G3-level thesis

Academic awareness in students’ papers

An investigation of information packaging and subjective projections in student papers at university level

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Abstract

In this thesis, emphasis was situated around the development of academic awareness among students studying to become teachers of English. To enable such investigation, a limited number of students were requested to submit written papers, conducted within two particular English courses provided at Linnaeus University. The courses concerned are named Academic writing – provided during the first semester of English studies – and Academic writing and rhetoric – provided during the second semester of English studies –. By investigating papers written within these two courses, conclusions could be drawn regarding the students’ development in academic writing. Twenty-five students decided to share their material, and submitted two productions each. Hence, the amount of written work to investigate was delimited to fifty papers. The investigation was conducted through a qualitative study where certain features, connected to the formal genre of academic writing, were analyzed. Information packaging and subjective projections were found to be valid measures of such investigation. The results showed that there was an overall improvement. In fact, all calculations conducted within these measures, indicated that the students had developed their academic awareness.

Key words

Academic awareness, academic writing, formal, informal, information packaging, lexical density, nominal quote, paragraphs, personal pronouns, subjective projections
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1. Introduction

Depending on the different contexts students find themselves in, both informal as well as formal use of language is important to appreciate. Nonetheless, within the context of school tasks are mainly based on the formal use of English. The further into the school system students reach, the higher the demand becomes of their capacity to use formal English (Lundahl, 2009:38-46). However, to apply an appropriate level of English is often difficult, especially for non-native speakers (Zareva, 2008:2) and informal expressions do consequently occur in the most formal of contexts. When conducting papers at university level, a specific genre of formal writing should be applied. The genre at question is generally referred to as academic writing (Björk and Räisänen, 2003:17).

According to Melin and Lange (2000) informal language use is mainly connected to spoken language. In contrast, there is generally a closer connection between formal language use and writing. In situations where spoken language is involved, expressions are foremost based on personal and subjective impressions. This means that within contexts where spoken language is preferred, people are generally expected to include themselves as central figures in the discussion. However, these are considered informal features which generally should be avoided. In contrast, objectivity should be upheld as a measure of formal approach and academic awareness (Melin & Lange, 2000:11-13).

Another feature to appreciate when striving towards academic proficiency is the application of words which carry much content. There are certain word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) which provide a reader with more information, referred to as content words. These should be preferred over function words (prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns etc.), which carry less information. A higher percentage of content words provide more information in a limited number of words, increasing the information packaging of a text (Johansson, 2008:65). Such features are determiners of formality and connect to guidelines concerning the development of academic awareness (lnu.se, received April 18th 2013)

At university level, many students perform written productions. Also, there are demands on students to apply an academic writing style. Adapting to this genre of formal writing is necessary at university level (Finch, 1999:21), and features relating to informality should be avoided when performing academic work.
1.1 Aim and scope

The primary aim of this study is to investigate and shed light upon the development of the students’ genre awareness during their first year of academic studies in the subject of English. The scope of this thesis is delimited to investigation of 50 papers written by 25 students at university level within the frames of two courses provided for students studying to become teachers of English. Characteristics concerning information packaging and subjective projections will be investigated, and justifications regarding the choice of these features will be provided in the theory section. The following factors will be taken into consideration in the exploration of the student papers:

- To what extent do first person singular/plural pronouns occur in the papers?
- To what extent are statements in the papers supported by references?
- How high is the level of information packaging within the texts, in relation to measures of nominal quote and lexical density?

2. Contextual background

When studying to become a teacher of English at university level, the first semester provides students with a course called Language proficiency. The course is divided into three different parts, one of which is named Academic writing. During the second semester, a course called Academic writing and rhetoric including a G2-level thesis is conducted. Assessing papers written by students within the frames of these courses will make the basis of this thesis.

This section will shed some light upon certain guidelines and content within the two courses language proficiency and academic writing and rhetoric. Since the focus of this thesis is based upon academic awareness in written productions, the mentioned content and guidelines will relate to this. Hence, certain information without relevance to the investigation is excluded. In addition to exploring the two courses separately, two sections highlighting the connection between the courses are included. Onwards, for practical reasons, the two courses language proficiency – academic writing – and academic writing and rhetoric will be named AW1 and AW2.
2.1 Guidelines for the course Academic writing (AW1)

Within the frame of this course, students studying to become teachers of English are provided with specific guidelines. To prepare students for the implementation of academic demands which university studies are characterized by according to Finch (1999:21), three different written academic assignments are introduced during the first semester of English studies at Linnaeus University. To some extent the guidelines regarding content differ between the three various tasks. However, they are all united by two factors: Firstly the assignments should all be conducted in the shape of written papers. Secondly, the use of formal language is highlighted as central. The aim is for students to learn how to write academic papers. Eventually, assisting students in their strive towards academic proficiency, the teachers responsible for the course provide verbal instructions and, in addition, a written document including various academic factors to consider when writing. Additionally, lectures including PowerPoint slides have been provided as a complement to the guidelines, explaining concrete examples of features to uphold and avoid when writing. The following factors are highlighted as important when performing academic written work, and connected to information packaging as well as subjectivity:

- Many (often abstract) nouns
- Irrelevant information should be excluded
- Informal and non-specific vocabulary should be avoided.
- Few pronouns!
- Subjective constructions should be avoided
- The writer should be less visible in the text
- Statements supported with reliable sources (lnu.se, 2010 received April 18th 2013).

Although these factors are appreciated as important to acknowledge when writing, there are additional factors to consider as well. However, the five factors mentioned in this case are most relevant in relation to the aim of the thesis. Other characteristics highlighted as crucial are hence excluded.
2.2 Guidelines for the course Academic writing and rhetoric

This course involves one assignment in the shape of a G2-level thesis paper, between 7 – 10 pages. Students are, although provided with a bank of possible topics, given the opportunity to freely choose a topic within the sphere of English teaching in school. Regardless of what topic the students might choose, the demands concerning academic performance do not differ. It is clearly stated in the guidelines of the course, that the paper is a piece of academic work which should contain a certain level of language proficiency. The course criteria also state that the level of academic style will be graded. Hence, the guidelines presented highlight the importance of academic writing. The following description demonstrates the academic demands within the guidelines for this course:

Please note that this paper is a piece of academic work, where you get to show that you have reached a certain level as far as composition techniques and language proficiency level are concerned.

