

Language Transfer in EFL Academic Writing: A Critical Review of Linguistic, Rhetorical, and Pedagogical Aspects

Assist. Dr. Bareq Raad Raheem

College of Engineering for Artificial Intelligence Technology, University of Diyala, Diyala, 32001,
Iraq

Bareq.raad@uodiyala.edu.iq

Abstract

The present study examines the impact of language transfer (LT) on academic writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), with specific reference to linguistic, rhetorical, and pedagogical dimensions. Although a first-language interference perspective has long prevailed, recent studies of transfer in foreign-language writing show that the phenomenon is more complex, variable, and context-dependent in academic settings. EFL learners draw on prior linguistic resources, literacy practices, rhetorical habits, genre knowledge, and multilingual repertoires when writing in English. These resources may facilitate or constrain performance depending on task requirements, proficiency, metacognitive awareness, discipline, and instructional context. This study synthesises research on lexical and syntactic transfer, phraseology, rhetorical organisation, argumentation and stance, source use, genre knowledge, and writing pedagogy. A critical narrative review was used to achieve the study objectives. The study concludes that effective pedagogy should not merely seek to avoid transfer; rather, it should help learners manage transfer strategically through genre-based teaching, contrastive awareness, multilingual facilitation, and the critical use of translation and AI-assisted writing tools.

Keywords: language transfer; EFL academic writing; cross-linguistic influence; rhetorical transfer; genre knowledge; source-based writing; multilingual writing; AI-assisted writing.

النقل اللغوي في الكتابة الأكاديمية باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية: مراجعة نقدية للجوانب اللغوية والبلاغية والتربوية

م. د. بارق رعد رحيم

كلية هندسة تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي، جامعة ديالى، ديالى، 32001، العراق

Bareq.raad@uodiyala.edu.iq

المخلص

تُعنى هذه الدراسة ببحث أثر النقل اللغوي في الكتابة الأكاديمية باللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية، مع التركيز على الجوانب اللغوية والبلاغية والتربوية للكتابة. وعلى الرغم من أن منظور التداخل الناتج عن اللغة الأولى ظلّ سائداً في تفسير هذه الظاهرة، فإن الدراسات الحديثة في مجال النقل اللغوي في الكتابة باللغة الأجنبية تُظهر أن هذه الظاهرة أكثر تعقيداً وتنوعاً، وتتأثر بسياقات

الكتابة الأكاديمية المختلفة. يوظف متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية مواردهم اللغوية السابقة، وممارساتهم القرائية والكتابية، وعاداتهم البلاغية، ومعرفتهم بالأنواع النصية، وخبراتهم متعددة اللغات عند الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية. وقد تسهم هذه الموارد في تحسين الأداء الكتابي أو تعيقه، وذلك تبعاً لمتطلبات المهمة الكتابية، ومستوى الكفاءة اللغوية، والوعي ما وراء المعرفي، والتخصص الأكاديمي، والسياق التعليمي. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تلخيص المعارف البحثية المتعلقة بالنقل المعجمي والنحوي، والتراكيب الاصطلاحية، والتنظيم البلاغي، وبناء الحجة، وإبراز الموقف الأكاديمي، واستخدام المصادر، ومعرفة الأنواع النصية، وطرائق تدريس الكتابة. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم اعتماد منهج المراجعة السردية النقدية. استنتجت الدراسة أن التربية الكتابية الفاعلة لا ينبغي أن تقتصر على محاولة تجنب النقل اللغوي، بل ينبغي أن تساعد المتعلمين على توظيفه بصورة استراتيجية ومنضبطة من خلال التدريس القائم على النوع النصي، وتنمية الوعي التقابلي بين اللغات، وتيسير التعدد اللغوي، والاستخدام النقدي للترجمة وأدوات الكتابة المدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النقل اللغوي، الكتابة الأكاديمية باللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية، التأثير العابر بين اللغات، النقل البلاغي، معرفة النوع النصي، الكتابة المعتمدة على المصادر، الكتابة متعددة اللغات، الكتابة المدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي.

