

# Paving the Way for Legal Academic Writing in Higher Education Institutions

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## Abstract

This paper examines the formulated curriculum offered to first-year students at the College of Law at Al Ain University. It employs a qualitative strategy that hypothetically supports curating a specialized writing course for law students in higher educational institutions. The proposal aligns with the researcher's 16 years of pedagogical experience in a university setting, which presents new pedagogical approaches. These approaches were developed by conducting questionnaires and interviews with 58 students and 18 faculty members during and after implementing the proposed curriculum in English classrooms. The paper then presents these approaches following an analysis of the students' obstacles from the current course book and the suggested solutions when undertaking lessons from the proposed curriculum. The collected data analysis displayed that this curriculum could advance the students' learning achievements and create positive vibes toward acquiring language skills for writing. However, the answer remains an ongoing process requiring continual enhancement. This emphasis on the research's nature underscores the field's dynamic nature and the commitment to continual improvement. Therefore, an unconventional teaching strategy is essential to maintain, advance, and develop the students' academically productive writing abilities that can benefit them in their prospective careers.

**Keywords:** English for law, university students, academic English, adult learners, teaching English as a second language, academic writing

## 1. Introduction

Writing has long been the most challenging skill for law students because it demands intensive brainstorming and sophisticated strategies to structure ideas cohesively and logically within paragraphs. Mastering this skill becomes more manageable with a robust foundation in the other language skills. Therefore, this paper offers a sample of an integrated curriculum designed specifically to address the writing challenges faced by law students. By incorporating legal themes across all language skills, this curriculum aims to reduce students' challenges and provide a unique and intriguing approach to legal writing education. As Wingate states, 'In today's mass, higher education system, many students are not fully prepared for the demands of academic study' (Wingate, 2011, p. 66). The students can only transition from a subpar level to an academic one by gradually studying a language skill in an amiable teaching atmosphere. Given that theoretical university courses typically span merely 15 weeks, studying foundational language principles with academic English within a single term is unfeasible. Therefore, a bifurcated curriculum that integrates intensive language foundations and focused academic skills would be effective. This student-centered approach directly caters to the student's needs when acquiring English for educational purposes. Thus, instead of reviewing the humdrum grammar rules they have learned at school, students would practice these rules by performing different activities related to simple legal topics. However, the proposed curriculum can only thrive if a permanent constructive learning system enhances it in various forms by offering courses in English tailored to the student's specialization. The need for such a system is urgent and crucial. The proposed curriculum fits the students' comprehension level and learning pace, which is necessary to have a good or reasonable command of the language—especially considering that language acquisition becomes more difficult for adults due to the limitations on declarative memory (Shrum & Glisan, 2015, p. 106). Hence, a 15-week English language course remains insufficient for beginners.

The paper begins with a literature review that states the problems the 58 students face during the General English Language university course, why a particular group of students was selected for the study, and the solutions suggested for these problems. Next, a section on data collection outlines how the case study was implemented, what the students were tested on, the data collection procedures, and the experiment's outcomes. Finally, the paper investigates the effectiveness of academic writing teaching within a 15-week course for first-year students from the College of Law based on the two findings of the study.

## 2. Literature Review

The researcher implemented qualitative strategies, conducting structured and semi-structured interviews with fifty-eight students in their first year of university. Throughout the discussions, the researcher considered three significant aspects:

1) The students expressed surprise, noting that 'the ESP language input differs from general English concerning grammar and lexis' (Morgan & Alfehaid, 2019). Consequently, the researcher first taught the students grammar and vocabulary lessons using the disciplinary

approach with which the students were familiar, integrating traditional teaching methods followed by intensive exercises and simple rewards, such as an appraisal or extra marks. Subsequently, the researcher gradually upgraded her teaching approach by introducing some legal terminology for reading and writing skills without explicitly informing them that they were studying an ESP lesson. Shanahan and Shanahan (2017) advocate that students derive more benefits from the disciplinary literacy approach during junior and senior high school since this approach aligns with their developing specialization. This pedagogy applies to first-year students since the proposed curriculum introduces them to their primary focus as the learning acquisition and language appreciation become stronger in subsequent years.

