



## **The Needless Complexity in Academic Writing: Simplicity vs. Flowery Language**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Different from other elaborate proses, academic writing needs a clear language to extend its scope of audience. Intending to be seen intellectual, competent, or more attractive, writers may inflate their manuscripts with unnecessary complicated words and pompous frills unique to specific jargons; however, such texts, called flowery writing, in an attempt to sound important or possibly gloriously elegant only create a viscous language hard to follow, ending with texts strangling in meaningless jargon that needs to be deciphered by readers with considerable effort. Obviously, the reader whose aim is simply to get a piece of information may become easily confused and irritated after a time of chasing the meaning of words inside an overwrought prose. Therefore, now that the primary purpose of a scientific writing is to reach audiences, and a simplified statement would just do fine to achieve that; why do we use a flowery language that is difficult to decode? This study investigated introduction and conclusion parts of a hundred research articles written in English by Turkish speakers, and picked up unnecessary complicated words, phrases and sentences. In addition, some pedagogical implications regarding the importance of being plain in academic writing were suggested particularly for non-native writers of English.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Many writers champion the use of concise and clear language particularly when the discussed issue needs a specialization in the field as in academic manuscripts; however, needlessly complex writing -sometimes called as ornate language, elaborate language, or opaque writing style- has been explored widely in academia (Clayton, 2015). In spite of the hidden burden that it brings on the reader, unwieldy writing continuously secures its position in academic writing. Apparently, there are no laws to prevent a writer from using a word or building a sentence, i.e. as a writer, you are completely free to include a common, specific or complicated word in your texts as well as sentences constructed elaborately or in a circumlocutory way. Inside such a generous freedom of writing and freedom of discourse -the way we write-, few of us are aware of the fact that plain language was protected through an act titled “An act to enhance citizen access to Government information and services by establishing that Government documents issued to the public must be written clearly, and for other purposes” (Plain Writing Act, 2010). Therefore, the question is that for whom we are writing; is it only for scholars in the field which constitutes a very small percent of reader’s circle or for audience from all backgrounds covering the globe? No matter for whom and for what the text is written, the common purpose of an author is to reach as far as possible so that s/he can have an impact on a wide range of scope, and a plain language can simply achieve this.

English for Specific Purposes largely determines the language that will be used for a particular register; correspondingly, you decide the words and other stylistic and discursive features of the language that you will use in your writing. Firstly, you need to set if your writing is expository, narrative, descriptive or persuasive, and then initiate the writing process through the words and sentences suitable for your writing. However, regardless of your discursive features, the language that you use will set the powerfulness of your communication and bond with the readers. If the purpose is to maximize comprehension of their studies, the authors should not overlook the fact that an elaborate language, called as flowery writing in this study, may create confusion with readers because of complicated words and unwieldy sentences which are difficult to decode, and that obscurity may cause a disconnect between writers and their audiences. The ramification of such an unwelcome situation may be an unpersuasive work and discouraged audience.

Writing for academic purposes occupies a large proportion of students' time (Jordan, 1997) as well as scholars', and is highly persuasive; it attempts to convince or influence readers over an issue. It is accurate that scholarly writing needs a formal writing style but not colloquial. This is why scholars have a soft spot for flowery language which is considered to be a showcase to display their superior knowledge over the debated issue. To the contrast of the idea that authors would be seen more intelligent through a needlessly complex language (Oppenheimer, 2006), an academic text literally does not demand a complicated language to hold the upper hand over other texts in the literature; therefore, authors should refrain from thesaurus abuse to sound intelligent at the expense of making the sentences unintelligible for the audience (Crowson, 2013).

The flower writing may not be a conscious manner of authors but as a result of accumulated knowledge that the author garnered on the course of his/her academic life. Pinker (2014) explained the inability of authors to unpack their complicated ideas in a concrete and coherent way appropriate for average folks as "curse of knowledge" (p.32). The situation could be defined as insufficient knowledge of authors regarding the knowledge of others; in other words, authors' flowery language in academic texts may not be a preference or a strategy for leverage but a blind spot that writers have because they do not know how to simplify their language in a way that will expand comprehension of audience at all levels of society.

