

The Interplay of Academic Writing Skills and Attitudes Toward Classical Arabic Among Graduate Students

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Abstract—This study aimed to assess the academic writing skills of graduate students in educational departments at a leading state university in Saudi Arabia and investigate the correlation between these skills and their attitudes towards the classical Arabic language. Employing a descriptive analytical approach, the research utilized an academic writing test and the Attitude towards Classical Arabic Scale. A random sample of 105 male and female students, representing 45% of the study population, participated. Drawing from a compendium of essential Academic Arabic writing skills, encompassing 74 sub-skills distributed across 8 core competencies, the results of the writing test unveiled that the participants had achieved a satisfactory level of mastery in these skills. Key findings reveal that graduate students excel in style and linguistic accuracy while showing a need for improvement in formatting skills. The study also highlights positive attitudes towards Classical Arabic, with a strong preference for writing, followed by listening, reading, and speaking. Notably, a significant positive correlation was observed at a 0.05 significance level between students' possession of academic writing skills and their attitudes towards Classical Arabic. Furthermore, gender-based analysis indicated higher academic writing skill scores among female students in educational departments. Based on these insightful findings, pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for future research were also deliberated.

Index Terms—graduate students, academic writing skills, attitudes, classical Arabic, educational departments

I. INTRODUCTION

In graduate programs leading to academic degrees such as Master's or Doctorate, the acquisition of essential academic writing skills emerges as a pivotal cornerstone. These skills are honed through research methodology courses, workshops, and engaging in scholarly dialogues and seminars within academic departments. Academic writing, a vital component for graduate students, is essential for crafting research papers, proposals, theses, and scholarly works with clarity and precision, pivotal for acceptance in peer-reviewed journals. It serves as a medium for articulating knowledge, theories, and specialized skills in a scientific language supported by evidence, reasoned arguments, and proper citations (Hay, 1996; Khadawardi, 2022).

Academic writing, a demanding yet fundamental skill, requires constructing meaningful, logical, and coherent texts, reflecting a cognitive process that necessitates skillful execution (Khadawardi, 2022). In the context of this study, academic writing is defined as a scholarly form of communication utilized by graduate students in educational departments for various academic endeavors such as research proposals, theses, papers, reports, and articles, demanding scientific precision, objectivity, and adherence to specific methodologies to achieve research objectives effectively.

Despite the challenges associated with academic writing, its pivotal role in academia for teaching, research, and administrative functions is irrefutable (Antonioua & Moriartyb, 2008; Lee & Boud, 2003). Success at the graduate level hinges on students' capacity to engage with and synthesize existing literature to develop their academic voice, a skill crucial for sustained scholarly success (McGrail et al., 2006).

Recognizing the importance of academic writing in graduate education, educational research has placed emphasis on delineating its skills, refining teaching methodologies, and evaluating student performance, with esteemed universities globally offering specialized courses to enhance students' writing prowess (Anwar & Ahmed, 2016; Nodoushan, 2014). However, existing preparatory classes often fall short in adequately preparing students for the rigors of graduate-level academic writing, underscoring the perceived complexity and challenges associated with this essential skill (Pelias, 2003).

In graduate programs leading to academic degrees such as Master's or Doctorate, the acquisition of essential academic writing skills emerges as a pivotal cornerstone. Although much research addresses the experiences of ESL/EFL graduate students in academic writing, few studies have focused on the academic writing skills of Arab graduate students. Scholars call for more research on ways to support these students and note a need for more research investigating the backgrounds of these students, their writing attitudes and experiences, strengths and weaknesses, and preferred ways of learning (Ali & Abdulhaleem, 2024; Khadawardi, 2022).

Academic Arabic writing is distinguished by its specialized language, unique style, precision, and standards that researchers must adhere to in order to achieve a high standard of quality and excellence. Classical Arabic is a fundamental

element that governs individual behavior and exerts a significant influence, rendering it impossible for individuals to do without language in various aspects of their lives. It is likened to the nourishment individuals consume and the air they breathe (Khurama, 1979). This viewpoint is reinforced by Taema and Minaa (2001, p. 48), stating that educational programs refrain from using colloquial language in teaching for several reasons:

1. Religious: Colloquial Arabic does not assist learners in connecting with the Quran, Hadith, and heritage.
2. Nationalistic: It creates divisions among Arab peoples and severs intellectual bonds.
3. Linguistic: Colloquial Arabic is narrower in thought and expression compared to Classical Arabic, even if it may seem deficient in Classical Arabic concepts. Colloquial Arabic is incapable of elucidating these concepts, hence the insistence on teaching in Classical Arabic.