2) All 58 students were Arab nationals living in a small, conservative town. Their limited exposure to English-speaking countries, with only 11 students traveling out of town and five visiting English-speaking countries as tourists, highlights their unique challenges in learning English. Thus, using English was unnecessary outside the university and in the English language classrooms since most of the courses were in Arabic. Furthermore, only a few were familiar with the English culture and its language. Moreover, 57 students preferred bilingual instructors, valuing those who tend to understand their personal needs before their academic ones, allowing students to feel comfortable communicating with their instructors and referring to them whenever needed. Many studies and resources have recognized the advantages of continuous academic writing for university students who will eventually graduate with a degree in their field of research and contribute productively to their careers and communities. Specifically, law students aspire to become lawyers, and 'their profession demands them to cope with a lot of written information' (Yemelyanova et al., 2016). Hence, preparing university students with basic and advanced writing techniques enhances the potential of meaningful research and academic undertakings while considering an individual's experience, voice, needs, and expectations from a higher education institution (Kandiko & Mawer, 2013).

3) Academic writing courses have many advantages. First, they offer an intensive focus on vocabulary and writing techniques within significant fields, such as law, medicine, and engineering, which benefits students both while studying and after graduation. This concentration allows everyone to benefit from an ongoing exchange of insights, ensuring that participants remain abreast of current educational systems (Tian & Zhang, 2017). Second, the availability of academic courses in many training centers would augment their learning system rather than be challenging. These courses could be offered in-person and online and adjusted to all circumstances. Many learners have favored studying via e-devices, such as iPads and Google Docs (Cheung, 2021), especially after the global pandemic. Notably, this shift has not only upgraded their language proficiency but also kept learners in pace with the demands of the intelligent world, which has challenged them greatly. Given these developments, students recognize that proficiency in the English language is pivotal and urgent, and they need to remain up to date with the latest forms of e-learning in an intelligent world. Collectively, these two crucial advantages bolster students' confidence in acquiring and using the language openly, further amplified by the support of their educators.

The students selected for this research have shown remarkable resilience despite their average or below-average English language abilities. Their proficiency level aligns with many previous students enrolled in the General English 1 course. These students, who must study five units from their current course book, Passages 1 by Jack Richards and Chuck Sandy, have encountered a significant challenge. Regrettably, this material does not align with their learning needs. For example, many students sought translations of some words before exercising to ensure they received the lesson the way they should during the explanation. Another example occurred when teaching a 'Gerunds and Infinitives' grammar lesson. Many students could not memorize the verb sets followed by gerunds and infinitives because of the words' meanings. Such obstacles heightened their anxiety regarding the upcoming tests and their final grades. The students also demanded that the course's tasks be minimized so that they could catch up with the rest of the lessons that similarly misfit their educational needs.

In response to these problems and other challenges that resulted from teaching the General English 1 and General English 2 courses, which are designed to train students to use the language for communication purposes, this paper offers novel approaches to teaching academic writing in an integrated curriculum for law students. The curriculum consists of a structured approach to academic writing, segmented into four steps: Lesson 1 addresses word formation; Lesson 2 focuses on main ideas and supporting detail writing; Lesson 3 delves into paragraph writing; and Lesson 4 culminates in essay writing. This paper pursues several key objectives:

- To identify the obstacles the students face and how to overcome them.
- To identify the instructors' beliefs and attitudes toward the curriculum and discuss these viewpoints.
- To evaluate the instructors' qualitative reflections, grounded in their pedagogical experiences, after they deliver the academic writing lessons to the students and offer them to other instructors.
- To validate the outcomes and determine recommendations for the applied lessons.

### 3. Method

With the participants close to the researcher, the investigation followed the random sampling procedure, a crucial step that significantly eased the online, telephone, and weekly face-to-face interviews. This method facilitated efficient administration and adhered to the social distancing policy when conducting in-person interviews, underscoring the importance of the research methodology.

The reason for choosing this procedure was to make the data collection flexible and smooth, ensuring that the results were meticulously detailed and accurate, especially since only a select group of students participated. Furthermore, according to Taylor and von Fintel (2016), having a well-ordered group of students in a university setting proves challenging for a research study due to the diversity of educational and cultural backgrounds, which complicates maintaining constant class-based variables.

There were two groups of respondents in this research. Group A consisted of 58 first-year law students from two different English 1 sections.

Group B was composed of 12 faculty members from the College of Law, including six instructors from the English Language Department. The questions directed to both groups of respondents were in the form of two types of interviews:

### 3.1 Semi-Structured Questionnaire Interview

The first interview occurred during the first week when the researcher established rapport with the students. The interview followed the conventional interview format used in online classes, asking the students the questions required for this paper, as shown in the table below (see Table 1). The table includes general information, such as the type of schools they attended and their use of the English language before joining the university.