After the course, you are expected to be able to search for and compose information and analyse your findings together with external sources. Thus, it is of great importance that your text brings in references to other sources than your own experiences and the ideas and experiences of e.g. your school practice teacher. A list of references that might be helpful to get started is attached to this document. Of course, we count on your being able to refer to other sources correctly by now.

Please use references wisely and adhere to the recommended system of referencing! (lnu.se, 2010 received April 18th 2013).

Further, analyzing the grading criteria, the following factors concerning academic writing will be graded:

**For the grade G:** “The essay is written in a structured manner with a progression of ideas in reasonably correct and appropriate academic English”.

**For the grade VG:** “Your essay is written in a structured manner with a clear progression of ideas in idiomatic, grammatically nearly impeccable (!) and stylistically advanced academic English” (lnu.se, 2010 received April 18th 2013)

2.3 Connections between the two presented courses

To investigate the correlation between how well the AW1 course improves the students’ academic awareness and whether the course AW2 show proof of such development, the guidelines within the two courses have to share similar demands regarding the use of written academic English. In the opposite case, comparing the two would be purposeless. The
guidelines of the two courses make it clear that the papers should be written in a formal style. Furthermore, the academic demands expressed in the AW1 course, have to be taken into consideration in the course AW2 as well. Hence, the demands regarding style of language are similar when comparing the two. This fact justifies the choice to compare the written productions within the two courses as means to shed light on how well the course AW1 prepares students for upcoming academic challenges. In this particular case, such challenge would be the G2-level thesis written in the course AW2.

2.4 Discussion regarding the connections

When analyzing the connections between the two courses, there are certain characteristics which are obvious. Initially, the first obvious connection could be noticed through looking at the two titles, both including the phrase academic writing. This feature per se does suggest that academic writing is emphasized as central in both courses. Secondly, when exploring guidelines and content, the first impression is strengthened through concrete statements which highlight the use of an appropriate formal style as central. Additionally, the level of academic proficiency makes a heavy part of the grading criteria. However, there are a few differences. The main difference when investigating the content within the courses is the level of provided material. The AW1 course provides students with a well formulated document including a great variation of different features to both avoid and apply when writing. The “writing checklist” along with other helpful tools is provided in the document. In addition, there are also conducted lectures involving PowerPoint productions which bring up concrete examples of features to avoid and uphold when writing. Overall, the content within the course is well designed including concrete examples and tools which are relevant and helpful. There is without doubt an obvious focus on improving the students’ academic awareness. In contrast, the course AW2 does not, although highlighting and grading the level of academic writing, provide students with an equal level of preparation.

If speculating, this might depend on the fact that the students, according to the institution, should have been provided with a proper level of academic awareness within the AW1 course and that these skills have been maintained through repetition. Hence, the students are presumably expected to possess an appropriate level of academic awareness at the beginning of the AW2 course. However, these are differences worth acknowledging as students might forget parts of the provided content during the time between the end of AW1 and the start of AW2. If the students do not get the opportunity to refresh their academic
awareness through repetition in AW2, there might be a slight risk that some features upheld during AW1 are forgotten. Equally, certain patterns to avoid might be applied. However, in AW2 the institution provides students with a mentor to guide them through the writing process, where comments on academic features are formulated. The mentor might hence be considered a substitute to the thorough lectures, information and examples provided in AW1.

3. Theoretical background

In this section theory will be provided to clarify why certain features are investigated in relation to academic awareness. Clarifications will be given regarding the concepts academic awareness, information packaging and subjective projections. Nominal quote and lexical density are two measuring tools used in this thesis and explanations will be provided regarding what these intend to measure.

3.1 Academic awareness

According to Björk and Räisänen (2003) written assignments within the sphere of university studies occur regularly, and the formulated guidelines frequently highlight the use of formal language. For the sake of written fluency, academic awareness is crucial to develop. When writing essays and papers at university level, there are demands on a high level of formality. Academic writing becomes highly significant to apply, and to adopt a certain level of academic awareness is hence crucial (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:13-18). In connection to these claims, additional points of view on the matter are provided by Hyland (2006). The angle of approach towards the issue does in this case concern features connected to the context of academic writing. At university level, one of the more prominent characteristics is the demand for a high level of formality, where specific, clear and precise expressions suitable to the context should be applied (Hyland, 2006:13). Further, Read (2000:200) claims that academic studies often concern narrow strings of context, characterized by certain genre-specific language styles. Hence, Hinkel (2003:276) considers the adaptation of academic skills as highly crucial, to uphold a suitable style that is appropriate within the sophisticated context of university studies.
3.2 Subjective projections

According to Björk and Räisänen (2003) students should not express their own ideas, but merely adopt communicative abilities which stretch beyond the limitation of personal thoughts. Nonetheless, personal exploration of ideas could be useful to some extent. Texts including these ideas should however not be intended for external readers, but merely written for own purposes. This depends on the fact that such projections are considered informal. When writing essays and papers, there are in contrast demands on a higher level of formality. Hence, productions intended for other readers should be objective (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:13-18).

Furthermore, Melin and Lange (2000:11-13) state that written formal papers should be impersonal, and the author should be ‘absent’ from the context highlighted in a production. Lundahl (2009:38-46) generalizes between the concept of informal language, which is mainly based on expressions related to the concrete present, and formal language use which is merely based on technical and abstract knowledge. Lagerholm (2008) also pinpoints this connection, and highlights informal language use and spoken language – mainly general every-day conversation – as closely related. When speaking, people generally get private, personal and emotional. Also, spoken language demands quick responses which force people to use informal sentence constructions, based on immediate personal reactions (Lagerholm, 2008:186), or the concrete present, as Lundahl (2009) describes it. In contrast, the emphasis when producing written work is merely put on using correct expressions. The time aspect is also significant in this case, since writing often provides people with more time to consider different ways of constructing a sentence. However, although informal features are more frequent in spoken language, it does not mean that informal expressions – personal and subjective – never occur in written productions. Contrarily, such expressions do occur in formal written work.