1. Introduction

The language transfer has dominated foreign language writing studies for decades. Previously, the prevalent thinking employed the transfer as to how the first language affects foreign language learning. It has tended to emphasise the concept of interference, error, and non-conformity to target norms [1]. However, this perspective was later extended when cross-linguistic influence was seen as something larger that could not only have a direct impact but also operate through distributional dispositions, preferences, and strategies of performance [2]. In terms of ESL writing, this has been enhanced by the knowledge of learning transfer, which demonstrates more information transfer of writers and learners across activities, genres, and contexts, and not merely imposing one language on another [3], [4]. In the EFL setting, academic writing is a very intricate concept to study; transfer in writing comprises much more than a focus on grammatical correctness or vocabulary use [5-10].

Since English has become a powerful mode of scholarly communication, learners and new researchers are now expected to write essays, reports, abstracts, literature reviews, theses, and research articles in English, even when they have built their existing literacy communities in other languages and rhetorical communities. They are thus not starting on a blank page. They start academic writing in English with already developed linguistic repertoires, textual practices, rhetorical tendencies, and knowledge presentation assumptions that will or will not benefit their performance.

Nevertheless, despite the importance of this issue, research on transfer in EFL academic writing remains fragmented. Some studies focus on lexical and syntactic transfer, others on rhetorical organisation and argumentation, and still others on instructional responses. Moreover, the literature does not always distinguish general L2 writing difficulties from genuine cross-linguistic influence. Rhetorical divergence is sometimes treated as a fixed cultural attribute rather than a context-specific choice mediated by expertise, genre familiarity, and educational background. These tendencies obscure how transfer operates in EFL academic writing and the conditions under which it may be restrictive, facilitative, adaptive, or transformative. Recent research has often examined specific dimensions, such as machine translation [11] and genre transfer [12]. The present review differs by integrating linguistic, rhetorical, source-based, and pedagogical perspectives. Its contribution lies not in proposing a new theory of transfer, but in clarifying how transfer operates across multiple dimensions of EFL academic writing.

2. Problem Statement

Despite the fact that first language transfer has been the focus of a lot of debate with regard to foreign and second language research, there has not been any well-integrated account of how language transfer takes place, particularly in EFL academic writing, in terms of linguistic, rhetorical, source-based, and pedagogical levels. The present literature tends to isolate grammar, lexis, rhetorical structure, or lesson reaction as items distinct from each other. This becomes part of the transfer together with constructs of academic writing performance. Whereas others appeal to rhetorical or cultural explanations, not explain genre well, proficiency well, metacognition well, or institutional context well. Consequently, the discipline has yet to provide a consistent scaffold for comprehending in which instances transfer is inhibitory, facilitating, adaptive, or metamorphosed in university composition writing. The present study attempts to critically review language transfer in EFL academic writing. It also aims to elaborate on the conceptual background of language transfer with regard to academic writing.

2.1 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to analyse how language transfer is demonstrated in lexical, syntactic, rhetorical, and source-based aspects of academic writing. It analyses pedagogical responses to transfer in EFL writing instruction, identifies research gaps, and suggests new research directions.

2.2 Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study lies in the fact that it combines a number of strands of scholarship, which should be discussed separately. The study gives a better framework for the operation of transfer by synthesising theoretical, empirical, and pedagogical research to understand transfer processes in the writing of English. The framework mentioned above has some application to researchers of applied linguistics and second language writing, EFL and EAP teachers, and postgraduate students, who need to enhance the quality of academic writing in multilingual environments.

2.3 Contribution of the Study

It has already been mentioned that different studies have been published in the area of language transfer. This review is different from the other published ones. It has three contributions to the literature. First, it combines linguistic, rhetorical, source-based, and pedagogical studies that are frequently divided in terms of research in the field of transfer and L2 writing. Second, it changes the topic of discussion from an interference model to a mediated and genre-sensitive description of transfer in academic writing. Third, it suggests one analytical scheme, consisting of five parts, whereby transfer is modelled as an interaction between prior linguistic repertoire, prior literacy practice, target genre expectations, writer agency, and mediation by institutions. By so doing, the review provides a better foundation for future research and pedagogies surrounding multilingual academic writing.

3. Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

The transfer of language in the written form used in academic writing can only be comprehended by a few traditions that overlap with other theoretical frameworks. Early literature termed transfer as the

impact of the already gained language on the target-language performance, mostly emphasising interference and error [1]. This perspective was later broadened by the scholarship that conceptualised the idea of cross-linguistic influence as lexical, grammatical, pragmatic, conceptual, and discourse-level interaction, instead of deviation from native norms [2]. In the EAP setting, another researcher [3] also associated transfer with general concepts of learning transfer, claiming that writers do not just translate one language to another but transfer knowledge between tasks, courses, and discourse contexts. Contrastive rhetoric has particularly influenced the discourse aspect of transfer and its subsequent evolution into intercultural rhetoric. The seminal writing on cultural patterns of thinking, written by some researchers [13], led to the interest in discourse-level differences; however, analysis of discourse differences later on problematized the interpretation of rhetorical patterning as static and essentialist. Instead of the culture of a country being sufficient to make rhetorical performance, [14], [15] demonstrated that genre, educational experience, audience, and institutional context mediate and reduce rhetorical performance.