Table 1. Baseline descriptive data of the participants

Description of participants	Group A (11 students of average level)	Group B (47 students below the intermediate level)
Average age (in years)	19	24
Public school sector (Al Ain)	20	38
	Only four students were private school graduates.	
Regular English Language usage before enrolling in the university	3	55
What characteristic feature of an ESL instructor matters most to help you accept their teaching strategies?	-Friendly (58 students) -Bilingual (58 students) -Native speaker (44 students) -Experienced (56 students) -Passionate (58 students) -Quite strict (19 students) -Familiar with the students' culture and backgrounds (58 students)	
More than 4-year gap between the time from school graduation to university enrollment	12	46
What motivates you to learn the writing skill?	- The instructor's attitude (56 students) - A specialized teaching material (58 students) - Having solid foundations in all language areas before learning how to write (58 students)	

Table 1 briefs the objectives of the interview, which are as follows:

- i) To gather background information regarding the student's history of English language practice.
- ii) To determine, based on the information gathered from the first objective, the most effective learning environment, emotionally and culturally (Kristmanson, 2000).
- iii) To choose the most appropriate pedagogical approaches that best address the students' learning needs.

### 3.2 Structured Interview

Structured interviews, a pivotal part of our course, occurred during weeks 2 and 11. Each unit from the 'Passages 1' university student book and accompanying workbook is designed to help students improve their writing skills. For example, the writing lesson in Unit 1 of the course book focuses on identifying the topic sentence and the main idea, followed by additional activities. In the third week, the students faced a rebutting challenge, a testament to their progress, by answering a question on paragraph writing based on one of the answered topic sentences from exercise 5B on page 3 of their workbook. The researcher provided them with two topic sentences, of which they were to choose one. The figure on the next page illustrates the exercise students must complete after a short lesson on Topic Sentences. The researcher and the students agreed to write the two topic sentences as displayed in exercises 5B1 and 5B2. Next, the students were required to write a simple paragraph on one of the two topic sentences within 45 minutes, showcasing their progress in the course.

**B** Complete these two sentences. Then choose one of them, and write a paragraph to support it.

1. My friend Ahmad is the kind of person who likes to help others.
2. Tamara is the most interesting person I know.

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Figure 1. General topic sentence exercise and paragraph writing from page 3 of Passages 1 workbook

Figure 2 illustrates that only nine students performed the task independently. However, six submitted writing pieces were filled with incoherent, meaningless sentences and many grammatical and spelling errors. The remaining students relied on the researcher's assistance and showed their need for support by soliciting word suggestions, adjusting their sentences, or translating terms from Arabic to English, often without regard to the grammatical roles of the translated words. Consequently, the writings mainly consisted of unclear, disjointed, and fragmented sentences. Unfortunately, most of the students exhibited limited engagement throughout the writing activity.

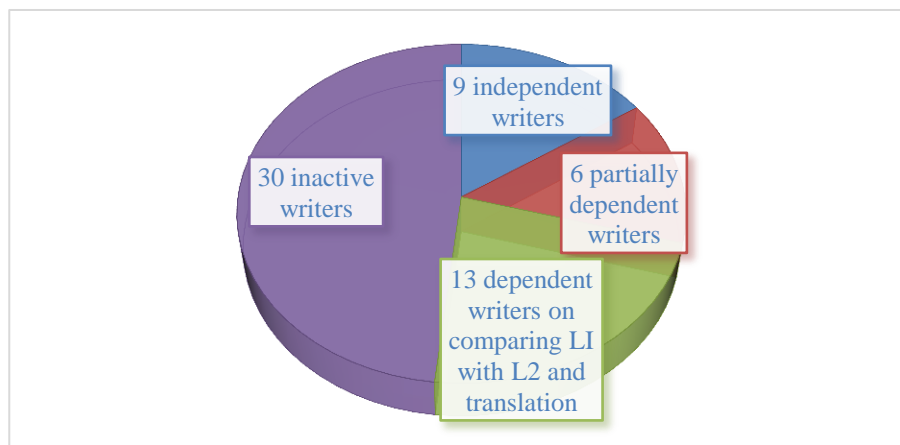


Figure 2. The results of the student's activity on the first writing task from the Passages 1 workbook

Conversely, when the students were offered the first lesson of the suggested writing lesson in week four, as shown in Figure 2, the results were marginally better than the previous one. However, the promising results could be because the proposed writing exercise consisted of legal terms with which some students were already acquainted. Integrating legal terms into grammar and vocabulary has proven to be the most appropriate strategy for our students' learning needs. Their achievements are truly inspiring. Just by trying out one task, their knowledge expanded significantly. For instance, they know the types of affixes, understand the parts of speech, have acquired some new legal vocabulary and phrases, and can grasp simple spoken conversations. Accordingly, the graph below (see Figure 3) displays the covered lessons and the students' participation toward each lesson's objective:

