READING AND WRITING ACROSS CULTURES: USING A SOCIAL LITERACIES APPROACH TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EXPERIENCES OF LIBYAN STUDENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

Internationalisation or the "process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of a higher education institution" (Knight 1997: 8) has become an important aspect of higher education institutions. In South Africa as in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Japan and Canada, there have been dramatic increases in the numbers of international students. Research shows that the majority of these international students experience various difficulties when the academic culture of the host environment is different from that of the home environment in many respects (Al-Murshidi, 2014; Abukhattala, 2013).

The present study employs a social approach to academic literacies (Barton and Hamilton, 2000) to examine the academic reading and writing practices of a group of Libyan students in South Africa (against the backdrop of the home academic culture). Using both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell and Plano, 2011), data were collected and analysed to address reading and writing across Libyan and South African academic cultures. The sources of data include Facebook discussions, focus group discussions, questionnaires, documents (such as policies of UWC relevant to my study), and interviews with selected UWC officials. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data whereas SPSS was used to analyse quantitative data.

The findings of the study confirm that Libyan students' perceptions of academic reading and writing are socio-culturally embedded. The students encountered difficulties in academic literacies. They faced problems with academic reading and writing due to the different academic cultures. The findings also highlight that gender is the only variable that shows the most influence on students' practices with academic writing, specifically with the conventions of style in essays and in the academic writing strategies of honesty.

KEYWORDS

Internationalisation

Libyan students

South African higher education

Academic culture

Academic literacies

Multilingual literacies

Translanguaging

University of the Western Cape

Institutional support
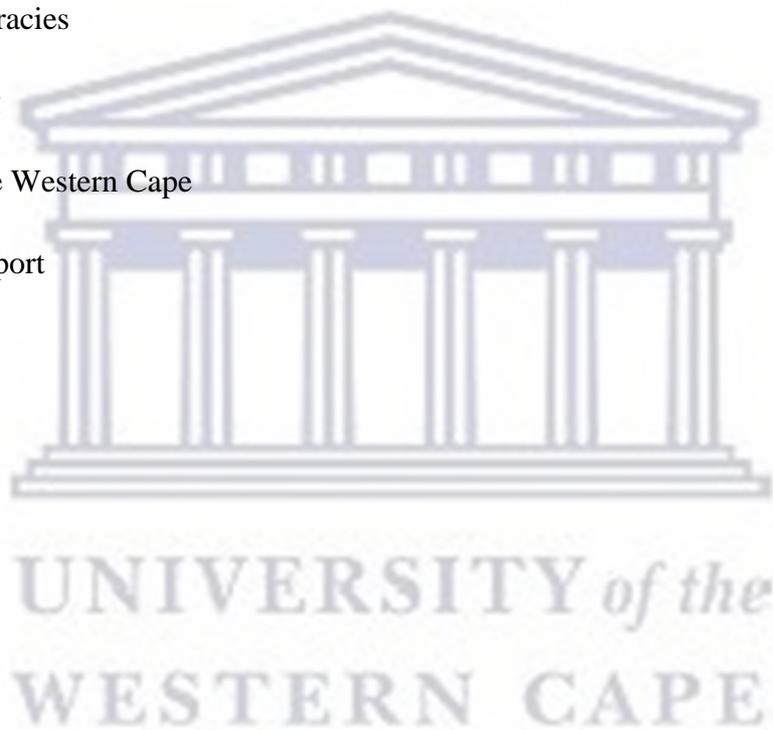
DECLARATION

I confirm that the thesis titled 'Reading and writing across cultures: Using a social literacies approach to account for the experiences of Libyan students in South African higher education' is an actual work that has not been submitted to any university for any certification purpose. I furthermore declare that all the works quoted in the thesis are referenced and that no part of the work has been plagiarised from previously existing research.

Name of candidate: Turkeya B Ali Burka

Date: March 2020

Signed: Turkeya

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the soul of my dear father, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake. Without him, pursuing my doctoral study would not have been possible. It is also dedicated to my beloved mother for her limitless support.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DPGS   Division of Postgraduate Studies

FBD   Facebook discussions

FGD   Focus Group Discussions

INI   Individual Interviews

INO   Internationalisation Office

SA   South Africa

SPSS   the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TA   Thematic Analysis

UWC   University of the Western Cape

WC   Writing Centre

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.0 Introduction

This study focuses on a social approach to academic literacies by examining the academic reading and writing experiences of Libyan students in South African universities, specifically at the University of the Western Cape. This chapter aims to introduce the research briefly by stating the problem of the study. It also presents the aim as well as the objectives of the study. In addition, it presents the research questions and outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the study

Internationalisation has been defined by Knight (1997: 8) as the "process of integrating an international / intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of" a higher education institution. As Yang (2000) observes, internationalisation is a term that covers different perspectives: foreign language programmes, area subjects, joint degrees, cross border education, and of course, student mobility. Indeed, student mobility (not just in contexts of student exchange but also in contexts of migration) has become an important component of internationalisation in higher education. When students move to study abroad in a foreign country, they may enrich their experiences in the host institution, but they may also challenge service functions.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) calculate that universally the number of foreign students increased from 1.3 million in 1998 to 2.0 million in 2003. Moreover, the United States noticed that its numbers increase from 286,343 in 1979 to 565,039 in 2004/05. Foreign student enrolments are large and also growing rapidly in Canada and China. The OECD and the UNESCO World Education Indicator (WEI) database show that foreign tertiary enrolments have increased quickly in OECD countries since 2001 and modestly in non-OECD countries. According to the WEI database, in 2003, five countries received 70% of the foreign students in that year: the United Stated (28%), the

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United Kingdom (12%), Germany (11%), France (10%), and Australia (9%). Recently, South Africa has become an attractive destination for Libyan students. According to the Libyan Embassy in South Africa (Libyan Embassy in South Africa, personal communication, August 2015), there are currently 263 Libyan government-sponsored students in South Africa.

Generally, the growing number of international students is driven by several factors. It is typical in the literature to speak of push and pull factors. Li and Bray (2007: 793) point out that:

> some students were pushed by unfavourable conditions in their home countries, while others were pulled by scholarships and other opportunities in host countries. The pull factors have included advanced research facilities, congenial socio-economic and political environments and the prospect of multinational classmates. The push factors create a generalised interest in overseas education. (Li and Bray, 2007: 793).

Varghese (2008: 22-25) likewise discusses components impacting student movement in cross-border education. The factors include: cost of education, ideological affinity, language proficiency, perceived academic superiority of institutions in the host countries, acquisition of foreign language and culture, post-university employment opportunity, and easy visa formalities. On reasons for mobility, Arthur (1997) notes as follows:

> while some international students may be selected to study abroad due to their superior academic qualifications, others make that choice not because of their academic achievement, but because of their family influences in the local government or sponsoring agencies. Other reasons for studying abroad may include political or local conditions (Arthur, 1997: 261).

With respect to Libyan students, it may be noted that after the fall of the Qaddafi regime and the success of the seventeenth revolution, there was a perceived need to send students abroad so that upon their return they would help to rebuild the higher education system. Recent conflict in Libya has destroyed the higher education infrastructure (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2013) and led to brain drain, with many lecturers and

professionals from India, Philippines, Iraq, and Egypt leaving the country. According to Al-Mulhim (2014), Libya is one of the Arab countries currently having to deal with significant brain drain due to political instability and insecurity. Besides conflict and the government agenda of rebuilding the higher education system, major factors influencing the choice of South Africa include: the need to improve competence in English which is becoming important in Libya, the perceived high quality of education, affordability, the high employability rate of graduates from South Africa in Libya, and the ease of obtaining study visas.

When students move from their own home country and its academic culture to different culture in a foreign country, they encounter challenges and difficulties in their academic life. Some research has focused on the role of culture, specifically in teaching, learning, reading and writing. For instance, in Abukhattala's (2013) study, Arab students studying in Canada reported difficulties related to the pedagogical style used in classrooms: the learning style in Canada demanded critical thinking and certain communicative strategies which students reported to be lacking in their own countries. Other studies (e.g. Pennycook, 1996) have focused on how a tradition of memorisation by Chinese students studying in English-speaking environments abroad creates problems (e.g. charge of plagiarism) for these students. Sam's (2000) study focuses on the English language proficiency of international students from non-English speaking countries. Singh's (2014) research of international graduate students doing their Master's at a Malaysian university identified difficulties associated with reading quickly to find information, taking down notes, and understanding academic vocabulary in English.

1.2 Statement of the problem

As seen in the background section, more Libyans are choosing South Africa as a destination for higher education, even though there are many cultural differences between Libya and South Africa. Arabic is the main medium of instruction in Libya, while in South Africa English, to a lesser extent, Afrikaans, are the main languages in higher education. Using Hofstede's culture model, despite its criticisms, Libya differs from South Africa in terms of several dimensions which have implications for different aspects of academic culture (see Hofstede 1986; see also Hofstede, 2009). A dimension such as Power Distance might suggest whether students would question writing by an established authority or consider engaging in

debate with their lecturer as appropriate academic conduct. On this dimension, Libya is different from South Africa (Libya 89 vs. South Africa 49). Acknowledging that literacies involve uses and understandings of reading and writing "that are bound up in social processes which locate individual action within social and cultural processes" (Marilyn-Jones and Jones 2000:5), rather than as a statement of cultural determinism, what these figures suggest is that the Libyan students (compared to their South African counterparts) are less likely to consider it appropriate to question perceived academic authorities. Going by the Power Distance dimension, Libyan students would be more accepting of authority than South African students. There could be implications here for critical reading and writing.

To my knowledge, to date, no attempt in the literature has been made to research the experiences of Libyan students studying in South Africa. Consequently, our understanding is insufficient regarding the following:

1. how groups of Libyan students in Libya may construct and perceive academic literacies;

2. how a group of Libyan students studying in South Africa conceptualise academic literacy/literacies and construct their personal challenges as students, particularly in view of the discourses of academic literacies in South Africa;

3. what strategies and responses a group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies; and

4. what the implications of the findings in points one to three above are for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for further research in a number of related areas.

1.3 Aim and specific objectives

The aim of the research is to draw on a social approach to academic literacies to examine the academic reading and writing of Libyan students in South African universities, specifically at the University of the Western Cape.

The objectives of the research are:

1. To obtain baseline data on how a group of Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of the academic culture in Libya.

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2. To determine major issues contributing to the construction or understanding of academic literacies in South Africa.

3. To examine how a group of Libyan students studying in South African universities construct their personal challenges as students in light of their construction of academic literacies / culture in South Africa.

4. To determine what strategies and responses the group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies.

5. To examine the implications of the findings in points one to four above for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for the research in a number of related areas..

1.4 Research questions

The questions which this study will seek to answer are the following:

1. How does a group of Libyan students in Libya construct and perceive academic literacies?

2. How are discourses of academic literacies in South Africa constructed in the relevant scholarship?

3. How does a group of Libyan students studying in South Africa conceptualise academic literacies and construct their personal challenges as students?

4. What strategies and responses does the group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies?

5. What are the implications of the findings in points one to four above for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for further research in a number of related areas?

1.5 Chapter Outline/ Organisation of the thesis

The proposed study consists of eight chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter that will contextualise the study. It will provide a background to the context of higher education in Libya and the push and pull factors responsible for the increasing mobility of Libyan students. It outlines the contents of chapter one.

Chapter 2 reviews the available literature in a number of relevant areas. These include: internationalisation and student mobility; Libyan and South African Higher Education systems; issues in academic reading and writing; academic culture with its determinants; teaching and learning styles; Hofstede's cultural dimensions; international students' experiences regarding academic reading and writing; culture in academia as seen through the lens of research on the experiences of international students; multilingual literacies and translanguaging, and the institutional support for the international academic literacy needs.

Chapter 3 describes the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter draws on several approaches that link literacy to socio-culture, including the traditions in contrastive rhetoric and more recent work in academic literacies.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology. After situating the study within a mixed methods paradigm, the chapter describes the various sources of data required to achieve each of the study's objectives, how they will be collected, and how they will be analysed.

Chapter 5 is the first results chapter. It represents constructions of academic culture / literacies through the eyes of Libyan students, both in Libya and in South Africa. It hopes to show that conceptions of literacy / literacies are socio-culturally embedded.

Chapter 6 will analyse the quantitative data from the questionnaire dealing with the reading and writing practices of Libyan students in South Africa, and discuss the findings in the light of how observed patterns are socially shaped by disaggregating the results according to such variables as disciplinary orientations, number of years of study in South Africa, institution, and so on.

Chapter 7 draws on data analysis (from interviews with officials / actors in UWC concerned with internationalisation, policy making and implementation around teaching and learning and supervisors of Libyan students) on institutional understandings and initiatives around the international students' experiences of reading and writing across cultures.

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Chapter 8 is the final chapter of the thesis, and summarises the implications of both institutional responses to internationalisation and the research around a social approach to literacies.

In the chapter that follows a literature review is undertaken.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this section, research in the following areas that are relevant to the study is reviewed: student mobility; Libyan and South African higher education systems; issues in academic reading and writing; academic culture with its determinants; teaching and learning styles; cultural dimensions of Hofstede; international students' experiences regarding academic reading and writing; culture in academia as seen through the lens of research on the experiences of international students; multilingual literacies; translanguaging, and institutional support.

2.1 Internationalisation and Student Mobility

Mobility, as a feature of internationalisation, has been defined severally by researchers. For instance, according to Kreswill (2006), and Byram and Dervin (2008), mobility/migration is seen as the movement between boundaries or locations for a period of time. Mobility of students has also been defined as "any opportunity for students to study abroad while undertaking their degree programme – whether undergraduate or postgraduate" (University of Glasgow, 2016: 1). Also, Richters and Teichler (2006:78) have stated that student mobility can be referred to as "crossing country borders for the purpose of or in the context of tertiary education". The related concept of international students has been described by Choudaha and Chang (2012) as individuals who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purposes of education and are now enrolled outside their country of origin.

Actually, the number of international students on many campuses around the world is increasing. Statistics show that the global number of foreign students climbed from 1.0 million in 1998 to 2.0 million in 2003 (Okoli, 2013). According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the countries receiving most of the

international students in 2005 were the United States (28%), the United Kingdom (12%), Germany (11%), France (10%), and Australia (9%).

There are patterns related to students' mobility. For example, Varghese (2008), Okoli (2013) and Byram and Dervin (2008) state that most of the unindustrialized countries which include Algeria, China, India, Korea, Malaysia and Morocco send huge range of college students abroad, particularly to Australia, France, Germany, UK and USA. This trend is changing, however, and India is now the top-ranked country in terms of the quantity of college students seeking cross-border education (Varghese (2008). Similarly, Streitwieser (2014) notes that the directions of international students' mobility are now changing. For instance, China, India, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa, Russia and Brazil, which were previously mainly sending countries, are now receiving countries. South Africa is now the main destination for international English-speaking students from Africa (ICF Monitor, 2013). South Africa is becoming an attractive destination for Libyan students since the fall of Qaddafi's regime. Most of the students are pursuing postgraduate studies.

There are several factors or reasons for student mobility. Expressions such as pull and push factors have been used to summarise the reasons. In some cases, the reasons are that the students have been pushed away from their home countries, and in other cases the students have been pulled to other host countries. The push factors force people to leave their own country and go to some other countries. These push factors include limited availability of space in public educational institutions, political reasons such as wars or conflicts in the country, shortage of staff members, lack of study facilities, and low quality of education. Pull factors, on the other hand, are factors which attract the students to a place other than their own country. These factors include cost of education, language proficiency (the ability of students to speak a foreign language and use it for educational purposes), employment opportunities (students after graduation can find jobs easily), and easy visa formalities (easy access to study visas) (Li and Bray, 2007; Altbach, 1997; Arthur, 1997; Varghese, 2008 and UNESCO, 2007).

International students are not homogeneous. For example, Streitwieser (2014) indicates that international students are different according to their academic preparedness and financial resources. In this respect, Steitwieser identifies four sorts of US-bound international students: strivers (most of them are employed fulltime or part-time to support themselves financially); strugglers (do not have enough financial means and need to prepare themselves well for

English classes); explorers (are very fond of studying overseas, but they are not interested in academic study); and highfliers (are academically well-prepared, and are able to attend programmes without any financial support from any institution). Also, within the European context, Byram and Dervin (2008) classify student mobility as follows: (1) permanent residents, (2) internationally mobile students, (3) European, non-European, institutional exchange students, and (4) free movers and intra-European institutional mobility. In other respects, some scholars have suggested that student mobility in higher education overall can be classified into three types: (1) diploma mobility, (2) credit mobility, and (3) voluntary mobility (King *et al*. (2004:11). With regard to diploma and credit mobility, Richters and Teichler (2006:92) have clarified that credit mobility is referred to as a part of the programme of the study. It signifies students who go to another country for a period of time to gain knowledge and experience in addition to what is learned in the country of nationality, and the students return home and complete their studies. Contrastingly, diploma mobility means to study the whole programme and obtain one's degree qualification abroad and as a rule, students cross borders before the first enrolment in a study programme. According to King *et al*. (2004:11), voluntary mobility refers to those people who choose to move to another country for various personal reasons.

2.2 Libyan higher education

Libya is an Arab country situated in North Africa with a population of approximately 6.2 million, of which 2.7 million are students (Rhema and Miliszewska, 2010). It is known that Libya has the largest literacy rate in the Arab World and education is free. Higher education is obtainable at universities and higher vocational learning institutions. However, there are three kinds of higher education institutions in Libya: the first is the university, which takes four to seven years; vocational and technical education, which takes three to five years; and advanced graduate studies, which includes varieties of fields with various timeframes (UNESCO, 2007; Salem 2013; Triki, 2010; and Rhema and Miliszewska, 2010).

Statistics indicate that the number of Libyan students in higher education has increased. For example, a study by Triki (2010) has pointed out that Libyan students' enrolment in universities increased from 3,663 students in 1969/1970 to 269,303 students in 1999/2000. Also, the number of students enrolled in technical, vocational education and training raised

from 1,130 students in 1980/1981 to 64,970 students in 1999/2000. The same author further explains that in 2006/2007, the enrolment of students in higher education rose to 279,105 and may reach 500,000 by 2025. In the academic year of 2010/2011, students who authoritatively enrolled at Libyan universities, both public and private were more than 340,000. More than 90% of them were enrolled in a public university (El-Hawat, 2009).

Libya is considered to be a monolingual country where Arabic is the official language, which is exclusively used in all contexts. The Arabic language comprises two varieties. These are Classical Arabic and the spoken Libyan dialect (Vernacular). Classical Arabic, which is also known as Modern Standard Arabic, includes both the written and spoken forms. Classical Arabic is learnt and taught in formal educational contexts. However, the Libyan Arabic dialect is employed in informal casual contexts, such as the home, everyday conversations, and the oral rendition and transmission of folk literature. Furthermore, it is acquired as the first language and thus limited to oral transmission (EL-Fiki, 1999). Thus, Classical Arabic is used as the medium of instruction in all levels of education, including higher education.

With respect to Libyan students, it may be noted that, after the fall of the Qaddafi regime and the success of the seventeenth revolution, there was a perceived need to send students abroad so that upon their return they would help to rebuild the higher education system. Recent conflict in Libya has destroyed the higher education infrastructure (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2013) and led to brain drain, with many lecturers and professionals from India, Philippines, Iraq, and Egypt leaving the country. According to Al-Mulhim (2014), Libya is one of the Arab countries currently having to deal with significant brain drain due to political instability and insecurity. Besides conflict and the government agenda of rebuilding the higher education system, major factors influencing the choice of South Africa include: the need to improve competence in English, which is becoming important in Libya, the perceived high quality of education, affordability, the high employability rate of graduates from South Africa in Libya, and the ease of obtaining study visas.

As any society, the Libyan educational system is affected by sociocultural factors that influence education in all societies. Orfi (2008) stated that the Libyan educational culture has its own attributes as a result of different beliefs and expectations between teachers and students.

Colleges and universities in Libya still use the traditional teaching and learning methods. The culture of teaching in the Arab world, including Libya, is teacher-centred where the teachers are very important in classrooms (Khalid, 2017; Zakarneh, 2017; Momami, 2015; Abushafa, 2014; Davey and Lukaitis, 2010; Fareh, 2010; Aldabus, 2008; Orfi, 2008, Mourtaga, 2006; AL-Khaiyali *et al*. 2018). The teachers talk all the time and explain everything to their students, who expect their teachers to be suppliers of information (Orfi, 2008). The students are expected "to provide a brief answer to the question, which is then evaluated by the teacher with such phrases as 'Good', 'That's right', or 'No, that's not right'" (Aldabus, 2008: 26). Similarly, Orfi (2008: 4-5) has explained that:

> Teachers are often seen as the source of knowledge in the school curriculum and their role is to impart that knowledge to their students. In ELT teacher education in Libya for example, the focus is mainly on increasing teachers' knowledge about the English language (knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, and literature), and methodology is often considered to be secondary. The rationale behind focusing on developing teachers' knowledge about English is that if teachers are well equipped with the knowledge of the target language, they will be in a better position to impart this knowledge to their students. This reflects deeper ideas in the culture generally about education being a process of knowledge transmission (Orfi, 2008: 4-5).

In the same vein, AL-Khaiyali *et al*. (2018:) has said that "some Arab students are always waiting for more detailed explanation from the teacher on the grammar, sentence structure and sentence meaning. They tend to depend on the teacher, because they were taught in teacher-centered classes".

On the other hand, Khalid (2017) and Abushafa (2014) have reported that, even though there is an attempt to introduce communicative language teaching into Arab education, most teachers fail to cope with it because they are accustomed to the traditional methods. This is what Abushafa (2014) referred to when he stated that "The lecture method is dominant in Libya and this is because new teachers copy the way they themselves were taught" (Abushafa, 2014: 55).

For the culture of learning in Libya, it is rote learning and memorisation (Rugh, 2002; Alhmali, 2007; Fareh, 2010; Zakarneh, 2017; Gent and Muhammad (2019); Yusuf (2010). For example, Fareh (2010) has said that in the learning process, the student's role is passive because teachers talk all the time and do not let the students ask or even interact with each

other. According to Fareh (2010), "many students excel when examinations focus mainly on memorization and rote learning. On the other hand, they (students) do not do well when exam questions involve creativity, critical thinking, or problem solving" (Fareh, 2010: 3603). Also, Rugh (2002: 408) clarified that "Pedagogy in most Arab schools and universities is typically based more on rote learning than it is on critical thinking, problem solving skills, analysis and synthesis of information, and on how to learn".

It is clear that the culture of learning in Libya values memorisation and rote learning because, as indicated by Gent and Muhammad (2019), memorisation is valued in Arabic culture since students in the Arab world are accustomed to memorising the Quran from the early stages of life. That is to say, there is a relationship between learning and memorising / reciting the Quran. When students study the Quran, they are expected to memorise and recite without analysing or decoding it. On the other hand, memorisation is seen as a sign of respect and the information transmitted by the teachers should not be questioned. Teachers are seen as an "authoritarian figure" and the students should respect them (Abushafa, 2014: 29). Here, it is worth mentioning that the sign of respect is as a result of how religion impacts the students' behaviour in the educational environment. Orfi (2008: 6) discussed that the Islamic religion influences the way parents raise their children, saying that "The Libyan family often emphasises the importance of listening to adults, and respecting their opinions. Children are not encouraged to participate in conversations or discussions particularly if these discussions are among adults. If children do not follow these rules, they are punished by their parents".

Learning materials in Libya are very important and are regarded as the sources of knowledge (Orfi, 2008; Abushafa, 2014; Davey and Lukaitis, 2010). In Libya, knowledge "is viewed as a set of facts not open for discussion and disagreement. Students are expected to master and comprehend the content of these textbooks without questioning the credibility" (Orfi, 2008: 6). That is why exams in the Arab world, including Libya, are called "exam-driven or exam oriented" because students are expected to reproduce the same information produced by their teachers (Orfi, 2008; Naguib, 2006; Khalid, 2017). Exams in Libya tend to favour high grades / test scores for passing and success. Orfi (2008: 7) said that:

Students compete to pass exams, and those who achieve high grades in exams are highly regarded by Libyan society. Family tend to openly show their pride in children who pass the exams with high grade. In fact a key public role teachers

are expected to fulfil is to prepare students to pass the exams. If students cannot reach this goal, teachers will be held responsible for students' failure. This responsibility compels teachers to concentrate on teaching the skills that are tested in the exams and ignore the ones that are not.

This is reflected in Khalid's (2010: 81) study, where different methods of exam design, such as MCQs (multiple-choice questions), were used to help students pass the exams easily. To lecturers, this type of exam does not require the students to write essays and does not require them to be well equipped in terms of academic writing.

2.3 South African higher education

South Africa has a population of 57.7 million (South African Population Census, 2018). It has 26 public universities. It also has numerous post-school vocational training institutions. However, South Africa is different from some other countries all over the world, due to the impact apartheid had on its educational system. Many researchers in literature have written about this era (Leibowitz, 2012; Van den Berg, 2012; Engelbrecht, 2006; Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001; Council on Higher Education, 2004, and Scott *et al.*, 2007). At that time, there were universities that were meant for white people only and others for black people; programmes at the institutions were differentiated, with white or advantaged universities likely to offer medicine, public administration, and political philosophy. They were more research intensive, more equipped, more autonomous, and they were commonly positioned in wealthy areas (Boughey and Mckenna, 2011). On the other hand, black or disadvantaged universities were more likely to offer nursing (Scott *et al.*, 2007), lacked resources, and were located mainly in homelands (Bozalek and Boughey, 2012; Boughey and Mckenna, 2011). Some of these institutions are regarded now to be comprehensive and others are universities of technology only. However, both kinds of institutions offer Bachelor degrees (from three to six years of study, depending on the course), Honours degrees (one to two years of study; it also has numerous post-school vocational training institutions requiring a thesis), Master's degrees (two years of post-graduate study), and Doctorate degrees (variable in duration with a minimum of two years, following a Master's). Several of South Africa's comprehensive universities are internationally known for their research in various areas such as astronomy,

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business, palaeontology, etc. (http://www.southafrica-info.com/arts-culture/11-languages-south-africa/).

Student enrolment has changed. African student enrolment escalated to 115,000 between 2000 and 2004, compared to 20,000 for coloured students, 17,000 Indian students and 37,000 for white students. This contrasts with the situation in 1986 where African students consisted of only 27% of the portion of higher education enrolment, and white students 60%. By 2002, this situation had reversed with African students comprising 61% of enrolment and white students 27% (Department of Education Republic of South Africa, 2009). According to Cloete *et al*. (2002), the students' enrolment in historically black universities raised by 28,000 (or 37%), and in historically white universities by a total of 10,000 (or 8%) between 1990 and 1994.

South Africa is regarded as a multilingual society with 11 national languages: nine indigenous languages and the two former colonial languages of English and Afrikaans that are utilized as the mediums of instruction in schools and universities. However, English is the main language of instructions in most educational system at a tertiary level (Antia and van der Merwe, 2018). The following table shows the official languages and the national distribution of home language speakers (Census, 2011).

Official languages	Home language speakers
Zulu	22.7%
Xhosa	16.0%
Afrikaans	13.0%
Sepedi	9.1%
English	9.6%
Setswana	8%
Northern Sotho	7.6%
Tsonga	4.5%
Swati	2.5%
Venda	2.4%
Ndebele	2.1%
Other	1.6 %
Sign language	0.5%

http://www.southafrica-info.com/arts-culture/11-languages-south-africa/

2.4 Issues in academic reading and writing

Academic literacy has been defined in several ways according to the scholars' perceptions. However, it has been found that, in general, literacy is concerned with two components, reading and writing. **As for academic literacy,** Amos (1999: 178) observed that it is simply the "students' ability to read and write effectively in the university context". On the other hand, Ballard and Clanchy (1988:8) defined academic literacy generally as "a student's capacity to use written language to perform those functions required by the culture in ways and at a level judged to be acceptable by the reader". That ability refers to a set of skills that would help a student find out how to adjust to the new environment and practices. In the same way, Lillis and Scott (2007: 16) believe that "Academic literacy indicates a fluency in the particular ways of thinking, doing, being, reading and writing which are peculiar to academic contexts….far more than surface features of grammar and vocabulary". Lea and Street (1998:160) also offer a most useful description of academic literacy practices, as they maintain that "reading and writing within disciplines – [that] constitute central processes through which students learn new subjects and develop their knowledge about new areas of study". Even though I have introduced academic literacy here, I have made its thorough elaboration in chapter three (see chapter three, theoretical framework, for academic literacy).

With regards to the above-stated definitions of academic literacy, the following sections deal with issues of academic reading and writing construction, perceptions, and demands in higher education. The first part deals with academic reading.

2.4.1 Academic reading

Reading is a receptive skill, one of the four basic language skills. It is important to mention that academic reading is different from the other sorts of reading in that it requires the reader to be more critical and to understand the author's purpose. The reader also has the ability to evaluate, interpret the text, and read between the lines (Sohail, 2016; Nhapulo *et al*., 2017). Based on its requirements and practice, Lopatovska *et al*. (2017) contend that academic reading is "the process of constructing meaning from a text that involves cognitive reading strategies to effectively locate, comprehend, synthesise and communicate information" (Lopatovska *et al*., 2017:504). This implies that "[r]eading [academic] is a complex

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information processing skill in which the readers interact with the text in order to create meaningful discourse" (Akarsu and Harputlu, 2014:61).

2.4.1.1 Reading academic texts

One of the most vital skills that college and university students of English as a second language must own is the capability to read academic texts. Reading a text in higher education does not only mean to find some information in the text, but it is a process of interacting with the text. The reader has to recreate the meaning of the text with the writer of the text. In this case, the reader uses his/her prior information (Malkei, 1992: 260). According to some researchers, (Malkei, 1992; Boughey, 2009; Boughey, 2013; Cerrvetti *et al.*, 2001; Bharuthram and Clarence, 2015; Lesley, 2001; Vered, 2016) readers who read academic texts should be skilled and critical. In keeping with the above point of view, Bharuthram and Clarence (2015: 4) observe that critical reading in higher education is crucial and involves engagement with the text by asking questions, examining texts, making meaning, developing critical literacy, as well as adopting stances in relation to the texts. Malkei (1992) stated that one of the qualities of good readers is to be skilled readers who have the ability to go into the deep structure of the text and have the command of the language. They should be able to analyse, synthesise and evaluate what they read. Moreover, they should be able to make inferences, predicting subsequent information as well as words. In addition, Pretorius (2000) claimed that academic reading is "a powerful learning tool, a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge" (Pretorius, 2000: 1). To her, good readers are those who are able to "read to learn", and if these readers do not master this tool, they will encounter serious problems from the beginning. This claim leads to the following section which presents and discusses the requirements of academic reading.

2.4.1.2 Demands of academic reading

Researchers have emphasised that, at a tertiary level, reading is very important. In this perspective, Pretorius (2000:169) states that "Reading is important in the learning context not only because it affords readers independent access to information in an increasingly information-driven society, but more importantly because it is a powerful learning tool, a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge". This means that, in academia, when students join colleges or universities, they should be able to predict and

decode meaning in an academic discourse otherwise they will have a surface understanding, which is not enough for them to be good academics. This will make them struggle as students. Boakye (2012: 9) has observed that academic literacy construction of the students in higher education centres on reading and writing. Therefore, reading is regarded as essential to writing and influences writing considerabaly. Accordingly, students are required to read and to understand concepts, make inferences from contexts, understand the relationship between parts of texts, and apply relevant information to new situations. Boakye (2012) added that students are also required to synthesise, integrate and evaluate the text they read. Moreover, students at a tertiary level are required to read large quantities of printed materials in a limited timeframe (Pretorius 2000; Boakye, 2012). They are exposed to and practise different types of genre texts to help them comprehend the texts (Prinsloo and Heugh, 2013). Similarly, Bharuthram (2012) highlighted that reading in higher education is much more demanding and complicated. The following example illustrates the authors' perception. In a typical course load, students are required to read a number of different books (genre) which requires complicated analytical and interpretive skills in reading and writing as well. Comprehending these texts is essential for academic success. Van Wyk and Greyling (2008), as well as Tien (2015), believe that extensive reading is important and that students should read at least 100 pages per week, covering a wide range of interesting topics that help students build general knowledge. In addition, Brunfaut (2008:33, cited in Boakye, 2012) stated that reading in higher education is different: "Texts read within tertiary education settings, however, are often of a different nature than those read in other environments … the academic setting within which these texts are read is characterised by a particular academic culture and a particular disciplinary culture, and those involved are expected to become academically literate". This implies that academic reading is different from reading for entertainment or reading for pleasure.

Decoding and comprehension processes are required when reading academic texts. Pretorius (2002: 91) proposed two components to the reading process, that is decoding and comprehension. Decoding requires eye movement, the perceptual and parsing facets of the reading activity where written symbols are translated into language. Comprehension, in contrast, denotes to the overall understanding process where meaning is constructed. In Pretorius' (2002) words, decoding means we "learn to read" whereas comprehension facilitates us to "read to learn" (Pretorius, 2002: 92).

Moreover, reading with a critical eye is very vital in higher education. In other words, critical thinking or critical reading is important and is required in higher education. Pienaar (2001, cited in Grosser and Nel, 2013: 3) thinks that critical reading and understanding at higher education level requires the following abilities:

- elaboration on an argument and developing its implications;

- understanding, analysing and evaluating arguments and opinions;

- supporting general assertions with details; and

- recognizing the central idea in a work.

Some researchers have realised that the connection between reading skills and proficiency is essential. Reading for learning and for the attainment of information within the educational setting needs students to be ready to create links, perceive opinions, analyse, and apply this to studies. Taking into consideration the above-stated claim, there seems to be an explicit correlation between the extent of proficiency in the reading ability in English and also the educational performance of scholars (Aina *et al*. 2013).

At this juncture, I am inclined to believe that at tertiary level, academic literacy should stress the fact that, to be academically literate, students should perform activities, and not just read and write (Weideman, 2007; Carstens, 2012). This point of view complies, on the one hand, with Flippo and Caverly (2000: 180), who observed that successful readers in academia employ different sorts of strategies such as: (1) previewing the text to gain the general meaning; (2) setting a goal; (3) connecting the new knowledge with the old one; (4) holding disparate ideas in abeyance until further reading; (5) monitoring their process toward their goal and adapting effective strategies; (6) critically reading to judge the ideas presented, and (7) reflecting on both the ideas learned and the success of their choice of strategies after reading. On the other hand, Barnet and Bedau (2014) proposed that, before students start reading any academic text, they have to preview the text by focusing on the author, place of publication, and the title; they also have to skim the text to find the main idea. Moreover, students have to read with a careful eye by underlining, highlighting and annotating. Summarising and paraphrasing are considered good strategies for avoiding plagiarism and patch writing. The authors continued by saying that active readers should delve deeper into the writer's argument to discover what type of argument the writer uses. To achieve this, Pretorius (2000: 45) suggested that successful readers at university level should make use of

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cues / keys in texts for the purpose of constructing meaning, because focusing on textual clues is especially crucial for reading texts on unfamiliar content.

Having discussed academic reading as one component of academic literacy, in the following section, I intend to discuss the second component of academic writing.

2.4.2 Academic writing

Generally, academic writing in higher education is wholly different from ordinary writing. According to Ariyanti (2016: 64), "academic writing is a set of evaluation on a way a writer thinks, analyses, proves, and presents factual and academic data". As indicated by Leki and Carson (1994: 83), "the ability to write well is necessary both to achieve academic success and to demonstrate that achievement". In the same way, Butler (2006: III) observed that "academic writing is generally regarded as the most important communication medium through which people in the tertiary academic context choose to communicate their ideas. It is also well known that it is sometimes an arduous process for students to become accustomed to the requirements (the conventions and conditions) that hold for the production of appropriate written texts in this context". In addition, Wilmot and Lotz-Sisitka (2015: 7) stated that "academic writing is not merely a set of skills one can acquire outside of their discipline or context, but rather it is a socially mediated, social practice".

In light of the above-stated conceptions, academic writing appears to be very important and needed for students in higher education. Scholars in the field have revealed that

> Writing is important because it is used extensively in higher education and in the workplace. If the students do not know how to express themselves in writing, they will not be able to communicate well with professors, employers, peers or just about anyone else. Much of professional communication is done in writing: proposals, memos, reports, applications, preliminary interviews, e-mails and more are part of the daily life of a college student or successful graduate (Walsh, 2010:1).

There are different types of writing approaches (Walsh, 2010). The most common approaches to writing are the product and the process approaches.

The product approach emphasizes on text production or the final product of the text. The main focus of the students in this approach is on their linguistic knowledge. According to this approach, students imitate, reproduce and copy a model text when asked to write (Steele, 2004, cited in Klimova, 2013). Consistent with the writing product, a piece of writing is supposed to contain particular assigned English rhetoric styles; it should reflect appropriate mechanics (spelling, grammar and punctuation), and vocabulary and organisation of the ideas (Brown, 2001). In brief, the "product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development as mainly the result of the imitation of print, in the form of texts provided by the teacher" (Badger and White, 2000:154).

On the other hand, the process approach in writing occurs when "language learners focus on the process by which they produce their written products rather than on the products themselves" (Bayat, 2014: 154). The process of writing is an approach to academic writing that "is seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on linguistic knowledge, such as knowledge of grammar and text structure" (Badger and White, 2000: 154). In the process of writing, the main focus is on the writer. This implies that, in this process, the main focus is on what the writer writes and not on the qualities of the text (Coffin *et al*., 2003). However, it should be mentioned that opinions on the stages the writers can follow to produce a piece of writing vary from one scholar to another. For example, Northedge (2005: 297) has proposed the following eight stages for the process approach: (1) thinking about the essay title; (2) planning the writing process; (3) studying the course content; (4) taking stock before you start writing; (5) getting ideas written down; (6) organising your material; (7) drafting an answer; and (8) reviewing and polishing. For Badger and White (2000), the typical stages for the process of writing are: previewing, in which the writers have to brainstorm / think about ideas; and composing / drafting, in which the writers have to structure the selected ideas that lead to setting a plan. According to Northedge (2005: 296), these stages are not obligatory because "writing is a highly individual activity and people succeed in very different ways". What is important is that the writers have to write the first draft, review and revise it. Lastly, the writers have to edit or proof-read the text written.

Having discussed academic writing in general and the academic writing approaches, the following section intends to discuss the academic writing requirements and features.

2.4.2.1 Academic writing requirements

Students in college are exposed to writing demands which are different from those they were exposed to in high school and certainly unlike their everyday writing practices (Barton and Hamilton, 1998).

In terms of academic writing, one should focus on language because without mastering a language, students in higher education cannot write properly. This means that students are expected to be good in the language of instruction. This is what a number of scholars have emphasized and suggested. For example, Wilmot and Lotz-Sisitka (2015:7) found that, from a sociocultural perspective of academic literacy, language is regarded as a backbone in academic writing and it is a necessary element through which students reflect their ability to build new knowledge and to write academically. Similarly, Neeley (2015) reported that, in higher education, "the college composition course is the ideal environment which you can experiment with academic language and conventions" (Neeley, 2015: 14). Moreover, researchers state that proficiency in the language is an important element that effects academic performance and experience at university and in education in general (Weideman, 2003; Butler, 2007).

2.4.2.2 Features / qualities of academic writing

According to scholars such as Zimmerman and Rodrigues (1992), students in higher education have to know that there are features to be respected to maintain quality in academic writing. These features differ from one discipline to another. For example, the features that are valued in an arts discipline may not be valued in a science discipline and vice-versa. This confirms that "good writing is writing that is appropriate for the audience and purpose of a specific writing situation" (Zimmerman and Rodrigues, 1992: 9). They also maintain that the characteristics of good writing are of two types: general features, and specific features. The general features include: appropriate purpose, audience, content style, and tone. The specific features consist of effective organisation, sentence structure, word choice, and visual display of information. Similarly, Higgs *et al.* (2009) stated that one of the academic writing genre basics is the conventions of writing. These include writing accurate grammar; punctuation; using precise words; avoiding long complex sentences; using consistent spelling, tense, style and voice; explaining and minimising jargon; limiting slang and colloquial language; and

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avoiding ambiguity. Finally, Higgs *et al*. (2009) emphasise that the argument is the core feature of the academic writing.

According to Butler (2006), El-Sakran (2013), and Altakhaineh (2010), textual features are required for students in university to produce coherent academic texts. These textual features include:

(1) formality, which refers to the use of formal language; the use of colloquial or slang language is not adequate in academic writing;

(2) conciseness and exactness, which is important for academic writing. This implies that the students should avoid using contractions, vague lexical items, ambiguous sentences, or metaphor;

(3) impersonality and objectivity, which means that in academic writing, the writers are expected to avoid referring to themselves as sources of knowledge. However, they are encouraged to use the pronoun "I" because it shows how competent they are and how they use their voice;

(4) nominalisation, which refers to the use of nouns rather than verbs. This is useful in academic writing because it conveys an objective and impersonal tone. Using normalisation in academic writing makes the text abstract and formal;

(5) grammatical correctness, which refers to students' ability to use correct grammar;

(6) logical coherence and cohesion, which refers to the use of connecting devices to connect the ideas and paragraphs; and

(7) appropriate use of evidence, which refers to acknowledging the source materials or referencing.

In all the above instances, the failure to respect, follow or apply these features affects negatively the quality of the academic writing.

Based on the premises that good readers are those who able are to "read to learn" (Pretorius, 2002) and "good writing is […] appropriate for the audience and purpose of a specific writing situation" (Zimmerman and Rodrigues, 1992: 9), I am disposed to believe that understanding academic literacy is subject to the knowledge and understanding of its culture.

2.5 Academic culture

This part presents the definition of academic culture, the determinants of academic culture, and aspects of academic culture that have been gleaned from various directions regarding teaching and learning styles. It also presents the theory of cultural dimensions developed by Hofstede and its implications on academic literacy / culture.

2.5.1 Definitions

Academic culture has been studied by many scholars. For instance, Clark (1980) was the first to refer to academic culture as an organisational culture, and the latter has been defined by Schein (2004) as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems" (Schein, 2004: 17). Similarly, Brick (2013: 97) and Throsby (2001: 3-4) have suggested that "academic culture is attitudes, values and ways of behaving that are shaped by people who work or study in universities, for example, lecturers, researchers and students".

2.5.2 Determinants of academic culture

There are factors that determine any academic culture all over the world. These determinants may affect the academic culture in different ways. They can relate to the way the students sit, participate, learn and interact in the classroom. They can relate to how students imagine their relationship with their teachers or what kind of relationship exists between them. They can relate to how students write and read, either widely or narrowly. They can relate to resources that support students' learning or teachers' teaching. They can relate to how teachers mark students' scripts and/or how students communicate and interact in the class. They can relate to how students migrate from one place to another. They can also relate to gender segregation, amongst others.

Studies have identified many components that influence academic cultures. It should be noted that these determinants vary from one country to another. This implies that what affects the academia strongly in one country may not be relevant, or be only weakly relevant, in another

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country. For instance, the **economic / socioeconomic factor** can determine whether students read widely or narrowly. In a country where the institution has different types of resources (Mwageni, 2015), and/or when the parents have a high level of economic status (Eamon, 2005; Rouse and Barrow, 2009), students can afford many books and can read widely. The students read narrowly when they do not find resources in the institution and when their parents have a low / poor socioeconomic status (Cooley, 2014). The **technological factor** can determine how widely students integrate online material into their learning or whether lecturers can easily detect students' plagiarism. The latter can either prevent students from the practice or not. The **social** and **religious factors** can in some cases determine the students' academic culture. For example, the Islamic religion can influence gender segregation in private and public education (Alhazmi and Nyland, 2012; Rettinger and Jordan, 2005; Marquette, 2009). The **political stability and security factor** can determine whether the institutions are secure because insecure institutions can negatively impact the students' academic success since the universities remain close and students can only reproduce what they are told or move to other environments if they do not abide (Devi, 2017; Amamio, 2004).

Aspects of academic culture can be gleaned from work in different directions such as: teaching and learning styles (Gafoor and Babu, 2012; Cassidy, 2004; Hess and Frantz, 2014; Hofstede, 2001; Manikutty *et al*., 2007; Gündüz and Özcan, 2010; Dahlin and Watkins, 2000); and the application of Hofstede's dimensions of culture to higher education (Hofstede, 1986; Cronjé, 2011; Yassin, 2012; Prowse and Goddad, 2010; Biemans and Van Mil, 2008; Tarhini, 2013).

2.5.3. Teaching and Learning styles

It has been said that when teachers understand students' learning styles and their preferences, the process of teaching is facilitated. Abdul Gafoor and Babu (2012: 57) stated that

> learning and teaching are the two sides of the same coin; one side involving the learner, the other side involving the teacher. The most effective teachers are those who used their students preferred learning styles as the basis for instruction. When an instructor's style matches with a student's learning style, that student typically experiences greater satisfaction and a more positive attitude toward the course.

2.5.3.1 Learning styles

In the literature, learning styles have been differently defined. For instance, Cassidy (2004: 421) has defined learning styles as "the preferred way in which an individual approaches a task or learning situation". Hess and Frantz (2014: 45) suggested that "learning styles or preferences are multifaceted ways in which learners perceive process, store and recall what they are trying to learn". Another definition has been introduced by Dunn (1984:12) as "the way in which each person absorbs and retains information and/ or skills".

Although the above authors have focused on individual preferences, others have pointed to the cultural conditioning of these styles, arguing that cultural background has a direct impact on the students' learning and that there is a strong relationship between education, learning, and culture (see Hofstede, 2001; Manikutty *et al*., 2007; Gündüz and Özcan 2010; Dahlin and Watkins, 2000). A study undertaken by Gündüz and Özcan (2010) examined the learning styles of 450 students from different cultures studying at Near East University, TRNC (Turkish Republic of North Cyprus). The participants were Arabic, Turkish and Cypriot. These students enrolled in the engineering and educational departments. Culture was used as one of the variables in this study. Before presenting the findings of the study, it is noteworthy that the authors employed the following terms that were taken from various learning style framework models. These terms include: active learning (students learn by discussing, testing or examining information in some way); reflective learning (students learn by examining and manipulating information); sensitive (students learn by observing, gathering data through senses); intuitive (students learn by discovering possibilities and relationships and they dislike repetition); visual learning (students learn by seeing pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, films); verbal (students learn by words, written or spoken, explanations); sequential learning (students learn by following logical, linear steps), and global learning (students learn by connecting learning with their personal experiences, stories, and anecdotes). Accordingly, the findings showed that, in terms of the active and reflective learning style, Cypriot students learned more reflectively than Turkish and Arabic students. This means that Turkish and Arabic students tended to learn more actively. With regard to sensitive and intuitive learning, Turkish students learned more intuitively than Arabic and Cypriot students. That is to say, Arabic and Cypriot students tended to learn more through sensing. Concerning visual and verbal learning, there was not a big difference among the students. All the students learned verbally. Regarding sequential and global learning, even

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though there is not a big difference among the students, Turkish students learned more sequentially than the Cypriot and Arabic students who learned more globally. Consequently, the result of this study indicated that the cultures of the students impacted their learning style preferences.

Regarding the cultural background and memorisation, a number of researchers in the literature referred to two types of learning styles, which are called surface and deep learning. An abundance of research indicates that memorisation is considered as a surface strategy, whereas evaluation and elaboration are regarded as deep strategies (Biggs, 1987, 1999; Lucas, 2001; Lyke and Kalaher Young, 2006). For example, Lyke and Kalaher Young (2006) defined and compared the two strategies. The authors stated that surface learning relies on rehearsal and mainly requires reading or repeating ideas many times. The students employ this strategy for the purpose of memorising information that is needed for recall on a short-term basis (exams, tests or quizzes). Conversely, deep learning strategies are defined as organisation and elaboration strategies. Examples of elaboration strategies are paraphrasing, identifying important points, making analogies and generalisations, and making connections and expanding on the material that has been presented. Biggs (1999) classified learners into two types. The first type refers to learners who just learn to obtain a qualification. These learners prefer surface learning. In other words, these students are passive and reproduce / memorise the content materials as they just want to obtain high marks to pass exams. The second type of learner employs deep learning: they are critical readers, use problem-solving, and they are active in the learning process. Surface learning is described as extrinsic learning and deep learning as intrinsic learning (Biggs, 1987, 1999; Lyke and Kalaher Young, 2006; Lucas, 2001). In the literature, some scholars have emphasised that Arab learners, including Libyan students, are regarded as surface learners (O'Brien and Ali, 2013; Aharony, 2006; Sadeghi, 2015). Sadeghi (2015) conducted a study with over 125 foreign language students majoring in the faculty of Humanities at the University of Guilan in Iran. The study intended to compare the strategies used by the students in foreign language departments (Arab literature and language, English literature and language, and Russian literature and language) through the questionnaire. Also, a semi-structured interview was used with the staff members. The result revealed that surface learning strategies were mainly used in learning and teaching in the foreign language departments. Similarly, O'Brien and Ali (2013) undertook a study on third year students at the University of United Arab Emirates to

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investigate learning and teaching. The finding suggested that the students were likely to use surface learning strategies rather than deep learning strategies.

2.5.3.2 Teaching styles

A teaching style is a recognisable set of classroom behaviours related to and implemented by the instructor. The chosen teaching style "is the operational behaviour of the teacher's educational philosophy" (Conti and Welborn, 1986: 20).

2.5.3.2.1 Teacher-centred approach

In this approach, the main focus is on teachers and the students' role is passive. A teacher-centred approach means that the teacher is like a leader or a dominant individual that conveys knowledge to the students, who are inactive recipients. The teachers do everything in the teaching and learning process (Mutlq Al-Zube, 2013; Garret, 2008; Lak *et al*. 2017; Brown, 2016).

Ahmad and Aziz (2009: 22), in their research on students' perceptions on teaching styles in the teaching and learning of English literature, observed that "teacher-centred teaching is the traditional teaching method where teachers are at the centre of the class activities: teach, talk and explain all the way". The authors suggested that in traditional classrooms, students have a certain and fixed perception of their own roles and those of their teachers. The students' experiences have clarified that teachers behave in certain ways and have particular roles in the process. The view considers teachers as 'custodians of knowledge'. Moreover, according to the students' perceptions, the authors observed that in the teacher-centred classrooms, participation was at a minimum and was allowed only when teachers recognized it as appropriate. Participation was entirely teacher-controlled.

2.5.3.2.2 Student-centred approach

This approach centres on the students who construct knowledge and are very active in the learning process. Brandes and Ginnis (1986, cited in O'Neill and Mcmahon, 2005: 31) stated that the learner-centred method has crucial features. These features are as follows:

- The learner has full responsibility for his/her learning.

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- Learner involvement and participation are necessary for learning.

- The relationship between learners is more equal, promoting growth and development.

- The teacher is only a facilitator of the student's learning and a resource person.

- The learner experiences a confluence of cognitive and affective learning in his education.

- The learner sees himself/herself differently as a result of the learning experience.

On the other hand, Lea *et al*. (2003) suggested that the learner-centred approach comprises principles which include: (1) the reliance on active rather than passive learning; (2) an emphasis on deep learning and understanding; (3) increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the student; (4) an increased sense of autonomy in the learner; (5) an interdependence between teacher and learner; (6) mutual respect within the learner teacher relationship; and (7) a reflexive approach to the teaching and learning process on the part of both teacher and learner (Lea *et al*. (2003:322).

In this study, the focus will be on Hofstede. Accordingly, I will shed some light on the dimensions of cultural differences by Hofstede.

2.5.4 Hofstede cultural dimensions

According to some scholars, cultures of societies are different and these differences impact how people work. In order to understand the variations in cultures, many studies attempted to compare cultural differences and to examine their effectiveness on the people's performances in their business or learning. Among others, there are studies by Hofstede (2004), House *et al*. (2004), and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997).

Hofstede developed a cultural dimensions model as a result of using a factor analysis to examine the effect of the culture of any society on the values of people and how these values are relevant to behaviours. These dimensions consist of five aspects which focus on power distance (PDI), individualism versus collectivism (IDV), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), masculinity versus femininity (MAS), and long-term orientation versus short-term orientation (LTO). By power distance, Hofstede (1997; 2001) refers to "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally". In societies with a high power distance culture, the distribution of power is more noticeable. Examples of such hierarchical cultures are France,

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Spain, Portugal, Russia, and most of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Low power distance cultures refer to people who think that power should be distributed equally among them. These cultures are also hierarchical, but they are less noticeable. Such cultures are in countries like Denmark and Sweden. De Mooij and Hofstede (2010: 5) defined individualism and collectivism as "people looking after themselves and their immediate family only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty". This means that, in an individualist society, the connections between individuals are untied; the individual is supposed to look out for himself/herself and his/her family. In contrast, in a collectivist society, every individual is expected to take care of his extended family. That is, people are incorporated into strong and interrelated groups. For masculinity and femininity, Hofstede *et al*. (2010: 140) stated "a society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life. A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life". Regarding uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede *et al*. (2010: 190) stated that uncertainty avoidance is "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations". In other words, uncertainty avoidance refers to when people in a society try to avoid / minimise surprising and unusual situations by generating rules and laws. People in uncertainty avoiding societies tend to be anxious and emotional while those in low uncertainty avoidance are willing to agree with uncertainty, rules and laws (Holtbügge and Mohr, 2010). With regard to time orientation, societies that score high in this dimension take the more pragmatic approach; they are more future-oriented and encourage perseverance and thrift. On the other hand, countries that score low in this dimension prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms; they are past- and present-oriented and value traditions and social obligations (Hofstede, 2001).

2.5.4.1 Application of Hofstede in teaching and learning

Learning culture varies from one society to another. This means that in a particular society the academic culture of critical reading may not be very widespread as a practice because the learners are afraid to challenge authority when they study abroad. Also, when the resources are limited in a certain academic culture, the students may not have a lot of materials to read

and they may not have experience in reading. Accordingly, the following section will show the cultural impact on learning and teaching in light of Hofstede's dimensions.

Hofstede (1986) has himself applied his dimensions of culture to student-teacher interactions, among other facets of education. With respect to the individualism/collectivism dimension, he notes that, in collectivist societies, students may expect to do and speak in class only when they are called upon by their teachers to cooperate in harmonious groups. In individualist societies, learners expect to be taught how to learn, and learning can be contested and confronted.

With respect to power distance, in societies with small power distance, teachers' value students' independence, learning is student-centred, students interact with their teachers in two-way communication, students depend on themselves, and they can criticize their teachers. On the other hand, in societies with huge power distance, students respect their teachers, learning is teacher-centred, teachers are the source of information and should not be criticised by their students, and effective learning is seen as one-way.

With respect to uncertainty avoidance, in societies with a low degree of uncertainty avoidance, students feel relaxed only when learning is without rules, objectives, timetables, detailed assignments and language is simple, whereas in societies with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance, students are more at ease with exact objectives, structured learning, firm timetables, exhaustive assignments and academic language. With respect to masculinity and femininity, in feminine societies, teachers praise average students as the norm, reward all students, and the students respect old teachers; in masculine societies, teachers compliment good students, set the top students as the target, prize good performance, and students respect the intelligent teachers.

The implication of Hofstede's analysis is that, because Libyan society (in comparison to South African society) is characterised by greater power distance, weak uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, and more femininity, in principle, Libyan students (without denying their agency to behave differently) would learn in the manner associated with cultures that are collectivist, exhibit greater power distance, less concerned by uncertainty, and more oriented towards femininity.

In a study by Manikutty, *et al*. (2007), the researchers studied whether culture influences learning styles in higher education or not and how international students prefer to learn. The

authors described how culture in Japan and Thailand differ from Western countries and how this affects Japanese and Thai students. For example, the study illustrated that the power distance is high in Japan and Thailand, which makes Japanese and Thai students less critical compared to Western students. They respect their teachers and everything written or said by teachers tends to be accepted. In contrast, Western students, coming from a background where power distance is low, tend to adopt more critical stances in various aspects of their learning.

Cronjé (2006) conducted a study which reflected on the cross-cultural communicative experiences of three professors from South Africa, and twelve Sudanese students doing their Master's degrees in Computers in education. There were three Sudanese supporters. The researcher used Hofstede's four dimensions for analysis and interpretation. The study took place in Pretoria, South Africa. However, the students were required to participate by utilising research journals, term papers, websites, spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations. The results showed that Sudanese students were characterised with power distance because they lacked confidence to do their assignments; they let their professors take the responsibility. Also, Sudanese students showed high levels of uncertainty avoidance. For the masculinity/femininity dimension, very little difference was found in traditional gender distinctions between South African and Sudanese students. This means that the two cultures were closest together on the masculinity/femininity dimension; both were almost in the middle of the range, and not much was observed in terms of constructing new common understanding.

Several researchers conducted research on various learning styles all over the world (Watkins and Biggs, 1996; Chan, 1999; Ballard and Clanchy, 1991; Sit, 2013). A study conducted by Biemans and Van Mil (2008) on Dutch and Chinese first year students majoring at a Dutch agricultural university, showed that Chinese students were likely to use more reproductive, stepwise, sequential, detailed and analytic study strategies, whereas the Dutch students were reported to use more deep, structuring, and relating strategies. Clearly, Chinese students preferred memorisation as a way for understanding the material.

Yassin (2012) carried out a study on ESL students from the Arab Gulf institution from Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates, examining the relationship between cultures and learning styles in relation to each country. The students studied English in Intensive English Language Centres at the University of Arkansas, and the University of Oklahoma in

the US. The researcher used a questionnaire that tested visual (by seeing), aural (by hearing / listening), reading / writing, and kinaesthetic (touching and moving) perceptual learning styles. The results showed that there was a difference among these countries in the learning style preference. That is, the cultural backgrounds of the students affected their preferences of learning styles. The analysis revealed that the majority of Omani students preferred a touching and moving (kinaesthetic) learning style, and most of the Emirati students preferred a reading / writing learning style. The majority of Kuwaiti and Saudi students preferred an aural learning style.

Another study by Tarhini (2013) was conducted on Lebanese and British students to examine Web-based learning systems in higher education. The author also tried to understand how the individual level of culture might affect students' behaviour when using Web-based learning. The participants were studying fulltime at 18 universities in Lebanon and 81 universities in England. The framework, Technology Acceptance model, was applied in this study and investigated the moderating effect of Hofstede's four cultural dimensions at the individual level. Concerning power distance, the results indicated that both British and Lebanese students were low. This result is inconsistent with Hofstede (1980) who indicated that Arab countries are high on power distance. With respect to masculinity and femininity, the results showed that both British and Lebanese students were rated high on masculinity. This result was unexpected because Lebanon is regarded moderate on the masculinity index compared to England, which was rated as a very masculine society. For individualism and collectivism, the findings showed that the British had individualistic values whereas Lebanon had collectivistic values. This finding was consistent with Hofstede. With regard to uncertainty avoidance, the results indicated that British students were neutral while Lebanese students had a high uncertainty avoidance. This result is close to Hofstede.