The significance of Classical Arabic language is evident in general and becomes more pronounced in graduate studies across all programs taught in Arabic due to the multitude of significant benefits it offers. It stimulates students' minds, enhances their ownership, deepens their understanding, distances them from colloquial influences, broadens their horizons, connects them to their rich heritage, and lays the foundation for their present and future.

The researcher of the present study has identified significant deficiencies in the development of research proposals among graduate students, particularly master's candidates, attributing these shortcomings possibly to inadequacies in academic Arabic writing skills. This revelation stemmed from various instances: analysing research proposals for master's students; supervising master's theses and noting weaknesses in these skills; consulting faculty members who concurred on the prevalent academic writing deficiencies among graduate students; and referencing studies such as those conducted by Al-Ahwal (2015), Hussein (2020), Al-Faqih and Dakhikh (2020), Al-Baladi and Hajji (2021), and Al-Zahrani (2021) that underscore similar shortcomings. Notably, some graduate students have been observed resorting to colloquial language in their academic writing and even during academic discussions, prompting the researcher to delve deeper into this issue.

Thus, the present study aims to investigate the essential academic Arabic writing skills lacking among master's students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University, exploring the correlation between their proficiency in academic writing and their attitudes towards the use of Classical Arabic, in order to shed light on this crucial aspect of their academic development. The main objectives of this study are to identify the necessary academic writing skills crucial for graduate students in educational departments, assess the proficiency levels of these skills among the students, unveil statistically significant variations in their proficiency levels based on factors like gender, specialization, academic level, and cumulative GPA, explore the attitudes of graduate students towards Classical Arabic, analyse statistically relevant differences in these attitudes influenced by variables such as gender, specialization, academic level, and cumulative GPA, and finally, investigate the correlation between the possession of academic writing skills and the attitudes towards Classical Arabic among graduate students in educational departments. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do graduate students in educational departments possess academic Arabic writing skills?
2. Are there differences in the academic writing skills of graduate students in educational departments based on variables like gender, specialization, and study level?
3. What are the attitudes of graduate students in educational departments towards Classical Arabic, and are there variations based on factors such as gender, specialization, academic level, and cumulative GPA?
4. Is there a relationship between the academic writing skills of graduate students in educational departments and their attitudes towards Classical Arabic?

The significance of this research study is rooted in its potential to offer valuable insights directly related to the academic writing skills of graduate students within educational departments. By identifying and highlighting weaknesses in students' academic writing capabilities, particularly in the context of scientific research endeavors, this study aims to pave the way for targeted interventions that can address these deficiencies effectively. Moreover, by equipping graduate students with essential research skills crucial for their educational journey, this research contributes to enhancing their proficiency in academic writing and research methodologies at a critical educational stage.

Furthermore, the findings of this study can play a pivotal role in shaping the development of graduate programs in education, such as Educational Research Methodologies and Research Seminars, by providing valuable indicators for curriculum design and enhancement. Additionally, by offering insights into the proficiency levels of graduate students in academic writing skills, this research can aid faculty members in tailoring their teaching methods to better support students in honing their writing abilities.

Moreover, this study seeks to guide graduate students within educational departments towards a deeper appreciation of Classical Arabic by utilizing an attitudes scale to gauge their perceptions and responses. By fostering interest in Classical Arabic and emphasizing its significance, this research aims to not only enhance students' linguistic and cultural understanding but also to underscore the importance of this language in academic and research contexts within the educational domain.