This is a critical change, especially in academic writing, where there are different genres and academic levels. The composition and L2 writing have also conceptualised transfer in terms of adaptive models. Some researchers [16] made the argument that multilingual authors do not merely replicate existing knowledge but transform it according to the new rhetorical conditions. Another article [4] also emphasised the fact that writing knowledge traverses settings and is converted when it is utilised. In this respect, transfer can be strategic, partial, negotiated, and task-based.

This is reinforced further by a genre and academic literacies standpoint. Another researcher [5] defined genre as a socially identifiable communicative event and was influenced by the discourse-community expectations. A few articles [6-8] identified academic writing as relying on stance, interaction, metadiscourse, and disciplinary convention. Genre knowledge has been conceptualised as multidimensional by researchers [10], [17], [18] and subsequently, it was demonstrated that genre awareness could be taught and grown over time [19], [20]. Recent research exposes monolinguals in research on L2 writing and instils prominence on multilingual academic writing, which is viewed not as a target-language-course imitation but as an area of negotiations over resources [21-24].

4. Research Methodology

A critical narrative review has been used and designed instead of a full systematic review or meta-analysis in the present study. The reason for choosing this method is that it has some transparent selection principles. It is not aimed at offering a comprehensive list of all studies on transfer and EFL writing, but rather synthesises the works that have a strong impact and effective representation in the field, and which shed some light on the key developments in the field. The use of a narrative review is warranted by the literature being in different research traditions and within the various terminologies, such as transfer, cross-linguistic influence, rhetorical transfer, learning transfer, genre knowledge, or multilingual resource-use.

Relevant literature was identified through searches of Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, and ERIC. Keyword combinations included “language transfer,” “EFL academic writing,” “rhetorical transfer,” and “cross-linguistic influence.” Publications were also included for conceptual framing [1], [5], [13], [14]. Preference was given to studies directly concerned with EFL or L2

academic writing in higher education, including essays, argumentative writing, source-based writing, literature reviews, abstracts, theses, and research articles.

5. Linguistic Transfer in EFL Academic Writing

Among the most evident spheres of EFL academic writing transfer is the lexis. The use and selection of vocabulary in academic writing are impacted by factors such as semantic and collocational knowledge of scholarly language. Transfer can manifest itself in cases of writers using literal translation, L1-influenced word choice, non-native collocation, and direct translation of the conceptual categories in the first language into English language. Other previous studies had tended to put more emphasis on lexical transfer as an inappropriate choice of words; more recent studies have indicated that academic writing heavily banks on formulaic writing, lexical bundles, and disciplined phraseology. It has been demonstrated by some researchers [25], that cross-linguistic influence exists in the use of lexical bundles in scholarly writing, and transfer is not limited to individual cases of lexical mistakes, but can inform repetitive discourse-construction patterns. Of particular importance is phraseological transfer since it proves that academic writing competence cannot be narrowed down to grammar and vocabulary only.

Learners can come up with grammatically correct sentences, which nonetheless might sound rhetorically unnatural or less proficient because phraseological wrapping depends on previous language experiences. An approach based on dependency grammar also revealed that transfer may be detected in the more profound structural relationships in L2 academic writing [26], which argues that the phenomenon of phraseological and syntactic effects tends to co-exist rather than be independent of each other. Such an observation has pedagogical implications in an obvious way; the teaching of academic writing should not be focused on the study of individual academic words but rather on repetitive multiword constructions and their genre-specific roles instead.

