Functional Analysis of Marked and Unmarked Theme in Demonstrating a Critical Argument Written by Iraqi and Australian Postgraduate Students

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Abstract—Theme, as a point of departure plays a crucial role not merely in the organization of the academic messages but also in the functions of the clause, such as the notions of authorial voice and critical thinking. Halliday (2004) defined theme as an element that serves as the point of departure, identified by its position in the clause. This means the use of the main idea and/or author in the subject position stem of any clause is very important in presenting the elements of critical thinking and self-voice. This raises an important question of how postgraduate students as academic writers deal with the function of Marked and Unmarked themes as a point of departure in demonstrating a critical argument. This study, therefore, attempts to see how the functions of the Marked and Unmarked themes in demonstrating a critical argument are tackled by the academic assignment writers. Applying Halliday's (2004) model of thematic organization, this paper investigated a corpus of four academic assignments from four Masters Students (two Iraqi non-native and two Australian native writers of English). The results showed that Australians were more visible in displaying the elements of critical thinking and self-voice as a dual competence for their writing, while these elements was invisible in the Iraqi writers as they gave their loyalty to their textbooks and course materials. This findings will provide not only Iraqi postgraduate students with a better understanding of problems in order to help them improve their authorial voice and critical thinking in demonstrating a critical argument, but will also for Iraqi EFL instructors at the Iraqi universities on what exactly needs to be made explicit within the framing and language of the academic assignments.

Index Terms- theme, Iraqi non-native writers of English, Australian native writers of English, marked theme, unmarked theme, critical thinking and self-voice

I. Introduction

Aspects of cohesion and coherence have been identified as a challenge for EFL and ESL students in writing an academic text (Alagozlu, 2007; Barnawi, 2011; Ebrahimi, 2012; Krisnawati, 2013; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996). In particular, research on Arab postgraduate students has illustrated that the lack of text cohesion and coherence is often clearly visible in their academic writing, and this is due to the inappropriate method of writing teaching in their home countries (Ahmed, 2010; Al-Khasawneh, 2010; Rabab'ah, 2003). In the same line of argumentation, Al-Khasawneh (2010) analysed the cohesion in Arab student's writing and showed that the Arab students face problems in grammar and the organization of their ideas.

Several studies have argued in academic writing that the coherence of ideas, clarity and logicality of relationships between sentences and among paragraphs is presented in terms of "thematic organization" (Berry, 1995; Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 2004). This important aspect of functional grammar keeps the academic message well organized. Ebrahimi (2008) explored the functional analysis of thematization in English student's compositions in three groups, sophomore, junior, senior, and native speakers. The results show that no marked difference was found between the native speaker's writing and EFL writing, and native or non-native and more attention to the subject of the sentence.

Ebrahimi (2012) selected comprehension writings and analysed them in term of Marked and Unmarked themes as points of departure. These texts were written by native and non-native writers of English and were analysed adopting a t-unit "as a clause complex which contains one main independent clause together with all the hypotactic clauses which are dependent on it" Fries (1994, p.318). The result showed some interesting points, firstly there were similarities rather than differences in these reading comprehension texts where both native and non-native writers presented small number of their point of departure to present marked theme. Native writers, for instance, applied marked theme as appoint of departure twice of that applied by those non-native writers to bring some element into the point of departure position. In contrast, the texts of non-native writers were less argumentative; more difficult to comprehend and not as well organized in nature as those by native writers, because of the higher frequency of unmarked themes.

While these studies have illustrated the usefulness of theme and rheme as a requirement of academic writing to achieve text cohesion and coherence, very few studies have analysed the authorial voice and critical thinking that lie

within theme and rheme patterns. Lewthwaite (2010) studied the coherence of Emirates' students writing, and argued that the "flow of thinking and expression" in any academic writing "is usually established by writers using cohesive devices, multi-word expressions and by developing the ideas (themes) with restatement or logical extensions" (rhemes) (p. 1). Kamler and Thomson (2006), for instance, stated that making effective authorial judgment is associated with theme and rheme functions in forming strong and creative arguments. Thus, if postgraduate students fail to use the theme and rheme appropriately in constructing a voice of authority, their writing would be more descriptive and less argumentative. However, this is not the requirement of post-graduate study of Western Universities. Barnawi (2011) investigated the critical thinking and voice in EFL student academic arguments and found that claims were not supported with logical and related conclusions to form healthy academic arguments; rather they shared somebody else's viewpoint and ignored to put their own viewpoint into their academic writing. The study has justified this as a result of the absence of teaching these two elements explicitly within the EFL education system.