When the speaker performs a speech act, the main goal is to exchange information with the interlocutor or to convey the meaning to the audience without any loss of content. In spite of the importance of being intelligible, the present study reveals two major reasons concerning academics' use of flowery language; an attempt to be suggestive of being intelligent or inability of measuring the knowledge of the audience. In that sense, this study investigated introduction and conclusion parts of academic articles written on ELT by Turkish speakers of English because introduction part of articles paves the way for readers to understand the general subject; lay a foundation for the justification of the study, and create an atmosphere with clear inductions for the readers while conclusion part of articles is important in summarizing your thoughts and demonstrating your justification on the issue discussed in the manuscript. Therefore, a complicated language in these sections may disrupt intelligibility of your paper, and accordingly may lead readers to lose track and end up with ceasing the reading regardless of the content's value of the work. In sum we should write to express, not to impress; in that sense, this study aims to raise awareness against the possible backfires of flowery language used in the introduction and conclusion parts of academic articles.

## **Literature Review**

A dedicated life to clear-writing and the founder of The Plain Language Group Deborah S. Bosley complains about the difficulty of academic proses that are so riddled with redundant

complicated syntax and professional jargon that even Ph.D. students in the same field cannot understand each other's work if their majoring is not the same (Clayton, 2015). It is a well-established fact that academic writing is regarded notoriously bad by average readers (Robbins, 2016) because of the complexity of the content. There is an unspoken tradition among researchers regarding the use of a complicated language although things simply could be told through a plain language.

The unwritten law of using a complex language is prevalent due to some misconceptions in relation to the quality of the work. One of the basic rules of academic writing is to be transparent, which is why clarity is a prerequisite in English writing (Lea & Street, 1998). Similarly, accessibility is also of great importance in that it increases the visibility of your paper, and increased visibility undoubtedly would bring you recognition in the academia. Now that plain writing brings academics an obvious advantage through expanding paper's sphere of influence, why do they insist on the complicated language? Some researchers (e.g. Oppenheimer, 2006) establish an inaccurate relation between intelligent and elaborate writing, and that feeling seems to be prevalent among academics, though there is no compelling evidence proving the relation between them. On the contrary, the elaborate language may backfire if the readers cannot pick the crucial points on which the study focuses. In other words, through a complicated language we simply make our writing inaccessible (Pinker, 2014) and boring (Sand-Jensen, 2007). Clarity in writing, by getting rid of redundant complexity and jargons, may contribute writers in reaching a more general audience, and accordingly they may have an upper hand in academia. In brief, authors are to use a plain language if they intend to achieve effective communication with audience.

Academics enjoy creating new words particularly through nominalization and verbification, which is a process you may need when the right word would not be available, but they tend to use the process not only to create the right word they need but also "to express complex ideas, perception, intelligence, and epistemology" (Sword, 2012). In other words, academics are free from any rules mandated on them, and the language they prefer to use is not an exception. Therefore, the unwritten law of complex language use in academic research is not a must that academics should follow because there are no rules regarding complexity of language, and even if there were, academics would not have to obey the rule; as to be academic denotes to be free from all mandates around. In concise, the academics should be well aware of the fact that there are no directives that necessitate them to use a flowery language in their texts; on the contrary, plain language has been gaining ascendancy in the recent years.

Flowery writing distracts the authority of authors and alienates readers from the central findings (Iskandrian, 2015) because readers' attempts to put meanings to vague or unfamiliar words may mislead them through inaccurate comprehension and perceptions. This is surely not the first or sole study that has noticed the setbacks of flowery writing. The importance of plain language was mentioned in different discourses for example in environmental policy documents (Jones et al., 2012), in health (Iskandarian, 2015), in legal writing (Hartig & Lu, 2014), in translation studies (Demiral & Kaya, 2013), and finally in academic writing (Robbins, 2016); however, this study focussed on a more specific majoring, namely writing in ELT, and came up with suggestions about why and how to avoid complicated language in manuscripts. Also, this study investigated whether authors are prone to use a flowery language more in *introduction* or *conclusion* part.