Prowse and Goddard (2010) investigated the impact of culture on pedagogy and also examined the adaptations of Western pedagogy in an Arabic environment (Qatar). The study compared and contrasted the effect of culture on the teaching practices in the two sites: the first site was a Canadian campus, and the second was a Qatari campus. The author used 10 participants (four in Qatar and 10 in Canada) who were interviewed using basic questions generated from the cultural dimensions, including Hofstede's. The participants were teachers instructing in business programmes. The results of this study, based on the participants' perceptions, indicated the following: For the **time orientation** dimension, in Qatar, the teachers perceived tardiness, absenteeism and non-completion of homework assignments as

challenges. Accordingly, they (teachers) used strategies to minimise these problems; these strategies included deducting marks for lateness and not allowing the late students in class because some of the teachers said that it was a priority of the academic culture to train students to follow and respect schedules. In terms of the students in Canada, the teachers found that the majority of the students were well prepared for class and submitted their homework assignments on time. With regard to **power distance**, the teachers indicated that in both sites the students needed guidance, but in Qatar guidance was more detailed than in Canada. In Qatar, the students depended on the textbook material which was assigned and covered in class, whereas students in Canada studied more independently. The level of power distance between teachers and students was significantly different between the students in the two sites. Participants explained that, in Qatar, the students saw teachers as authority figures, but the students in Canada did not. In Qatar, the students were polite, respectful and used a title to address teachers; they did not interrupt and always waited to be called to answer questions. The students in Canada were usually casual, raised topics that were not related to the matter being discussed, and used their voices. The power distance between students on both campuses was different. In Qatar, teachers are aware of the interactions between females and males; teachers reduce or balance this power distance by not pairing Qatari women with men. In Canada, the academic students participate in class discussions. With concern to the **individualism and collectivism** dimension, the teachers noted in Qatar that students were proactive in helping their friends and they talked to each other in class. The students did not ask for help from their teachers; if they asked them (teachers), they (student) just wanted to make sure of the completed work. In contrast, students in Canada worked individually. They sought help from their teachers when they encountered difficulty. The teachers reported that even though the students enjoyed group work in Qatar, this strategy was rarely employed. In Canada, students preferred working in groups because this strategy is considered very important in Canadian academic culture. With regard to **uncertainty avoidance**, the teachers reported at the Qatar campus that there was a strong level of uncertainty avoidance in students concerning discussing controversial topics such as sexual behaviour, and drug and alcohol consumption. In Canada, teachers observed that taboo topics were used in class discussions regularly. In Qatar, according to the teachers, the students preferred structured learning situations, whereas in Canada, you cannot find students who preferred structured classes. Guidance was very essential in the Qatari academic culture. The teachers reminded the students to bring their textbooks, papers and pens to class. In Canada, it was common for the students to write essays and to give presentations, but this was improbable in Qatar where

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the teaching method is teacher-centred. Qatari students characterised themselves as having high uncertainty avoidance because of the different academic expectations and using a language which was not their own.

2.6 Literacy experiences of international students

When students move from their own home country with a culture which is considerably different from the one in the host country, they encounter challenges and difficulties in their academic life. Some research has focused on the role of culture in terms of academic reading and writing. This section has two subsections: the first subsection is academic reading challenges and strategies for overcoming problems. The second subsection is academic writing problems and the strategies for overcoming problems.

The following subsection is for academic reading challenges and strategies used to overcome problems.

2.6.1 Academic reading challenges and the strategies used to overcome problems

One of the most important skills that college and university students of English as a second language must own is the ability to read academic texts. Reading a text in higher education does not only mean finding some information in the text, it is a process of interacting with the text and the reader has to recreate the meaning of the text with the writer who wrote the text. In this case, the reader uses his/her prior information (Malkei, 1992: 260).

According to Pretorius (2000: 1), academic reading is "a powerful learning tool, a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge". To her, good readers are able to "read to learn", and if these readers do not master this tool, they will encounter serious problems from the beginning. These problems may be encountered because ESL students, such as Arabs in general and Libyans in particular, have different linguistic, educational and cultural backgrounds from that found in the new environment where they are studying.

Some scholars have found that some international students had problems in academic reading (Alghail and Mahfoodh, 2016; Robinson-Pant, 2009; Keong and Mussa, 2015; Hirano, 2011; Hartshorn *et al*., 2017; Al-Jarrah and Ismail, 2018; Sibomana, 2016; Singh, 2014; Barnawi, 2009; Alamri, 2017).

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One of the problems that international students (in general) and Arab students (in particular) faced, was **general overview reading** (not understanding) texts / vocabulary (Hirano, 2011; Hartshorn *et al*., 2017; Barnawi, 2009; Alamri, 2017; Singh, 2014). A study undertaken by Singh (2014) in Malaysia on international students from the Middle East countries (Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Libya, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt) examined the academic reading challenges faced by the students from these countries. The results showed that the students had difficulties in reading quickly to find information, working out the meaning of difficult words, reading quickly to gain the overall meaning of the text, and understanding specialist vocabulary. In order for the students to overcome their problems, they made an effort to use their own strategies that included reading the assigned material more times, reading extensively in their discipline, referring / translating from first to second language (translanguaging), using a dictionary, and reading articles which focused on improving non-English speakers' language use.

Another study by Hirano (2011) focused on the literacy learning of seven refugee first year undergraduate students studying at an American college. Some of the participants were unable to understand the reading texts and understand unfamiliar vocabulary. In addition, the researcher indicated that some of the students had problems in exams / tests as they were unable to understand the exam / test questions. That is, they had difficulty understanding exam instructions, and multiple-choice questions. These difficulties, according to the researcher, happened because the students had different background knowledge and different expectations. The researcher stated that the students (with refugee backgrounds) tried to adapt their reading difficulties; they attempted to adjust to the expectations of their college and to cope by making use of several available sources and strategies. Their strategies included skimming texts, using PowerPoint slides, relying on study guides (hand-outs, exam study guides, review sheets, sample questions), using the library, reading / studying with peers, using dictionaries especially for unknown words, re-reading after the lecture, highlighting the main points, taking notes, and seeking help from their tutors and professors.

The same problem was found among Arab students at a Canadian university where the researcher, Alamri (2017), conducted a study to explore the experiences of Saudi Arabian students. The result indicated that the students were unable to understand the terms and phrases while reading. The strategies the students used to overcome their problems were to put in more time and effort, they sought help from tutors and professors, and they cooperated with each other.

Khalid (2017), in his study investigating the attitudes and experiences of teaching English at Sebha University in Libya, which included 24 staff members and 21 Libyan undergraduate students, revealed that most of the students were incapable of understanding the vocabulary of the reading lessons; they were also unable to understand the questions of tests and exams. The researcher commented that the students tried to cope with this problem by translating the lessons into Arabic with the help of lecturers or friends. That is, the students depended on code meshing.

Critical thinking (reading) was indicated by Robinson-Pant (2009) and Hartshorn *et al.*, (2017) as a challenge for international students. Robinson-Pant (2009) conducted a study on international PhD students after they finished their PhDs at a UK university. The purpose of the research was to analyse the academic literacies in 'host' and 'home' universities and how these are shaped and affected by institutional values and structures. The author commented that most of the international students found reading and writing critically as the biggest problem. Arab Saudi students reported that it was easier to be critical in your own language (Arabic) than in another language (English), and another Saudi student highlighted that he understood what his supervisor meant by "being critical" when his daughter started school in the UK. He noticed that she was taught to ask questions.

Hartshorn *et al*. (2017) investigated the reading expectations and challenges of undergraduate first year ESL students in the US. The findings showed that the participants lacked critical thinking skills.

Taking notes is also another challenge faced by international students, including Arab students (Sibomana, 2016; Alghail and Mahfoodh, 2016). Alghail and Mahfoodh (2016) examined how Yemeni international students at a Malaysian university perceive and overcome their academic reading challenges. The findings showed that Yemeni students encountered academic reading difficulties such as taking brief and relevant notes, using their own words in note taking, working out the meaning of difficult words, identifying supporting ideas/examples, and managing their time to complete their readings. However, the students explained that they tried to overcome their difficulties by employing different types of strategies, which included taking intensive English courses, participating in workshops, reading books, and seeking help from peers.

Sibomana (2016) conducted a study on African postgraduate students from Rwanda majoring in South African higher education. The study investigated English language challenges faced

by 22 Rwandan French-speaking postgraduate students. The result revealed that taking notes was one of the challenges the students encountered. The author explained that, because the participants had limited vocabulary and they could not use their own words, they had difficulty writing down notes when reading academic texts.

The following subsection deals with academic writing challenges and the strategies used to overcome writing problems.

2.6.2 Academic writing challenges and the strategies used to overcome problems

It has been said that learning to write in English is problematic especially when learners are non-English speakers. Grami (2010) stated that the difficulty of academic writing increases when English is not the student's first language; added to that is different teaching and learning approaches between English and Arabic.

In the literature, many researchers conducted research on the academic writing challenges faced by international students (Ankawi, 2015; Ibrahim and Nambiar, 2011; Hisham, 2008; Al-Shareef, 2011; Keong and Mussa, 2015; Ravichandran, 2017; Hirano, 2011; Al-Jarrah and Ismail, 2018; Evivie, 2009; Sibomana, 2016; Alamri, 2017; Al-Khasawneh, 2010; Khalid, 2017; Shaheen, 2016). Academic writing in higher education requires students to know certain features or technical tools that should be used properly. Higgs *et al*. (2009) stated that one of the academic writing genre basics is the conventions of writing. These include writing accurate grammar,; punctuation; using precise words; avoiding long complex sentences; using consistent spelling, tense, style and voice; explaining and minimising jargon; limiting slang and colloquial language; and avoiding ambiguity.

The mechanics of writing, as one of the writing styles, is regarded as a big challenge to international students (Ravichandran, 2017; Hirano, 2011; Al-Jarrah and Ismail, 2018; Evivie, 2009; Sibomana, 2016; Al-Khasawneh, 2010; Khalid, 2017; Hisham, 2008; Alamri, 2017). In a recent study conducted by Al-Shareef (2011) on Arab Libyan students doing their Master's degrees at Diponegorg University in Semarang, Indonesia, the students were asked to write about three different topics and to answer a writing test for the purpose of testing their competence in a writing skill. The results indicated that all the students faced difficulties in grammar, spelling, vocabulary and punctuation.

In another study by Ravichandran (2017) on 15 international students from 11 different countries and different fields of study in the US, the goal was to identify the writing challenges and the various strategies students employed to overcome those problems. The result of the study showed that the students had many problems including grammar and vocabulary. In order to cope with the college expectations, the students used strategies such as using www.dictionary.com, App translator, and asking assistance from friends and the writing centre.

Evivie (2009) studied a group of African international sub-Saharan students (Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Cameron and Nigeria) to describe their perspectives of the challenges faced by African students studying in the United States. The findings revealed that the students had problems in language (spelling, vocabulary), writing style, and word placement.

The mechanics of writing as a problem was identified by Al-Khasawneh (2010) who performed a study on Arab students at the college of business at the University of Utara in Malaysia.

Organisation and coherence are indicated as big challenges for international students (Al-Jamhoor, 2001; Sibomana, 2016; Ibrahim and Nambiar, 2011). For example, as mentioned earlier, Sibomana (2016) found that sub-Saharan African students encountered reading challenges. Also, the same students had problems in academic writing, according to the researcher. These problems included the inability to write coherent paragraphs when they were asked to do research papers, they could not write good introductions, conclusions and the main body of paragraph. Moreover, the students could not express their ideas clearly and logically. Concerning writing strategies, the students asked help from their knowledgeable colleagues to revise or edit their written work for them; they consulted the institute's writing centre; and they cooperated in peer learning groups from the same nationality.

Al-Jamhoor (2001) used cross-cultural analysis to the writing of Arab-speaking learners of English at Imam University, Saudi Arabia. The students were asked to write two essays in English and Arabic, which were compared to essays written by American students studying at Michigan State University. The analysis indicated that the Arabic students used fewer thesis statements and fewer conclusions. Also, Arab learners wrote a relatively large number of discourse markers than their counterparts did. Moreover, Arabic students used more parallel structures than American students did. According to Yehia (2015), using a lot of discourse markers in English writing, such as the conjunctions 'but' or 'and', is considered to be

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language transfer. This means that the students transferred their linguistic practices of language use from Arabic to English in order to convey meaning for communicative purposes.

Shaheen (2016) conducted a study on 150 non-native speakers of English from a wide range of countries throughout the world. The students were at different levels (Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD) in the UK. The researcher aimed to understand the difficulties the students had in their academic writing in relation to critical thinking and how they (students) coped with their problems. The findings indicated that the biggest challenges the students faced were lack of logical organisation and the inability to provide evidence to support their arguments.

Another challenge the international students faced was conventions of style, which includes using formal language. Alamri (2017), in his qualitative study, explored the experiences of international Saudi Arabian students at a Canadian university. The findings showed that there were difficulties in reading and writing that the students faced. In writing, the students faced problems with different writing styles; they were unable to use formal language. However, the students employed strategies to overcome their problems. The students put in more time and effort, sought help from tutors and professors, they cooperated with each other, and they made use of the university services and the writing centre.

Honesty is very important in academic writing. The students have to paraphrase and to acknowledge the source materials otherwise they will plagiarise. Referencing, paraphrasing / summarising, and citations are also big challenges for some of the international students (Al-Badi, 2015; Keong and Mussa, 2015; Ankawi, 2015; Ravichandran, 2017; Hisham, 2008; Al-Khasawneh, 2010). Al-Badi (2015) conducted a study on international students, including Arab students, studying in Australia. The researcher explored the academic writing problems the students had. The findings indicated that referencing, paraphrasing and citations were some of the challenges the students encountered.

Ankawi's (2015) study on ten Saudi international students at a New Zealand University, showed that the students did not know how to paraphrase or summarise the articles they read, and they were unable to cite correctly the references they used. As a result, the students tried to use strategies to cope with their challenges. They visited the staff in the students' learning centre to assist them, and they assigned private tutors. Some of them relied on themselves by reading articles and course textbooks, and others made use of technology such as YouTube.

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A study by Keong and Mussa (2015), investigated the difficulties in academic writing faced by 30 Iraqi postgraduate students studying in Malaysia (in their third and fourth semester of study) majoring in the Master's programme from the Social Sciences and Humanities and Faculty of Applied Sciences. Consequently, the researcher mentioned that the students were weak in paraphrasing, and they were poor at managing references. However, these are some of the other problems the students had.

The participants in Al-Khasawneh's (2010) research faced many problems, including referencing. The researcher explained that the students faced problems because of their weak English background, and that the educational system was different from where they were studying. Moreover, the author added that their environment impacted on their studies. That is, in their educational context, the students had few opportunities to practise their English skills.

What follows presents multilingual literacies and translanguaging and the institutional support for international students.

2.7 Multiple literacies

Impetus for the pluralisation of literacy (in such terms as 'biliteracy' or especially 'multiple literacies') has come from the New Literacy Studies framework as a response to, or criticism of, a non-contextual or asocial view of literacy. When literacy is viewed through a social, non-judgmental lens, it becomes evident that it manifests in a variety of ways, all shaped by a range of social or contextual factors. Marilyn-Jones and Jones (2000) view literacy as social practices that "include the values, understandings, and intentions people have, both individually and collectively about what they and others do" (Marilyn-Jones and Jones, 2000: 5). The contextual factors shaping practices and understandings will vary from activity through channel to culture. Thus, one may speak of literacy associated with information, health, and traffic; or of visual literacy, computer literacy, or of Guajarati culture and literacy (Street, 2000).

In commenting on the use of the term 'multiliteracies', Street (2000) cautions against a reification that runs the risk of taking the concept of literacy back to the asocial, autonomous model. Street makes the point that a form of cultural determinism has to be avoided, especially one which lines up "a single 'literacy' with a single 'culture'" (Street, 2000: 19).

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There is, however, agreement that literacies as social practices are "ways of reading and writing and using written texts that are bound up in social processes which locate individual action within social and cultural processes", and that "languages and literacies are embedded in different cultural practices and in specific views of the world" (Martin-Jones and Jones 2000: 1). In this sense, this study is an attempt to situate the academic literacy experiences of a group of Libyan students within specific social and cultural contexts or perspectives.

Several of the reasons why Marilyn-Jones and Jones prefer the term multilingual to bilingual literacies, apply just as well to many international (Libyan) students (in South Africa) and, as we will see, make translanguaging a relevant notion (see also Antia & Dyers 2017). Firstly, the repertoire of these students tends to be quite complex. Not only do Libyan students in South Africa know both standard and colloquial varieties of Arabic, they have in all likelihood also been exposed to English taught as a foreign language in Libya, various forms of English (academic and non-academic) in South Africa, as well as other languages spoken in South Africa. An added layer of complexity may reside in the different scripts used by, for example, English and Arabic. Furthermore, the literacy levels of these students would typically be uneven in these various codes. It might expectedly be higher in Classical Arabic (the formal medium of instruction in Libya) than in English (the formal medium in their host institutions in South Africa).

Secondly, like all multilinguals, international students draw on and combine their codes in complex ways while engaging in literacy practices. For international students whose home languages differ from the language of the host institution, and who may not have attained the level of expertise required in the latter language for academic purposes, this is all the more true. Such students move in and out of the home language as they attempt to make sense of information in the institutional medium of instruction. In note taking, as in annotating while reading, languages and scripts may be combined. In peer study sessions, the material being studied may be in the institutional medium of instruction, but all of the talk around it could be in blends of this institutional language and the home language shared (for example, by a group of Arabic-speaking Libyan students). The various codes or languages constitute a resource pool for making meaning. Even with local students, as Antia and Dyers (2017) point out, the home language (e.g. isiXhosa) serves as a "central cognitive processor, the base on which understanding [of material presented in English], interpreting and recall take place" (Antia and Dyers, 2017: 15).

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Unsworth (2001: 8) proposed that "in order to become effective participants in emerging multiliteracies, students need to understand how the resources of language, image and digital rhetorics can be deployed independently and interactively to construct different kinds of meanings".

2.8 Translanguaging

Not unlike local students, or perhaps even more so, international students are more likely to operate with a number of recent notions such as translingualism and translanguaging while performing required academic literacies. Canagarajah (2014) describes a translingual approach as follows:
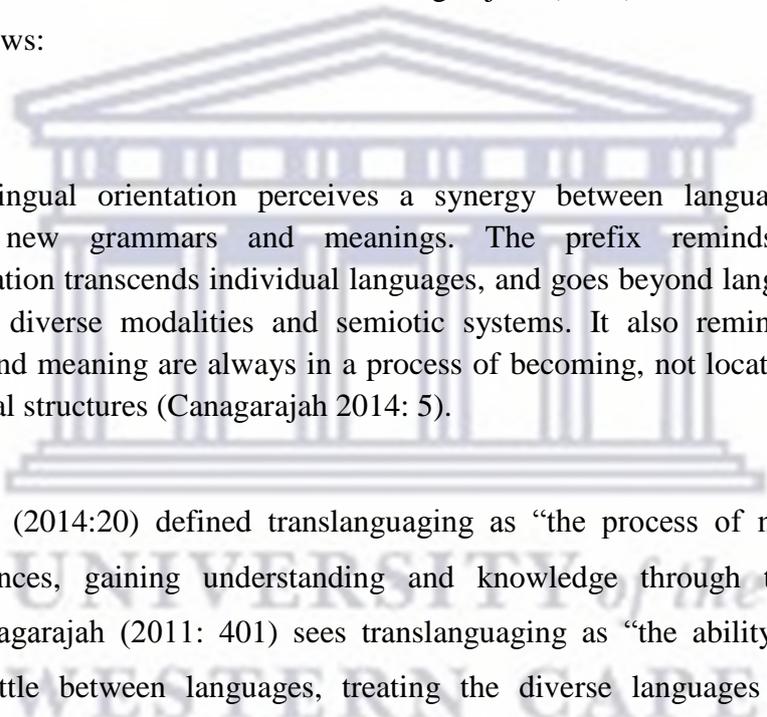
> The translingual orientation perceives a synergy between languages which generates new grammars and meanings. The prefix reminds us that communication transcends individual languages, and goes beyond language itself to include diverse modalities and semiotic systems. It also reminds us that language and meaning are always in a process of becoming, not located in static grammatical structures (Canagarajah 2014: 5).

Garcia and Wei (2014:20) defined translanguaging as "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages". Canagarajah (2011: 401) sees translanguaging as "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system".

The translingual approach suggests a multi- or integrated competence model for the codes in an individual's repertoire, implying that there is no compartmentalization. All of the codes can be simultaneously activated, leading to parts of written notes being in one code while others are in a different code.

A more commonly employed notion is translanguaging, which referred initially to the alternation of languages for input, e.g. listening to teacher, and for output, e.g. writing notes (Lewis *et al.*, 2012). The scope of the term has been extended to now mean, for instance, "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, understandings and knowledge through two languages. Both languages are used in an integrated and coherent way to organize and

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mediate mental processes in learning" (Baker, 2011: 288). Of course, more than two languages could be involved.

From the sociolinguistic perspective, Wolff (2018) says that in the multilingual environment, it is advisable to focus on new terms like translanguaging or supervernacular rather than using old terms such as codeswitching, code meshing and code mixing. The author suggests that compared to codeswitching," translanguaging is a shift from the external view of language to the internal perspective of speakers whose own mental grammar has been developed in social interaction with others… For these bilingual speakers, their language features are simply their own. Translanguaging is more than going across languages and taking the internal view of the speaker's language use" (Wolff, 2018: 2).

Compared to home or local students, it is conceivable that the pressure to translanguage would be even greater for international students whose home language is different from the language of their host institutions. With translanguaging, as with translingualism, meaning making is always taking place across languages. The benefits of translanguaging (outlined in Lewis *et al*., 2012) easily apply to international students:

- enhancing understanding of the content of what is taught (through using several languages to make meaning and shape understanding)
- developing the weaker language (e.g. looking up meanings of English terms in a bilingual dictionary that includes the home language can eventually lead to growth of the English vocabulary)
- facilitating home-school links (e.g. in peer study by international students from the same region).

In the same vein, Baker (2011: 289-290) proposes four advantages for translanguaging: promoting understanding of the subject matter; helping students develop oral communication and literacy in their weaker language; facilitating home-school cooperation; and developing the students' second language ability. Also, in terms of the students' recognition of language and the acceptance of their identity, Garcia (2012: 3) views translanguaging as "the ability of bilingual students to have multiple identities that are not exactly like those constructed in

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monolingual context or in other contexts. It actually buttresses the multiple and fluid identities of bilingual students".

Using strategies of translanguaging in learning ESL / EFL promotes the students' understanding. For instance, in South Africa, Van de Walt and Dornbrack (2011) conducted a study on 11 postgraduate education students who attended a module of multilingual education at Stellenbosch University to examine the strategies they employed to negotiate their academic studies. Interviews and a questionnaire were used to elicit information from the students about the strategies they employed in their academic studies. The students were encouraged to use either English or Afrikaans. The result indicated that the students made sense of the academic material in English and Afrikaans. The authors argued that using translanguaging is necessary for the students' success in the learning process. In the same environment, Motlhaka and Makalela (2016) performed a study from a sociocultural perspective on eight first year students in the Curriculum Design Module in the School of Social Sciences at an urban university in South Africa to examine the translingual techniques the students used in L2 writing. Accordingly, the students were asked to write two different descriptive essays; one in Sesotho and the other one in English. The aim behind writing these essays was to know how the students tried to use sociocultural strategies, such as identity and values, to conceptualise shared and collaborative engagement when they translanguaged between English and Sesotho. The results showed how these strategies helped the students to be aware of how to construct their desired voices and how to position themselves in the topics they were writing on.

In their study examining translanguaging practices of the early aged learners in Spain, Portolés and Marti (2017) noticed that the learners employed their L1, L2 and L3 to serve different communicative functions.

Scholars in the literature have emphasised that the use of L1 in the classroom facilitated the process of learning English as a second language. Bhooth *et al.* (2014) conducted a study on 45 EFL second year undergraduate students from the Department of English as a foreign language at the University of Yemen. The result indicated that the students used Arabic (L1) as a strategy for translating new words, defining concepts, giving explanations, and helping each other in their groups. The authors concluded that "L1 can be used as a pedagogical tool by the teacher to enhance learning experience as well as maximise engagement in classroom" (Bhooth *et al.*, 2014: 76). Similarly, in her study exploring the attitudes of teachers and

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students using Arabic (L1) in the Libyan classrooms at Sebha University, Alsied (2018) noticed that participants had positive attitudes towards using Arabic in classrooms even though they used English more than Arabic; Arabic was used when necessary.

2.9 Institutional academic support for international students

Universities in countries that receive or are trying to attract international students prioritise services for these students. International students' services are regarded as a powerful means to enhance learning. They provide international students the meaningful support in their academic studies because these students have moved from their own cultural and linguistic environment to a new environment. A survey of documents produced by specific institutions or national agencies supports this view on academic support to international students to enable them to overcome the challenges of different academic cultures. For instance, in the UK, universities provide programmes on the academic induction of international students that focus on (1) assessment feedback; (2) learning facilities, including library resources, laboratories and visual learning environments; (3) the use of tutors and tutorials, the role of research supervisors and that of academic advisors; and (4) opportunities for student representation and feedback (The Quality Assurance Agency of Higher Education, 2015: 8). In the same context, the University of Glasgow offers international students an English language course which is called English Academic Study (EAS). It consists of pre-sessional and in-sessional courses to support the students in their study. In the first year, students who want to develop their academic English and study skills, can take the pre-sessional course to prepare them for study throughout the year. In-sessional courses are assigned to support international students during their studies. These courses offer a range of workshops and short courses to help them develop the language (University of Glasgow, 2018-2019: 20).

Uppsala University in Sweden offers a guide for international students that contains initiatives and procedures to support them and to meet their needs in terms of their academic study. There is (1) learning note-taking assistance, course literature in alternative formats including audio books, mentors, modifications to examination times for written exams, and additional assistance from the university; (2) workshops for those students who have difficulty structuring a written assignment or require feedback on an oral presentation. Tutors can provide individual consultations; and (3) English lessons are for those who want to improve their English proficiency through the Department of English. The course is called

Practical English for oral and written production through compulsory discussions and presentations (Uppsala University, 2017-2018: 42-43).

Different types of initiatives and structures are found in New Zealand higher education for supporting international students. The University of Otago offers a 'Student Learning Development Program' that provides free (and confidential where necessary) academic assistance: (1) students can talk to staff who will help in time management, workload issues, effective note-taking and writing improvement; (2) there is a workshop programme for finding out what is expected from the students; (3) there is Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) which supports students through weekly interactive study groups; (4) there is also Peer Learning and Support Programmes in which students can obtain help from senior students on planning and structuring their assignments, grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure; and (5) there are digital resources to help the international students with a wide range of common tasks. In a study undertaken by Ankawi (2015), the researcher found that Arab students studying in New Zealand benefited from the services provided by the institution. The researcher found that Saudi Arabian students who encountered problems in their academic writing either went to the Student Learning Centre to have their assignments proofread, and for help in structuring their writing as well as checking the grammar.

Academic services are equally available to support international students studying in Australia. For example, at the Melbourne Institute of Technology, there is a 'Learning Foundation Program' that takes the form of workshops to help students in their essay writing and referencing. The Library Workshops are to assist students with navigating databases and online journals. There are also peer-to-peer support and ongoing monitoring of academic progress. Moreover, the institution has identified various services to help students to avoid plagiarism. These services include: study skills, mentor programmes, and student consultations with academic staff (Melbourne Institute of Technology, 2018: 74-77). With regard to mentoring for international students in Australia, a study by Orth (2015: 46), on Saudi students majoring in a business course, mentioned that the monitoring programme is one of the more successful initiatives used in almost all universities in Australian higher education. The researcher observed that student mentoring is employed to help new students and older students work together as 'buddies'.

However, Wu *et al.* (2015), in their study on international students including Arab students studying at the southernmost part of a US university, indicated that the international students

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utilised the institution's recourses as a strategy to help them in their studies. The respondents in the study mentioned that some of them used the students' organisation to make contact with American students to improve their English and communication. Other students sought help from the writing centre to revise their written papers and assignments, while many of them relied on the library either by borrowing books or studying in quiet places.

2.10 Summary of the chapter

The current chapter reviewed literature related to the academic literacies experiences of international students studying abroad. The chapter began with the internationalisation and students' mobility showing the patterns of mobility, types, and the push-pull factors that lead to students' mobility. The chapter then provided information on educational systems in both Libya and South Africa, and the issues in academic reading and writing. After that, the chapter provided a general picture about academic culture, its determinants and some issues related to teaching and learning styles. The chapter also presented Hofstede's cultural dimensions with their application in teaching and learning. International students' experiences were also explained in this chapter, followed by a section that included information on multiple literacies and translanguaging. The chapter ended by giving a general picture of the institutional support for international students all over the world.

The focus of the next chapter will be on the theoretical framework that is employed in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the theoretical framework for the study. It draws on academic literacy approaches that link literacy to socio-culture. This chapter will first show the theoretical approach of social literacies, and then examine the implications of this approach on academic literacies across academic cultures.

3.1 Social literacies approach

The social literacies framework was originally developed from the field "New Literacy Studies" (Street, 1984; Barton, 1994; Ivanic, 1998; and Lea, 1999). Social approaches to literacies, rather than skills-orientated, claim that literacy is influenced, affected and shaped by a variety of factors. According to Langer (1987, cited in Kelder, 1996: 6), literacy, from a socio-cognitive perspective, does not just mean the ability to read and write, and to possess sets of skills. Literacy means the activity of thinking and performing. Literacy is a "culturally-specific phenomenon and cannot be separated from the social contexts and purposes in which it is practised". Furthermore, based on the ideological perspective, Street's (2003) definition of literacy refers to learning, modifying, and reinforcing the existing knowledge, behaviours, skills, and values that may require incorporating various kinds of information.

From the above-mentioned definitions, social literacy is viewed differently from some of the traditional definitions, that is, as the possession of skills. In the past, a literate person was seen as possessing these skills and an illiterate as a person who did not possess those skills. Individuals' literacies are shaped by their social backgrounds, experiences, and power dynamics. Today, there is a realisation that literacies are shaped, not just by individuals, but also by social factors (Gee, 1990; Street, 2005; and Prinsloo and Baynham, 2013).

Lea and Street (2006:227-228) have proposed that, for the purpose of developing students' academic literacies (reading and writing) in higher education, three general perspectives should be considered. The first one is the study skills model, the second is the socialisation model, and the third is the academic literacies model. Baynham (1995: 15), on the other hand, has suggested a list of literacy models, as follows:

- The skills development model: It is when learners just learn or acquire solid skills.
- The therapeutic model: It refers to how learners can solve their problems from the psychological perspective.
- The personal empowerment model: It is when a learner looks at literacy with a critical eye and when the learner links literacy with his/her confidence and self-esteem.
- Functional models of literacy: It emphasises social aims and the context, helping the learner to learn the basics of reading and writing to engage and continue the interactional activities required in the community.
- Critical model of literacy: It also emphasises social purpose and context, but the learner has to negotiate, agree, disagree, analyse and question the difficult.

Based on the ideological dimension of literacy, and according to the scholars of social literacies studies, there are three components of literacy: literacy practices, literacy events, and texts that should be examined. However, Barton (1994:64) said that we cannot separate texts from practices and if we want to understand literacy, we have to analyse practices as well as texts.

3.1.1 Literacy practices

The literacy practices approach has been defined by Barton (1994:37) as "the general cultural ways of utilising literacy which people draw upon in a literacy event". Baynham (1995:53) interpreted literacy as "concrete human activity, involving not just the objective facts of what people do with literacy, but also what they make of what they do, how they construct its value, the ideologies that surround it". Also, Street (1984:1) characterised literacy practices as a means of concentrating on "the social practices and connections of reading and writing". However, Baynham (1995) and Barton (2006) have conceptualized literacy as a set of complex, located human activities, established in the individuals' social practices as they

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engage with people, institutions, ideas and texts. For example, Barton has outlined six principles of the social approach to literacy.

A. The first principle is that no one will understand literacy without seeing the way people interact. Social practices of reading and writing can be shaped by values, attitudes, feelings and social relationships.

B. The second principle is that there are various literacies that are associated with different domains of life. Thus, literacy cannot be viewed as singular because the events in which literacy occurs have to be considered. For example, literacy might refer to health literacy, numeracy, computer literacy, driving literacy, and adult literacy, among others.

C. The third refers to the relationships between the dominant factors. This means the activities done by people are influenced by social institutions and power relationships. Literacies can range from formal to informal.

D. The fourth principle is that people write different texts based on their diverse social and cultural backgrounds. For example, writing a medical text will be different from writing a report; different strategies will be used for different needs or purposes.

E. The fifth principle is that literacy practices are socially constructed. Literacy practices have evolved through time and are intertwined with cultural practices. Therefore, literacy is historically situated or located, and literacy practices are fluid and dynamic. Also, what people have practised across their lifetime is as a result of changing demands and needs as well as available resources.

F. The last principle claims that literacy practices change from time to time and new practices can be acquired informally through the learning process. It is crucial to perceive that the rules and the conventions of academic literacies were created by humans and can be changed by them (Barton, 2006: 22).

3.1.2 Literacy events

The concept of the literacy event has its roots in the sociolinguistic idea of speech events. It was defined by many scholars. For instance, Heath (1982: 50) described literacy events as "the occasions in which written language was integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes". Also, Barton and Hamilton (2000:8-9) stated that literacy events are "activities where literacy has a role. Usually there is a written text or

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texts central to the activity and there may be talk around the text". Barton and Hamilton (2000) suggested that events are visible episodes that resulted from practices and are influenced by them. The idea of events stresses the situated nature of literacy, that is, it always exists in a social context. However, there are several literacy events in our life that are regular and repeated activities.

Hamilton (2000: 17) drew a distinction between literacy practices and literacy events. Literacy events are observable, which means that we can see what people are doing, whereas literacy practices are unobservable and should be inferred / deduced because they are connected to beliefs, feelings, attitudes and power, and so on.

Using this approach in the proposed research, I will argue that Libyan students bring with them literacies that have been influenced by social factors. The argument is that these students residing in South Africa may have literacies that are peculiar to their social environment in Libya which may not be exactly the same as the environment in South Africa.

The academic literacies model will be discussed in relation to the Libyan students in South Africa. This model assists to view academic writing from a cultural viewpoint, even though it has to be understood that academic culture is not homogenous. The academic literacies model enables us to view how issues of identity, power, disciplinary requirements, attitudes and all academic patterns can shape the academic literacy experiences and practices of Libyan students in South Africa.

3.2 Academic literacies model

The academic literacies model is regarded as another example of the social literacies approach. This model is relevant for understanding what practices Libyan students may bring along with them to their new host institutions in South Africa, but also with implications for the kinds of support these and other international students may require. This model has come about as a result of the dissatisfaction with the traditional or autonomous model that only focused on the cognitive perspective which ignored the social and cultural aspects of the learners. According to Lea and Street (1998: 159), "an academic literacies approach views the institutions in which academic practices take place as constituted in, and as sites of, discourse and power. It sees the literacy demands of the curriculum as involving a variety of communicative practices, including genres, fields and disciplines".

The academic literacies model was introduced by Lea and Street (1998) as the third model for examining and understanding students' writing in higher education. The first and second models are the study skills model and the academic socialisation model. The study skills model assumes that writing is merely a technical skill, which with some training can easily be fixed. It focuses on surface language features like spelling or grammar, and considers literacy to be autonomous or independent of a range of social factors. It is described as reductionist. The academic socialisation model helps students to acculturate, that is, integrating students into a new academic culture, but it fails to recognise that there is not just one culture, and that various factors (e.g. institutions, disciplines, even lecturers) can bring about different academic cultures.

Lea and Street (2006) state that the academic literacies model originated from the social and ideological perspectives, stressing the idea that this model does not attempt to ignore the autonomous models, but rather complements them. From the ideological point of view, the academic literacies model treats reading and writing as social practices influenced by different kinds of contextual factors such as identity, power and culture. Also, Neeley (2005) defines the academic literacies model as the different ways of thinking, reading, listening, speaking, and writing that are dominant in an academic setting, requiring different ways of receiving, managing and creating knowledge for the benefit of the field of study. Such an approach makes it possible to, for example, investigate how Libyan students in Libya studying in a given field or institution view the reception, management and creation of knowledge; or how Libyan students in South Africa in a given discipline or institution approach academic literacy.

Since there is no assumption of one given or fixed way of receiving, managing or creating knowledge, the academic literacies model encourages reflexivity and focuses on the particular institutional settings in which reading, writing, listening, and so on, are taking place. That is, as students interact effectively, they have to make sense of academic learning by using their identity and power by contesting and negotiating. The academic literacies approach views writing and learning by the students as epistemological and a matter of identity rather than related to skills. Neeley (2005: 17) agrees with Street (2003) and Lea (2004) that students have to avoid "passively accepting the rules and conventions knowing that they were created by humans and can be also changed by them".

The academic literacies model will enable me to be alert in my data to issues such as contestation in students' accounts of their literacy experiences, and sensitivity to specific disciplinary contexts either by students or in provisions made institutionally to support international students.

3.3 Implications of the social approach to literacies

This section will look at the relationship between the social literacy approach and research regarding academic culture, that is, the implications of the approach to academic culture. As we have seen, there are principles which can be used as a guide when doing research. So, these principles overlap. In light of this observation, they can be presented in a very global way to address different issues simultaneously they relate to.

Using this approach in the proposed research, I will be arguing that Libyan students bring with them literacies that have been influenced by social factors. The argument is that these students residing in South Africa may have literacies that are peculiar to their social environment in Libya which may not exactly be the same as the environment in South Africa. The academic literacies model enables us to view how issues of identity, power, disciplinary requirements, attitudes and all academic patterns can shape the academic literacy experiences and practices of Libyan students in South Africa. Such an approach makes it possible to, for example, investigate how Libyan students in Libya studying in a given field or institution view the reception, management and creation of knowledge; or how Libyan students in South Africa in a given discipline or institution approach academic literacy.

As far as the first principle is concerned, and taking into consideration Hofstede's cultural dimensions, it should be noted that in the Libyan environment the power distance is greater than it is in the South African environment. It means that one would see the effect of this power distance in Libyan students' reading and writing practices only when comparing Libyan students in Libya and in SA. As the power distance is smaller in South Africa, Libyan students need to adjust / accommodate to fit into the academic culture in SA.

Since there is no assumption of one given or fixed way of receiving, managing or creating knowledge, the academic literacies model encourages reflexivity and focuses on the particular institutional settings in which readings, writing, listening, and so on, are taking place. Regarding the last two principles, and considering the present study, I prefer to put all

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the implications together because they tend to be similar. Therefore, it can be said that academic culture cannot be essentialised. By essentialism, I mean the simple way individual people can classify themselves. This can be a serious issue in that cultural essentialism concerns the practice of labelling groups of people within an environment or from other nations, on the basis of essential qualities. Therefore, the view that culture cannot be essentialised is because academic culture is dynamic and it changes over time. This implies that, even though the students under investigation are labelled as international or Libyan students, when they came to SA, they had to change or adapt to fit into the new environment. At this juncture, it is essential to mention that academic culture can be changed even within the same society.

3.4 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented the conceptual framework of the study that is guided by the academic literacies approach (Lea and Street, 1998). This theory is discussed in relation to the social and cultural context of a group of Libyan students studying at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. The implications of the theoretical framework for this research are presented. The discussion mainly draws on the Libyan students' social and cultural constructions of academic reading and writing.

The following chapter explores the research design, the methods of collecting data, and the analysis of results are also discussed in detail.

Methods that are employed in this study are presented and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology employed in the study. It discusses the research design and research methods. It also describes the research site, the research participants, and research sample. Furthermore, it discusses the instruments used for data collection, the data analysis procedures, as well as research ethics.

4.1 Research design

The study adopted a mixed-methods research paradigm. The reason that has motivated the use of mixed methods in this study is that qualitative and quantitative approaches will help the researcher to gain control of the complexity of issues being investigated (Jonson, *et al.*, 2007; and Creswell, 2014).

As said above, in this study, the researcher used the qualitative approach to both collect and analyse data such as Facebook discussions, focus group discussions, individual interviews, and documents. A quantitative approach was used to both collect and analyse data obtained from the questionnaire. That is, the qualitative data is used to address objectives one, three and five, whereas the quantitative data is used to achieve objective four of the study.

4.2 Data type, source and collection procedures

The researcher used a range of data, either qualitative or quantitative, to address the different objectives of the present study. As far as qualitative data were concerned, the researcher used: discussions with students to collect their reflections on their perceptions of academic cultures/literacies; document analysis (relevant institutional support policy); and in-depth individual interviews. A questionnaire was used to obtain quantitative data. The researcher organized the discussion sessions with students on Facebook and in focus groups. In keeping

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with the above, the following section presents the first source of data and the procedure followed to collected relevant data.

4.2.1 Facebook discussions

The first type and the major tool the researcher used to collect data in this study was a Facebook discussion. The researcher created a Facebook group consisting of ten Libyan students residing in Libya to discuss their experiences of academic cultures/literacies in Libya. This discussion was mainly based on their constructions of reading and writing tasks, on their lecturers' expectations, the mechanics of writing, writing conventions, their approaches to academic reading, honesty, and on their personal strategies for overcoming their academic reading and writing challenges.

The researcher's main aim in collecting this type of data was to address the first objective relating to "obtaining baseline data on how Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of academic culture/literacies in Libya". This method also helped the researcher to understand that academic literacies / cultures can be different and are socio-culturally embedded.

The researcher started a Facebook discussion after she obtained permission from participants to open a private page in August 2016. Because of the unstable condition in Libya and challenges of internet connectivity, the discussion lasted three months, from 20 September to 20 December 2016. The discussion consisted of various questions posted on the platform by the researcher at intervals during the above-mentioned period. All the questions were posted in Arabic since it is the participants' first language. The discussion was kept open so that whenever a participant had a concern or needed clarification it was posted and addressed. All the respondents responded freely and willingly.

4.2.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussion is one of the qualitative data collection methods for collecting information from a small group of people (Masadeh, 2012: 64). Focus group discussions can be defined as interactive discussions between a small group of people that focus on a topic assigned by the researcher (Hennink *et al*., 2011: 136). Focus groups, according to Hughes and DuMont (1993: 776), reflect the social realities of a cultural group that provide the

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researcher with how the participants construct their experience when they (participants) use their particular language as well as concepts. Also, focus groups, unlike the other data collection instruments such as individual interviews, let the researcher see how participants interact and agree or disagree with each other (Hughes and DuMont, 1993: 777-778; Gilbert, 2008: 251). They are also quicker and cheaper (Marshall and Rossman, 1995: 81; Gilbert, 2008: 252; and Stewart and Shamdasni, 2015: 10).

For this study, 12 Libyan students were chosen for the focus group discussion to obtain information on their experiences of academic literacies in their South African host environments/programmes of study. In this respect, the researcher considered Hughes and DuMont's (1993) and Onwnegbuzie *et al.*'s (2010) claim that the ideal focus group size is six to twelve participants. The focus group helped me, the researcher, to address the third objective of this study, which is "to examine how Libyan students studying in South African universities conceptualise academic literacies within their programmes of study and how their perceptions of the literacy requirements in these programmes relate to constructions of academic literacies in Libya". In addition, it helped the researcher to understand that academic literacies / cultures can be different and can be socio-culturally embedded.

The respondents for the qualitative study were purposively selected, as recommended by Morgan (1998). The selection of this purposive sampling for this study is justified by the fact that the researcher wanted to work with a specific category of participants who have the same background, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994), and Morgan (1998). These participants were from the Arts and Sciences faculties. The majority of them were from Science because of the limited number of Arts students.

To collect data from the focus groups, I ensured that the time and the venue proposed for the meeting were convenient to all the participants (Morgan, 1998). The discussion with participants from the first group (comprising three participants) was held on 9 May 2017. The discussion lasted for an hour and a half.

The discussion with the second group (comprising three participants) took place on 10 May 2017 and lasted an hour. As all the issues were not looked at that day, a second meeting was held on 17 May 2017. At this meeting, two new participants (a male from Arts and a female from Science) joined the group, increasing the size to five. The discussion with the third group (comprising four participants) took place on 10 May 2017 and it lasted for an hour.

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To gain in-depth insight and useful information, as well as for the participants to express their thoughts, feelings and beliefs clearly and easily, all the discussions in these three different sessions were done in Arabic as it was the participants' target language. I then transcribed the discussions and translated the transcripts into English.

During the discussion sessions, the researcher created a relaxed atmosphere and used informal language. In each session, the moderator (researcher) gave an introduction to the study and the aims of focus group discussions. Respondents were given information sheets (Appendix 8) and consent forms (Appendix 2). All the informants who participated in the FGDs signed the consent forms and returned them to the researcher before the discussion sessions.

The researcher used semi-structured question guidelines (Appendix 5). All discussion sessions were electronically recorded and transcribed just after the discussions. The transcriptions were analysed manually, using Microsoft Atlas.ti version 8.

4.2.3 Document analysis

According to Bowen (2009: 28), as an analytical procedure, document analysis "entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesizing data contained in documents". In literature, many researchers have used document analysis as a part of triangulation to verify and corroborate evidence from interviews (Bowen, 2009: 29). However, document analysis can be used alone or can be combined with other types of data collection, such as interviews or questionnaires (Bowen, 2009). Some researchers found that using documents in any research is valuable. For instance, Jensen (2002) stated that documents are unconstructive, which means that data are there in the documents and they are not made by the researcher. Moreover, Bowen (2009: 30) also pointed out that documents "provide background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change and development and verification of results".

In this study, the documents used are those related to the policies of UWC with relevance to the academic literacies of international students. These documents address the fifth objective of my study. These documents include: (a) the UWC language policy, which I obtained from the UWC web page, and (b) the UWC Institutional Operating Plan (e.g. sections dealing with teaching/learning and with internationalisation).

4.2.4 In-depth individual interviews

Cohen and Manion (1980: 241) defined interviews as "a two-person conversation conducted by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information and focused on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation". Using interviews in research is useful and powerful. In his attempt to explain what it is and how it works, Johnson (2001: 106) stated that "In-depth interviewing begins with common sense perceptions, explanations and understandings of some lived cultural experience and aims to explore the contextual boundaries of that experience or perception, to uncover what is usually hidden from ordinary view or reflection or to penetrate to more reflective understandings about the nature of the experience". In this study, I conducted individual interviews as one of the tools for collecting qualitative data with two lecturers/supervisors, two officials from the division of postgraduate studies, two individuals from the Writing Centre, as well as two officials from the international office at UWC. The interviews conducted with lecturers and supervisors helped the researcher to clarify different matters about academic literacy construction. Interviews conducted with the officials from the division of postgraduate studies, the Writing Centre as well as the officials from the international office helped to obtain information on how the University of the Western Cape supports students who come from countries where English is not the medium of instruction. This type of data was relevant to the fifth objective of the present study, which aims to determine the implications of the findings in objectives one to four with respect to institutional policies and practices of academic literacies in support of international students including Arab and Libyan students in particular.

The interviews followed the semi-structured technique. They were mainly based on different questions generated from the findings of the Facebook discussion, focus groups, and the questionnaire. All the interviews were conducted between 30 May 2018 and 11 October 2018. The interviews took place in each interviewee's office and each interview took half an hour. Before conducting the interviews, I sent invitations to all the interviewees giving a short and clear picture of the study. Then, in the interviews, I let them speak freely to obtain valuable information. At the end of the interviews, I asked everyone if they would like to add anything that is relevant to the areas of the study. All the interviews were recorded with permission of the participants and then transcribed. All interviews were conducted in English because all the interviewees were English speakers.

4.2.5 The questionnaire

In this study, the questionnaire is the tool I used in order to collect quantitative data and generate findings based on numerical data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014: 162), quantitative research depends mainly on numbers for the presentation of results. Numbers are commonly presented with unknown words and symbols. The reason for choosing this tool related to the quantitative method was to meet the requirements of the fourth objective of the present study: to determine, on the one hand, what strategies and responses the group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employed to cope with challenges of academic literacies they face; and on the other hand, to help me see if there is any connection between what the self-reports of reading and writing barriers state within the South African environment, and what the data collected from Facebook discussions describe in relation to the academic culture in the Libyan environment from where students have come. The questionnaire was tested by piloting it to avoid ambiguity and complexity. As a result of this pilot study, the questionnaire underwent some changes. Items were rephrased, some words removed and replaced by others, sentence structures changed and adapted, etc.

The questionnaire was administered at UWC by hand (by the researcher and with the help of Science students and one Libyan staff member in Chemical Sciences) and electronically to participants at other South African universities. Altogether, the questionnaire was administered to 150 students studying at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Stellenbosch (US), University of Johannesburg (UJ), Durban University of Technology (DUT), and University of Witwatersrand (WITS). Of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 123 participants completed the questionnaires while 27 respondents failed to respond. The questionnaire was distributed between September 2016 and May 2017.

The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions (structured) with a Likert Rating Scale, as suggested by Burgess (2001). According to this questionnaire structure, the informants were provided with a set of options to select from. The respondents were expected to choose from the list by circling one of the following adverbs of frequency: **never, sometimes and usually (usually stands for always, usually and often)** to identify their challenges as well as the strategies they used to minimise their challenges. The questionnaires were translated into Arabic to enable the respondents to complete the questionnaires easily. However, there were

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some students who preferred the questionnaire in English. When I asked them why, they told me that most of their study was in English and they forgot some Arabic terms and vocabulary.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was based on demographic data such as sex, universities in SA, faculty / school, level of study and length of study. The second section was subdivided into two parts: the first part was about reading challenges and the second part was about writing challenges. The items of the first part (reading challenges) were developed from the *Handbook Guide to Learning Independently* written by Lorrine Marshall and Frances Rowland (1998). For the second part (writing challenges), the items were developed from different books and articles about academic writing (See Appendix 6). Most of the items covered concepts or themes related to academic reading and writing. These themes included reading approaches such as general overview reading, in-depth reading, and critical reading. For academic writing, the categories were mechanics of writing, organization and coherence, conventions of style in essays, and honesty. The same themes were also addressed in the third section of the questionnaire which covered the academic strategies employed by the students to overcome their difficulties. This section was also subdivided into two phases. The first phase was about reading strategies and the second phase was about writing strategies. All the items of both reading and writing strategies were developed from various books and articles.

Table 4.1 below is an overview of data sources, sizes and sampling procedures used in this study. All the Libyan students were from Science and Arts colleges and faculties enrolled on an undergraduate and postgraduate degree during 2016 and 2017.

Table 4.1: A summary of information about the participants in the study

Data collection tools	Faculty		Gender		Total
	Arts	Science	Male	Female	
Questionnaire	10	113	72	51	123 Random sampling
Face Book Discussion	6	4	3	7	10 Purposive sampling
Focus Group Discussion	3	9	2	10	12 Purposive sampling
Individual Interviews	/	/	4	4	8 Purposive sampling
Total	/	/	/	/	153

4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis is the practice of generating order, organization and significance in data collected (Marshall and Rossman, 1999:150). It is a way of making sense of, inferring, deducing and speculating on data that implies an exploration for general reports among types of data (Schwandt, 2007:6).

In the present study, I have conducted my data analysis in two distinct phases. The first consisted of the preparation of data to analyse (coding of both qualitative and quantitative data). The second consisted of presentation and interpretation. I transcribed and analysed the data gathered through Facebook, the focus group discussions, and individual interviews by using thematic analysis (TA), which is a common and widely used analytical method in qualitative research. This method has been characterized as "flexible, straightforward and accessible" (McLeod, 2011: 146). Also, TA "can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of reality" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 81). However, many researchers and scholars have proposed a number of possible thematic analyses (Tesch, 1990; Miles and Hurberman, 1994; Boyatzis, 1998; Pope *et al*. 2006; Attride-Stirling, 2001; Morse and Richards, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Polio and Ursiak, 2005) Braun and Clarke, 2006).

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Before I transcribed my data, I listened and re-listened to the audio tapes many times and then I transcribed the recordings. After that, I read and re-read the transcripts of only Facebook discussions and focus group discussions (Braun and Clarke, 2006) in Arabic. I double-checked the recordings and the scripts to produce accurate translation and transcription. Actually, translating the discussions and fruitful communication with my supervisor helped me in the coding process. I pinpointed patterns, meanings and wrote down the initial ideas. As a result of this repetitive manipulation of these data, I became more familiar with them. In the following step, I read and checked the transcription searching for specific themes. Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) state that the thematic approach will let the researcher identify, analyse and report patterns (themes) in the data collected. With respect to the first objective, thematic analysis was used to obtain baseline data on how Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of academic culture/literacies in Libya. Regarding the third objective, the thematic analysis was employed to analyse how Libyan students studying at South African universities conceptualise academic literacies within their programmes of study and how their perceptions of the literacy requirements in these programmes relate to the constructions of academic literacies in Libya. In order to achieve the fifth objective of determining the institutional policies and practices of South African institutions regarding the academic literacies of international students (with UWC as case study), thematic analysis and document analysis were used. TA was used to obtain useful themes from the individual interviews with the officials from the Division of Postgraduate Studies, the Writing Centre, the International office, and with supervisors / lecturers. Therefore, to process my data using Thematic Analysis, I followed a series of phases outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Their data processing steps are summarized in the following Table 4.2:

Table 4.2: A summary of phases of data content analysis (Source: Braun and Clarke 2006: 16-23)

No.	Phase	Description of the phases
1	Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2	Generalising initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3	Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to potential theme.
4	Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic "map" of the analysis.
5	Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6	Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back to the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Based on the stages of the thematic analysis in the table above, I identified my initial codes manually by using highlighters and Atlas.it software for accuracy. In the third step, I read the transcripts and the initial codes that I wrote down, combining the very similar codes into themes. For the Facebook discussions and focus group discussions, I used my coloured pens and highlighters to help link themes and remove any irrelevant responses in regard of my research objectives. For the individual interviews, I used my laptop and hardcopies for coding the transcripts of the segments of the interviews. I reviewed all the themes and generated further sub-themes from the data corpus, making sure that there were no missing codes in the previous stages. In the following step, I named the themes and defined them according to my data requirements. Finally, I wrote a detailed report about the themes.

For the document analysis, I collected relevant documents with regard to the academic literacy needs of international students, including Libyan students. Then I reviewed and analysed them in search of support structures for international students' academic literacy needs. My analysis relies on the three components of attitude (Jain, 2014; Bohner and Dickel, 2011): A (Affective = feelings); B (Behaviour = readiness to act); and C (Cognitive = awareness and/or knowledge). However, the affective component found in the statements policies was always implicit and so we excluded this dimension from analysis and further discussion.

When I analysed the documents, I followed the three stages of Bowen's (2009) document analysis: skimming, reading, and interpretation. In order to make the analysis easier, I used keywords / concepts such as 'institutional support / structures / initiatives', 'academic literacy', 'reading and writing', 'international students', and 'peculiar' that were derived from the question, *What is the institutional awareness at UWC of the possibly peculiar academic literacies needs of international students in general and Libyan students in particular?* During the analysis, I focused on these keywords or looked at other cues that refer to the internationalisation concept. The stages of document analysis were done as follows:

In stage 1, I skimmed the selected sections of all the documents I collected to familiarise myself with the information in the relevant documents. Then I read thoroughly through the specific sections.

In stage 2, I read and re-read the selected sections to gain a deep understanding of the purpose of analysing them. I started with document one that dealt with the language policy (see appendix 10). I read and re-read the whole document because it was relevant to the needed information. As a result, I selected the appropriate parts. This was followed by reading sections, 'Mission and Core Values', 'Student Experience', 'Learning and Teaching', and 'Research Innovation' of the second document, *Institutional Operating Plan of 2016-2020* (see appendix 11). During the whole analysis, I underlined and highlighted the identified keywords or any other relevant words / phrases. The questions written below were used for the purpose of analysing the documents accurately.

1. Does the language policy of UWC mention international students' academic literacy needs?

2. Does Institutional Operating Plan of UWC mention international students' academic literacy needs?

In stage 3, I explained / commented on the findings from each document. Finally, I provided my comments and interpretations.

To achieve the fourth object of the study on how Libyan students studying in South Africa construct their personal academic literacy challenges and to determine the strategies they employ in responding to their perceived challenges, responses to the questionnaire were collected, presented and analysed statistically using the relevant software (SPSS 24). The descriptive and inferential analysis was conducted. The descriptive analysis was displayed in a table format containing numbers and percentages, according to the relevant categories, in order to give an overview of certain categories (see chapter 6, section 6.2). Cronbach's alpha values were determined for each category in the questionnaire to check the internal consistency of the categories and the core reliability (see 4.3). **T-tests** were used and computed for each aggregate indicator generated per sub-category using the variables gender and level of study as points of reference to find out whether gender and level of study have an impact on practising academic reading and writing (see chapter 6, section 6.2.2).

4.4 Research rigour

Validity and reliability are fundamental phases denoting rigour in any kind of research. Careful consideration of these two phases of research can make the difference between good and bad research. Importantly, they can help to guarantee that scientists admit the results of a research study as credible and reliable. This is mainly vital in qualitative studies, where the researcher's bias can so freely cloud the understanding of the information, and where research results are often examined or regarded with doubt by the scientific community (Emden and Sandelowski, 1998).

The correctness, dependability and credibility of the evidence hang on validity and reliability. In quantitative research, reliability denotes the capacity to duplicate the results of a study. In qualitative research, there is no probability of duplication. It is common to see expressions such as quality, rigour or trustworthiness instead of validity, dependability, or reliability in qualitative studies (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Mishler, 2000; Golafshani, 2003).

In the following section, the researcher explains how she ensured the validity and reliability of the instruments used to collect data for this study.

4.4.1 Validity

According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982), validity in research is concerned with the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings. A valid study should determine what really exists, and a valid tool or instrument should essentially measure what it is made up to measure. There are several kinds of validity and lots of terms have been used to delineate the diverse types of validity. There exist two main forms of validity referred, to as "internal" and "external" validity.

There exist different methods a researcher can use to state validity (quality / rigour / trustworthiness) and reliability (dependability). In this study, the validity of the instruments used to collect qualitative data was assumed based on a member checking process, which necessitated a process of authenticating information with the focus group. The member checking process allowed the researcher to correct certain errors of circumstance or errors of understanding related to tools. By using these tools to collect data in the scope of the present study, the researcher expected the saturation of data to generate similar information.

In qualitative studies, triangulation is frequently used and it involves the use of two or more information sources, methods, investigators, theoretical viewpoints, and approaches to the investigation in the study of a single phenomenon, and then confirming the correspondence among them. The main objective of triangulation is to avoid the subjective preconceptions of investigators and overcome the insufficiencies intrinsic to single-investigator, single-theory, or single-method studies, thus increasing the validity of the study (Denzin, 1989). In this study, the researcher has referred to triangulation to assure the reliability and validity of the findings.

It should be noted that linguistic skills are manifold and cannot simply be measured directly. This indirect way of evaluation nurtures issues of acceptability, relevance, and the effectiveness of the measures in testing an individual's skill or ability. The researcher used the Pearson correlation test to demonstrate the extent to which the data obtained made or did not make important differences with all other categories of academic reading and writing challenges, as well as with reading and writing strategies. The Pearson correlation test was

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used to evaluate the validity of linguistic constructs and assessment methods to use in this study (Chen and Henning, 1985).

4.4.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the capacity of a research method to produce the identical results regularly over recurrent testing periods. In other words, it necessitates that a researcher use the identical or equivalent methods to obtain the identical or equivalent results each time she uses the methods on the identical or equivalent issues. It further necessitates that the researcher develop reliable responses in using the tool or evaluating its findings, and that elements related to issues and testing processes have been used to decrease measurement bias and error.

The reliability of the questionnaire used in this study was established when the researcher tried her best to avoid huge, imprecise and inflexible questions, by providing comprehensible and clear items for most of the participants in the study. The researcher also used the Cronbach alpha value to measure the internal consistency and the core reliability of the questionnaire. The T-Test was used to correlate coefficient between the two sets of scores and to describe the degree of reliability. In Sekaran and Bougie's (2010) words, core reliability refers to the degree of connection concerning diverse items of a measuring construct.