II. PREVIOUS STUDIES

The studies discussed in this review were conducted within the Saudi context, focusing on two primary areas:

A. *Studies on Academic Writing*

Research into academic writing skills among students in Saudi Arabia has yielded valuable insights. Al-Ahwal (2015) developed a program targeted at enhancing academic writing skills among education college students, demonstrating significant grade improvements post-intervention within the experimental group. Similarly, Hussain (2020) explored the perspectives of foundation year students in scientific disciplines, revealing a correlation between perceived language skill importance and actual proficiency in academic writing. Al-Zahrani (2021) identified essential academic writing skills at Bisha University, offering insights on required competencies based on faculty perspectives.

Additionally, Al-Baladi and Haji (2021) assessed the proficiency levels of students in academic writing within the Arabic Language Curriculum and Teaching Methods department, reporting a moderate proficiency level across universities. Haji (2023) evaluated the effectiveness of a writing process-based program in developing academic writing skills among master's students, highlighting a mix of acquired and lacking skills. Salem et al. (2024) examined common errors in academic writing among student teachers, emphasizing prevalent weaknesses in their writing.

These studies collectively stress the critical importance of academic writing skills for students in the Saudi context, prompting universities to offer training courses and resources to enhance these competencies. Institutions like Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University have implemented programs to teach scientific writing principles, procedural steps, and specialized research writing. The integration of defined standards in academic writing can significantly benefit students in Saudi Arabia in their research endeavours and thesis writing, ensuring quality and adherence to scholarly norms.

B. *Studies Addressing Attitudes Towards Using Classical Arabic*

Studies by Mahra (2017), Mondheri (2018), and Ziyada (2019) delved into the attitudes towards employing Classical Arabic in educational contexts in Saudi Arabia. Mahra's study explored the attitudes of university lecturers in applied sciences towards using Classical Arabic in lectures, with positive inclinations noted, especially among lecturers in humanities and those with extensive teaching experience at the college level. Similarly, Mondheri uncovered positive attitudes among Omani teachers towards using Classical Arabic in teaching, highlighting its role in enhancing cultural identity and addressing writing challenges. Ziyada's study at Independence University revealed a moderate prioritization of Classical Arabic in lectures and interactions among professors, influenced by various factors.

While in alignment with previous works conducted in the Saudi context concerning the usage of Classical Arabic, its practical applications, and assessment tool development, this study uniquely focuses on master's students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. By exploring their attitudes towards employing Classical Arabic in various language skills, this study aims to provide tailored recommendations for enhancing students' Arabic language skills in the Saudi academic setting.

III. METHOD

A. *Study Design*

This study utilized the descriptive-analytical methodology, integrating quantitative data by employing an academic Arabic language writing test to objectively evaluate the writing skills of graduate students. Additionally, a structured questionnaire was administered to investigate participants' attitudes towards Classical Arabic. By combining these methods, the research aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics involved in academic writing in Arabic and its relevance within higher education settings. This multi-faceted approach not only facilitated a detailed assessment of students' writing proficiency but also provided insights into their perceptions and inclinations towards Classical Arabic, contributing to a more holistic analysis of language use in academic contexts.

B. *Participants of the Study*

The current study population consists of all female students enrolled in the graduate program in educational departments pursuing a master's degree at the College of Science and Humanities at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. There are a total of 26 students, with 16 specializing in Special Education: Learning Disabilities and 10 specializing in Curriculum and Teaching Methods. Additionally, all students in the College of Education at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University pursuing a master's degree total 205 students, including 51 males and 154 females. Thus, the study population comprises 231 male and female students specializing in Curriculum and Teaching Methods, Educational Administration and Leadership, Psychological Counselling, Learning Disabilities, and Educational Principles according to official statistics for the second semester of the year 2022-2023. Based on random sampling method, the current study sample consisted of 105 male and female students, representing 45% of the study population.

C. *Instruments*

1. *Academic Arabic Writing Skills Test*

The purpose of developing the test was to assess the academic writing skills of graduate students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. In preparing the test, the researcher drew on various sources, including a list of academic writing skills, as well as books, references, studies, and research that addressed the topic.