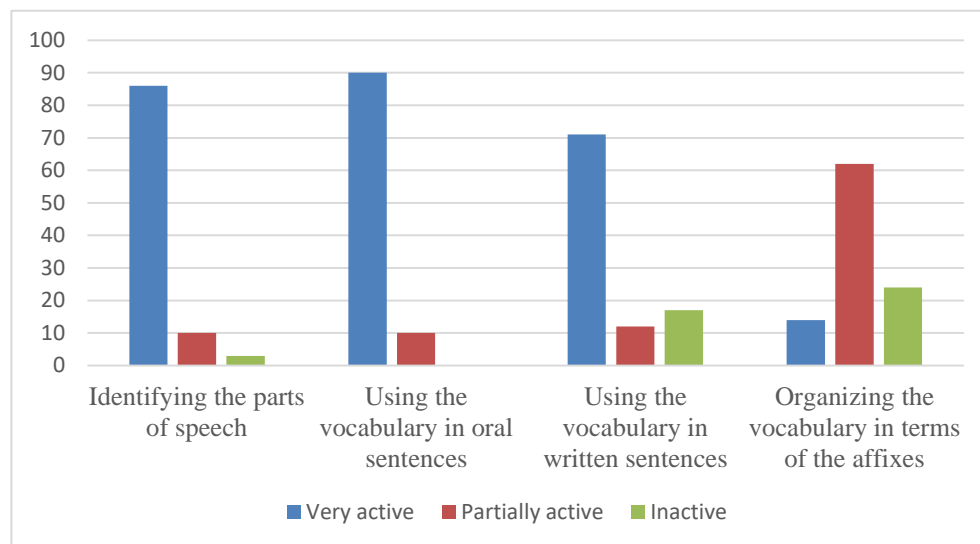


Figure 3. Lesson 1 Objectives

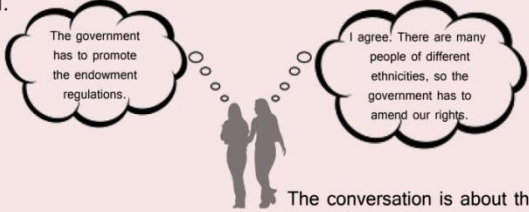
**Sample of Lesson 1.9 – Word Formation Activity**


**Exercise A: Classify the words according to their parts of speech.**  
 legislation – illegal – procedure – administrative – justice – to delegate – crime – person

Noun	Verb	Adjective

**Exercise B: On page Activity One there is a set of jumbled words. Rewrite the jumbled words and match them to their expressive pictures on pages Activity Two and Activity Three.**

**Exercise C: Write beneath each picture what kind of law is each conversation about.**

1.  The conversation is about the \_\_\_\_\_ law.

2.  The conversation is about the \_\_\_\_\_ law.

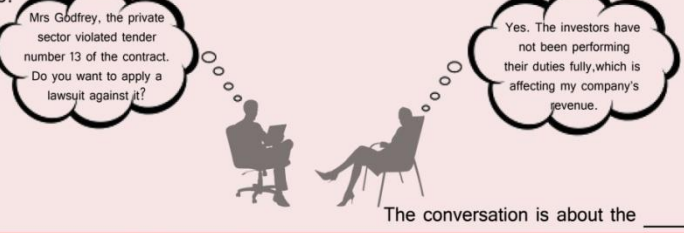
3.  The conversation is about the \_\_\_\_\_ law.

Figure 4. A sample activity on affixes from lesson 1

Every student was eager to understand the meanings of the words, their application in sentences, and their pronunciation. Following the trial, students were intrinsically motivated to participate. The researcher kept encouraging and commending them, even when they gave incorrect answers. Affirmative remarks such as 'You are getting there', 'What progress!' and 'I am proud of you' motivated them to persevere despite their mistakes.

As the students entered week six, they moved to lesson 2 of the proposed writing lesson, which focused on defining the main idea and supporting details in another legal topic related to court systems and public international law. Notably, the students' vocabulary terms increased, indicating a friendly competition to impress each other and the instructor. This was particularly inspiring in weeks seven and eight, during the teaching of lesson 3. The lesson, which focused on main ideas, supporting sentences, and forming short paragraphs, initially presented some challenges.