When the items are strongly associated with one another, their core reliability is high and the alpha coefficient is near (1.00). However, when the items are not strongly framed and do not relate to one another strongly, the alpha coefficient is near (.00). The conventional Cronbach's alpha coefficients diverge from high reliability (.900) to low reliability (.700).

For this study, to check the internal consistency of the categories, Cronbach's alpha values were determined for each category in the questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Cronbach alpha's values of the computed categories

Category	Sub-category (Aggregate indicator)	Cronbach's alpha reliability value
Reading challenges	General overview reading score	0.648
	In-depth reading score	0.456 x
	Critical reading score	0.852
Writing challenges	Mechanics of writing score	0.667
	Organisation and coherence score	0.651
	Conventions of style in essay score	0.809 *
	Writing honesty score	0.746
Reading strategies	General overview reading score	0.450 x
	In-depth reading score	0.404 x
	Critical reading score	0.765
Writing strategies	Mechanics of writing score	0.751
	Organisation and coherence score	0.570 x
	Conventions of style in essays score	0.503 x
	Writing honesty score	0.640 *

Note: (*****stands for sub-categories of interest; **x** stands for omitted sub-categories)

In Table 4.3 above, the first column contains the following categories: reading challenges, writing challenges, reading strategies, and writing strategies. The second column contains sub-categories; the third and last columns indicate the Cronbach's alpha value for each sub-category item. However, taking into consideration what has been previously mentioned about the Cronbach's alpha value (the value closer to zero is considered low and means that the correlation of items is weak or not existing), in this study, any category with more than 0.600 is considered very important and satisfies the criteria values. Those below 0.600 are not important and do not satisfy the criteria of reliability.

Table 4.3 indicates that the Cronbach's alpha values of this research tool ranged between 0.404 and 0.852. This means that the following subcategories, in-depth reading (0.456), strategies for general overview reading (0.450), in-depth reading strategies (0.404), organisation and coherence strategies (0.570), and conventions of style in essays strategies

(0.503), had low values, and in this case, they were not interesting and did not satisfy the criteria of reliability. Consequently, they were excluded. In contrast, critical reading with its 0.852 Cronbach's alpha value and all others categories with at least 0.600 values were all interesting and satisfying the criteria.

However, the deletion of categories with weak internal consistency did not affect the test and they were not used as part of valid data in the analysis. The focus was on the other categories, namely general overview reading, critical reading, mechanics of writing, organisation and coherence, conventions of style in essays, writing honesty, critical reading strategies, strategies of mechanics of writing, and strategies of writing honesty.

4.5 Ethical statement

This study was conducted in an ethical manner at all times. Full ethical approval was obtained from the University of the Western Cape to carry out the research on the university premises. The researcher assured participants that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed as they were informed that codes would be used for their identities and their names would not appear on any report or document or mentioned in the writing up of the findings. Moreover, the researcher assured the participants that the data collected via questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, Facebook discussions and the documents would be stored in a safe place. The participants were volunteers and were asked their permission to tape record the interviews. However, the information sheet was read and explained verbally in front of the participants and consent forms were given to and signed by them.

4.6 Summary of the chapter

The researcher presented in this chapter the research methodology that helped her to conduct this study. The chapter highlighted the design and the methods, the data types and their sources. She has also discussed the procedures she followed to collect and analyse the data, the participants, as well as the research rigour and the ethical aspects of the research.

The results of the qualitative data (Facebook and focus group discussions) are presented and discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ACADEMIC LITERACIES/CULTURES IN LIBYA AND IN SOUTH AFRICA IN THE IMAGINATION OF LIBYAN STUDENTS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter represents the results obtained from the Facebook discussion as well as the focus group discussions. There were two categories of participants: those residing in Libya who participated in the Facebook discussions, and those who are studying in South Africa at the University of the Western Cape and participated in the focus groups discussions. The findings illustrate the constructions of academic literacies in Libya and in South Africa through the eyes of Libyan students in both countries.

The chapter is divided into three sections. Section one explores the literacy constructions by Libyan students in Libya and in South Africa, and it also clarifies how academic literacies in the two environments were constructed in relation to culture. The second section presents the academic reading and writing challenges faced by Libyan students in Libya and in South Africa; this section also states the strategies they (Libyan students) employed to overcome their challenges. The last section summarises the chapter.

5.1 Constructions of Academic literacies (reading and writing) by Libyan students in Libya and in South Africa

The section examines constructions of academic reading and writing by Libyan students in Libya and in SA. The students' comments are displayed in italics. The participants' excerpts show the actual (transcribed) texts participants discussed with me. The following part is about academic reading which is divided into subsections as 1) general overview reading, 2) in-depth reading, and 3) critical reading.

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5.1.1 Academic reading

Academic reading is an important and essential skill in tertiary education and it is different from normal everyday reading. Academic reading involves students not only reading and comprehending the text, but it requires different types of strategies such as questioning, critiquing, commenting, taking notes, and so on. As a means to understanding how they construct dimensions of academic literacy, the participants in the Facebook and focus group discussions were asked about the strategies they employed under three headings or kinds of reading, namely, (a) general overview reading, (b) in-depth reading, and (c) critical reading. It is important to recall that the Facebook discussions were with Libyan students still in Libya, whereas the focus groups were with Libyan students in South Africa. The word **strategy** in this chapter is used in two different contexts. In the first context (see 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 below), whatever problem in text there is does not get verbalised because the student resolves them without recourse to explicit, observable actions. In the second context (see 5.2 below), strategy refers to when the students have difficulties / challenges and they try to overcome those problems.

5.1.1.1 General overview reading

I posed a question that sought to determine what strategies students use to support the reading comprehension process and why these strategies play or do not play an important role. The aim of this question was to understand how students construct this kind of reading. Responses to this question are linked to the heading, "Reading for general overview". The following data is related to general overview reading; it is generated from the Libyan students who participated on Facebook and are still studying in Libya:

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
03: 00 pm:

أقرأ عنوان ومقدمة النص بسرعة، ثم أقرأ العناوين الجانبية إن وجدت، فقراءة العناوين الرئيسية ضرورية لأنها تعتبر كلمات مفتاحية/إشارات خاصة بفهم النص كما أسلط الضوء على النقاط المهمة فى النص. كما أنني أحاول قراءة الجملة الأولى من كل فقرة لأن قراءة أول جملة من كل فقرة تساعدني على فهم النص كما تساعدنى على التوقف من قراءة الفقرة كاملة و بالتالي أقرأ الخاتمة.

I read the title and the introduction of the text quickly and then I read the headings if there are some. Reading headings is necessary because they are regarded as keywords/ clues to the text and highlight the main points in the text. Also, I read the first sentence of each paragraph because reading the first sentence of each paragraph helps me understand the text and helps me stop reading the whole paragraph. Moreover, I read the conclusion.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
03: 06 pm:

أقرأ النص بسرعة مركزة على العنوان، فالمقدمة ثم العناوين الجانبية، فقراءة العناوين الجانبية ضرورية
لانها تعتبربمثابة كلمات مفتاحية للنص، كما أنني أسلط الضوء على أهم الأفكار الموجودة في النص. بعد ذلك أقرأ الخاتمة.
بالنسبة لي يعتبر "العنوان" كالمرآة، فيما تعتبر المقدمة والخاتمة ملخص للموضوع ككل. قراءة أول جملة من كل فقرة
بالنسبة لي ليست كافية لفهم كامل النص. اعمل دائما على قراءة كل جملة لأفهم الفقرة، لأنه بالنسبة لي تعتبر الجملة
الأولى بمثابة مقدمة و ما يليها من الجمل تعد أمثلة بخصوص الجملة الأولى.

I read the text quickly focusing on the title, the introduction and the headings. Reading headings is important as they are thought to be keywords to the text and highlight the most main points written in the text. Then I read the conclusion. For me, the title is like a mirror and introduction and conclusion are a summary of the topic. Reading the first sentence of each paragraph was not enough for me to understand the text; I always read each sentence to understand the paragraph because for me the first sentence is like introduction and the following sentences are examples for the first sentence.

Excerpt 5: NA (Arts student)
03: 08 pm:

بطبيعة الحال أقرأ العنوان والمقدمة أولا بسرعة و ذلك لمعرفة الفكرة العامة للنص أما العنوان فيعتبر كالمرآة، في حين أن
المقدمة والخاتمة تعتبران كملخص للموضوع ككل .

Of course I first read the title and the introduction for general meaning.
The title is like a mirror and introduction is a summary of the topic.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
03: 12 pm:

أقرأ النص بسرعة لتحديد المعنى العام، كما أقرأ العنوان ، و أقرأ المقدمة والخاتمة. فقراءة العنوان والمقدمة والخاتمة
تساعدني فعلا على فهم الموضوع .

I read the text quickly for general meaning, read the title, the introduction and the conclusion. Reading the title, the introduction and the conclusion helps me understand the topic.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
03: 14 pm:

أقرأ العنوان و أقرأ بالتالي المقدمة، ثم أقرأ النص بشكل عام لمعرفة الفكرة العامة. وبعد ذلك اتفحص الخاتمة و
المراجع .

I read the title, the introduction and then I read the whole text for general meaning. After that I check the conclusion and references.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)
03: 16 pm:

أقرأ النص كاملا بسرعة عدة مرات. أقرأ العنوان والمقدمة و الخاتمة. فقراءة العنوان والمقدمة والخاتمة ضرورة ملحة
لأن نصف الإجابة موجودة فى العنوان والنصف الآخر من الإجابة موجود فى المقدمة والعنوان. بعد ذلك أقرأ بشكل
مركز و دقيق لأقف على الكلمات و الجمل الجديدة، و بعد ذلك سأعمل على ترجمتها للغة العربية باستخدام قاموس
إنجليزي- عربي.

I read the whole text many times quickly; I read the title, the introduction and the conclusion. Reading the title, the introduction and conclusion is important because half of the answer is in the title and the other half is in the introduction and conclusion. I then do close reading to find out the new words and sentences and try to translate them into Arabic by using English-Arabic dictionary.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
03: 20 pm:

أقرأ النص بسرعة لمعرفة المعنى العام للنص، أراجع و أتصفح اسم المؤلف، كما أقرأ النص بتمعن شديد،
كما أضع خطا تحت الكلمات الغير-مألوفة / الصعبة، مستعملة في ذلك القاموس الإنجليزي –العربي لترجمة و معرفة
معنى الكلمات. وبالتالي فقراءة العنوان والمقدمة والخاتمة تساعدني على الفهم الجيد للموضوع.

I read the text quickly for general meaning, check the author's name, read the text accurately, underline unfamiliar words, and use English-Arabic dictionary to translate the meaning of words. Reading the title, the introduction and the conclusion helps me understand the topic.

As can be seen from the excerpts above, for all the students, reading for general overview was constructed as involving or imagined to involve "*reading the title, reading the introduction and reading the conclusion*". According to the participants, reading the title, the introduction and the conclusion helped them to understand the text. For example, two students (FA and NA) from Arts indicated that the title is like a mirror through which they know the main idea of the topic and that it reflects the general meaning of the text; the introduction and conclusion are a summary of the whole text. HB, HR and NS from Science pointed out that reading the title, the introduction and conclusion helped them understand the text easily. NS continued by saying that reading the title, the introduction and conclusion is important because half of the answer is in the title and the other half is in the introduction and conclusion as well. Other strategies used by the participants were *reading headings* and *reading the first sentence of each paragraph*, for instance, AJ and FA from Arts stated that it is necessary to read headings because they are regarded as keywords/clues that help in understanding the text. They carried on by saying that headings highlight the important information in the text. On the other hand, AJ added that reading headings helped her understand the following paragraph and stop reading the whole paragraph. There were other strategies that were employed by the participants when reading for general meaning. For instance, the majority of the participants from Arts and Science stated that when they read the text quickly, they understood the general meaning. What was surprising is that only one student (HB, excerpt 10) from Science checked the name of the author. To her, checking the author's name is not vital, but she said that she used this strategy to see if she read something from that author previously. The last strategy used by the participants was *reading references*; it was employed by only two students, (NA, excerpt 5) from Arts, and (MZ, excerpt 8) from Science. These two students clarified that they did not always read references, but they sometimes did just to know if there were other authors who wrote on the same topic. It is astonishing to notice that one of the Science students (HR) said that, in order

to minimise the number of pages of a book or reading sheet, she always tore off unnecessary pages such as references.

The above responses show how Libyan students in Libya perceived / constructed the general overview reading through the Facebook discussions. Now let us see how Libyan students in SA who participated in the focus group discussions responded to the same question.

When participants in the focus group discussions in SA were asked the same question on what strategies they used to support their reading comprehension process, most of them indicated that they used strategies such as **reading the whole text, the abstract, the title, the introduction and the conclusion.** Their responses are in the excerpts below:

أقرأ النص بشكل كامل لمعرفة الفكرة الأساسية.

I read the whole text to know the main idea. (TH, Science student/ FGD)

أقرأ النص كاملا مرتين أو ثلاث مرات لمعرفة الفكرة الأساسية فيه.

I read the whole text twice or three times to know the main idea. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

أقرأ النص كاملا عدة مرات لمعرفة الفكرة العامة التي يحملها النص.

I read the whole text many times to understand the general meaning of the text. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

عندما أريد أن أعرف معنى الفكرة الأساسية في النص ، فإنني أقرأه عدة مرات.

When I want to understand the meaning of the main idea, I read the text many times. (HD, Science student/ FGD)

أقرأ النص بشكل عام لأجد بعض الأجزاء المهمة التي لها علاقة بالموضوع الذي هو "قيد الدراسة".

I read the whole text in general to find some important sections that are related to my study. (RM, Science)

من أجل معرفة المعنى العام للنص ، تتوجب قراءته عدة مرات.

Understanding the general meaning of the text involves reading the text many times. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

Interestingly, the above excerpts show that for Libyan students in SA, general overview reading frequently was imagined to involve reading a text entirely several times. Four students from the focus group mentioned that **reading the abstract** is important to them,

explaining that reading the abstract helped them to select the suitable text. This, again, was not prominent in answers provided by Libyan students in Libya. The following excerpts show some of the views of the Libyan student in SA:

تركيزي كله ينصب حول مستخلص البحث ، لأن ذلك حتما يساعدني في اتخاذ قرار فيما إذا كان هذا الموضوع يتناسب

مع دراستي أم لا.

My main focus is on the abstract because it helps me to decide if the topic is useful for my study. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

عندما أقرأ ، فإن تركيز اهتمامي ينصب حول المستخلص ، لأن ذلك يساعدني على أن أقرر إذا ما كان هذا الموضوع مفيدا و مناسبا لدراستي.

When I read, I focus on the abstract because it helps me to decide if the topic is useful for my study. (RW, Science student/ FGD)

أول شيء أقوم بفعله عندما أقرأ هو تركيزي و اهتمامي بالمستخلص، لأن ذلك يساعدني في تحديد القرار الصائب إذا ما كان هذا الموضوع مناسبا لدراستي.

The first thing I do when I read is to focus on the abstract because it helps me to decide if the topic is useful for my study. (TH, Science student/ FGD)

عندما أقرر أن هذا الموضوع مفيدا لدراستي ، فإنني أقرأ المستخلص.

When I decide if the topic is useful for my study, I read the abstract. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

Reading **the title, the introduction and conclusion** seem to be important to some of the participants, as they were for the Libyan students in Libya. Let us refer to the excerpts below:

أقرأ العنوان ليساعدني على فهم الموضوع ككل.

I read the title to help me understand the text. (IA, Arts student/ FGD)

أقرأ المقدمة و الخاتمة لأحصل على المعنى العام أو الفكرة الأساسية للنص.

I read the introduction and the conclusion to get the man idea of the text. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

قراءة المقدمة و الخاتمة تساعدني على تحصيل الفكرة الأساسية.

Reading the introduction and the conclusion helps me to get the man idea of the text". (RW, Science student/ FGD)

أقرأ المقدمة و الخاتمة لكي أحصل على الفكرة الأساسية للنص.

I read the introduction and the conclusion to get the man idea of the text. (TH, Science student/ FGD0

عندما أقرأ، أقرأ المقدمة و الخاتمة للحصول على الفكرة الرئيسية في النص.

When I read, I read the introduction and the conclusion to get the man idea of the text. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

Interestingly, one of the interviewed participants stated that when he reads, **he reads line by line and prefers to read references.** The excerpt below is from him:

أفضل أولا أن أقرأ المصادر و المراجع المعتمدة ، و بعدها أشرع في قراءة النص سطرا تلو الآخر لفهم أعمق و أحسن.

I prefer first to read references and then read the whole text line by line to understand better. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

From the students' responses in both environments, Libya and SA, it is obvious that there is some difference between academic cultures in terms of general overview reading. While Libyan students in Libya often referred to reading the title, introduction, headings, and the conclusion, the students in SA even while making use of these same strategies also underscored the practice of reading texts (skimming through them) several times, as well as reading abstracts. Although they come at it in different ways, overall it is obvious that previewing the academic reading text is an important strategy for the Libyan students in Libya and SA. This is what some scholars in literature have stated (see 5.1.1.1 above). This result correlates with the findings of Ebrahimi (2012) and Khaokaew (2012). Ebrahimi (2012) investigated what reading strategies ten Iranian students used when they learned their L1 and L2. The students were asked to respond to a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. He noticed that the students employed skimming / reading the text quickly overall as one of the strategies used by them in L1 and L2. Khaokaew (2012) examined the reading strategies used by 40 Thai undergraduate first year English major students from different levels who participated in the International Communication Programme. The findings indicated that the students were able to preview the text in order to gain its main idea; they previewed the text by quickly reading the title, subtitle, the introduction, the conclusion and the first sentence of each paragraph.

5.1.1.2 In-depth reading

To understand how they imagine or construct in-depth reading, the participants were asked what strategies they used to support the reading comprehension process when they read an

academic text thoroughly / comprehensively. Let us first see data from the Facebook discussions of the Libyan students in Libya and how they answered the question regarding in-depth reading. We can read some of their following excerpts:

Excerpt 1: AA (Arts student)
02: 59 pm:

أحاول أن أربط النص بمعرفتى السابقة لكي أختبر إذا ما كنت أعرف أي شيء يتعلق بالموضوع. ثم بعد ذلك أقرأ النص بتأني ، وأضع خطا تحت الكلمات والمصطلحات الجديدة و المهمة و بالتالي أستخدم قاموسا إنجليزيا- عربيا لترجمة معاني الكلمات .

I try to connect text with my prior knowledge to examine if I know something about the topic. I then read the text slowly, underline the new and important words and terms. I always use English- Arabic dictionary to translate the meaning of words

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
03: 00 pm:

عندما أقرأ النص قراءة متأنية و دقيقة، فإنني عادة أضع أوأظلل الكلمة أو المصطلح الجديد اوالكلمات الغريبة/ الغير- مألوفة، و بعد ذلك أحاول جاهدا تذكر اذا ما كنت قد درست هذه الكلمات أوالمصطلحات من قبل.

When I read the text thoroughly, I often underline or highlight new or unfamiliar words and terms and then I try to remember if I studied them before.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
03: 03 pm:

أقرأ النص قراءة متأنية لأعرف عما يتحدث عنه النص، و معرفة أهدافه و مراميه. ثم أترجم معاني الكلمات الغريبة إلى العربية لأتمكن من فهم النص فهما جيدا. فالترجمة تساعدني على فهم المعنى الضمني لبعض الجمل و للنص بشكل عام.

I read the text slowly to know what is the text talking about, and what is the aim of the text. I translate the meaning of unfamiliar words into Arabic to help me better comprehend the text. Translation will help me understand the implicit meaning of some sentences and the text in general.

Excerpt 4: NA (Arts student)
03: 08 pm:

أقرأ النص بعناية كبيرة لكي أعين الكلمات والمصطلطات الغريبة، و أضع خطا تحتها، وفى هذة الحالة أستعمل قاموسا إنجليزيا-عربيا لمعرفة معانى الكلمات، كما أحاول الاستفادة من معلوماتي السابقة.

I read the text carefully to underline words and unfamiliar terms. In this case I use English Arabic dictionary to know the meaning of new words and try to use my previous knowledge.

Excerpt 5: KM (Arts student)
03: 10 pm:

أقرأ النص بدقة وتأني، أتفحص الكلمات والمصطلحات الجديدة، بحيث اظللها، و بالتالي أستعمل قاموسا إنجليزيا –عربيا لأترجم الكلمات الجديدة إلى العربية.

I read the text slowly, check, highlight the new words, and use English-Arabic dictionary to translate the new words into Arabic.

The excerpts above indicate that almost all the students (4) from Arts *underlined new and important information*, whereas half (2) of the Science students used the same strategy. It is important to observe that the majority of both Arts and Science students used an *English-*

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Arabic dictionary when they read the text carefully. Translating words and terms into Arabic helped them to understand the text easily. For instance, one of the Arts students (SG, Excerpt 3) said that when she translated some words and terms, she understood the text properly and understood the implicit meaning of some sentences. Clearly, to succeed in their understanding of the text, they translated the English words into Arabic. Three arts students, AA (excerpt 1), AJ (excerpt 3) and NA (excerpt 4), said that they sometimes tried to *use their previous knowledge / information* to help them understand better.

Based on the relation between in-depth reading and **taking notes**, the participants in Libya were asked if they took notes while reading any academic work actively, their way of writing down notes, as well as their reasons for taking notes. The participants commented on the question as shown below:

Excerpt 1: AA (Arts student)
04: 48 pm*:*

نعم أدون و أسجل النقاط المهمة على هوامش الكتاب أو في دفتر خاص للعمل بها في الامتحانات.

Yes, I take notes on the margins of the book or in a notebook to read them in exams.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
04: 49 pm:

نعم، إن تدوين النقاط المهمة ضروري و مهم بالنسبة لي. استعمل قلم الرصاص واستعمل دفترا خاصا لتسجيل المعلومات وأحيانا استخدم (هاتفي النقال)لأستفيد منها جميعا فى الامتحانات.

Yes, because writing down notes is important for me. I use a pencil and a notebook and sometimes I use my mobile phone to benefit from them in exams.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
04: 52 pm:

نعم تدوين الملاحظات يعتبر من الأشياء الضرورية، بحيت أقوم بكتابة النقاط المهمة والتى تستدعى الحفظ . كما أستعمل كلماتي الخاصة . تدوين الملاحظات تساعدنى فى الفهم والتذكر ودراستها للتحضير للامتحانات .

Yes, taking notes is necessary. I write the main points that require memorisation and I use my own words. Taking notes helps me understand and study them in preparation for exams.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
04: 54 pm:

نعم ، يعتبر تدوين الملاحظات مهما للغاية، أسجل المعلومات التي تبدو لي مهمة و التي لا توجد فى المنهج المقرر، وفى العادة أدونها اما على هامش الصفحة أو فى الدفتر . تدوين نقاط مهمة تساعدني كثيرا في الامتحانات .كما أنني أستعمل اللغة العربية لتدوين المعلومات بدل اللغة الإنجليزية و ذلك من أجل فهم أكثر . كم أتمنى أن أكتب باللغة الانجليزية إلا أن خلفيتي المعرفية بها لا تمكنني من ذلك ، بحيث ليست لدي القدرة الكافية لكتابة معلوماتي بها كما أنني لا أعرف كيف أستعمل اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل سهل وسلس.

Yes, writing down notes is crucial. I write down information that I feel is important and that does not exist in the material. I write down notes on the side of sheets or in a notebook. Taking notes helps me in exams. I always use Arabic instead of English when I wrote down

my important notes to understand better. I hope to write my notes in English but I am not able to do that because I am not confident and I do not have good background knowledge on how to use English in taking notes.

Excerpt 5: NA (Arts student)
04: 56 pm:

نعم ادون كل المعلومات التى يذكرها المحاضر فى دفتر خاص بذلك ، واحيانا اخرى أضع خطا أو أظلل ما هو مهم على هامش الصفحة لكي أستفيد منها في الامتحانات.

Yes, I write down notes and important information said by my lecturer in a notebook and other times I underline or highlight main points in sheets to benefit from them in exams.

Excerpt 6: KM (Arts student)
04:.58 pm:

نعم من الضرورى تدوين الملاحظات التى ينطقها المحاضر خاصة فى المرحلة الجامعية لانة من الصعب دراسة كل المقرر الدراسى فى الامتحان . ادون المهم وذلك للرجوع اليها عند الحاجة كمرجع فان لم يتم تدوينها سوف تنسى . معظم الملاحظات ادونها على حافة الكتاب او الشيت .

Yes, it is necessary in higher education because it is so difficult to study the whole materials in exams. I write down important information said by the lecturers to benefit from them and not to forget the important points. I write down information in notebooks or on margins of books or sheets.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
05: 00 pm:

نعم، أقوم بتسجيل الملاحظات لأفهم النص جيدا .أكتب النقاط الرئيسية على هوامش الصفحات، و بالتالي أستخدم أقلام ملونة لكي أدرسها للاختبارات والامتحانات.

Yes, I take notes to understand the topic. I write down the main points on the margins of sheets and I use coloured pens to study them in tests and exams.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
05: 02 pm*:*

نعم ، لاستعمالها في الاختبار أو الامتحان، أكتب كل النقاط على هوامش الصفحات و الدفاتر، وفي أحيانا أخرى أظللها لكي تساعدني على الفهم .

Yes, to use them in test and exam. I write down all my notes on the margins of sheets and books and sometimes I highlight main information to help me understand.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)

نعم، أكتب كل النقاط و المعلومات المهمة لاستعمالها في الامتحانات و بعدها. 05: 05 pm:

Yes, I write down all important notes and information to use them in exams and later.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
05: 06 pm:

نعم، أسجل جميع النقاط والمعلومات المهمة لاراجعها فى الامتحانات، كما أنني أستعمل دائما اقلام ملونه.

Yes, I take notes of important information to study them for exams. I always use coloured pens.

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As the excerpts above indicate, all participants from Arts and Science took notes when they read. This shows that taking notes is very important to both students from Arts and Sciences. That is to say, writing down notes to them has a vital role in in-depth reading. What is astonishing is that all the participants mentioned the ways and the reasons of writing down their notes. However, all the students from Arts said that they benefited from notes in exam revision, but SG (excerpt 3) added further reasons for taking notes by saying that taking notes helped her to understand and to remember the content material. Some students from Science said that they studied them in tests and exams (see HR, excerpt 7 and HB, excerpt 10), and one student said that she used them as future reference (see excerpt 9 above). However, few participants indicated that they used Arabic language when they wrote down their important notes; most of the students took down their notes in English. It is important to note that in Libya many study materials (textbooks, articles) are in English. One student (FA) from Arts said that she always used Arabic instead of English when she wrote down her important notes to understand better. She explained that she would like to write her notes in English but she was not able to do that because she was not confident and she did not have good background knowledge. In contrast to KM, NA said that she wrote down her notes in English because, to her, writing important notes in English will save time in exam revision. That is, she was not going to translate notes that were written in Arabic into English in English exams. For the majority of the Arts students, who said that they did not take down notes in Arabic, they indicated that they sometimes use Arabic and at other times they used English.

We have seen how the Libyan students in Libya constructed in-depth reading. Now let us also see how the Libyan students in SA constructed in-depth reading.

The Libyan students who participated in the focus group discussions in SA were asked about the strategies they applied when they read the text. They stated that they **underlined difficult and unfamiliar word or phrases**. However, all of them indicated that they **translated difficult words or phrases**. This can be understood from their utterances below:

أضع خطأ تحت الكلمات و الجمل الصعبة و الغريبة، و أعمل على ترجمتها.

I underline difficult and unfamiliar words and phrases and translate them by using Google translator. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

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عادة أضع خطأ تحت الكلمات الغريبة و الصعبة ، كما أنني أضع خطأ تحت الجمل الصعبة كذلك و أعمل على ترجمتها .

I usually underline difficult and unfamiliar words and phrases and translate them. (HT, Science student/ FGD)

في بعض الأحيان، أضع خطأ تحت الكلمات الصعبة و الغريبة ، و أحيانا أضع خطأ تحت الجمل الصعبة مع العمل على ترجمتها بالاستعانة على قاموس إنجليزي -عربي.

I sometimes underline difficult and unfamiliar words and phrases and translate them by using English Arabic dictionary. (HD, Science student/ FGD)

عندما أجد صعوبة في بعض الكلمات الغريبة أو بعض العبارات الصعبة ، فإنني أقوم بوضع خط تحتها و أترجمها .

When I find difficult or unfamiliar words and phrases, I underline and translate them. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

أضع خطأ تحت الكلمات الصعبة والغريبة و كذلك تحت العبارات الصعبة ، وبالتالي أعمل على ترجمتها مستعينا بترجمة غوغل .

I underline difficult and unfamiliar words and phrases and translate them by using Google translator. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

نستعمل ترجمة الشبكة العنكبوثية و أحيانا أستعمل و أستعين بقواميس أخرى لترجمة الكلمات أو العبارات الصعبة .

We use online or other dictionaries to translate difficult words or phrases. (RW, Science student/ FGD)

Surprisingly, one Science student added a few comments about her way of translating by saying:

أستعمل " مترجم غوغل " لترجمة النص إلى العربية ، و أحيانا أخرى أستعمل قاموسا (عربي – إنجليزي)، و بعد ترجمة الكلمات ، أعيد قراءة النص ، فالترجمة فعلا تساعدني على فهم النص بشكل سهل.

I use Google translator to translate the text into Arabic and sometimes I use English Arabic dictionary. After translating words, I re-read the text. Translating helps me understand the text easily. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

As note taking is an essential strategy for in-depth reading, the focus group participants in SA were also asked whether they **took notes** when reading. Almost all of them mentioned that they wrote down notes when they read any academic texts. Moreover, they illustrated their way of taking notes and why. Let us read their remarks in the following excerpts:

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عادة ما أسجل بعض النقاط المهمة على صفحات خاصة لمراجعتها في آخر المطاف في الامتحان ، و أحيانا أسجلها على هوامش النص ، كل النقاط تكون مسجلة باللغة العربية

I usually take notes on pieces of papers to revise them later for exams. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

آخذ النقاط المهمة و أسجلها إما على صفحات خاصة بذلك ، و إما على هوامش النص ، كل النقاط تكون مسجلة باللغة العربية لكي يسهل لي استعمالها في آخر المطاف.

I take notes either on pieces of papers or on the margins of the text. All my notes are in Arabic to become easy for me to use them later. (RA, Science student/ FGD)

عادة ما أسجل النقاط على الشكل التالي: (1) أظلل الكلمات،و التعابير، و الجمل المهمة. (2) أكتب على الهوامش كل الكلمات أو الجمل المفيدة ، على سبيل المثال تلك المتعلقة بالأدب ، أو الخاصة بالمناقشات ، أو تلك المتعلقة بالتحليل أو ما إلى ذلك. (3) أستعمل اللغة العربية فقط لبعض الكلمات أو لبعض التعابير المهمة، أو التي تعتبر ذات أهمية قصوى و التي تجذبني عندما أعود إليها ، و على أية حال ، فإن النقاط المسجلة دائما ما توفر الوقت و تكون بالتالي جد مفيدة في سياق تسلسل المعلومات.

I always write down notes which are as follows: (1) I highlight any important words, phrase or sentences; (2) I write beside words, phrases or sentences in margins these are useful, for instance, for literature or for discussions or for analysis and so on; (3) I use Arabic language just for some words or phrases such as important, very important and very very important to attract me when I come back to them. However, notes save time and are useful for the sequence of information. (IA, Arts student/ FGD)

آخذ نقاطا حول النص ، إما أن أسجلها على الهوامش، أو أضع خطأ تحتها مستعملا قلما أحمر ، أو أنني أعمل على تظليل الكلمات و الجمل المهمة ، و للحديث بصراحة ، تسجيل النقاط يساعدني كمرجع أعود إليه في الامتحانات ، أو في كتاباتي المتعلقة بمقترح البحث ، أو في كتابة البحث ككل. أفضل أن أستعمل اللغة العربية في تسجيل النقاط و المعلومات من أجل الانتباه و من أجل فهم أعمق.

I take notes in the text either I write in the margins or I underline using red pens or highlight words and important phrases. Frankly speaking, notes help me a lot as a reference in exams and in my further writing such as my proposal and thesis. I prefer to use Arabic language in my notes to draw my attention more and to remember better. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

أكتب كل النقاط و المعلومات مستعملا حاسوبي الخاص (المحمول) ، أفتح صفحة جديدة على " الوورد" ثم أستعمل تقنية " نقل و لصق " لأية معلومة مهمة ومفيدة من موضوعاتي أو مقالاتي السابقة. عادة فإنني أضيف أي معلومة وخاصة تلك التي أجدها مفيدة لدراستي ، إلا أنني مع ذلك أستعمل اللغة العربية لأخد النقاط و المعلومات ، هذه النقاط جد مهمة لأنها تساعدني في إنجاز بحثي ، و بالمناسبة فإنني في هذا الصدد أستعمل حاسوبي الخاص لتسجيل النقاط المهمة بدل الاعتماد على الأوراق سيما و أن خلفيتي المعرفية باللغة الإنجليزية نوعا ما ضعيفة لكتابة نقاط و معلومات مهمة.

I write down notes using my Lap top where I open a new page, copy and paste any important information from previous essays or articles. Usually I add any other information that I find it useful for my study. However, I use Arabic language in my notes. These notes are really useful and helpful because they help me a lot in my thesis. By the way, I use my Lab top instead of using papers because my English background is very low to write appropriate notes. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

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أستعمل حاسوبي الخاص (المحمول) لتسجيل المعلومات و النقاط المهمة مستعملا في ذلك طريقة " نقل و لصق " لأهم المعلومات في صفحة جديدة على سبيل المثال، أنقل و ألصق عنوان إحدى المقالات ، ثم أسجل إضافة إلى ذلك معلومات مهمة باللغة العربية و ليس باللغة الإنجليزية . كتابة المعلومات و النقاط بالعربية يكون أسهل و أوضح بالنسبة لي سيما عندما أنوي استعمالها لاحقا. كل المعلومات التي أدونها تساعدني على كتابة البحث.

I use my Lap top for taking notes by copying and pasting important information in a new page for example, I copy and paste a title of an article and then I write beside it important in Arabic not in English. Writing notes in Arabic will be easy and clear for me when I use them later. All my notes I wrote helped me now in my writing thesis. (RW, Science student/ FGD)

أضع النقاط على الصفحة ، بعدها أضع خطأ أو أظلل المعلومة المهمة ، أحيانا أستعمل اللغة العربية عندما أريد أن أكتب بشكل سريع لأنني لاأريد أن تفوتني أي معلومة بخصوص المحاضرة. لكن بالنسبة لي كتابة النقاط بالإنجليزية أسهل من كتابتها باللغة العربية.

I take notes inside the sheet; I underline or highlight important information. I sometimes use Arabic when I write fast to save time and I do not want to miss any point in the lecture. However, for me writing notes in English is easier than writing in Arabic. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

آخذ النقاط المهمة مستعملا طريقة الكلمات المختصرة مع وضع خط تحت المعلومة المهمة .

I take notes using abbreviations and underlining important information. (HA, Science student/ FGD)

عادة ما أسجل النقاط المهمة مع وضع خط تحت المعلومة المهمة و تحت الجملة الجيدة في السياق .

I always take notes by underlining important information and good sentence context. (OZ, Science student/ FGD

As can be seen, almost all of the participants in the focus group discussions studying in SA took notes when they read texts carefully. This clarifies that taking notes is very important to both students from Arts and Sciences. All the participants mentioned the ways and the reasons for writing down their notes. All the students mentioned that taking notes is useful for exams and in writing their proposals and theses. Interesting, only two participants from Science (AS and RW) indicated that they took notes on their laptops while the others used either papers or scribbled in the margins. Also, almost all the participants reported that they used Arabic (their first language) for taking notes, except one participant from Arts (AE) who stated that it was easier to write notes in English than in Arabic. On the whole, the data underscore the role of translanguaging (see 2.8, chapter 2) in reading.

After we have seen how in-depth reading is constructed by the Libyan students in Libya through Facebook discussions and the Libyan students in SA through focus group

discussions, we can say that the data clearly show that there is no difference between students in Libya and in SA. This means that the academic culture encourages students in both environments. Even though the academic culture in Libya is different from SA's, the data reveal that in-depth reading is required in both cultures. Reading the academic text carefully / actively is considered as a necessary strategy for reading an academic text. That is, reading the text carefully is common in any academic culture. This finding correlates with a study by Shehata (2017) who examined the reading behaviour and the strategies used by 33 Egyptians at Minia University in Egypt when reading academic texts in Arabic and English. The author found that the students employed several strategies with Arabic and English texts. Focusing or in-depth reading strategy was one of the strategies used by the students.

5.1.1.3 Critical reading

In terms of reading critically, I posed three questions as follows: *1. Does your lecturer ask you to read and comment on texts? 2. Do you sometimes criticise (openly or privately) views held by your lecturers or contained in academic materials you read? 3. If you criticise, how do you criticise the lecture's content?* These questions aimed to determine the role students' voices play in terms of reading the texts critically. That is to say, I want to know whether comments and critique play or do not play a prime role in students' reading a text critically. Answers to these questions are connected to the building blocks of academic literacy called "critical reading".

Before we read the students' responses to the first question mentioned above, it is a good idea to give a short explanation on **commenting**.

Commenting on a reading text is one of the strategies for critical reading and it is very important for students studying in higher education. Thomas (2017) proposed that critical readers have to question or reject information they read, and they have to comment on a text. Also, Vered (2016: 165) explained that "when you read annotate, comment on what you read to clarify the author's ideas, to amplify them with your own reactions and ideas". Commenting, according to Vered (2016: 165), means "to circle, underline or highlight key terms and phrases; to write short responses to your readings, and to state your agreement or disagreement with the author's ideas".

Regarding the first question written above, the excerpts below are some of the answers of Libyan students in Libya who participated in the Facebook discussions.

Excerpt 1: AA (Arts student)
10:56 pm:

لا، لا يطلب منا المحاضر أن نعلق على أي نص للقراءة ، خلال مدة الدراسة، و أن المدرسين لن يطلبوا منا التعليق .

No, the lecturer does not ask us to comment on any reading text. In all my study all my teachers did not ask us to comment.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
10: 58 pm:

نعم، يطلب منا بعض الأساتذة أن نعلق على بعض النصوص لأنها مفيدة لنا و تساعدنا على فهم النص.

Yes, some lecturers ask us to comment on some texts because it is useful for us and helps us understand the text.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
10: 59 pm:

نعم، هو أو هي تسألنا أن نعلق ، فالتعليق على أي نص ليس بالأمر الهين ، لكنه مفيد و يساعدنا على الفهم ، في الوقت الذي يطلب منا المدرسين التعليق فإنهم يريدون منا أن نفعل حوارا مع النص ، لكشف معلومات جديدة ، و بالتالي فأنا أحب هذه الإستراجية.

Yes, he or she asks us to comment. Commenting on any text is not easy but it is useful and helps us understand. When our teachers ask us to comment, they need us to make a conversation with the text and to discover new information. I like this strategy.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
11:00 pm:

لا، هي أو هو لا يطلب منا أن نعلق على نصوص القراءة .

No, he or she does not ask us to comment on any reading texts.

Excerpt 5: KM (Arts student)
11: 04 pm:

لا، هي أو هو لا يطلب منا التعليق ، و نحن بدورنا لا نعرف كيف نعلق على أي نص .

No, he or she does not ask us and even we do not know how to comment on a text.

Excerpt 6: MZ (Science student)
11: 12 pm:

لا، هي أو هو عادة لا يطلب منا التعليق على نص القراءة إطلاقا.

No, he or she does not usually ask us to comment on a reading text at all.

Excerpt 7: NS (Science student)
11: 15 pm:

نعم، يطلب منا بعض المحاضرين التعليق في حين أن آخرين لا يطلبون منا ذلك ، فالتعليق استراجية جيدة ، لأنها تساعدني على فهم النص بسهولة كما أنها تساعدني على أن أفكر أكثر

Yes, some lecturers ask us to comment and others do no. Commenting is a good strategy because it helps me understand the text easily and helps me to think more.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
08: 43 pm:

لا أحد من المحاضرين الذين يدرسونني يطلبون منا التعليق على النص ، في قاعة المحاضرة فقط يقرأون النص عدة مرات ثم يشرحون الكلمات الصعبة بعدها نقوم بالإجابة على الأسئلة .

None of our teachers who taught me ask us to comment on the text. In class, they just read the text many times then they explain new words only and finally we answer the questions.

As we can see from the comments above, almost all of the students from Arts and Science said "No". Even those who said "Yes" (AJ, Arts student, and NS, Science student), meant *sometimes*. It is noticeable to observe that a comment on a reading text was not seen as an important strategy to both students in Arts and Sciences. However, the commenting on a text is seen as a common strategy in the students' perceptions because none of them explained what they write in their comments. In other words, they did not mention the way of commenting on the text as a strategy when reading critically. In this case, to them commenting on a text is not only used when they read the text critically, but it is used even when they read the text quickly or carefully. For example, the two students from Arts (AJ and SG) and one student from Science (NS) who answered with "Yes" found that commenting on a reading text is good for consolidating information and helps understanding, although this strategy needs effort and not everyone can do it properly. Also, SG (excerpt 3) debated that commenting on a text is a demanding job, but it is useful. The more the student comments on the text, the greater understanding he/she gains. She carried on by saying that when any lecturer asks his/her students to comment on a reading text, he/she needs them to make a conversation with the text and to discover all aspects that are not mentioned in the text. This may increase students' background knowledge. For those students who said "No", commenting on a text was not necessary since their lecturers did not ask them to and they were not accustomed to doing it.

The comments above are from Libyan students in Libya through the Facebook discussions. Let us now see how Libyan students in SA responded to the same question through the focus group discussions. Their remarks are below:

هنا ، (في جنوب إفريقيا) التعليق على النص مهم جدا لفهم النص، في نظري ، عندما يطلب منا المحاضرون التعليق ، فأنهم يريدون من ذلك معرفة هل فهمنا النص كما يريدون معرفة نظرة طلابهم حول النص ، لأن طلاب الدراسات العليا ملزمون بتقييم النص / و إعطاء وجهة نظرتهم حول الموضوعات ، فهم يقرأون بدل أن يتلقوا المعلومات / او المعرفة فقط

. علاوة على ذلك ، أعتقد أنه عندما يطلب منا المحاضرون التعليق على النص ، يكون عندهم هدفا من أجل ذلك و الذي هو ربما يكونون مهتمين أو بالأحرى يحاولون إقامة بحث حول نفس الموضوع و يريدون من وراء ذلك آراء الطلاب حول ذلك.

Here (in SA), commenting on a text is important for understanding the text. To my opinion, when the lecturers ask us to comment, they want to see if we can understand the text and to see their students' views on the text because students in a higher education have to evaluate / give their views on topics they read instead of receiving information/ knowledge only. Also, I think that when lecturers ask us to comment on a text, they have a purpose which may be they are interested and doing a research on the same topic and need students' point of views. (IA, Arts student/ FG)

أعتقد أن التعليق على النص يساعد على فهمه ، كما أنه يساعدني على متابعة المحاضرين ، و يساعدني بالتالي على طرح أسئلة خلال المحاضرات. و لهذا أن كل محاضر هنا (بجنوب إفريقيا) يطلب منا أن نعلق على النص ، هذا فضلا على أنهم بحاجة إلى معرفة الاختلافات بين الأشحاص .

I think commenting on a text helps understand the text, helps me to follow the lecturers, and enables me to ask questions in the lectures. That is why any lecturer here (SA) asks us to comment on a text and also they (lecturers) need to know the individual differences. (SJ, Arts/ FG)

Another Science student compared Libya with SA with respect to commenting on a text by reporting:

المدرسون في ليبيا ، على الأقل الذين درسوني ، لم يطلبوا منا قراءة النص و التعليق عليه، لكن هنا بجنوب إفريقيا كل الأساتذة و المحاضرين يطلبون منا أن نقرأ المقالات لتحليل المحتوى و أن ندلي برأينا حول النص.

In Libya teachers, at least who taught me, did not ask us to read a text and comment on it. Here (in SA), all the lecturers and professors ask us to read the articles, to analyse the content and to give our opinions about the text. (AS, Science/ FG)

This comment has been confirmed by Libyan students in Libya through the Facebook discussions:

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
11:00 pm:

لا، هي أو هو لا يطلب منا أن نعلق على نصوص القراءة .
No, he or she does not ask us to comment on any reading texts.

Excerpt 5: KM (Arts student)
11: 04 pm:

لا، هي أو هو لا يطلب منا التعليق ، و نحن بدورنا لا نعرف كيف نعلق على أي نص .
No, he or she does not ask us and even we do not know how to comment on a text.

Excerpt 6: MZ (Science student)
11: 12 pm:

لا، هي أو هو عادة لا يطلب منا التعليق على نص القراءة إطلاقا.

No, he or she does not usually ask us to comment on a reading text at all.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
08: 43 pm:

لا أحد من المحاضرين الذين يدرسونني يطلبون منا التعليق على النص ، في قاعة المحاضرة فقط يقرأون النص عدة مرات، ثم يشرحون الكلمات الصعبة بعدها نقوم بالإجابة على الأسئلة .

None of our teachers who taught me ask us to comment on the text. In class, they just read the text many times then they explain new words only and finally we answer the questions.

Interestingly, one Arts student in the SA focus group discussions explained why their lecturers in Libya did not ask them to comment on any text:

فى ليبيا ، المحاضرون لم يطلبوا منا قراءة النص و التعليق عليه ، لأن المحاضرة أو المحاضر لا يهمهما الأمر إن كنا قد فهمنا أم لا ، لكن كان همهم هو كيف نحصل على نقطة أو درجة عالية و ننجح في الامتحان.

In Libya, teachers did not ask us to read a text and to comment on it because he/ she did not care if we understood or not, he/ she only cared on how to get high marks and pass our exams. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

Three students who participated in the focus group discussions in SA discussed that they learned how to think critically when they read the text. The excerpts below are their remarks:

بكل صراحة يمكن القول أن قراءة النص تتوقف على تحليله ، و هذا ما درسناه هنا بجنوب إفريقيا ، فعندما نقرأ ، فإننا نقرأ النص على الأقل أربع مرات لفهمه بشكل جيد ، بعدها نحلل النص طارحين أسئلة على أنفسنا عما؟ لماذا؟ و كيف؟

Frankly speaking, reading texts depend on text analysis. This was what we learned here (in SA) that when we read, we have to read the text at least four times to understand them. Then we analyse the text by asking ourselves questions of what? Why? And how? (AT, Science student/ FGD)

نعم ،هنا بجنوب إفريقيا أعرف معنى القراءة النقدية، عندما بدأت بكتابة مقترحي البحثي ، طلب مني مشرفي أن أجد مقالات مناسبة تخدم دراستي و من أجل تحليلها . طلب مني أن أقرأ المقالات ، أقرأ ، أفهم ، أضع خطا تحت العبارات الغريبة و أن أطرح أسئلة .

*Oh, here (in SA) I know the meaning of critical reading. When I started to write my proposal, my supervisor asked me to find suitable articles for my thesis topic and to analyse them. He asked me to read the articles, reread, understand, underline strange information and to write questions. (*RW, Science student/ FGD)

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بكل صراحة، هنا في جنوب إفريقيا ، تعلمت فعلا كيف أقرأ مقالة أو كراسة / كتاب لأنني خلال مرحلة الباكالوريوس من مرحلة دراستي للمقرر كل المحاضرين الذين درسوني علمونا كيف نقرأ النص عدة مرات و كيف نفهم العبارات الصعبة واضعين خطا تحتها أو مظللين كل المعلومات الجديدة ، و كيف نطرح أسئلة ، و كيف نناقش و كيف نعطي رأينا حول النص المقروء.

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Honestly, here (in SA) actually I learned how to read an article or a textbook because in my honours' course all the lecturers who taught me taught us to read the text many times and to understand them by underlining or highlighting new information, to ask questions, to discuss and to give our opinions about the text being read. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

From the above students' reports, we understood that commenting on a text as a strategy for critical reading was used in SA. It was unlike what Libyan students in Libya stated about commenting on a text. Libyan students studying in SA highlighted that commenting on a text was a common approach to reading critically and every lecturer asked his/her students to read the text as well as to provide him/her with feedback or comments on the text being read. In contrast, Libyan students in Libya emphasised that their lecturers did not ask them to comment on any academic texts. Even those who said "Yes", said sometimes, not always. This shows that the academic culture in Libya does not encourage students to comment on what is written because Libya is considered to have high power distance. According to Hofstede (1986, 1991), countries with strong power distance, such as Libya, respect teachers or even authors as an authority that should be valued. This means that the students have to accept what is written without commenting and without agreeing or disagreeing.

Regarding the second and the third questions mentioned above (*2. Do you sometimes criticise (openly or privately) views held by your lecturers or contained in academic materials you read? 3. If you criticise, how do you criticise the lecture's content?),* the responses will be displayed below, but it is a good idea if I briefly state the meaning of **critique** in general and how Libyan students perceive it in terms of critical reading.

Critique (النقد) is one of the strategies of critical reading. Loveless and Griffith (2012: 141) stated that reading academic texts does not only mean understanding them, but also to analyse and critique them. However, the common meaning of the concept critique is to find something negative and/or positive. According to Webster (2008), critique is defined as "a careful judgement in which you give your opinion about the good and bad parts of something such as a piece of writing or a work of art" (Webster, 2008). So, critique in literature is valued and is considered an important quality of academic culture. In our data, the concept

critique was used in a different perception when I asked the participants in both the Facebook and in focus group discussions whether they critiqued their professors or lecturers' content or not. The participants' understanding of critique tends to be bad or negative although the word critique itself has the same meaning in Arabic and English. For instance, Mu'jam Al-Maeany Al-Jamie (Al-Ateya, 2012) defined the equivalent critique as النقد هو ان تبين الحسن والردى او ان تبين العيوب والمحاسن which means to show bad or good, or to show advantages or disadvantages.

It is quite interesting that the Libyan students in Libya and in SA consider that, in Libya, criticising teachers or writers is not valued in the Libyan educational environment. Teachers or professors are considered the main source of information and the students have to accept that information. However, critique against them means something bad. In other words, Libyan students think that critiquing is something bad only. To begin with, let us look at comments from the Facebook discussions. In trying to find out the important role of **critique** in the students' academic study in, they were asked if they criticised the lecturers' views or any content material.

Excerpt 1: AA (Arts student)
12:25 am:
نعم أنتقد ، عندما احاول أنتقد ان استخدم معرفتى السابقة وأتفحص اسلوب الكتابة، القواعد، الإملاء و أدوات الترقيم.
Yes, I criticise. When I criticise, I connect what has been explained with my background knowledge, check language being used, grammar, spelling and punctuation marks.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
12: 26 am:
نعم، غالبا ما أنتقد ، أنتقد بالرجوع الى معلوماتى السابقة وأتفحص آليات الكتابة والقواعد .
Yes, I often criticise. I criticise by using my background information, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
12: 28 am:
نعم أحيانا. أنتقد وذلك بتفحص أدوات الترقيم ، الإملاء، القواعد وكذلك ارجع الى المحاضرات السابقة وأُقارنها .
Yes, I sometimes criticise by checking punctuation marks, spelling, and use my prior information.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
12:30 am:
لا أنتقد انى اكره النقد لان أى نقد سوف يتسبب فى معاقبتى بتنقيص درجاتى.
No, I hate criticising because criticising will lead to penalty of losing marks.

Excerpt 5: NA (Arts student)
12:32 pm:
نعم أنتقد وذلك بالنظر الى القواعد، أدوات الترقيم وكيف طور الكاتب الجملة الرئيسية و كذلك استعمل معلوماتى السابقة.

Yes, he/ she often asks us. I criticise by examining grammar, punctuation marks and, how the author develops the main idea and use my old information

Excerpt 6: KM (Arts student)
12: 35 pm:

لا احب ان أنتقد لاننى اذا انتقدت أى استاذ فسوف يعاقبنى بتنقيص درجاتى وهذا ما حدث لى فى سنة من السنوات.

No, I do not like criticising because if I will criticise, the lecturer will punish me by losing marks.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
11:10 pm:

نعم أنتقد أحيانا ولكن سراً حتى لا أحرج الاستاذ وكذلك حتى لا يعاقبنى. اذا انتقدت اركز على أدوات الترقيم والقواعد .

Yes, I sometimes criticise but privately in order not to embarrass the lecturer and not to be penalised. I focus on punctuation marks and grammar.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
11: 12 pm:

نعم احيانا جهرا وافعل ذلك كنوع من المناقشة حتى لا أحرج الاستاذ والامر الذى يؤدى الى معاقبتى واركز على أدوات الترقيم والقواعد .

Yes, I sometimes criticise openly. I criticise when I have information about the subject/topic. I change critique into a type of discussion in order not to embarrass her/him, and not to lose marks. I check punctuation marks and grammar.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)
11: 15 pm:

نعم احيانا أنتقد جهرا واحيانا اخرى سراً ولكن بحذر واركز فى نقدى على القواعد.

Yes, I sometimes criticise openly and other times I criticise privately but cautiously. I focus on grammar.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
11:20 pm:

فى الحقيقة نعم، أنتقد ولكن ليس أمام الطلبة وأتفحص القواعد فقط

In fact yes I criticise, but not in front of students. I examine grammar only.

As we can see from excerpts above, most of the students from Arts indicated that they criticised, whereas all participants from Science said that they criticised. In terms of criticising openly or privately, none of the Arts students indicated whether they criticised privately or openly, they just said "yes" that they criticised. Unlike the Science students, most of them said that they criticised, but they were cautious. Some said they criticised privately, such as HR (excerpt 7), and HB (excerpt 10). HR (excerpt 7) said it was because she would be penalised by the lecturer if she criticised him/her privately. HR's answer was confirmed by other participants, HB (excerpt 10), and MZ (excerpt 8), although MZ indicated that he sometimes criticised openly. MZ (excerpt 8) said he tried to make a discussion instead. NS

(excerpt 9) said that she sometimes criticised privately and other times openly. For the two Arts students who said "No", they did not criticise, indicated that they hated criticising their lecturers because of the fear of punishment by their lecturers (see excerpts 4 and 6 above).

Importantly, from the same excerpts above we note that the participants mentioned the **way of criticising**, for example, the majority of Arts students (4 students) criticised by relating the content to their prior knowledge, checked spelling and punctuation, and checked the grammatical structures. Only one student checked for organisation and coherence, one checked the convention of style, and one checked how the author presents and develops his / her main ideas. It is also significant to notice that all respondents from Science did not check how the author presented and developed his / her main ideas. Two students of Science used their prior knowledge, checked the organisation and coherence of the text, and two checked spelling and punctuation when they criticised. Only one student checked conventions of style, and three students checked the grammatical structures. It is clear that it is difficult for students to check how the author presents his main idea and how to develop it. Maybe these students were not accustomed to doing so.

The data presented above is from the Facebook discussions with Libyan students in Libya. Now let us see how the Libyan students studying in SA, particularly at UWC, answered the same questions in terms of critiquing lecturers or content materials. Some of their comments are below:

أستطيع أن أنتقد هنا ، لقد انتقدت أحد المحاضرين عندما تحصلت منه على درجة ضعيفة ، و عندما طلبت منه مراجعة الجواب نقطة نقطة ، أخيرا فهم أنني استعملت طريقة مغايرة في تحليل السؤال ، وهذه الطريقة هي الأخرى صحيحة ، و كنتيجة ، فقد غير المحاضر النقطة .

I can criticise here, I criticised one of the lecturers when he gave me a low mark when I asked him to revise the answer step by step, he finally realised that I used a different way of analysing the question, this way also is correct. As a consequence, he changed the mark. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

أستطيع أن أنتقد هنا، أنتقد عندما أجد ملاحظات المحاضر على ما كتبنه في غير محلها أو عندما تكون التعليقات غير مهمة .

I can criticise here. I can criticise when I find the lectures' remarks on my writing are not in their place or unimportant comments. (RA, Science student/ FGD)

هنا بجنوب إفريقيا ، بإمكانك أن تتعلم كيف تنتقد المحاضرين ، ما زلت أتذكر دوره حضرتها و التى من خلالها سألنا المحاضر(نحن الطلاب جميعا) أن نعطيه بعض التعليقات ، لكن إذا وجدت أن انتقادي لبعض الطلاب في محله و أنه كذلك مهم ، فإنني أنتقد .

Here (in SA), you can learn how to critique lecturers. I still remember a course that I attended, in which the lecturers asked us (all the students) to provide him with feedback/ comments. However, if I find that my criticising is important to other students, I can critique.
(IA, Arts student/ FGD)

يناقش الطلاب مع محاضريهم على الرغم على أنهم على خطأ / ليسوا على صواب ، جرأة الطلاب خلال الدراسة داخل القاعة تعتبر شيئا عاديا ، لا يشعرون بأي خجل أن ينتقدوا أمام الطلبة .

Students discuss with their lecturers even they are wrong/ mistaken. The audacity of students in the study hall is considered normal. They do not feel shy to critique in front of the students.
(SM, Science student/ FGD)

هنا ، تشعر أنك حراً بخصوص أنك تتفق أو لا تتفق مع الأساتذة بدون أي حرج وبدون أن تعاقب ، الأساتذة يطلبون منا من وقت لآخر أن ندلي بتعليقاتنا و بآرائنا حول محتوى المحاضرات .

Here, you feel free to agree or even to disagree with your professors without being punished; professors from time to time ask us to provide them with feedback of the lectures' content.
(AE, Arts student/ FGD)

As the comments above indicate (even though not all on reading), it is clear that criticising is a common strategy every student can employ in SA's higher education. The evidence for that can be seen when Libyan students in SA were asked whether they sometimes **criticise** views held by their lecturers or contained in academic materials they read. They illustrated that in SA they can criticise; they can disagree with their lecturers or professors. The students do not feel afraid of being punished; they dare to criticise course materials and their professors without being punished. For example, the participant, SM from Science, mentioned that the students criticise their professors openly without feeling embarrassed.

As we saw from the comments of the Libyan students in Libya through the Facebook discussions, and the Libyan students in SA through the focus group discussions, criticising lecturers and materials in Libya is not valued and the academic culture does not encourage students to critique authority. In contrast, criticising is normal and is valued in the South African academic culture. The education system encourages the students to criticise authority.

This is consistent with what Hofstede (1986, 1991) suggested that in countries with high power and collectivist countries such as Libya, students tend not to criticise or question their teachers. They tend not to discuss, express their opinions or ask questions of their teachers.

They are supposed to obey and respect their teachers. In contrast, SA is classified as a country with low power distance and as an individualist country. This means that students are supposed to be active and are expected to express their opinions. The students' learning culture encourages them to critique, disagree and question their professors, who in turn encourage them (students) to discuss and debate with them (professors).

5.1.2 Academic writing

Both the Facebook and focus group participants were asked five questions. The **first** question aimed to determine what the students in both countries think are the academic requirements that they should follow when they engage in their academic writing; the **second** question was about the personal strategies they employed when they faced problems in their writing, and **the last three** questions related to honesty.

To begin, with regards to the first question (*what do you think are the academic requirements that you should follow when you engage in their academic writing?*), three themes emerged from the responses as the **mechanics of writing**, **process of writing**, and the **conventions of style**.

The Libyan students in Libya responded as in the excerpts below. For the purpose of not repeating the same excerpts in mechanics of writing and in the conventions of style as the emerged themes, the same excerpts will be represented once. The comments which are underlined are for conventions of style that will be used later in this section, and the comments which are not underlined are responses for mechanics of writing.

