In my eyes, I believed that I was providing enough information for each of the topics that I was discussing; yet he always found areas that I could develop in more detail. He would push me to think outside of the box and try to find some answer to the problems that stated in my thesis.

He wanted to push me to create the best piece of academic writing that possibly could, and with his help I was able to develop as a writer and a thinker. By the end of course was able to see the difference in my own writing. I was grateful that the instructor took the time out to help me develop as a strong writer. Through the course of the class my strengths, writing compelling thesis statements and attention grabbing introductions, doubled and my weakness, grammatical and syntax errors, improved. I truly believe that people need to know not only how to write but also how to effectively communicate effectively to their audience through their writing. Writing is a universal tool of communication; it is in everyone's best interest to learn how to use this tool to his or her advantage. That being said, academic writing is not something that one can master over-night. Being able to produce well-rounded papers requires one to spend a lot of time revising and having a wide array of tools to deal with all the challenges that academic writing throws at you.

Section II: Issues encountered in Academic writing There are several issues that writers have when trying to produce a well-written academic paper:

structure, organization, and remaining objective are just a few. Another <https://assignbuster.com/academic-writing-the-author-and-the-audience-assignment/>

aspect is communicating to the audience. This aspect isn't often the first thing that jumps comes to mind when one sits to write an academic paper. But the audience is a key part of the equation when the author is trying to make his or her point. Who is the author writing for, if not the supposed hypothetical audience?

Who does the author formalize their paper around if not for the hypothetical audience? Communicating with the audience is a key ingredient in the recipe for the perfect academic paper. After examining over twelve articles written by different authors regarding the relationship between the author and the audience, I was able to narrow own my list to eight articles that provided the most detail on the subject. Of the eight articles, three were written by Ken Holland (Directives: Arguments and Engagements in Academic Writing Options of Identity in Academic Writing, and Authority and Invisibility.

Authorial Identity in Academic Writings years- 2001, 2004, 2008). Separate authors wrote the other articles: Geoff Thompson (Interaction in Academic Writing: Learning to Agree with the Reader), David S. Gaffer and Cheryl Glister (Novelty in Academic Writing), Lisa Deed and Andrea Langford (Audience Addressed/linked: The Role of Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy), Barry M. Karol (Writing for Readers: Three Perspectives on Audience), and Vivian Camel (Writing the Process of Discovering Meaning). Each of these articles shed a new light on the relationship between the author and the audience.

Using them, I was able to gather some understanding on just how important the audience is for the writer. Along the way, was also able to gather

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information on some writing techniques that the author can use to create the perfect pull to capture the intended audience's attention, and other useful tips on maneuvering between the author-audience relationship. Section III: Defining Writing and its Novelty Before defining what the author, the audience and the combination of the two represent, it is quintessential to define what writing itself is and what characteristics it portrays.

In the article, *Writing: The Process of Discovering Meaning*, by Vivian Camel (1982), the author states that, "since writers do not seem to know beforehand what it is they will say, writing is a process through which meaning is created" (p. 195). As one writes they produce meaning, but just how much of what is written is in fact 'new; so to speak? In David S. Gaffer and Cheryl Glister article (1989), *Novelty in Academic Writing*, the authors discuss the innovative role that the author has in academic writing.

The authors believe that creating new knowledge is quite difficult, therefore, "writing [links] directly with intellectual change" (p. 287). In their eyes, academic writing is using what is already there and a hint of creativity to produce a new inference. There are four propositions on authorial newness that Gaffer and Glister state are: "First... Newness is less a property of ideas than a relationship between ideas and communities... Second... Authors in capillary communities rely on novelty claims to reference complex processes by which they and their fellows learn ... Third... Newness [is referred to] as shorthand for the standards they must follow to contribute to growth

[and] Finally... Newness turns on a delicate balance between inertia of the past and the drive to change it" (p. 288-289) These four statements made

on the 'newness' of an author's writing bring to light that all writing, be it <https://assignbuster.com/academic-writing-the-author-and-the-audience-assignment/>

academic or not, is building of off previous statements and claims. Since, information is never fully new, unless it is based of research observation, it is essential to represent it in the best way possible to make the most powerful impact to your audience.