The syntactic transfer can be found in combining the clauses, order of words, using articles, tense-aspect patterns, subordination, nominalisation, and information structure in EFL academic writing. Academic English often prefers nominal structures that are dense, compacted nominal arrangements, and the patterns of discipline-sensitive clauses. Individuals with alternative syntactic preferences formed because of their previous schooling may consequently find it hard to conform to such expectations. There are those writers who depend more on spoken-like expansion of clauses than nominal compression of prose found in academic texts; some of them bring into English L1 word-order preferences that influence the selection of emphasis and coherence. Researchers [26] demonstrated that apparently sophisticated academic texts could have evidence of L1 influence on dependency structures, which proves that not only beginners can engage in syntactic transfer. The transfer of language is also applied to the elements of cohesion and flow of text. The literary writings demand management of efficient logical connectors, thematic flow, chains of references, and how the information should be arranged. Studies have indicated that EFL writers can either overuse, underuse, or misuse cohesive devices, and this is influenced partly by previous language patterns.

However, at the same time, cohesion cannot be researched without discourse expectation. It might seem reasonable in one educational environment, but it might not entirely be regarded as anti-Anglophone academic writing. Particularly helpful in this case is the work of [7] on the metadiscourse due to the fact that it demonstrates that the text organisation and guiding the readers

are the key features of the interaction in academic writing and not secondary stylistic features. In general, linguistic transfer also influences the correctness as well as phraseological naturalness, syntactic structuring, and movement of the text.

6. Rhetorical Transfer in EFL Academic Writing

The concept of rhetorical transfer is used to refer to the effect of the earlier discourse and literacy experience on the way writers organise ideas, arguments, and the relationships among the texts in the second language. This aspect is more vital in EFL academic writing, where academic genres are socially controlled. Authors must not simply be correct and grammatically proper, but also must build arguments, present evidence, lead readers, and establish themselves with reference to knowledge and power. The early tradition of contrastive rhetoric was used to examine rhetorical transfer in terms of paragraph development and text structure. Although this work drew attention to discourse-level transfer, it occasionally exaggerated rigid cultural divergences.

According to more recent research, the idea of rhetorical transfer could be conceived as genre performance. Writers do not simply export the L1 rhetorical structure wholesale; rather, they negotiate among possible discourse habits, genre models, and task conditions. A study [15] has not gone out of relevance since it has connected the notion of rhetorical transfer with the educational setting. In contrast, another article [12] demonstrated that the knowledge transfer of genre may take place not only between two languages, but also within the multilingual environment of English-based universities. Among the most studied locations of rhetorical transfer, argumentation should be mentioned. EFL academic texts can also demand that writers take a side, prove it, accept other options, and boost their confidence. Such practices are all associated with stance, hedging, engagement, and evaluative language [6], [7]. Such expectations are new to the writers whose former educational systems have recognised reproduction of knowledge, indirect criticism, or delaying the presentation of any thesis system. Transfer in argumentation is not simply a structural but also an epistemological issue in that school traditions define writer-reader, knowledge-authority relations, and the relationship between claim and evidence. This debate has been accentuated in more recent scholarship as a connection between rhetorical transfer and metacognitive awareness. Few articles [27-29] demonstrated that the level of awareness of rhetorical transfer L1-to-L2 varies with proficiency, and metacognitive control has a central influence on the development of whether transfer is automatic or strategic.

Some articles [27-29] also established that transfer in rhetoric is linked with the perceptions of L2 writers with regard to the difficulty and proficiency of the task writing, indicating that transfer does not purely belong to but is affected by the experience that writers undergo in the process. Researcher [30], who demonstrates that genre awareness is not only textual but also metacognitive, offers further complexity, and it becomes particularly critical when novice writers work on academic writing, which requires dealing with unfamiliar genres.

The other significant rhetorical transfer area is the sharing of coherence between the writer and the reader. Certain writing traditions promote a more reader-responsible style where interpretation remains quite free. In contrast, English academic writing is usually expected to give more indications of the connections, to be explicit about purpose, and to worry about how to guide the reader. Be this as it may, the difference between writer-responsible and reader-responsible discourse should be

employed with caution since explicitness is not only a result of culture, but also genre, discipline, and audience. One of the most explicit locations of transfer is the use of sources, where significant issues of academic literacy supersede error. The writers are to summarise, paraphrase, synthesise, attribute, evaluate, and position previous research or research and remain independent-voiced. Challenges in these domains can be addressed through the categories of plagiarism, patchwriting, or limited academic literacy. However, they can also be indicative of the transferred beliefs of authority over texts, what can be accepted in reuse, and demonstration of knowledge [31-33]. According to research, the use of source integration is inextricably connected with the quality of the text and the ability to control the rhetoric, rather than with citation mechanics [34-37]. As shown by some researchers [38], explicit genre-based instructions may help novice L2 writers develop criticality in literature review writing, thus indicating the need to research the use of sources, the stance, and the transfer collectively instead of as independent variables.