Excerpt 1 AA (Arts student)
10:56 pm:

الأخطاء الإملائية، أدوات الترقيم، التركيبات النحوية، الازمنة الصحيحة زمن الافعال، استعمال مفردات مناسبة، تنظيم النص من حيث استعمال المقدمة والجزء الرئيسى والخاتمة، استعمال ادوات ربط مناسبة، استعمال لغة رسمية وتجنب الاختصارات تعتبر ضرورية ومهمة فى الكتابة الاكاديمية. حسب وجهة نظرى يجب على كل الطلبة مراعاة هذه النقاط.

Spelling, punctuation marks, verb tenses, using appropriate vocabularies, <u>organisation of the text by using introduction, body and conclusion, using linking devices, using formal language, avoiding abbreviations</u> are important and necessary for academic writing. In my opinion, the students must focus on these points when writing.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
12: 25 am:

عندما اكتب، اضع في الاعتبار كل ما يتعلق بجودة و خصائص الكتابة الاكاديمية بما في ذلك الأخطاء الإملائية ، أدوات ترقيم، وزمن الافعال، تنظيم الفقرات، أدوات الربط، اللغة والاختصارات ولكنى دائما ما اجد صعوبة فى اختيار المفردات و المصطلحات المناسبة للنص.

When I write I always pay attention to the qualities of academic writing such as: using accurate spelling, punctuation, verb tenses, <u>organisation of the text, linking devices, and formal language.</u>

Excerpt 3: HR (Science student)
10: 02 pm:

عندما اكتب دائما اتذكر الاتى:الأخطاء الإملائية، أدوات الترقيم، زمن الافعال الصحيحة، كتابة المقدمة والجزء الرئيسى والخاتمة، استعمال لغة رسمية و تجنب الاختصارات ولكن كتابة تركيبة نحوية صحيحة لاى جملة تعتبر مشكلة بالنسبة لى بالاضافة اننى اجد صعوبة فى اختيار و استعمال و أدوات الربط المناسبة.

When I write I always remember the following: correct spelling, punctuation, and verb tenses. <u>I also try to organise my writing by writing the introduction, the body and conclusion considering the use of formal language, and avoiding abbreviations.</u>

Excerpt 4: MZ (Science student)
10: 59 am:

عند الكتابة اضع فى اعتبارى زمن الافعال لان كل الاساتذة مركزين عليها كثيرا، كتابة مقدمة وجزء رئيسى وخاتمة مع وجود بعض الصعوبة فى ذلك، استعمال لغة رسمية وتجنب الاختصارات. بصراحة معظم اخطائى كانت فى الهجاء، أدوات الترقيم، التركيبات النحوية التى لازلت اعانى منها حتى الان، واستعمال كلمات مناسبة للنص بالاضافة الى استخدام أدوات الربط المناسبة.

When I write, I focus on verb tenses because all our lecturers are focusing on them. <u>I write the introduction, body and conclusion of the text although they are a challenge. I use formal language and avoid abbreviations.</u>

Excerpt 5: NS (Science student)
03: 59 pm:

عندما اكتب دائما اركز على الهجاء، زمن الافعال الصحيحة، كتابة المقدمة والجزء الرئيسى والخاتمة، استعمال لغة رسمية واهم الصعوبات التى تواجهنى هى كتابة تركيبات نحوية صحيحة، اختيار مفردات مناسبة واستعمال الروابط المناسبة للجمل. وبالنسبة للاختصارات لا تعتبر مشكلة بالنسبة لى ومع ذلك استعملها.

When I write, I always focus on spelling, punctuation, verb tenses. <u>I write introduction, body and the conclusion of the text and I also use formal language.</u>

Excerpt 6: HB (Science student)
08: 39 pm:

عندما اكتب اضع فى اعتبارى الهجاء، أدوات الترقيم، زمن الافعال الصحيحة، كتابة المقدمة والجزء الرئيسى والخاتمة، استعمال لغة رسمية و تجنب الاختصارات الحقيقة اكثر صعوبة اواجهها حتى الان بحيث اننى لا استطيع ان اربط الجمل الطويلة باستعمال ادوات ربط مناسبة وكل ماتعلمته هو ربط الجمل باستعمال "و، لكن، او" واستعمال " على اية حال، علاوة على و بالاضافة" تعتبر مشكلة بالنسبة لى.

When I write I always take account of correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. <u>I write the introduction, the body and conclusion. I use formal language, and avoid abbreviations.</u>

As can be seen from the excerpts above, all the students from Arts and Science used different types of strategies such as *using correct spelling and punctuation, using correct sentence structures, using correct verb tenses*, and *using appropriate vocabulary/terms,* except for one student (AJ, excerpt 2), who said that she could not select and use the appropriate vocabularies / terms. This is perhaps due to her lack of practice on how to deal with suitable

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words and phrases in her learning. It may also be due to the educational system she has engaged in.

Let us now see the responses of the Libyan students in SA. Some of their comments are presented below.

عندما أكتب ، أتفحص دائما الإملاء وعلامات الترقيم وابذل قصارى جهدى لاستخدام القواعد الصحيحة.

When I write I always check spelling, punctuation and I do my best to use correct grammar. (RW, Science student/ FGD)

أركز على علامات الترقيم والهجاء والقواعد عندما أكتب واجبى أو عرض تقديمى.

I focus on punctuation marks, spelling, and grammar when I write an assignment or a presentation. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

بالنسبه لى ، فان علامات الترقيم والإملاء والقواعد هى أهم الأشياء التى يجب أن أركز عليها فى الكتابة.

For me, punctuation marks, spelling, and grammar are the most important things that I have to focus on in writing. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

From the excerpts above, we can understand that the mechanics of writing plays a crucial role in academic writing in SA higher education. That is, the academic culture encourages the students to focus on using accurate spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and grammatical structures.

As we have noticed, the data presented above from the Libyan students in Libya and SA, in terms of the mechanics of writing, reveal that there is a similarity between the perceptions of the Libyan students in Libya and SA in using mechanics of writing. This means that the academic culture in Libya and in SA encourage students to use accurate spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and grammar (see Bashyal, 2009; Hedge, 1988; Shatta, 2008).

With respect to the process of writing (see chapter 2, point 2.4.2), let us see how the students in Libya and SA commented on it.

5.1.2.1 Process of writing

Regarding the process of writing, only one student in Libya commented as follows:

النقاط الرئيسيه التى يجب مراعاتها دائما عندما اكتب هى: اولا أفكر فى الموضوع الذى سأكتب عنة ، ثم أكتب أفكار الموضوع. ثانيا ، أبدأ الكتابه فى مسوده. عندما أرغب فى الكتابه أبدأ بالمقدمه التى ستحتوى على الفكره الرئيسيه للموضوع . ساكتب

المعلومات المهمه ذات الصله والتى ستكون واضحه لأى شخص. أخيرا ، أركز على ترابط النص واسلوبة وتنظيمة مع الأخد فى الاعتبار علامات الترقيم التى تعتبر أساسيه فى الكتابه الأكاديميه.

The main points I always consider when I write are: first I think of the topic I will write about, and then I write down the ideas of the topic. Second, I start writing in a draft. When I want to write I start with the introduction which will contain the main idea of the topic. I will write the important and related information which will be clear for anyone. Finally, I focus on the coherence, style, organisation of the text considering punctuation marks that are crucial in academic writing. (SG, Arts student, FBD, 04: 48 PM)

The above comment about the process of writing was posted in the Facebook discussion from one Arts student (out of ten) in Libya that, when she wrote, she set a plan in which she wrote a draft in which she wrote down all her ideas. She also wrote outlines on how to organise her writing. This indicates that the process of writing is taught to Libyan students in Libya and the academic culture values it. The evidence can be seen from the student's comment above even though the other students did not mention that. Maybe the other students forgot to mention this approach.

The above comment is from the Libyan student in Libya. Let us now see the comments of the Libyan students studying in SA.

نعم الشى الاكثر اهميه والذى يجب ان اركز عليه هو الفكره الرئيسيه للموضوع ، وبعدها اكتب خطتى. احاول ايضا تنظيم عملى ان أنظم كتابتى وذلك بكتابه المقدمه ، الجزء الرئيسى الذى يتضمن أمثله واكتب الخاتمه.

Yes, the most important thing that I have to focus on is the main idea of the topic, and then I write my plan. Also, I try to organise my work by using the introduction, the main body that includes examples and the conclusion. (IA, Arts student/ FGD)

Another student from Science explained that when she wants to write, she takes into account of certain steps:

عندما اريد ان اكتب ،يجب ان أضع خطه التى تشمل الفكره العامه التى يجب كتابتها فى المقدمه. يجب علىّ ان ادعم الفكره العامه فى الجزء الرئيسى وأن اكرر الفكره الرئيسية فى الخاتمه بكلمات مختلفة.

When I want to write, I must set a plan which includes the main idea that should be written in the introduction. I have to support the main idea in the main body and to restate the main idea in the conclusion. Also, I think of using drafts and to proofread everything I have written. (AS, Science/ FGD)

As the excerpts above indicate, the Libyan students in SA who participated in the focus group discussions said the process of writing is vital in the academic culture in SA.

From the students' comments from Libya and SA, it is noticeable that the process of academic writing has a role in the academic culture in both Libya and in SA. Although the students did not mention all the stages of the writing process, as indicated by some researchers mentioned above (see chapter 2, point 2.4.2), the students referred to some of them. So, the culture of learning in both academic contexts encourages students to follow the writing process when writing academic texts.

5.1.2.2 Conventions of style

Regarding the **conventions of style,** some of the students in Libya and SA reported that they tried to employ the required conventions of styles in their writing. This can be seen in the comments that will be represented below. For the Libyan students in Libya, I will present their comments from the same excerpts displayed above regarding the mechanics of writing. The data which is relevant to the conventions of style are underlined. Accordingly, most of the students pointed out that they used *formal language* and they *organised their texts by using an introduction, body and conclusion*. For instance, excerpt 1 AA (Arts student, 10:56 pm) mentioned using formal language, organisation of the text, linking devices and avoiding abbreviations. This comment has been confirmed by excerpts 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (see the underlined comments in mechanics of writing above).

From the Libyan students' remarks, we infer that the conventions of style in academic writing have a role in the Libyan academic culture because students referred to that in their comments. The learning culture encourages using the conventions of style in academic culture in higher education.

Now let us see the responses of the Libyan students in SA. Some of their responses are presented below:

هنا (فى جنوب افريقيا) ، جميع المحاضرين اخبرونا عندما نكتب ، يجب ان نستعمل لغه رسميه ، اللغه الرسميه هى احد متطلبات الكتابه الاكاديميه.
Here, all of the lecturers told us when we write, we must use formal language, and formal language is one of the requirements of academic writing. (OZ, Science student, FGD)

Another student added:

<div dir="rtl">

نحن لسنا مطالبين فقط ان نستعمل اللغه الرسميه ولكننا ايضا يجب ان نتجنب التكرار ، نستعمل جمل قصيره وواضحه.

</div>

We are not required to use formal language only, but also we must avoid repetition, use short and clear sentences. (HA, Science student/ FGD)

Almost the majority of the participants studying in SA noted that using conventions of style is necessary in academic writing. That is, the academic culture in SA inspires students to focus on the writing styles to produce a good piece of writing. The evidence of that is mentioned by the two students in the excerpts above.

Based on the comments provided through Facebook by Libyan students in Libya and through the focus group discussions by Libyan students in SA, it is obvious that the academic culture in Libya and in SA value using conventions of writing when producing a good piece of writing. This finding is in line with the researchers who have stated that, without conventions of style, the text will be unreadable (See Butler, 2006; Altakhaineh, 2010; and El-Sakran, 2013).

5.1.2.3 Honesty/ Ethics

Regarding **honesty/ ethics,** I proposed three questions to the participants in Facebook and focus group discussions aimed to determine what considerations of academic writing the respondents should think about/ consider when they start to write academically. That is to say, do they think about academic honesty as one of the requirements of academia that they should follow when they engage in their academic writing? The idea behind this question was to confirm what role honesty plays in the students' academic writing. The following questions were asked: *(1) Do you sometimes copy and paste from other people's work? (2) Do you always acknowledge the source of information/ material that is not your own? (3) Does your lecturer punish you for copying and pasting or not acknowledging your source?* Answers to these questions are connected to the building blocks of academic literacy named "Ethics/ Honesty". Before reading the students' comments, general information is presented to know what the meaning of **honesty / ethics** is.

Ethics does not simply mean rules that people should follow, but it means morals. To Resnik (2015: 1) ethics means "norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour". Ethical norms are very important especially in higher education for many reasons: first, ethical norms promote knowledge, truth and avoidance of error against fabricating, falsifying or misrepresentation of research data; second, ethical norms encourage moral and social values such as responsibility, human rights (Resnik, 2015: 1). So, ethics prohibits plagiarism. However, plagiarism has been defined by different ways. For example in Dictionary.com web site, it refers to "an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorisation and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author" (dictionary.com, 2018).

Now let us see how the Libyan participants in both the Facebook and the focus groups answered the questions written above regarding plagiarism. First, the data presented below is from the Libyan students in Libya who participated in the Facebook discussions.

Excerpt 6: (KM Arts student)
10: 45 am:

نسخت ولصقت كل شى لاننى لا اريد ان افقد درجات.

I copied and pasted everything because I did not want to lose marks.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
12: 20 pm:

فى كل واجباتى نسخت ولصقت فتحصلت على درجات عالية. انه اسهل عندما تكتب كل شى كما هو فى الكتاب لاننا لم نتعلم كيف نستخدم كلمات من عندنا.

In all my assignments I copied and pasted and I got very good marks. It is easier to write everything as they are in the sheet or a book because we did not learn how to use our own words.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
12: 25 pm:

لاننى لا ادرس فى قسم اللغة الانجليزيه ، استمريت فى النسخ واللصق فى كل واجباتى وفى الامتحانات. هذة احسن طريقة للحصول على درجات عاليه فى الامتحانات والواجبات.

Because I was not studying in English Department, I kept on copying and pasting everything in assignments and exams. This is the best way to get high marks in exams and assignments.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
10: 45 am:

فى كل واجب قمت بالنسخ واللصق لانه لم تكن لدينا اى فكرة حول كيفية استخدام كلمات من عندى لاعادة صياغة النص ولان اراد مدرسينا أن نكتب المعلومات كما هى فى الكتاب.

In every assignment, I copied and pasted because we did not have any ideas on how to use my own words and our teachers wanted us to write information as it is in the book.

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However, two Arts students explained that there are some lecturers who punished their students who cheated or copied and pasted in their exams or assignments. The excerpts below are the evidence for that:

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
12: 15 pm:

مازلت اتذكر عندما قمت بنسخ ولصق فى اول اوراقى البحثيه فى بدايه دراستى وكيف محاضرتى اهانتنى.حلفت بان لا اعيدها.

Oh I still remember when I copied and pasted the first papers at the beginning of my course and how my lecture insulted me. I swore not to repeat it again.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
02: 30 pm:

في بعض الأحيان أستعمل طريقة " نقل و لصق " في واجباتي و في عروضي عندما بدأت دراستي ، وبعد أن رفض محاضري أن يصحح أحد الواجبات ، حينئذ توقفت عن استعمال طريقة " نقل و لصق"

I sometimes copy and paste in my assignments and presentations when I started my courses. After my lecturer refused to correct one of my assignments, I stopped copying and pasting.

From the excerpts above, we have seen the construction of copying and pasting in the eyes of the Libyan students in Libya. Most of the participants indicated that they copied and pasted for the purpose of passing the exams. Others indicated that they were punished by their lecturers, as in excerpts 2 and 3. This means that copying and pasting are regarded as accepted activities in the Libyan academic culture.

The participants in the focus group discussions were also asked whether or not they copied and pasted. They stated that here (in SA) they did not copy and paste. Interestingly, some participants made a comparison between their practices of copying and pasting in Libya and in SA. Moreover, they learned what plagiarism is and how to avoid it as well. Some of their comments are presented in the excerpts below:

في ليبيا ، كنت أستعمل " طريقة نقل و لصق " و استخدمها في كل واجباتي و مع ذلك لم يقل لنا أي من أساتذتنا " أن طريقة نقل و لصق " هي نوع من انواع الغش الأكاديمي.

In Libya, in our assignments, I copied and pasted, none of teachers told us that copying and pasting is a type of plagiarism. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

في ليبيا ، كنت أستعمل في كل واجباتي " طريقة نقل و لصق " بشكل كبير ، ولم يلاحظ أساتذتي ذلك ، ولم يقولوا شيئا بهذا الخصوص ، وكنت أحصل على درجات عالية .

In Libya, in my assignments I copied and pasted a lot and my lecturers did not notice that because they did not say anything and I got high marks. (TH, Science student/ FGD)

في بلدي ، كنت قد تعودت على استعمال " طريقة نقل و لصق " تقريبا في كل المواد بما في ذلك مواد اللغة العربية .

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In my country, I was used to copying and pasting in all subject including Arabic subjects. (HA, Science student/ FGD)

The same respondents indicated that copying and pasting in SA is an offence and there are strict rules in place against plagiarism. Their comments below are presented as evidence.

هنا بجنوب إفريقيا تعرفت على معنى الغش الأكاديمي و كيفية اجتنابه كلية ، كل الأساتذة هنا يريدون منا أن نشير بدقة إلى المصادر و المراجع المقتبس منها .

Here (SA) I know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. All the professors here want us to acknowledge the source material. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

الآن وقد عرفت ماهو الغش الأكاديمي، وعرفت كيفية تفاديه، جميع الأساتذة يريدون منا أن نشير إلى المصادر و المراجع المستعملة ، وبالتالي فهم يكتشفون الطلاب الذين يغشون باستخدام برامج معينة .

Now I know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. All the professors here want us to acknowledge the source material and they can discover the students who plagiarise by using certain programs. (TH, Science student/ FGD)

هنا بجنوب إفريقيا كل المحاضرين يطلبون منا اجتناب الغش الأكاديمي عن طرق " نقل و لصق " . وقد تعلمت من مشرفي كيف أكتب ملخصا ، وكيف أستعمل كلماتي وتعابيري الخاصة ، وهذا ساعدني على ألا أغش .

Here (in SA) our lecturers ask us to avoid copying and pasting. I learned from my supervisor to write a summary and to use my own words. This helped me not to plagiarise. (HA, Science student/ FGD)

One Arts student added that in SA there are strict rules against plagiarism, commenting"

هنا بجنوب إفريقيا أعتقد أنه لاأحد من الطلاب يمكنه أن يغش ، لأن هناك قوانين صارمة بالنسبة لهؤلاء الطلاب الذين ينوون القيام بذلك ، على سبيل المثال مسألة " نقل و لصق " هناك برامج برمجيات تكشف كل الأعمال المأخوذة بهذه الطريقة بخصوص أي عمل.

Here (SA) I think that no student can plagiarise because there are strict rules for those who will, for example, copy and paste. There are software programmes that detect plagiarising work. (IA, Arts student/ FGD)

This view coincides with the view of one of the lecturers/ supervisors in the individual interviews when he was asked if international students plagiarised. He said:

There is a lot of copying and pasting, plagiarism……They plagiarise from the internet and from other sources and put directly in the documents, but the supervisors are quite alert to these (students who plagiarise) and we look for any plagiarism scores; we use Turnitin to see if there is any familiar text and then we advise them accordingly. (P2, INI)

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From the students' comments in the data above, we gain a clear picture that copying and pasting in Libya is more acceptable than in SA. In SA, to copy and paste from the source material is less tolerated or less acceptable. That is, students in SA are expected to understand the topic and to use their own words or to summarise the source material instead of lifting others' work and passing it off as their own. We understand that from the lecturers' words when they ask their students to acknowledge the materials; they also explained the plagiarism policy to them. Even though some students in Libya said that some lecturers were not happy with copy and paste, it appears nearly all the students had a positive attitude toward this malpractice. The students said that it was not a problem; they saw copying and pasting as not serious or unacceptable. Copying and pasting to them has advantages. The students saw that more marks were awarded when they copy and paste. These results suggest that the norm of plagiarism (copying and pasting) is normal because of students' ignorance and it is a type of respect. However, Labidi (1992: 80) proposed that "although plagiarism is a dishonest thing to do, it is not, seen in the context of Arab students' as a form of dishonesty or fraud. It is rather a sign of respect for and trust in which scholars write or say". This is what Hofstede (1986) referred to when he stated that in societies of power distance such as Libya, students think that it is correct to reproduce the authors' words and it is impolite to change those words. However, it is worth noting that this does not mean that plagiarism is restricted to Libyan students only and the Libyan students do not know how to be honest. Rather, they are not taught how to avoid plagiarism (copying and pasting).

The next part focuses on the academic reading and writing challenges as well as the strategies the participants employed to overcome their challenges.

5.2 Academic reading and writing challenges and strategies of Libyan students in Libya and in South Africa

It has been reported in literature that when students move from their own country to study in a new country, they will face problems / challenges. Arab learners who studied abroad encountered many academic literacies challenges. These problems occurred as a result of the vast academic cultural differences between Arabic and English. So, students with their different cultural backgrounds will face challenges when they read and write. I posed a question to the students from Arts and the Sciences participating in the Facebook and focus group discussions to see whether they had problems in their reading and writing practices and

what strategies they employed to overcome their problems. The following section identified the challenges Libyan students in Libya and in South Africa had in reading and writing.

5.2.1 Academic reading challenges

When participants in the Facebook and focus group discussions were asked about what challenges they faced in their study in terms of academic reading, the participants reported that they had problems with **vocabulary and writing style**. The excerpts below are data generated from Facebook from the Libyan students in Libya.

Excerpt 2: FA (Arts student)
11:03 am:

مشكلتي تتلخص في كوني لاأفهم المعنى العام للنص ، لأن هناك مفردات جديدة .

My problem is that I do not understand the general meaning of the text because there are new vocabularies.

Excerpt 6: KM (Arts student)
11:03 am:

أكبر مشكلة عندي هي فهم الكلمات و الجمل في النص .

My biggest problem is to understand the words and phrases in the text.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
11:10am:

لا أفهم الكثير من الكلمات و المصطلحات وخاصة تلك التي تتميز بالتعقيد .

I do not understand many words and terms especially complex ones.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
11:03 am:

عندما أقرأ ، فإنني لا أفهم معنى الكلمات .

When I read, I do not understand the meaning of words.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)
11:03 am:

واجهت صعوبات في فهم الكلمات والمصطلحات عندما اقرأ.

I face difficulty understanding the words or terms when I read.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
11:03 am:

معظم النصوص التي قرأتها وجدتها صعبة لأنها تحتوي على كلمات و مصطلحات صعبة .

Most of the texts I have read are difficult because they have many difficult words and terms.

The comments or constructions above are provided by the Libyan students in Libya through the Facebook discussions. Now we want to see how the Libyan students in SA also viewed their problem with words/ terms through the focus group discussions. Some of their comments are displayed below:

أكبر التحديات التي واجهتها عندما أقرأ لم أفهم الكلمات و المعنى العام للنص .

The most challenges I face when I read I do not understand the words and the general meaning of the text. (SM, Science student/ FGD)

عندما أقرأ فإنني لا أفهم الكلمات والتعابير داخل السياق .

When I read, I do not understand words and terms in the context. (HD, Science student/ FGD)

فهم معاني الكلمات أو التعابير في النص بشكل عام و المعنى العام للنص يعتبر صعبا .

Understanding the meaning of words or terms in the text as well as the general meaning is so difficult. (TH, Science student/ FGD)

لكي أفهم الكلمات أو المصطلحات الجديدة بالنسبة لي يعتبر في حد ذاته تحديا .

To understand the new words or terms is a challenge for me. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

One can clearly see that words / terms are really a serious challenge for the Libyan students in both contexts. The participants indicated that they found difficulty in understanding the words in the reading text. What the students realised was that understanding the text basically relies on specific words or terms. That is, words or terms are very important for the students and they cannot understand the text unless they focus on vocabulary. The academic literacies of the participants emphasise specific words or terms and that is why most of the students reported specific words or terms as reading challenges. Even though the majority of the participants in the Facebook discussion highlighted vocabulary as their main problem, one surprising view mentioned the general meaning of the text as a challenge. This suggests that the student has been socialised into making meaning of the text by concentrating on specific words or terms (see excerpt 2 above).

It is quite clear that the main focus of the Libyan students in Libya and SA is on vocabulary when they read. This has only one explanation – that academic culture has a major role in English learning, not only in Libya but also in SA. The Libyan educational culture has an impact on the students when they learn English as a second language. It has been argued that the traditional methods of teaching English exists, for example, the grammar translation method is widely used by teachers, where students memorise a large amount of grammar rules and vocabularies. So, it was not surprising when the participants mentioned vocabulary in reading as their challenge. It seems that teaching or learning vocabulary is the only way for gaining knowledge in the Libyan academic culture and the learning culture encourages

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students to focus on vocabulary more when reading academic text in Libya and in SA. A study by Albashtawi (2016) found that Jordanian undergraduate students majoring at a Jordanian college of higher education, had problems of not understanding the meaning of new words as well as the meaning of the text.

Interestingly, writing style is another problem that was mentioned by the Libyan students in SA through the focus group discussions. This challenge came about when the students said that, here in SA, they are required to read a large number of articles. The students commented that they did not have a problem understanding the articles, but they sometimes faced a problem with the writing style. The excerpts below are their remarks:

أحيانا أواجه صعوبة في طريقة كتابة بعض المقالات ، أشعر أحيانا أن بعض الكُتاب يستعملون لغة معقدة بشكل كبير ألى درجة أنها لا تساعدني على فهم النص ، ومن جهة أخرى ، هناك بعض الكتاب الذين يستعملون لغة سهلة و مفهومة تجعلني أشعر بالراحة كقارئ .

I sometimes face difficulty in some articles' writing style; I sometime feel that some authors used language that is extremely complicated which will not help me comprehend the text. On the other hand, other authors used simple and understandable language that makes me feel relaxed as a reader. (IA, Arts student, FGD)

In the same focus group, the participants, SJ from Arts and AS from Science, agreed with AI from Arts, saying:

طريقة كتابة بعض المقالات تكون معقدة إلى حد أنك لا تستطيع فهمها .

Some articles' writing style is complicated so as you cannot understand them. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

أوه ، ، مازلت أتذكر عندما قرأت مقالا كان متعلقا ببحثي ، قرأته عدة مرات ، لكنني لم أفهمه إطلاقا ، لأن الكاتب استعمل جملا و تعابير معقدة التركيب .

Oh! I still remember when I read an article which was related to my research, I read it many times but I did not understand it at all because the writer used complicated sentences and terms. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

From the Libyan students' remarks about the difficulty of **writing style**, it seems that the students now learned how to distinguish between the simple and difficult articles because the academic culture of SA valued academic reading and critical reading. It is part of the academic culture in SA for students to be asked to read many articles, while in Libya the

students are not asked to read articles or additional material, as indicated by the participants in Facebook. This is the evidence: From Facebook, excerpt 6: KM, Arts student, 07: 00 pm posted: *"We only use the summaries/ notes that our lecturer use and no lecturer asks us to read extra material"*. From the focus group discussion*, AE, Arts student reported: *"In Libya we only use the material our lecturers use, we do not use extra textbooks or summaries"*. A possible explanation for this result may lie in the fact that different writing styles create problems, especially for second language learners, in case of Libyan students. This finding confirms what Hinds (1987) and Clyne (1987) distinguished between Japanese, German and English language rhetoric and organisation of essay writing. They suggested that there is writer and reader responsibility; the writer is responsible when he/she uses many linking devices that help readers to gain the meaning easily, whereas reader responsibility is when the reader makes an effort to comprehend the message of the text because the writer uses complicated language that does not help the readers to understand the text. This idea was mentioned by a supervisor in an individual interview when she was asked if the students found difficulty in identifying the author's purpose. She said that we cannot blame the students since some writers use a very complicated style of writing and sensible lecturers should recommend simple texts that fit the students' needs (see transcript 1 in appendix 11).

5.2.2 Academic writing challenges

When participants in the Facebook and focus group discussions were asked about what challenges they faced in their study in terms of academic writing, the participants indicated that they had problems with **choosing appropriate vocabulary**, **referencing**, **paraphrasing** and **structure.**

Again the participants in Libya and in SA identified **choosing appropriate vocabulary** in writing as a problem. The excerpts below are from the Libyan students in Libya.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
07:30 am:

أجد صعوبة في اختيار واستعمال الكلمات و المصطلحات المناسبة للنص عندما أكون بصدد الكتابة .
I find difficulty in selecting and using appropriate words and terms for the text when I write

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
07: 33 am:

اختيار كلمات أو مصطلحات لكتابة فقرة أو موضوع ...اوه ، إنه أمر كارثي ، أحيانا تجد كلمة لها سياقات متعددة ، و لذا كيف يمكنني أن آخذ الكلمة ذات المعني الحقيقي و المناسب للنص .

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Choosing words and terms to write a paragraph or an essay …oh is a disaster. Sometimes you can find a word that has different meaning. How can I take the right meaning to the topic?

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
07: 40 am:

أول مشكله تواجهنى عندما أكتب هو أن أجد الكلمات المناسبة للموضوع.

The first problem I face when I write is to find suitable words for the topic.

The above comments were posted by the Libyan students in Libya. Let us see the responses of the Libyan students in SA who took part in the focus group discussions. Some of them expressed their views on the difficulty of choosing the appropriate words in academic writing.

لا أتمكن من اختيار معجم و مرادفات عندما أكتب .

I cannot select proper vocabulary and synonyms when I write. (AS, Science student/ FG)

بالنسبة لي ، لا يمكنني اختيار مصطلحات علمية دقيقة حتى ما استعنت بالقاموس .

For me, I cannot choose proper scientific terms when I write even from the dictionary. (SM, Science student/ FG)

The students were quite sure that the culture of learning in Libya values focusing on words / terms when the students read. It is quite clear that the Libyan students' main focus is on the vocabulary when they read and write. The Libyan educational culture has an impact on the students when they learn English as a foreign and as a second language. Even the Libyan students in SA complained and clarified that vocabulary is an obstacle for them when they write. As explained above (see 5.2.1), cultural background has an impact on the students' learning of English. Another possible explanation of this result is that the Libyan background culture has a major impact. Arab students' culture of learning depends on the reproduction of the information produced by the teachers. In doing so, the students are expected to respect the authors' words and it may amount to disobedience to change that information (Hofstede, 1986, 2001). However, in literature, some researchers have stated that when students depend only on reproducing information or memorising, for example for exam purposes, they do not try to interpret and analyse the information learned, or they do not make use of their previous knowledge to seek a clearer understanding of the material read, then they are called surface learners (Alt and Boniel, 2018; Haggis, 2003).

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Referencing was also one of the challenges that participants faced when they were asked about the difficulties of academic writing. However, this difficulty was indicated by some of the participants on Facebook and in the focus group discussions as well. According to the participants in the Facebook discussion, they thought that when they copied and pasted they would meet their lecturers' expectations, and copying and pasting was easy work for them. Moreover, they added that acknowledging the source material is a challenge for them. Some of their comments are represented below:

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
12:30 pm

في الحقيقة اعتماد المراجع أمر صعب لاسيما أذا تم استعماله داخل النص .
Really referencing is very difficult especially when you use it in the text.

Excerpt 5: NA (Arts student)
12: 50 pm

الاستشهاد او الاقتباس من مصادر هو حقا أمر جد صعب بالنسبة لي و خاصة عندما تجد أكثر من مؤلف ، إنه فعلا أمر صعب و مربك .
Citation and referencing are very difficult for me especially when you find more than one author; it is really difficult and confusing.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
12: 50 pm

إلى حد الآن ما زلت مرتبكا في كيفية استعمال اقتباسات من أعمال مؤلفين .
Till now I still confused how to reference the writers.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
12: 35: pm

أعتبر أن استعمال المراجع و الاعتماد على الاقتباسات من مصادر أخرى أمر صعب بالنسبة لي ، لأنني لست جيدة فى ذلك .
I consider referencing very difficult for me because I am not good in using references.

As can be seen from the excerpts above, the Libyan students in Libya claimed that they had a big problem with referencing. For example, FA (Arts student) mentioned that referring to the author in the text is difficult. This comment is confirmed by NA (Arts student), who added that even writing the authors in the list is also a problem, especially when she finds two or three authors.

Some participants in the focus group discussions also found that referencing was a problem at the beginning of their study, but now they learned how to reference well and referencing is no longer a challenge for them. The majority of them expressed that they did not have any idea how to write references before. They indicated that their teachers in Libya did not show them

how to cite and to reference. Moreover, the compared the two cultures in terms of references.
For instance, one science student expressed his views as follows:

في بداية دراستي ، و جدت صعوبة كبيرة في استعمال الاقتباسات والمراجع بشكل سليم مستعملا أعمال آخرين ،لذلك اعتمدت بشكل كبير على الأنتيرنيت " الشبكة العنكبوتية " و مصادر تكنولوجية أخرى مستعملا بشكل سليم أعمال المؤلفين ، كما استعنت بأساتذتي، هنا طبعا بجنوب إفريقيا كل الأساتذة يطلبون منا أن نستعمل المراجع إذا اعتمدنا على معلومات غيرنا في إثراء النص المكتوب من طرفنا .

At the beginning of my study, I found it was so difficult to reference other works, so I depended on the internet and other technology of using appropriate acknowledging and also with the help of my professors "Here (SA) all professors ask us to reference the information we use in our writing. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

In another group, a participant from Arts stated that:

عندما بدأت أدرس مقرري عانيت كثيرا في كتابة موضوعات أكاديمية ، و لم أكن أجيد استعمال الاقتباسات و المراجع بشكل مضبوط و سليم في النصوص و كذا في قائمة المصادر و المراجع .

When I started my course I suffered in writing an academic essay and I could not write references properly. Now, I know how to use references in texts and in bibliographies. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

One participant agreed with him saying that:

عندما بدأت الدراسة ، بدأت أقرأ و أشعر و أعترف بعمل كل مؤلف ، أنه مجهود كبير و ليس بالأمر الهين ، لأنني لم أفعل ذلك بليبيا قط ، لم يسبق لمدرسينا أن قد طلبوا منا استعمال الاقتباسات و المراجع . لكنني الآن تعلمت كيف أتعامل مع المراجع و كيف أستعمل الاقتباسات .

When I started studying, I felt that to cite and acknowledge the work of any author is very difficult because I did not do that in Libya; the teachers did not ask us to reference at all. Now I learned and know how to reference. (RW, Science student, FGD)

Another student explained that:

عندما درست بالقسم الشرفي " بكالوريوس " ذلك المقرر ، لم أكن أعرف إطلاقا كيف أستعمل المراجع أو الاقتباسات في نص ما و كذا في قائمة المصادر و المراجع ، كان الأمر بالنسبة لي صعبا ، لكنه الآن أصبح سهلا، ما زلت أذكر عندما وجدت نفسي أكتب أول واجب . اوه لقد كان أمرا فضيعا .

When I studied honours' courses, I did not have any idea on how to use references in text and in the list. It was really difficult, but now it is easy. I still remember when I first wrote an assignment, oh it was horrible. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

From the participants' remarks, it is clear that referencing or acknowledging source material is difficult for Libyan students both in Libya as well as in SA. One explanation is that the Libyan academic culture of learning depends on traditional methods of teaching where referencing is rarely taught. Both participants in Libya and SA emphasised that they were not taught how to reference. That is why almost all of them found difficulty in referencing. For the respondents studying in SA, they indicated that referencing was a big challenge in their first year, but now they knew how to reference. This means that the academic culture in Libya and in SA are different in terms of referencing, that is, the Libyan academic culture does not value referencing and does not teach their students how to reference, whereas in SA, referencing has great value and the students are taught how to use references. What this suggests is that the Libyan students here in SA try to adjust to the academic culture in terms of acknowledging the source materials when writing either in the text or in the referencing list. The changing of the Libyan students' practices supports one of the principles of the academic literacies approach that says that academic literacies practices of people can be changed over time (Baynham (1995: 15).

This result of referencing as a challenge is consistent with many studies done on Arab speaking students, for instance, Keong and Mussan (2015) investigated the challenges of academic writing that postgraduate Arab students encountered in Malaysia. The author found that referencing is one of the difficulties they had in writing. Similarly, Ankawi (2015) reported that Arab students majoring in New Zealand were not able to reference the source materials.

Paraphrasing is a strategy for avoiding plagiarism and it is a difficult task, particularly for students who study English as a second language, because students have to put someone else's ideas into their own words (Kraft, 2014: 38). Sun (2009) proposed that the best way of avoiding plagiarism is to use accurate paraphrasing. To paraphrase or use your own words was a challenge for most of the Libyan students in Libya and SA as well. Let us first see how the Libyan students in Libya commented on this challenge. Some of their remarks are below:

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
02:30 pm:
عندما اكتب لا أستطيع أن أعبر بطلاقة ، إذن كيف أستعمل كلماتي الخاصة ، و كيف أغير كلمات المؤلف في الكتب .
I cannot express myself when I write, so how can I use my own words and how to change the words of that author in the books.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
02:35 pm:

حقا أنه من الصعوبة بما كان أن تستعمل مفرداتك و تستعين بها في كتابة نص ما ، أعتقد أنه حتى الكاتب الجيد لا يستطيع فعل ذلك بسهولة ، لأن ذلك في حد ذاته مهارة.

Really to use your own words in writing is not an easy skill. I think even good writer cannot do that easily because it is a skill.

Excerpt 9: NS
02: 38 pm:

إن إعادة صياغة النص أمر عسير و مستعص ، حيث أنه يجب عليّ تغيير ما كتبه المؤلف ، حيث لأأعرف كيف استعمل كلمات من عندي لفعل ذلك .

Paraphrasing is so difficult because I have to change what the writer says. I do not know how to use words from me.

Excerpt 10: HB
02: 38 pm:

لا أعرف إطلاقا كيفية أعادة صياغة النص .

I do not know how to paraphrase at all.

The above displayed comments are from the Libyan students in Libya. These comments suggest that the students do not know how to use their own words. Almost all of the participants agreed that paraphrasing is a demanding strategy and they are not taught how to paraphrase.

Now let us read the comments of the Libyan students in SA. Some of them also identified paraphrasing as a challenge for them. For example, one participant in the focus group discussions said:

لا أستطيع استعمال كلماتي و خاصة عندما أحاول كتابة واجباتى .

I cannot use my own words when I write my assignments. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

Likewise, another student commented saying:

لاأعرف كيف استعمل الكلمات لأنني أفتقر إلى المفردات .

I do not know how to use my words because I do not have enough vocabularies (HT, Science/ FGD)

From another group, a student from Arts explained:

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لكي أكتب مستعملا كلماتي فيما يخص (إعادة صياغة النص) فإنه من الصعوبة بما كان ، لأنني لم يسبق لي أنني قد كتبت موضوعا من قبل ، و هذه هي أول مرة أسمع بها عن إعادة صياغة النص. إذ في بلدي لم ندرس هذه الاستراتيجية.

To write with my own words (paraphrasing) is difficult because I have never written an essay before and this is the first time to hear with paraphrasing. In my country we did not study this strategy. (She commented this happened when she first enrolled in courses of her honours programme). (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

Again, the excerpts above from both students in Libya and SA reveal that the participants were not taught how to paraphrase and their academic culture did not encourage them to express their own ideas. This is not surprising. That is, to write in your own words is not important in the Libyan academic culture. What is different between the Libyan academic culture and the South African culture is that paraphrasing in Libyan academic culture is not important, whereas in SA it is important and valued. Lecturers here in SA expect students to use their own words. The evidence for that is mentioned by one (SJ, Arts student) of the students in SA who said: "……*this is the first time to hear of paraphrasing. In my country we did not study this strategy"*. This may be as a result of what Hofstede (1986) proposed, that in a collectivist society such as Libya, the students have to respect older people or authors by not changing what the writers wrote. However, this finding is interesting because it confirms a study undertaken by Hassan and Badi (2015) investigating the academic writing difficulties of international ESL students in Australia, including Omani Arab students. The result showed that the students were not able to incorporate the author's ideas with theirs when they were asked to paraphrase. Similarly, the result is consistent with what Ismail and Maasum (2009) found in their study on Saudi students in Malaysia, that the students reported paraphrasing as their problem.

Structure was identified as one of the difficulties Libyan students faced in their academic writing. By structure here I mean the use of spelling, punctuation, grammar and organisation of the text. Some students on Facebook and the focus group felt that they could not master writing their assignments and projects because they were not good in the mechanics of writing and in organising the text. Let us see what Libyan students in Libya and SA said. The first comments were posted by some participants from the Facebook discussion.

Excerpt 6: KM (Arts student)
02:00 pm:
عندما أكتب واجباتي أو موضوعا ما ، لا أستطيع أن أعبر بطلاقة عن أفكاري على الرغم أنني أحمل في ذهني العديد من الأفكار ، لأنه فعلا يصعب عليّ كتابة ما يروج في ذهني من أفكار باللغة الأنجليزية ، لأنني فقط لا أجيد النحو و الإملاء.

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When I write my assignments or an essay, I cannot express my ideas although I have many ideas in my mind but it is so difficult for me to write those ideas down in English because I am not good at grammar and spelling.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
02:00 pm:

إنني أحيانا أشعر أنني لا أستطيع أن أعبر بشكل طبيعي ، و لا أستطيع أن أنظم أفكاري خاصة عندما أكتب مشاريعي الدراسية و واجباتي ، كما أنني أعاني من مشكل الأخطاء الإملائية و الجمل الفعلية.

I sometimes feel that I cannot express and organise my ideas when I write my projects or assignments. Moreover, I have a problem with spelling and verb tenses.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)
02:00 pm:

لأحب الكتابة لأن لدي مشاكل مع الأخطاء النحوية و الإملائية . كذلك لست أدري متى و كيف استعمل " الحروف الكبيرة و علامات التنقيط كالفواصل و غيرها .

I do not like to write because I have a problem in spelling and grammar. Also, I do not know when to use capital letters and commas.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
02:10 pm:

نعم ، الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية مشكل حقيقي بالنسبة لي ، عندما أكتب واجباتي ، أكتبها أولا باللغة العربية ثم أنقلها إلى اللغة الإنجليزية ، كما أنني أجد صعوبة بالنسبة للأخطاء الإملائية و النحوية ، لأأعرف كيف أكتب جملة فعلية ، علاوة على ذلك فإنني لأأستطيع أن أنظم بشكل متناسق الجمل في الفقرات .

Oh, writing in English is my serious problem. When I write my assignments, I first write it in Arabic and then I change it into English. I also have problems of spelling and grammar; I do not know how to write a correct verb tense. Moreover, I do not know how to organise my sentences in the paragraphs.

Similarly, some participants from the focus group discussions said that they considered the structure of the text as a challenge because they had a problem with spelling, grammar and punctuation as well. For example, one student commented:

عندما أكتب ، فإنني دائما أفكر في كيفية استعمال كلمات دون أخطاء إملائية ، و في كيفية استعمال أفعال صحيحة و الصفات لأنني لست جيدا في النحو و الإملاء .

When I write, I always think on how to use correct spelling and to use correct verbs and adjectives because I am not good at grammar and spelling (RA, Science student/ FGD)

Another participant noted:

إنه من الصعب بما كان أن تكتب بشكل متناسق و بتركيب جيد ، لأنني أجد مشكلة في النحو و الإملاء و كذلك وضع الفواصل و النقط.

It is so difficult to write a good structure because I have a problem with grammar, punctuation and spelling (HT, Science student/ FGD)

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A student from Arts noted that a good writing structure was a challenge when she first joined the university, and indicated that her teachers and the education system had an influence on her. She commented:

مازلت أتذكر عندما كتبت أول عرض لتقديمه فقد كان الأمر مخجلا ، كل شيء لم يكن على مايرام ، كان العرض يحوي أخطاء إملائية ، نحوية ، وفى ادوات الترقيم، في ليبيا كان المدرسون لا يصححون لنا الواجبات.
I still remember when I wrote the first presentation that was shameful. Everything was wrong. It contained bad spelling, bad grammar, and bad punctuation. In Libya, our teachers did not correct our assignments (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

The students' comments shared on Facebook and the focus group discussions simply indicated that the participants had a problem in writing good structure; they could not use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is because Arabic and English are different. The students tried to transfer the Arabic rules into their writing in English. This was confirmed by the participants' responses in the questionnaire; more than 80% of the participants said that using correct spelling was a challenge, more than 90% indicated that using correct grammatical structures and vocabularies were problems for them (for more explanations, see Chapter 6, point 6.3.2.1). This finding goes with the study conducted by Al-Shareef (2011) on Libyan students who studied in Indonesia.

The following section presents the academic reading and writing strategies used by the Libyan students in Libya and in SA to overcome their academic literacy (reading and writing) problems.

5.3 Reading and writing strategies used by Libyan students studying in Libya and in South Africa

When learners of a foreign language or a second language face any problems in reading or/ and writing, they try to find ways to cope with those problems. These strategies enhance students' learning. There are different sorts of reading and writing strategies students can use. Oxford (1990) stated that the strategies the students use depend on the problems they face. This section is divided into two subsections. The first part shows how the Libyan students in Libya and in SA employed reading strategies to overcome their problems. The second part deals with the writing strategies the participants used to overcome their problems.

5.3.1 Academic reading strategies

Participants in the Facebook and focus group discussions were asked about the strategies they used in order to overcome their problems. According to the participants, different sorts of strategies were used. This is normal because every student has his or her style of learning, or students learn better if they receive information fitted to their preferred learning strategies (Felder and Brent, 2005; Howard-Jones, 2014).

Data on reading strategies from Libyan students in Libya will be first presented, followed by data from the Libyan students in SA. Thereafter, I will investigate and discuss any differences and similarities in reported reading strategies and how these may reflect or be shaped by the respective academic cultural environments.

The participants in the Facebook discussions said that they used strategies such as *reading each paragraph, re-reading the text several times, reading each sentence slowly, reading the title*, and *translating and writing the Arabic meaning above the words*. The excerpts below are their comments. The first three excerpts are from the participants who said that they used *reading each paragraph, re-reading the text several times, reading each sentence slowly*, and *reading the title*. However, according to these participants, they repeated the same strategies they employed when they read the text normally and they added other strategies. Some of their remarks are below:

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
03: 00 pm:
عندما أجد النص صعبا جدا ، فإنني أضطر إلى مزيد من التركيز مستعملا استراتيجيات أخرى ، فمثلا أعيد قراءة النص أكثر من مرة ، بعدها أقرأ كل جملة جملة بتأني .
When I find the text is so difficult, actually I focus more and I use extra strategies for example I re-read the text more than once and then I read each sentence slowly.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
03: 06 pm:
عندما أجد مشكلة في فهم النص ، فإنني أحاول استعمال نفس الاستراتيجيات بتأني و هدوء ، ثم أقرأ كل فقرة بانتباه شديد.
When I face a problem in understanding the text, I try to use the same strategies slowly and I also read each paragraph carefully.

Excerpt 10: HB (Science student)
11:20 pm:
عندما أقرأ النص و أجده صعبا ، فإنني أقرأ العنوان و أقرأ كل فقرة فقرة بتأني ، ثم أعيد الفقرة و أقرأ جملة جملة.
When I read the text and find it difficult, I read the title and read each paragraph slowly.
Then I repeat the paragraph and read each sentence.

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Two students from the Facebook discussions said that they wrote the Arabic meaning above the words to understand much better. Read what the two students wrote below.

Excerpt 1: AA (Arts student)
02: 59 pm:

عندما أواجه صعوبات في النص ، فأنني أفضل استعمال قاموس إنجليزي –عربي لأترجم معاني الكلمات و أكتبها فوق تلك الكلمات ، ثم أقرأ النص بعد ذلك عدة مرات.

When I faced problems in the text, I always prefer to use English- Arabic dictionary to translate the meaning of words and write the meaning above them. After that I read the text several times.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
03: 10 pm:

بالطبع، عندما أجد نفسي لا أفهم النص جيدا ، أستعمل القاموس الإنجليزي – العربي لترجمة الكلمات الجديدة بالنسبة لي إلى العربية ، واكتب معاني الكلمات بالعربية فوق الكلمات المترجمة . بعد ذلك أقرأ النص بهدوء أكثر من مرة .

Actually, when I find myself did not understand the text, I use English-Arabic dictionary to translate the new words into Arabic and write the Arabic meaning above the words. Then I read the text slowly more than once.

The above comments provided by the Libyan students in Libya reveal that the academic culture dictates that students read carefully when they have reading problems. This is exactly what happened with FA (Arts student), or to read word by word, as in the case of AJ (Arts student). Interestingly, two students, from Arts (AA) and from Science (HR), found more comfort when they translanguaged. In order for them to adjust to their reading problems, they translated words into Arabic and wrote the meaning above the words. They mixed two languages, Arabic and English, to understand better (Baker, 2011; Garcia and Lin, 2017).

What follows are the remarks of the Libyan students in SA. Some of the participants in the focus group discussions who faced problems in reading also indicated that they usually focused more when they read and used extra strategies such as *looking at pictures or graphs, highlighting phrases / terms, translating the text*, and *reading subheadings.* However, translating was used twice as a strategy for general reading and as a strategy for overcoming a problem.

عندما أقرأ النص و أجده صعبا ، فإنني أركز كثيرا على الصور أو الرسوم البيانية ، و أترجم النص كاملا.
When I read the text and find it is difficult, I focus on pictures and diagrams and I translate the whole text. (AZ, Science student/ FGD)

بالنسبة لي ، عندما أواجه مشكلة ما في قراءة النص ، فإنني أقرأ العناوين الجانبية ، و بعد ذلك أرى إذا ما كان هناك بعض الصور أو رسوم بيانية.

For me when I face a problem in a reading text, I first read the subheadings, and then I check if there are any pictures and diagrams. (RW, Science student/ FGD)

تعتبر الترجمة استراتيجية ناجعة عندما أواجه صعوبة في النص.
Translation is the best strategy when I face a difficult in a text. (SJ, Arts student/ FGD)

عندما أقرأ على سبيل المثال مقالا و لا أفهمه ، فإنني أقرأ العناوين الجانبية ، و أظلل الكلمات و التعابير، و الجمل المهمة
و أعمل على ترجمتها للغة العربية بعد ذلك.
When I read for example an article and I did not understand it, I read the subheading, and highlight the important words; phrases and some sentences and then I translate them into Arabic. (HT, Science student/ FGD)

Libyan students in SA also used different strategies to face their reading problems. The participants (for instance, AZ and RW from Science) indicated that, when they had problems in reading, they focused on pictures and diagrams. To them, this strategy was helpful. Reading subheadings is considered a good strategy. Two students from Science (AZ and HT) said that they translated the text to understand better. SJ from Arts agreed with them.

The students' comments in Libya and in SA suggest that the academic culture in Libya and in SA encourage students to use various strategies when they encounter reading problems. Although the students in both environments used different strategies, there are differences between them. For example, the Libyan students in SA employed the strategy of checking pictures and diagrams which were not used by the Libyan students in Libya. The Libyan students in Libya indicated that when they encountered academic reading problems, they read the text slowly and carefully, while the Libyan students in SA did not mention this strategy. The interpretation for using different strategies by the Libyan students in Libya and in SA shows that the academic culture in Libya teaches students how to focus on reading word for word when the faced academic reading challenges, whereas the academic culture in SA permits students to focus more on the illustrations as a good strategy to read and understand better.

There is a similarity between both students in Libya and in SA when using translation. This supports the view that, when the students translanguaged / used their home language beside the second language, they make more meaning and they can develop their learning (Garcia and Wei, 2014; Baker, 2011; Swain and Lapkin, 2000). In other words, the students construct academic literacies as necessarily involving multilingualism.

5.3.2 Academic writing strategies

To understand how they constructed another dimension of academic literacy, the participants in the Facebook and focus group discussions were asked about the strategies they used to overcome their academic writing problems. The idea behind this question was to confirm what role personal writing strategies play in the students' writing. Answers to this question are connected to the building blocks of academic literacy named "writing strategies". Data on writing strategies from Libyan students in Libya will be presented first, followed by data from the Libyan students in SA. After that I will investigate any differences or similarities in the reported reading strategies and how these may reflect or be shaped by the respective academic cultural environments.

Various strategies were employed by the Libyan participants in Libya, for instance, most of them stated that before they started writing, they *make a plan in which they wrote their main ideas, made outlines and drafts*. While writing, *they sought help; some used dictionaries, used textbooks for writing, consulted feedback in marked essays and obtained inspiration from articles*. The other participants *asked help from a friend to read what he or she wrote, from his or her sister, or from his or her lecturers*. First let us see some of the participants' comments.

Excerpt 2: AJ (Arts student)
09: 15 am:

أولا أحدد أفكاري ، بعدها أقرأ الكتب و القواميس لكي تساعدني على الاختيار المناسب للمفردات. كما أنني أتفحص المقالات لأتعرف كيف يستعمل المؤلفون المراجع .

I outline my ideas first, and then I read textbooks and dictionaries to help me choose suitable vocabularies. I also check articles to see how authors wrote references.

Excerpt 3: SG (Arts student)
09: 20 am:

غالبا ما أحصل على نوع من الإلهام من قراءة المقالات لكي أتفحص طريقة كتابة المراجع و الاقتباسات ، كما أنني أسأل محاضري / محاضرتي لتساعدني و بذلك أستعمل عدة مسودات.

I usually get inspiration from articles to check the way of writing references. I also ask my lecturer to help me and I use many drafts.

Excerpt 4: FA (Arts student)
09: 25 am:

نعم ، فيما يتعلق بالاقتباسات واستعمال المراجع فهي دائما صداع ، عندما أكتب فإنني دائما أتفحص المراجع الواردة في المقالات و أستعمل كتابة مسودات.

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Oh referencing is a headache; when I write them I always check references in articles and use drafts.

Excerpt 7: HR (Science student)
09: 30 am:

لأنني اواجة مشاكل فى المفردات وتركيب الجمل ، فإنني أقرأ باستمرار الكراسات / الكتب، الواجبات و الموضوعات المصححة ، كما أنني أكتب حول موضوعين و أطلب من صديقي و مدرسي أن يقر ا ما كتبت من مسودات.

Because I have vocabulary and structure problems, I always read textbooks, handouts and my marked essays. Also, I write two drafts to ask my friend and my teacher to read what I have written.

Excerpt 8: MZ (Science student)
09: 34 am:

في بعض الأحيان أطلب مساعدة صديقي مستعملا كلماتي ، و أتفحص المراجع المتضمنة في المقالات .

Sometimes I ask help from my friend to help me use my own words and I check references in articles.

Excerpt 9: NS (Science student)
09: 34 am:

أحصل على نوع من الإلهام في قراءة المقالات و أسأل أختي لكي تساعدني .

I get inspiration from articles and I ask my sister to help me.

The above data show that these students view a student's academic literacy success not as an individual effort but as a collaborative effort, aided by multiple resources.

During the focus group discussions students in SA were asked about the strategies they utilised to overcome their academic writing challenges. They reported that some of them *checked articles and dictionaries* to help them in selecting appropriate vocabulary. Other students mentioned that they *asked for help from friends, South African students or from supervisors.* Those who had a problem in paraphrasing indicated that they *copied and pasted* and other times they *asked for help in paraphrasing.* In addition, a few of them used *referencing style,* as well as *joined a workshop.* The most striking strategy used by only one student was self –correction; according to her when she found any problems in her writing, she read aloud what she has written many times and fixed mistakes. Now read their remarks below:

عندما أواجه مشاكل تتعلق بكتابتي ، أقرأ بطريقة جهرية كل ما كتبته عدة مرات لأجد أو أتعرف على الأخطاء فأصححها.

When I face problems in my writing, I read loudly what I have written several times to find out mistakes and to correct them. (IA, Arts student/ FGD)

أسأل طلبة جنوب افريقيا الذين يدرسون معي ، عن قراءة المقالات واستعمال القواميس.

I ask South African students who study with me, read articles and use dictionaries. (SJ, Science student/ FGD)

أقرأ الكثير من المقالات ، و أطلب من زملائي في نفس المجموعة مساعدتي مستعملا طريقة الاقتباس في إدراج المراجع من على النت .

I read articles a lot, ask my friends in the same group to help me and use referencing styles in the web. (AE, Arts student/ FGD)

لأنني لا أستطيع استعمال كلماتي ، واصلت الاعتماد على طريقة " نقل و لصق " ، و أحيانا أسأل أصدقائي المساعدة.

Because I cannot use my own words, I kept on copying and pasting and sometimes I ask my friends to help me. (AS, Science student/ FGD)

أخذت درسا في كيفية الكتابة الأكاديمية ، و كيف أستعمل المراجع و أقتبس منها بشكل صحيح .

I took a course on how to write academically and to reference correctly. (OZ, Science student/ FGD)

أستعمل دائما قواميس الشبكة العنكبوتية ، كما أطلب مساعدة مشرفي .

I always use online dictionaries; ask for help from my supervisor. (Science student/ FGD)

So, Libyan students in Libya and South Africa utilised various strategies to overcome their academic writing challenges. What is surprising is that most of the strategies used by Libyan students in FBD and in FGD are similar, for example, Libyan students in Libya checked dictionaries and articles in order to overcome vocabulary problems just like the Libyan students in SA did. Also, Libyan students in Libya sought help from friends and supervisors; this happened with Libyan students in SA as well. This is not surprising, because Libyan students, just like any other student who studies English as a second language, need strategies that will facilitate their learning. An interpretation for this is that academic culture everywhere encourages students who study English as a foreign or as a second language to use ways or strategies to overcome their academic literacy problems and to make their English learning easier. This goes with what Oxford (1990) stated when she said that when learners encounter different problems, they employ various learning strategies and these strategies are characterised as "problem-oriented".

5.4 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented and analysed the data that sought to describe academic literacy constructions by Libyan students studying in Libya and the ones studying in South Africa.

To understand how Libyan students in Libya and in SA constructed academic literacies, several dimensions of their experience of academic literacy were probed. Firstly, we investigated the strategies used by Libyan students to overcome their academic reading challenges on the basis of three different aspects: general overview reading, in-depth reading, and critical reading. Secondly, we investigated the strategies they used to overcome their academic writing challenges.

Considering general overview reading challenges, the investigation revealed that, to overcome their comprehension problems and to solve their challenges, Libyan students used strategies such as reading the title, the abstract, the introduction, the conclusion, and reading and re-reading the whole text several times slowly.

As for in-depth reading challenges, the investigation revealed that, to overcome their comprehension problems and solve their challenges, Libyan students used strategies such as underlining new words and phrases, as well as any key information, then translating them from English to Arabic.

With respect to critical reading challenges, the investigation revealed that, to overcome their comprehension problems and solve their challenges, Libyan students used strategies such as taking notes and criticising views by either contrasting the new notion to their prior knowledge or by engaging in discussions with the teacher. The critique by discussion was valid only for Libyan students studying in South Africa where criticising the materials or lecture's content was allowed.

With regard to academic writing, the investigation revealed that, to overcome their writing problems and solve their challenges, Libyan students used strategies including the process of writing, the mechanics of writing, and the convention of domain / style. These strategies concerned brainstorming to plan main ideas and outline the draft, taking into account the use of correct spelling and punctuation, sentence structures, use of correct verb tenses, use of appropriate vocabulary/terms, writing the introduction, body and conclusion, the use of linking devices, formal language, abbreviations, and mechanisms to avoid plagiarism.