## METHODOLOGY

### Corpus

A hundred research articles gathered from five journals that publish on ELT and linguistics built the corpus. Articles only on ELT and linguistics were collected because there might be

stylistic differences between scientific fields; for example, while the language of literature may be more elaborative, it may be rather scientific in chemistry, which this discursal difference could lead to reliability problem regarding the data. Similarly, all the articles were written by Turkish speakers of English because people of same nation may have similar discursal styles; ie., authors of different nations may have their own traditional discursal features in writing, which is an overarching consideration not to disturb data in terms of discourse equity. Each journal contributed to the corpus on equal amounts. The table 1 provides number of articles from each journal, average number of words for *introduction* and *conclusion*, and total number of words for each journal. Not to cause any reliability concern, the corpus was compiled from articles that have equi-length *introductions* and *conclusions*. Another requirement considered to be essential to construct a corpus for critical acts analyses is the publication time of the texts that build the corpus because type of critical acts and frequency can be affected by the historical time in which the texts had been published (Salager-Meyer, 2008). Accordingly, articles published only between 2015 and 2018 were collected to secure synchronical similarity. Another potential confounding factor is concerning the length of *introductions* and *conclusions*; exceptionally short or long *introductions/conclusions* were excluded from the data. The last thing to note is that direct quotations were removed from the data since they did not belong to the writer.

**Table 1.** Journals and word count in the corpus.

Journal	Number of article	Average number of words for introductions	Average number of words for conclusions	Total
The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning	20	569	502	21420
Novitas Royal	20	575	490	21300
Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics	20	553	411	19280
Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies	20	531	425	19120
Journal of Narrative and Language	20	497	368	17300
Total	100	545	439	98420

In line with publication rules of some journals, authors may be required to write discussion and conclusion parts separately; meanwhile, some journals ask authors to use a single title as *Discussion and Conclusion*. The present study did not make a distinction between discussion and conclusion parts if they are under single title, and regarded it as *conclusion*.

## Analysis

The researcher manually analysed the corpus to detect any flowery language patterns. The analyses were made based on two categories, namely word-based and phrase/sentence-based. To speak more specifically about the categories:

1. In word-based category: Complicated words that bring about difficulties in understanding the purpose of the writer were detected, and words that can be replaced with intelligible ones were suggested using Coxhead's suggestion of academic word lists (2000; 2002). For example;

*Convolutred results should be investigated by further studies.*

The readers cannot resolve the meaning of this sentence without knowledge of the word *convolutred*. It is a fairly infrequent adjective and the word already has a plain form with a high

frequency ratio in academic writing like *complicated* or *intricate*. In sum, this study suggests using high frequency words *complicated* or *intricate* instead of *convoluted*.

2. Phrase/Sentence-based category: Some phrases or sentences may unnecessarily include quite much rhetorical elegance through using a flowery language to sound competent on the issue or effective on the readers. However, an overloaded sentence with elaborate grammar or words may backfire because of the infelicities that it may create on readers such as preventing them from understanding the big picture that the study endeavours to present or simply it can make the reader bored. For the analysis of the data, the researcher read the whole data carefully to detect sentence-based flowery language, and then the ones that were found too complicated were remodelled by the researcher through the use of plain language. For example;

Complicated Sentence: *The researcher with high acceptance in his field is going to start to conduct a holistic investigation on May 1<sup>st</sup> about the issue that has been forgotten by the public.*

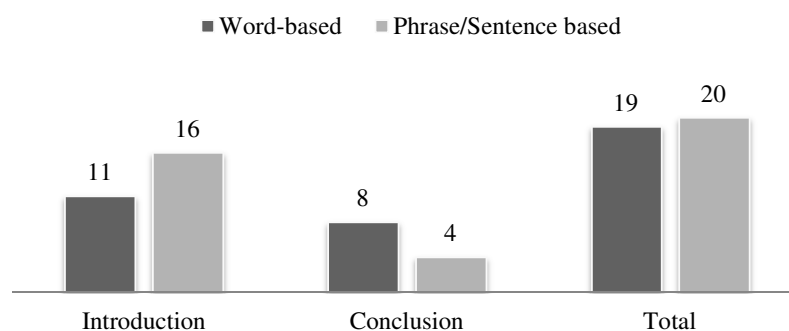
Plain form: *The prominent researcher thoroughly investigates unspoken agenda on May 1<sup>st</sup>.*

The problem with the sample sentence stems from redundant words. To overcome the problem, the noun phrase of *The researcher with high acceptance in his field* was edited as *The prominent writer*, the verb phrase of *is going to start to conduct a holistic investigation* was changed to *thoroughly investigate*, and lastly preposition phrase of *about the issue that has been forgotten by the public* was changed to *unspoken agenda*.