Melin and Lange (2000) explain certain features which separate the formal context of written productions, from the general informal context of spoken language. Among these features there is a few important key components mentioned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written language characteristics</th>
<th>Spoken language characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Subjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Absent’ from context</td>
<td>‘Present’ in context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Melin & Lange, 2000:11-13).
The use of “I”, “me”, “my”, “we”, “our”, “us” should be avoided since these pronouns suggest that the writer takes part in the context. In such case, the author uses a style which is generally adapted in spoken language. Through projecting oneself as ‘present’ in a text, an informal approach is applied (Melin & Lange, 2000:11-13). Davies (2012:7) supports these claims and describes such features as personally tinged, since they evoke impressions of the author being included in the text. Such expressions should be avoided since it goes against the grain of academic writing. Furthermore, Lagerholm (2008:186) claims that expressions related to personal and subjective impressions are informal features, connected to spoken language. These should be avoided when performing formal written work. Lastly, it is according to Björk and Räisänen (2003:272) important to always support claims in academic productions with scientific and reliable sources. The conclusions made should be based on theories as well as material, and an appropriate academic style should be applied when writing about the research.

3.3 Information packaging
In spoken language the use of informal expressions has been highlighted as a prominent feature which, due to the nature of demands on quick responses, inevitably occurs. This fact does not only decrease the probability of an upheld objective approach (Lagerholm, 2008:186), but consequently also affects the occurrence of content bearing words. However, when performing written formal work, the circumstances often allow thorough considerations regarding the use of appropriate words. This also enables a construction of text which consists of a higher level of information packaging. To exemplify such consideration, Davies (2012:9) explains how the use of pronouns, could be replaced with nouns, which according to Johansson (2008:65) and Biber et. al (2002:11) is a feature which should be frequently occurring in academic texts, due to the high informational density of the word class.

To gain understanding regarding how high the level of information packaging is in a text, there are certain measures which could be calculated. According to Yates (1996:36), lexical density (henceforth LD) is among the most reliable and scientifically explored measures. There are considerable differences between the utterance of spoken and written language. Among these characteristics, the construction of sentences does include more content words in written productions. Oppositely, the use of function words does occur more frequently in spoken language, and transmissions of such features to written productions do
evoke informal impressions. The LD could crudely be described as a measure of information packaging, which Johansson (2008:65) will discuss further. In relation to these claims, Oliveira (2010:192) suggests that there are issues concerning the high academic demands at university level, where many learners of English do struggle to adapt to an appropriate style. The demands to produce and understand informationally dense texts at university level do not correlate with the students’ every-day language. The abstract, often long words that occur within the academic context are hence often hard to interpret. Lagerholm (2008:186) mentions that in contrast, the every-day language use is mainly connected with informality.

Johansson (2008) also mentions the packaging of information in a text as a formal feature. There are certain word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives and to some extent adverbs), referred to as content words, which carry more information than other word classes. The proportion of these word classes can be put in relation to the total number of tokens in a text. By investigating this, a notion is received regarding the packaging of information in a text. The measure of such correlation reveals the LD (Johansson, 2008:65).

Although both nouns and verbs have been accounted as measures of content bearing words to appreciate in formal contexts (Johansson, 2008:65), there are other ways of measuring the information packaging. Lagerholm (2008) claims that nouns are the most informationally dense word class, but does however state that verbs stand in a contrary relation. Verbs occur more frequently in spoken language, whereas nouns occur more frequently in written texts. Also, these word classes occur at the expense of the other, meaning that a sentence with many verbs generally consist of few nouns. Hence, a simpler but similar investigation of information packaging could be calculated. The measure is called a nominal quote (henceforth NQ) and is a measure of the nouns in a text divided by the verbs. Through such measure, a notion of information packaging could be received (Lagerholm, 2008:132-133).

3.4 Measuring tools

Below, the measures of LD and NQ are further explained. These are designed to enable investigations regarding the level of information packaging in texts, which are calculations that to various extents shed light on the level of formality.
3.4.1 Nominal quote
According to Lagerholm (2008) the NQ of a text is a measure which provides a notion of information packaging in a text, investigated through dividing the number of nouns in a text with the verbs. This is a simple measure which is not completely accurate. However, these word classes stand in a contrary relation to each other, where the frequency of nouns generally occurs on the expense of verbs. Such relation is characteristic for formal writing, whereas the use of verbs at the expense of nouns is related to speech and informality. The distinct contrast between the two word classes validates this NQ equation. To provide an example, a text could consist of 30 nouns and 20 verbs. The equation would in such case function like this:

\[
\frac{30 \text{ nouns}}{20 \text{ verbs}} = 1.5 \text{ NQ}
\]

However, such investigation does not provide a detailed description of the information packaging. Additionally, the occurrence of the word classes should, for thorough analysis, be related to their connection in the text. Hence, the results from an N/V-equation are highly general. Additionally, this measure does not take the total number of words in a text into consideration. The two word classes are only put in relation to each other and additional elements in the text are excluded (Lagerholm, 2008:133).

3.4.2 Lexical density
According to Johansson (2008), “Lexical density is the term most often used for describing the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and often also adverbs) to the total number of words.” (Johansson, 2008:65). By investigating this, a notion regarding the information packaging is received. This depends on the fact that those content words contain more information than other word classes. Function words, (prepositions, interjections, pronouns, conjunctions and count words) contain little information in comparison. The correlation between the content words and function words is hence a valid measure to use when investigating the information packaging. A high score of information packaging is a measure of formality (Johansson, 2008:65). For example: A text includes 26 content words (CW) and 24 function words, counting to a total number of 50 words. In such case the equation would be:

\[
LD = \left(\frac{CW}{50}\right) \times 100 \quad (LD = 52\%) \quad (\text{Johansson, 2008:67})
\]
Although this measure is scientifically supported, Yates (1996) claims that there are certain variables that should be recognized. The questions raised do in this case concern the frequency of which certain words generally occur. Within the measure Johansson (2008) proposes, all content words share the same value, without any consideration regarding the frequency of which they occur. This means that in relation to all tokens in the text, a common every-day verb shares the same value as an abstract genre-specific noun (Yates, 1996:37-38). These recognitions do also connect to claims regarding nouns being the most content bearing word class (Biber et al, 2002:11) and the considerations regarding verbs, which are described as more informal (Lagerholm, 2008:133). Also Björnsson (1968:2) attends a similar subject and describes common every-day words as generally more informal. In contrast, longer words exceeding six characters consist of a higher level of formality. Hence, it could be argued that the measure is not completely reliable. In this thesis the issues raised are only highlighted as factors to keep in mind, and will not be dealt with practically.

3.5 Previous research

Johansson (2008) conducted a study based on the lexical diversity and LD among an age-group reaching between children at 10 years of age to adults. The research showed that within the measures of LD, there seemed to be a considerable development of skills among students studying at the university to use lexically dense words. At this stage of education within school, the investigation shows that skills connected to formal written language are developed. Their ability to use varied, lexical dense vocabulary does at university level improve according to the research (Johansson, 2008:77).