The following chapter represents the data obtained from the questionnaire.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA RELATED TO ACADEMIC LITERACIES/ CULTURES CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES USED BY THE LIBYAN STUDENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

6.0 Introduction

While chapter five, which was qualitative in nature, provided insights into students' constructions of academic literacies, specifically in terms of their challenges and strategies, the current chapter seeks to verify and understand these constructions by using statistical data. It is also important to note that although chapter five dealt with the constructions of both Libyan students in Libya and Libyan students in South Africa. This is because our interest in this study is ultimately about international higher education and the issues it raises for international students. In other words, this chapter investigates statistically self-reports in chapter five of academic reading/ writing barriers and solutions employed by Libyan students within the South African environment. The data employed was obtained from 123 copies of questionnaire administrated.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 24 was used to analyse students' self-reports of challenges and strategies in the questionnaire (see appendix 6) and the findings are reported. First, the demographic data were described in order to define the variables of the sample and to evaluate whether they had any influence on the results of the study. The demographic data contained gender, universities in SA, faculty/ school, level of study and duration of stay in South Africa. Second, reading and writing challenges and strategies were reported according to the following themes: (1) Reading challenges and strategies: (a) General overview reading; (b) In-depth reading and (c) critical reading.

(2) Writing challenges and strategies, categories: (a) Mechanics of writing; (b) Organisation and coherence; (c) Conventions of style in essays and (d) Honesty.

The chapter is divided into two main parts; the first part presents the statistical descriptive analysis obtained from the questionnaire. The data are presented in table format containing

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numbers and percentages according to the relevant categories in order to give an overview of certain categories. The second part contains the inferential results which present academic and social explanations as well as how the responses of the different genders might have been influenced by culture.

Before starting with the data analysis, the following section introduces the participants' profile.

6.1 Profile of the Participants

On the basis of information obtained from the questionnaire, and to get a clear picture of the study participants, a brief profile of them is presented in table 6.1 below. The present study was conducted with 123 participants, 72 males and 51 females, all of them Libyan citizens studying in SA. There were students from seven different universities in SA, namely, the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Stellenbosch (US), University of Johannesburg (UJ), Durban University of Technology (DUT), and University of Witwatersrand (WITS). This sample group was composed of 14 undergraduates and 109 postgraduates majoring either in Arts or Sciences. However, most of the participants who answered the questionnaire were natural sciences postgraduate students at UWC. For the undergraduate students who participated in this study, their level of study ranged from first to third year. There were six participants from the first year, four from the second year, and three from the third year. Their duration of stay in SA ranged from one year to seven years. There were 15 who have stayed for one year, 47 for two years, 42 for three years, 13 for four years, two for five years, three for six years, and one for seven years. Table 6.1 below summarises the participants' demographic characteristics.

Table 6.1: Demographic characteristics of the participants

Summary of demographic characteristics of the participants		N (%)
Gender	Male	72(59%)
	Female	51(41%)
University	UWC	56(46%)
	CPUT	13(11%)
	UCT	27(22%)
	US	18(15%)
	UJ	3(02%)
	DUT	4(03%)
	WITS	2(02%)
Faculty/ School	Arts	7(06%)
	Education	3(02%)
	Natural Sciences	77(63%)
	Dentistry	6(05%)
	Economic and management Sciences	9(07%)
	Community and health Sciences	9(07%)
	Engineering	11(09%)
	Aviation	1(01%)
Level of study	Undergraduate	14(11%)
	Postgraduate	109(89%)
Total		123(100%)

Note: N= number   (%) =percentage

6.2 Data statistical analysis

As indicated earlier in chapter four (methodology chapter), the Cronbach's alpha values of this research tool ranged between 0.404 and 0.852. This means that the following **five** subcategories have low values: **in-depth reading challenges** (0.456), **general overview reading strategies** (0.450), **in-depth reading strategies** (0.404), **organisation and coherence strategies** (0.570) and finally **conventions of style in essays strategies** (0.503).

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In this case they are not interesting and do not satisfy the criteria of reliability. Consequently, they were excluded and I will only describe them statistically in the following sections (6.3 and 6.4). In contrast, critical reading with its 0.852 Cronbach alpha value and all others sub-categories with at least 0.600 values are interesting and satisfy the criteria. This means that these sub-categories were included and they were used as part of the valid data in the analysis in the following sections. However, the deletion of sub-categories with weak internal consistency did not affect the test. The focus was on the other categories, namely, **general overview reading challenges**, **critical reading challenges**, **mechanics of writing challenges**, **organisation and coherence challenges**, **conventions of style in essays challenges**, **writing honesty challenges**, **critical reading strategies**, **mechanics of writing strategies** and **writing honesty strategies** (see table 6.1 above). So, these sub-categories will be discussed further in terms of cultural explanation. This section is divided into two parts, the descriptive and inferential analysis. First, the descriptive analysis is presented in the following part.

6.3 Academic reading and writing challenges

This section shows the results of the academic literacies challenges experienced by undergraduate and postgraduate Libyan students studying at South African higher education institutions. The participants were provided two categories of academic literacies challenges: academic reading, which had 22 items, and academic writing, which had 19 items. They used a Likert scale indicating one (never), two (sometimes), and three (usually which stands for always, often and usually). Scales sometimes and usually were combined for reporting purpose.

6.3.1 Academic reading challenges

When considering the research questionnaire, and particularly looking at reading and writing challenges scores, there are a number of items related to the participants' challenges. In this section of the questionnaire, the participants indicated their own barriers. The questionnaire's items on academic reading challenges were organized as follows:

A. General overview reading, subdivided into six items;

B. In-depth reading, subdivided into three items; and

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C. Critical reading, divided into three sub-categories: (1) The author's purpose (consisting of three items); (2) The author's approach (consisting of three items) and (3) The content (containing eight items). (See appendix 6).

6.3.1.1 General Overview reading

This section sought to investigate the perceptions of Libyan students about their skills in reading rapidly to find information, working out meaning of difficult words, and understanding the overall meaning of a text. Table 6.2 below summarizes the students' responses on the general overview reading challenges.

Table 6.2: Participants' responses on general overview reading challenges

Items	Number and percentage		
THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	**Never**	**Sometimes**	**Usually***
Reading quickly to identify the usefulness of the book/text	29 (24.0%)	55 (45.0%)	39 (32.0%)
Reading quickly to identify the unfamiliar concepts/terms	20 (16.3%)	45 (37.0%)	58 (47.2%)
Reading quickly to decide whether to read material in detail	26 (21.1%)	43 (35.0%)	54 (44.0%)
Reading quickly to look for specific section/chapter	25 (20.3%)	41 (33.3%)	57 (46.3%)
Reading quickly to familiarise myself with the main approaches presented in the book/text	16 (13.0%)	42 (34.1%)	65 (53.0%)
Reading quickly to activate my background knowledge	34 (28.0%)	37 (30.1%)	52 (42.3%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

As Table 6.2 above shows, the most challenging activities for the participants were the following: reading quickly to familiarise themselves with the main approaches presented in the book/text, reported by 53.0% of participants; reading quickly to identify the unfamiliar concepts/terms, reported by 47.0%; reading quickly to look for a specific section/chapter, reported by 46.0%; reading quickly to decide whether to read material in detail, reported by 44.0%; and finally, reading quickly to activate their background knowledge, reported by 42.0%. The findings indicated that the participants are *usually* or *sometimes* having problems with these items because, if *usually* and *sometimes* are combined together, it can be observed

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that for almost all the items, the majority of the participants had challenges. More than 50% of the participants reported that each item either *sometimes* or *usually* was a challenge. For example, with reference to *"Reading quickly to decide whether to read material in detail"*, 35.0% of participants said sometimes, and 44.0% said usually, which comes to 79.0%. Also, with reference to *"Reading quickly to familiarise myself with the main approaches presented in the book/text"*, 34.0% of participants said *sometimes* and 53.0% said *usually*, making a total of 87.0%. In keeping with the above, it is quite clear that the participants found difficulties with these items (as indicated in the table above) because they did not agree with them.

These results, as indications of academic culture, are very interesting. They complement chapter five in which the participants indicated that Libyan universities and colleges lack resources such as reading materials. For example, for a specific topic, students would probably read one or two materials recommended by their lecturers. This finding from the participants was confirmed in the focus group discussions and Facebook discussion platform. The students confirmed that they had limited reading materials. To illustrate, one of the participants in the focus group discussion reported, *"In Libya we only use the material our lecturers use, we do not use extra textbooks or summaries"* (AE, Arts/ FGD). Another respondent from the Facebook discussion explained, *"No, we only use the summaries/ notes that our lecturer use and no lecturer asks us to read extra material"* ("Excerpt 6: KM (Arts student at 07:00 pm). This result confirms studies by Abdel-Latif (2012) and Abushafa (2014). According to these authors, in many Arab speaking universities, there is a lack of reading materials. Abushafa (2014) indicated specifically that one of the teaching challenges in Libya is the lack of resources, especially learning materials at universities.

6.3.1.2 In-depth reading

This section sought to investigate the perceptions of Libyan students about their skills in reading to gain deeper meaning and comprehension of a text. Table 6.3 below summarizes the students' responses on in-depth reading challenges.

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Table 6.3: Students' responses on in-depth reading challenges

Items THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	Number and percentage		
	Never	**Sometimes**	**Usually***
Determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs	19(15.4%)	45 (37.0%)	59(48.0%)
Identifying material showing objections to the analysis/argument	16(13.0%)	39(32.0%)	68(55.3%)
Identifying the author's theoretical perspective	20(16.3%)	32 (26.0%)	71(58.0%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

As can be seen in table 6.3 above, the majority of the participants had problems *usually* with in-depth reading because the highest score was for *usually*, and the least score was for *never.* Around 58.0% of participants indicated that the item *"identifying the author's theoretical perspective"* was a problem; about 55.0% of them reported they had a problem with "*identifying material showing objections to the analysis/argument*" and nearly 48.0% of participants saw "*determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs*" as a problem. The findings indicate that the participants are *usually* or *sometimes* having problems with these items because when *usually* and *sometimes* are combined, it can be observed that for almost all the three items, the majority of the participants indicated them as a challenge. More than 80% of the participants said that the items either *sometimes* or *usually* were challenges, for instance with regard to "*determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs"*, 37.0% of the participants said *sometimes,* and 48.0% said *usually,* which comes to 85.0%. Also with reference to *"identifying material showing objections to the analysis/argument",* 39.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 55.0% said *usually* making a total of 87.0%. These results suggest that most of the participants had problem with in-depth reading. Even though the students had limited learning materials, they only read the texts quickly. That is, the students did not read to understand the structure of, as well as the link between, paragraphs. As we recalled in (chapter 4, section 4.3 and chapter 6, section 6.2), in-depth reading was one of the categories that was excluded by Cronbach alpha's scores. So, we do not explain any further.

6.3.1.3 Critical reading

Table 6.4 below summarizes participants' responses on critical reading. It comprises the following three concepts of critical reading: (a) The author's purpose (developed into three items); (b) The author's approach (subdivided into two items) and (c) The content (containing eight items).

Table 6.4: Participants' responses on critical reading challenges

Items THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	Number and percentage		
	Never	Sometimes	Usually*
a. The author's purpose			
Identifying why the author writes the text	24 (20.0%)	41 (33.3%)	58 (47.2%)
Identifying if the goals are written clearly	18 (15.0%)	42 (34.1%)	63 (51.2%)
Identifying which audience the author is addressing	18 (15.0%)	31 (25.2%)	74 (60.2%)
b. The author's approach			
Identifying how the author presents the main ideas	12 (10.0%)	43 (35.0%)	68 (55.3%)
Identifying the author's tendency in terms of explaining the information	14 (11.4%)	48 (39.0%)	61 (50.0%)
c. Content			
Identifying if there is adequate supporting evidence	19 (15.4%)	51 (42.0%)	53 (43.1%)
Identifying how the author develops the main statement	12 (10.0%)	40 (33.0%)	71 (58.0%)
Trying to find out if the information provided is correct	16 (13.0%)	43 (35.0%)	64 (52.0%)
Identifying the more and less focused aspects of the text	26 (21.1%)	45 (37.0%)	52 (42.3%)
Identifying the irrelevant material used	19 (15.4%)	44 (36.0%)	60 (49.0%)
Identifying to what extent the author answers your question	14 (11.4%)	42 (34.1%)	67 (55.0%)
Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations	28 (23.0%)	33 (27.0%)	62 (50.4%)
Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text	21 (17.1%)	37 (30.1%)	65 (53.0%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

With regard to the critical reading from the standpoint of **(a) the author's purpose**, the analysis of the responses in table 6.4 above indicates that 60.2% of the participants said that *"identifying which audience the author is addressing"* was a challenging activity, followed by *"identifying if the goals are written clearly"*, expressed by 51.2% of the participants, and *"identifying why the author writes the text"*, expressed by 47.2% of the participants. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined, almost all of the items are indicated by the participants as being challenges. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the items were either

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sometimes or *usually* challenges. For instance, with reference to *"identifying why the author writes the text"*, 33.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge, and 47.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, which makes a total of 80.0% of the participants who reported that the item was a challenge. It has also been indicated with respect to *"identifying which audience the author is addressing"* that 25.0% of participants said *sometimes* it is a challenge, and 60.0% said it is *usually* a challenge, making a total of 85.0%.

When looking at the analysis of the responses related to **(b) the author's approach** in table 6.4 above, 55.3% of the participants reported *"identifying how the author presents the main ideas"* as being *usually* a challenging activity, and 50.0% viewed *"identifying the author's tendency in terms of explaining the information"* as being *usually* difficult. On the other hand, 35.0% of the participants felt that item 1, *"identifying how the author presents the main ideas"*, as being *sometimes* a challenge to them, and nearly 39.0% saw item 2, *"identifying the author's tendency in terms of explaining the information"*, as being *sometimes* difficult. When combining *sometimes* and *usually* together, the two items were indicated by the participants as being *sometimes* or *usually* challenges to them. More than 80.0% of participants reported that the items were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenges. For the first item, 35.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge, and 55.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, which comes to a total of 90.0%. For the second item, 39.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 50.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, making a total of 89.0%.

With regard to **(c) the content** as an activity to critical reading, all the items in table 6.4 above were seen as *usually* challenging for the respondents. However, the most challenging item was *"identifying how the author develops the main statement"*, expressed by 58.0% of the participants, and the least challenging item was *"identifying the more and less focused aspects of the text"*, expressed by 42.3%. If *sometimes* and *usually* were combined together, all of the items were indicated by the participants as being *sometimes* or *usually* challenges. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the items were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenges. For instance, with reference to *"identifying how the author develops the main statement"*, 33.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 58.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, which makes a total of 85.0%. It also has been reported about *"identifying to what extent the author answers your questions"*, 34.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 55.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, making a total

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of 89.0%. However, only two items were indicated as being *sometimes* or *usually* challenges by more than 70.0% of the participants. Considering the first one, *"identifying the more and less focused aspects of the text"*, 37.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 24.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, which makes a total of 79.0%. Regarding the second item, *"identifying if the author used understandable items relevant to the author's expectations"*, 27.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 50.0% said it was *usually* a challenge.

From the standpoint **of academic culture and social dispositions/practices**, the results of either *sometimes* or *usually* combined together indicated that the majority of the participants (more than 80.0%) had real problems with the items of critical reading. It is important to link this finding with social and cultural stances. Although one must guard against the fallacy of generalisation, Hofstede (2001), Holliday (1996), and At-Twaijri (1996) reported that learners from Arab speaking countries tended not to be critical readers when they engaged with academic texts in comparison to students from English speaking countries. The conclusion proposed by At-Twaijiri (1996) revealed that almost all Arab contexts consider authority as a great value which should be respected. What the authority does should not be challenged or discussed. Therefore, it is not surprising when the students said that they had problems, for example, finding a problem with *how the author presents the main idea*. This means that they are not used to doing those things. This coincides with what Hofstede has stated about the cultural index, when power distance is high, then there is no need for the students, for instance, to know the purpose of the author, the author's approach or even to analyse the text. According to Arab culture, students do not discuss or question their teachers; they accept everything they are told. Consequently, these norms or dispositions might affect these students' studies in other environments such as South Africa, where students can question, discuss or even challenge their teachers. Another interpretation of the result is that this result is not surprising because Albeckay (2013) proposed that some of the Libyan teachers "had not been formally taught or studied critical reading". According to the author, even those teachers who used reading skills, they unconsciously did not label the skills of critical reading as critical reading.

After having analysed and presented results of academic reading challenges, the following section will analyse and present academic writing challenges results.

6.3.2 Academic writing challenges

Concerning academic writing challenges, the research questionnaire contained a number of items related to students' challenges to which the student participants indicated their own barriers. This research questionnaire had the following items of academic writing challenges:

     A. Mechanics of writing, including three items;

     B. Organisation and coherence, consisting of three items;

     C. Conventions of style in essays, subdivided into nine items and finally

     D. Honesty developed in four items (see appendix 6).

6.3.2.1 Mechanics of writing

Table 6.5 below summarizes the students' responses on the mechanics of writing based on their academic writing challenges.

Table 6.5: Participants' responses on the mechanics of writing challenges

Items	Number and percentage		
THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	**Never**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**
Using correct spelling and punctuation	15 (12.2%)	43 (35.0%)	65 (53.0%)
Using precise, appropriate, academic vocabulary.	9 (07.3%)	34 (28.0%)	80 (65.0%)
Using appropriate grammatical structures in English.	11 (09.0%)	38 (31.0%)	74 (60.2%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The findings in table 6.5 above indicate that "*using precise, appropriate, academic vocabulary*" was reported by 65.0% of the participants as the most challenging activity, followed by "*using appropriate grammatical structures in English*" reported by 60.0%, and finally by "*using correct spelling and punctuation*", reported by only 53.0%. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be noted that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being a challenge for them. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the item, *"using correct spelling and punctuation*" was either *sometimes* or *usually* a challenge; 35.0% said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 53.0%, which comes to a total of 88.0% of the participants. More than 90.0% of them said that the other two items were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenges for them. With reference to *"using precise, appropriate, academic vocabulary*", 28.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge, and 65.0% said it

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was *usually* a challenge, which makes a total of 93%. It has been also noted in respect of *"using appropriate grammatical structures in English"* that 31.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 55.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, making a total of 91.0%.

One possible explanation for these results is because the two languages (Arabic and English) are different in terms of the mechanics of writing. Some native cultural features are related to writing practices. These features may be transferred from L1 to L2 writing and sometimes they may create difficulties (Elachachi, 2015:134-135). Accordingly, the results suggest that the majority of the participants found the mechanics of writing challenging, because participants were trying to transfer their cultural norms into the English academic texts when they wrote.

With respect to grammatical structures, Arab students may also transfer their target language when constructing English sentences, because there are differences between English and Arabic grammatical structures. These differences can be seen in the use of word order, verb tenses, auxiliaries, genitive constructions, articles, pronouns and prepositions.

For instance, the rules of English composition carry values that are either absent in or contradictory to the values of the Arab society (for example, in Arabic there is singular, dual and plural "مدرس\ مدرسان\ مدرسون" whereas in English there is singular or plural "teacher / teachers". The Arabic language differentiates between male and female in verbs "أحمد يجرى\ فاطمة تجرى" while English does not "Ali runs / Fatima runs".

With reference to word order at the level of the adjective-noun order, the students may transfer negatively the Arabic rule of word order or adjectives, because in Arabic adjectives come after nouns "بنت جميلة" whereas in English it comes before a noun, as in "beautiful girl". Arab students will likely write 'The house **big**' instead of 'The **big** house', or they may write "**three rules very helpful**" instead of "**three very helpful rules** (Diab, 1996).

With respect to spelling, Arabic does not have silent letters; every letter is spelt out and pronounced, whereas English has a lot of silent letters. The students may write, for example, the word 'no' instead of 'know', or 'lisen' instead of 'listen' (Altakhaineh, 2010; El-Sakran, 2013; Elachachi, 2015). According to Swan and Smith (2001), another aspect of writing that might cause difficulties for Arab students when writing English essays is that Arabic orthography is a cursive system, running from right to left, which leads Arab students to misread and misspell some words that have letters with mirror shapes such as 'p' and 'q' and

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'd' and 'b'. In addition, the authors believe that the right to left writing system makes students misread letters by right to left eye movement, e.g. 'form' for 'from', or 'twon' for 'town'.

Regarding punctuation, in the Arabic language, there are no capital letters and no lower-case letters (Altakhaineh, 2010; El-Sakran, 2013; Swan and Smith, 2001). As a result, the students may not use capital letters in English or may mix capital and small letters. For example, when writing proper names, students may write 'ali' instead of 'Ali'. Also, in Arabic, commas can be replaced by dashes and full stops by a series of dots.

In terms of using appropriate vocabulary, Arab students, in the case of Libyan students, tend to misuse some English vocabulary. To illustrate, Altakhaineh (2010) suggests that Arab students might make mistakes by using the verb 'know' in place of 'discover, learn or find out'. Diab (1996) and Abi-Samara (2003) argue that Arab students sometimes use literal translations to convey the meaning in English. This translation leads to lexical errors. For example, Arab students may use "**right health**" instead of "**healthy**", or "**strong** disease" instead of "**severe** disease", or "afraid **from**" instead of "afraid **of**", and so on. In other words, when students translate, they might use wrong equivalent words (Abi-Samara, 2003). Also, the students make errors because they are unfamiliar with the word collocation in English. For instance, Diab (1996), in her study on Lebanese students, found that the students made errors when they translated words; the students wrote "Man and woman **continue** each other" instead of "Man and woman **complete** each other." They also wrote "I **cut a promise**" instead of "I **promised myself**"; "Doctors **describe** medications for their patients" instead of "Doctors **prescribe** medications for their patients."

With regard to prepositions, the students will probably write 'They have a meeting **on** 6 o'clock' instead of 'They have a meeting **at** 6 o'clock' (Swan and Smith, 2001; Elachachi, 2015). For verb tenses, the students may omit the verb 'to be' because Arabic does not have the copula (to be). For example, Arab students will likely say 'That car mine' instead of 'That car is mine', because in Arabic both sentences have the same meaning هذا الكتابُ لى. (Altakhaineh, 2010).

Another challenge of grammatical structures Arab students faced was found in their use of 'articles'. This is also because Arabic system has two articles; definite article 'the' which is in Arabic 'al' for "al-ma'rifah = المعرفة" and the zero article, which has the equivalent meaning in Arabic as "an-nakirah= النكرة". The English system has three articles: the definite article

"the", the indefinite article "a/an", and the "zero article" (Al-Zubaidi and Rechards, 2009; Labidi, 1992). As a result, Arab students make errors in English. For instance, Diab (1996) indicated that Arab students may delete the definite article "the" before the nouns; they may write "**Arms** of soldiers are guns and daggers" instead of "**The arms** of soldiers are guns and daggers". Students also may delete the indefinite article "a", they may write "He has book" instead of "He has a book". They may use the definite article "the" before the nouns which are not normally introduced by the definite article "the". The students may write, for example, "the Egypt, "the happiness", "the cancer", "in the bed" because in Arabic such nouns are preceded by the definite article "the" whereas in English they are not.

6.3.2.2 Organisation and coherence

Table 6.6 below summarizes the students' responses to the organisation and coherence of academic writing challenges.

Table 6.6: Participants' responses on organisation and coherence of writing challenges

Items	Number and percentage		
THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	Never	Sometimes	Usually[*]
Writing good and clear introduction to help readers understand the text	5 (4.1%)	45 (37.0%)	73 (59.3%)
Making links between paragraphs	9 (07.3%)	44 (36.0%)	70 (57.0%)
Writing effective closing sentence/conclusion	8 (07.0%)	35 (29.0%)	80 (65.0%)

[*]usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The analysis of the participants' responses in table 6.6 above shows that "*writing effective closing sentence/conclusion*" was reported as the most challenging activity; about 65.0% of the participants said it was *usually* a challenge. *"Writing good and clear introduction to help reader understand the text"* was *usually* a challenge for 59.3% of participants, and *"making links between paragraphs"* was also *usually* a challenge by 57.0% of the participants. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be said that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being challenges. More than 90.0% of the participants said that the items were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenges. For instance, with reference to the item *"writing good and clear introduction to help the reader understand the text",* 37.0% of the participants said it was s*ometimes* a challenge and 59.0% said it was *usually*, which makes a total of 96.0% of the participants who reported that the item was a challenge. Also,

with reference to *"writing effective closing sentence/conclusion"*, 29.0% of the participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 65.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, making a total of 94.0%. These results indicate that the majority of the participants said that they had a problem with organisation and coherence in academic English writing. This may be because English and Arabic are completely different in how both languages are organised. For example, when the participants said that they had a challenge with writing a good introduction as well as a conclusion, this is because the organisation in Arabic is different: "Arabic argumentation is structured by notion that it is the presentation of an idea – the linguistic forms and the very words that are used to describe it – that is persuasive" (Johnstone, 1983: 55). Another explanation is provided by Labidi (1992) who believes that demonstrating that, although text in Arabic is long, the meaning remains concise because Arabic can use a variety of words to explain a single reality. Moreover, the difficulty may arise from the idea that in English the main idea in the introduction should be restated in the conclusion, whereas in Arabic essays the conclusion has to bring something new (Adas and Bakir, 2013). A study conducted by Abu-Rass (2015) on first year students majoring in an EFL programme at a teacher training college in the centre of Israel, confirms this. The study aimed to help students write better sentences and paragraphs in English because the students were unable to write good paragraphs in English. The findings showed that the students could not write appropriate topic sentences, conclusions and supporting details. Abu-Rass (2015) believed that students' writing challenges were due to the fact that the Arabic writing system is different from English. When the participants said that they could not link paragraphs, this was because the students were not accustomed to using connectors such as 'and', 'or' or 'but', which are linking devices in English. In support of this explanation, Adas and Bakir (2013), and Altakhaineh (2010) found that Arab students faced problems when using English linking devices such as 'therefore', 'however', 'in addition', 'moreover', 'nevertheless'… etc.", because they prefer just to use the coordinators 'and' and 'but', resulting in endless sentences. This is explained by the fact that using many 'ands' and 'buts' is acceptable in Arabic, yet it is not in English. The connector 'and' means 'wa' in Arabic but has many functions than the English equivalent (Labidi, 1992).

6.3.2.3 Conventions of style in essays

Table 6.7 below summarizes the students' responses on the conventions of style in essays as academic writing challenges.

Table 6.7: Participants' responses on conventions of style in essays as academic writing challenges

Items THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	Number and percentage		
	Never	Sometimes	Usually *
Using formal English	15 (12.2%)	39 (32.0%)	69 (56.1%)
Avoiding using abbreviations (e. g, N. ADJ..) and contractions (I'll, isn't… etc.)	17 (14.0%)	39 (32.0%)	67 (55.0%)
Avoiding using slang words or colloquial terms (e.g. guys, kids…)	30 (24.4%)	42 (34.1%)	51 (42.0%)
Avoiding using hesitation fillers such as "er, um, well….etc.)	32 (26.0%)	36 (29.3%)	55 (45.0%)
Avoiding using ambiguous sentences	12 (10.0%)	44 (36.0%)	67 (55.0%)
Avoiding repetition	10 (08.10%)	44 (36.0%)	69 (56.1%)
Being impersonal	20 (16.3%)	40 (33.0%)	63 (51.2%)
Using cautious language and hedging devices such as "perhaps, almost, is probably due to……)	14 (11.4%)	41(33.3%)	68 (55.3%)
Using appropriate referencing style*	19 (15.4%)	39 (32.0%)	65 (53.0%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often". *using for example, Harvard, MLA, APA etc.

An analysis of the above table of students' responses reveals that the majority of the participants found that all the nine items were *usually* challenging. The most challenging activities were *"using formal English"* reported by 56.1% of the participants; *"avoiding repetition"* reported by 56.1%; *"using cautious language and hedging devices"* reported by 55.3%; *"avoiding using abbreviations"* reported by 55.0%; *"avoiding using ambiguous sentences"* reported by 55.0%; *"using appropriate referencing style"* reported by 53.0%; *"being impersonal"* reported by 51.2%; *"avoiding using hesitation fillers"* reported by 45.0%, and *"avoiding using slang words or colloquial terms"* reported by 45.0%. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be noted that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being *sometimes* or *usually* challenging. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the items were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenges. For instance, with reference to *"using formal language"*, 32.0% of student participants said it was *sometimes* a challenge, and 56.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, which makes a total of 88.0% of participants. Also with reference to *"being impersonal"*, 33.0% of the participants

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said it was *sometimes* a challenge and 51.0% said it was *usually* a challenge, making a total of 84.0%. The findings of this part clearly show that Libyan students faced difficulties with conventions of style.

For the sake of discussing the results culturally and socially, I would like to say that although I cannot find literature to back up each of the items listed in the table above, it is interesting to notice that much has been written, for example, on repetition. Many studies reported that students from Arab speaking countries who studied abroad prefer to repeat the same words and phrases in their academic writing because repetition is one of the features of the Arabic language (Labidi, 1992; Feghali, 1997; Johnstone, 1983a; kharma, 1981; and Abu Rass, 2011). Johnstone (1983a: 267, cited in Labidi, 1992) argued that "repetition is a key to textual development in Arabic". Labidi (1992) suggested that when Arab learners repeat, the repetition has rhetoric and linguistic purposes. The rhetoric purpose refers to "text cohesion and coherence", whereas linguistic purpose denotes "assertion, emphatic and persuasion and assurance" (Labidi, (1992: 268). Also, Abu Rass (2011: 209) explained that "Arab students tend to write long and expanded English sentences with repetition of content and form. In Arabic, repeating ideas and phrases is used for the sake of persuasion. Repetition is presented by writing more synonyms in the same sentences to convey emphasis". The explanations provided by the scholars mentioned above suggest that it is not surprising when the participants said that they had difficulty avoiding repetition. The students transferred the norm of repetition when they wrote in English. This means that repetition in Arabic is acceptable whereas in English it is unacceptable.

6.3.2.4 Honesty

The table below summarises the students' responses on honesty as an academic writing challenge.

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Table 6.8: Participants' responses on honesty challenges

Items THIS IS A CHALLENGE FOR ME.	Number and percentage		
	Never	**Sometimes**	**Usually** [*]
Submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere.	25(20.3%)	33(27.0%)	65(53.0%)
Using[1] authorised[2] material during open[3]/ closed book exam	31(25.2%)	39 (32.0%)	53(43.1%)
Paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words	26(21.1%)	33(27.0%)	64(52.0%)
Using references/ bibliography to acknowledge the source of information	20(16.3%)	36(29.3%)	67(55.0%)

[*]usually stands for "always, usually and often"

As can be clearly seen in table 6.8 above, *"using references/ bibliography to acknowledge the source of information"* was *usually* seen as the most challenging item for 55.0% of the participants. About 53.0% of the participants reported that *"submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere"* was challenging; around 52.0% of the participants said that they had a problem with *"paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words"*; and finally, 43.1% of the participants reported that they had a problem with *"using authorised material during open/ closed book exam"*. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined, it can be observed that all of the items indicated by the participants are a challenge *sometimes* or *usually*. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the two items, namely *"submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere"* and *"using references/ bibliography to acknowledge the source of information"*, either *sometimes* or *usually* were challenges. For instance, with reference to *"submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere"*, 27.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 53.0% of them said *usually*, which makes a total of 80.0%. With regard to *"using references/ bibliography to acknowledge the source of information"*, 29.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 55.0% of them said *usually*, making a total of 84%. More than 70.0% of the participants reported that the other two items, namely *"using authorised material during open/closed book exam"* and *"paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words"*, were either *sometimes* or *usually* challenging. For example, with reference to *"using authorised material during open/closed book exam"*, 32.0% said *sometimes* and 43.0% said *usually*, this comes to

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[1] Making use of

[2] They are resources an examiner allows his/her students to bring and use during an open book exam.

[3] It is an exam students are allowed to bring notes and/or other resources into the exam room.

75.0%. Also, the item "*paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words*", 27.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 52.0% said *usually,* making a total of 79%. The findings clearly imply that most of the students reported that they had problems acknowledging the source material.

Attempting to explain these results from the social and culture aspects, there is considerable research about culture and plagiarism in the literature. Fishbein (1994), Nelms (2003), and Razek (2014) argued that, according to the cultural dimension, not acknowledging sources is considered as acceptable behaviour in some cultures, whereas in others it is regarded as unacceptable. For example, Razek (2014: 151) found that Saudi students studying in America reported that plagiarism is an "acceptable norm for survival in their American college endeavour". Another interpretation of why the participants had problems with attribution of information to sources is given by Introna (2003:19). He argues that "students who have good memorisation skills and who have been encouraged to reproduce large quantities of text in previous assessment will obviously tend to employ this method in their new educational environment". In regard to the above claim, it is clear that when Libyan students, whose learning culture values memorisation as indicated by Gent and Muhammad (2019), are limited and cannot be creative, they tend to memorize and replicate, or copy and paste (see also Elabbar, 2011; Khalid, 2017; Salah, 2019). For example, Elabbar (2011) has said that, because Libyan students are used to learning the Quran and poems by memorisation, they are accustomed to this method when learning English. Similarly, Salah (2019) also referred to the Quran by stating that the Quranic method resembles in its focus the practices of the grammar translation method in learning by drilling, repetition and memorisation which seem to be the fundamental of teaching and learning English in Libya. On the other hand, the lecturers interviewed in a study by Khalid (2017), who investigated teaching and learning English in Libya, explained that even though some of the students hoped to use new methods of learning, the majority of students were satisfied with rote learning / memorisation because they are accustomed to it and they preferred this method for the purpose of obtaining high grades in exams. Therefore, according to this explanation, if the students indicated that they had difficulty avoiding plagiarism, it means that they are accustomed or encouraged to memorise content material and, in this case, they are reproducing them in exams. Consequently, they unintentionally plagiarise.

After having discussed and presented the different results of challenges Libyan students face in their academic writing, the next section explains and presents the academic reading and writing strategies used by the participants to overcome their challenges. First, let us see academic reading strategies.

6.4 Academic reading and writing strategies for overcoming challenges

This section shows the results of the academic literacies strategies employed by undergraduate and postgraduate Libyan students studying in South African higher education institutions. The participants were provided two categories of academic literacies strategies, academic reading, which has 30 items, and academic writing, which has 26 items. They used a Likert scale indicating one (never), two (sometimes), and three (usually which stands for always, often and usually). Scales *sometimes* and *usually* were combined for reporting purposes.

6.4.1 Academic reading strategies

When considering the research questionnaire, and particularly looking into reading and writing strategies scores, there are a number of items related to the participants' strategies. In this section of the questionnaire, student participants in the present study indicated their own strategies. The questionnaire's items on academic reading strategies are organized according to the following building blocks/ categories:

A. General overview reading, subdivided into seven items;

B. In-depth reading, subdivided into seven items; and

C. Critical reading, subdivided into 16 items (see appendix 6).

6.4.1.1 General overview reading

Table 6.9 below summarises the strategies of reading employed by the participants to overcome their general overview academic reading challenges.

Table 6.9: Participants' responses on general overview reading strategies

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	Never	Sometimes	Usually *
Reading the title	/	8(6.5%)	115(93.4%)
Reading the introduction	1(00.8%)	28(23.0%)	94(76.4%)
Reading the first paragraph	3(02.4%)	31(25.2%)	89(72.4%)
Reading the subheadings	3(02.4%)	30(24.4%)	90(73.2%)
Reading the first sentence of each paragraph	13(11.0%)	31(25.2%)	79(64.2%)
Looking for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts… etc.)	4(03.3%)	27(22.0%)	92(75.0%)
Using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs	17(14.0%)	28(23%)	78(63.4%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The results in table 6.9 above indicate that the most common strategies employed by the participants were *"reading the title"*, which was reported by 93.4% of the participants, followed by *"reading the introduction"*, reported by 76.4%, and "*Looking for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts… etc.)"*, which was reported by 75.0%. The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs*", reported by 14.0%, and "*reading the first sentence of each paragraph*", reported by 11.0%. When *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be observed that the participants indicated that all of the items as the most common used strategies. All the participants (100%) said that the item "*reading the title*" was the most common strategy used either *sometimes* or *usually*. Of the 100%, 06.5% of the participants said *sometimes* and 93.4% of them said *usually*. More than 90.0% of the participants reported that the four items in the table 6.9 above were either *sometimes* or *usually* common strategies employed by them. With reference to "*reading the introduction*", around 23.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 76.0% of them said *usually*, which makes a total of 99.0%. Also concerning *"looking for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts…etc)"*, 22.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 75.0% of them said *usually*, making a total of 97.0%. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the other two items, namely "*reading the first sentence of each paragraph"*, and "*using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs*", were either *sometimes* or *usually* common strategies used by them. With reference to "*reading the first sentence of each paragraph"*, 25.0% of the respondents said *sometimes* and 64.0% of them said *usually*,

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which comes to a total of 89.0%. Also regarding "*using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs*", 23.0% of the respondents said *sometimes* and 63.0% of them said *usually,* making a total of 86.0%. Based on the analysis, the students employed various reading strategies to understand the general meaning of the text. As indicated by the participants in (6.3.1.1 above), the majority had a problem reading quickly to familiarise themselves with the main approach presented in the text. So, in order to overcome this problem, they used different strategies, but the most common / frequently used ones by more than 90.0% of the participants were "*reading the title*" (101%), "*reading the introduction*" (99.0%), "*reading the first paragraph*" (97.0%), "*reading the headings*" (97.0%), and "*looking for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts...etc.)*" (97.0%). As we recalled in (chapter 4, section 4.3 and chapter 6, section 6.2), general overview reading strategies was one of the categories that was excluded by Cronbach alpha's scores. So, we do not explain any further.

6.4.1.2 In-depth reading

Table 6.10 below summarises the strategies of reading employed by the participants to overcome their in-depth academic reading challenges.

Table 6.10: Participants' responses on in-depth reading strategies

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	**Never**	**Sometimes**	**Usually** [*]
Circling transitional words/phrases	16(13.0%)	37(30.1%)	70(57.0%)
Underlining main points	2(02.0%)	25(20.3%)	96(78.0%)
Taking marginal notes	6(05.0%)	41(33.3%)	76(62.0%)
Using annotation such as "stars numbers… etc."	16(13.0%)	28(23.0%)	79(64.2%)
Using online dictionaries and online translation systems	16(13.0%)	34(28.0%)	73(59.3%)
Using flowcharts, diagrams...etc.)	23(19.0%)	31(25.2%)	69(56.1%)
Consulting other textbooks	10(08.1%)	36(29.3%)	77(63.0%)

[*]usually stands for "always, usually and often"

As can be seen, the findings in table 6.10 above indicate that the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*underlining main points*" reported by 78.0%, followed

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by "*using annotation such as "stars numbers… etc.*" reported by 64.2%, and lastly, "*consulting other textbooks*" reported by 63.0%.The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*using flowcharts, diagrams...etc.*" reported by 19.0%, and followed by "*circling transitional words/phrases*", reported by 13%. When *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be observed that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being the most common strategies used. The majority of the participants, more than 90.0%, said that the three items, "*underlining main points*", "*taking marginal notes*", and "*consulting other textbooks*" were either *sometimes* or *usually* the most common strategies used by them. With reference to "*underlining main points*", 20.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 78.0% of them said *usually,* which makes a total of 98.0%. As for the item "consulting other textbooks", 29.0% of the respondents said *sometimes* and 63.0% of them said *usually,* a total of 92.0%. More than 80.0% of the participants indicated that the other four items, namely "*circling transitional words/ phrases*", "*using annotation such as 'stars, numbers….etc.'*", "*using online dictionaries and online translation systems*", and "*using flowcharts, diagrams…etc.*", were either *sometimes* or *usually* the common strategies they used. For example, concerning "*circling transitional words/ phrases*", 30.0% of the respondents said *sometimes* and 57.0% of them said *usually*, which makes a total of 87.0%. For "*using flowcharts, diagrams…etc.*", 25.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 56.0% said *usually*, a total of 81.0%. According to the analysis, it is clear that almost all the participants used all the strategies listed in the table above, but the most frequently used by them were "*underlining the main points*", "*taking marginal notes*", and "*consulting other books*".

As we saw in (chapter 4, section 4.3 and chapter 6, section 6.2), in-depth reading strategies was one of the categories that was excluded by Cronbach alpha's scores. So, we do not explain any further.

6.4.1.3 Critical reading

Table 6.11 below summarises strategies of reading employed by the participants to overcome their critical academic reading challenges.

Table 6.11: Participants' responses on critical reading strategies

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	Never	Sometimes	Usually *
Testing claims against my prior knowledge	11(09.0%)	45(37.0%)	67(55.0%)
Making connection between my old information and new information	7(06.0%)	30(24.4%)	86(70.0%)
Looking for and analysing the keywords and phrases	10(08.1%)	40(33.0%)	73(59.3%)
Reading my notes	5(04.1%)	39(32.0%)	79(64.2%)
Reading the blurb of the book	41(33.3%)	23(19.0%)	59(48.0%
Reading the abstract, introduction and the conclusion	10(08.1%)	23(19.0%)	90(73.2%)
Checking the reference list used	15(12.2%)	32(26.0%)	76(62.0%)
Reading each section/ paragraph carefully	6(05.0%)	36(29.3%)	81(66.0%)
Writing down in one sentence what each section says and does	20(16.3%1)	26(21.1%)	77(63.0%)
Checking the table of content	20(16.3%)	27(22.0%)	76(62.0%)
looking at footnotes	26(21.1%)	29(24.0%)	68(55.3%)
Examining the connection between the words and main ideas	23(19.0%)	32(26.0%)	68(55.3%)
Examining the language used	18(15.0%)	32(26.0%)	73(59.3%)
Examining techniques used	18(15.0%)	33(27.0%)	72(59.0%)
Examining sentence structure	27(22.0%)	34(28.0%)	62(50.4%)
Making inferences	24(20.0%)	26(21.1%)	73(59.3%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The results in table 6.11 above indicate that the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*making connection between my old information and new information*", reported by 70.0 %; "*Reading the abstract, the introduction and the conclusion*", reported by 73.2%; and "*reading each section/ paragraph carefully*", reported by 66.0%. The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*reading the blurb of the book*", reported by 33.0%; "*examining sentence structure*", reported by 22.0%; and "*looking at footnotes*", reported by 21.1%. If *sometimes* and *usually* are combined together, it can be observed that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being the most common strategies used. The majority of the participants, more than 90.0%, said that seven of the items are used *sometimes* or *usually*. These items are: "*testing claims against my prior knowledge*"; "*making connection between my old and new information*"; "*looking for and analysing the keywords*

and phrases"; "reading my notes"; "Reading the abstract, the introductions and the conclusion"; "reading each section/ paragraph carefully"; and "writing down in one sentence what each section says and does". For instance, regarding "testing claims against my prior knowledge", 37.0% of participants said sometimes and 55.0% said usually, which makes a total of 92.0%. For the item, "reading each section/ paragraph carefully", 29.0% of the participants said sometimes and 66.0% said usually, making a total of 95.0%. More than 80.0% of the participants said that six of the items were either sometimes or usually the most common strategies used. For example, with reference to "checking the reference list used", 26.0% of the participants said sometimes and 62.0% said usually making a total of 88.0% reporting that they either sometimes or usually checked the reference list. More than 70.0% of the participants indicated that the two items, "looking at footnotes" and "examining sentence structure", were sometimes or usually the most common strategies used by them. For example, with reference to "looking at footnotes", 24.0% of the participants said sometimes and 55.0% said usually, which makes a total of 79.0%? For "examining sentence structure", 28.0% of the participants said sometimes and 50.0% of them said usually, making a total of 78.0%. More than 60.0% of the participants indicated that the item "reading the blurb of the book" was the strategy least employed by them, that is, 19.0% of the participants said sometimes and 48.0% said usually, making a total of 67.0%. All in all, the first seven strategies indicated by more than 90.0% of the participants are considered to be the strategies mostly used to overcome their critical reading challenges. These strategies are: "testing claims against my prior knowledge", "making connection between my old and new information"; "looking for and analysing the keywords and phrases"; "reading my notes"; "Reading the abstract, introduction and the conclusion"; "reading each section/ paragraph carefully"; and "writing down in one sentence what each section says and does". The statistics suggest that the participants employed various strategies to read critically; the majority of them used the strategies listed in table (6. 11) above sometimes or usually. Almost all of the students used their prior knowledge, made a connection between their old and new information, read each section / paragraph, and wrote down in one sentence what each section says and does. Even though there are items in table 6.11 above that have not been studied extensively, there are many studies in terms of prior knowledge. In keeping with the first and the second items in the table above, Voss and Silfes (1996), and Ozuru et al., (2009) reported that previous knowledge has significant influence on text comprehension. That is, the students comprehend the text easily when they link what they have studied before and the new information in the text. So, we can conclude that, from the results, using prior

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knowledge and making a connection between the old and the new information are strategies that are used more by the Libyan students in SA than the Libyan students in Libya. This means that these strategies are more valued and accepted in the South African academic culture than the Libyan academic culture, because in SA the majority of the students (more than 90%) employed them, whereas in Libya there were only four out of ten, meaning that 40% of the students employed this strategy (see chapter 5, excerpts 1, 2, 4, p. 78).

After having discussed and presented the different results of strategies Libyan students employed in their academic reading, the next section explains and presents academic writing strategies used by the participants to overcome their writing problems.

6.4.2 Academic writing strategies

Concerning academic writing strategies, the research questionnaire contained a number of items related to students' challenges to which the student participants indicated their own strategies. This research questionnaire had the following items of academic writing strategies:

A. Mechanics of writing, including nine items;
B. Organisation and coherence, consisting of four items;
C. Conventions of style in essays, subdivided into seven items and finally
D. Honesty, developed into six items (see appendix 6).

6.4.2.1 Mechanics of writing

Table 6.12 below summarises the strategies of writing employed by the participants to overcome their mechanics of academic writing challenges.

Table 6.12: Participants' responses on mechanics of writing strategies

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	Never	Sometimes	Usually *
Using a dictionary to confirm spelling.	11(09.0%)	29(24.0%)	83(68.0%)
Using the spell-checker	12(10.0%)	27(22.0%)	84(68.3%)
Seeking appropriate help/guidance	8(07.0%)	43(35.0%)	72(59.0%)
Using specialised dictionary	18(15.0%)	36(29.3%)	69(56.1%)
Using glossaries in books	32(26.0%)	32(26.0%)	59(48.0%)
Using thesaurus	21(17.1%)	27(22.0%)	75(61.0%)
Using grammar book/handbook	33(27.0%)	26(21.1%)	64(52.0%)
Using grammar-checker	38(31.0%)	31(25.2%)	54(44.0%)
Using an encyclopaedia	57(46.3%)	20(16.3%)	46(37.4%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

As can be seen in table 6.12 above, the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*using a dictionary to confirm spelling*", reported by 68.0 %, "*using the spell-checker*", indicated by 68.0%, and "*using thesaurus*", indicated by 61.0%. The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*using an encyclopaedia*", indicated by 46%, and "*using grammar-checker*", reported by 31.0%. More than 90% of the participants said that three of the items were used by them. These items are: "*using a dictionary to confirm spelling*", "*using the spell-checker*", and "*seeking appropriate help/ guidance*". Regarding "*using a dictionary to confirm spelling*", 24.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 68.0% said *usually*, which comes to a total of 92.0%. For the item, "*seeking appropriate help/ guidance*", 35.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 59.0% said *usually*, this makes a total of 94.0%. More than 80.0% of the participants said that the two items, "*using specialised dictionary*" and "*using thesaurus*", were strategies used by them *sometimes* or *usually*. With regard to "*using specialised dictionary*", 29.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 56.0% said *usually*, making a total of 85.0%. For "*using thesaurus*", 22.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 61.0% of them said *usually*, making a total of 83.0%. Two items, "*using glossaries in books*" and "*using grammar book/ handbook*", were used *sometimes* or *usually* by more than 70.0% as strategies. With reference to "*using glossaries in books*", 26.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 48.0% said *usually*, making a total of 74.0%. Concerning "*using grammar book/ handbook*", 21.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 52.0% said

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usually, which comes to a total of 73.0%. Only one item, "*using grammar-checker*", was used by almost more than 60.0% as a strategy, while 25.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 44.0% said *usually,* a total of 69.0%. For the item, "*using an encyclopaedia*", 16.0% said *sometimes* and 37.0% said *usually*, making a total of 53.0%.

These data suggest that the students employed various types of strategies in order to overcome their mechanics of writing challenges. The most common strategies used *sometimes* or *usually* by more than 80.0% were using a dictionary to confirm spelling, using the spell-checker, seeking appropriate help/ guidance, using specialised dictionary, and using a thesaurus. Taking into account the fact that Arabic and English are two totally different languages based on the mechanics of writing, it is clear that students from Arab-speaking countries resort to various strategies to overcome their problems when writing in English. In the case of this study, it has been found that they used different types of dictionaries in order to confirm their spelling, to use correct punctuation, to select appropriate vocabulary, and to use correct grammatical structures. Different studies have proved that using dictionaries in ESL learning plays a vital role (Fraser, 1999; Hartmann, 1991; Al-Darayseh, 2013; Al-Busaidi, 2015 and Rimbar, 2017).A study conducted by Al-Busaidi (2015) on university Arab students found that dictionaries helped them resolve their spelling problems. In case of using a spell-checker, Rimbar's (2017) study in a residential school in Sarawak (Malaysia) investigated error correction by the spell-checker on two groups of Form One English language students. The results showed that the spell-checker helped the students eliminate their errors. With respect to seeking appropriate help/guidance, the result is consistent with research done on Arab students studying abroad. For example, in Alamri's (2017) study, Saudi students majoring at a Canadian university sought support from both professors and university services.

6.4.2.2 Organisation and coherence

Table 6.13 below summarises the strategies of writing employed by the participants to overcome their organisation and coherence of academic writing challenges.

Table 6.13: Participants' responses on organisation and coherence strategies

Items Strategies	Number and percentage		
	Never	**Sometimes**	**Usually** *
Using a handbook of writing	46(37.4%)	18(15.0%)	59(48.0%)
Consulting other textbooks	21(17.1%)	31(25.2%)	71(58.0%)
Asking someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing center)	17(14.0%)	40(33.0%)	66(54.0%)
Taking additional writing course	46(37.4%)	30(24.4%)	47(38.2%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The findings in table 6.13 above indicate that the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*consulting other textbooks*[4]", reported by 58.0%, and "*asking someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing centre)*", indicated by 54.0%. The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*using a handbook of writing*", indicated by 37.0%, and "*taking additional writing course*", indicated by 37.0%. According to the analysis, it is clear that almost all the participants used all the strategies listed in the table above, but the most frequently used by them were "consulting other textbooks", and "asking someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing centre)". As we recalled in (chapter 4, section 4.3 and chapter 6, section 6.2), organisation and coherence strategies was one of the categories that was excluded by Cronbach alpha's scores. So, we do not explain any further.

6.4.2.3 Conventions of style in essays

Table 6.14 below shows the strategies of writing employed by the participants to overcome conventions of style as academic writing challenges.

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[4] Seek information from other books

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Table 6.14: Participants' responses on conventions of style

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	**Never**	**Sometimes**	**Usually** *
Analysing sample or model texts	24(20.0%)	28(23.0%)	71(58.0%)
Using online referencing tools	17(14.0%)	28(23.0%)	78(63.4%)
Using a handbook of writing	44(36.0%)	25(20.3%)	54(44.0%)
Asking my friend to read what I write	13(11.0%)	40(33.0%)	70(57.0%)
Making a draft and asking my lecturer to check it	10(8.1%)	29(24.0%)	84(68.3%)
Making use of my lecturer's past feedback/comments	5(4.1%)	31(25.2%)	87(71.0%)
Using information and examples in dictionaries for non-native speakers such as Collins Co-build English Dictionary…. etc.	33(27.0%)	24(20.0%)	66(54.0%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

The results in table 6.14 above show that the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*making use of my lecturer's past feedback/comments*", indicated by 71.0%; "*making a draft and asking my lecturer to check it*", indicated by 68.0%; "*analysing sample or model texts*", reported by 58.0%; and "*asking my friend to read what I write*", reported by 57.0%. The least common strategies used by the respondents were "*using a handbook of writing*", reported by 36.0%; "*using information and examples in dictionaries for non-native speakers such as Collins Co-build English Dictionary.... etc.*" was reported by 33.0%; and ". If **sometimes** and **usually** are combined together, it can be noted that all of the items were indicated by the participants as being the most common strategies used by them *sometimes* or *usually*. More than 90.0% of the participants said that the following three items were used by them *sometimes* or *usually*: "*asking my friend to read what I write*", "*making a draft and asking my lecturers to check it*", and "*making use of my lecturer's past feedback/ comments*". For instance, regarding "*asking my friend to read what I write*", 33.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 57.0% said *usually*, which comes to a total of 90.0%. For the item, "*making a draft and asking my lecturer to check it*", 24.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 68.0% said *usually*, making a total of 92.0%. With respect to the item, "*making use of my lecturer's past feedback/ comments*", 25.0% of the participants said *sometimes* and 71.0% said *usually*, which comes to a total of 96.0%. More than 80.0% of the

participants said that the items "*analysing sample or model texts*", and "*using online referencing tools*", were strategies that they used, with 23.0% indicating *sometimes* and 58.0% indicating *usually*, making a total of 81.0%. Only one item, "*using information and examples in dictionaries for non-native speakers such as Collins Co-build English Dictionary…..etc.*", was sometimes used as a strategy by 20.0% of the participants, and 54.0% said *usually* which, makes a total of 74.0%. Also, for the item, "*using a handbook of writing*", 20.0% indicated they *sometimes* used this strategy, and 44.0% said *usually*, making a total of 64.0%. This analysis revealed that different strategies were used by the participants. Also, the analysis indicated that the most common strategies employed were analysing sample or model texts, asking a friend to read what they wrote, making a draft and asking the lecturer to check it, and making use of the lecturer's past feedback / comments.

As we recalled, conventions of style in essays strategies was one of the categories that was excluded by Cronbach alpha's scores. So, we do not explain any further (see chapter 4, section 4.3 and chapter 6, section 6.2).

6.4.2.4 Honesty

Table 6.15 below summarises the strategies of writing employed by the participants to overcome writing challenges related to the use of previous work.

Table 6.15: Participants' responses on strategies for honesty

Items	Number and percentage		
Strategies	Never	Sometimes	Usually *
Ensuring that I make the effort to understand material that I read	3(2.4%)	29(24.0%)	91(74.0%)
Reminding myself of the consequences of plagiarism	6(05.0%)	24(20.0%)	93(76.0%)
Noting the source of information I get from articles, books, lectures….. etc.	2(02.0%)	22(18.0%)	99(81.0%)
Finding what is required[5] to finish my assignment	1(00.8%)	23(19.0%)	99(81.0%)
Avoiding using the cut-and –paste tool in my software	5(04.1%)	22(18.0%)	96(78.0%)
Applying the rules of proper citation and referencing	2(02.0%)	22(18.0%)	99(81.0%)

*usually stands for "always, usually and often"

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[5] To determine what is appropriate and necessary

As can be seen, the results in table 6.15 above show that the most common strategies employed by the participants were "*noting the source of information I get from articles, books, lectures..... etc.*", reported by 81.0%; "*finding what is required to finish my assignment*", indicated by 81.0%; "*applying the rules of proper citation and referencing*", indicated by 81.0%; and "*avoiding using the cut-and-paste tool in my software*", reported by 78.0%. The least common strategy used by the respondents was "*reminding myself of the consequences of plagiarism*" (05.0%). Although there is not much research on all the items listed in table 6.15 above, there is a lot of research on avoiding plagiarism (Neville, 2010; Pears, 2010; Rodriguez, 2013; Roig, 2002; Burkitl and Abbey, 2004). All of these scholars indicated that accurate citation, referencing, paraphrasing and summarising will help students to avoid dishonesty in their academic writing. These strategies are accepted in the academic culture of South African higher education. That is, the academic culture encourages students to reference, cite and use their own words in their writing. Several guide books and handbooks are available for students that explain how to avoid plagiarism. For example, at UWC, there is "Guide to Academic Writing" by Nelleke Bak (2003) that explains how the students are required to reference the source materials. Similarly, in a study by Lamula (2017) investigating the students' understanding, perception and experience of plagiarism at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the author concluded that "lecturers and academic staff could emphasise the positive aspect of referencing and the creation of original work…The academic staff need to explain to the students the importance of referencing and how to do this appropriately" (Lamula, 2017: 180).

After having discussed and presented the different results of the descriptive analysis of the academic reading and writing challenges and strategies Libyan students employed in their academic study in SA, the next section explains and presents the results of the T-test results.

6.4.3 T-Test results

Following the computation of the Cronbach's alpha reliability test, **t-tests** were computed for each aggregate indicator generated per sub-category using the variables gender and *level of study* as points of reference to find out whether gender and the level of study have an impact on practising academic reading and writing. The t-test results showed no significant differences with the level of study. However, there were somewhat significant differences with the gender variable in two sub-categories. From the nine scores computed, only two

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showed statistical significant differences across the gender variable, namely in *challenges around conventions of style* and in *writing strategies for honesty*. The t-test for the *conventions of style* score yielded a T-value of 2.141 with a P-value of 0.035, implying a statistically significant difference in the conventions of style challenges of male and female students. In the case of students' writing strategies, a significant difference was observed for *strategies of honesty*, yielding a T value of -2.880 and a P-value of 0.005. As can be seen in the table 6.16 below, these two sub-categories are indicated in the rows of the table and they are regarded as sub-categories of interest because of their high Cronbach alpha values.

Interestingly, males scored higher than females in the two sub-categories, in writing conventions of style and in strategies for dishonesty. That is to say, males had more problems, for instance, with using formal English, and in avoiding repetition. However, they were better than females in using various strategies to avoid plagiarism. More comments and explanations will be provided on gender differences in (6.5).

After having presented the principles of the T-Test, the following sub-sections present different results related to the four valid sub-categories.

6.4.3.1 Academic reading challenges

The following part presents the T-test results of reported academic reading challenges for the two categories: (1) General overview reading, and (2) critical reading. The results for each category are summarised in the tables below.

6.4.3.1.1 General overview reading

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in general overview reading for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of general overview and the results as reported in Table 6.16 below.

Table 6.16: T-test gender results for general overview reading challenges

Sub-category	T test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
General overview reading	0.103	0.918	2.2407	2.2320	0.0087

As shown in Table 6.16, even though a mean difference of 0.00871 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a t-value of 0.103 and a p-value of 0.918. It can therefore be inferred that there was no gender effect on the general overview reading.

6.4.3.1.2 Critical reading

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the critical reading challenges for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of critical reading. The results are presented in table 6.17 below.

Table 6.17: T-test gender results for critical reading challenges

Sub-category	T-test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Critical reading	0.329	0.743	2.3718	2.3454	0.0264

As shown in Table 6.17 above, even though a mean difference of 0.02640 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a T-value of 0.329 and a P-value of 0.743. However, it shows that both males and females had the same challenges as they reported themselves. That is, the challenges indicated in the table 6.17 were not peculiar to males or females and gender did not have an impact on the students' critical reading.

After having presented the academic reading challenge T-test results, the sub-section below introduces T-test results for academic writing challenges.

6.4.3.2 Academic writing challenges

The following part presents the T-test results for the reported academic writing challenges for the four categories: (1) mechanics of writing; (2) Organisation and coherence; (3) Conventions of style in essays; and (4) honesty. The results of each category are summarised in the tables below.

6.4.3.2.1 Mechanics of writing

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the mechanics of writing for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of mechanics of writing.

