

# Introduction to Academic English & Research Writing

**Course:** English for Research and Thesis Writing (UEF 2.1) **Target:** 1st Year Master's Students

## 1. Overview

Academic English is a formal style of writing used in universities and scholarly publications. Unlike everyday English, it is characterized by specific conventions that ensure information is conveyed clearly, accurately, and objectively.

## 2. The Three Pillars of Academic Writing

### A. Formality

Academic writing avoids casual language. This ensures the focus remains on the research rather than the writer's personality.

- **Avoid Contractions:** Use "do not" instead of "don't," and "it is" instead of "it's."
- **Avoid Slang and Idioms:** Use "examine" instead of "look into" or "postpone" instead of "put off."
- **Avoid "Vague" Words:** Use "significant" or "substantial" instead of "big" or "a lot."

### B. Objectivity

The emphasis should be on facts, evidence, and arguments rather than personal feelings.

- **The Third Person:** Generally, avoid using "I" or "my" (e.g., instead of "I think the results show...", use "The results indicate...").
- **Evidence-Based:** Every claim must be supported by citations or data.
- **Avoid Emotive Language:** Avoid words like "terrible," "wonderful," or "disgusting." Use neutral terms.

### C. Precision and Clarity

Researchers must be exact about their findings to avoid misunderstanding.

- **Be Specific:** Instead of "The temperature was high," write "The temperature was  $45^{\circ}\text{C}$ ."
- **Hedging:** Use cautious language when you cannot be 100% certain. Use "This suggests..." or "It is possible that..." instead of "This proves..." or "It is definitely..."

## 3. Comparing General vs. Academic English

Feature	General/Casual English	Academic English
<b>Vocabulary</b>	"The researchers <i>found out</i> ..."	"The researchers <i>discovered</i> ..."

Feature	General/Casual English	Academic English
<b>Grammar</b>	"I <i>don't</i> think the plan works."	"The plan <i>appears to be</i> ineffective."
<b>Structure</b>	Loose, conversational sentences.	Structured, logical, and cohesive.
<b>Punctuation</b>	Frequent use of exclamation marks (!).	Primarily periods (.) and commas (,).

## 4. Practical Exercise: Style Transformation

Rewrite the following sentences to make them more academic:

1. **"I think that the economy is doing really badly right now."**
  - *Academic:* "Current economic indicators suggest a significant downturn."
2. **"The scientists looked into the problem for a long time."**
  - *Academic:* "The researchers investigated the issue extensively."
3. **"It's pretty clear that the results are a bit weird."**
  - *Academic:* "It is evident that the results are inconsistent."

## 5. Summary Checklist

Before submitting any academic work, ask yourself:

- Have I removed all contractions (e.g., can't, won't)?
- Is my tone neutral and objective?
- Have I replaced "get," "do," and "make" with more precise verbs?
- Are all my claims supported by evidence?