For phrase/Sentence based category, I built a taxonomy composed of seven sub-categories which are redundant words, redundant conjunctions/subordinators, redundant relative clauses, redundant grammar, redundant expletives, redundant information, and rare idiom.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The number of phrase/sentence category was found to be slightly higher than the category of word. The overall results were provided in the Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Number of complicated words and phrases /sentences

It was also found that academics are more prone to use both complex words and sentences in introductions than in conclusions; 27, 12, respectively.

## The analysis results of introduction parts

### Word-based category

Having scanned the data thoroughly I found eleven elaborate words that could be replaced with plain ones. After given in the table 2, each word, concerning unnecessary complexity, was explained in detailed. The table also provided frequency of each word.

**Table 2.** Complicated words of introductions parts and plain equivalents of them

Complicated	Frequency*	Plain	Frequency*
1. Arduous	1318	Difficult, Challenging	14595
2. Ascribe	572	Attribute	3776
3. Auspicious	570	Favourable	6585
4. Cupidity	44	Enthusiasm	10022
5. Debilitative	31	Complicating	1126
6. Extant	1261	Current	87767
7. Pertaining	1941	About	1560875
8. Permeated	827	Common	86537
9. Pliable	463	Manageable	1912
10. Sojourn	634	Stay	95773
11. Unencumbered	456	Clear of	2141

\*according to Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

[ex 1] ...one of the most *arduous* task with multiple challenges for students learning...

The desire to use a different adjective in the example 5 led to a collocation problem in the sentence. The word *arduous* is not used to show the hardness of the task but *difficult* or *challenging*. Therefore, 'difficult task' or 'challenging task' is more accurate than the use of *arduous* which causes a weird word combination with *task*.

[ex 2] ...active participants of their own learning process can be *ascribed to* self-regulation.

A much more common equivalent of *ascribe* could be proposed; *attribute*. Coxhead's academic word lists (2000; 2002) suggest using the word *attribute* but not *ascribe*.

[ex 3] ...at that time teacher find the most *auspicious* moment to correct the mistake.

It may, on occasion, be regarded acceptable to use infrequent words in scientific sentences. However, this sentence does not involve anything scientific; therefore, the adjective *auspicious* is better if changed with a frequent adjective *favourable*. There seems no need for any complexity.

[ex 4] Student's *cupidity* for reading stems from the desire to get higher scores in the exam.

Although the word *cupidity* means *the desire for money or possession*, it may be used for other types of desires by expanding the meaning. Any synonym dictionary would give you the word *greediness* as the synonym of *cupidity*; however, from the sentence we understand that students have a wish for reading. This is why the word *enthusiasm* would be more legible.

[ex 5] Anxiety may have facilitative or *debilitative* effects on the foreign language learning process...

It is understood that the writers wanted to discuss the pros and cons of anxiety on language learning with the words of *facilitative* and *debilitative*; however, the word *debilitative* is such a rather unusual word that it is almost impossible to encounter such a word in texts. In sum, the desire to use an infrequent word brings about flowery writing and it needs replacing with a synonym or near-synonym word. The proposal form of it is; *complicating effects* but not *debilitative effects*.

[ex 6] The *extant* exploration has mostly been done superficially owing to...

Possibly the desire for unnecessary complex words may cause meaning confusion as well as it may disrupt native fluency in writing as in this example. The noun *exploration* has no collocative adjective of *extant*, which is a mis-collocation, and regarded as “a major indicator of foreignness” (McArthur, 1992, p. 232). The word *current* is exact-synonym for this word and it would not disrupt word combination rule.

[ex 7] Research *pertaining* <sup>[sic]</sup> teacher education has explored various aspects...

While the word *about* is prevalent and convenient across the texts, the writer prefer to use *pertaining*, there is a lack of preposition ‘to’, though. It seems that the writer does not know how to use the word *pertaining*; yet, s/he insists on using it. However, it is certain that the writer knows how to use the word *about*, i.e., if s/he had used a plain word instead of a more complicated one, s/he would not have had such a mistake. In brief, plain writing may prevent authors from making mechanical errors as in the 7<sup>th</sup> example.

[ex 8] ...which becomes *permeated* in ELT.

The words *become* and *permeated* are apt for word combination; yet, the word *permeated* is distinctively infrequent and does not exist in academic word lists; therefore, the word *common* seems to be more legible in this example. According to COCA, *common* is a hundred times more prevalent than *permeated*.

[ex 9] Children are considered to be the most *pliable* early in learning.