7. Pedagogical Perspectives on Transfer in Academic Writing

The simplest pedagogical reaction to such an understanding of transfer in academic writing is the most obvious one. This has resulted in the development of instructional patterns that are overly grammatical, with vocabulary and sentence-level errors. Though such practices can alleviate the effects of transfers, they are not adequate in the academic writing development process since they do not do much to cover rhetorical organisation, control of the genre, integration of sources, and stance of the writer. Excessive focus on correcting mistakes may also support a deficit perspective of multilingual writers, defining L1 influence as an item to get rid of instead of as something to learn. The most significant one among all the pedagogical studies is the fact that explicit genre teaching can be helpful in helping EFL writers to regulate the transfer to a greater extent.

Genre-based pedagogy brings to the limelight communicative agendas, structural movement, linguistic nature, and rhetorical anticipations of academic writing. Whenever students see the purpose of a literature review to synthesise and not to list sources, the purpose and contribution are concisely announced in a research abstract, and stance is tuned in a disciplinary writing, they are in a better position to adjust rather than transfer without examination what they have learned in previous writing. To this pedagogical direction, [5], [7], [9], [17-20], [23] appear to be aligned.

According to Pedagogical studies, metacognitive awareness and contrastive analysis are important. Skilled authors have better chances to observe that the previous language tendencies are in line with either the English academic requirements or incompatible with them, and may determine the best approaches of retaining, altering, or suppressing the transferred properties. The less-skilled writers can switch automatic incorporations because they are not aware of the issues of rhetorical and linguistic variations enough. Teaching must, then, be involved with contrastive awareness exercises whereby the students compare parallel texts, rhetorical moves, compare the differences between hedging and source integration, and deliberate on the similarity of similar communicative goals being achieved in different languages.

Some researchers [27-30] support this strategy. An emerging concern is whether the assumption that the first language should be excluded from writing instruction is valid [39]. In multilingual pedagogy, the L1 can support idea generation, planning, conceptual clarification, and comparison of rhetorical choices. In academic writing, its strategic use may help students access disciplinary

knowledge, construct sophisticated arguments, and evaluate source content before reformulating it in English. Early process-oriented studies [40], [41] demonstrated that L1 use is a genuine component of L2 composing behaviour.

More recent studies [21], [42] argue that multilingual resources should be incorporated into an explanatory model of academic writing development rather than excluded through an English-only approach. New tools have also reshaped transfer research and writing practice, including machine translation, grammar assistants, automated paraphrasing, and generative AI. Such tools may reduce superficial lexical and structural problems, but they do not necessarily address genre awareness, rhetorical appropriateness, source integration, disciplinary voice, or academic integrity.

In some cases, these tools may mask transfer by generating fluent-appearing sentences that remain conceptually framed through L1-based assumptions, display weak argument structure, or express an inadequate stance. Recent studies indicate that machine-translation-assisted EFL writing does not always resolve deeper academic-writing problems [11]. Research on critical GAI literacy in L2 writing likewise emphasises the principled and reflective use of AI technologies rather than uncritical reliance on them [43].

8. A Critical Synthesis: Toward a Multidimensional View of Transfer

The literature reviewed demonstrates that language transfer in EFL academic writing is neither merely a surface-level effect nor a sufficient explanation for all writing difficulties. Instead, it is a multidimensional process manifested through lexical choice, phraseology, syntactic shaping, rhetorical organisation, argumentation, stance, source use, and genre performance. These dimensions are interdependent: linguistic transfer may affect rhetorical acts, while rhetorical expectations may shape lexical and syntactic decisions. The literature also shows that transfer is mediated rather than automatic. Its effects depend on proficiency, genre awareness, prior educational experience, metacognitive awareness, disciplinary expectations, institutional evaluation, and instructional support. Research on rhetorical transfer and metacognitive awareness indicates that writers differ not only in what they transfer but also in the degree of conscious control they exercise over transferred knowledge [27-30].