Regarding subjective projections in papers, Hinkel (2001) investigates certain informal features in non-native speakers’ papers. The investigated features concern certain words which are ‘emphatically” related, leading to the impression of informality. It is argued that since most non-native speakers of English mainly use their language skills in spoken conversation, they project similar informal words in papers as well. The research did in this case show that the papers written by native speakers consisted of a higher level of formal word constructions. In contrast, the non-native speakers included informal words at a considerably higher frequency rate. One example raised among many others is the construction: I definitely believe..., which does indicate that the student emphasizes with the content. Such projections are informal and do occur frequently among non-native speakers (Hinkel, 2001:1059).
4. Material & Method

In this section clarifications will be made regarding the material used in this thesis as well as how the process of collecting material was carried through. The method used when investigating the papers is explained and important aspects as selection, reliability, validity and ethical aspects are highlighted.

4.1 Material

The investigated material is collected from two different courses given at Linnaeus University. These courses are provided for students studying to become teachers of English and run during the first and second semester of English studies. During the first semester a course called *language proficiency* (AW1) is outlined and divided into three parts. One of those parts is called *academic writing* (AW1), where students should submit formal written assignments. The assignments are in the shape of written papers and these texts make up the first part of the material investigated in this thesis. The students write three different papers within the course and those are submitted to the responsible teachers for comments on the academic performance. A hand written final examination is also included in the course to decide the final grade. However, this thesis will be delimited to an investigation of the three initial assignments. The final examination paper is hence excluded. During the first semester of English studies, this is one among the first courses provided and it occurs early. The course does stretch over a limited time span of a few weeks, which makes the course quite compact. The amount of material used from this particular course is 25 papers written by 25 students.

During the second semester of English studies, a course called *academic writing and rhetoric* is outlined. The course consists of one G2-level thesis which should be written in an academic style. This course stretches over an extended period of time and is conducted during the last half of the second semester of English studies. The students are in this course divided into small groups with a mentor who will help the students throughout the process. In these groups feedback on the thesis is given by both the mentor and the other students. However, although divided into smaller groups, all students write their theses individually. The papers collected within this course will make up the second part of the investigated material. The papers collected are of the equal amount as from AW1; that is 25 papers written by 25 students. Moreover, to enable a comparison between papers written within the two courses and later reach a conclusion regarding the extent of which the AW1 course prepares students to write formally, the 25 papers collected in both courses have to be written by the same
students. Thus, the total amount of material collected amounts to 50 papers written by 25 students within the two courses AW1 and AW2.

In order to shed light upon the length and extent of the investigated papers, the table below displays the total number of words within the 25 papers of each course separately. It also displays the total number of words per paper on average.

Table 1. The number of words on total and average within the papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of words within the 25 papers in each course</td>
<td>19,876</td>
<td>67,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of words per paper</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>2,701</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.1 The collection of material

At the beginning of the process, a total number of 32 students were asked to send copies of their written papers within the two courses, allowing an analysis of these. Before doing so, the students were provided with information regarding the general purpose of this thesis; namely to compare their written productions in AW1 with the G2-essays written in AW2. An explanation regarding how these papers were to be compared was given. Twelve out of the twenty-five students were initially verbally asked to share their papers, with the purpose of investigating whether there were any indications of interest to enable an analysis. All the students approved to share their work, resulting in the decision to follow through with the intended idea. Hence, an e-mail was formulated and sent to the students, reminding them of the purpose of the thesis as well as the ethical aspects.

The ethical aspects did in this case concern principles which are demanded when carrying through with research. Among these principles, there are certain requirements to keep in regard, to ensure that the participating individuals’ integrity is protected (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002). Firstly, there are demands which highlight the importance of providing the participants with proper information. The information should include explanations regarding the aim of the study, the participant’s role in the study and clarifications concerning their rights. Additionally, confidentiality has to be secured, along with other promises stating that the material will only be used within the context of the research (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002). The e-mail which the participants received included all the mentioned aspects and ethical factors have thus been recognized when transmitting the request.
Furthermore, since twelve students could not provide enough material, twenty additional students were contacted via e-mail. The e-mail included information which was similar to what the previous twelve students received, but with some additional clarifications. When ultimately provided with their answers, a total of 25 students agreed to share their written productions. The students then sent an e-mail consisting of their formulated approval as well as attached papers written within the concerned courses.

The selection of the participants was easily decided, mainly as a result of the investigation being delimited to students who have studied English and finished their studies within AW1 and AW2 at Linnaeus University. Hence, the emerging challenge was to find 25 students who were qualified within these criteria. When an appropriate number of students were found and contacted, these were provided the opportunity to choose if they wanted to participate and share their material. In connection to this approach, Halvorsen (1992:26) mentions the concept of ‘self-selection’, which means that the individuals get the opportunity to decide whether they want to contribute. As seven students decided to deny the request to include their productions in the investigation, the 25 remaining students were left to make the foundation of this thesis.

4.2 Method
This is a quantitative as well as a qualitative study which investigates 25 students’ development of academic genre awareness at Linnaeus University. Since the material is limited to a number of 50 academic papers, it enables a general investigation where the overall development is analyzed. Additionally, the circumstances allow a deep and thorough investigation where certain sentences from the papers are provided as examples. The occurrence of certain formal and informal features in the papers written within the course AW1, are compared to the frequency of the same features in the G2-level theses, within the AW2 course.

In order to investigate the measures of information packaging in the texts, a text analyzing tool on the internet was used. The tool could be used by registering as a member on the website usingenglish.com. The website consist of approximately twenty staff members, all professionally active within the area of language. Also, the website is specialized in ESL (English as a second language). The tool provided measures for the LD of the texts on average (usingenglish.com, 2002 received May 7th 2013). The NQ could not be investigated through using this tool. Hence the material was in relation to that measure investigated manually.
The investigation of subjective expressions was carried through both automatically by using the website usingenglish.com, as well as manually. To investigate the occurrence of subjective projections in the texts, there are certain words which foremost are used as measures. Since the occurrence of personal pronouns (Melin & Lange) is a measure of informality, and because pronouns according the AW1 guidelines should be avoided in academic writing (lnu.se), these features are investigated. Additionally, since statements in academic productions in general should be supported by sources (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:272) to uphold an objective approach, this is also a measure which provides a notion of the academic approach in the papers.