The sentence may be more legible with the word of *manageable* instead of *pliable* which is an infrequent word according to dictionaries providing frequency.

[ex 10] ...learners’ *sojourn* in the target language environment helps...

The dictionary meaning of the word *sojourn* is ‘a period of time you spend in a particular place’; however, a much more simple and frequent equivalent of it would be *stay*. Briefly to say, *learners’ stay in the target language environment helps* is more intelligible than *learners’ sojourn in the target language environment helps*.

[ex 11] Student who are *unencumbered* by work seem to find more time to study.

There are many words or phrases that may cover the meaning of *unencumbered*, though the *word clear of* may be the most suitable. The word *unencumbered* complicates readers to get the meaning that the sentence could simply give.

### Phrase/Sentence-based category

I found thirteen examples under this category. The sentences writing through an elaborate language and the plain remodelled forms were provided in the table 3, and then description of the problems and solutions of them were explained.

**Table 3.** Phrase/sentence based flowery writing examples from introduction parts

	Original Text	Problem	Remodelled Text
1	In this study, our central focus is on investigating how the beliefs of Turkish EFL instructors conducting AR as a transformative PD differ from the ones engaging in transmissive and transitional PD models.	<b>Redundant grammar</b>	The main focus in this study is to investigate the differences in using AR as transformative PD and transmissive - transitional PD models of Turkish ELF instructors.
2	The major effect of glossing thereby is consciousness raising which will make the word more salient the next time it is met	<b>Redundant words</b>	The major effect of glossing is consciousness rising.
3	Individual differences, having a personal-trait feature, could be related to predispositions of second or foreign language (L2) learning differences among learners of a specific language who share similar characteristics in terms of their demographic background such as gender, nationality, and age.	<b>Redundant words</b>	In SLA and FLA, individual differences like a personal feature may be related to learning differences of those who have same gender, nationality and age.
4	On the issue of language acquisition and skill development in second language, there can be said to be various viewpoints.	<b>Redundant expletives</b>	There are various viewpoints on language acquisition and skill development in language learning.
5	This study holds considerable significance as it intends to bridge the gap and be a pioneering study in researching the role of synectics as a particular prewriting technique in language development in L2 writing.	<b>Redundant words</b>	This study is important in researching the role of synectics as a prewriting technique in L2 writing development.
6	Strategies of pronunciation learning have been given little attention to teach specifically, and also quite few, but pivotal studies were undertaken to date exclusively give attention to that aspect, namely to the pronunciation learning strategies.	<b>Redundant conjunctions / subordinator</b>	Although the issue is of importance for language learning, strategies on learning of pronunciation have drawn little attention and few studies focussed on the point.
7	This finding brings the issue of L1 interference into the limelight assuming that while English and Spanish are in the same language family, Korean and Japanese are in a language family different from English.	<b>Redundant grammar</b>	This study investigates L1 interference, and constructed two language groups: English & Spanish for the same family group and Korean & Japanese for different family group.
8	Procrastination is one of the common behaviours that almost all people experience sometimes in their lives by putting off their responsibilities or tasks needed to be completed in a certain time.	<b>Redundant words</b>	Procrastination is a common behaviour.
9	Having proficiency in English, can be considered as a way of guaranteeing access to science and technology and access to the	<b>Redundant grammar</b>	Proficiency in English may be a global gate to access to science, technology, international business community, and education.