Table 6.18: T-test gender results difference of mechanics of writing

Sub-category	T test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Mechanics of writing	1.174	0.243	2.5463	2.4314	0.1149

As shown in Table 6.18, even though a mean difference of 0.11492 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a T-value of 1.174 and a P-value of 0.243. However, it shows that both males and females had the same challenges as they reported themselves. That is, the challenges indicated in the table 6.18 were not peculiar to males or females and gender did not impact on students' mechanics of writing practices.

6.4.3.2.2 Organisation and coherence

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the mechanics of writing for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of organisation and coherence. The T-test mean values of gender difference of organisation and coherence are presented in table 6.19 below.

Table 6.19: T-test gender difference of organisation and coherence

Sub-category	T test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Organisation and coherence	1.492	0.142	2.5972	2.4706	0.1266

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As can be seen in Table 6.19 above, even though a mean difference of 0.11492 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a T-value of 1.174 and a P-value of 0.1.4.2. However, it shows that both males and females had the same challenges as they reported themselves. That is, the challenges indicated in the table 6.19 were not peculiar to males or females and gender did not impact on the students' organisation and coherence practices.

6.4.3.2.3 Conventions of style in essays

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the mechanics of writing for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of conventions of style in essays. The T-test mean values of gender difference of conventions of style in essays are presented in the table 6.20 below.

Table 6.20: T-test gender difference of conventions of style in essays

Sub-category	T -test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Conventions of style in essays	2.141	0.035	2.4429	2.2571	0.8582

The results in Table 6.20 above indicate that a mean value difference of 0.8582 was observed between males and females. This was a significant difference, yielding a T-value of 2.141 and a P-value of 0.035. This difference implies that males had more problems using the conventions of style in essays compared to females. That is, the challenges indicated in the table 6.20 were more peculiar to males than to females and the gender factor had an impact on students' practices in terms of employing the conventions of style in essays.

6.4.3.2.4 Honesty

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in honesty for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of honesty. The T- test mean values of gender difference of writing honesty challenges are presented in the table 6.21 below.

Table 6.21: T-test result gender difference for writing honesty challenges

Sub-category	T -test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Honesty	0.918	0.360	2.3403	2.2402	0.1000

As can be seen, the findings in the Table 6.21 above revealed that, even though a mean difference of 0.1000 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a T-value of 0.918 and a P-value of 0.360. However, it shows that both males and females had the same challenges as they reported themselves. That is, the challenges indicated in the table 6.21 were not peculiar to males or females and gender did not impact on students' honesty.

After having presented the academic reading and writing challenges, T-test results of the sub-section below introduces T-test results for academic reading and writing strategies.

6.4.3.3 Academic reading strategies

This section represents T-test results of the academic reading and writing strategies employed by the participants to overcome their challenges. The T-test results present academic reading strategies for only one category, namely critical reading.

6.4.3.3.1 Critical reading strategies

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the critical reading strategies for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of critical reading. The T-test results for gender critical reading strategies are reported in the table 6.22 below.

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Table 6.22: T-test result gender difference for critical reading strategies

Sub-category	T -test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Critical reading strategies	-1.224	0.223	2.4253	2.5012	-0.0758

6.4.3.4 Academic writing strategies

The following section presents the T-test results for academic writing strategies for only two categories, namely mechanics of writing, and honesty.

6.4.3.4.1 Mechanics of writing strategies

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the mechanics of writing strategies for males and females, a T-test was computed using mechanics of writing strategies. The T-test results for gender mechanics of writing strategies are reported in the table 6.23 below.

Table 6.23: T-test result gender difference for mechanics of writing strategies

Sub-category	T -test results		Means		
	T –value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Mechanics of writing strategies	1.180	0.240	2.3796	2.2832	0.0964

The findings in the Table 6.23 above indicate that, even though a mean difference of 0.0964 was observed between males and females, this was not significant, yielding a T-value of 1.180 and a P -value of 0.240. However, it implies that there is no evident difference that gender factors affected the use of the mechanics of writing among the participants.

6.4.3.4.2 Honesty

To ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the mechanics of writing strategies for males and females, a T-test was computed using the generated score of honesty of

academic writing. Table 6.24 below reports the T-test results of gender variable of mechanics of writing.

Table 6.24: T-test gender differences for honesty of writing strategies

Sub-category	T -test results		Means		
	T -value	P -value	Males	Females	Difference
Honesty	1.180	0.240	2.3796	2.2832	0.0964

As the results in Table 6.24 above indicate, a mean value difference of 0.09641 was observed between males and females. This was a significant difference, yielding a T- value of 1.180 and a P -value of 0.240. This difference implies that males used more strategies to avoid dishonesty than females.

After having analysed and presented the T-Test results, the next section presents the interpretation of gender differences socially and culturally. The explanation states why males scored higher than females, why males in this study had more problems with academic writing in terms of the conventions of style, and why males used more strategies to avoid dishonesty than the female participants.

6.5 Comparison and interpretation of gender differences

As has been stated earlier in this chapter, in order to indicate variable differences with participants' academic reading and writing, **Cronbach's alpha** and **T-Tests** were used. The results showed no significant differences with the following variables: level of study, and duration of stay in South Africa. However, gender was the only variable that showed the most influence on students' practices with academic writing. Interestingly, gender differences were noticed in only two sub-categories of the students' academic writing practices, namely, the conventions of style in essays, and in the academic writing strategies of honesty. No other gender differences were found in the sub-categories of students' academic writing and reading practices (see tables 6.20 and 6.24 above).

From the results obtained from the comparison of gender and the sub-categories mentioned above, gender showed its impact only in two sub-categories. To the question of

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understanding why variable differences appeared in just two sub-categories and not with the others, the researcher's interpretation is that it might be due to the Libyan academic cultural influence. This means that both Libyan male and female participants have the same background knowledge, since they come from the same environment, which may have influenced for example, how to read and write in a similar way. Also, the Libyan educational system may have affected both male and female students' reading and writing processes.

However, looking at academic culture in higher education alone is not enough to understand the students' practices in terms of gender differences, because society or social culture has a role in students' literacy behaviour. It cannot be supposed that academic culture can be separated from the culture of the environment where students have grown up. Social culture also has an effect on students' reading and writing. This is what has been indicated by Knobel and Lankshear (2007), Street (2003), and Lillis (2003), when they suggested that how to read and write can only be understood with relation to social and cultural situations.

The common assumption in any society, and in Libyan society more particularly, is that a man's role differs from a woman's role. Hofstede (2005), De Mooij and Hofstede (2010), Aubrey and Harrison (2004), Larson (2001), and House *et al.*, (2004) stated that, in a masculine society, a male is supposed to be assertive, motivated and tough. A female takes care of the household, children and people. A man does certain things which a woman cannot do.

Although both males and females were born and raised in the same society, they may utilize or exploit different tasks when they read and write. This is what could be seen from the results based on the fact that there were small differences between them. These differences also revealed that, although academic culture in higher education in Libya is different from the academic culture of South African higher education, there is a significant difference between male and female respondents. This may be as a result of the role that social culture plays.

The following section presents gender differences based on conventions of style in essays and the strategies for dishonesty.

6.5.1 Gender differences in conventions of style in essays

Surprisingly, these gender differences on the conventions of style challenges show that males scored higher (mean = 2.4429) than females (2.2571). This means that males faced more problems when using the conventions of style in their writing than females. The challenges indicated by the participants in table 6.20 are mainly associated with males. For example, it has been observed that male participants used more informal language and repetition, besides their failure to use cautious language and hedging devices. They also used abbreviations, ambiguous sentences, hesitation fillers and slang words. Moreover, they tended to use personal pronouns very often, more than females.

From the standpoint of gender differences in learning, the findings of this study appear to be well anticipated by some researchers, who found that males did less than females in language learning in general and in academic writing in particular. It was found that females were better than males in essay writings (Morris, 1998; Bourkel and Adams, 2011). Waskita (2008) demonstrated that, in writing skills, women were better than men in using complex structures, presenting the thesis statements with hedging, using more paraphrasing, and organising argument paragraphs.

Interestingly, this result is contrary to what proponents of culture studies assumed about gender and culture. For instance, Hofstede (2005), and De Mooij and Hofstede (2010), in their study of masculinity as one of cultural indexes, explained that men tended to be more assertive and dominant, whereas women value their role of taking care of their families. Based on the above views, male learners, as in the case of Libyan students in SA, should not face problems in the course of their studies in terms of academic culture, because they can dominate anything, even in their studies. Unfortunately, no studies are found with respect to the conventions of style that disaggregate each item. For example, the finding of "Using formal language", as one of the writing conventions, is consistent with the research finding of Akhter (2014) who conducted a study on 25 male and 25 female students of private universities in Bangladesh, to find out gender variation in language use. The results revealed that more male students used informal language than females. It was also found that males faced difficulty in using hedging devices, which confirms the results of studies by Lakoff (1973) and Karlsson (2007), who concluded that female students used hedges more than their male counterparts.

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6.5.2 Gender differences in writing strategies for honesty

The results in table 6.24 above illustrate that males received a higher score (2.3796) than their female counterparts (2.2832). This means that male respondents used more strategies to overcome their dishonesty problems than female participants. They also tended to understand their assignments, reminded themselves of plagiarism penalties, acknowledged the source material, avoided cut and paste, and applied the rules of citation and referencing. This result coincides with Ahmad and Ullah (2015) who carried out research on avoiding plagiarism in Pakistan on 108 students(53 males, 55 females) doing their MPhil and PhD in social sciences. In their study, male students used more plagiarism avoiding techniques than females. On the other hand, the study contradicts previous research on academic misconduct which found that males were more unethical than females. For instance, Grosch and Rau (2017) undertook a study of 139 females and 128 males at Göttingen University in Germany to investigate the role of social value orientation on honesty. The results demonstrated that females were more honest than males.

However, it can be said that these differences are perhaps results of social and cultural factors. There is a strong relationship between society, culture and literacy, because, according to the masculine and feminine society, males and females construct their own practices differently by reflecting their social and cultural norms unconsciously (Butler, 1990; Blackstone, 2003). With reference to Hofstede (2015), their gendered stereotypical upbringing affected their learning. Accordingly, in executing activities such as exams or writing their assignments or any piece of writing, female participants tend to reproduce the information in the exact form as it was explained by their teachers. For this reason, it is not surprising to find that, in my data, female Libyan students at South African universities copied and pasted information.

6.6 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has provided an account of the quantitative data addressing the fourth objective of my study. Firstly, the chapter has presented a detailed demographic description of the participants. Next, it has presented and discussed the findings from the questionnaire based on the participants' academic reading and writing challenges as well as the strategies they employed to overcome their problems. Then, the descriptive and the inferential analyses were

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presented. In addition, the chapter has also addressed gender differences based on the academic writing practices.

To determine the academic reading and writing problems encountered as well as strategies employed by Libyan students within SA environment, the data were statistically analysed according to academic reading categories validated by Cronbach alpha coefficient value. The findings revealed that as far as general overview reading is concerned, the most challenging practices for most Libyan students were 'Reading quickly to identify the usefulness of the book/text' and 'Reading quickly to familiarise with the main approaches presented in the book/text'. They also revealed that the least challenging practices were 'Reading quickly to decide whether to read material in detail' and 'Reading quickly to look for specific section/chapter'. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the most common strategies employed by most Libyan students to overcome the above-mentioned problems were 'Reading the title' and 'Reading the introduction'. The least common strategies used were 'Using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs'.

With regard to in-depth reading, the investigation showed that for most Libyan students the most challenging practice was 'Identifying material showing objections to the analysis/argument' and the least challenging was 'Identifying the author's theoretical perspective'. To overcome these challenges, the same investigation indicated that the most common strategy used was 'Underlining main points' and the least common was 'Using flowcharts, diagrams...etc.'.

Considering critical reading, the results showed that the most challenging practices for most Libyan students were 'Identifying how the author presents the main ideas' and 'Identifying how the author develops the main statement'. The least challenging practice was 'Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations'. For the strategies employed to overcome these challenges, the findings identified 'Reading my notes' as the most common strategy, while 'Reading the blurb of the book' was the least common one.

With regard to academic writing, the investigation revealed that the most challenging practice related to mechanics of writing encountered by Libyan students was 'Using precise, appropriate, academic vocabulary' while the least challenging practice was 'Using correct spelling and punctuation'. To overcome these problems, the same investigation indicated that

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the most common strategy was 'Seeking appropriate help/guidance' while the least common was 'Using grammar-checker'.

As for organisation and coherence, the results showed that the most challenging practice for Libyan students was 'Writing good and clear introduction to help readers understand the text'; while the least challenging was 'Making links between paragraphs'. The same results indicated that to overcome these problems, the most common strategy used was 'Asking someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing center)' while 'Taking additional writing course' was the least common strategy.

Concerning the conventions of style in essays, the investigation revealed that the most challenging practice for most Libyan students was 'Using cautious language and hedging devices such as perhaps, almost, is probably due to, etc.)', while the least challenging was 'Avoiding using hesitation fillers such as er, um, well, etc.)'. The same investigation revealed that the most common strategy used by the students was 'Making use of my lecturer's past feedback/comments' while the least common was 'Using a handbook of writing'.

With respect to honesty, the data revealed that the most challenging practice for most Libyan students was 'Using authorised material during open/ closed book exam' while the least challenging were 'Submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere' as well as 'Paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words'. To avoid plagiarism, the data revealed that Libyan students employed 'Finding what is required to finish my assignments' as the most common strategy, while 'Reminding myself of the consequences of plagiarism' and 'Avoiding using the cut-and –paste tool in my software' were the least common strategies.

It is important to mention that these findings have revealed the gender as the only variable that showed a significant impact on the academic writing practices.

The next chapter presents the results of the qualitative data got from the individual interviews and the document analysis.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC LITERACY
NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the fifth objective of the study, which is to examine the implications of the findings in the first and the fourth objectives for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities. In order to fulfil this objective, I used a case study from UWC. Two sets of data were employed, namely, individual interviews with officials at UWC, and UWC policy documents (see chapter 4). The goal of this chapter is to gain a better understanding of the institutional support structures for international students, including Libyan students' academic literacy needs.

This chapter presents and analyses data in terms of the dimensions of attitude, namely affective, which means the individual feelings or emotions towards an attitude object; behavioural, which denotes the readiness or willingness to do something for an attitude object; and cognitive, which denotes beliefs and evaluation or awareness of the attitude object (Jain, 2014; Bohner and Dickel, 2011).

In the first section, the researcher answered the following questions: What is known about UWC's awareness of the possible academic literacy needs and strengths of Libyan students / international students? What is known about UWC's feelings towards the possible academic literacy needs of Libyan students / international students? In the second section, the researcher answered the following question: What is known about UWC's support / readiness to help in the face of the possible academic literacy needs of Libyan students / international students?

As can be seen in the first section, the researcher combined the questions regarding cognition (awareness) and affect (feelings) because there was not enough data on feelings / emotions. However, the three questions will actually be asked because they are interconnected. In other

words, what the officials think about the students' academic literacy needs (C), how they feel towards students' needs (A), and how they act / react towards those needs (B).

7.1 International Students' Academic Literacy Needs: Institutional Cognition and Feeling

This section answers the following questions: What from the different data sources is known about UWC's awareness of the possible academic literacy needs and strengths of Libyan students / international students? What from the different data sources is known about UWC's feelings towards the possible academic literacy needs of Libyan students/ international students? In other words, the section analyses officials' awareness of the academic literacy needs of international students, including Libyan students, and how these officials feel about these needs or concerns. Interview responses and document analysis are presented and analysed in this section to answer the first question on the possible academic literacy needs and strengths of Libyan students / international students. The answer to the second question, on the feeling towards students, will be generated from the interviews only. With respect to the **individual interviews**, I attempted to answer the question first by presenting the responses of the UWC officials who participated in the individual interviews. To do so, I outlined two questions according to the interviewees' responses: *What is positive about Libyan students' academic literacies (reading and writing)? What is challenging / negative about Libyan students' academic literacies (reading and writing)?* When I read and coded the transcripts, seven categories emerged on the qualities of successful students. These categories include *perseverance, determination, collaboration, eagerness to learn, brilliance, self-sufficiency* and *competence.* All of these categories fall under awareness as the main theme. The first six categories are coded as something positive; however, the last item (competence) has been classified as positive competence and negative competence, which means that, when the officials, for example, answered with "yes" to my questions (see appendix 7), I put it under positive, and when they answered "no", I put it as negative. Other categories appeared when coding the transcripts, as follows: awareness of academic culture differences, academic environment differences, no gender differences, no differences between students, perceiving plagiarism as a universal issue, lack of awareness of the number of international students, the strategies/initiatives/ policies for international students, support for Middle East students and students from the francophone regions, the students about the support of the WC (the Writing Centre), and the negative qualities of Libyan students (lack of

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proficiency, willingness to go home, attachment to in-group and missing of broader opportunities on campus, lack of conscious effort, lack of English exposure).

All the officials were aware of the Libyan students' academic literacies needs. In other words, they knew and had positive and negative attitudes towards Libyans as international students. Regarding **lecturers / supervisors**, when they were asked about the strengths or qualities of Libyan students with regards to their academic work, the lecturers showed their positive feelings and positive awareness only; they did not show negative attitudes. This means that the lecturers / supervisors are aware (cognition) of the academic literacy issues associated with Libyan students. On the other hand, they liked / admired the qualities that Libyan students have. As mentioned above, the successful qualities of Libyan students are characterised as categories. They are associated with *perseverance, determination, collaboration, eagerness to learn, brilliance, self-sufficiency and competence*. Some of them (categories) are found in the comments below:

Libyan students have quality of perseverance; they don't give up. This is something admirable, you get students who have situations, circumstances not nearly as negative as yours, I mean problems in your country, there is war and you have to come out of the country to study in a foreign country with the culture that in part is very different from own. So, they are very proactive, they don't sit around feeling hopeless, as I said before they got strong perseverance okay. So, I am quite impressed by the strategies that Libyan students use to overcome their problems". I wish other students could be as industries. And what I also notice is that Libyan students support each other. So, they will work together on a project or someone who has a problem with an assignment, go and talk to other Libyan students and then they work it out together. So, that to me that's quality of perseverance; the perseverance basically means you don't give up, you keep going, yeah. I admire that because it is a quality that a postgraduate student desperately, as you know, needs. (P1)

...what I have noticed is determination even if in the beginning, things don't go so well and you don't do assignments or so; you keep coming back, you keep coming to consult with the lecturers, you keep trying by all means you find other pathways as well. (P1)

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They are quite eager to do the work, em, they do like some laboratory..... they are eager to learn and um…, but they acquire the skills very easily because they integrate nicely with the other students…(P2)

However, one lecturer / supervisor (P2) gave his negative opinion towards Libyan students in terms of bad qualities. I mean contrary to the above qualities, P2 held the negative attitude that some Libyan students **lack English proficiency**. According to him, this is because these students did not come into contact with international people or did not travel and study in an English-speaking country before. His comments are below:

………but other students have a severe lack of English proficiency…It also depends on the exposure because we notice that some students who had international exposure, they were much better than those who came directly from Libya. So, the students from Libya directly have some deficiency in the English spoken and written discourse. We got good students who are not really proficient, but I don't really blame them because they don't have exposure to English language. (P2)

When the lecturers / supervisors were asked about the problems Libyan students faced in their academic reading and writing, their positive statements and negative statements were counted. In total, there were more negative statements (37) than positive statements (19). Most of the negative statements were about their academic writing than academic reading. That is to say, the lecturers are aware of the challenges the international students have and they know that the international students, including Libyan students, are struggling in their academic writing more than in their reading. The following excerpt from P2 illustrates this:

They are familiar with terminologies when they read, they understand but when it comes to writing in English they don't happen to make good selection or choice of words. (P2)

With respect to academic reading, the two lecturers / supervisors were aware of the Libyan students' academic literacies needs. In other words, they know and had positive and negative attitudes towards Libyans as international students. The two lecturers / supervisors interviewed reported that Libyan students did not have a problem when they read any academic texts, explaining that Libyan students did not have difficulties with understanding the **general meaning** of the text. The lecturers commented as follows:

Libyan students don't really struggle with the general meaning of the text. (P1)

Not really difficulty (P2)

Also, the two lecturers / supervisors stated that the students did not have difficulties when they **read** the texts **closely,** nor with the structure of the text, noting:

No. Em...the structure of the text and the link between paragraphs is not difficult for them, but that question actually links to the general meaning of the text. You get the general meaning by actually if being able to follow the structure of the text. That is important… (p1)

No, they do not. (P2)

However, the two lecturers / supervisors showed their different attitudes when asked if Libyan students had a problem understanding unfamiliar words / phrases / terms while reading. P1 noted that Libyan students had a problem with the unfamiliar terms. She said that all the students had this problem, including Libyan students. To her, all the students had a challenge of not understanding when they found words or phrases in a reading text, whereas P2 showed his positive attitude, indicating:

Yes, all the students struggle with terms/ words/ phrases including Libyan students, but Libyan students would of course look them up yeah...yeah! (P1)

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They are familiar with terminologies. When they do the reading, they understand. (p2)

When asked if Libyan students had problems with **critical reading**, that is, with identifying how the author presents and develops his/her main ideas, identifying which audience the author is addressing, identifying the less and more focused aspects used, and identifying the link between introduction and conclusion, the two lecturers / supervisors showed their positive attitudes and articulated that most of the students did not have problems, commenting:

They don't struggle and they can identify how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas. They don't struggle identifying the less and more focused aspects of the text. They don't struggle identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text. They don't struggle identifying which audience the author addressing. (P1)

No. They know what the rules are; they don't have any problems with identifying how the author presents and develops his/ her main idea, identifying which audience the author addressing, identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience expectations, Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text. (P2)

However, there are contrary comments to the above remarks. Both lecturers / supervisors P1 and P2 verbalised that Libyan students had a challenge *identifying the author's purpose in writing the text*. In other words, the students found difficulty understanding why the author wrote the text. Interestingly, P1 stated that the students sometimes faced this problem because some authors write in a complicated style that creates a problem for the students. She elaborated as follows:

Sometimes (the students find difficulty identifying the author's purpose of the text). *It is not the students; it is very often the author, and some authors do write very obscurely. Some authors write in such a way is hard to follow their arguments or their purpose, okay. That is why it's also important for the lecturers when they prescribe texts for the students and saying you must read this, you must read this and you must read this, they make sure that the*

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particular author speaks to the needs of the students. You know, you can't… some academics is just write so obscurely. I rather listen to them when they talk, and open talk, when you can interrogate them that read the text. So, that is why I said "yes sometimes" not the fault of the students. (P1)

Similarly, P2 mentioned that Libyan students had a problem when they tried to demonstrate why the author wrote the text, because academic reading practices in Libya are considerably different from SA. This means that the lecturer is alert to the academic cultural differences between Libya and SA. His remarks are as follows:

Yes, they do have (a problem of identifying the author's purpose of the text) *but I think there is a vast difference between what have done in Libya and what they are doing here (SA).* (P2)

For **academic writing**, both lecturers / supervisors said that Libyan students had a severe problem with academic writing. They showed their pessimistic attitudes towards Libyan students' inability to write properly. With respect to the **mechanics of writing**, the two lecturers / supervisors showed their negative attitudes towards Libyan students' inability to write proper paragraphs, use of appropriate tenses, use of correct punctuation, and their use of correct spelling and punctuation. For example, P1 illustrated:

Yeah, there is struggle with English clearly, some Libyan students struggle with the <u>structure of the English sentence</u> where order is different in Arabic than in English. Some students struggle with tense, but <u>tense</u> is a universal problem for all the students who are non-English, not speak English as their mother tongue; whether you're South African, Libyan, or Italian or whatever, you are going to struggle with tense in English. Then, there is <u>also subject verb agreement/ concord,</u> that is a big problem, is the subject singular? Does the verb reflect? Do the students write, for example, "he comes" or do they just write "he come"? Okay. <u>Punctuation is</u> another area that I 've noticed, I don't know what has to do with Arabic punctuation, but very often a student will not end sentences with full stops and not start the sentence with the capital letter… sometimes they… they struggle to get the <u>precise word</u> (P1)

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P2 also commented:

In terms of thesis writing, there grows deficiency there and some of them fail to understand the structure…They have problems in selecting appropriate vocabulary, and using appropriate grammatical structures. (P2)

With regard to **organisation and coherence**, the two lecturers / supervisors were asked if Libyan students had difficulty writing effective introductions and conclusions, and using logical connectors. They negatively indicated that the students had a problem with organising their writing. For instance, P1 elaborated as follows:

Hmm…yes, I would agree that, too, is a problem, that too…umm...logical <u>connectors</u>, sometimes they don't quite know which connectors to put at the start of the next sentence. You see, okay, clearly the students have meant to go from this sentence to that sentence, but there is no connection between the two sentences. Does the student? Should the student here use connectors however, although? um...on the other hand, the reason for this is…., you know, yeah…(P1)

Yes, they cannot write effective introduction and conclusion. They are unable to make link between paragraphs. (P2)

When asked if the students had problems with **conventions of style**, the lecturers expressed their negative attitudes concerning using formal language; avoiding repetition; using cautious language and hedging devices; avoiding abbreviations; and avoiding the use of ambiguous sentences.

Yes, it is a degree of a skill (using cautious language and hedging devices) (P1)

No, no they don't use ambiguous sentences; generally quite clear what the meaning is. (P1)

Hmm…yes, I would agree that, too, is a problem (using formal language and avoiding repetition) (P1)

Yes, they have difficulty in using formal language; avoiding repetition; using cautious language and hedging devices; avoiding abbreviations and avoiding using ambiguous sentences. (P2)

However, there is one positive comment on avoiding abbreviations, which was said by P1:

I don't think so (avoiding abbreviations). (P1)

Regarding **plagiarism**, the two lecturers / supervisors held different attitudes, P1 held a positive attitude, while P2 held a negative attitude towards Libyan students. That is, contrary to P1, P2 explained that Libyan students copied and pasted. According to him, some Libyan students failed to use their own words. However, what is important here is that this participant (P2) is quite aware that plagiarism is not peculiar to Libyan students, and explained that all students all over the world copied and pasted from the internet, and that they (the students) thought that professors do not know (see transcript 2). Their remarks are below:

No. I can't say that I have noticed this, but again, I don't have enough students to be able to say this definitely. Certainly, it is not the case with the student I am supervising. (P1)

There is a lot of copying and pasting, plagiarism. Some of them don't seem to understand the importance of paraphrasing. They plagiarise from the internet and from other sources and put directly in the documents… But this is not peculiar to Libyan students, I mean students all over the world copy and paste from the internet and they feel to get away with them (P2)

When the two lecturers / supervisors were asked about what **strategies** Libyan students employed when they encountered academic reading and writing problems, the two lecturers /

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supervisors showed their positive attitudes towards Libyan students. Although in the initial observation P1 felt that the students would struggle with the reading texts, she noticed that they employed different strategies to overcome their reading problems. Importantly, P1 showed her awareness by saying that English was not their native language and, in this case, they will struggle like South African students. That is, this situation is not unique to Libyan students; they are like the vast majority of ESL students. When a student comes from a different culture, he/she will actually struggle to gain the general meaning of the text because the way of reading in his/her academic culture is different from English. She noted:

.......I get the impression that they will struggle with the text, use the bilingual dictionary; speak to others until they come up with the general meaning.....they use all the resources they have, you know. Then in this context of our situation here, they would draw and work with other Libyan students, so they have freedom to speak to each other not in standard Arabic, but in the local dialects of Libyan Arabic umm....So, um. Then they also obviously translate, they are very busy with translation; they got translation from phone or they've got dictionaries there, so they are working with that okay. They also use editors; I've noticed that Libyan students find people who can edit for them or they go down to the Writing Centre, they get help there. (P1)

Similarly, P2 participant observed positively that Libyan students did not sit aside hopeless, but they made their effort to overcome their reading problems, remarking:

Yes, they improvise; they try to compromise and improvise when in a foreign environment especially in deficiency in English They do approach the tutors and they also communicate with other Libyan students and also other students in the department. So, there is a network of students who assist each other and they support each other. (P2)

On a negative note, as mentioned earlier, **lack of awareness** is identified as an additional category that emerged from the interview data and is subdivided into *lack of awareness of the number of international students, the strategies/ initiatives/ policies for international students, support for Middle East students and students from the francophone region, among the students about the support of the WC (THE Writing Centre).* However, all the comments

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that will be displayed below about this category are provided by the officials in the Writing Centre, the Division of Postgraduate Studies, and the administrators in the Internationalisation office. After each comment, I will identify each one between brackets as from WC, DPGS, and INI. As I said, that lack of awareness appeared as a result of asking the officials whether they are aware that there are programmes for the international students' academic literacies needs. Some of the responses revealed that almost all the participants were not aware of the programmes for helping international students' academic literacies needs. Their responses are represented below:

We don't have a particular strategy or any kind of that towards the international students. If you think about the priority that we have in terms of the WC, we don't have specific strategy for international students. For the policy, there is a policy in teaching and learning and WC policies go under that. The policies don't differentiate the students whether they are international or national, they are for all students. (P3-from WC)

Also, P4 commented:

I don't know any policy actually that the WC has; it might have guidelines that put by the co-ordinators. So, it depends on the co-ordinator. (P4- from WC)

Similarly, P6 clarified that:

Okay. In terms of initiatives for targeting Libyan students, there are no specific initiatives uh, but that is the case all around; we don't have at the institution at the moment initiatives for targeting or attracting any nationality of students to be fair (P6 - from INI)

P7 elaborated:

Okay, that is a very good question. Looking at resources at this disposal uh, we don't have a specific designated assistance to students from, say Middle East or may be from francophone region (P7- from DPGS)

P8 articulated that:

We work with postgraduate students in general (P8- from DPGS)

Based on these responses, it can be said that the university does not have a set of initiatives directed specifically at the academic literacy needs of international students.

The answers provided to the first question above are generated from the individual interviews with the lecturers, and the officials at UWC. Now let us see what the documents revealed about helping the international students, including Libyan students. As indicated in the methodology chapter, the researcher chose two documents, the Language policy, and the Institutional Operating Plan 2016-2020 (see appendix 10).

Let us first see what the first document has in terms of the international students' academic literacies needs.

Document 1 "Language Policy"

The Language Policy of UWC was chosen because language is an important aspect of the academic literacy of international students. The UWC "Language policy" (see appendix 10, annex 1) consists of three pages. It comprises of a preamble, teaching and learning and assessments; academic literacy and language acquisition; and internal communication and external communication. However, when I examined and re-read the whole document, I determined the relevant / applicable sections, which are the preamble, parts of Language of Teaching and Learning and Assessment, and access to academic and professional discourse. When I read the preamble, I did not find the phrase 'international students' as my main focus. Even though international students are not mentioned here, it can be understood clearly that the target of the university is to make the campus welcoming and supportive as far as international students are concerned. This is what the first policy statement in the preamble states: *The University of the Western Cape is a multilingual university, alert to its African and international context.* What the statement suggests is that language should not be a

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barrier at UWC because it is a multilingual university. UWC lives in a world; it does not live in isolation, meaning that UWC welcomes with open arms all students from all over the world. This is the reason why the university has to be a multilingual university. Another thing is that UWC wants to treat all the students equally; it is committed to spreading fairness among students. When we look at the preamble alone, we gain the impression that UWC is an international space where language should not be a problem. This interpretation is confirmed when we look at some parts of the next section. For example, in the part of language used in lectures, tutorials and practicals, although international students are not mentioned, the statement policy says: *Lectures, tutorials and practicals for any module will be delivered in the language formally approved by the faculty concerned. If lecturers are competent users of other languages, they are encouraged to use these languages in addition to the main language of teaching, if such a practice facilitates communication or discussion.* In terms of attitude, there is awareness; there are some students that may need a different language. This idea can also be seen under a very important area of students' academic literacy, the language to be written in tasks, assignments, tests and examinations should be English. Here the policy statement says: "languages used in the setting of tasks, assignments, tests and examinations shall be English".

Document 2 "Institutional Operating Plan 2016-2020 of UWC

This document is a comprehensive long-range plan that provides strategies that must be completed. It also enables us to understand people who have the responsibility for each strategy, when the strategies must be completed, and the amount of financial resources required for those strategies. It was chosen because it determines what UWC feels, thinks, believes and is willing to do in terms of what is needed in the institution. This is a good document through which we can know what UWC thinks of international students. Although the document does not mention international students, we can infer this information. The document has 13 sections; they are: 2030 Mission; Preface, Mission and Core Values; Core Goal Areas; the Student's Experience' Learning and Teaching' Research and Innovation' Enabling Goal Areas; People Framework; Financial Viability; Enhancing UWC's Standing and Profile; Development of the Campus and Surrounding Areas; and finally Leadership, management and governance. After examining the whole document, I found only four sections that are relevant; they are: Mission and Core Values, the Student's Experience, Learning and Teaching, and Research and Innovation. Two themes emerged that were identified as a result of the analysis in terms of awareness. These themes are: (1) *awareness*

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of international context; and (2) *awareness of the international students' challenges/ needs regarding academic literacy*. With respect to the international context or the existence of international students, we found evidence in the IOP that has to do with UWC's position or space that is open to international students from all over the world. UWC is aware of its position; this is found in some of the policy statements in the following sections: Mission and Core Values, the Student's Experience, Learning and Teaching, and Research and Innovation. Concerning mission and core values, even though international students are not mentioned, it is implicit in the statement, "national and international context". Being in that environment, UWC is aware of the internationalisation of the students' body. The statement says "The University of the Western Cape is a national university, alert to its African and international context" (p. 8). The word 'context' in general has a variety of meanings, but here it could mean the environment where students come from. When one reads the word 'context' in its context in mission and core values, one understands that UWC realises that it is operating in a context that it is not only national, but also international Another important aspect that indicates that UWC is operating in a context of international students can be seen in the words or phrases written in its mission and core values: 'diversity' and 'society in transition'. When we read, for example, the word 'diversity' in mission and core values, we directly and simply recognise that UWC is a place for everyone; a space for students who come from different academic cultures. The same notion can be inferred from the 'a society in transition', means people from other parts of the world and moving to another area or environment. Further evidence that UWC is operating in an international environment can be seen in one of the values where UWC acknowledges the importance of taking responsibility for excellence. The statement says: "…we critically review what we have done and assess ourselves, applying our own and international benchmarks and using the results to make us more efficient and effective" (p. 8). This means that UWC makes an effort to create an attractive space for students in spite of the fact that the students are not mentioned here. This implies that UWC is aware that the university is a position for all the students.

Although international students are not mentioned, again, we can implicitly understand that the policies do not distance international students from these programmes. This means that international students are not excluded; the university welcomes students from different cultures, and/or from different levels of education. Similarly, in the "Mission and Core Values" section, the words and phrases such as 'international context', 'diversity', and 'transition' are found. This implies that UWC is not only a national space but it is also an

international environment that embraces students from all over the world. In addition, the university is devoted to creating fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity. This can be understood from the following policy statement:

the University of the Western Cape is a national university, alert to its African and international context as it strives to be a place of equity, and a place to grow from hope to action through knowledge. It is committed to excellence in teaching, learning and research, to nurturing the cultural diversity of South African, and to responding in critical and creative ways to the needs of a society in transition. Drawing on its proud experience in liberation struggle, the University is aware of having a distinctive academic role in helping build an equitable and dynamic society.

From the policy statement, we can say that UWC is implicitly aware of the academic literacy needs of international students. This contradicts what the officials said.

7.2 Readiness to help international students: institutional responses

The interview responses and document analysis are presented and analysed in this section to answer the question: what from the different data sources is known about UWC's readiness to help the possible academic literacy needs of Libyan students/ international students?

First, let us see the responses from the individual interviews with the lecturers and the officials at UWC with regard to the second component (behavioural) of attitude. The two major categories that were generated from the interviews were **readiness / willingness to help** (**support),** and **unwillingness to help (lack of support)**. These categories are divided into sub-categories. Readiness / willingness to help (support) includes *individual consultations, feedback / editing, referring the students to language schools, assigning writing coaches*, and *developing English courses;* unwillingness to help (lack of support) includes *UWC, faculties, supervisors and Writing Centre services for international postgraduate students.* However, readiness / willingness to help (support) is characterised as a positive attitude and unwillingness to help (lack of support) is characterised as a negative attitude. Accordingly, the participants viewed both their positive and negative attitudes.

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When **lecturers / supervisors** were asked about what strategies they have used to help the students overcome their academic reading and writing problems, the lecturers, P1 from Arts, and P2 from Science, highlighted that they helped Libyan students by employing different types of supporting strategies, illustrating:

Okay. We have individual consultations either face to face,… but nowadays it's all via email, and to be quite honest, I often just edit the work. (P1)

Similarly, P2 indicated that:

I try to assist them. We recognise the deficiency the students have and we go to assist them and it becomes a bit frustrating because we find ourselves doing a lot of work for the students in terms of their writing and assisting them where we have to rewrite paragraphs for them, assist them with spelling stuff, grammar and punctuation. Feedback is quite interactive because I do one to one passes with them and they do understand what they need to do in order to improve their writing, what is acceptable standards. My comments in feedback focus on general writing paragraph structure, spelling, and punctuations, all of those things. (P2)

From the lecturers' comments, different types of support were provided to the students. The academic support includes one-on-one consultation, help via email, editing, and giving feedback. According to P2, even though he sometimes felt frustrated, he did his best to help his students and he did everything; he even edited the students' work.

However, P1 commented negatively about the other supervisors' lack of support, explaining:

.....but in my view that is why the supervisor is there, to advise or correct the inappropriate vocabulary, ...I think it is amount of guidance you get from skilled supervisors. ..... (P1)

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The **officials / administrators** in the international office showed their willingness to help all the students, including international students and Libyan students. Explaining that they are not supportive in the academic culture issues, they support international students in other issues such as accommodation, visa, transportation and registration issues. Even though academic culture support is not their business, P6 tried to help those students who asked for academic literacy support. He explained:

Okay, well, what we've done recently is to begin to refer them to a language school……. Now, you may know of organisations like Star College, they teach English uh, and at some other institutions. What we do is to refer students to apply in South African language academy and this is where they teach English for reading, writing and conversational English. (P6)

When the same administrator, P6, answered negatively on the lack of support in the internationalisation office, he said:

...so we don't offer linguistic support um, there is no linguistic initiative, for example, where we find that the students need to improve their English or need to learn how to communicate in the Western Cape, in Cape Town, just to get around for the basics. We don't have that kind of support available for any international students. (P6)

Another administrator, P5, emphasised that some faculties do not support the international students:

Some faculties don't offer guidelines for students to follow. It is a lack of guidelines or rules or um…assistance for the English language consideration. (P5)

The **officials in the DPGS** were asked about supporting international students, including Libyan students. Positive and negative statements were counted, with positive statements (12) outnumbering the negative statements (01). Based on the positive statements, it is worth mentioning that the officials in the DPGS are supportive of all the students, including international students. Importantly, Libyan students as international students are mentioned by P8 in only one positive statement. The comments of the officials are shown below:

...we look at the unique areas over the years where students seem to struggle when they come to conduct research. We help students on standard concepts in more much deeper and understanding for them to carry on their research....in the workshops, the topics were carefully selected...with different stages of research. Now...short courses which have been approved; these short courses have been basically fragmented into different sessions, for instance, we have research methodology and design, we have proposal writing, we have literature review, we have qualitative data analysis, we have quantitative data analysis, we have theoretical discussion research, we have ...and findings. So, all of these are short courses that take place on Saturdays. So that students who are in different stages of their research can select the suitable course to him/ her. So, these are things we do. Then, to complement that, is now for us, to assign writing coaches to the students to help them along way to understand content much better. So, this is just what the division is doing. (P7)

We work with postgraduate students in general and what we do is we offer various resources, ...we offer workshops to help students to look at different elements of theses production, so for example, proposal writing, mmm, writing for publication is also added to that, umm, some people do dissertation for publication, they also look at things like literature review um, data analysis, the difference between quantitative and qualitative write up and so on. ..we also do the software um, SPSS and Atlas ti to uh, use as tools to data analysis...we seek funding, ...we welcome projects with international partners that benefit postgraduate students. And we are responsible for postgraduate mobility, uh, we work with the international office but we are the advisors for the postgraduate mobility projects. ... and now we also run Erasmus plus projects which can be capacity building projects or they can be mobility projects, so people

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either move or people participate in projects. …We offer statistical support for writing support; students one on one and in groups. We work inside of programmes now as well where for example with some honour programmes, we go to classrooms with their lecturers, we teach part of the programme to enhance their research skills em. I'm thinking of the different structures,… we do like we had a workshop yesterday on writing and in English proficiency which would've been something you could attend. Yes, we em, do monitoring and evaluation, but it's a normal part of our job, you know, but we teach that module now in various places on campus to help researchers to manage the projects better, you know and to be able to write in more professional way… We offer research events like we host the international projects; we would have seminars and workshops on where we looked at writing and feedback. And then, we offer actual spaces on campus with our partners like the space of level 13 in the library, A Block where writing coaches have a sort of home, and we have the seminar room writing store, the big seminar room where we offer workshops and where we have the Life Science building computer lab where we also offer some bigger workshops. (P8)

P7 also explained that they did not have specific services for international students from other cultures, such as students from the Middle East or from francophone countries. Interestingly, he said that, in case some of the international students asked for assistance, they did their best to assign writing coaches to them. His explanations are below:

What we have to try to do is based on the writing coaches' model, is to look at students who, for instance, are also from Arab speaking and they can understand the basics of research; they can communicate well; they also can write well. Then we take them and we assign them to the students from the Middle East. So, we try to do as possible to blend in and make sure that across faculty we make it, like for like. (P7)

My job is basically to coordinate the activities of the coaches. In other words, I look at the request from the students and look at the coach that I have disposal and say okay this coach is fit for A, or this coach is fit for B, or this coach is fit for C. What I do is to make sure that I do not assign students to coaches who are out of their faculties. So, I

mentioned that the coach that we assigned to the student is from the same faculty and not necessary from the same department. Being from the same faculty means that to be able to speak the same, on like if I assign the student to a coach who is from Natural Science and the student is in Arts. Arts student is talking about theoretical framework; in Natural Science, we don't say all of that. So, then there is going to be a little bit of mismatch. Besides, I also meet students; I have a lot of students that coming here sometimes for one on one discussion for them to express the area they are struggling with their research. That is the reason why I have a board here. We do a lot of explanations, teaching and showing the students the basic concepts and I also do across campus training facilitation masters, PhD, honour students in different departments. (P7)

The two participants, P7 and P8, showed their readiness to help international students who faced academic literacy challenges in the comments below:

I think there is a lot of room for opportunities, when I say a lot of room, I believe that UWC is not close to any nationality. It would be a good idea if we can have the needed support especially with these students. (P7)

I think there should set up the unit that looks at umm…developing academic English for students who are coming from different countries uh…to go through a programme for the year before they start the programmes that's what I am going to start now. (p8)

However, there are two contrary examples for supporting international students (Arab students). The examples are presented below:

So, basically, we don't have designated coaches or services exclusively for Arab students. (P7)

Yes, we already have targeted services to Libyan students in the science faculty especially. (P8)

When the officials in the **WC** were asked if the WC had services for international students, they responded positively, referring that the WC is for students of all nationalities. Their responses contained more positive attitudes than negative ones. This means that, although positive statements are more than the negative ones, there are no targeted services / programmes for international students. For instance, P3 and P4 said:

…So if you think about the priority that we have in terms of the WC, we don't have specific strategy for international students. (P3)

…So, there is nothing like a UWC policy for the WC… (P4)

The participants clarified how they can assist students, noting:

The main system of working in the WC is through individual consultations; we see students on one and one paces. What we do is we work with the tasks students bring, we work on drafts of their assignments; we ask them to bring the instructions of the assignments. The point is not just focus on the draft, we show them the kind of structure that they need, or they need to keep the same idea or they need one paragraph or whatever. The point is using feedback; the students should be able to use or to apply to the other assignments as well. Our main focus is not on language of grammar, but the consultants' work is to pick up some language errors and try to help students on that.

Now, we are developing a version for work to the WC that we want to be doing more work with lecturers, with a more integrated way so that we are not working with individual students, but we will be working with assessment and assisting lecturers with structuring tasks and possibly providing feedback with programmes. All students will benefit from those kinds of approaches. So, that is a kind of area that we bring out at the moment. (P3)

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P4 explained that:

The WC um…what they do is to help you on your work; they establish the mistakes in their work and they ask you what was supposed to be done; you explain, then they ask you whether that's what has done. .., then they work with you, supposing to change this, supposing to change the introduction, the literature review it seems to only resources, That is what the WC does, but it's limited for an hour; that help supposed to be given for an hour. If the help is not sufficient, then you have to put for another hour, if that is not sufficient, another hour, if your work is big, perhaps uh…proposals or thesis…So, it is limited in terms of resources em… The help that the WC is best on the problem you have, it is best on the task that you have; the students have. If it is an essay, the help will be best on the essay; if is it a research project like a proposal, a literature review, a methodology, and the help is best on that. So, if perhaps a Libyan student has come and brought an essay, I look at aspects, does it have an introduction? How paragraph is arranged; does it have the main idea, the topic sentence? Does it have a source? Is it explained? Is there a task analysis? Is the grammar okay? Has it written well? So, in my offering feedback, I tell the students well, your grammar is not okay. I find out what is your first language spoken, of English or you are not. South African, see, how to help from that perspective… (P4)

When the two officials in the WC were asked if the WC is useful for international students, they indicated that it is very useful for them. They proposed:

Yes, I definitely think that the international actually should benefit a lot from coming to the WC because it is one of those few places we can actually have individual consultations. This gives a lot of support for those students who learn English as a second language, such as South African students and Libyan students; English is not their first language. The availability is unlimited…International students could keep coming to the WC when they really can get a lot of benefits …If the students take responsibility and find it useful, then they can be really useful resource. (P3)

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Yes, I do…So, from my perspectives I'll advice the students to go to the WC because it is so helpful. (P4)

On a negative note, P3 stated that the WC has limited support:

Well, we encourage the undergraduate because this is the job of the WC, but we don't encourage postgraduate because it is a complicated issue; we work with undergraduate, so we would not encourage them to come to the WC because we are not fully equipped to deal with postgraduate students. It is difficult for us to give feedback for the whole thesis. I think the PGDS may be better; they are involved with the whole thesis… In the WC we do not teach academic English because that is very specialised and very intensive, so I don't think that we give a kind of assistance that is needed for a certain level. (P3)

The analysis to follow is generated from relevant documents assigned to indicate whether there are responses related to the component of readiness to help international students, including Libyan students. As previously mentioned (see 7.1 above and the methodology chapter), two documents were presented and analysed.

Document 1 "Language Policy"

With regard to the language policy of UWC, the analysis revealed that there are some statements in terms of readiness to help. For example, in the "Language used in lectures, tutorials and practicals" section, there is something that has to do with readiness to help: "*lecturers are encouraged to use these languages in addition to the main language of teaching*". This means that lecturers are free to use languages other than English. The meaning of the policy is to allow the opportunity for every lecturer to help students who have a problem understanding English. Readiness to help can also be seen in other parts of the language of teaching and learning section. For instance, the policy statement says: "*departments should actively seek to appoint some student tutors who can assist students in Xhosa and/ or Afrikaans, as well as English*". Even though international students are not mentioned here, this policy suggests that there is a type of readiness to help and there may be some students who struggle with the English language. The same notion can be seen in the following policies: *"All students will have access to entry-level courses aimed at*

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strengthening their English oral and aural communication skills and improving their academic literacy in English; all students will have access to support services to assist them in developing their academic literacy in English". Even if the international students are not mentioned here, the policy statements show that there is keenness towards students; there is a type of support towards students in general, including international students. These policy statements reveal that there should be help for the students who have challenges in academic literacy such as academic writing or in academic reading. This can be done by assigning courses and programmes; the following policy confirms that: "*The university undertakes to make language acquisition courses in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa*". "*All students will be encouraged, through enrichment programmes to develop proficiency in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa*".

Document 2 "Institutional Operating Plan 2016-2020"

After a thorough examination of the document, the analysis yielded that a variety of initiatives, strategies and programmes are set out in this document. The Strategic approach is one of the institutional actions taken by the authority of UWC to promote or to assist the students in their academic studies. For example, in the "Student Experience" section, a statement says: "*To provide UWC students with meaningful and stimulating university experience through a strategic approach to student enrolment and relevant co-curriculum opportunities*". This means that UWC understands that, because the university embraces students who come from different academic cultures and backgrounds, there should be a strategy that will create opportunities for students to succeed in their studies. This can be done by providing students with services so that every student has a chance to learn. Also, there is a difference between students in the way of understanding the language, and the way of writing the language. In this policy, there is evidence of readiness to help all students, even though international students are not mentioned here. Again, we understand implicitly, because UWC is characterised as a diverse institution and it embraces students from all over the world. From the policy stated above, we can determine that the aim of UWC is to support all students. This is illustrated by this policy that says: "…*the establishment of a position of Deputy-Vice Chancellor: Student Development and support. This went along with a reconfigured Center for Student Support Services and ongoing programme…*" (IOP, 2916-2020: 11). Also in the section, "Student Experience", other evidence of student support can be identified:

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Supporting and informing these developments at UWC and strengthening its standing as a research-intensive university has been the progress towards developing the area of student development and support as a focus of scholarship. Key here has been UWC's role in launching and running the Journal for Student Affairs in Africa, undertaking a number of research initiatives to build new knowledge and inform practice, and establishing significant national, regional and international partnerships in the field.

These policies suggest that UWC actively supports students by granting some of them scholarships for the purpose of gaining knowledge, and to pave the way to be successful in the completion of their degrees. Moreover, in order for UWC to help students better in their research, it sets and manages a journal for the students to publish their research. This strategy (research) is seen in the "Research and Innovation" section. For example: "*Establish and sustain strong, strategic and mutually beneficial research partnerships*". This statement suggests that UWC is willing to help students work with other researchers from outside the university. This is confirmed as one of the major benefits of research partnerships when the policy says: "*Connecting UWC researchers with their academic peers in national and international universities*". This means that UWC is a supportive institution for all students, including international students. Further readiness to help students' learning can be found in the "Student Experience" section; it states "*Provide optimal support services that enable excellence in the execution of all academic core functions*". The strategic approach of UWC does not only support the students, but also supports the students who encounter difficulties in their studies. In this respect, the university improves learning capabilities by making adjustments between the curriculum and co-curriculum to help the students meet their academic requirements. This is what the policy says: "*Enhance learning opportunities and support an exceptional student experience through co-curricular provision where students can develop their full potential*".

The main focus of this policy is on technology which is considered very important in higher education.

In this IOP period the focus will be on: Institutional design; ongoing research into the field of innovative education and communication technologies; software development and application; digital academic literacy programmes; ongoing ICT skills training; and the design and development of materials for multiple digital platforms; and creating integrated, seamless and flexible progress and infrastructure to support a well-connected campus (IOP, 2016-2020: 19).

Because UWC is a diverse university, technology is needed to facilitate learning. Other evidence that supports UWC as a supportive environment is in the "Research and Innovation" section, which illustrates that, in order to support postgraduate students, there should be specific strategies / programmes for this purpose. These programmes are stated well in the following statement: *"To give prominence to the focus on postgraduate programmes and the necessary supportive infrastructure, the university will establish a School of Postgraduate Studies to…….Focused attention will be also be given to doctoral students through establishment of a Doctoral Support Academy.*

What is understood from the interviews and document analysis is that the responses of the participants regarding the structures or services for international students did not match with the statement policies in the documents that were analysed. Almost all of the participants (six out of eight) indicated and explained that there were no programmes for international students. However, as we saw, even though international students are not mentioned in the policies, we inferred that programmes / structures that were mentioned in the policies are not restricted to national or local students, but they were also provided to international students since UWC is a space for students from all over the world. The support for international students is implicitly understood and not explicitly. This may be the reason why the participants said that there were no targeted programmes for international students. Although almost all of the officials' responses did not coincide with the policies in the documents, it is noteworthy to say that they are well aware of the international students' academic literacy needs; they also are supportive and ready to help the international students.

7.3 Summary of the chapter

This chapter focused on the institutional support. This was done by presenting and analysing the individual interviews with some of the officials at UWC and examining two relevant

documents. The analysis was based on whether there was evidence associated to the three components of attitude as affective, behavioural and cognitive.

In the chapter that follows the conclusion is provided.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.0 Introduction

The current chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the entire study. It also discusses the contributions of the study to different stakeholders and different areas of related research. It further makes recommendations and identifies limitations of the study to give direction for further research. In doing the above, the chapter addresses the fifth objective (to determine the implications of objective one to four for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for the research in a number of related areas).

8.1 Overview of the study

The study was principally intended to explore the academic reading and writing experiences of Libyan students in South African universities, more specifically at the University of the Western Cape. The study had the following objectives: (1) to obtain baseline data on how a group of Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of the academic culture in Libya; (2) to determine major issues contributing to the construction or understanding of academic literacies in South Africa; (3) to examine how a group of Libyan students studying at South African universities conceptualise academic literacies and construct their personal challenges as students; (4) to determine what strategies and responses the group of Libyan students studying at South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies; and (5) to examine the implications of the findings in one to four above for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for the research in a number of related areas.

As theoretical framework, I employed a social approach to academic literacies since the study involved different conceptions and practices of academic literacy. In light of this framework,

the following academic literacies principles are relevant: (1) no one will understand literacy without seeing the way people interact. Social practices of reading and writing can be shaped by values, attitudes, feelings and social relationships; (2) the activities done by people are influenced by social institutions and power relationships. Literacies can range from formal to informal and (3) people write different texts based on their diverse social and cultural backgrounds. For example, writing a medical text will be different from writing a report; different strategies will be used for different needs or purposes.

In this study, I employed a mixed methods data collection technique including Facebook data from Libyan students studying in Libya who reported their academic literacies experiences; focus group discussions from Libyan students studying in South Africa who discussed their academic literacies perceptions and experiences of the academic literacies / culture; questionnaire data from Libyan students in South African higher education institutions presenting their challenges and strategies of the academic literacies / culture; individual interviews with lecturers / supervisors of Libyan students and with officials at UWC who are responsible for assisting international students in general and Libyan students in particular, by providing them with relevant the services / support; policy documents from UWC that are relevant to the academic literacies of international students' needs. Data sets from Facebook, the focus group discussions, the individual interviews, and policy documents were analysed qualitatively, whereas the data from the questionnaire was analysed quantitatively. The data from the Facebook discussions was intended to address objective one (to obtain baseline data on how does a group of Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of the academic culture in Libya). The data from the focus group discussions was intended to address objective three (to examine how a group of Libyan students studying at South African universities conceptualise academic literacies and construct their personal challenges as students). The data obtained from the questionnaire was intended to address objective four (to determine what strategies and responses the group of Libyan students studying at South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies). The data gathered from the individual interviews and policy documents were intended to address objective five (to examine the implications of the findings in one to four for planning the teaching and learning components of internationalisation in South African universities and for the research in a number of related areas).

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8.2. Summary of the major findings

The major findings are presented according to the objectives below.

8.2.1 Objective 1: To obtain baseline data on how does a group of Libyan students who are in Libya construct and perceive facets of the academic culture in Libya.

Under this objective, the findings as presented in Chapter (5) (see points 5.1.1.1, 5. 1.1.2, 5.1.1.3, 5.3.1, 5.2.1 and 5.2.2) can be summarised as follow. Libyan students in Libya reported they did not have enough vocabulary to help them comprehend the passages they read. They experienced problems with *referencing, paraphrasing and sentence structure as well as with the use of appropriate language*. With respect to strategies for coping with academic reading, Libyan students studying in Libya developed a number of strategies (normal and when they faced problems). For general overview reading, they read *the title, introduction and the conclusion. They may also* read *headings* or *the first sentence of each paragraph or references*. When the participants were particularly challenged by the reading material, they applied the following strategies: *reading each paragraph slowly, reading the title, re-reading the text several times and reading each sentence*. With regard to in-depth reading*,* the participants *underlined new vocabulary, took notes, and used dictionaries for translating new words*. When the participants had problems, they applied strategies like: *translating and writing the Arabic meaning above words*. With regard to critical reading, no specific strategy was developed by the participants.

As far as academic writing is concerned, Libyan students studying in Libya applied the following strategies (when faced problems) (see points 5.1.2.1, 5.1.2.2 and 5.1.2.3). In respect of mechanics of writing, they *sought help to be able to use the correct spelling and punctuation, used correct sentence structures, used correct verb tenses, and used appropriate vocabulary/terms*. In respect of organisation and coherence, they *wrote introduction, body and conclusion*. For conventions of style in essays, they *used linking devices, used formal language, and they avoided abbreviations*. In respect of honesty, *copying and pasting* was a strategy employed by some of the students for the purpose of passing the exams. The other strategies used by them when facing problems in writing were: *setting a plan (making*

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outlines), *consulting feedback in marked essays* and *getting inspiration from articles and asking for help* (see point 5.2.2).

8.2.2 Objective 2: To determine major issues contributing to the construction or understanding of academic literacies in South Africa.

This part represents the main results of the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from Libyan students studying in South Africa. Data were relevant to these students' construction of academic culture. Regarding academic reading, **critical reading** was one of the major issues that emerged from the focus group discussions, the questionnaire, and the individual interviews. For instance, the participants in the focus group discussions said that commenting on a text as a strategy for critical reading is used in South Africa. Every lecturer asks his/her students to read the text as well as to provide him/ her with feedback or comments on the text being read. Also critiquing the lecturer's content or any material is a common strategy every student can employ in South Africa's higher education. The students can disagree with their lecturers/ professors without feeling afraid of being punished; they dare to criticise. This means that the academic culture in South Africa encourages students to be analytical and critical (see 5.1.1.3). There are two interpretations for this result. The first explanation is consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions regarding power distance and individualism/ collectivism according to which South Africa is classified as a country with low power distance and as an individualist country. This means that students are supposed to be active and are expected to express their opinions. The students' learning culture encourages them to critique, disagree and question their professors who in turn encourage them (students) to discuss and debate with them (professors). The second interpretation is that one of the requirements of academic literacy is that the students must be able to be "critical thinkers" (McWilliams and Allan, 2014).

In the questionnaire, according to the participants' response to the items listed in Table 6.4, the majority of them had problem with critical reading because they were not accustomed to questioning or critiquing. As a result when they studied in South Africa, they found it difficult to deal with these norms or dispositions. They were not used to an environment where students can question, discuss or even challenge their teachers (see 6.3.1.3 and table 6.4).

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Regarding the individual interviews, one lecturer/ supervisor P2 said that Libyan students experience difficulty with identifying the author's purpose when they are critically reading (see chapter 7, pages 174-175 and transcripts 1 and 2 in appendix 11).

Honesty is also mentioned by the participants in the focus group discussions and by one lecturer/ supervisor in the individual interviews. The respondents stated that copying and pasting in South Africa is an offence and there are strict rules for preventing plagiarism and programs for detecting plagiarism. In South Africa, to copy and paste from a source material is considered to be unacceptable. That is, students in South Africa are expected to understand the topic and then to use their own words or to summarise the source material instead of stealing others' work and turning it in as their own (see chapter 5, point 5.1.2.3). However, even though copying and pasting are malpractice in South Africa, some students kept on doing these practices, indicating that the lecturers/ supervisors were aware that this practice is not peculiar to international students; students all over the globe copy and paste.

Evidence was found in this study that indicated that the academic literacy / culture in South Africa was to encourage students to read **additional materials / a lot of materials** to meet academic reading requirements. Since South African higher education requires students to read widely, it is not surprising that different writing styles created problems, especially for some Libyan students in South Africa.