However, the students' achievements were truly remarkable. More than 33 students could write semi-sentences, and 12 produced paragraphs with fewer mistakes than in weeks two and three. Notably, only thirteen students still required additional writing support, a testament to the students' hard work and dedication.

**Sample of Lesson 3.7 – Activities on Forming Short Paragraphs**

**A. Given below is a Main Idea and three Supporting Details. Coordinate them in a simple paragraph using the appropriate Transitional Words.**

Main Idea: The Commercial Transactions Code of the UAE adopts a rather wide definition of the term 'Trader'.

Supporting Detail 1: A trader is someone who practices the traditional subject of commercial law.

Supporting Detail 2: According to Article 1/11 of the Commercial Transactions Code 'any person who carries out in his/her own name and for his/her own account commercial transactions, while having the legal capacity.'

Supporting Detail 3: When a person is considered a trader s/he has to meet various obligations, such as the obligation to register in the commercial register.

**B. Write a well-formed paragraph supporting the Main Idea given using the following words: civil cases – crime – obligations – plaintiff – defendant.**

Main Idea: Civil law is the fundamental branch of private law.

**C. You are required to write a 100-word paragraph on 'Punishment'. The picture describes one kind of punishment called 'Fine'. Your paragraph should include terms related to the topic, a main idea and at least three supporting details.**



Figure 5. A sample activity on forming short paragraphs from Lesson 3

Finally, in weeks 10 and 11, the final stage of the writing experiment included composing essays on topics related to public international law, human rights, and civil law. The researcher's limited time teaching this lesson made teaching all the vocabulary related to these topics imperative. However, the researcher prioritized time explaining the techniques required for writing a simplified standard essay for the following question:

The topic of today's writing is: 'As an advocate, your job is to take part in stating new strategies to advance universal human rights. One of these strategies would be on early marriages. You are to write an essay with clarified reasons explaining the negatives of early marriage and the resolutions.'

First, students had to identify the topic's problem and draft an appropriate outline. Subsequently, the researcher guided them in how to develop a coherent piece of writing using the following steps:

1. After placing the main idea, which is the topic's problem, order the outlines into three paragraphs: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. A standard essay consists of at least three paragraphs: the introduction, body, and conclusion, as shown in Figure 6.
2. Expand the outlines with ideas using the legal terms related to this topic.



3. Connect the ideas in simple sentences using the following linking words: however, moreover, due to, what is more, (un)fortunately, and the sequencers firstly, secondly, thirdly, and finally.
4. Connect the paragraphs so the reader can tell what each section is about.
5. Underline the main ideas in each paragraph. Do the supporting details in every section back up the underlined main idea?
6. Proofread the essay against any grammatical and semantic errors.

#### 1. Introduction

- What are a child's human rights and the general threats against these rights?
- The rise in early marriages in developing countries.
- General resolutions to overcome this dilemma.

#### 2. Body

- The cons behind early marriages and their outcomes.
- Why is early marriage taking place in particular countries?
- Who is to be blamed for such cases?

#### 3. Conclusion

- Your roles as a(n) citizen/ advocate in protecting children's rights. (Main Idea)
- The involvement of UNESCO in banning early marriages.*
- The factors should be endorsed soon to promote children's rights in developing countries.*

Figure 6. A sample activity on writing a standard essay from Lesson 4

The essay writing work spanned two weeks and six credit hours. As a result, 34 students were adequately equipped with the necessary vocabulary and had their ideas ready. Their primary need was to practice further linking the ideas and the paragraphs and working on their dictation. Of these, 13 students still needed help constructing sentences, and four out of the 13 needed help understanding the question without resorting to a complete translation into Arabic. Finally, the rest of the students worked independently. When their work was corrected, the errors were minor. Notably, what was more progressive was the students' reactions to the researcher's remarks. Unlike their responses from the start of the experiment, they showed an eagerness to acknowledge their errors and learn how to overcome them.

Post-trial, the researcher visited the 18 faculty members in weeks 12 and 13 and introduced them to the writing lessons and the teaching methods employed in the classrooms. The following questions were directed at the faculty:

1. Are the legal themes inserted in the tasks appropriate for our students?
2. What changes would you suggest adding/subtracting to/from the curriculum?
3. To what extent do you find these lessons productive in the long run?
4. Is teaching integrated language skills necessary to develop students' writing skills?
5. In your opinion, should this curriculum be adopted by UAE universities and made a compulsory university course for law students?