Meanwhile, the discipline is still methodologically disproportionate. Small textual elements may be isolated and unrelated to rhetorical purpose in linguistic studies, and edited across large areas of text without the narrow enough textual detail in rhetorical studies. Genre teaching, multilingual assistance, or contrastive awareness are often prescribed pedagogical studies, though the transfer mechanisms involved are often not specified. There is also the need to have more integrated studies. According to the literature analysed in this location, language transfer in EFL academic writing could be framed as the interrelation of five components, which are the pre-existing linguistic repertoire, the pre-existing literacy practice, the expectations of the target genre, the writer's agency, and the institutional mediation. Previous linguistic knowledge involves lexical, syntactic, and phraseological knowledge. Practices of literacy beforehand comprise the rhetorical habits, source-use traditions, and assumptions on the authority of the academics. Target genre expectations are requirements of the communicative and discourse needs of English-mediated academic work. Writer agency is with regard to the possibility of observing, controlling, and changing transfer. Institutional mediation involves instruction, evaluation, publication conventions, and digital technology. This

five-part model can be used to justify the variability of transfer as opposed to the fixed one, and how the same aspect can act as a resource in one situation, and a constraint in another.

9. Implications of Language Transfer for EFL Writing Instruction

The literature reviewed in this article yields several pedagogical implications. First, instruction should move beyond treating transfer solely as error and should help learners understand how prior linguistic and rhetorical knowledge affects decisions involving organisation, stance, and source use. Second, academic writing instruction should include explicit genre teaching so that learners understand why academic texts are organised in particular ways and how communicative purposes are achieved within disciplinary settings. Third, metacognitive and contrastive tasks should enable students to compare texts across languages and make strategic writing choices. Fourth, multilingual resources should be used strategically rather than categorically prohibited. Fifth, teachers should explicitly address machine translation and AI-based writing assistants so that students learn to evaluate their output critically in relation to genre, meaning, and academic integrity. Finally, teacher education should be strengthened because many EFL teachers remain underprepared to implement multigenre, multilingual, and AI-aware writing pedagogy.

10. Conclusion

First-language transfer in EFL academic writing should not be understood merely as a trace of the mother tongue; rather, it is a dynamic process embedded in academic literacy development. The literature identifies transfer in lexical choice, phraseological and syntactic structuring, rhetorical organisation, argument formation, stance, source use, and genre performance. However, it does not operate uniformly across learners, writers, tasks, or contexts. Treating transfer as a blanket explanation for all EFL writing challenges is therefore unproductive. Scholars and educators should instead examine how prior linguistic and rhetorical knowledge is mobilised in response to changing academic demands and under what conditions that mobilisation becomes adaptive, problematic, or transformative. This reframing makes it possible to study EFL academic writing not through a deficit perspective, but through a more nuanced account of how multilingual writers negotiate disciplinary participation, rhetorical choice, and academic agency across languages and contexts.

11. Limitations of the Study and Future Research

Much of the literature continues to treat academic writing as a single category. This is a major limitation because structure, stance, and source use vary substantially across essays, literature reviews, abstracts, research proposals, laboratory reports, theses, and research articles. Future research should investigate how transfer varies across academic genres rather than treating it as a uniform effect. Research on genre knowledge and occluded genres points strongly in this direction [17], [30]. A second limitation is the predominance of cross-sectional research.

Much existing research shows what transfer looks like at a single point in time but not how it develops as writers become more proficient, gain disciplinary knowledge, and receive instructional support. Longitudinal studies are needed to explain how writers move from automatic to strategic transfer and how developing academic literacy changes the role of prior languages [44]. A third limitation is the persistence of a simplified L1-English model. Many academic writers are

multilingual, and transfer may involve multidirectional interaction among languages. Future research should therefore examine multilingual repertoires, cross-linguistic source reading, and cross-linguistic concept formation. Recent studies [12], [35], [37] indicate that multilingual models are now necessary rather than optional. More research is also needed in underrepresented EFL contexts, including Arab, African, Central Asian, and other settings in which academic English writing is taught under distinct institutional conditions.

The field would benefit from research that identifies how local educational histories and language ecologies mediate transfer [24]. Studies integrating corpus analysis with pedagogy are also increasingly needed. Corpus-based methods can identify fine-grained patterns of phraseological, syntactic, and rhetorical transfer, whereas intervention studies can test whether explicit instruction changes those patterns. Such integration would move the field beyond description toward actionable pedagogy [26], [39], [43].

Finally, machine translation, AI-based writing aids, automatic grammar checkers, and automated summarisation systems are transforming how EFL writers produce academic texts. Future studies should examine whether these tools reduce, mask, transform, or generate new forms of transfer. This is likely to become a major frontier in second-language academic-writing research as AI-assisted composing becomes standard practice in academic environments [11], [43].

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