	international business community and education in a globalized world.		
10	Fostering listening comprehension is key to develop proficiency in speaking and it provides the input that is the raw material necessary for the process to occur	<b>Redundant expletives</b>	Because it triggers the learning process, listening comprehension is to be fostered if proficiency in speaking is aimed.
11	Put simply[sic], all of the whole of the aforementioned studies clearly reveal that teaching experience is...	<b>Redundant words</b>	In sum, all studies mentioned on this paper reveal that teaching experience is...
12	Considering the increasing affect [sic] of globalization around the world, it becomes easy to perceive the potential and power of technology as well as the necessity of doing research in the area of CALL which derives from the need to integrate technology into the language learning process in an efficient way.	<b>Redundant words</b>	Considering the increasing effect of globalization and technology, it becomes a necessity to make a research on CALL that integrates technology into language learning.
13	Much ink has been spilled on the role of self-efficacy in language development	<b>Rare idiom</b>	The role of self-efficacy in language development has been widely discussed.
14	After describing the participant's reading habits both in his native language (Turkish) and foreign language (English), it explores the difficulties that he experiences in academic reading in English, and the reading strategies that he applies in attempting to overcome these.	<b>Redundant words and conjunctions</b>	Having described the participant's reading habits in Turkish and English; the researcher explored the difficulties that the participant experienced, and the reading strategies to overcome these difficulties.
15	Although students' probability of studying with NESTs is relatively maximal at EMI programs, most of their language and content teachers will be NNESTs given the fact that among all English speakers whose number now corresponds to about two billion, NNESTs have already outnumbered NESTs by as much as five to one.	<b>Redundant info</b>	Although students' chance of studying with NESTs is much at EMI programmes, most of their language and content teachers are NNESTs because NNESTs outnumber almost fivefold NESTs.
16	This difference between positive and negative emotions can be further explained through broaden-and-build theory, which suggests that the former triggers thought-action tendencies in humans, resulting in an increased level of attention, a drive for problem-solving and critical thinking unlike negative emotions which are more oriented towards immediate survival, having a smaller repertoire of appropriate responses.	<b>Redundant reduced (and) relative clauses</b>	The difference between positive and negative emotions can be explained through broaden-and-build theory in which positive emotions trigger thought-action in humans. This results in attention increasing which is a drive for problem solving as well as critical thinking. On the other hand, negative emotions are based on immediate survival with fewer appropriate responses.

In some flowery writing examples, we may encounter redundant words with intent of seeming more sophisticated, but being sophisticated or complicated are two very different things that the authors should be aware of. According to the findings, the foremost reason for flowery writing is the inclusion of redundant words by writers. Examples 2, 3, 5, 8, 11, and 12 included words more than necessary to explain a situation, which does not help readers to understand what the author intended, but does cause confusion (Barrass, 2005) in getting the meaning. It may be difficult particularly for non-native writers of English to place words in correct order not to transform the meaning of a sentence unjustifiably.

Similarly, a sentence constructed through –I call– *redundant grammar* may lead to a disruption in conveying the meaning as in 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> examples. In brief, to use overdosed grammar to build a simple sentence creates a perfect setting for flowery appearance.

The other problem is redundant conjunctions and subordinators. The struggle to build very long sentences with the help of conjunctions and subordinators may not always be a good option

because the reader may get lost inside the sentence where a full stop is forgotten (c.f. 6<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> examples). Therefore, it should be kept in mind that conjunctions are to be used moderately, and a sentence with too many conjunctions will only make the sentence incomprehensible.

The tenth and fourth examples are vague because of redundant use of expletives like *it/there-phrases* which generally function to fill a syntactic position. Although authors intend to use expletives to explain a situation, they may prevent readers from focusing the main point due to prolonged sentences.

The problem with the 13<sup>th</sup> example is the use of a rare idiom. The desire to express himself / herself in a different way from other utterances in order to be seen sophisticated may backfire if the reader does not know the meaning of the idiom. At the expense of seeming different through using a rare way of expression like idioms, proverbs, and other chunks, the author should not take a risk of constructing a flowery sentence that may disrupt the readability of his/her manuscript.

Filling a sentence with extra information may seem necessary for the writer while it may entirely be unnecessary for the readers; even may cause readers to miss the main point in the middle of word clusters (c.f. 15<sup>th</sup> example); therefore, writers should avoid redundant information.

## The analysis results of conclusion parts

### Word-based category

Eight elaborate words were found in conclusion parts of the articles. The table 4 includes complicated words and those that could be replaced with plain ones. Each context of the unnecessary complicated words was provided following the table.

**Table 4.** Complicated words of conclusion parts and plain equivalents of them

Complicated	Frequency*	Plain	Frequency*
1. <b>Bespeak</b>	120	Show	224129
2. <b>Ebullient</b>	387	Cheerful	3530
3. <b>Equanimity</b>	341	Calmness	817
4. <b>Excogitate</b>	1	Conceive	2275
5. <b>Isomorphicity</b>	1	Resemblance	3079
6. <b>Newly-minted</b>	388	Fresh, new	53483
7. <b>Parsimonious</b>	253	Insufficient, short	4221
8. <b>vis-à-vis</b>	81	In comparison with	19564

\*according to Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

[ex1] Native English speaking teachers *bespeak* being of high prestige among other speakers.