Section IV: Ken Halyard's take on Academic Writing As Ken Holland (2002) states in his article Options of Identity in Academic Writing, "[s]tudents often approach university writing assignments with the idea that academic prose is dry and impersonal" (peg. 351). This universally conceived idea that one must male their personality at the door' and subordinate their views, actions, and personality to [academic writings] rigid convention of anonymity' is how academic writing is generally thought of (peg. 1 Holland, however, believes otherwise, he states: " If we simply assume that academic writing is universally impersonal, we disguise variability, and this may have the effect of preventing our students from coming to terms with the specific demands of their disciple. Instead we need to guide them towards an awareness of the options that academic writing offers" (peg. 352). Holland believes that academic writing is more than just being neutral. He believes that disciples define their own terms of an academic paper. In another article that Holland (2002) wrote, Directives: Arguments and

Engagements in Academic Writing, he conducted a study to see how the use of directives varied across the disciplines. He found that, " in some fields [directives] represented a major... Resource... In other field they... [were seen] as patterns of reasoning and interactions" (peg. 230). The relationship between the uses of directives in a field to the type of writing they were doing confirmed his other hypothesis (in the article, Options of Identity in <https://assignbuster.com/academic-writing-the-author-and-the-audience-assignment/>

Academic Writing), that calling academic writing UN oversea limits the students ability to meet the need of their discipline. Ins Ken Highland's articles, Options of Identity in Academic Writing and Directives: Arguments and Engagements in Academic Writing, was able to clearly define clearly how academic writing is perceived and one of the many flaws that it contains. Considering academic writing universal is a generalization of its abilities. Ken Holland pointed our what happens when one generalizes such a term, but for the purpose of seeing the author- audience relationship, will define academic writing as: a form of writing that fulfills the purpose of education in a college or University. Section V: The

Authors Role in Academic Writing Having defined academic writing for the purpose of this paper, I will now move away from what academic writing is perceived as and its flaws to trying to show the relationship between the author and the audience. The authors identity is a key component when one is trying to visualize the relationship between the author and his or hers intended audience. In Ken Halyard's (2001) article, Authority and Invisibility: Authorial Identity in Academic Writing, he states that, " Academic writing is not just about conveying the ' content', it is also about the representation of self... ND] that writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas" (peg. 1091). In his article, Holland states that the most common way to do this is through first personal pronouns like ' I'. He states that, " first person [pronouns are] powerful means by who ICC writers express an identity by asserting their claim to speak as an authority' (peg. 1094). The use of first person pronouns empowers the writer, divergently

bestowing the author with certain credibility and power to claim the statements they made as his/ re own.

Section VI: Defining Audience Having defined a few aspects of the authors identity in academic writing, it is reasonable to say that a perspective on audience should be established as well. In the article, Writing for Readers: Three Perspectives on Audience, by Barry M. Karol (1984) , the author states that in contemporary works, the term ' audience' has gained a diversified meaning. The three views of audience that Karol examines are: " ' rhetorical', ' informational', and the ' social' perspective" (peg. 172). In Krill's analysis of the rhetorical perspective he states that it is the rotational way to view writing as a reader.

Writers must analyze the audience's beliefs, and attitudes so that their message can be adapted to the pa reticular characteristics of their specific audience. After his analysis of the rhetorical perspective, Karol states that, " perhaps because it is the traditional view of the audience, the rhetorical perspective has been... Criticized for several limitations" (p. 174). Out of the several limitations that Karol stated, one limitation was the belief that the writer knows a great deal about the audience or can find out.

Karol argues this notion by stating that since the hitherto perspective originated from oratory, and the audience is a physical manifestation, this notion is legitimate for that particular type of communication, but when writing is discussed, the format of communication is different. The second perspective, informational, is the act of writing to convey information. However easy this sounds, it isn't. Karol states that the, " readers ' process'

messages, transforming linguistic input into a conceptual code that must be integrated with information already stored in memory' (peg. 176).