4.2.1 Reliability and Validity
The concept of validity concerns the research and whether it actually measures what it intends to. Reliability on the other hand concerns how trustworthy the research really is (Bryman, 2008:78). Firstly, in order to make sure that these required aspects have been adopted, the investigation is based on a qualitative study, which according to Svensson & Starrin (1996:169) should be applied when analyzing papers. To ensure that the investigation is reliable, the theory and previous research used is extracted from scientifically based sources. Additionally, the students contributing with papers did not solely perform their written work during the same semester. Based on the year the students attended the AW1 course, it ranges from spring 2010 to the autumn of 2011. This fact makes the investigation more diverse and provides additional depth. A fact that might evoke questions regarding the reliability is the difference in extent between the papers in each course. There is a considerable difference between the number of words per paper in the productions written within the AW1, compared to the G2-theses within the AW2.

4.2.2 Method discussion
In relation to the aim of this study, there are some factors that should be recognized. The overall aim is to investigate whether the students have developed their academic awareness. However, the features measured in this thesis cannot solely determine if the students have developed. Although subjectivity and information packaging are proved to be determining features, there are other variables which are related to academic awareness as well. Hence, if the investigation would show that the students have not improved within these measures, it does not exclude the possibility of development within other areas of academic proficiency.
For example, Channell (1994:1) argues that vague expressions should be avoided, and Read (2000:200) indicates that to avoid this, expressional accuracy and “lexical richness” are important academic features. Such characteristics are in this thesis excluded. Thus, the investigation does only cover a limited part of the students’ academic awareness. Additionally, the measures only shed light on whether the students have developed during the time between AW1 and AW2. The calculations are not put in relation to any standardized normative scores.

Regarding the methods used to investigate the material, there are additional factors which should be acknowledged. Firstly, there is a correlation between information packaging in a text and formality. This could be measured with the calculation of a simple NQ. However, such calculation only provides a general notion of the information packaging (Lagerholm, 2008:133). Also, the occurrence of nouns and verbs in the texts were counted manually. Hence, there is a certain risk that an unknown number of nouns and verbs are missing in the calculation. Despite this, the count was carried through with support from Vannestål’s (2007) book *A university grammar of English*. The book provided information regarding certain borderline words and enabled a more reliable investigation. However, an additional calculation of information packaging was needed. In this case, the LD in the papers was used as such measure. According to Johansson (2008:65) the LD of a text is a measure of information packaging. Since this measure could be automatically calculated on the website usingenglish.com, it was an efficient way of adding credibility to the measure of information packaging in the investigated papers.

The final important aspect to highlight is the measure of subjective projections in the papers. Firstly, the use of pronouns overall should, in accordance with the AW1 guidelines, be excluded (lnu.se, received April 18th 2013). According to Melin and Lange (2003:11-13) the pronouns *I, me, my, we, us, our,* should be avoided, since these words evoke the impression of a ‘present’ writer; a feature which should be avoided in academic productions. These claims support an investigation of the exemplified pronouns. The calculation measures the occurrence of *I, me, my, we, us, our,* in 1000 words. In addition to this measure, a second investigation of subjectivity will be carried through. The calculation does in this case count “the percentage of paragraphs consisting of references”. This includes scientific references as well as paragraphs connected to material (interviews, recordings, questionnaires etc.). Support to such measure could also be found in the AW1 guidelines where it is acknowledged as crucial to connect statements to sources (lnu.se). Additionally, Björk and Räisänen (2003:272)
mention that claims in academic productions exclusively should be supported by reliable sources. This is important, in order to uphold an objective approach.

The calculations of information packaging are done by using measures which are supported by scientific sources (Lagerholm, 2008:133; Johansson, 2008:65). Such calculations have hence been used in previous research and proved to be useful. In contrast, the calculations connected to subjective projections have not been found in any previous research. This fact might invoke on the credibility of these measures. Hence, it is important to acknowledge that these calculations should be perceived as highly general. However, the investigated features are supported by sources. Also, Melin and Lange (2003) mention that linguistic analysis is not an accurate science. This means that within such studies, different developed analyzing tools could be applied in various ways and it enables development of new analyzing tools (Melin & Lange, 2003:15). A final factor to keep in mind is that some of the sources used in this thesis mainly relate to the use of Swedish language. Although there are many similarities between Swedish and English, there are also differences which might evoke questions regarding the relevance of these sources. However, the sources used were carefully chosen.

5.0 Results & analysis

In this section the results will be displayed in tables along with explanations regarding what these results show. When the results are presented, an analysis of the results will be carried through. The analysis part will consist of a general analysis, explaining what the scores indicate. Furthermore, a detailed investigation will be conducted where samples from the students’ papers make the basis.

5.1 Results & General analysis

The results will be displayed in tables, to provide a general view of the measures for both information packaging as well as subjective projections. The results for information packaging are measured through NQ and LD. The subjective projections are measured through the occurrence of the pronouns *I, me, my, we, us, our*, in 1000 words. Additionally, the percentage of paragraphs in the papers, supported by references scientific sources and material is also used as a measure, to provide a notion of the extent objectivity is upheld.
5.1.1 Nominal quote
As Lagerholm (2008:133) claims, the NQ is calculated by dividing the total number of nouns in a text with the total number of verbs. Through such equation, this measure calculates the information packaging within the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nouns</td>
<td>3522</td>
<td>12395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>6296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NQ</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information packaging in a text is a characteristic which serves a significant function when deciding how formal a text is and the NQ provides a notion of such feature (Oliveira, 2010:192; Lagerholm, 2008:133). In this case, the results show an overall improvement from a NQ of **1.83 in AW1** to **1.97 in AW2**. This indicates that generally, the students provide information through the use of nouns more frequently in AW2 than AW1, put in comparison to the use of verbs. Hence, it provides an indication of improvement among the students to use words which provide the reader with more informationally dense text. Hence, a higher level of formal writing has in general been applied (Biber et al, 2002:11).