The aspect of critical thinking in forming academic argument has also been investigated by Western-oriented second language researchers and concluded of the need to integral part of both first (L1) and second language (L2) in writing (Park and Stapleton, 2002). Along the same line, Alagozlu, (2007), argued convincingly that there is a great significance between Eastern and Western education system in terms of the critical thinking and voice in forming academic argument where these aspects is deemed to be peculiar to the western culture. This view emphasises on the need to have the combination of both writing context to meet the requirement of the western writing. Therefore, to achieve effective, critical and coherent argument in academic writing, Iraqi postgraduate students need to meet these requirements of Western academic cultures to persuade their readers. This academic problem has instilled in me the desire to further investigate the obstacles to the making of such meaning in Iraqi students' academic assignments. Thus, this study will focus on the functional analysis of Marked and Unmarked theme as a point of departure in demonstrating a critical argument.

II. METHOD

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The data for this paper were drawn from four written assignments written by four Masters Students (two Iraqi and two native Australian students), Faculty of Education at Monash University. The assignments were taken from a small data set of four essays collected as a part of the author's master's degree thesis. One segment of about 1500 words on the same topic has been chosen across these assignments for the basis of comparison. The authors of these four academic assignments are from two different academic discourse communities. This study, therefore, attempted to compare the similarities and the differences of the functional analysis of marked and unmarked themes as point of departure in demonstrating a critical argument in these academic assignments.

Segments A1 and A 2 were written by Australian postgraduate students who are native writers of English; **Segments** Ir 1 and Ir 2 were written by Iraqi postgraduates who are non-native writers of English.

In this study, the Masters of Education (TESOL) the author of this paper has drawn his data specifically. The Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is designed for a wide range of professionals working in English language teaching and in international contexts. It aims to prepare postgraduate students as language teachers who wish to gain an accredited qualification and who seek to teaching in Australia. This course comprises eight units and upon the successful completion of each unit in this course, students are expected to understand and reflect critically on the core principles of language learning, develop sound pedagogy with strong theoretical foundations, which can be adapted and applied to particle international contexts. From this particular course, I have chosen the unit of Languages Society and Cultural Difference as a data for this study. The ration for selecting this unit was because it is a fundamental critical unit in the Master of Education (TESOL) at Monash University. This unit aims to develop capacity as a self-directed learner-researcher in the classes and on line activities as well to explore the ways that language, society, and cultural difference and how they are related to each other (Faculty of Education, 2013).

Postgraduate students are required to write a literature review and demonstrate a critical understanding of the complexities of Stuart Hall's argument about representation language and identity. As well, they are require to write 3,200 words equivalent in order to support the connection between language, identity and cultural by reference to at least one other reading as well as Stuart Hall (1979), based on four criteria (provides a well-focused and comprehensive summary of the reading, demonstrates a critical understanding of the complexities of Hall's argument, identifies a significant context and provides a rich description, provides an insightful and critical with strong links to Hall's theory, and provides a well-structured and clearly set out response with good presentation, appropriate writing strategies, careful documentation of sources (Faculty of Education, 2013).

III. ANALYTICAL MODEL

In the investigation of the occurrence of Marked and Unmarked theme functions' relations, I utilised the Hallidaian (2004) model of thematic organization to categorize the academic assignments of the two groups into the following categorizations for Marked and Unmarked Ideational themes. The rationale for the selection of the Hallidaian model was that this model is the most plausible and was most recently updated. In this study, the Marked and Unmarked theme

were analysed at the level of clause rather than at the sentence level because the study aimed to identify similarities and differences in the way thematic structures across small segments of the academic assignments are employed by some Australian native and Iraqi non-native writers of English in this study.

Unmarked theme is "an element that occupies the point of departure position of the clause and conflates with the grammatical subject" (Halliday, 1994, p. 44).

Example 1: Hall stated that identity is changeable and not fixed.

Marked theme is "an element other than occupies the point of departure position of the clause but does not conflates with the grammatical subject" (Halliday, 1994, p. 44).

Example 2: In this light, identity is not fixed or static rather that it is changeable.

A. Selection of Participants

The participants consisted of two Iraqi postgraduate students studying at the Faculty of Education at Monash University. These participants were not have been educated in English-speaking or Western countries prior to their enrolment in the Australian Masters, and had completed their first assignment for the unit within the year 2012, and two Australian participants who, in contrast, were not educated in Iraq or similar countries prior to their enrolment in the Australian Masters, and also needed to have completed their first assignment within the same year.

B. Recruitment of Participants

After taking the permission of the course's lecturer, I visited the class and distributed a flyer explaining the project. The explanatory statement was attached to the invitation, which specified that those interested should read it before indicating their interest to me by email. I explicitly stated that, while their participation would be valuable, they should not feel any obligation to participate. Those interested in participating contacted me via my provided email, expressing their agreement to participate in this current research. They provided me with their contact details and their consent form. They also provided me with their marked for the "Language, society and cultural differences" Assignment (1). Each participant provided one sample assignment of writing along with the assignment requirements to the researcher. These had been marked and returned.