Convey and storing the information is a difficult problem. When psychology enters the realm of understanding it is important to learn the know-how/s of memory. Taking this information into account, Karol states that to successfully integrate the information into long-term memory each sentence must contain new and old information, thus flowing the information from point to point and linking it so that the reader remembers. The third and final perspective, social, views writing as a social activity that entails the "process of inferring the thoughts and feelings of the other person involved in the act of communication" (peg. 79). Karol believes that thinking of writing, as social activity will yield big breakthroughs in one's works. Some ways of achieving this is through collaborative writing and discussion. Karol says that when writers have experienced others responding to their work, they begin to anticipate the readers' reactions. By doing this several times they develop a sense of audience. Krill's article was a synthesis of these three perspectives on audience. His final note stated that, "focus[ing] too much attention on writing for an audience... may narrow our view of composing, forgetting that writing is also an exploration of ideas, a quest for purpose, and a rejection of oneself" (peg. 183). Conclude somehow: For the purposes of this paper I am using Krill's definition of audience. ? Section VII: The Author- Audience Relationship, a Balance between the two Having defined a few aspects of the author's identity and a perspective of the intended audience for that author's writing, it is reasonable to say that one can now

move on and try to define the several factors that create the author-audience relationship.

In the article, Audience Addressed/Audience invoked: The Role of Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy, by Lisa Deed and Andrea Langford (1984) the authors examine the role of the audience as either being addressed or invoked, and finally in the end they formulate their own definition of how an audience should be perceived. The first audience type that they state is the Audience Addressed. Deed and Langford summarize this section as, " Those who envision audience as addressed emphasize the concrete reality of the writers audience; they also share the assumption that knowledge of this audiences' attitudes, beliefs, and expectations... Are] essential" (peg. 156). Assuming that the author will know the beliefs and the attitudes of their hypothetical audience is asking for a lot. Most authors have a general idea of what their audience believes in, but to say that knowing everything about the audience is a key element of engaging with the audience in ones academic writing is a little far-fetched. Deed and Langford pointed out that the weakness of this model is that it doesn't hold a " balanced understanding of language use, [it] overemphasized one aspect of discourse... [the] audience" (peg. 160).

The Audience Addressed model emphasized the audience too much, so naturally one would assume that the Audience Invoked emphasizes the author. In the other model that Deed and Langford examine, Audience Invoked, they find that " those who envision audience as invoked stress that the audience of a written discourse is a construction of the writer, a ' created fiction'" (peg. 160). To discuss this topic in more detail, Deed and Langford <https://assignbuster.com/academic-writing-the-author-and-the-audience-assignment/>

turn to Russell Long and Walter Ones article, *The Writers Audience is Always a Fiction*. Eng talks about how the author must construct the audience in some sort of role.

Deed and Langford agree with this claim, because they know that when a writer is writing there is no physical audience, the writer has to image the audience hat he or she wishes to address. However, Deed and Langford believe that Eng has over simplified the diversity between an oral and written communication situation. Deed and Langford summarize the shortcomings of One's article as: " He fails... To acknowledge that readers' own experiences, expectations, and beliefs do play a central role in their reading of a text, and that the writer who does not consider the needs and interests of his audience risks losing that audience" (peg. 65). Each of these two models had some shortcoming. The model, however, that Deed and Langford described in the ND of their article was a summation of the two models. Deed and Luncheonettes authors drew from the two models strengths to create their interpretation of what an audience-author relationship should be. Deed and Langford state that, " It is the writer who, as a writer and reader of his or her own text, is guided by a sense of purpose and by the particularities of a specific rhetorical situation, established the range of potential roles an audience may play/" (peg. 165-166).

