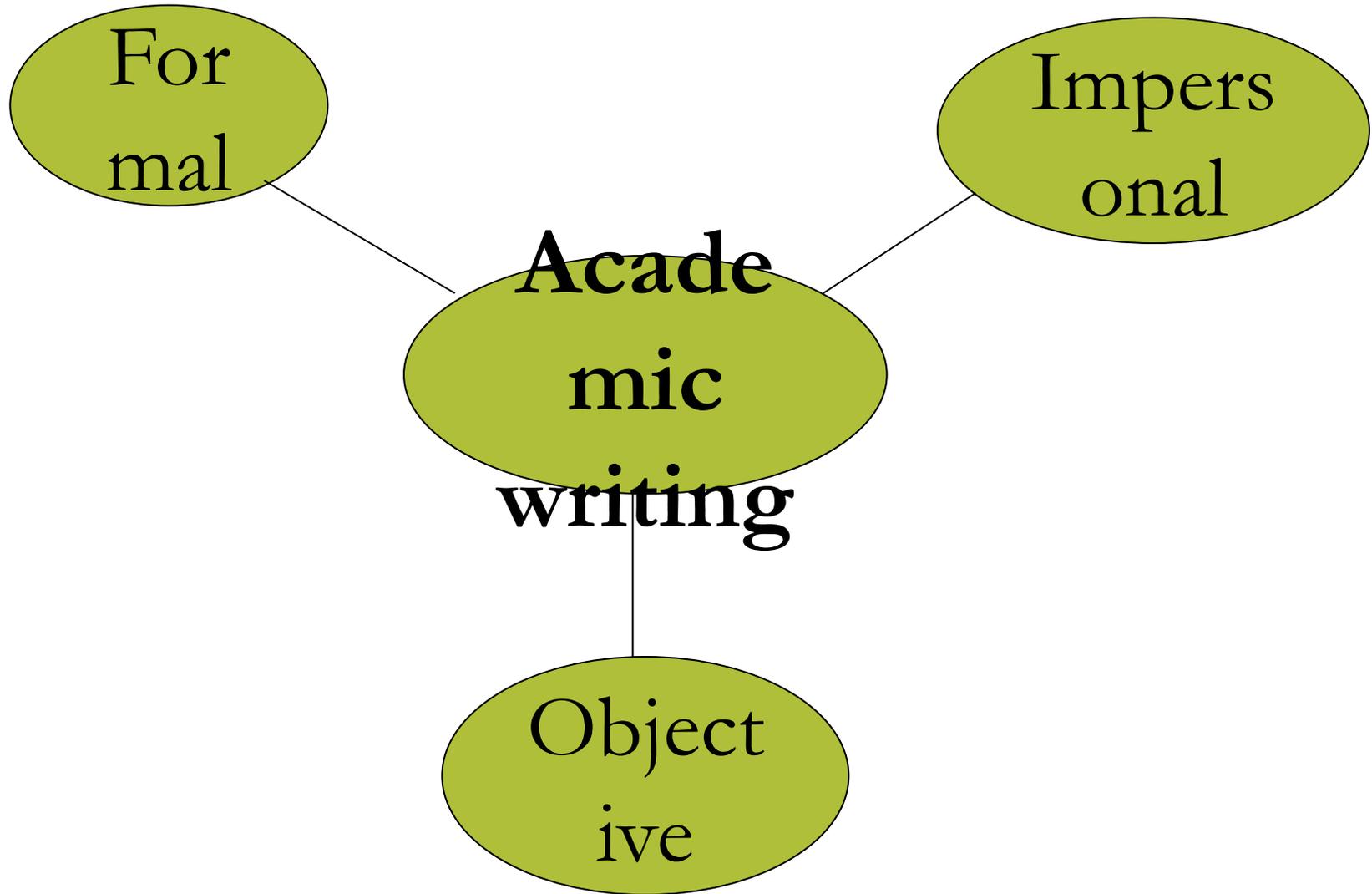


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# Features of academic writing

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# 1. Formal

Use:

- **academic vocabulary (Academic word list)**
  - **characteristic phrases** of academic texts  
*e.g. with respect to ..., in terms of ...,  
regarding..., in addition ...*
  - **terminology**, i.e. vocabulary characteristic of a specific field
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# 1. Formal (cont.)

Avoid:

- idioms, colloquial words, phrasal verbs

*e.g. this piece of writing* □ *the present study*

- contracted forms

*e.g. it's* □ *it is*

*don't* □ *do not*

*shouldn't* □ *should not*

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## 2. Impersonal

- Avoid using **personal and possessive pronouns**: *I/ our/ you etc.*

*Many of my friends and colleagues say that... □ It is commonly said that...*

*In my essay I'll make it clear □ the present paper will clarify*

*Our study proves that □ This study shows that*

*I'm sure this is so. □ There is reason to believe that this is so.*

*We really couldn't make anything of the results. □ There were difficulties in analyzing the results.*

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## 2. Impersonal (cont.)

- **Emphasize things and ideas**, instead of people and feelings.

Instead of writing:

*I believe the model is valid, based on these findings.*

Write:

*These findings indicate that the model is valid*  
or *The following section will show how the model is validated by the findings.*

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## 2. Impersonal (cont.)

- Avoid **evaluative words**, such as "badly", "disappointment", "amazing", etc.

*I think this idea is awful. □ This idea may not be accurate.*

*In my opinion this is a wonderful topic. □ This topic is worth investigating because....*

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## 2. Impersonal (cont.)

- **Avoid rhetorical questions**

*How could this trend affect the company operation?*

- *It is worthy examining the effects the trend under consideration may have on the company operation.*
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## 2. Impersonal (cont.)

- Avoid **exclamation marks**

*All students should have lessons in plagiarism avoidance from day one!!!*

- *Students may require instruction on plagiarism avoidance at the start of their first year.*
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# 3. Objective

- Precision

*pets like cats, dogs, etc.* □ *pets, such as cats  
and dogs,*

*around half of the group* □ *approximately  
53% of the group*

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## 3. Objective (cont.)

- **Caution** to avoid intense or emotional evaluative language

*Parents who smoke are obviously abusing their children.*

- *Second hand smoke has some harmful effects on children's health.*
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### 3. Objective (cont.)

- ‘Vague’, tentative language (**HEDGING**)  
*I think second-hand smoke causes cancer.*
  - *Second-hand smoke may cause cancer*  
*or There is evidence to support the possibility that second-hand smoke increases the risk of cancer.*
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## 3. Objective (cont.)

- Reference to sources

instead of writing:

*Language is, in my view, clearly something social.*

write

*As Halliday (1973) shows, language is intrinsically social.*

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## 4. Text organisation

- **easy to follow** (introduction, main body, conclusion)
  - **sensible components** (paragraphs, subsections, main sections)
  - **paragraph structure**
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# 4. Text organisation

- **Cohesion and coherence** at different levels

**Cohesion:** the language indicates the **links** between the various issues;

**Coherence:** interrelated issues are presented **logically**.

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