The initial form of the test was created based on a list of academic Arabic writing skills. The aim of this list was to identify the essential academic writing skills required by graduate students in the educational departments. The initial form of the list was developed by referencing previous literature, studies, and research related to academic writing skills. The necessary academic writing skills for graduate students in the educational departments were formulated and initially distributed in the form of (8) main skills, encompassing (60) sub-skills. To refine the initial form of the list, the researcher presented it to a panel of specialized reviewers, consisting of (5) reviewers. Based on the reviewers' feedback, the researcher adjusted the initial list, including adding some sub-skills, deleting others, and modifying the wording of certain skills, resulting in a final list of essential academic writing skills, comprising (8) main skills containing (74) sub-skills.

Accordingly, the academic Arabic writing test comprised (74) objective multiple-choice questions, with clear and simplified test instructions. To ensure the suitability of the initial test form, it was reviewed by a panel of specialized 5 reviewers to provide feedback on the test. The reviewers' feedback was analysed, leading to adjustments to the initial test form, including rephrasing some questions, reordering others, deleting some questions, and adding new ones. After the review process, the test consisted of (79) questions.

After verifying the integrity of the test in its initial form, the test was administered to the sample population consisting of 20 students to calibrate it through measures of validity, reliability, difficulty, discrimination, and to calculate the appropriate time needed to complete the test. The results of their score analysis are as follows:

Calculating the difficulty and discrimination coefficients for each item (skill) of the current test vocabulary revealed that the difficulty coefficients ranged from 0.55 to 0.85. These values fall within the acceptable range of difficulty levels commonly recognized in this context, ranging between 0.15 and 0.85.

The discrimination coefficient was calculated to determine the effectiveness of each item in distinguishing between one student's answer and another in the final test score. This is done to retain only highly discriminating and effective items. It is considered that "items with discrimination coefficients ranging from 0.15 to 0.85 are acceptable, while items with discrimination coefficients below 0.15 or above 0.85 are rejected" (Al-Munizil, 2009, p. 141). The discrimination coefficient was computed for each item of the current test vocabulary, showing values ranging from 0.18 to 0.82, all of which are appropriate, indicating acceptance in terms of discrimination coefficients falling within the recognized range for these coefficients. Thus, the test is stabilized with all its 79 items.

The time required to answer the questions of the academic writing skills test was calculated by summing the time taken by the first student and the last student to answer the test questions, divided by their number. It was found that the test duration is 85 minutes, with an additional 5 minutes for preparation and filling in basic information. Therefore, the appropriate time for administering the test is 90 minutes, which is an hour and a half.

To ensure the validity of the test, it was assessed using two methods: The first method involved examining its self-reliability. This was done by calculating the square root of the test's stability coefficient, which was found to be 0.92. Additionally, the self-reliability coefficient for the test questions was calculated to be 0.96. These high values indicate the test's reliability, with its questions demonstrating a high level of accuracy, flexibility, and balance when applied. The second method focused on assessing internal consistency. This was achieved by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the score of each item (skill) and the total test score. The correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score were statistically significant at a significance level of 0.01. This indicates the internal consistency of the test questions and their items, affirming its suitability for application.

Test stability was confirmed through two approaches, based on the application to the sample survey scores: The first approach utilized the split-half method, employing the Spearman-Brown equation to split the test questions. The stability coefficient was calculated to be 0.87, a high stability coefficient indicating the test's appropriate level of consistency. The second approach involved using the Cronbach's alpha equation. The calculated stability coefficient was 0.92, reflecting high stability and demonstrating the test's validity in achieving the study's objectives through the answers it elicits. This leads to the ability to trust the results that can be derived from its application.

2. *Scale of Attitudes Towards Classical Arabic*

The purpose of developing this scale was to identify the attitudes of graduate students in the educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University towards Classical Arabic. The researcher initially relied on various references, literature, studies, and previous research related to attitudes towards Classical Arabic in preparing the scale.

The scale measures a total of 61 Items. To refine the initial version of the scale, it was reviewed by two professors specialized in Arabic language studies. Based on their input, the researcher made some adjustments to the wording of certain sub-skills, resulting in a total of 61 skills in the scale. After modifications based on the reviewers' feedback, all core and sub-skills were retained. The scale was designed in a closed format for questions, defining the possible responses to each question. A Likert scale with five points was employed for this purpose.