Deed and Langford believe that the elements that are required for the author-audience relationship will shift and change according to each writing task. Section VIII: How to Create the Pull Now that a balance has been created between the emphasis of the author and that of the audience, it is time to address some techniques that the author can use to lure his or her

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reader to engage with the writing. In the article *Interaction in Academic Writing: Learning to Argue with the Reader* (2001), the author Geoff Thompson says that he views writing as an interaction between the reader and the writer.

Thompson says that, " Interaction can draw on both interactive and international resources: interactive resources help to guide the reader through the text, while international resources involve the reader collaboratively in the development of the text" (peg. 58). By using these t-von. Or methods, anyone can choose to strengthen their argument. However, Thompson says that sometimes the real world reader doesn't present the response that the writer intended for them to have, so the writer should base their writing on the premise of an ideal reader.

For a writer to write effectively he needs to be aware of the audience, and an area that is affected by audience awareness is the organization of the text. Thompson states that a paper is like a conversation between the writer ND reader; good writers will try to guess what the reader will say, and they will build their text with the anticipated responses. Thompson says that there is are three main options writers can use to engage their reader or audience in dialogue, " commands... Which is the reader-in-the-text obeys... Questions... And] statements" (peg. 66). By using these three strategies and having the paper-structured right, one is on their way to effectively communicating with their audience. Section IX: The Research Study Taking into account what has been said about the author-audience relationship, and the techniques that writers can use to strengthen the injection, it seems appropriate to provide a real life example. I conducted a research study, to show the real life <https://assignbuster.com/academic-writing-the-author-and-the-audience-assignment/>

relationship between student writers and their audience. The structure of the study was simple.

There were four questions that were derived from the writing experiences of twenty-some students. These four questions were then formulated to seek information on the writing experiences of other students. Question 1: What was your most pleasant writing experience in college? Why is that? Question 2: What negative experiences do you recall in college writing classes? Question 3: Teachers have their role in writing outcomes. How do you perceive your role? Tell of a time when you own actions contributed to the positive or negative outcome of a paper.

Question 4: Has anything you've written ever influenced anybody and in what way? These four questions were then formulated to seek information on the writing experiences of other students. Each of the twenty- some two students, that were first asked to write about their writing experience, were then given the four questions and told asked to interview one other person attending the Sensitivity of California Santa Cruz. The oral interviews was were recorded and transcribed into a written document to ensure that all the details the interviewees provided were accounted for.

After having transcribed the information that was obtained orally, each of the twenty-some two students transcripts were e-mailed to the other people who also conducted the study. At the end of the study, each of the participants had received twenty-some two transcripts. Now it was time to analyze the findings. The twenty-some students were broken up into smaller groups of three to four students each. Each student group received one question that

they had to analyze. After analyzing their respected question, each group had to emailed their analysis to the other groups.

By the end of the study, each of the groups had received an analysis of each of the four questions. The research study was based on a broader understating of academic writing, and the roles of individuals in it. The sub-aspects of academic writing, like the relationship between the author and the audience, were not direct questions that were asked. Nonetheless, through the analysis, it was easy to derive some information relevant to the author-audience relationship. Section X: The Findings Looking specifically at question number two (“ What negative experiences do you recall in college writing classes? From the research study, was able to analyze all the number two questions to find that most of the answers fell into four categories. The categories were: None ‘ Random, Prompt, Professor, or Writing Classes (explained bellow). Each of these categories was then further analyzed to reach the final concision on how the question affected the students academic writing experience. The first sub Category, None/Random, shed light on the fact that some students believed that they had not experience any academic writing task or writing class challenge that they couldn’t handle.

One student in Transcript 1 0 aid, can’t say I ‘ eve had a terribly negative experience in college writing classes at all. ” The general consensus of their category was that academic writing, and the writing classes that teach it are doing just fine. It can be inferred that the students have had any issues with formulating their academic papers, or conveying their thoughts to the

audience. The second sub category, dealt with negative experiences related explicitly to the prompt.