8.2.3 Objective 3: To examine how a group of Libyan students studying in South African universities construct their personal challenges as students in light of their construction of academic literacies/ culture in South Africa.

Under this objective, the findings as presented in Chapter (5) (see points 5.1.1.1, 5. 1.1.2, 5.1.1.3, 5.3.1, 5.2.1 and 5.2.2) can be summarised as follow. Libyan students in South Africa highlighted they lacked vocabulary to help them understand the texts they read; they also highlighted challenges related to the *writing style* of texts they read. For academic writing, they experienced problems with *citations and the way of writing references; they also had difficulty using their own words, using appropriate sentence structure, and using appropriate language.* With respect to the strategies for adjusting to academic reading, Libyan students studying in South Africa developed a number of strategies (normal and when they faced problems). For general overview reading, they *read the whole text, the abstract, the title, the*

introduction and the conclusion, because understanding a text implies understanding its content and looking at its different aspects. They *read the abstract, because* it helps them to select a suitable text; they *read the title, the introduction and conclusion; they read the text line by line and also read the references.* When they were experiencing challenges, they developed strategies such as *looking at pictures or graphs and reading subheadings.* With respect to in-depth reading, they *underlined difficult and unfamiliar words or phrases, translated words and terms into Arabic;* this strategy helped them to understand the text easily. They also took notes and made annotations while reading. When they were faced with problems, they employed the following strategy: *translating words and terms into Arabic.* With respect to critical reading, *commenting on a text* and *critiquing/ criticising* the content of the text were considered by some students as important strategies for critically reading.

As far as academic writing is concerned, Libyan students studying in South Africa developed a number of strategies (normal and when faced problems). They respect the **mechanics of writing**, the **conventions of domain/ style** and the principles of **honesty** in writing (strict rules for avoiding plagiarism).

8.2.4 Objective 4: To determine what strategies and responses the group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies.

This section shows the main findings of the quantitative data (questionnaire) gathered from Libyan students studying at South African universities. Data were relevant to these students' construction of the academic culture in South Africa (see points 6.3 and 6.4). The findings are presented as follows:

8.2.4.1 Literacy Challenges experienced

To determine the academic literacy challenges perceived by Libyan students studying at South African universities, the data presented and analysed in chapter six revealed the following findings: most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* had problems with the proposed strategies related to general reading overview (see Table 6.2). However, the T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.16) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender. They *usually* or *sometimes* had problems with the proposed strategies related to in-depth reading strategies (see Table 6.3). Moreover,

they *usually* or *sometimes* experienced problems with understanding (a) the author's purpose of writing, (b) the author's writing approach, and (c) the content of the text as critical reading strategies (see Table 6.4). However, the T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.17) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender.

With respect to academic writing challenges, most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* experienced problems in using the mechanics of writing (see Table 6.5). Yet, the T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.18) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender; they *usually* or *sometimes* experienced problems with text organisation and coherence (see Table 6.6). Yet, the T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.19) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender; they *usually* or *sometimes* experienced problems with the use of the conventions of style in essay writing (see Table 6.7). The T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.20) indicates that there was significant difference based on students' gender. More male students had problems with using the conventions of style in essay writing than females and they *usually* or *sometimes* experienced difficulties in applying academic writing honesty principles (see Table 6.8). However, the T-test related to the above-stated agreement (see Table 6.21) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender.

8.2.4.2 Literacy strategies and responses to challenges

To determine the strategies and responses Libyan students studying at South African universities employed to overcome the challenges of academic literacies, the data presented in chapter six revealed the following findings: as far as the general overview reading (see Table 6.9) is concerned, most students agreed that they *usually* read the title, they usually read the introduction, they *usually* read the first paragraph and they *usually* read the headings to look for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts…etc.). Concerning in-depth reading (see Table 6.10), most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* underline the main points, they *usually* or *sometimes* take marginal notes and they *usually* or *sometimes* consult other books. As for critical reading (see Table 6.11), most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* test claims against their prior knowledge, they *usually* or *sometimes* make connections between their old and new information, they *usually* or *sometimes* look for and analyse the keywords and phrases, they *usually* or *sometimes* read their notes, they *usually* or *sometimes* consult the

abstract, introductions or title, they *usually* or *sometimes* read each section / paragraph carefully and they *usually* or *sometimes* write down in one sentence what each section says and does. Concerning the above-stated strategies, the T-test (see Table 6.22) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender.

As far as academic writing is concerned, the findings showed the following: concerning the mechanics of writing (see Table 6.12), most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* use a dictionary to confirm spelling, they *usually* or *sometimes* use the spell-checker, they *usually* or *sometimes* seek appropriate help / guidance, and they *usually* or *sometimes* use a specialised dictionary and thesaurus. Concerning the above-stated strategies, the T-test (see Table 6.23) indicates that there was no significant difference based on students' gender. As for the organisation and coherence (see Table 6.13), most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* consult other textbooks and they *usually* or *sometimes* ask help from someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing centre). Regarding the conventions of style in essays (see Table 6.14), most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* analyse sample or model texts, they *usually* or *sometimes* ask their friends to read what they have written, they *usually* or *sometimes* make a draft and ask their lecturer to check it, and they *usually* or *sometimes* make use of their lecturer's past feedback / comments. As far as honesty (see Table 6.15) is concerned, most students agreed that they *usually* or *sometimes* ensure that they make an effort to understand the material that they read, they *usually* or *sometimes* remind themselves of the consequences of plagiarism, they *usually* or *sometimes* note the source of information they obtain from articles, books, lectures, etc., they *usually* or *sometimes* find out what is required to finish their assignment, they *usually* or *sometimes* avoid using the cut-and-paste tool in their software and they *usually* or *sometimes* apply the rules of proper citation and referencing. Concerning the above-stated strategies, the T-test (see Table 6.23) indicates that there was significant difference based on students' gender. More male students used various strategies to avoid dishonesty than females.

8.2.5 Objective 5: To examine the implications of the findings in 1-4 above for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities and for research in a number of related areas.

I will address this objective by presenting the contributions and recommendations of the study as well as by pointing out directions for further research.

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8.2.5.1 Theoretical and research contributions

Concerning the contribution to theories in the field of academic literacy, to the best of my knowledge, this study is the first in the literature to focus on the details of the academic literacy challenges faced by international Arab students (Libyans) in the South African higher education landscape. The results show that Libyan students can use different strategies when they are reading to solve the problems they encounter. When focusing on these different strategies, one can say these strategies are also useful for institutions in SA as they can be used to help international students. This means that different strategies can be developed into programmes that help international students to overcome their academic reading and writing problems.

In light of these findings, firstly, this study has very clearly illustrated one of the principles of a social literacy approach, which is that academic literacy practices or conceptions change over time. Academic literacy practice changes can be observed in one or in more than one society. For example, we saw that the conceptions of academic literacies of Libyan students were changing as a result of their exposure to the South African higher education context.

Secondly, this study has presented academic literacy conceptions within two totally different environments, Libya and SA. Most of studies done previously looked at conceptions in one environment.

Thirdly, another important contribution of this study is its investigation of variable differences of academic reading and writing in relation to academic culture. Accordingly, this study goes in line with researchers such as Ahmad and Ullah (2015) who carried out research on students' *plagiarism* behaviour, which revealed that male students used more strategies to avoid plagiarism than females. On the other hand, the study contradicts previous research on academic misconduct conducted by Grosch and Rau (2017), who found that males were more unethical than females.

Fourthly, the study also confirmed a number of previous research findings.

- It confirms the cultural dimension of power distance developed by Hofstede (1989, 2010) that says when power distance is high, the students refrain from critiquing authority and try to reproduce the information written by them, sometimes even copying and pasting information out of respect for authority (see chapters 5, 6 and 7).

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- It confirms what some researchers (Elachachi, 2015; Altakhaineh, 2010; El-Sakran, 2013) have indicated on language transfer and interference. That is, the impact of L1 on L2 in language learning, especially in academic writing (see chapter 6).

- It goes with what scholars such as Lewis *et al*. (2012) and Baker (2004) have argued that translanguaging and translation enhance learning especially for those students who study English as a second language or international students (see chapters 5 and 6).

- It is consistent with those researchers who indicated that teaching methods have an impact on students' learning and literacy skills development. The above claim supports the notion that the Libyan educational culture / learning culture has an influence on the students when they learn English in a new environment. Based on fact that Libyan students were experiencing vocabulary challenges while reading and writing, they relied on the grammar translation method to mainly focus on vocabulary and grammar (see chapter 5).

8.2.5.2 Methodological contribution

The study has demonstrated and proved that Facebook is a significant qualitative tool that can be used to investigate the academic literacy constructions of study participants who cannot physically be in a discussion group.

8.2.5.3 Contributions to international students and recommendations

Concerning the contribution related to international students' awareness, the data that were presented and analysed revealed that the study is relevant to international students, because it contributed, firstly, to the view that academic cultural differences can greatly impact international students studying abroad. In order for the international students to be successful in their academic literacies in the international environments, they are required to understand these cultural differences. This awareness is crucial for any student who wants to study in an international environment.

Secondly, the findings revealed that the academic culture of the new environment (SA) required students' voice when reading and writing. This critical literacy (see objective 2 above) requirement is essential when studying abroad.

Thirdly, the findings maintain that adjusting to different cultures requires using various accommodating strategies that can be personal, collaborative or supportive.

In keeping with the above findings, it is recommended that international students, including Libyan students:

- be aware of cultural differences; they should understand that the Libyan academic culture is different to South Africa's;
- be well prepared before starting any academic programme by joining specific courses in order to be both good and critical readers;
- be aware of the academic literacy requirements and the academic expectations of their host environment; they should recognise that in the new culture (SA) they should not only memorise the lecture content, they should also learn socially by interacting with the material.
- use the Writing Centre because it is useful / helpful;
- ask for help when necessary; they should not be afraid to ask other international students, professors, officials, etc.

8.2.5.4 Contributions / recommendations relevant to faculty staff members

Concerning the contribution related to staff members' roles in the development of international students' academic literacy, the presentation and analysis of data related to FGD (see chapter 5) revealed that, when staff members of the institutions are aware of the students' cultural background and when they know the students' learning styles, their support will be helpful and oriented to students' needs. In light of the above-mentioned findings, the awareness of the students' academic culture background facilitates the process of learning and teaching. This implies that lecturers' support for the international students is important and also that supporting international students is providing them with feedback on how to improve their academic literacy skills. Therefore, it is recommended that staff members:

- provide students with regular feedback to facilitate their process of learning;
- use and make available specific strategies;
- assign tutors to them; and finally
- advise them to make use of the Writing Centre (WC) or the Division for Postgraduate Studies (DPGS).

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8.2.5.5 Contributions/recommendations relevant to the support services

Concerning the contribution of the study related to support services, data presented and analysed in this study revealed the relevant contributions of the stakeholders who are responsible for supporting international students. In light of these findings, officials, either from the WC (Writing Centre), DPGS (Division of Postgraduate Studies), or in the INO (Internationalisation Office), are all useful for international students. The findings of the study demonstrated that most international students need support with academic reading and writing due to the academic culture differences. However, data has revealed that, although there are different types of support for all students at UWC, there are no targeted services for the international students, including Libyan students. Some officials reported that there are no specific programmes for international students, but that they were doing their best to help these students. In keeping with the above claim, this study has contributed to the understanding of how best to support international students' experiences of the academic culture at UWC by the officials from WC, DPGS and INO. The study found that for international students to adjust to the South African academic culture, different types of services are needed.

In light of these findings, it is very important for Libyan students studying at the University of the Western Cape to overcome their academic reading and writing problems in order to be critical readers and to have an interactive study group where they can read and discuss with their peers. It is also advisable for these students to join English courses that will enable them to approach any text and how to use different types of techniques on how to read critically.

On the other hand, the data presented in chapters five, six and seven indicated that writing academically was a big problem for Libyan students at the University of the Western Cape. For instance, paraphrasing was indicated by most of the participants, on the basis of data collected by means of FGD (chapter 5), and the questionnaire (chapter 6), and was also identified by lecturers and supervisors as a challenge for most the Libyan students (chapter 7). Consequently, it is important that strategies or initiatives are made available, as is the case at the University of Melbourne in Australia (Melbourne Institute of Technology, 2018: 74-77), to use peer students or a student mentor to help international students on how to write in their own words. Furthermore, the mechanics of writing and coherence problems were also indicated by most of the participants in FGD (chapter 5) as another writing challenge, besides using appropriate vocabulary or terms and grammatical structure (chapter 6). Equally

important, the interviewed lecturers and supervisors (chapter 7) also indicated that grammar, structure and punctuation are challenges to Libyan students. It is quite useful for those students to attend peer-learning workshops where they can learn how to use correct grammar and use suitable punctuation. Taking into consideration the above-stated findings, peer learning and student mentors would assist students with how to structure their assignments, structure paragraphs, check grammatical structures, and use correct punctuation. This has been proven by the University of Otago in New Zealand, where all these initiatives are applied (see chapter 2).

8.2.5.6 Recommendations regarding policy makers

Concerning the contribution related to policy makers, the data presented and analysed in chapter seven revealed that UWC organizes different programmes or initiatives to help all students from different nationalities improve their academic literacy. The analysed documents are talking about students' support in general. They do not specify what is meant for national students, for international students and more particularly for international students coming from backgrounds where the language of education is not English. This indicates that there are no targeted or special programmes for international students in general, and Arab or Libyan students in particular, to support their academic reading and writing needs. Therefore, the institution and policy makers must pay attention to these students. There is a real need to address their challenges by establishing specific programmes that suit their challenges. In this respect, the policies should consider international students' academic literacy needs and should specify explicitly adequate services based on their backgrounds.

8.3 Limitations and directions for further research

Even though this study provided significant understanding of academic literacy constructions by Libyan students in relation to academic culture, there were special limitations that should be introduced in this section.

The first limitation is that this study focused on Libyan students only as international students studying in SA. Therefore, in further investigations, it may be possible to use this study with Arab students in general who study at universities of SA.

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The second limitation is that the number of the participants in both qualitative and quantitative was small, so conducting this study with a highest number of participants will yield greater insight into the academic literacy constructions of Libyan students in SA. However, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to all Libyan students. Because there is no data from the qualitative FGD showing that the practices of academic reading and writing of Libyan students are different in Sciences and Arts, it is suggested that further research in specific disciplines in the Arts and Sciences is needed to determine the students' practices of academic reading and writing.

Lastly, this study used the demographic variables gender, universities in SA, faculty / school, level of study, and duration of stay in SA to evaluate whether these variables had an influence on the results of the study. Unfortunately, the results showed only the influence of gender in just two categories in academic writing and no influence with the other variables. The findings would suggest that a further investigation on these variables is needed to find out more about their impact on international students' academic literacy studies.

8.4 Implications for teaching and learning international students

In conclusion, the general implications of the study may be summarised as follows:

1. The findings indicated that Libyan students as international students faced academic literacy problems as a result of the influence of their academic culture. The educational systems in Libya and SA are wholly different. Therefore, attention needs to be paid by host institutions when accepting international students from different cultural backgrounds. These students should be given specific orientation programmes that raise cultural awareness.

2. Because the students encountered academic reading problems, it is suggested that the institution, staff members and the stakeholders need to help these students by establishing programmes encouraging them (students) to participate in study groups. As indicated in this study, critical reading was one of the problems, so, the community may have to assist them by assigning special classes in which students can learn how to read the text critically by commenting, criticising, analysing and applying knowledge. Students should be encouraged and allowed in a reading group to read a variety of materials with the guidance of their lecturers.

3. Academic writing was identified as a big problem for most of the Libyan students in this study. Faculty members need to create a targeted learning space for international students as opportunities for them to construct their own learning. For example, a learning space can be a workshop or a course in which the students can learn how to employ the academic writing conventions as requirements for writing. The WC can also be a learning space for international students. The two officials interviewed indicated that the Writing Centre is useful for international students. Moreover, the DPGS can be another learning space for the students because this division provides a lot of support services for all the students in general.

Finally, this thesis shows that Libyan students faced problems in academic reading and writing as a result of the different academic cultures. Gender was indicated as the most effective variable that impacted the students' academic literacies practices.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent Form – Facebook Discussions

Research project:

Reading and Writing across Cultures: Using Social Literacies Approach to account for the Experiences of Libyan Students Studying in South African Higher Education

Researcher: Turkeya Burka

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)

3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

4. As a participant of the discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.

5. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

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6. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____

Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature

(*If different from lead researcher*)

_____   _____   _____

Lead Researcher   Date   Signature

(*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*)

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	Supervisor:	HOD:

Supervisor's details

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Appendix 2: Consent Form – Focus Group

Consent Form – Focus Group Discussions   University of the Western Cape

Research project:

Reading and Writing across Cultures: Using Social Literacies Approach to account for the Experiences of Libyan Students Studying in South African Higher Education

Researcher: Turkeya Burka

Please initial box

7. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

8. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)

9. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

10. As a participant of the discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.

11. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

12. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____

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Name of Participant   Date   Signature

(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____

Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature

(*If different from lead researcher*)

_____   _____   _____

Lead Researcher   Date   Signature

(*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*)

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	**Supervisor:**	**HOD:**

Supervisor's details

Professor Bassey Antia

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Researcher's details

Turkeya Burka

Student number: 3513526

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Email: or turkiabaraka@rocketmail.com

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Appendix 3: Consent Form –Questionnaire

Research project:

Reading and Writing across Cultures: Using Social Literacies Approach to account for the Experiences of Libyan Students Studying in South African Higher Education

Researcher: Turkeya Burka

Please initial box

13. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

14. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)

15. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

16. As a participant of the discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.

17. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

18. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____

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Name of Participant   Date   Signature

(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____

Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature

(*If different from lead researcher*)

_____   _____   _____

Lead Researcher   Date   Signature

(*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*)

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	**Supervisor:**	**HOD:**

Supervisor's details

Professor Bassey Antia

Cell: +27 60 504 2000

Email: bantia@uwc.ac.za

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Researcher's details

Turkeya Burka

Student number: 3513526

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Appendix 4: Facebook discussion questions

Facebook discussion questions

1. In which faculty are you studying?
2. How long have you been studying in this faculty?
3. Do you have the opportunity to learn English? Where? When?
4. When reading an academic work, describe some of the activities you engage in to support the reading comprehension process.
5. Does your lecturer sometimes ask you to read a text and comment on it?
6. Do you sometimes criticise (openly or privately) views held by your lecturers or contained in academic materials you read? Explain.
7. If you criticise, how do you criticise the lecture's content? Do you relate the content to your prior knowledge/check organisation and coherence of the text/check conventions of style/check spelling and punctuation marks/check the grammatical structures/check how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas?
8. Do you take notes while listening to the lecturer or reading course materials?
9. For an exam, do you memorise the course content material? What do you memorise? What do you memorise? Why?
10. When producing a written work, describe some of the points you take into account.
11. When you face challenges in reading and writing tasks, what strategies do you employ to overcome these challenges?
12. For referencing, do you sometimes copy and paste from other people's work? Do you always acknowledge the source of information/ material that is not your own? Does your lecturer punish you for copying and pasting or not acknowledging your source?
13. Have you received any feedback or comments from your lecturers on writing essays? Any samples you can share? What type of comments your lecturers provide you? Does your lecturer comment on spelling, punctuation and grammar? How useful are your lecturers' comments for addressing your academic problems?

End of questions

Thanks for your cooperation

Annex 1: appendix 4

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اسئلة للنقاش فى الفيسبوك

1. فى اى كلية تدرس؟

2. منذ متى وانت تدرس فى هذة الكلية؟

3. هل أتيحت لك الفرصة لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية؟ اين؟ متى؟

4. هل يطلب منك المحاضر فى بعض الاحيان قراءة النص و التعليق علية؟ ما هى برأيك توقعات المحاضر للتعليق المقبول؟

5. فى كتابة مقالات/ الإختبارات/الامتحانات، كيف تعتقد ان استاذك يتوقع منك ان تثبت/تبرهن تعلمك؟ هل سوف تطابق الكلمات التى وردت فى الأسئلة مع نفسها فى النص؟ هل سوف تقرأ اجزاء رئيسية من النص مثل المقدمة و الخاتمة؟ هل سوف تجد معنى الكلمات الصعبة؟ هل سوف تقوم بربط المعلومات فى النص مع المعلومات الواردة فى الأسئلة؟ او انك سوف تستخدم معلوماتك السابقة ....الخ ؟

6. عند قراءة اى نص اكاديمى، صف بعض الانشطة التى تستخدمها لتساهم فى عملية القراءة؟

7. هل تستعمل كتب/مراجع اضافية غير التى يستعملها المحاضر؟

8. هل تدون ملاحظات اثناء الاستماع الى المحاضرة او عند قرأتك لموادك الدراسية؟ كيف؟ لماذا؟

9. عند كتابتك لمقالة /بحث/مشروع صف بعض النقاط التى تاخدها بعين الاعتبار.

10. هل احياناً تنتقد (علناً او جهراً) الآراء التى أعرب عنها المحاضرين او الواردة فى المواد الدراسية؟

11. اذا انت تنتقذ ، كيف يمكنك نقد محتوى المحاضرة؟ على سبيل المثال، هل تربط محتوى المحاضرة بمعلوماتك السابقة؟ هل تتفحص بنية النص وترابطة؟ هل تتحقق من نمط/اسلوب الكتابة.............الخ

12. عندما تواجهك مشكلة او صعوبة فى القراءة او الكتابة، ما هى الأستراتيجيات التي تستعملها للتغلب على المشكلة او الصعوبة؟

13. حسب وجهة نظرك، ما الذى تسبب فى هذة الصعوبات؟ (هل الثقافة ، الشخصية ، النظام التعليمى/اسلوب التعليم ....الخ).

14. هل تلقيت تعليقات من المحاضر على كتاباتك لمقالة/بحث او مشروع؟ امثلة اذا عندك .

15. ماهى نوع التعليقات التى زودك بها المحاضر؟ هل علق المحاضر على الإملاء، على علامات الترقيم ام على التركيبات النحوية ....الخ؟

16. ما هى فائدة تعليقات استاذك فى مواجهة / معالجة/التغلب على مشاكلك الأكاديمية؟

</div>

17. هل احيانا تقرأ وتكتب فى دراستك الأكاديمية باللغة ألأنجليزية؟ كيف تعتبر القراءة والكتابة باللغة الأنجليزية مختلفة عن الكتابة والقراءة باللغة العربية؟

18. فى الأمتحان، هل تحفظ عن ظهر قلب محتوى المادة التى تدرسها؟ ماذا تحفظ عن ظهر قلب؟ كم مرة تحفظ عن ظهر قلب؟ لماذا؟

19. ماذا عن المراجع، هل تستخدم المراجع المناسبة عند كتابتك لورقة بحثية او لمشروع؟ هل تستعمل الطريقة الصحيحة لكتابة اى مرجع؟

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Appendix 5: Focus group discussion questions

Focus group discussion questions

1. How long have you been studying in South Africa?
2. What is your field of study?
3. How long will your course take/last?
4. Do you have the opportunity to learn English? Where? When?
5. Have you ever learned English in an English-speaking country? Where? When?
6. Why did you come to study in South Africa?
7. What/Who motivated you to select South Africa as a destination for your study? OR Who influenced your decision for selecting South Africa as a destination for your study?
8. What academic experiences/challenges have you faced?
   a. Regarding English language in academics?
   b. Regarding learning style?
   c. Regarding Teaching pedagogy?
   d. Discipline content knowledge?
   e. Regarding academic support?
   f. Regarding evaluation/assessment?
9. What are the differences and similarities between Libya and South Africa?
   a. Regarding English language in academics?
   b. Regarding learning style?
   c. Regarding Teaching pedagogy?
   d. Discipline content knowledge?
   e. Regarding the relationship between students and lecturers?
   f. Regarding academic support?
   g. Regarding evaluation/assessment?
10. Compare the expectations of (your) lecturers in Libya to lecturers in South Africa on the following points:
    a. answering questions or demonstrating your knowledge based on the , textbook;
    b. reading a textbook;
    c. correctness of language while writing;
    d. ways of studying;
    e. bringing in your viewpoint across in your work (essay….. etc.)
11. What type of comments do your lecturers provide you as feedback on your work?
12. How useful do you find your lecturers' comments for addressing your academic problems?
13. Does the university provide opportunities/structures to help international students overcome their challenges? **OR** What kind of support have you received from university faculties to overcome your challenges? **OR** What

polices/structures/interventions the institution/faculty put to help international students overcome the challenges face in their academic literacies practices?

14. Do you think your reading and writing practices have changed as a consequence of studying in South Africa? Examples? OR

15. Have your reading and writing practices improved as a consequence of studying in South Africa?

16. If you returned to Libya and you were asked to advise Libyan students planning to study in South Africa, what differences would you highlight regarding teaching and learning in both countries?

End of questions

Thanks for your cooperation

Annex 1: appendix 5

1- منذ متى وانت تدرس فى جنوب افريقيا ؟

2- ما هو مجال دراستك؟

3 - كم من الوقت سوف تستغرق دراستك؟

4 - هل لديك الفرصة لتعلم اللغة الانجليزي؟ أين؟ متى؟

5 - هل تعلمت اللغة الانجليزية فى بلد بتحدث الانجليزية ؟ أين؟ متى؟

6- لماذا اتيت للدراسة فى جنوب أفريقيا؟

7- ما / من الذى دفعك الى اختيار جنوب افريقيا كوجهة لدراستك؟ او من اثر فى قرارك باختيار جنوب افريقيا كوجهة لدراستك؟

8- ما الخبرات/ التحديات الاكاديمية التى واجهتها؟

أ- فيما يتعلق باللغة الانجليزية؟

ب- فيما يتعلق باسلوب التعليم؟

ت- فيما يتعلق بطريقة التدريس؟

ث - فيما يتعلق بمعرفة المحتوى ؟

ج- فيما يتعلق بالتقييم؟

9- ما هى الاختلافات والتشابه بين ليبيا وجنوب افريقيا ؟

أ- فيما يتعلق باللغة الانجليزية الاكاديمية؟

ب- فيا يتعلق باسلوب التعليم؟

ت- فيما يتعلق بطريقة التدريس؟

ث- فيما يتعلق بمعرفة المحتوى ؟

ج- فيما يتعلق بالعلاقة بين الطلاب والمحاضرين؟

ح- فيما يتعلق بالدعم الاكاديمى؟

خ- فيما يتعلق بالتقييم؟

10- قارن توقعات (المحاضرين) فى ليبيا وفى جنوب افريقيا حول النقاط التالية:

أ- الاجابة على الاسئلة او إظهار معرفتك بناءً على الكتاب المدرسى؛

ب- قراءة كتاب مدرسى ؛

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ج- صحة اللغة أثناء الكتابة؛

ح -طرق الدراسة ؛

خ- أبداء وجهات نظرك فى عملك (مقالة ....الخ).

11- ما نوع التعليقات التى يقدمها لك المحاضرون كتعليقات على عملك؟

12- ما مدى فائدة تعليقات المحاضرين لمعالجة مشاكلك الاكاديمية؟

13- هل توفر الجامعة الفرص / الهياكل لمساعدة الطلاب الدوليين على التغلب على تحدياتهم؟ أو ما نوع الدعم الذى تلقيته من كليات الجامعة للتغلب على تحدياتك؟ أو ما هى السياسات / الهياكل / التدخلات التى وضعتها المؤسسة / الكلية لمساعدة الطلاب الدوليين للتغلب على التحديان التى تواجه ممارسات تعليمهم الاكاديمى؟

14- هل تعتقد أن ممارسات القراءة والكتابة لديك قد تغيرت كنتيجة للدراسة فى جنوب إفريقيا ؟ أمثلة ؟ أو

15- هل تحسنت ممارسات القراءة والكتابة كنتيجة للدراسة فى جنوب إفريقيا ؟

16إذا عدت إلى ليبيا وطُب منك تقديم المشورة للطلاب الليبيين الذين يخططون للدراسة فى جنوب إفريقيا ، فما الاختلافات التى تبرزها فيما يتعلق بالتعليم والتعلم فى كلا البلدين؟

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Appendix 6: Questionnaire

Appendix 3

Questionnaire on reading and writing

Dear student,

I am Turkeya Burka, a PH.D student in the Department of Linguistics. My research focuses on how different academic culture affects International Students particularly the Libyan students in the area of academic reading and writing. That is, I am looking at Libyan students' experiences as a result of studying in South Africa and their strategies they employed to overcome their problems. I would kindly ask you to complete the questionnaire. All your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. Thank you for your time and participation.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections (one, two and three). Please complete all three sections.

Section one: General information (background)

1. Sex: (Please tick ✓) Male: ☐

   Female ☐

2. University in Cape Town where you are currently studying: (Please tick ✓): UWC ☐

   CPUT ☐

   UCT ☐

   US ☐

   UJ ☐

   DUT ☐

   WITS ☐

3. Faculty/School: ……………………………………………………………………..
4. Are you an undergraduate or a postgraduate? (Please tick ✓): Undergraduate ☐

   Postgraduate ☐

5. If an undergraduate, level of study: (Please tick ✓): First year ☐

   Second year ☐

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Third year ☐

Fourth year ☐

6. For how many years have you been studying in South Africa? ....

Section two: Reading and writing challenges

Reading challenges

Please state the challenges you encounter while reading academic material related to your course of study by circling one of the numbers in the table below.

Category	This is a challenge for me.	Scales				
A. General overview	1.Reading quickly to identify the usefulness of the book/text	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Reading quickly to identify the unfamiliar concepts/terms	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Reading quickly to decide whether to read material in detail	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Reading quickly to look for specific section/chapter	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Reading quickly to familiarise myself with the main approaches presented in the book/text	1	2	3	4	5
	6. Reading quickly to activate my background knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
A. In depth reading	1.Determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs	1	2	3	4	5
	2.Identifying material showing objections to the analysis/argument	1	2	3	4	5
	3.Identifying the author's theoretical perspective	1	2	3	4	5
B. Critical reading	**1. The author's purpose**					
	a. Identifying why the author writes the text	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Identifying if the goals are written clearly	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Identifying which audience the author is addressing	1	2	3	4	5
	2.The author's approach					
	a. Identifying how the author presents the main ideas	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Identifying the author's tendency in terms of explaining the information	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Content					
	a. Identifying if there is adequate supporting evidence	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Identifying how the author develops the main statement	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Trying to find out if the information provided is correct	1	2	3	4	5
	d. Identifying the more and less focused aspects of the text	1	2	3	4	5
	e. Identifying the irrelevant material used	1	2	3	4	5
	f. Identifying to what extent the author answers your questions	1	2	3	4	5

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	g. Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations	1	2	3	4	5
	h. Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Writing challenges</u>

Please state the challenges you encounter while writig academic material related to your course of study by circling one of the numbers in the table below.

Category	This is a challenge for me.	Scales				
A. Mechanics of writing	1.Using correct spelling and punctuation	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Using precise, appropriate, academic vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Using appropriate grammatical structures in English.	1	2	3	4	5
B. Organisation and coherence	1.Writing good and clear introduction to help reader understand the text	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Making links between paragraphs	1	2	3	4	5
	3.Writing effective closing sentence/conclusion	1	2	3	4	5
C. Conventions of style in essays	1.Using formal English	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Avoiding using abbreviations (e. g, N. ADJ..) and contractions(I'll ,isn't… etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Avoiding using slang words or colloquial terms (e.g. guys, kids…)	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Avoiding using hesitation fillers such as "er, um, well….etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
	5.Avoiding using ambiguous sentences	1	2	3	4	5
	6. Avoiding repetition	1	2	3	4	5
	7. Being impersonal	1	2	3	4	5
	8. Using cautious language and hedging devices such as "perhaps, almost, is probably due to……)	1	2	3	4	5
	9. Using appropriate referencing style	1	2	3	4	5
D. Honesty	1. Submitting work that is my own and not copied from elsewhere.	1	2	3	4	5
	2.Using authorised material during open/ closed book exam	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Paraphrasing/summarising the source material by using my own words	1	2	3	4	5
	4.Using references/ bibliography to acknowledge the source of information	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Section three: Reading and writing strategies</u>

<u>Reading strategies</u>

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Please indicate the strategies you use while reading academic material by circling one of the numbers in the table below. You can choose more than one.
NOTE: 1= (always) 2= (sometimes) 3= (usually) 4= (often) 5= (never)

Category	Strategy	Scales				
B. General overview	a. Reading the title	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Reading the introduction	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Reading the first paragraph	1	2	3	4	5
	d. Reading the subheadings	1	2	3	4	5
	e. Reading the first sentence of each paragraph	1	2	3	4	5
	f. Looking for clues (e.g. phrases, tables, numbers, charts… etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
	g. Using mind mapping such as diagrams and graphs	1	2	3	4	5
C. In depth reading	a. Circling transitional words/phrases	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Underlining main points	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Taking marginal notes	1	2	3	4	5
	d. Using annotation such as "stars, numbers… etc."	1	2	3	4	5
	e. Using online dictionaries and online translation systems	1	2	3	4	5
	f. Using flowcharts, diagrams...etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
	g. Consulting other textbooks	1	2	3	4	5
D. Critical reading	a. Testing claims against my prior knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Making connection between my old information and new information	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Looking for and analysing the keywords and phrases	1	2	3	4	5
	d. Reading my notes	1	2	3	4	5
	e. Reading the blurb of the book	1	2	3	4	5
	f. Reading the abstract, introduction and the conclusion	1	2	3	4	5
	g. Checking the reference list used	1	2	3	4	5
	h. Reading each section/ paragraph carefully	1	2	3	4	5
	i. Writing down in one sentence what each section says and does	1	2	3	4	5
	j. Checking the table of content	1	2	3	4	5
	k. looking at footnotes	1	2	3	4	5
	l. Examining the connection between the words and main ideas	1	2	3	4	5
	m. Examining the language used	1	2	3	4	5
	n. Examining techniques used	1	2	3	4	5
	o. Examining sentence structure	1	2	3	4	5
	p. Making inferences	1	2	3	4	5

Writing strategies
Please indicate the strategies you use while writing academic material by circling one of the numbers in the table below. You can choose more than one.
NOTE: 1= (always) 2= (sometimes) 3= (usually) 4= (often) 5= (never)

Category	Strategy	Scales				
A. Mechanics of writing	a. Using a dictionary to confirm spelling.	1	2	3	4	5
	b. Using the spell-checker	1	2	3	4	5
	c. Seeking appropriate help/guidance	1	2	3	4	5

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		d. Using specialised dictionary	1	2	3	4	5
		e. Using glossaries in books	1	2	3	4	5
		f. Using thesaurus	1	2	3	4	5
		g. Using grammar book/handbook	1	2	3	4	5
		h. Using grammar-checker	1	2	3	4	5
		i. Using an encyclopaedia	1	2	3	4	5
B. Organisation and coherence		a. Using a handbook of writing	1	2	3	4	5
		b. Consulting other textbooks	1	2	3	4	5
		c. Asking someone (e.g. an editor or a coach at the writing center)	1	2	3	4	5
		d. Taking additional writing course	1	2	3	4	5
C. Conventions of style in essays		a. Analysing sample or model texts	1	2	3	4	5
		b. Using online referencing tools	1	2	3	4	5
		c. Using a handbook of writing					
		d. Asking my friend to read what I write	1	2	3	4	5
		e. Making a draft and asking my lecturer to check it	1	2	3	4	5
		f. Making use of me lecturer's past feedback/comments	1	2	3	4	5
		g. Using information and examples in dictionaries for non-native speakers such as Collins Cobuild English Dictionary…. etc.	1	2	3	4	5
		h. Using templates for essay writing	1	2	3	4	5
D. Honesty		a. Ensuring that I make the effort to understand material that I read	1	2	3	4	5
		b. Reminding myself of the consequences of plagiarism	1	2	3	4	5
		c. Noting the source of information I get from articles, books, lectures….. etc.	1	2	3	4	5
		d. Finding out what is required to finish my assignment					
		e. Avoiding using the cut-and –paste tool in my software					
		f. Applying the rules of proper citation and referencing					

Thanks for your cooperation
The researcher

Annex 1: appendix 6

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استبيان على القراءة و الكتابة الأكاديمية

ينقسم الأستبيان الى ثلاثة أقسام، الرجاء اكمل الأجزاء الثلاثة.

<u>القسم الأول: معلومات عامة (خلفية)</u>

1 الجنس: (يرجى وضع علامة √)   ذكر   ☐

انثى   ☐

2 الجامعة فى كيب تاون حيث تدرس حاليا: (يرجى وضع علامة √) جامعة كيب الغربية   ☐

جامعة بنسوليا التقنية   ☐

جامعة كيب تاون   ☐

جامعة ستلنبوش   ☐

3 الكلية/المدرسة ....

4 القسم/الوحدة: ....

5 هل انت تحت التخرج ام فى الدراسات العليا؟ (يرجى وضع علامة √) تحت التخرج   ☐

دراسات عليا   ☐

6 اذا تحت التخرج، المستوى الدراسى: (يرجى وضع علامة √) السنة الأولى   ☐

السنة الثانية   ☐

السنة الثالثة   ☐

السنة الرابعة   ☐

7 لمدة كم سنة وانت تدرس فى جنوب أفريقيا؟ ....

</div>

القسم الثانى: صعوبات القراءة والكتابة

صعوبات القراءة

يرجى ذكر الصعوبات التى تواجهها أثناء قراءة المواد الدراسية ذات الصلة ببرنامجك الدراسى. أكمل الجدول ادناه،
وذلك بأستخدام الأرقام والرموز التالية:

1(دائما)   2(احيانا)   3(غالبا)   4(عادة)   5(ابدا)

لقد شهدت نتائج سلبية(مثل فقدان درجات،فقدان ماء الوجه) بسبب هذه الصعوبة	هذا يعتبر مهم بالنسبة لاستاذى.	هذا يعتبر تحدى/صعب بالنسبة لى.	انا أفعل هذا	الفئة/البنود
				أولا: نظرة عامة
				قراءة النص بسرعة لتحديد فائدة الكتاب
				قراءة النص بسرعة لتحديد المفاهيم والمصطلحات غير المألوفة
				قراءة النص بسرعة لاقرر فيما اذا اريد قراءة الكتاب بالتفصيل
				قراءة النص بسرعة للبحث على قسم/ فصل معين
				قراءة النص بسرعة لتعريف نفسى بالطرق المستعملة فى الكتاب/النص
				قراءة النص بسرعة لتنشيط معلوماتى السابقة
				ثانيا: القراءة العميقة
				تحديد بنية النص وكذلك الترابط بين الفقرات
				تفحص النص موضحا وجهات النظر فى التحليل او الجدال
				تحديد المنظور النظرى للمؤلف
				القراءة النقدية
				هدف المؤلف/الكاتب
				تحديد لماذا يكتب المؤلف النص
				تحديد ما اذا تم كتابة الأهداف بوضوح
				تحديد الى اى القراء يكتب المؤلف
				الطريقة التى اتبعها المؤلف فى الكتابة
				تحديد كيفية عرض المؤلف للافكار الرئيسية
				تحديد اتجاة/وجهة الكاتب من حيث شرح المعلومات
				المحتوى
				تحديد ما اذا كان هناك ادله داعمة ومناسبة
				تحديد كيف يطور الكاتب الجملة الرئيسية
				محاولة اكتشاف ما اذا كانت المعلومات المقدمة صحيحة
				التعرف على الجوانب الأكثر و الأقل تركيزا فى النص
				تحديد المواد الغير مناسبة/ليست لها صلة المستخدمة فى النص
				تحديد الى اى مدى يجيب الكاتب على اسئلتك
				تحديد ما اذا كان الكاتب قد استخدم مصطلحات ذات الصلة بتوقعات القراء
				تحديد الصلة بين المقدمة والخاتمة

صعوبات الكتابة

يرجى ذكر الصعوبات التى تواجهها أثناء كتابة المواد الدراسية ذات الصلة ببرنامجك الدراسى. أكمل الجدول ادناه، وذلك بأستخدام الأرقام والرموز التالية:

1(دائما) 2(احيانا) 3(غالبا) 4(عادة) 5(ابدا)

لقد شهدت نتائج سلبية(مثل فقدان درجات،فقدان ماء الوجه) بسبب هذه الصعوبة	هذا يعتبر مهم بالنسبة لاستاذى.	هذا يعتبر تحدى/صعب بالنسبة لى.	انا أفعل هذا	الفئة/البنود
				اولا: آليات الكتابة
				استخدام الإملاء وعلامات الترقيم الصحيحة
				استخدام مفردات اكاديمية دقيقة ومناسبة
				استخدام تركيبات نحوية مناسبة باللغة الأنجليزية
				ثانيا: التنظيم والترابط/التماسك
				كتابة مقدمة جيدة وواضحة لتساعد القارئ على الفهم
				استخدام الروابط بين الفقرات
				كتابة خاتمة مؤثرة للنص
				ثالثا: القواعد/الأساليب المتبعة لكتابة مقالة
				استخدام اللغة الأنجليزية الرسمية
				تجنب استخدام الاختصارات
				تجنب استخدام اللغة العامية والمصطلحات العامية
				تجنب استخدام الحشو (حشو التردد مثل "اية، امممم، حسناً ....الخ).
				تجنب استخدام جمل غامضة
				تجنب التكرار
				ان تكون غير شخصى (لا تستعمل ضمير المتكلم "انا، نحن" او ضمير المخاطب "انت")
				استخدام اللغة الحذرة مثل التحوط "ربما ، تقريبا ، ويرجع ذلك على الأرجح ....الخ
				استخدام الطرق الصحيحة لكتابة المراجع فى الورقة البحثية/المشروع/رسالة ماجستير........الخ
				رابعا: النزاهة
				تسليم عمل بمجهودى وليس منسوخ من اى مكان اخر
				استخدام كتب او مراجع مصرح بها فى الامتحان ذات الكتاب المفتوح او المغلق
				تلخيص نص/فقرة بكلمات من عندى
				استخدام قائمة المراجع للاعتراف بمصدر المعلومات

القسم الثالث: استراتيجيات القراءة و الكتابة

استراتيجيات القراءة

يرجى الأشارة الى الأستراتيجيات التى تستخدم اثناء قراءة المواد الأكاديمية وذلك بوضع دائرة حول احدى الارقام فى الجدول ادناه. يمكنك اختيار اكثر من واحدة.

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ملاحظة: 1= (دائما)، 2 =(احيانا)، 3 =(غالبا)، 4 =(عادة)، 5 =(ابدا)

الصنف	الأستراتيجية	الموازين				
اولاً: نظرة عامة	قراءة العنوان	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة المقدمة	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة الفقرة الأولى	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة العناوين الجانبية	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة أول جملة من كل فقرة	5	4	3	2	1
	البحث على ادلة (على سبيل المثال العبارات، الجداول، الأرقام، رسومات بيانية ...الخ)	5	4	3	2	1
	استخدام خرائط العقل مثل الرسوم البيانية/رسوم شبكة العنكبوت وما الى ذلك	5	4	3	2	1
ثانياً: القراءة العميقة	وضع دائرة على الكلمات والعبارات الأنتقالية	5	4	3	2	1
	وضع خط تحت النقاط الرئيسية	5	4	3	2	1
	تدوين الملاحظات الهامشية	5	4	3	2	1
	عمل ملاحظات عن طريق الشرح مثل "نجوم، ارقام، دوائر ...."الخ	5	4	3	2	1
	استخدام القواميس الألكترونية ونظم الترجمة على الانترنت	5	4	3	2	1
	استخدام خرائط، مخططات.........الخ	5	4	3	2	1
	تفحص كتب مقررة اخرى	5	4	3	2	1
ثالثا: القراءة النقذية	تفحص المتطلبات ضد معرفتى السابقة	5	4	3	2	1
	الربط بين معلوماتى القديمة بالجديدة	5	4	3	2	1
	البحث عن و تحليل الكلمات والعبارات	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة ملاحظاتى	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة دعاية الكتاب	5	4	3	2	1
	تفحص الملخص، المقدمة او العنوان	5	4	3	2	1
	تفحص قائمة المراجع	5	4	3	2	1
	قراءة كل قسم/فقرة جيداً	5	4	3	2	1
	تدوين فى جملة واحدة ما يقول ويفعل كل قسم	5	4	3	2	1
	التحقق من جدول المحتويات	5	4	3	2	1
	البحث فى الحواشى	5	4	3	2	1
	تفحص العلاقة بين الكلمات المستعملة و الأفكار الرئيسية	5	4	3	2	1
	تفحص اللغة المستخدمة	5	4	3	2	1
	دراسة التقنيات المستخدمة	5	4	3	2	1
	دراسة التركيبات النحوية	5	4	3	2	1
	تكوين استدلالات	5	4	3	2	1

<u>استراتيجيات الكتابة</u>

يرجى الأشارة الى الأستراتيجيات الى تستخدم اثناء كتابة المواد الأكاديمية وذلك بوضع دائرة حول احدى الارقام فى الجدول ادناه. يمكنك اختيار اكثر من واحدة.

ملاحظة: 1= (دائما)، 2 =(احيانا)، 3 =(غالبا)، 4 =(عادة)، 5 =(ابدا)

الصنف	الأستراتيجية	الموازين				
اولاً آليات الكتابة	استخدام قاموس للتآكد من الإملاء	5	4	3	2	1
	استخدام المدقق الإملائى	5	4	3	2	1
	طلب المساعدة المناسبة والتوجية	5	4	3	2	1

5	4	3	2	1	استخدام القاموس المتخصص	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام المعاجم فى الكتب	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام قاموس المفردات	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام كتب قواعد	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام مدقق القواعد	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام موسوعة	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام كتيب الكتابة	ثانيا: التنظيم والترابط
5	4	3	2	1	تفحص مقررات دراسية اخرى	
5	4	3	2	1	طلب المساعدة من شخص ما (مثل محرر او مدرب فى مركز الكتابة)	
5	4	3	2	1	اخذ دورة اضافية للكتابة	
5	4	3	2	1	تحليل عينة/نماذج من النصوص	ثالثا: القواعد/الأساليب المتبعة لكتابة مقالة
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام انظمة كتابة المراجع على الأنترنت	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام كتيب الكتابة	
5	4	3	2	1	أسأل صديقى لقراءة ما اكتب	
5	4	3	2	1	اعمل مسودة وأسأل المحاضر ليتفحصها	
5	4	3	2	1	الأستفادة من تعليقات/ملاحظات المحاضر السابقة	
5	4	3	2	1	استخدام الامثلة والمعلومات الموجودة فى القواميس لغير الناطقين باللغة الأنجليزية مثل قاموس كولنز كوبلد او اوكسفورد .....الخ	
5	4	3	2	1	التأكيد على اننى أبذل جهد لفهم المواد التى ادرس	رابعا: النزاهة
5	4	3	2	1	تذكير نفسى من عاقبة الأنتحال/ السرقة الادبية	
5	4	3	2	1	اشير على ان مصدر المعلومات احصل عليها من المقالات و الكتب والمحاضرات .....الخ	
5	4	3	2	1	معرفة ما هو المطلوب لانهاء واجباتى	
5	4	3	2	1	تجنب استخدام القص و اللصق من الأنترنت	
5	4	3	2	1	تطبيق قواعد الاقتباس وكتابة المراجع الصحيحة	

انتهى الأستبيان

**شكرا على حسن تعاونكم**

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Appendix 7: Interviews

Annex 1: Interview questions for supervisors/ lecturers

Good morning/afternoon. I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today. My name is Turkeya Burka and I would like to talk to you about the experience of Libyan students studying at the University of Western Cape in terms of their construction of academic reading and writing. My main focus is on the academic literacies of Libyan students in relation to academic culture in reading and writing. The interview will take less than an hour. I will be using audio recorder to record your comments/responses in order not to miss any of the ideas. I urge you to feel free to express your views on how you really feel. All responses will be kept confidential and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview any time.

1. Have you ever supervised or taught Libyan postgraduate students? How many Libyan students do you currently supervise? What strengths or qualities for academic work do you see in your Libyan students?
2. In your experience as a supervisor or a lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan student, what is it that you notice about the way they **read** and process academic texts?
3. Do they have difficulties with:
   - Understanding the general meaning of the text?
   - Understanding unfamiliar terms/ words/ phrases?
   - Determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs?
   - Identifying the author's purpose of the text?
   - Identifying how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas?
   - Identifying which audience the author addressing?
   - Identifying the less and more focused aspects of the text?
   - Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations?
   - Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text?
4. Are there any noticeable differences between males and females with respect to your observations in questions 2 and 3 above?
5. In your experience as a supervisor or a lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan student, what is it that you notice about the way they **write**?
6. Do/Did Libyan students face difficulties in the following? Please give examples or give an indication of frequency or other information that will help me to understand your opinion:
   - Using and selecting appropriate vocabulary;
   - Using appropriate grammatical structures;
   - Writing effective introduction and conclusion;

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- Using formal language; avoiding repetition; making links between paragraphs;
- Using cautious language and hedging devices;
- Avoiding abbreviations;
- Avoiding using ambiguous sentences;
- Acknowledging the source material.
- Using mechanics of writing;
- Organising paragraphs;
- Using conventions of style and
- Acknowledging the source material.

7. Are there any noticeable differences between males and females in your observations regarding questions 5 and 6 above?

8. In your supervision or grading of work by your Libyan students, how do you approach their problems? What strategies have you used to help them overcome these problems?

9. What strategies did you notice that Libyan students use to overcome their problems?

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WESTERN CAPE
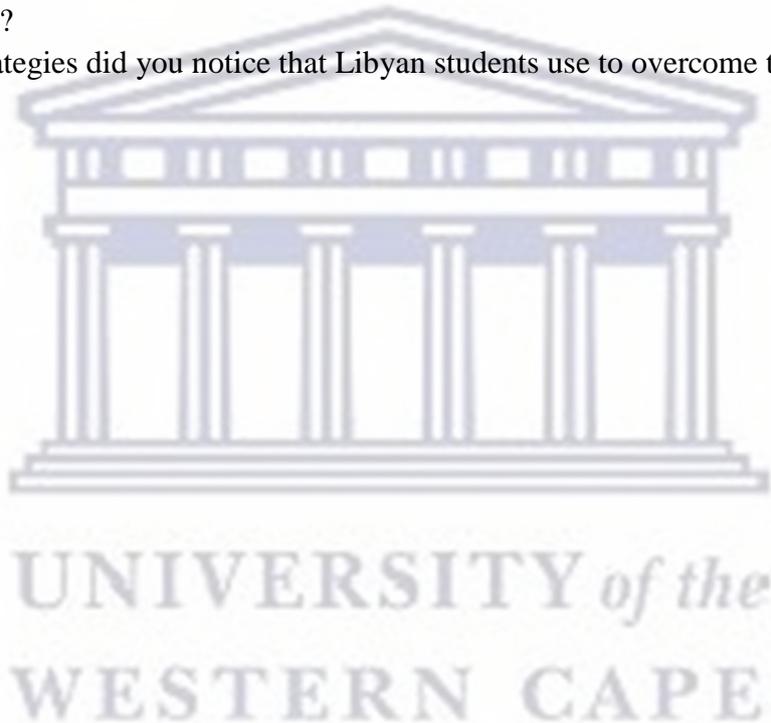
Annex 2: Interview questions for the director in postgraduate office

Good morning/afternoon. I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today. My name is Turkeya Burka and I would like to talk to you about the experience of Libyan students studying at the University of Western Cape in terms of their construction of academic reading and writing. My main focus is on the academic literacies of Libyan students in relation to academic culture in reading and writing. The interview will take less than an hour. I will be using audio recorder to record your comments/responses in order not to miss any of the ideas. I urge you to feel free to express your views on how you really feel. All responses will be kept confidential and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview any time.

1. What kind of services does the Division of Postgraduate studies offer to students?
2. In offering services to students, does the Division work closely with supervisors and lecturers in departments to identify specific needs?
3. Does the Division have services directed at students from certain academic cultures who for language or other reasons may not be able to benefit optimally from current services?
4. Would the Division consider such services, e.g. for Arab-speaking students, students from francophone countries, etc? Does the Division think such targeted programme services/ support will be useful/ important for them?
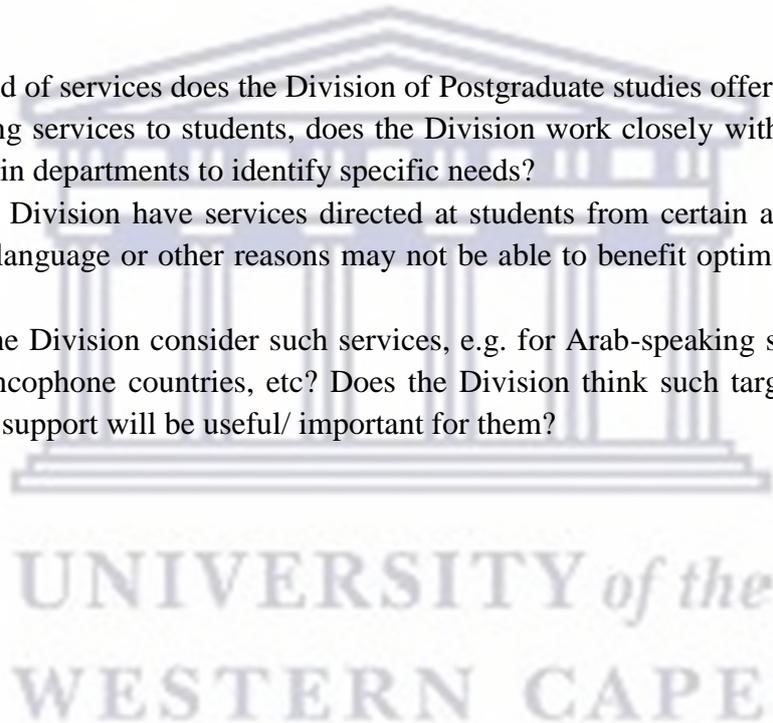
Annex 3: Interview questions for the administrators in the internationalisation office

Good morning/afternoon. I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today. My name is Turkeya Burka and I would like to talk to you about the experience of Libyan students studying at the University of Western Cape in terms of their construction of academic reading and writing. My main focus is on the academic literacies of Libyan students in relation to academic culture in reading and writing. The interview will take less than an hour. I will be using audio recorder to record your comments/responses in order not to miss any of the ideas. I urge you to feel free to express your views on how you really feel. All responses will be kept confidential and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview any time.

1. How many Arab international students are there in the university? How many Libyan students are there in the university?
2. Do you have any initiatives that are targeted at international students, for instance at Libyan students? Before they arrive, when they arrive, and when they leave the university?
3. Talking about the international students' needs with respect to their academic study, how do you help them if they face challenges?

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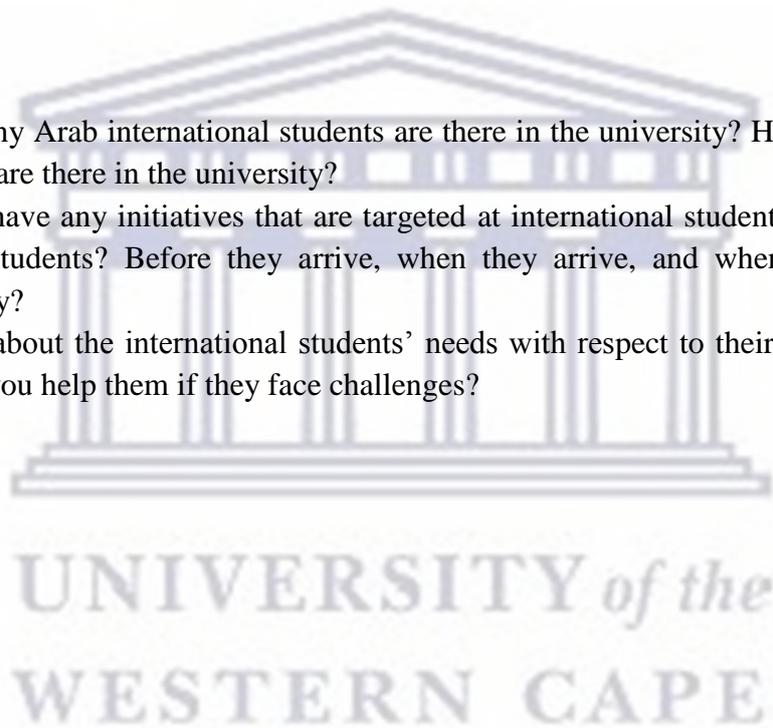
Annex 4: Questions for officials in the Writing Center

Good morning/afternoon. I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today. My name is Turkeya Burka and I would like to talk to you about the experience of Libyan students studying at the University of Western Cape in terms of their construction of academic reading and writing. My main focus is on the academic literacies of Libyan students in relation to academic culture in reading and writing. The interview will take less than an hour. I will be using audio recorder to record your comments/responses in order not to miss any of the ideas. I urge you to feel free to express your views on how you really feel. All responses will be kept confidential and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview any time.

1. Do you keep/ have records of international students in the WC? Approximately, how many students use the WC? What about Libyan students, are there any of them in the WC? (To coordinator/ tutor)
2. Are there any policies for international students? (To coordinator/ tutor)
3. How can the WC best help international students in general and Arab students in particular? (To coordinator/ tutor)
4. In regard to the requirements of the academic writing, do Libyan students have difficulties with for example mechanics of writing, organisation and coherence, conventions of wring and honesty? (To the tutor)
5. Have you had any experience in the WC? Can you please give me examples that you have noticed when you assessed the Libyan students? What are the problems you faced when you assessed them? (To the tutor)
6. If Libyan students come to you, how might you help them? Would you be able to encourage them to use the WC? (To coordinator/ tutor)
7. Do you think it is useful for the students to use the WC?

Appendix 8: Information Sheet:

FACULTY OF ARTS

Linguistics Department

University of the Western Cape

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8ᵗʰ September 2016

Information Sheet:

Reading and Writing across Cultures: Using Social Literacies Approach to account for the Experiences of Libyan Students Studying in South African Higher Education

I, Turkeya Burka, am a PhD student in the Department of Linguistics at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. For this degree, I seek to investigate the academic literacy experiences of Libyan students studying in South African higher education (against the backdrop of experiences reported by individuals studying in Libya). From research on international students, it is known that these students experience a number of difficulties, especially when the academic culture of the host environment is different in many respects from that of the home environment. As yet, there are no studies of the experiences of Libyan students studying in South African higher education.

The study will draw specifically on contrastive academic rhetoric as well as on the academic literacies to understand:
1. how a group of Libyan students in Libya construct and perceive norms of academic literacy (in order to have a reference point for examining the experiences of such students when they find themselves studying in South Africa);
2. how discourses of academic literacies are constructed by scholars in South Africa (in order to have a benchmark for accounting for the experiences of Libyan students),
3. how a group of Libyan students studying in South Africa conceptualise academic literacy/ literacies and construct their personal challenges as students,
4. what strategies and responses this group of Libyan students studying in South African universities employ in responding to perceived challenges of academic literacies,
5. what the implications of the findings in 1-4 above are for planning the teaching and learning component of internationalisation in South African universities,
6. what the implications of the findings in 1-4 above are for further research on a social approach to literacy.

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http://etd.uwc.ac.za/ A place of quality, a place to grow, from hope to action through knowledge

For purposes of collecting data for the study, you will be requested to voluntarily participate in

Focus Group Discussions involving Libyan students studying in South Africa on their academic literacy experiences in their courses of study. The questions will be translated into Arabic and discussion will approximately last one hour and 30 minutes.

