

Teaching Assistantship Programme Workshop

Academic Writing in English for Non-Native Speakers

Organizational details

Instructor:	Marija Spirkovska
Dates:	November 15 & 17, 2022, 12.00 noon – 4.00 pm respectively
Venue:	Room 315, JLU Main Building, Ludwigstr. 23, 35390 Giessen (3 rd floor)
Max. number of participants:	12

Objectives

Learning goals for the participants:

- Effective use of specific vocabulary, syntax, and structuring through hands-on practice of writing they would typically be expected to undertake in their own research;
- Giving feedback and peer-review of their and their fellow researchers' work in a mutually supportive and non-judgemental environment;
- Learning proper paraphrasing, especially in order to avoid inadvertent academic plagiarism;
- Tackling repetitive issues and errors they run into while structuring various sections of articles, dissertations, or similar academic text types;
- Reflecting on their own writing and generating ideas of how they might improve it relative to their specific subject matter.

Content & Methods

Content:

In the first part, we will begin with the pre-requisite for good writing, i.e., good reading, and discuss and practise techniques for different types of reading and note-taking in academic study. We will then move to discussing structuring paragraphs and centre on what a successful academic paragraph is made of. **The participants are asked to pre-select what they consider is a particularly well written scholarly paragraph, as well as a sample of their own writing, and bring both to the session.** Lastly, we will discuss the planning and structuring of academic essays.

Part 1 Schedule:

1. Introductions and Roadmap - 20 mins
2. Tough Nuts: Free-Form Reflection on Writing - 20 mins
3. Sine Qua Non: Academic Reading – ca. 1h 40 mins
(Break: 15 mins)
4. Paragraphs: Structure – ca. 1h 15 mins
5. Feedback and Reflection – 10 mins

The second part of the workshop will zero in on matters of language and will follow a more hands-on approach. To start us off, we will tackle proper paraphrasing and summarising ideas and arguments and touch on frequently overlooked traps of academic plagiarism. The core of this part will be dedicated to practising the lexical, syntactic, and discursive presentation of statistical data found in charts and diagrams. This particular practice will aim to enable participating writers to achieve clarity when interpreting and discussing quantitative research and data display. In the last portion, we will reflect on and correct the most common mistakes in advanced-level grammar made by non-native academic writers in English.

Part 2 Schedule:

1. Paragraphs: Paraphrase – ca. 1h 15 mins
2. Presenting and Discussing Statistics – ca. 2hrs
(Break: 15 mins)
3. Common Grammatical Errors – ca. 25 mins
4. Feedback/Reflection – 5 mins

Methods:

- Reading and note-taking techniques will be practiced through individual work on a longer text, while the writing in the latter part will include shorter pieces;
- Peer-review, individual, group, and – if possible – pair work; spoken English will be practised too through alternating between discussion and hands-on tasks;
- Presentation of helpful digital tools where applicable.

Target Group & Course Language

Target group:

The workshop primarily targets early career researchers (at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels) who are non-native speakers of English and are writing, or may be expected to write academically in English.

Participation requirements: Participants are required to bring short writing samples: one of their own, e.g. work in progress, and one they consider exemplary, by another author.

Course language: English (Please note: proficiency in English at a minimum B2 level of competency is required.)

About the Instructor

Marija Spirkovska is a PhD researcher of 20th and 21st century literatures in English, urban (literary) studies, and crosses between psychiatry and psychology. At university level, she has taught Modernist literature and given workshops on spatiality in literary study. She also regularly gives workshops on creative writing for stress management and on academic writing for ECRs working in English as non-native speakers. Since 2019 she has been working as a freelancing proofreader of academic texts in

English. She is also an experienced and award-winning literary translator and has worked as a teacher of English to children and adults. Her semi-academic and creative writing has appeared in the Random Walks blog, where she is also one of the founders and editors.

Registration

By **November 8, 2022**, via e-mail at info@ggs.uni-giessen.de.