The students who fell under this category believed that their academic writing challenges derived from the prompt. Because the prompt was worded confusingly, or because the “ prompt... Interdicted itself” (transcript 3), the students had issues with their academic papers. Fifth directive for the students to create the prose around is confusing its-self, forget conveying to the audience, the students will find it difficult to even begin writing. That is what happened with the students who found that their most negative experience in writing classes came because of the style of the prompt.

The third sub category, Professor, dealt with the negative experiences that students had with their professors. Most often the interaction or the feedback that the students received from the professors was lax and therefore, the students weren't able to correct their mistakes, thus resulting in their negative experience. The student teacher interaction in academic writing is crucial. The professor is the one that guides the students when they are stuck, without appropriate help from the professor, and the students were not able to perform adequately.

Thus issues with communicating with their audience in their papers must have risen. There isn't sufficient evidence to back this claim, but using my prior knowledge think it suffices to say that professors most often give the students feedback to fix their weaknesses. For a student the professor is a part of the hypothetical audience, if not the main audience, and the feedback that they receive from their ' audience' is critical. For those very

pointers are what the student has to work on and improve so that they can more efficiently convey their message to the reader.

The fourth sub category was related to the negative experiences that students had in their core and other writing classes. Within this subcategory' the students were further subdivided into two branches. One of the branches dealt with the negative experiences that students had that revolved around them being unable to express their opinion. The other branch dealt with negative experiences involving peer editing. The commonality within both these branches was that the students found that their academically written papers weren't adequate enough to meet the demands of the prompt.

The first branch of students saw their difficulty to be expression of thought in their papers. This could be due to several factors, like not being able to comprehend the task, inadequate information, not enough context, etc. The main point here is that academic writing isn't always clear. Sometimes, one has to start the process of creating a well-written academic paper with first understanding what they are dealing with. This makes the challenge even more difficult, but it isn't UN-doable. The second branch found that when their papers were peer edited, their "... Errs [told them] to say things that [they didn't] want to say... " (transcript 4). Every time a new person reads the paper, a new perspective is added on how the subject matter should be handled. When peer editing comes into play, most students find that their ideas are being edited. This is common, since every audience has their own way of understanding, interpreting, and storing the information. The methods that work for one reader isn't wouldn't necessarily what somewhere for another reader will like.

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Each person is unique, and as Geoff Thompson stated in his article *Interaction in Academic Writing: Learning to Argue with the Reader* (2001), “There is clearly no guarantee that the real-world readers will in fact provide the response that the text constructs for them... Therefore [it is] more accurate and more useful to talk [in the context of]... The ‘ideal reader’” (p. 60). Keeping this in mind, the students who found peer editing to be their negative experience should understand that each reader infers the rating differently, and as a writer it is one’s job to write with the ideal reader in mind.

This is not to say that the advice that one receives during peer editing should be entirely ignored, rather it should be sifted through and only that which the writer deems appropriate should be applied. When each of the sub-categories were further analyzed, it was easy to see how the comparison between the negative experience that one had in a writing class corresponded with the negative experiences that students can have in their academic writing and the challenges that they can face because of it.

Section XSL: Conclusion Having analyzed one aspect of academic writing, the relationship between the author and the audience, it is acceptable to say that one should now have gained a better understanding on how: the relationships between the author and audience is formulated, the different techniques that writers can use to successfully communicate their thoughts to the audience, and what the relationship means to different people.

Academic writing is an illusive term to define.

But what is even more difficult is trying to comprehend all the various ways in which one can effectively establish an author-audience relationship. The information that was provided in this paper is a glimpse of all the information that is available on this one sub category of academic writing. The analysis of the different techniques that one can use to create a strong author-audience relationship is just a few of the many tools that one can use.

Ken Holland, Vivian Camel, Geoff Thompson, and the others who articles were used in this research paper provide a variety of in-depth observations on the multiple different branches that lead out from the author-audience relationship. Using the information that I obtained from them, the research that conducted, and some personal experience I was able to produce a well-rounded definition on what the author-audience relationship means to academic writing.