To assess the internal consistency reliability of the scale and the contribution of its constituent skills to the stability coefficient, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient between each sub-skill and the total score of the scale. The results indicated that all specified statements had statistically significant correlation coefficient values with the total score of the scale at a level of 0.01, demonstrating the internal consistency of the Scale of Attitudes Toward Classical Arabic and the collective contribution of its statements to its stability.

To ensure the stability of the scale, the researcher relied on the survey sample scores and estimated stability using the Cronbach's alpha method. The results revealed that the Cronbach's alpha stability coefficient for the Scale of Attitudes

Toward Classical Arabic was 0.967, a high value indicating the scale's validity.

D. Data Analysis

To statistically analyse the data of the study, the statistical software SPSS was employed, utilizing various statistical techniques. These included computing means, standard deviations, and percentages to provide a comprehensive overview of the data distribution. Additionally, the Independent Samples t-test was utilized to compare means between two independent groups, helping to determine if there were significant differences between them. Furthermore, the One-Way ANOVA test was conducted to investigate variations among multiple groups by analysing the differences in means. This method allowed for a deeper understanding of how various factors impacted the study variables. By employing these statistical approaches within SPSS, a robust analysis was carried out to draw meaningful conclusions from the study's data.

IV. RESULTS

In this section, the researcher presents the findings obtained after applying the research tools and conducting statistical analysis on the acquired data. This involves outlining the study questions and the corresponding results.

A. Graduate Students' Academic Arabic Writing Skills (RQ1)

To address the first question regarding the assessment of graduate students in educational departments' proficiency in academic writing skills, scores from an academic writing skills test were utilized. The total scores and percentages for each skill were calculated, and these percentages were evaluated based on the Saudi universities' grading system (Pass 60 - Good 70 - Very Good 80 - Excellent 90). The results presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
TOTAL SCORES AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN THE ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS TEST (N = 105)

No	Skill	No. of Skills	Total score of skill	Total student scores	Percentage	Estimate	Rank
1	Writing a good title related to the specific major	6	618	421	68.1%	Pass	6
2	Formulating the research problem and identifying its sources	15	1545	1279	82.8%	Very good	6
3	Theoretical framework and previous studies	14	1442	953	66.1%	Pass	7
4	Research methodology and procedures	18	1854	1333	71.9%	Good	5
5	Research results, recommendations and suggestions	7	721	550	76.3	Good	4
6	Style and linguistic correctness	4	412	379	92.0%	Excellent	1
7	Documentation	7	721	586	81.3%	Very good	3
8	Output	8	824	457	55.5%	Fail	8
Total Score		79	8137	5958	73.2%	Good	

From Table 1, it is evident that the overall percentage for graduate students in educational departments in academic writing skills reached 73.2%. This indicates that graduate students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University possess academic writing skills at a "Good" level. Moreover, the table above reveals that the academic writing skill most possessed by students is "Style and Linguistic Accuracy," ranking first. This is followed by "Defining Research Problem and Sources" in second place, "Documentation" in third place, "Research Results, Recommendations" in fourth place, "Research Methodology and Procedures" in fifth place, "Crafting a Relevant Specialized Title" in sixth place, "Theoretical Framework and Literature" in seventh place, and "Presentation" in eighth place.

B. Differences in the Academic Writing Skills of Graduate Students (RQ2)

To address the second research question concerning the significance of differences in academic writing skills among graduate students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University based on gender, specialization, academic level, and cumulative GPA, the researcher employed the Academic Writing Skills Test scores to ascertain statistical differences based on gender, specialization, and academic level. The findings are as follows:

Firstly, concerning gender differences, an Independent Sample T-test revealed a t-value of 2.166 for academic writing skills among graduate students in educational departments attributed to gender. This statistically significant t-value at a significance level of 0.05 indicates notable differences in the mean scores of male and female graduate students in educational departments regarding their possession of academic writing skills. A comparison of means indicated that these differences favour female students.

Secondly, examining differences based on academic level, a One-Way ANOVA test was conducted, showing an F-value of 2.321 for academic writing skills among graduate students in educational departments attributed to academic level. However, this non-significant F-value at a significance level of 0.05 suggests no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of students based on their academic levels.

