Academe: First Forays into Academic Writing
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¹EFL stands for English as a Foreign Language

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Perceptions of Card Shuffling: A Statistical Study

Mutsumi Morisaki

Abstract

For the first time, Diaconis (1996) found and proved the number of times a deck of playing cards had to be shuffled in order to make it statistically well-shuffled. He stated that more than 7 riffle shuffles or more than 10,000 overhand shuffles (or Hindu shuffles) were required. Since then, this view has been supported by many other mathematicians. However, these studies do not account for people’s perception of well-shuffled, though it is very important from the point of view of the everyday act of playing cards. Therefore, I undertook a micro-research project in order to examine whether people’s perception of well-shuffled were consistent with the definition of well-shuffled from the statistical viewpoint. Based on the result of the research, I made three observations. First, people’s perceptions of cards that are well-shuffled may differ greatly. Second, people may tend to feel a deck to be well-shuffled when it was riffle shuffled more than only three times. Third, when you have short time to shuffle a deck of cards, Hindu shuffles may make a deck better-shuffled than riffle shuffles. While I accept that my findings are not generally applicable because they are based on a sample of few research subjects, the findings of the preliminary study mean the topic warrants further investigation.
The Time’s Building as an Expression of Contemporary Japanese Architecture

Anna Kreshchenko

Abstract

This paper analyzes the theoretical concepts behind The Time’s Building by famous contemporary architect Tadao Ando, emphasizing philosophical ideas as an essential part of contemporary architecture, which nowadays tends to be overlooked by the general public. The author seeks a better understanding of the metaphysical existence of a building by a walk-through supplemented with photographs taken by the author. Moreover, the fact that Tadao Ando quotes elements of Japanese architecture is discussed in the paper in an attempt to find interconnections between contemporary and traditional architecture. It is hoped that modernist language of contemporary works will be perceived as a conceptualized development of artistic traditions.
At the Time of Writing: The Three Tenets of a Good Theory of Writing

Rick Mitcham

Abstract

The problem of a general lack of motivation, of productivity, and of quality - what Wendy Belcher (2009) calls ‘writing dysfunction’ – is all-pervasive across academia. If you are similarly afflicted then this article offers a solution to your problem. Among the primary causes of writing dysfunction according to Eric Hayot (2014) is the way that academic writers think about writing, their ‘theory of writing’ (1). Based on research conducted in the classroom and drawing on the ideas of Belcher (2009) and Hayot (2014) this article attempts to release academic writers from their misery by outlining a good theory of writing. Composed of three tenets, the theory asserts that writers pursue a passion, follow an academic writing process, and use writing as a tool to develop their thinking. In the course of this, the article also suggests ways in which academic writers, especially those using English as a foreign language, can learn to write with more originality. After discussing the tenets, the article provides an example of a highly motivated, prolific, and original writer who embodied all three tenets of the good theory of writing. Speaking mainly to undergraduate and postgraduate student-writers, the article concludes by drawing attention to a set of printable resources available on the journal’s website.
Academic Writing Skills for Postgraduate Students

Sin Wang Chong

Abstract

To many English-as-an-Additional Language (EAL) language users, academic writing simply means the accurate use of citation and referencing style, and the construction of long and complex sentences. To broaden the understanding of the notion of ‘academic writing’ of a group of postgraduate students at my university, I organized a three-day academic writing skills workshop in August 2018. In the workshop, various important topics related to academic writing were explored. In the first workshop session, three article types commonly found in social sciences literature were discussed: empirical study, literature review, and theoretical paper. In the second workshop session, I put forward the concept of ‘academic writing style’ by showing a number of word-level and sentence-level language features commonly found in journal articles. In the last session, to encourage my students to publish their term papers and theses in refereed journals, I introduced the publication process to them and drew their attention to a number of ethical issues pertaining to publication and research. Despite focusing on academic writing skills for a group of postgraduate students in the field of educational research, the content covered in this workshop is useful to both undergraduate and postgraduate students in other social sciences fields.