5.1.2 Lexical density

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>48.75%</td>
<td>53.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LD is a measure of information packaging in a text, which is connected to formal writing (Yates, 1996:36). The results show that generally, there has been a **4.46 %** increase of the content word occurrence in the AW2 papers, compared to AW1. The function words which previously occurred on a **51.25%** rate have now decreased to a rate of **46.79%**. The frequency of content words has hence increased to a score of **53.21%**. This measure shows that the LD in the texts has improved. Thus, the level of information packaging in the investigated papers has proved to be higher. The general level of formal writing in the
productions has in relation to this measure increased (Yates, 1996:36). This result also correlates with Johansson’s (2008:77) findings regarding the overall development of students’ ability to produce lexically dense texts at university level.

5.1.3 Occurrence of personal pronouns

Table 4. The percentage of personal pronouns on average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of words in the papers</td>
<td>19,876</td>
<td>67,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of investigated personal pronouns in the papers (I, me, my, we, us, our)</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of investigated personal pronouns in 1000 words</td>
<td>10 words (1%)</td>
<td>5 words (0.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The occurrence of any pronouns should in accordance with the guidelines for AW1 be very limited (lnu.se received 18th April 2013). Further, Melin and Lange (2000:11-13) mention the investigated personal pronouns as features of informality, that evoke impressions of a present writer. Such subjective projections should be excluded when performing academic work (Davies, 2012:7). When looking at the results of this measure, the occurrence of the investigated pronouns does not exceed a frequency of 1% in any of the two courses. However, there has been a considerable drop of frequency between the AW1 and AW2. There has been a 50% decrease per 1000 words when counting the occurrence of the pronouns in AW2 compared to AW1. This suggests that in general, students have adopted skills to formulate sentence constructions, without including the investigated pronouns. This provides a notion of improvement among students to uphold a higher level of objectivity, which is a formal and academic feature.

5.1.4 Paragraphs consisting of references

Table 5. The percentage of paragraphs consisting of references on average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of paragraphs</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs consisting of references</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total percentage of paragraphs consisting of references</td>
<td><strong>52%</strong></td>
<td><strong>78%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The guidelines in AW1 do state that it is important to support statements with scientific sources. From a general standpoint Björk and Räisänen (2003:13-18) also claim that in academic contexts, it is important to perform written work that stretches beyond the limitation personal thoughts. Hence, it is important to apply reliable sources as well as collected material, in connection to claims. The results within this measure show that paragraphs consisting of references have increased considerably in AW2 compared to AW1. The general percentage of 52% in AW1 has increased to 78% in AW2. This shows that within the AW2, students have used sources more frequently within a higher percentage of paragraphs, to support their claims. By doing so, the students ensure that a higher level of academic style is applied (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:272).

5.2 Detailed analysis
In this section, analyzes of the investigated features are conducted. These are detailed and concern both information packaging as well as subjective projections. Samples from the students’ papers are provided as examples.

5.2.1 Detailed analysis of nominal quote and lexical density
To gain some depth in the analysis regarding LD and NQ, different features in sentences will be explained. The examples given include sentences written by a student with scores below average; one example from AW1 and another from AW2. The two sentences provided as examples will show proof of the overall development which the general analysis displayed. The examples chosen will be supported with the specific measures of NQ and LD. Also, the theory section will be used to highlight features in the examples which are connected to academic awareness. Before analysing the sentences, some clarifications will be made:

- The words in **bold** shape stand for nouns in the sentence. – (NQ)
- The words in *italics* indicate the verbs in the sentence. – (NQ)
- All the underlined words show the content words in the sentences (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs). – (LD)
- The remaining words without any markers stand for the function words in the sentences. – (LD)
To receive an immediate notion of how formal the texts are, the NQ and LD are calculations which are valid measures. Information packaging in a text is a characteristic which is connected to written language, formality and academic writing (Lagerholm, 2008:133; Johansson, 2008:67; Oliveira, 2010:192).

Example from the student’s paper in AW1:

By *doing* that we *get* an *idea* of what we *say*, why we *say* it and how we *can say* it.

Example from the student’s paper in AW2:

According to me this *is* an important *part* of the *study*, along with *investigating* in which *way* they *should work*.

Table 6. Nouns, verbs, content words and function words in the examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Example from AW1</th>
<th>Example from the LSP (AW2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nouns</strong></td>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>Part, study, way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbs</strong></td>
<td>Doing, get, say, say, can, say</td>
<td>Is, investigating, should, work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content words</strong></td>
<td>Doing, get, idea, say, why, say, how, can, say</td>
<td>According, is, important, part, study, investigating, way, should, work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function words</strong></td>
<td>By, that, we, an, of, what, we, it, and, we, it</td>
<td>to, me, this, an, of, the, along, with, in, which, they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. NQ and LD in the examples, compared to the student’s total scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NQ: 0.16 , LD: 42 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores in the example from AW1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total scores from AW1</td>
<td>NQ: 1.18 , LD: 35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores in the example from AW2</td>
<td>NQ: 0.75 , LD: 45 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total scores from AW2</td>
<td>NQ: 1.41 , LD: 39 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Firstly, to conduct a detailed investigation of these two sentences, the NQ will make the basis. The NQ of both sentences is low in comparison to the general N/V score among the students in both courses, but the sentences show proof of some features that the student seems to have developed. The AW1 sentence has a score of 0.16 NQ and such score stands in direct relation to spoken language and informality, since the occurrence of verbs in the sentence by far exceeds the number of nouns (Lagerholm, 2008:133). The AW1 example relies almost exclusively on the use of verbs. In this case, the word class does occur at the expense of nouns when describing an apparent outcome, which evokes the impression of a spoken text (Lagerholm, 2008:133). The design of the sentence is hence informal. Nouns are the most content bearing word class and should to a greater extent be included in formal contexts (Biber et al, 2002:11). By constructing the sentence in this way, the student has applied a style which does not correlate with an appropriate academic style. The NQ is low and indicates a low level of information packaging, which is an important academic feature (Oliveira, 2010:192).

In AW2, the student has constructed a sentence consisting of more nouns in relation to the verbs. Compared to the AW1 sentence, this construction has a higher level of information packaging. Additionally, the total NQ-score of the whole paper (1.41) is higher than in AW1 (1.18). The AW2 example shows some interesting features that could be perceived as evidence for such development. Mainly, the considerable difference between the use of verbs and nouns is erased, and the frequency of which the verbs occur is less inconvenient. This fact is proved through the NQ-score which in the AW2 example (0.75) is higher than in the AW1 sentence (0.16). In the AW2 sentence, the student has adapted to the use of nouns which consequently has made the verbs occur at a lower rate in comparison. This contrary relation has been recognized by Lagerholm (2008). When perceiving the total scores in the papers, the student has acquired skills to include nouns at a higher rate. This fact has had a positive effect on the outcome of the NQ-score.