Fourteen college faculty members said 'yes' to questions 1, 4, and 5. Addressing questions 2 and 8, some instructors suggested adding more units on writing skills, while the rest fully consented to the proposed curriculum. All 14 instructors found this curriculum prospectively productive, mainly because it contains sufficient basic legal vocabulary and topics. Concurrently, they emphasized the need to create more lessons on speech and grammar, considering these facets are foundational in improving reading, speaking, and writing skills. Nonetheless, three instructors complained that many previous students who applied for M.A. Studies in public and private law had yet to take the step forward when they discovered the prerequisite of sitting for an English proficiency exam. This rebutting challenge made the students realize that 'only high quality, deep learning approaches are likely to lead to high-quality learning outcomes desired of higher education students' (Cope & Staehr, 2005, p. 194).

Finally, the feedback from the 14 instructors regarding the curriculum highlighted the following points:

- The curriculum enticed students to use the language in their domains rather than merely acquire it for grading purposes.
- It reduces reliance on instructors to translate for them.
- It fits the students' socio-academic contexts.
- The students will be eager to use the nomenclature related to their subject areas outside the classrooms.
- The intensive grammar lessons provided would be an asset to their writing accomplishments.
- It resonates more with students' intrinsic motivations than the current English coursebooks.

- The curriculum is integral in advancing the students' language level and motivating them to pursue higher education.

Conversely, *Table 2* displays the replies of the four instructors:

Table 2. The responses of the four instructors during the interview

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Instructor 1 (English Dept.)	✗	Reading	✓	✓	✓
Instructor 2 (Law College)	✗	Nothing	✓	✓	✓
Instructor 3 (Law College)	✓	Nothing	✓	✓	✗
Instructor 4 (Law College)	✗	Speaking & Listening	✓	✓	✓

The reasons for the four instructors' reservations on the integrated curriculum presented in Table 2 are as follows:

1 – Instructor 2 said that the curriculum is too advanced, potentially causing some confusion in first-year students. They proposed that the curriculum should be simplified further with more focus on grammar and speaking lessons. Instructors 1 and 4 suggested teaching the curriculum to older students after familiarizing them with the legal terms.

2 – Instructor 1 suggested that reading legal topics is more efficient than grammar and writing because it is the reading skill that widens one's language cognition and upgrades it to a higher level. However, Instructor 4 claimed that speaking skills are first and foremost in acquiring a foreign language, along with listening skills. Once a student accurately utters and seamlessly perceives speech, it will be easy for them to master the writing skill. Instructor 4 disagreed with integrating all language skills into one complete course book, thinking it would be impossible for an average student to master the language within a semester. She encouraged the researcher to design a distinct curriculum for a legal writing course.

3 – Only one of the 18 instructors expressed concern that incorporating the curriculum as a primary course of study could be challenging, mainly due to the prevailing dominance of the Arabic language in this field in the state. However, he acknowledged that positioning it as an elective course would be more welcoming because, after graduation, most students either enlist in the police force or join legal bar associations to become lawyers. Irrespective of their career choices, the use of the English language is not demanding.

#### 4. Findings

Two findings emerged from this research:

##### 4.1 Emotional Impediments

Throughout the interviews conducted between weeks 2 and 11, the researcher observed that shyness might significantly contribute to many adult students' weakness in English. This timidity could be a source of the problem in students' learning activities in the classroom (Hanayanti, et al., 2023). Industrial Engineering's Speaking Problem in Learning English. <https://doi.org/10.30587/kontribusia.v6i1.4185>. Thus, to remove this obstacle, it has become crucial to motivate the students to vocalize more freely for enhanced speaking performance in the classroom (Gebhard, 2017).

Fifty-four students showed relief when asked if they wanted the words or questions translated into English. Their responses, often as smiles or giggles, clearly indicate their shyness, which needs to be addressed to create a comfortable learning environment. Notably, only three students out of 54 said 'yes' after the researcher asked them. This highlights the emotional aspect of the situation and the students' strong preference for building a rapport with the instructors, which is a significant alleviating factor.

A couple of colleagues added to the researcher's observation. They noted that students who had joined the university after leaving education for five years or more exhausted themselves in trying to perceive the lessons. These students tried to build intimate relations with the course instructors in their quest for understanding. However, encountering professional boundaries, they perceived the instructors' professionalism as an impolite rebuff, discouraging students from learning the language. Another ESL instructor asserted that she is like a dictator imposing instructions on the students rather than a kind investor in their education. These working students already follow their employers' rules and want to be in a less-regulated environment. However, they usually find a familiar learning environment in which they desire to be friendlier. Despite students knowing that their course grades add to the accumulation of the average rate because they are not intrinsically motivated, they invest more effort into gaining the instructors' compassion and help than they do into their quizzes, tests, or exams. When their expectations are unmet, many students lose hope or depend on an instructor's clemency, leading to many withdrawals, academic underperformance, or even failures.