As seen in the table 4, in comparison with the word *show*, *bespeak* is a very infrequent word. Furthermore, the word *show* is one of the foremost words in academic word lists.

[ex2] Students seemed to be *ebullient* concerning the use of...

Some words may be seen informal by writers because they are so intertwined with spoken language; therefore, they may avoid using them. The word *cheerful* may be an example for that phenomenon; however, it is absolutely worse to use a complicated form instead of a word used generally in spoken language as in example 2. That a word be common in spoken language does not mean that it cannot be used in writing.

[ex3] *Equanimity* of teacher in classroom setting is important so as not to...

Jargon creates a register with its own terms; for example, the word *equanimity* is a rather common word in psychology while it is almost invisible in other registers. In other words, the *equanimity* may be regarded as a plain word for psychologists, but not for academics in other fields; therefore, the word *calmness* seems to be a better option for reading fluency for all types of readers.

[ex4] The curriculum should be *excogitated* before its implementation in...

[ex5] The lack of steady *isomorphicity* between...

The examples four and five included such infrequent words that it is almost impossible to get the meaning without looking up a dictionary. Even, the word *isomorphicity* does not exist in the dictionary because it is a newly conjugated word by the writer him/herself. On occasion, the conditions may render you compulsory to create a unique word but not when there already exists a word.

[ex6] It is important for L2 researchers in general and *newly-minted* PhDs in particular to be better equipped with...

[ex7] *Parsimonious* account of the context may cause...

The use of true word combinations is important for native-fluency in writing (Demir, 2018). The word *newly-minted* is not collocate word for *PhD* but it is *new* or *fresh*. Similarly, the true collocate word for *account* is *short* or *insufficient*. The writers may divorce themselves from the similar parlances in the literature by using synonyms, but it should be taken into consideration that different word choice may cause mis-collocation, which is an unacceptable situation in academic discourse at all (Demir, 2017).

[ex8] ...today's students are quite good at using computer technology *vis-à-vis* their teachers.

No language is pure because of its loan words; therefore, it is common to include and use loan words in any language. However, the frequency of loan words may not be as high as the words original to the language. In the example eight the writer uses a French word of *vis-à-vis* while the exact equivalent of it is *in comparison with*. Now that the primary aim is to be plain in academic writing, it sounds more sensible if the writer had used *in comparison with* instead of *vis-à-vis*.

### Phrase / Sentence based category

Six examples were found under this category. The original text written through an elaborate language and the plain remodelled forms were provided in the table 5. You may also find the description of the problems in the table.

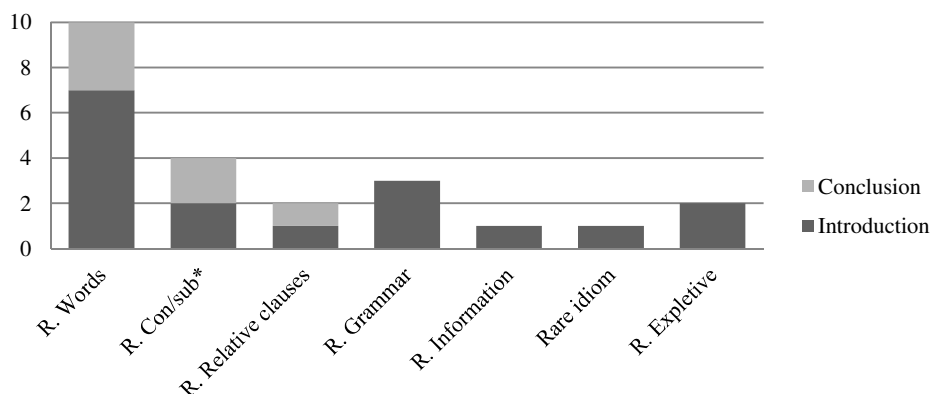
**Table 5.** Phrase/sentence based flowery writing examples from conclusion parts