When analysing the LD of the sentences, there are more word classes to acknowledge (Johansson, 2008:65) which makes this investigation more complex. When perceiving the LD of the two sentences, the scores are similar. In fact, the results do intend that the AW2 sentence (LD 45%) only contains a slightly higher level of information packaging than the AW1 sentence (LD 42%). This result does without doubt put question marks around the outcome of the NQ-score, which did suggest that the level of information packaging was considerably higher in the AW2 example. The results from the two measures have in this case
provided differences in outcome. However, explanations could be found to clarify several reasons. Yates (1996:37-38) mentions that there are some issues concerning the measure of LD. Mainly, all words in a text that qualify as content words do share the same value. In the examples concerned in this case, it is clear that although the LD-score is close to identical, there are considerable differences when it comes to the use of word classes. In the AW1 sentence, eight out of the nine content words in the sentence are either verbs or adverbs. The remaining content word in the example is a noun. In contrast, the correlation between the word classes seems to be more convenient in the AW2 sentence. The use of nouns is more frequent and the use of verbs is less occurring, which is preferable in formal writing (Lagerholm, 2008:133). Adjectives are also included in the sentence, which makes the use of word classes more varied. These differences do indicate that although the LD-score is similar, the word classes used in AW2 seem to be more adapted to the formal context of academic writing (Biber et al, 2002:11). The difference between the choices of words could also be put in relation to Björnsson’s (1968:2) claims. Words exceeding six characters could generally be considered more formal and in such relation, the AW1 sentence is highly informal due to the fact that none of the words exceeds that number. In contrast, the AW2 sentence consists of three words exceeding that number. Although this is not an accurate measure of information packaging, Oliveira (2010:192) does claim that within the academic context, longer words are generally more content bearing. The every-day common language however, is often more informal (Lagerholm, 2008:186) and consist of shorter high-frequency words. Despite the similar LD-score between the sentences, these explanations do indicate that the AW2 sentence could be classified as more academic than the AW1 sentence. Also, the total LD- and NQ-scores in the two papers show that there has been a general improvement within both measures.

5.2.2 Detailed analysis of personal pronouns
Within this section, one student’s papers will make the basis. One example of sentence construction in each paper will be analysed to shed light on the level of subjectivity. Certain features will be explained that will reveal differences of approach in the two sentences. The personal pronouns used will be the emphasis in this case, and these will be marked in **bold** shape.
**AW1:** To answer my own question posed in the introduction I locate pictures viewing elephants and lions which can be used effectively.

**AW2:** However, the book also presents four main sections regarding the current vocabulary methods used today which will be explained later in this section.

**Table 8. The occurrence of personal pronouns in the examples, compared to the occurrences on total.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of personal pronouns in the example</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of personal pronouns on total in the papers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount of words in the papers</td>
<td>1029</td>
<td>3445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns per 1000 words in the papers</td>
<td>15/1000 words (1.5%)</td>
<td>6/1000 words (0.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the general analysis of the results has shown, there seem to have been improvements made among the students to uphold an objective approach in relation to their productions. In this case, there are features which point in such direction as well. Both sentences suggest that an investigation is taking place. In the AW1 sentence, an investigation is carried through by locating pictures in a book, while the AW2 sentence describes the apparent content in a book concerning vocabulary methods. Despite being similar in the sense that both examples suggest investigations, the approach towards such investigation does differ. As Melin and Lange (2000:11-13) describe, there are certain pronouns that should be avoided in formal texts. Among these, the occurrence of the words “I” and “my” is accounted, and the AW1 sentence consists of such pronouns. This is an inconvenient feature according to Davies (2012:7), since such projections do suggest that the writer is ‘present’ in the text, which goes against the grain of academic writing. In the case concerning the AW1 sentence, the construction consist of the words “I” and “my”, which indicates an obvious inclusion of the own persona in the context. This does according to Melin and Lange (2000:11-13) indicate a subjective standpoint, due to the impression of personal approach that such pronouns evoke. Moreover, Björk and Räisänen (2003:13-18) highlight an objective approach as crucial. Hence, the statements in academic papers should stretch beyond the limitation of personal thoughts. In the AW1 case, it is obvious that the writer uses personal pronouns which oppose the appropriate level of objectivity that should be applied. Also Hinkel (2001:1059) recognizes the apparent
“emphatic” relation to the content, which such projections suggest. These should be avoided due to their informal character.

When taking a look at the AW2 sentence, the aspects highlighted in relation to the AW1 example do not correspond similarly. In this case, the student appears to highlight a finding within an area, similar to the AW1 example. However, the AW2 example oppositely projects an alternate objective construction, where the use of personal pronouns is excluded. To demonstrate a feature which differs, two samples from the examples will be explained:

AW1: […] I locate pictures viewing elephants and lions […]
AW2: […] the book also presents four main sections […]

In the AW1 example, the use of “I” projects the student as present in the text (Melin & Lange, 2000:11-13). In this case, the student suggests that he, the writer, found something in the investigated book. Hence, the student includes personal impressions in the context and consequently, an informal subjective approach is upheld. In the AW2 example however, the student upholds an objective approach, where it is simply described that within a book, four main sections are presented. Through such formulation, it is expressed that regardless of who might read the book, four main sections will be found. The student does in AW1 uphold a subjective approach towards the described content, and support to these claims has been found (Melin & Lange, 2000:11-13; Davies, 2012:7; Björk & Räisänen, 2003:13-18). Also, the occurrence per 1000 words is considerably higher in the AW1 than in the AW2. In general, when including all conducted papers, it is also obvious that the occurrence of personal pronouns has decreased considerably.

5.2.3 Detailed analysis of paragraphs
In this section an analysis of two paragraphs in one student’s papers will make the basis. As in the previous sections, one example will be taken from AW1 and the other from AW2.

Table 9. Paragraphs consisting of references in the examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of paragraphs in the papers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of paragraphs consisting of references</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paragraph from AW1:
“The English language is very dominant in the world and with all probability, I think it will remain that way for many years to come. Because of the Internet, TV-show, music etc. the language will probably continue to spread. Also, more and more people constantly learn English around the world, which will make the development continue. English has grown much over the last decades, and the most powerful countries have English as the mother tongue. Therefore, there are no real threats against the language today. Talking about the future however, it is hard to predict what will happen.”