Another prime observation regarded students' lack of eye contact when they replied. They only looked at the researcher when asked because they understood better when they watched spoken lip movement. However, most students avoided eye contact. Hence, making eye contact is also important because the students are more likely to be emotionally and intellectually invested in the classes where they have positive relationships with their teachers. In conclusion, instructors who build positive relationships through eye contact with their students may enjoy the following benefits (Barati, 2015, pp. 222–227). These benefits have surfaced in students' appreciation of the new



teaching strategies and curriculum that satiated their knowledge and eagerness to evaluate their progressions or regressions. After students experienced some emotional catharsis, they showed their utmost attention to the curriculum, which led to their desire to learn more. This shift cleared the way for the instructors to give constructive criticism, which was a sensitive issue because many students used to take it personally. Once the students clearly understood that ‘Teaching is a values-led profession concerned, at its heart, with change, directly for the betterment of pupils but ultimately for the betterment of society as a whole’ (Day, 2004, p. 15), the instructors seamlessly looked for flexible pedagogical approaches that suitable to their level as university students.

#### 4.2 Academic Impediments

Although the curriculum seems simple, it consists of a teacher's educational philosophy, language pedagogy, linguistic knowledge, and knowledge of the language to be taught. It also requires knowledge of the students' future professions (Jaatinen, 2006, p. 55). Thus, all the analyzed data from the interviews with both students and instructors, who added to the efficiency of the suggested curriculum, not only comply with the academic needs of the students but also with their emotional needs, as discussed in the first finding. In week nine, the students still required assistance linking their brainstormed ideas and could not compose a well-organized essay in weeks 10 and 11. The main challenges they faced post-experiment were spelling the legal words and phrases, organizing their ideas, understanding the functions of the linking terms, and linking them effectively in the sentences.

The chart below (see Figure 7) illustrates the diagnoses of the 18 participating instructors and outlines the students' negligible or low writing abilities.

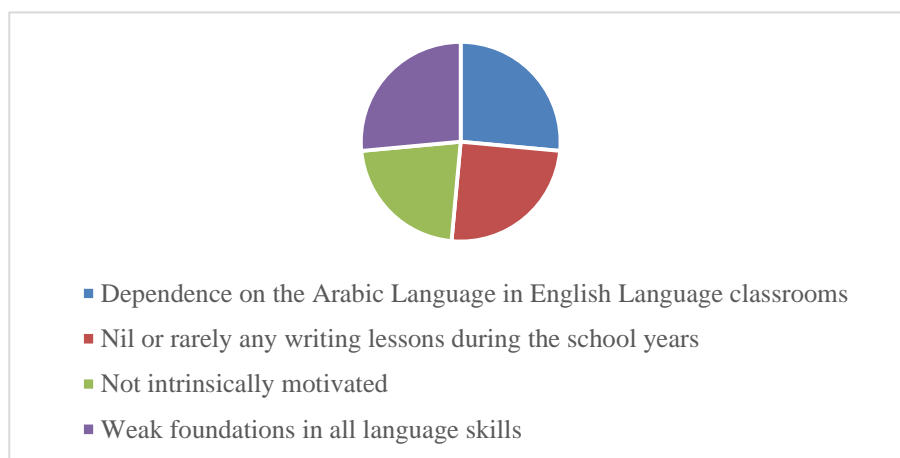


Figure 7. The pie chart of the instructors' diagnoses of the student's weaknesses in the writing skills

Nevertheless, a couple of ESL instructors added external non-legal writing lessons into their general English courses, which can be problematic for two reasons: 1) not all students attending the English course were law students, potentially leading to some disagreements or objections, mainly if an instructor includes a missed lesson from the course description; and 2) such incorporation can cause a delay to the syllabus timeline, leaving a section behind that could induce unwanted pressure on both students and instructors at the end of a course.

The dependence of law instructors and students on ESL instructors remains a constant issue. Therefore, creating a permanent solution for students' education is crucial in the most appropriate cultural and academic frames. This dependence has cultivated some awareness among ESL instructors regarding the needs of the students, who rely on them academically and emotionally. Hence, this proposed curriculum addresses these needs during their university years, and the tailored lifelong e-learning courses answer the prospective concerns of both students and instructors.