	Original Text	Problem	Remodelled Text
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1	The picture which emerges from this study of a group of successful students of Turkish is one of remarkable homogeneity.	<b>Redundant words</b>	The results show remarkable homogeneity about Turkish students.
2	As for the beliefs of instructors participating in transitional professional development practices, these are similar to those based on transmissive professional development models, as the approach also depend on knowledge transmission models with expert-driven professional development activities, and have extrinsic motivation as a facilitator.	<b>Redundant conjunctions</b>	The beliefs of instructors in both transitional and transmissive professional development practices are alike. Similarly, the approach depends on knowledge transmission models through expert-driven professional development activities; and has extrinsic motivation as a facilitator.
3	Despite the long-held controversy of accuracy versus fluency, the analysis of video-records and transcribed texts showed that in early level, when students made most mistakes in plural form, they were already far from fluency, which implies that lack of accuracy is accompanied by lack of fluency.	<b>Redundant words and relative clause</b>	Despite the long-held controversy of accuracy versus fluency, the analyses showed that students were far from fluency in early levels where they made mistakes in plural form. This proves positive correlation between accuracy and fluency.
4	Since most of the teachers work with a fixed syllabi and they certainly need to assess learners for what has been enabled to them, examinations are inescapable; however, as indicated in the study, the pressure put on the students to be prepared for the examination distracts not only them but also their teachers as well and this unfortunately causes students to perceive the language like a lesson to study, rather than a subject to be learned both in and outside the classroom.	<b>Redundant words and conjunctions</b>	Examinations are necessary in that teachers work with fixed syllabi and need to assess learners; however, the stress of exams may distract both students and teachers. With this, students may have an unfortunate feeling of that language is learnt only inside classroom.

The examples 1, 3, and 4 were complicated because they included redundant words. Redundancy may confuse readers in getting the central point of the text. Similarly, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> examples were prolonged unnecessarily with the addition of conjunctions. Finally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> example, together with redundant words, was complicated because of unnecessary use of relative clauses.

The figure 2 provides taxonomy categorization results for a better insight regarding the reasons of why the sentences are complicated.



**Figure 2.** Reasons of complicated texts

As seen from the figure (the capital R represents for the word *redundant*), primary reason of flowery writing in academic texts is the use of redundant words (10); then follows R.

conjunctions/subordinators (4), R. grammar (3), R. relative clauses (2), R. expletives (2), R. information (1), and rare idiom (1).

This study investigated introduction and conclusion parts of a hundred research papers written in English by Turkish speakers of English and found that Turkish speakers of English are not prone to flowery writing, though they had some word and phrase/sentence based examples. The study also proved that authors use more complicated words and sentences in introduction part than conclusion part.

## CONCLUSION

It seems that there is a war between supporters of plain and complicated academic writing in which supporters of plain writing seem to be far from a win because the idea that complicated language with full of specific jargons and complex sentences is a way of showing your intelligent is still common in academia, there is no compelling evidence supporting the positive correlation between a flowery language and academic accomplishment, though.

Time is too precious to spend generously; therefore, readers may avoid anything that may cause time-wasting as readers do to decode texts in scholarly writing; however, flowery writing crammed with unnecessary complicated words, pompous frills, and highly specific jargon, no doubt, cause time-loss. Furthermore, complicated language in texts does not create an elegant scientific text but only a viscous language that needs deciphering by the reader with considerable effort. Obviously, the reader whose aim is simply to get a piece of information may become easily confused and irritated after a time of chasing the meaning of words inside an overwrought prose. The primary purpose of a scientific writing is to reach and affect a wide scope of area and a simplified statement would just do fine to achieve that; therefore, the writers are suggested to use a plain language in their manuscripts.

Academic writing is notoriously bad and it does not have to be that way (Robbins, 2016). Through a complicated language we simply make our writing inaccessible (Pinker, 2014). Therefore, clarity in writing by getting rid of redundant complexity and jargons, your work may reach to a more general audience. On the other hand flowery writing is one of the reasons making your text boring so it should be avoided (Sand-Jensen, 2007).

Academic writing can be expected to be more complicated than a casual writing because it is formal, and the audience have background knowledge at a certain extent. Yet, the writer should incorporate the jargon and the phrases to create intelligible scientific texts. In other words, flowery writing and academic writing are two separate things in that flowery writing does not add anything scientific into your manuscripts, on the contrary, it prevents the reader from having a good grasp of the issues. In other words, an academic text literally does not demand a complicated language to hold the upper hand over other texts in the literature; therefore, authors should refrain from thesaurus abuse to sound intelligent at the expense of making the sentences unintelligible for the audience (Crowson, 2013).

Those who support plain language in writing obviously need more contributions from the academic and research organizations (Mazur, 2000). Therefore, further studies that aim to reveal the advantages of plain language in academic text will certainly bring benefits to readers that are either bored or confused from the complexity of scientific texts.

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