Paragraph from AW2:
“However, Lundahl (2009) goes on by claiming that even though English should be used as frequently as possible, there are situations where Swedish might be suitable or perhaps necessary to use. Instructions regarding goals and grading in an English course are situations of such character. The chance for pupils to understand exactly what to do is decreased if their English skills are lower than the English level of which the instructions are told (Lundahl, 2009). When pupils are set to work with an assignment, they should know exactly what to do and using their mother tongue eases the conditions for pupils to interpret tasks correctly.”

When comparing the two examples, there is a considerable difference between how the student expresses the message in each paragraph. In the AW1 example, the student expresses statements which are based on own thoughts. In the paragraph, there are no visible sources which provide any support to the claims. Hence, the student does in this case fail to adapt to the academic skill which is highlighted in the guidelines of the course, namely to support statements with sources (Inu.se). Also, adaption of the ability to communicate beyond the limitation of own thoughts (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:13-18), is a feature that the student has failed to uphold in the particular paragraph. Björk and Räisänen (2003:272) also highlight the importance to support statements with sources within the academic context. Mainly, such a factor is important to apply an objective approach. In this paragraph, the student fails to do so. Instead, the personal idea on the matter is projected, which both Melin and Lange (2000:11-13) and Davies (2012:7) describes as a subjective and informal feature.

In the AW2 paragraph however, the student relies solely on a source to support the expressed claims. In contrast to the AW1 example, the features of formality connected to Björk and Räisänen’s (2003:272) as well as Davies’s (2012:7) claims are upheld. In this case,
the student has obviously adapted to the use of a construction which projects the claims through the support of a reliable source. Hence, an objective approach is applied. If perceiving the scores of both papers within this measure, the student applies sources to a considerably higher number of paragraphs in AW2 (83%), compared to AW1 (33%). This indicates that the student has developed skills to, in an extended way, project statements and claims through the use of references rather than own ideas. By doing so, the approach to the text becomes objective (Björk & Räisänen, 2003:272).

6.0 Conclusion & Discussion
In this section conclusions based on the analysis will make the first part. Both the information packaging in the papers as well as the subjective projections will make the basis to such conclusions. Furthermore, discussions regarding the results and the analysis will take shape. These discussions are based on the theories used but will also include assumptions regarding circumstantial factors which might have affected the outcome of both results and analysis.

6.1 Conclusion
This thesis is aimed towards investigating students’ papers and shed light on the students’ development of academic awareness within the first year of English studies. Within the two courses AW1 and AW2, 50 papers are investigated and certain features are used as measures to analyse such possible development. In this case, the features analysed are the information packaging as well as subjective projections in the papers.

Through the conducted analysis, there are several conclusions that could be found. The two initial investigations of the material included an analysis of the information packaging in the texts. The general results did show that within both the NQ as well as the LD-score, the students have developed skills to construct text that contain a higher level of information packaging. Theory has shown that both NQ and LD are valid measures to use when calculating the information packaging in texts. Certain features have been appreciated as important to uphold and in the AW2 example, these characteristics have been applied in a more convenient way than in AW1. Through a detailed analysis, additional depth to these showings has been provided by highlighting several features that point in such direction. Both the general as well as the detailed analysis of the measures have shown proof of development during the time between the AW1 course and the AW2 course. Overall, the conclusion that could be drawn in accordance to these findings, is that the twenty-five students have
developed their skills to construct text that contain a higher level of information packaging. This is a feature that theory has highlighted as highly formal and academic. Hence, the students’ academic awareness has in relation to this feature of formality improved.

Regarding the subjectivity in the papers, the analysis has shown that within the investigated papers in general, there has been a considerable decrease of subjective projections. Theory has shown that within the academic context, it is important to uphold an objective approach. Through the investigation of personal pronouns and references in paragraphs, such features have been analysed. Both these features have in accordance with the theory as well as AW1 guidelines been highlighted as important characteristics. The general analysis of both these measures shows that there has been a considerable decrease of personal pronouns in the students’ papers and an increase of paragraphs consisting of references. Through the detailed analysis, examples have also shown that the approach towards the expressed content has changed between the AW1 and AW2 course. The examples show that the students uphold a higher level of objectivity in the AW2 papers than in the AW1 papers. Both the general and detailed analysis show that the subjective projections have decreased during the months between the courses. Hence, the academic awareness among the twenty-five students has within this measure of formality, improved overall.

To summarize the conclusions that could be drawn within this thesis, all the measures investigated show proof of development among the students. The students’ academic awareness has hence, within the limitation of the conducted calculations, overall improved during the months between the AW1 course and the AW2 course.

6.2 Discussion
The conclusions found in the thesis do correspond with the displayed results as well as the conducted analyses. Although all the measures used are general, they all show proof of improvements. This fact makes it possible to state conclusions based on the calculations, despite the general inaccuracy of the measures. Mainly, this depends on the unanimous findings in the papers which all do point in the same direction. Hence, the conclusions found in this thesis are reliable in the sense that all calculations suggest similar improvements, within the measures for both information packaging as well as subjective projections. In relation to this, it is a valid claim to state that within the investigated features, the students have improved their academic awareness. However, it cannot be claimed that all students have improved. Also, it cannot be guaranteed that none of the students in fact has failed to
develop at all within these measures. Hence, the conclusion does correspond with the aim of this study, namely to investigate the general development among the 25 students, rather than investigating every student per se. Considering these factors, the general conclusion of this thesis is reliable.

It is important to highlight that the investigation does not correspond with extensive dominant features of academic writing, but merely a few smaller characteristics. This fact delimits the investigation to a fraction of academic writing, which disables the possibility of stating broad conclusions. Although this research has found that the students have improved their academic awareness within the investigated features, it cannot be perceived as a general improvement of the students’ academic writing skills. There are numerous other features which relate to this formal context of writing. However, such features have in this thesis been excluded, consequently delimiting the conclusion to a smaller part of academic writing.

In all, it is valid to claim that within the measures investigated in this thesis, the students have in general developed their academic awareness. Both the level of information packaging and the level of objectivity have improved. However, stating claims that stretch beyond such conclusion should be avoided in relation to this investigation. This depends on the general measures, along with the limited number of investigated features. Still, the conclusions correspond with the analysis and the displayed results, which in turn are supported by reliable theory. Thus, the students have developed their skills within this particular area of academic writing.
Bibliography


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