Thirdly, analysing differences based on specialization, a One-Way ANOVA test was utilized, revealing an F-value of 1.928 for academic writing skills among graduate students in educational departments attributed to specialization. The

non-significant F-value at a significance level of 0.05 indicates no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of students concerning their possession of academic writing skills based on their specializations.

C. Graduate Students' Attitudes Towards Classical Arabic (RQ3)

To answer the third research question regarding the attitudes of graduate students in educational departments towards Classical Arabic, weighted arithmetic means and standard deviations of the research sample's responses on the attitude scale towards Classical Arabic were calculated, as illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
ANALYSIS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS' ORIENTATIONS TOWARDS CLASSICAL ARABIC (N=105)

No.	Skill	Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Importance	Skill Level	Rank
1	Listening	4.17	0.49	83.4%	High	2
2	Speaking	3.70	0.47	74.0%	High	4
3	Reading	3.87	0.52	77.4%	High	3
4	Writing	4.32	0.42	86.4%	Very High	1
Overall Means		4.01	0.40	80.3%	High	

The tabulated data in Table 2 delineates that the composite arithmetic averages characterizing graduate students' orientations within educational departments towards Classical Arabic varied between 3.70 and 4.32. The comprehensive arithmetic mean attained a value of 4.01 on a five-point scale, factoring in the distribution of category lengths based on their relative significance within the scale (80.3%). This observation signifies a markedly positive disposition among graduate students within educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University towards Classical Arabic. Additionally, the tabular presentation accentuates that the primary inclinations of students towards Classical Arabic predominantly center on written expression, occupying the foremost position. Subsequently, their proclivity towards auditory comprehension ranks second, followed by reading comprehension in the third position, and oral communication in the fourth.

In addition, significance testing was conducted to examine differences in students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic based on gender, specialization, and academic level, yielding the following results: Regarding gender differences, the researcher employed an Independent Sample T-test, indicating that the calculated t-value (0.630) concerning graduate students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic in educational departments attributed to the gender variable. This value was statistically non-significant at the 0.05 level of significance, suggesting no significant statistical differences at the 0.05 level between the mean scores of students' attitudes based on the gender variable (male, female).

Concerning academic level variances, the researcher utilized a One-Way ANOVA test, revealing that the computed F-value (0.302) for graduate students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic in educational departments attributed to the academic level variable. This value was not statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, indicating no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the mean scores of students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic attributed to the academic level variable.

Regarding specialization disparities, similarly, the researcher employed a One-Way ANOVA test, showing that the obtained F-value (0.900) for graduate students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic in educational departments attributed to the specialization variable. This value was statistically non-significant at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the mean scores of students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic attributed to the specialization variable.

D. Relationship Between the Academic Writing Skills of Graduate Students in Educational Departments and Their Attitudes Towards Classical Arabic (RQ4)

To answer the fourth question of the study regarding the significance of the correlation between the possession of academic writing skills by graduate students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University and their attitudes towards Classical Arabic, Pearson's correlation coefficient equation was employed. The calculated value was 0.991, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates a very strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation at the 0.05 level between the possession of academic writing skills and attitudes towards Classical Arabic among graduate students in the educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University.

The researcher perceives that the presence of this strong correlation between the possession of academic writing skills and attitudes towards Classical Arabic among graduate students in the educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University may be attributed to the students' proficient academic writing skills, as indicated by the results. Furthermore, their strong inclination towards Classical Arabic language greatly contributed to establishing this correlational relationship.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study shed light on the academic writing skills possessed by graduate students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. Notably, the results indicate a commendable level of proficiency among these students, with a particular strength observed in style and linguistic accuracy. However, a notable area for improvement lies in drafting skills, where students exhibited a lesser degree of proficiency. These results resonate

with the study conducted by Albladi and Haji (2021), which evaluated the proficiency levels of students in the Arabic Language Curriculum and Teaching Methods department. Faculty members perceived students' proficiency in academic writing skills as moderate, aligning with the current findings.