#### 5. Conclusion

After learning and understanding the students' communities, backgrounds, and languages (Jaatinen, 2006, pp. 20-21), the researcher witnessed a profound and transformative change in their attitudes. This new curriculum has benefited them in acquiring the language and giving them more self-esteem, especially when they commit errors in peer interactions. Notably, addressing their learning needs has encouraged the students to give candid feedback. This positive outcome encouraged the students to discuss the most crucial lessons for upgrading their writing skills with their instructors. This optimistic step forward resulted from implementing the appropriate learning pedagogy consisting of foundational lessons integrated with legal topics as manifested in Table 3.

Table 3. Suggested lessons for a potentially enhanced curriculum

Lesson	Lesson target(s)	Expected outcome(s)
Affixes	1. Vocabulary expansion 2. Parts of speech identification	Becoming familiar with the legal words and phrases and their uses in sentences after several practices on exercises in affixes and parts of speech
The tenses	Past, present, and future tenses use and identification	Being able to use the correct tense in writing
Linking words (contrasts, additions, consequences, and listings)	1. Linking words identification 2. Sentence connection	Mastering the process of sentence and paragraph cohesion
Essay writing	Different topic types on legal matters	Practicing and identifying the topics through continuous essay writing

Table 3 lists the tasks that warrant extra student focus, the lessons' targets, and the students' expectations from these lessons. A consensus emerged from the students and instructors, positing that ESL instructors must adjust the curriculum accordingly.

Finally, the need for curriculum adjustment emerges from the needs analysis requirements, which involve collecting and analyzing learner information to set goals and content for a language curriculum based on these learners' needs (Richards, 2010, p. 51-89). Therefore, the curriculum needs to be adjusted to make it more feasible and, thus, more intensive. For example, the adjusted curriculum may contain one unit on suffixes, detailing their meanings and parts of speech, including various exercises in the lesson, such as adding the correct suffix to a root word, unscrambling and dictating the terms, using them in sentences, pronouncing them, and engaging in role-play activities to practice speaking. Such practices sequentially progress learners in acquiring the language until the last step: writing. However, the students find writing taxing due to the need to constantly practice different legal topics to attain mastery.

Hereafter, intensive writing practice involves using various grammar rules and vocabulary phrases. Learning from their errors is the sole pathway to acquiring this skill. This agreement manifested when the researcher assigned the 58 students to write about the topic mentioned earlier. Though there were discernible improvements in using legal phrases and comprehending the topic's questions, some unanswered areas still required attention. For instance, some students still needed to learn how to link the sentences; others faced issues with sentence construction, and many others still needed intensive practice coordinating their ideas. Consequently, considering the students' emotional and academic needs, the researcher was lenient when correcting and remarking on their writing pieces, avoiding the uniform scrutiny of every writing assignment. This methodology was employed to ease the correcting mechanism because it is believed that over-marking students' errors can be a tiring process for the instructors (Lee, 1997), which would reflect on the students' enthusiasm to learn.

Undoubtedly, intensive academic courses would cultivate a more productive community that can quickly devour writing strategies and comprehend the importance of educational and professional writing tasks. As noted, 'Learning is defined as a behavioral change and the construction of knowledge. Moreover, obtaining a behavioral change using knowledge to enhance personal and social development can be considered learning, which starts from the mother's womb and ends in the tomb as a life-long concept' (Premadasa, 2006). Students' learning outcomes are influenced by various factors, including the instructor's teaching methods, the students' language acceptance capabilities, the course content, the learning environment, and their self-confidence. These factors collectively shape the development of a curriculum that caters to students' academic, professional, social, and personal needs during their university years.

In conclusion, adult learners continuously learn through pragmatism and collaborative learning. Within this framework, an instructor sets social boundaries called social-shared regulations, wherein all group members regulate and manage motivation, cognition, metacognition, emotions, and behavior to collectively achieve the intended results (Ismail et al., 2020). The study informs ESL instructors about the valuable ways to promote academic writing at higher educational institutions, emphasizing their significant role in the educational process and empowering them to make a difference. Thus, the researcher takes into consideration two main points:

- 1) the drawbacks mentioned by the four instructors in the Method section, and
- 2) the conducted qualitative analysis was limited to a specific demographic.

Further examinations of other demographics are necessary for comparisons to enhance the curriculum's validity and consistency. This will help promote it to higher education institutions, benefiting learners aiming to improve their professionalism with a strong command of academic English.

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