My supervisor is Professor Bassey E. Antia in the Department of Linguistics, University of

the Western Cape, South Africa. He can be contacted at +27 60 504 2000 or at

bantia@uwc.ac.za.

My contact details are as follows: Turkeya burka, Linguistics Dept., UWC, phone: 0611241095 or turkiabaraka@rocketmail.com.

This information sheet is for you to keep so that you can be aware of the purpose of the study. With your signature on the attached document, you indicate that you understand the purpose of the exercise.

Yours truly,

Turkeya Burka (3513526)
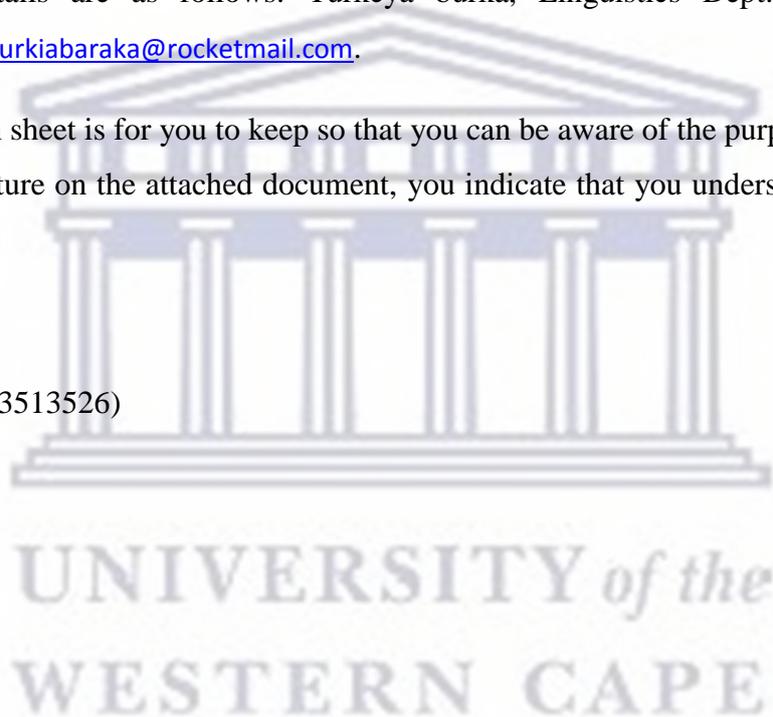
Appendix 9: Invitation Letter to Participate in the Interview

Invitation Letter to Participate in the Interview

Dear x

My name is Turkeya Burka, PhD in Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview which is part of my research data. I have already obtained an ethical approval for this interview.

My research focuses on how different academic culture affects International Students particularly the Libyan students in the area of academic reading and writing. That is, I am looking at Libyan students' experiences as a result of studying in South Africa and their strategies they employed to overcome their problems.

I would like few minutes interviewing you next week. I know you are busy, but I really need to collect this data urgently because I want to go back home. I would appreciate your participation. Please let me know your availability in the following week.

If you are willing to participate please suggest a day and time that suits you and I'll do my best to be available. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you for your time.

Turkeya Burka
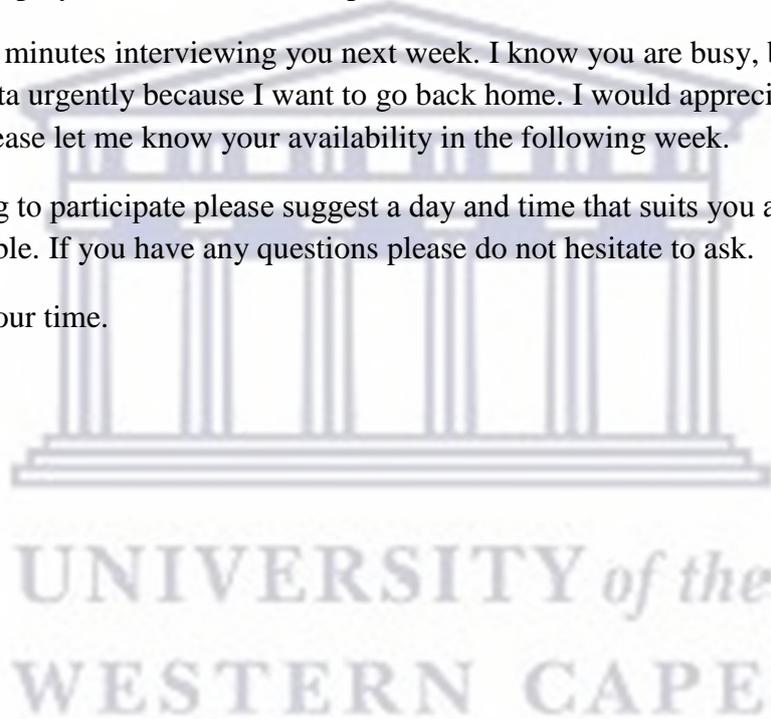
Appendix 10: UWC Instructional documents

Annex 1: Language policy

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
LANGUAGE POLICY

Preamble:
The University of the Western Cape is a multilingual university, alert to its African and international context. It is committed to helping nurture the cultural diversity of South Africa and build an equitable and dynamic society. This language policy relates to one aspect of that commitment. It attempts to guide institutional language practice so that it furthers equity, social development, and a respect for our multilingual heritage.

Language of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:
The languages of teaching, learning and assessment will be discussed under the following headings:
- Language(s) used in lectures, tutorials and practicals
- Language(s) used in the setting of tasks/assignments/examinations
- Language(s) used/allowed in the writing of assignments/examinations
- Language(s) in which text material is available
- Language(s) students use in their self-directed learning processes and activities

Language used in lectures, tutorials and practicals:
Lectures, tutorials and practicals for any module will be delivered in the language formally approved by the Faculty concerned. If lecturers are competent users of other languages, they are encouraged to use these languages in addition to the main language of teaching, if such a practice facilitates communication or discussion.

Languages used in the setting of tasks, assignments, tests and examinations:
Regarding the languages used in the setting of tasks, assignments, tests and examinations, English, Afrikaans and Xhosa should be used wherever it is practicable to do so.

Languages used in writing tasks, assignments, tests and examinations:
Unless otherwise negotiated between a student or a class and a lecturer, the language in which tasks, assignments, tests and examinations should be completed shall be English.

Languages in which texts are available:
Regarding the language students use in their self-directed learning processes and activities, departments should actively seek to appoint some student tutors who can assist students in Xhosa and/or Afrikaans, as well as English.

Access to Academic and Professional Discourse:
- All students will have access to entry-level courses aimed at strengthening their English oral and aural communication skills and improving their academic literacy in English.
- All students will have access to support services to assist them in developing their academic literacy in English.

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Promoting Multilingualism:

- The university undertakes to make language acquisition courses in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa available to both administrative and lecturing staff.
- All students will be encouraged, through enrichment programmes, to develop proficiency in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa.

Languages of Internal Communication:

The main language of internal communication for academic and administrative purposes shall be English. However, the university will progressively make important information available in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa. Essential information such as rules will be made available in the three languages as a matter of priority. If departments for whatever reason deem it necessary, or because research into the needs of the client group reveals a clear need, Afrikaans , English and Xhosa translation of formal communications should be made available, provided that it is practicable to do so.

In spoken debate and deliberation, the objective is to be understood by everyone present. Should a speaker prefer to speak in Afrikaans, English or Xhosa, use will be made of informal interpreting if it is practicable to do so.

The university shall have staff available to assist enquiries in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa, particularly in advisory sessions and at registration in the examination periods. In appointing administrative staff who deal directly with students, the university will make their capacity to assist students in Afrikaans, English and Xhosa a strong recommendation. In these ways it will attempt to nurture and use the abilities of all in the university community in accordance with its mission statement, and to promote multilingualism, linguistic diversity and racial harmony at UWC.

Languages of External Communication:

The language used for external communication shall normally be English, unless sensitivity to the recipient requires use of another language. If individuals request information from the university in either Afrikaans or Xhosa, the information will be translated into that language, and the translated version will be sent to the individual accompanied by the English version. In all cases the official version shall be the English version.

Signage on campus will progressively be in Afrikaans, English ad Xhosa, having due regard to readability and aesthetic considerations.

Adapted from the original draft discussion document (1998) by the Board of Management of the Lilwini Sentrum.
April 2003

Annex 2: Institutional Operating Plan

MISSION AND CORE VALUES

The University of the Western Cape is a national university, alert to its African and international context as it strives to be a place of quality, and a place to grow from hope to action through knowledge. It is committed to excellence in teaching, learning and research, to nurturing the cultural diversity of South Africa, and to responding in critical and creative ways to the needs of a society in transition. Drawing on its proud experience in the liberation struggle, the University is aware of having a distinctive academic role in helping build an equitable and dynamic society.

This broad statement of our mission is underpinned by the following values:

1. We nurture democratic leadership and innovative problem solving. This means that we honour and promote conscious, values-based, integrative leadership as a key means of aligning action with principled vision, and of creating a caring, productive and respectful culture.

2. We respect and strive for excellence in teaching and learning and in research. To this end we encourage a reflective culture among all members of the University community, rooted in taking responsibility for excellence. More formally, we critically review what we have done and assess ourselves, applying our own and international benchmarks and using the results to make us more efficient and effective. Finally, recognising that we need to differentiate in order to excel, we aim to be leaders in niche areas of excellence while maintaining good standards overall.

3. We cultivate a socially responsive, people-centred approach to education that encourages our graduates to engage with the challenges of the day and to make powerful contributions to building an equitable and sustainable society.

To this end, we interact and work with each other and with external players, building robust partnerships within which we are able to address tough issues, speak directly about concerns, and develop ideas and proposals in terms of a sophisticated sense of realities.

4. We expect high standards of integrity, ethics and respect from one another across the institution. Accordingly, we are committed to equity, diversity, inclusivity and fairness, and seek to nurture and build on our diverse cultural heritage. We honour collegiality and a climate of critical professionalism among staff. We also promote high standards of service provision that require continuous improvement.

5. We place a high premium on collaboration, team work, accountability and shared responsibility. Accordingly, we work with each other and with external groups in ways that are mutually beneficial, mutually empowering and mutually responsible, and that speak of caring and connection.

6. We seek to communicate well within the institution, informing one another of what we are doing, giving due prominence to achievements, drawing one another to significant intellectual, cultural and sporting events on campus, and equipping one another to speak with confidence about the University to external audiences.

7. We seek the perspective of others and value their good opinion. Accordingly, we acknowledge a communal responsibility to promote an appropriate image of UWC through the reflective ways in which we respond to others and to the major challenges facing our society, through the confident and ethical ways in which we conduct our relationships, and through the pride with which we speak about the University's vision and its achievements.

GOAL AREA 1: THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

To provide UWC students with a meaningful and stimulating university experience through a strategic approach to student enrolment management and the provision of enabling and relevant co-curriculum opportunities.

UWC has a long-standing commitment to providing epistemological access to higher education. Integral to this commitment is a concern that students should not only be able to enter higher education but also have every opportunity to excel in their studies. Successful students graduating from UWC need to be well-versed in their disciplines, broadly educated, and skilful at applying and extending knowledge. They also need significant social capital. Attaining these characteristics has important practical implications. In this regard, well-planned management of student entrance into the institution and of opportunities to engage in its academic and communal life are essential.

The University's enrolment mandate from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (its Enrolment Plan), requires it to manage student enrolment and throughput in line with nationally agreed targets and system-wide planning. UWC's response goes beyond compliance. A strategic approach to managing student entrance and participation is an important factor in enabling the University to meet its obligations as a public higher education institution in South Africa and to do so with intellectual and social integrity.

UWC is currently in the middle of a six-year enrolment cycle. It requires the University not only to grow its student body, particularly at the postgraduate level, but also consciously to change its distinctive profile in terms of academic field, programme type and demography. Important progress has been made, particularly towards building a critical mass of postgraduate students in identified niche areas. The University has also been able to sustain a more strategic approach to enrolment planning at faculty level, and to increase capacity by strategic improvements in staffing and in the development of infrastructure, areas directly affected by an increase in student numbers. UWC is set to continue on this positive trajectory. However, it recognises significant contextual factors that both affect the realisation of its goals and offer new opportunities. Some of these factors currently impacting on higher education enrolment are:

- national student protest about affordability;
- the human resource demands of the National Development Plan;
- an underperforming schooling system;
- the shrinking pool of learners doing Science and Mathematics at school;
- growing youth unemployment;
- limited financial support for qualifying students who do not have the means to support themselves in their studies;
- pressure for mission clarity of post-school institutions;
- increased competition for qualifying students; a new funding framework supportive of institutional differentiation; and
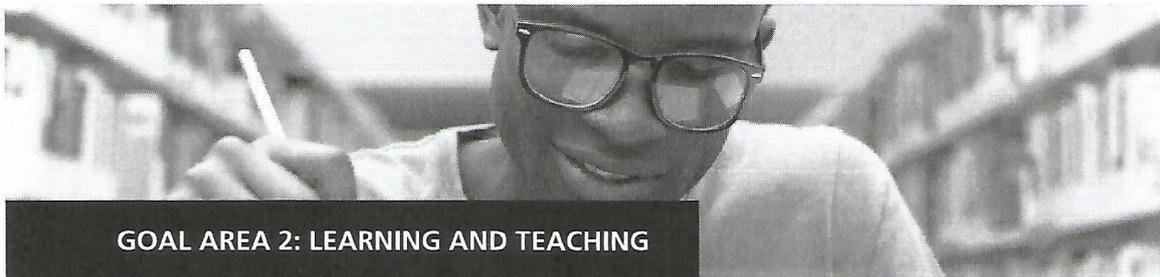
GOAL AREA 2: LEARNING AND TEACHING

To provide opportunities for an excellent learning and teaching experience that is contextually responsive to the challenges of globalisation and of a society in transition, and which enhances the students' capacities to be change agents in the 21st century.

In the pursuit of its mission, UWC continues to place excellence in teaching, in support of effective learning, among the central concerns of its intellectual project and at the forefront of its commitment to its students. Over the last IOP period the University made substantial progress towards enhancing its capacity to deliver on its teaching and learning mandate and improve on the quality and relevance of its academic programmes. Central to this was the strengthening of a range of structural and organisational changes initiated just before the last IOP was implemented. These changes included the establishment of a Directorate for Teaching and Learning, the appointment of a Director of Teaching and Learning and of Deputy Deans of Teaching and Learning, and the introduction of teaching and learning specialists in most of the faculties. They have been supported and guided in their work through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees and the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee, with the latter bringing faculty leadership together with other key role players across the institution whose responsibilities are important to the teaching and learning function. Especially important here has been the participation of the Director of the Centre for Innovative Educational and Communication Technologies [CIECT] and the Director: Community Engagement. This has embedded these priorities in the planning, delivery and advancement of the teaching and learning function.

These structural changes have been mirrored by strategic changes in processes associated with professional advancement and the recognition of excellence. These now place excellence in teaching and learning alongside excellence in research as an institutional goal and a criterion for measuring achievement. For example, appointment and promotions guidelines have been augmented to include teaching and learning as a key performance area. Equally important to progress has been the focused attention given to enhancing the scholarship of teaching and learning, thus embedding it more fully in the intellectual life of the institution and reasserting it as an area of institutional excellence. Dedicated research funding has been provided and important national and international research partnerships have been developed in this area. These developments are seen as especially important to advancing UWC's commitment to being a research-led university where what happens in the classroom is informed by the research interests and activities of members of staff who draw on this knowledge in their teaching. UWC is committed to student learning as a research-led process, so that research is increasingly prominent as a means of learning. The ideal is that students are thoroughly inducted into research and research principles at undergraduate level to support their ongoing formal and informal learning.

GOAL AREA 3: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
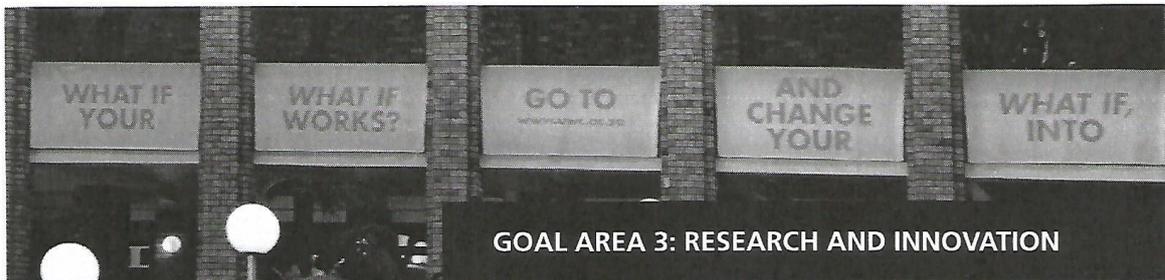
To strengthen UWC's position as an excellent research and innovation university with local relevance, regional impact and global recognition.

In the last IOP, UWC signalled its intention to position itself as an excellent research university in South Africa, with the capacity to produce and advance new knowledge in areas of recognised research strength and to work towards the translation of this knowledge through innovative endeavours. The last five years have seen the University steadily pursuing these objectives with significant achievements evident along the way. These achievements are well documented and include that UWC became the first historically disadvantaged institution to host a: Department of Science and Technology(DST) / National Research Foundation(NRF), Centre of Excellence and a DST/NRF Flagship Project. UWC is now one of South Africa's leading research-intensive universities and this position must be consolidated, further strengthened and capitalised on in the immediate and long term.

Some important research milestones reached over the last five years include: an increase in the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) rated researchers from 65 in 2010 to 124 in 2015; an increase in the number of SARChI research chairs from 3 in 2010 to 14 in 2015; an increase in the proportion of permanent academic staff with PhDs to 56% in 2015, amongst the highest of South Africa's 26 public universities; 1048 total weighted research outputs achieved in 2014, an increase of 157% on the 667 achieved in 2010; and ongoing growth in postgraduate enrolment, especially at Master's and Doctoral level.

UWC has long had an interest in innovation and has established itself as a pioneer and leader in biotechnology, bioformatics and the hydrogen economy. More formal entry into the innovation space has followed the fundamental research and developments in science. During the last IOP, UWC created an institutional infrastructure to nurture and support a culture of social and scientific innovation across the faculties. This included the establishment of a Technology Transfer Office, a Business Development Unit, a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and a number of professional entities to take forward specific innovation and commercialisation ventures. In a sense, serious work in placing UWC as a significant player in the global knowledge economy has just begun. The scientific and financial imperatives for innovation make it a major area of focus for 2016-2020. Apart from furthering UWC's use of its intellectual resources to connect to the broader society and help address a range of transformational social, economic and health issues, becoming part of a strong innovation system has rich and complex benefits:

- It raises the pace of scientific development as it amplifies the advantages of each innovation.
- It builds robust, long-term, mutually supportive relationships between the partners.
- It generally leads to the establishment of companies in close proximity to the university and so to increasing the number of highly-qualified people and excellent facilities in the area. This enhances UWC-industry partnerships through industry's access to expertise and the University's access to placement opportunities for its students and to a wider pool of specialists for teaching and thesis supervision.

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This appendix comprises the coding design of the interview texts and samples of five out of eight coded interviews with the officials at UWC.

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

The following table gives a picture of the coding method to support the interpretation and the discussion. Different colours were used to distinguish different codes. A (Affective), B (Behaviour) and C (Cognitive) as analytic tools for the interviews conducted are used to represent components of the attitude that can be either positive or negative.

Colour codes	Colour codes
Perseverance C positive quality	awareness of differences among students C awareness differences
Determination C positive quality	academic environment differences C awareness differences
Collaboration C positive quality	awareness of academic culture differences C awareness differences
Eagerness to learn C positive quality	Supervisors' orientation/ guidance for making use of DPGS B positive support
Self-sufficiency C positive quality	The usefulness of the services provided to students in the DPGS B positive support
Positive competence C	Language proficiency needed as one of the requirements B positive support
Negative competence C	Language/ literacy: no difference between the students C awareness of differences
Language/ literacy: lack of awareness among the students about the job of the WC C awareness negative	Being unsure of the number of international and Libyan students
No opinion A negative	Socialisation: attached to in-group (avoid across cultural interactions) and miss broader opportunities on campus. C negative quality
Support B positive	Language/ literacy: lack of exposure to English language C negative quality
Lack of support B negative	Sympathy: (make a positive relationship between supervisors and the students A positive
No cultural differences C awareness differences	Lack of emphasising of orientation program from university towards international students support B negative
no difference between students in approach C awareness differences	gratefulness/ appreciating of the usefulness of the WC B support positive
academic culture differences C awareness differences	emphasising the importance of English C competence negative
awareness of gender differences C awareness differences	appreciation of Libyan students' effort C competence positive (I think it is positive competence I will ask my Prof)
awareness of no gender differences C awareness differences	Willingness to go home (home pressure/ scholarship pressure) C negative quality
readiness to help B positive	Language/ literacy: perceiving plagiarism as a universal issue C awareness positive

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1. Interview transcription

Date:	11 October 2018
Time of the interview	12:30 pm
Interviewer	Turkeya Burka
Interviewee symbol	P1- Supervisor/ lecturer

Interview questions and responses	Coding
Have you ever supervised or taught Libyan postgraduate students? How many Libyan students do you currently supervise? Yes, three. One female student is still under my supervision.	
What strengths or qualities for academic work do you see in your Libyan students? Libyan students have quality of perseverance; they don't give up. This is something admirable, you get students who have situations, circumstances not nearly as negative as yours, I mean problems in your country, there is war and you have to come out of the country to study in a foreign country with the culture that in part is very different from own, but what I have noticed is determination even if in the beginning, things don't go so well and you don't do assignments or so; you keep coming back, you keep coming to consult with the lecturers, you keep trying by all means you find other pathways as well. And what I also notice is that Libyan students support of each other, So, they will work together on a project or someone who has a problem with an assignment, go and talk to other Libyan students and then they work it out together. So, that to me that's quality of perseverance; the perseverance basically means you don't give up, you keep going, yeah. I admire that because it is a quality that a postgraduate student desperately, as you know, needs (laughs).	Perseverance Language/ literacy: determination (strategies to overcome English language barriers) Language/ literacy: collaboration for supporting each other
In your experience as a supervisor or a	

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lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan student, what is it that you notice about the way they **read** and process academic texts?	
Well, the things as in honours lecturing don't really look at things like that. This is the kind of things that an English language teacher would look at. That is not my job. So, I have no way of telling you how a Libyan student typically reads, yeah.	Language/ literacy: lack of awareness of how Libyan students read
Do they have difficulties with: a. Understanding the general meaning of the text? Not really**.** I get the impression that they will struggle with the text, use the bilingual dictionary; speak to others until they come up with the general meaning. This is precisely the same thing that my honour South African students will do. For many South African students, English is not the first language; they struggle also like a Libyan student struggles. So that is why I think judging from how the students respond in class after they had text to read, Libyan students don't really struggle with the general meaning of the text. b. Understanding unfamiliar terms/ words/ phrases? Yes, all the students struggle with terms/ words/ phrases including Libyan students, but Libyan students would of course look them up yeah...yeah! c. Determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs? No. Eum,...the structure of the text and the link between paragraphs is not difficult for them, but that question actually links to the general meaning of the text. You get the general meaning by actually if being able to follow the structure of the text. That is important, okay. d. Identifying the author's purpose of the text? Sometimes. It is not the students; it is very often the author, and some authors do write very obscurely. Some authors write in such a way is hard to follow their arguments or their	Language/ literacy: positive competence (strategies to overcome academic reading barriers) Language/ literacy: no cultural differences between L and SA Language/ literacy: positive competence (general meaning of the text) Language/ literacy: negative competence (terms/ phrases/words) Language/ literacy: positive competence (structure and link between paragraphs) Language/ literacy: negative competence (challenge of the authors' writing style)

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purpose, okay. That is why it's also important for the lecturers when they prescribe texts for the students and saying you must read this, you must read this and you must read this, they make sure that the particular author speaks to the needs of the students. You know, you can't… some academics is just write so obscurely. I rather listen to them when they talk, and open talk, when you can interrogate them that read the text. So, that is why I said "yes sometimes" not the fault of the students.

e. Identifying how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas?

Again that is linked to the third question of yours, the structure of the text and the link between paragraphs. They don't struggle and they can identify how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas.

f. Identifying which audience the author addressing?

No.

g. Identifying the less and more focused aspects of the text?

No.

h. Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations?

Not sure because I can't read the author, you know um... like what I said before in selecting suitable texts for the students to read. Ah...sensible lecturers will normally get the text that is accessible to the students, you see. So, umm...when the not sure comes in, is if the students go to the library and pick up some any books related to the topic of assignment or so and then I can't say is the author using understandable terms or not? Because I don't know everything my students read.

i. Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text?

No. I don't think the students have many problems with that.

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Language/ literacy: positive competence (how the author presents and develops the main idea)

Language/ literacy: positive competence (which audience the author addressing)

Language/ literacy: positive competence (the less and more focused aspects of the text)

Language/ literacy: no opinion (Lecturers' responsibility in choosing appropriate texts)

Language/ literacy: positive competence (the link between the introduction and conclusion)

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Are there any noticeable differences between males and females with respect to your observations in questions 2 and 3 above?

I haven't taught males, I only taught females.

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Language/ literacy: no opinion (gender

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So, this question is not applicable to those questions unfortunately. Sorry I am…I just want to say something; I…I…I'm devious about whether there is gender issue here; I don't really think there is gender issue following the line of your questions. I think males and females will be similar.	differences)
In your experience as a supervisor or a lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan students, what is it that you notice about the way they **write**? Yeah, there is struggle with English clearly, some Libyan students struggle with the structure of the English sentence where order is different in Arabic than in English. Some students struggle with tense, but tense is a universal problem for all the students who are non-English, not speak English as their mother tongue; whether you're South African, Libyan, or Italian or whatever, you are going to struggle with tense in English. Then, there is also subject verb agreement/ concord, that is a big problem, is the subject singular? Does the verb reflected? Do the students write, for example, "he comes" or do they just write "he come"? Okay. Punctuation is another area that I 've noticed, I don't know what has to do with Arabic punctuation, but very often a student will not end sentences with full stops and not start the link sentence with the capital letter. So, that to me, those to break some are crucial. You know I am often correcting that as I work with my students' work.	Language/Literacy: negative competence (structure) Language/ literacy: negative competence (grammar) Language/ literacy: negative competence (punctuation) Language/ literacy: lecturers' academic support
Do/Did Libyan students face difficulties in the following? Please give examples or give an indication of frequency or other information that will help me to understand your opinion: a. Using and selecting appropriate vocabulary? Yeah, sometimes they… they struggle to get the precise word, but in my view that is why the supervisor is there, to advise or correct the inappropriate vocabulary, and of course as you read. What I have noticed with great interest that Libyan students when they read	Language/ literacy: negative competence (appropriate vocabulary) Language/ literacy: lack of support from supervisors Language/ literacy: positive competence

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English text, they write down phrases, words, expressions that they can use in their own writing as well. This is useful, this looks interesting, and this is practice of improving their English.	(overcoming barriers strategies in academic writing)
b. Using appropriate grammatical structures?	
Yes. The answer is mentioned by the interviewee above.	Language/ literacy: negative competence (grammatical structures)
c. Writing effective introduction and conclusion;	
Yes. This can be better; that has to do with being able to summarise an English text, you have written an essay in English. Now both the introduction and the conclusion function as summaries, right; the introduction to introduce in this paper and going to and the conclusion draws all what goes in this paper and look back, I have shown that bla, bla, bla, okay…. So… yeah.., that is something where they need, they need guidance.	Language/ literacy: negative competence (effective introduction and conclusion)
d. Using formal language; avoiding repetition; making links between paragraphs?	
Hmm…yes, I would agree that, too, is a problem, that too…umm...logical connectors, sometimes they don't quite know which connectors to put at the start of the next sentence. You see, okay, clearly the students have meant to go from this sentence to that sentence, but there is no connection between the two sentences. Does the student? Should the student here use connectors however, although, um...on the other hand, the reason for this is…., you know, yeah… Formal language em…, it is quite hard to say, it is a kind of general…, it is a kind of general. I don't…I don't really think that the average Libyan student has a strong grasp of informal English. I think they've been taught Standard English that is the only use that really when they do academic work……..	Language/ literacy: negative competence (linking devices) Language/ literacy: no opinion (formal language)
e. Using cautious language and hedging devices?	
Yes, it is a degree of a skill; it's on going the process. Again as a supervisor sometimes when ………..asked the students you can't say this "will result in", you have to say, for example, "may this result in". I think it is amount of guidance you get from skilled	Language/ literacy: negative competence (cautious and hedging devices) Language/ literacy: lack of academic support

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supervisors. …..	from supervisors
f. Avoiding abbreviations?	
I don't think they do.	
g. Avoiding using ambiguous sentences?	Language/ literacy: dishonesty
No, no they don't use ambiguous sentences; generally quite clear what the meaning is.	
h. Acknowledging the source material? I mean do they copy and paste?	Language/literacy: positive competence (don't use ambiguous sentences)
No. I can't say that I have noticed this, but again, I don't have enough students to be able to say this definitely. Certainly, it is not the case with the student I am supervising.	Language/ literacy: positive competence (honesty)
i. Using mechanics of writing?	
Yes, the answer is mentioned by the interviewee.	
j. Organising paragraphs?	
Sometimes.	Language/ literacy: negative competence (mechanics of writing)
k. Using conventions of style?	
Yes.	Language/ literacy: partial competence (organising paragraphs)
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (conventions of style)
Are there any noticeable differences between males and females in your observations regarding questions 5 and 6 above?	
I can't say, I am sorry if I had, I had as you know there are only females, okay in Linguistics Department.	Language/ literacy: no opinion (gender differences)
In your supervision or grading of work by your Libyan students, how do you approach their problems? What strategies have you used to help them overcome these problems?	
Okay. We have individual consultations either face to face before she left, but nowadays it's all via email, and to be quite honest, I often just edit the work; I get the work, I think emm… I am going to struggle to read, to make sensible, I start editing. I edit and I comment some more times. So, when she gets that, is an edited piece of work with my comments_ you have to add this, you have to say that, may be you have to save this…..you read this. I think a lot of supervisors actually work like that because	Language/ literacy: academic support from supervisor

Language/ literacy: support from supervisors(frustration) |

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What strategies did you notice that Libyan students use to overcome their problems? It's quite an interesting question; I think it is probably one of the best questions in your set of questions. Number one, a Libyan student; any student, whose English is not the mother tongue, typically makes use of all the literacy resources; how they interpret words and meanings and concepts and arguments in Arabic gets join to how they understand the thing in English, but it is not only work in English or only work in Arabic. No, the brain…the brain does it work, you can't only think in thinking and translating …em _ (knocks at the door). Right, so they use all the resources they have, you know. Then in this context of our situation here, they would draw and work with other Libyan students, so they have freedom to speak to each other not in standard Arabic, but in the local dialects of Libyan Arabic umm....So, um. Then they also obviously translate, they are very busy with translation; they got translation from phone or they've got dictionaries there, so they are working with that okay. They also use editors; I've noticed that Libyan students find people who can edit for them or they go down to the Writing Centre, they get help there. So, they are very proactive, they don't sit around feeling hopeless, as I said before they got strong perseverance okay. So, I am quite impressed by the strategies that Libyan students use to overcome their problems". I wish other students could be as industries (laughs).	Language/ literacy: determination (various strategies to overcome English language barriers) Language/ literacy: perseverance (proactive and hopeful)

2. Interview transcription

Date:	05 May 2018
Time of the interview	12:05 pm
Interviewer	Turkeya Burka
Interviewee symbol	P2- Supervisor

| Interview questions and responses	Coding
Have you ever supervised or taught Libyan postgraduate students? How many Libyan students do you currently supervise? Yes, I have, there is still about three under my supervision. Before, I have graduated four students.	
What strengths or qualities for academic work do you see in your Libyan students? They are quite eager to do the work, …em, they do like some laboratory skills. When they come here, there is some lack of skills and proficiency in laboratory, but they are eager to learn and um…, but they acquire the skills very easily because they integrate nicely with the other students and we teach them everything they need in laboratory and they work hard. There is a considerable reliability among the students because you do get the students who are capable of writing their theses, articles and so on, but other students have a severe lack of English proficiency. It also depends on the exposure because we notice that some students who had international exposure, they were much better than those who came directly from Libya. So, the students from Libya directly have some deficiency in the English spoken and written discourse. We got good students who are not really proficient, but I don't really blame them because they don't have exposure to English language.	Eagerness to learn Language/ literacy: positive competence (academic writing) Language/ literacy: negative competence (English proficiency) Language/ literacy: lack of exposure to English language
In your experience as a supervisor or a lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan student, what is it that you notice about the way they **read** and process	

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academic texts?	

Do they have difficulties with:
   a. Understanding the general meaning of the text?
Not really difficulty, but their English is a bit poor, but they make their effort to understand and as I said you do get differences among the students.
   b. Understanding unfamiliar terms/ words/ phrases?
They are familiar with terminologies when they read, they understand but when it comes to writing in English they don't happen to make good selection or choice of words.
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (understanding meaning of the text)
	language/literacy: negative competence (poor English)
	Language/ literacy: awareness of differences among students
	
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (understanding terms)
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (writing in English)

c. Determining the structure of the text as well as the link between paragraphs? No, they do not. In terms of thesis writing, there grows deficiency there and some of them fail to understand the <u>structure</u>, I mean I had a student who had a major problem with following the instructions for writing the Ph.D. thesis and we appointed a writing tutor for that student and still the student does not want to comply with the principles understand thesis writing. So, that student has a major problem. d. Identifying the author's purpose of the text? Yes, they do have but I think there is a vast difference between what have done in Libya and what they are doing here (SA). So, may be they are familiar with the laboratory work there but when it comes to this environment, it is different to set them together and while they can do the work, they are not always able to write what they are doing	Language/ literacy: negative competence (structure in writing) language/ literacy: support from supervisors (writing tutor) Language/ literacy: negative competence (understanding academic writing instructions) Language/ literacy: negative competence (academic writing) Language/ literacy: academic environment differences Language/ literacy: negative competence (challenges in writing)

e. Identifying how the author presents and develops his/ her main ideas?
No.
   f. Identifying which audience the author addressing?
They know what the rules are; they don't have any problems with identifying the principles just when they do the writing.
   g. Identifying the less and more focused
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (identifying how the author presents and develops the main idea)
	
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (identifying which audience the author addressing)
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (writing)

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aspects of the text?
No, they don't have.
  h. Identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations?
No, they don't have.
  i. Identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text?
No, they don't have.
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (writing)
	
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (identifying the less and more focused aspects of the text?)
	
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (identifying if the author used understandable terms relevant to the audience's expectations?)
	
	Language/ literacy: positive competence (identifying the link between the introduction and the conclusion of the text?)

Are there any noticeable differences between males and females with respect to your observations in questions 2 and 3 above? No not really, with my students I haven't seen any major differences between males and females in behaviour towards me and also the way we interact. There is not much difference between them in terms of understanding or in anything else; it's about 50%, 50%"	 Language/ literacy: awareness of no gender differences
In your experience as a supervisor or a lecturer reading work submitted by your Libyan student, what is it that you notice about the way they **write**? Some students can do, but others struggle really very hard in their writing.	 Language/ literacy: negative competence (academic writing)

Do/Did Libyan students face difficulties in the following? Please give examples or give an indication of frequency or other information that will help me to understand your opinion:
  a. Using and selecting appropriate vocabulary?
Yes.
  b. Using appropriate grammatical structures?
Yes.
  c. Writing effective introduction and conclusion;
Yes.
  d. Using formal language; avoiding
	
	Language/ literacy: negative competence appropriate vocabulary
	
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (grammatical structure)
	
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (

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repetition; making links between paragraphs?	introduction and conclusion)
Yes. e. Using cautious language and hedging devices?	Language/ literacy: negative competence (formal language, repetition, links between paragraphs)
Yes. f. Avoiding abbreviations?	Language/ literacy: negative competence (cautious language and hedging devices)
Yes. g. Avoiding using ambiguous sentences?	Language/ literacy: negative competence (abbreviations)
Yes. h. Acknowledging the source material? I mean do they copy and paste?	Language/ literacy: negative competence (ambiguous sentences)
There is a lot of copying and pasting, plagiarism. Some of them don't seem to understand the important of paraphrasing. They plagiarise from the internet and from other sources and put directly in the documents, but the supervisors are quite alert to these and we look for any plagiarism scores; we use Turnitin to see if there is any familiar text and then we advise them accordingly. But this is not peculiar to Libyan students, I mean students all over the world copy and paste from the internet and they feel to get away with them.	Language /literacy: negative competence (copying and pasting) Language /literacy: negative competence (paraphrasing) Language/ literacy: negative competence (plagiarism) Language/ literacy: support from supervisors (plagiarism advice) Language/ literacy: perceiving plagiarism as a universal issue

i. Using mechanics of writing?
Yes.
   j. Organising paragraphs?
Yes, but not all the students.
   k. Using conventions of style?
Yes.
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (mechanics of writing)
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (organising paragraphs)
	Language/ literacy: negative competence (conventions of style)

Are there any noticeable differences between males and females in your observations regarding questions 5 and 6 above? There was not a difference between them.	Language/ literacy: awareness of no gender differences
In your supervision or grading of work by your Libyan students, how do you approach their problems? What strategies have you used to help them overcome these problems? I approach their problems like any other students, but I have do an understanding where they come from in terms of their exposure and also may be their deficiencies	Language/ literacy: no difference between students in approach Language/ literacy: awareness of academic culture differences

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and the lack of experience in writing/ written discourse and on the basis of that I try to assist them. We recognise the deficiency the students have and we go to assist them and it becomes a bit frustrating because we find ourselves doing a lot of work for the students in terms of their writing and assisting them where we have to rewrite paragraphs for them, assist them with spelling stuff, grammar and punctuation. <u>Feedback is quite interactive because I do one to one passes with them and they do understand what they need to do in order to improve their writing, what is acceptable standards. My comments in feedback focus on general writing paragraph structure, spelling, and punctuations, all of those things</u>. Some students really need more attention but not only from myself; I think then general concern in the departments and also the institution, the students need some extra coaching, extra tutoring in writing. Some of them are doing well; they become self-sufficient in terms of the way they do articles and publications.	Language/ literacy: support from supervisors(frustration) Language/ literacy: Support from supervisors (feedback) Language/ literacy: readiness to help (extra writing coaches and tutoring/ collaborative support) Language/ literacy: positive competence (self-sufficient in writing)
What strategies did you notice that Libyan students use to overcome their problems? Yes, they improvise; they try to compromise and improvise when in a foreign environment especially in deficiency in English, <u>they will try to solve their problems. We can observe those things and appreciate what trying to do</u> but I made absolutely clear to them that the international language of science, medicine and technology is English, and where you go, you need to be able to communicate and write in English but given the fact that some of them have deficiency in English it makes this more difficult to them. They do approach the tutors and they also communicate with other Libyan students and also other students in the department. So, there is a network of students who assist each other and they support each other.	Language/ literacy: Determination(strategies to overcome English language barriers) <u>Language/ literacy: appreciation of Libyan students' effort (In think this is a continuation to the theme above)</u> Language/ literacy: emphasising the importance of English (I think this is the same as negative competence below) Language/ literacy: negative competence (English language) Language/ literacy: determination (strategies to overcome English language barriers) (network support)
Anything please you can add or recommend.	

I would just like to say to those students if you go back to your country, they need to make sure that English becomes a language stored to from the lowest grade up to tertiary level. The reason is you need to move to into the international arena; you can't be in just a confined space and think in a box because if you want to develop the country in terms of science technology in medicine, all these things need to be communicated in English. Because you draw in English I mean you even take a country like France or a country like China, they were very reluctant to embrace English, but they had to because English is out basing any other language in terms of technology, everything is English. You can obviously convert to your own language but there are technologies that cannot easily acquire in your own language.	Language/ literacy: emphasising the importance of English
My recommendation is that I think Libyan students need more support in terms of their schooling and in terms of exposure to English. English is very important, I mean not only for Libyan students; any country must invest more in languages and English should be one of the top languages that to be able to speak and write and communicating. So, no longer is the situation when you have one language, the native language of your country, you also need to use English.	Language/ literacy: readiness to help (English courses/ programmes)

3. Interview transcription

Date:	6 September 2018
Time of the interview	12:00 pm
Interviewer	Turkeya Burka
Interviewee symbol	P3- Writing Centre

Interview questions and responses	Coding
Do you keep/ have records of international students in the WC? Approximately, how	

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many students use the WC? What about Libyan students, are there any of them in the WC? (To coordinator/ tutor)	
Ahem…I'm just trying to think about that …., we uh, the only, we don't actually keep records, because we do about international students, because we do get information but it is,…,we get information about people's language, about home language. I just want to check what languages (checks the computer's system) mm, there is a list of languages umm, what languages! So, I want to check what languages are, …em. So, we just have Arabic ahem, as one of the languages, I don't know what language do people in Libya speak? So, that is the only way we had to get information_, that is the only way I think that the system would be able to pull out the information about students, but I don't think that we even know from which country they come because we haven't kept that information.	Lack of awareness of the number of international students

Lack of awareness (linking language with nationality) |
| So, approximately how many international students use the WC? | |
| (Laughs). When you pressure me to interview me, (ahem) I explained that it is not something that we specifically pay a lot of attention to because we_, the WC's aim is for the students generally at UWC. We don't do about international students. | The WC is not language specific/ demographic information not important |
| Are there any policies for international students? (To coordinator/ tutor)

We don't have a particular strategy or any kind of that towards the international students. In the WC, we have the co-ordinator, three persons direct teaching and learning and about fifteen consultants as tutoring. So if you think about the priority that we have in terms of the WC, we don't have specific strategy for international students. For the policy, there is a policy in teaching and learning and WC policies go under that. The policies don't differentiate the students whether they are international or national, they are for all students. Now, we are developing a version for work to the WC that we want to be doing more work with lecturers, with a more integrated way so that we are not working with individual students, | Lack of awareness of the strategy/ policies for international students

Teaching and learning in the WC don't differentiate the students

Language/ literacy: academic support: (Integrated / assessment program support by |

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but we will be working with assessment and assisting lecturers with structuring tasks and possibly providing feedback with programmes. All students will benefit from those kinds of approaches. So, that is a kind of area that we bring out at the moment.	the WC and the lecturers)
How does the WC best help international students in general and Arab students in particular? (To coordinator/ tutor) The main system of working in the WC is through individual consultations; we see students on one and one paces. What we do is we work with the tasks students bring, we work on drafts of their assignments; we ask them to bring the instructions of the assignments. The point is not just focus on the draft, we show them the kind of structure that they need, or they need to keep the same idea or they need one paragraph or whatever. The point is using feedback; the students should be able to use or to apply to the other assignments as well. Our main focus is not on language of grammar, but the consultants' work is to pick up some language errors and try to help students on that. I think I imagine that a lot of the students including Libyan students should learn a kind of basics of academic literacy abilities, but they need to translate into different languages; different types of discourses required in Arabic culture However, the international students with Libyan students are part of those students that would be coming in.	Language/ literacy: writing skills support from the WC(individual consultations) Language/ literacy: writing skills support from the WC (feedback) Language/ literacy: readiness to help (basics of academic writing requirements)
If Libyan students come to you, how might you help them? Would you be able to encourage them to use the WC? (To coordinator/ tutor) Well, we encourage the undergraduate because this is the job of the WC, but we don't encourage postgraduate because it is a complicated issue; we work with undergraduate, so we would not encourage them to come to the WC because we are not fully equipped to deal with postgraduate students. It is difficult for us to give feedback for the whole thesis. I think the PGDS may	Language/ literacy: Lack of support (limited resources for postgraduate students)

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be better; they are involved with the whole thesis.	
Do you think it is useful for the students to use the WC? Yes, I definitely think that the international actually should benefit a lot from coming to the WC because it is one of those few places we can actually have individual consultations. This gives a lot of support for those students who learn English as a second language, such as South African students and Libyan students; English is not their first language. At UWC, there is not a lot of support in terms of language. So, I think the resources in the WC are really significant in this issue. The fact that the students can get one on one support for probably an hour and they can come back three times with the same draft as they want as well. The availability is unlimited, but the students have to make a booking, and accordingly we give them a booking at least a day not less than a day in advance, so the consultant has time to read the assignment. International students could keep coming to the WC when they really can get a lot of benefits and can also if they find somebody that they work with; they can request to see that tutor again. They need to fit with them (tutors) when they are available. If the students take responsibility and find it useful, then they can be really useful resource.	Language/ literacy: academic support (proving one on one consultations) Language/ literacy: lack of language support in the UWC Language/ literacy: Readiness to help Language/ literacy: unlimited support in the WC for international students Language/ literacy: academic support (students' underestimating the capacity of the WC)
Anything would you like to add/ suggest/ recommend? (To coordinator/ tutor) I am not able to make recommendations, but I think about limitations. In the WC we do not teach academic English because that is very specialised and very intensive, so I don't think that we give a kind of assistance that is needed for a certain level. I would think that students who study another language, not their first language, don't have some kind of competence of that language, they need more courses. So, that is unfortunate that the university admit students that they can't	Lack of awareness Language/ literacy: limited knowledge/ lack of academic English support Language/ literacy: Readiness to help (language courses) Language/ literacy: academic support (lack of support from the institution toward international students)

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provide support for them, that is a problem of resources.	

6.Interview transcription

Date:	5 June 2018
Time of the interview	10:00 am
Interviewer	Turkeya Burka
Interviewee symbol	P6- Internationalisation Office

Interview questions and responses	Coding
How many Arab international students are there in the university? How many Libyan students are there in the university? We have in the region of two thousand international students, so approximately ten percent of the total students at UWC comprise international students from all over the world. Hmm, we have quite a few nationalities represented, uh, probably in the region of about sixty to seventy nationalities, uh, at the university at one moment. For Arab students, oh, in terms of numbers, I would have to check, I don't have the number in my head. Yeah, let's have a look and see, uh, what our latest stats if you don't mind, (checking the system) okay I'll come back that what I am doing now is just looking the stats of Libyan students. All right, so uh, ahem, I'll wait on those statistics (the system is so slow) to come in quickly just to verify how many Libyan students in particular (coughs) but I wouldn't be surprised if we had some way in the region of thirty around, about ….the Libyan students registered at one time at the…the institution. May be slightly more may be slightly less uh, but in the region about thirty Libyan students, yeah.	Lack of awareness of the number of international students
Do you have any initiatives that are targeted at international students, for instance at Libyan students? Before they arrive, when they arrive, and when they leave the	

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university?	
Okay. In terms of initiatives for targeting Libyan students, there are no specific initiatives uh, but that is the case all around; we don't have at the institution at the moment initiatives for targeting or attracting any nationality of students to be fair. Um, there isn't a marketing strategy to that degree that goes out to look for certain nationalities. that we do what do attract the institution…….. So, that we actually don't have to advertise the institution to get uh, you know, the …the applications that we are looking for. In reality uh, in reality, most of our programmes have in faculties have international applicants, then we have space for at the moment. So, that is one of the experiences of the institution in that regard. Uh, in so certainly we would like to be able to have more access and more …more space and be able to give international access, but given some of our space requirements. That's been challenge. So, we don't have any initiatives at targeting international students or in particular Libyan students in this case. As far as, when they arrive at the institution, it is the role of this office to try and support Libyan students as far as possible with the administrative components of study in a foreign country. As you know there are visa issues, there is medical cover issue, there is your student record here at the institution, there is an accommodation issues et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and our role is to try and make sure that an individual coming from a different culture and different language can acclimatise to life in the Western Cape and in Cape Town. So, we try to support them in that respect. Our support is limited though, so we don't offer linguistic support um, there is no linguistic initiative, for example, where we find that the students need to improve their English or need to learn how to communicate in the Western Cape, in Cape Town, just to get around for the basics. We don't have that kind of support available for any international students.	Lack of awareness/ knowledge of the initiatives for international students

Supporting international students by Internationalisation Office

Awareness of language and culture differences

Lack of linguistic support |
| Talking about the international students' needs with respect to their academic study, | |

how do you help them if they face challenges?	
Thankfully in most cases, the Libyan international students have actually had relatively good command of the English language. In fact, it is a small amount of students I feel don't have grasp of English from the Libyan component, you know. This's probably been three or four that felt I felt wow, you know, they really bad with English communication; the fast majority of Libyan students have been very competent as far as linguistically speaking their English at the institution has been.	Language/ literacy: positive competence (English language command)
In fact, there's been some students who've been very significantly worse than some of the worst Libyan students as far as English goes and English competency goes and there is a lot more students who are really bad than some of the Libyan students.	No difference between Libyan students and the international students
The majority of Libyan students can get by very comfortably in SA with the English; some their English is broken, but they can still communicate, they can express their thoughts and we can still make out worded what needs are and what can assist them with.	Language/ literacy: positive competence (English language)

Language/ literacy: negative competence (communication) |
| For those who can't communicate, look, em, I…I…I really think, you know coming from a…a…a Semitic language; an Arabic language to come to an Anglophone language, does have challenges um. There are significant differences in reading and writing as well as, the_, you know, the alphabet, you see, that's obviously from Arabic distinctions, I mean is right to left instead from left to right. We use a Roman alphabet and Semitic language uses a Semitic alphabet and Semitic writing. So, there are significant differences and I think part of the issue is, in Libya_, predominantly English spoken, in a country like Morocco, some Arabic, some French. So, the Arabic regions of the African continent mmm, there is limited English you can get by very well._ Speaking Arabic and may be one of other European language, but English is very seldom spoken. That is my surprise when students come here and they do very well in English because it is spoken so seldom when they are, but most Libyan students that we | Language/ literacy: academic culture differences |

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have at UWC are postgraduate students. As a result, a lot of literature is in English and particularly in the sciences, a lot of literature is written in English and a lot of literature they need to access at the university is probably English as well. And so, for…for the articles they need to read and prepare for research. My thinking, postgraduates had a better command of English purely because of the fact that they relate in research at such high level of reading and that helps them in English competency. This is what I think is one of the, you know, links to why Libyans can cope so well in South Africa.	Language/ literacy: appreciation: positive competence (English language)
Talking about the international students' needs with respect to their academic study, how do you help them if they face challenges/ if they come and ask for help?

Okay, well, what we've done recently is to begin to refer them to a language school. Now, the Libyan Embassy has very often allowed uh, that for someone to come and study in SA, they will allow to do one year of language. Now, you may know of organisations like Star College, they teach English uh, and at some other institutions. What we do is to refer students to apply in South African language academy and this is where they teach English for reading, writing and conversational English. So, we don't have dedicated programme here at the institution. This is definitely something that we are exploring and looking into, so that we could say at the institution there is a space for language to be allowed and we want our internationals to have competency in English. That is one thing we are considering and we're debating to a large degree em, especially if we want to call ourselves international institution, but in the absents of that, being presented at the moment, we are actually saying let's refer them to a school that can help them with their English competency because English is such an important language for the literature we have available and the research that they will be doing. So, at the moment while we are working on plans to facilitate a language school not for degree purposes, but for | Language/ literacy: Supporting international students by Internationalisation Office (English language) |

English competency purposes. We are also thinking at the same time saying in the absents of that how to refer students if some students have said to us I am really struggling to understand what's happening in the lectures, we then said okay we think it's the best thing that you consider extra classes perhaps a language school um, like the South African language Academy.	

8. Interview transcription

Date:	30 May 2018
Time of the interview	11:00 am
Interviewer	Turkeya Burka
Interviewee symbol	P8- Division of Postgraduate Studies

Interview questions and responses	Coding
What kind of services does the Division of Postgraduate studies offer to students? We work with postgraduate students in general and what we do is we offer various resources, one of it is …uh, we offer workshops to help students to look at different elements of theses production, so for example, proposal writing, mmm, writing for publication is also added to that, umm, some people do dissertation for publication, they also look at things like literature review um, data analysis, the difference between quantitative and qualitative write up and so on. But we also do the software um, SPSS and Atlas ti to …uh, use as tools to data analysis. That is research capacity building. Then, we do uh, a lot of um, we…we seek funding, but we also do the administration. Of course the internationalisation is across cutting team for all units; in our case we welcome projects with international partners that benefit postgraduate students. And we are responsible for postgraduate mobility, uh, we work with the international office but we are the advisors for the postgraduate mobility projects. For the past …em, seven years,	Language/ literacy: awareness/ knowledgeable of supporting students at UWC

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we've worked with more than a hundred people who have been in mobility or seeking degrees overseas in Europe. And now we also run Erasmus plus projects which can be capacity building projects or they can be mobility projects, so people either move or people participate in projects. That's uh, that's uh, thing, and then, of course there is a work around academic administration that I do, I am the chief person of the high degrees committee………..and head of the scholarships committee of senate, so on various structures including the counsel of the university. Um, so, that's part of what of…..but which comes part of one job. Um. We offer statistical support for writing support; students one on one and in groups. We work inside of programmes now as well, where for example with some honour programmes, we go to classrooms with their lecturers, we teach part of the programme to enhance their research skills em. Um, grant writing for project that what to do we'd busy with postdoc applications for big scholarships like…… I'm leaving out something, I'm thinking of the different structures, we have visits from overseas like this week, we have the Polish people we include them things we do like we had a workshop yesterday on writing and in English proficiency which would've been something you could attend. Yes, we em, do monitoring and evaluation, but it's a normal part of our job, you know, but we teach that module now in various places on campus to help researchers to manage the projects better, you know and to be able to write in more professional way. We host interns; we host interns, every year we get between one and three interns; last year, we got two. We offer research events like we host the international projects; we would have seminars and workshops on where we looked at writing and feedback. And then, we offer actual spaces on campus with our partners like the space of level 13 in the library, A Block where writing coaches have a sort of home, and we have the seminar room writing store, the big seminar room where we offer workshops and where we have the Life

Science building computer lab where we also offer some bigger workshops. So, we very involved um, you know, um, in other lines like registrar, having essay in something like this morning………….to be appointed	
In offering services to students, does the Division work closely with supervisors and lecturers in departments to identify specific needs? Okay, we actually have supervision training which we offered …em, twice now really to big coat of staff, so that was I attempt to work with supervisors and in actual fact they got a certificate accredited by …….what I will say is that we set plan for three supervisions workshops which will draw in the supervisors of students that is one way we can work with them. The other way is to answer their emails when they ask questions which I do daily …em, and they ask questions in terms of the administrations of the supervision, how to deal with the difficult situations; whether one to stop being a supervisor, whether one to be a supervisor, whether one to find a supervisor, students will email me all those kinds of academic advising …um, and a policy is when we do offer the writing support, it is written in a policy that you check with your supervisor, that advice given in sound and that you only do the corrections accordingly. Supervisors must have a role, that is the main person, you see, that is the academic expert. So, we really appreciate the role of the supervisor and we try to….When there is a problem between the people, I have enough evidence in this…… which I can show you which is the …….for which shows you how we resolved the relationships, we try to repair instead of breaking it up further. When you see, you can do anything more, you're allowing to …., you do the proper work with them, finish. You take the students to another person. So, you have to do that. We have cases with students coming from the other institutions, I advised_ you get the institution blessing, you don't steal, you don't poach in writing and	Support for supervisors Sympathy: (make a positive relationship between supervisors and the students

you proof to us that you did that. So, we always keep the relationships in that (laughs). But a lot of these things in the background, you understand. We do it quietly, but we try to uh, you will see that's only something goes really wrong, you'll know about it, but there are a lot of thing we keep down so that the institution and the relationships stay positive.	
Does the Division have services directed at students from certain academic cultures who for language or other reasons may not be able to benefit optimally from current services? Yes, we already have targeted services to Libyan students in the science faculty especially. Um, we find that um, there is a big problem with science students, a Libyan student in science; I mean of course I speak with much respect because their first language is not English for the Libyan students. So, I understand it but also remember that for most South Africans, English is not the first language. So, what the Libyan students present is um, problems with English proficiency …em, but it is not a natural problem, it is a problem of everybody at UWC including the professors. So, what I found is that what we support the students; we set with the students and we have a coach that sits with you, a coach not a consultant because the person must not write for you, you still have to write, but you must be able to go away and start to write and come back with your piece and get information. What I found and this is just for my honesty, is that I feel that in some cases they get one or two inspects from the coach to do the writing for them, that is the problem, so we have to get them learn that. And then, there are some of them are in a hurry and they want to tell you that I need to go home now, I need to go to Libya, you know. Now, that trait on your head and the students must get done is not our problem because we can only push you as far as you can go. You cannot expect us to be writing for you. So, some of these challenges came up to the Libyan students.	Support Libyan students from DPGS Language/ literacy: negative competence (English language) Language/ literacy: no difference between the students from Libya and SA Language/ literacy: negative competence (lack of English proficiency as a general challenge at UWC) Language/ literacy: writing coach support Language/ literacy: negative competence (academic writing) Language/ literacy: Willingness to go home (home pressure/ scholarship pressure)

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Would the Division consider such services, e.g. for Arab-speaking students, students from francophone countries, etc.? Does the Division think such targeted programme services/ support will be useful/ important for them?	
Yes, they're extremely helpful because even in the case of your Francophone students we do have French speaking people who work for us here, like X. He is my really writing support person, he looks at my work to take to publications, he's noting to updating some of the stuff have written they can't get to. Now X is French speaking and he is..., I think it's important again having a person who can speak French, but you can translate for the person who is coming from Rwanda and you see that would speak beautiful English , find it difficult even student from Cameron who are from the French part they find it difficult to adapt immediately. So, again a first thing is to have your English proficiency training. I think that is what we are trying to set up now. And then, from there have a …..programme where you have someone, a student on your work study like X, who works in your unit or in your department and you can be the intermediary who speaks both English and French because I do think that a lot are feeling of isolation, you know. And then, of course the students who are French speaking and Arab speaking should form study groups. Um, I saw a model of this when our students went to Spain from the Linguistics department last year. There were four of them, They couldn't speak Spanish right now, but they couldn't speak Spanish. There lecturers wouldn't speak English to them although it was…... When they got there, they had a lot of problems, so you know what they did, I told them to record the lecturers then go back home and sit together and you analyse. As they went on, things sorted out themselves up. So, I do think that we need to offer a better way of this, I know it is not our responsibility however it just becomes my responsibility when I accept the students. Right, so now the …..Organisation is expecting the Dentistry	The usefulness of the services provided to students in the DPGS Language/ literacy: Support (translator/ intermediary) Readiness to help

faculty to screen the students to make sure before they come, they have English proficiency, uh. I got that email yesterday. Now all of these things come at the right time and even while I wanted to have an interview with you. It is important because if <u>external body is now making the requirements from the proficient programmes, like the Dentistry programme that you need to screen the students or otherwise which you can do that.</u> Then, what's responsibility to make sure we still allow those students to come here. We need to find different ways of working. So, this is what I am busy with this week.	Support language proficiency needed as one of the requirements
Anything would you like to add/ recommend? I think there should set up the unit that looks at umm, developing academic English for students who are coming from different countries uh, to go through a programme for the year before they start the programmes that's what I am going to start now. And I have a model I have a ….models but the one I most familiar with is what happens in the US because I studied there and I recall that , you know, doing mostly like literature , reading books or reading all of those things, but their English proficiency of that year was like……..they were improved. They were forced to speak English in class, they had to read certain texts that to come and give feedback, and they really, really improved, they watch television with the English titles, there are a lot of things to be used, but your willingness, you must submit to one to learn English. <u>Because if you come in to a country where English is a language of instruction, you have to learn English otherwise you can stay in Libya or in Rwanda.</u>	Readiness to help (English for Academic Purposes) Lack of sympathy