In contrast, the results diverge from the study by Hussein (2020) involving foundation year students in scientific disciplines, where performance in academic writing skills fell below average. Similarly, Haji (2023) identified a high level of deficiency in academic writing skills among master's students, with a substantial percentage exhibiting shortcoming. Furthermore, Salem et al. (2024) highlighted significant deficiencies in academic writing skills among teaching students at the Faculty of Education. These disparities underscore the varied levels of proficiency and highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance academic writing skills across disciplines.

Significantly, the study identifies a gender-based difference in academic writing skills, favoring females. This trend suggests that female students exhibit a higher aptitude and diligence in utilizing academic writing skills across their university coursework. However, no statistically significant differences were found concerning academic level and specialization, consistent with the findings of Albladi and Haji (2021).

Turning to students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic, the results indicate a significantly positive outlook. This favorable disposition towards Classical Arabic underscores the language's significance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills among graduate students. These findings align with Al-Mundhiri's (2018) study on teachers' attitudes in Oman and contrast with Ziyada's (2019) findings at Independence University, where attitudes towards Classical Arabic were more moderate.

Interestingly, students' attitudes towards Classical Arabic were predominantly focused on writing, followed by listening, reading, and speaking. No statistically significant differences were observed based on gender, academic level, or specialization, in line with Ziyada's (2019) study. The enduring importance of Classical Arabic in Arab culture, heritage, and literature likely contributes to the consistent attitudes observed among students.

Notably, a robust correlation was identified between students' academic writing skills and their attitudes towards Classical Arabic. This correlation underscores the interconnectedness between proficiency in academic writing and a positive disposition towards Classical Arabic. The proficiency in academic writing skills, coupled with a strong appreciation for Classical Arabic, likely reinforces students' ability to articulate their ideas effectively and coherently. In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the academic writing skills and attitudes towards Classical Arabic among graduate students in educational departments. These results underscore the need for targeted interventions to enhance drafting skills and further cultivate a positive attitude towards Classical Arabic, fostering a holistic development of language competencies among students in academic settings.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the essential academic Arabic writing skills lacking among master's students in educational departments at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. It explored the correlation between their proficiency in academic writing and their attitudes towards the use of Classical Arabic, shedding light on this crucial aspect of their academic development. Notably, the findings indicated a commendable level of proficiency among these students, with particular strength observed in style and linguistic accuracy. However, an area requiring improvement was drafting skills, where students demonstrated a lower level of proficiency.

The implications drawn from the study findings underscore the critical importance of enhancing academic Arabic writing skills among graduate students in educational departments. To address the identified proficiency gaps, targeted interventions are necessary to bolster students' drafting skills and linguistic accuracy, fostering a more comprehensive academic writing proficiency. Furthermore, a concerted effort is needed to empower students in mastering the nuances of theoretical frameworks and research methodologies, aligning with the study's emphasis on the significance of these skills. Additionally, the study highlights the positive attitudes of students towards Classical Arabic, indicating a strong foundation for further exploration and engagement with the language. Encouraging students to actively use Classical Arabic in academic discourse and beyond can not only enhance their linguistic abilities but also deepen their cultural understanding. By promoting a culture of engagement with Classical Arabic literature, critiques, and discussions, graduate students can enrich their language skills and broaden their academic horizons, contributing to a more holistic educational experience within the realm of educational departments. Additionally, encouraging graduate students to employ diacritics for select words with varied connotations and refine their expressive writing skills by prompting them to write in Classical Arabic can further enhance their language proficiency and cultural appreciation.

Two main limitations of this study warrant consideration. Firstly, the study's findings may be constrained by a limited sample size and lack of diversity among participants, potentially affecting the generalizability of the results. Secondly, the research's focus on specific variables might have overlooked other influential factors, suggesting the need for a broader scope of variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. These limitations highlight areas for future research to address and enhance the robustness of findings in similar studies.

Continuing the trajectory set by the current study, the researcher proposes the following avenues for future research:

- In-depth exploration of academic Arabic writing skills and their role in formulating and evaluating research plans among graduate students.

- Investigation into the effectiveness of dialogue and discussion strategies in addressing challenges related to speaking proficiency in Classical Arabic among graduate students.
- Evaluation of the impact of digital technology utilization on enhancing academic writing skills and academic performance among graduate students.
- Examination of the role of using Classical Arabic in bolstering values of identity and belonging among graduate students

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