C. Unite of Analysis

To analyse the data, t-unit was selected. T-unit is defined by Fries (1994, p. 318) "as a clause complex which contains one main independent clause together with all the hypotactic clauses which are dependent on it" (p. 318). Analysing theme at the level of t-unit rather than the individual clauses make it easier to focus on patterns of the thematic development in large amounts of text, and can also be justified on the grounds that the thematic structure of a dependent clause is often constrained by the independent clause Fries & Francis (1992).

D. Procedure

One segment of about 1500 words on the same topic from these four students has been chosen across these assignments for the basis of comparison. Each segment was broken down into a list of clauses that were then divided into their theme and rheme. The ideational themes were further categorized as marked and unmarked themes. The frequency of Marked and Unmarked theme in these academic segments were calculated, and the percentages were derived by comparing the number of their occurrences in each group of Iraqi and Australian postgraduate students' English writing. Afterwards, Halliday's model of thematic organization of Marked and Unmarked themes (1994; 2004) was applied to investigate the function of marked and unmarked theme as a point of departure in demonstrating a critical argument. Several researchers pointed out that there is always a danger of misinterpretation with text analysis (Ebrahimi, 2012; Jalilifar, 2009). Therefore, to minimize the threat of reliability in the analysis, one segment of each group were also analysed by an experienced researcher in applied linguistics and agreements made based on Hallidaian (2004) model of discourse analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the functional analysis of Marked and Unmarked themes is to identify the level of the argument that the students of different culture have produced through the element of critical thinking and self-voice as dual competences in forming their critical arguments. The results are presented in Table 1, which indicates that in terms of unmarked theme as appoint of departure, the Iraqi non-native writers of English used unmarked themes (90%) slightly more than the Australian native writers (84%), as well as, Australians used marked themes (16%) slightly more than the Iraqi non-native writers (10%).

TABLE 1.
FREQUENCY OF MARKED AND UNMARKED THEMES IN THE STUDENTS' WRITTEN SEGMENTS.

TREQUERTED OF MARKED AND CHARACTED THEMES IN THE STODE OF WRITTEN SECURENTS		
Theme types	Iraqi non-native writer (%) Australian native writer (%)	
	Student Ir1 Student Ir2	Student A 1 Student A 2
Unmarked Ideational theme (UM)	33+17 (90%)	84 + 79 (84%)
Marked Ideational theme (MT)	4+2 (10%)	5 + 21 (16%)
Total (in whole piece)	37 (100%)	32 (100%)

A. Unmarked Point of Departure Relations in the Students' Written Segments

A most interesting finding is that the frequency of unmarked themes was greater in the Iraqi native students' written segments (90%) than in the Australian native writers' ones (84%), as Table 1 illustrates. In the segments analysed, for the Iraqi non-native writers, most unmarked themes as a point of departure are personal names, examples of which are provided in examples 1 and 2.

Example, 1 Student Ir 1		
Unmarked theme	Rheme	
Hall <um> (personal name)</um>	proposed the term of "Diaspora" to refer to any migrants people that share common ethnic identity such as the African Diaspora in Europe.	
Hall (1997) <um> (personal name)</um>	argues that identity is varied, constructed, multiple, hybrid, dynamic and recreated continuously in one's everyday experiences.	
	Example, 2 Student Ir 2	
Unmarked theme	Rheme	
Hall (1997) <um> (personal name)</um>	states that identity is changeable and not fixed, as understood from Hall (1997) arguments	
Hall <um> (personal name)</um>	refers to the idea that "identity" is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think" (p.1).	

As evident from the analysed segments, examples 1 and 2 display how (Student Ir 1 and Ir 2) stamp the elements of critical thinking and self-voice as dual writing competences through the unmarked theme as a point of departure. These writers develop their topic with a lack of these competences features, where, most of their ideas as a point of departure are descriptive; rather than being critical. In the case of Student Ir 1, he introduces the theme of the first clause "Hall (1997) argues that cultural identity", as an unmarked theme for the second and third clause, and the information presented in the rheme is often neglected. As well he starts to link his first sentences with the following as if he formed a list rather than bringing them together in a cohesive and relational way. More specifically, this writer presents his analytical argument like a list of descriptive information (rather than being argumentative) through placing another scholar's names (Hall) repeatedly in the theme stem, which makes his segment read descriptively and without his own authority and self-voice as a necessary for the academic success.

In similar manner, Student Ir 2, has provided a purely descriptive argument in which he merely showing loyalty to the course materials rather than critically questioning the validity of the ideas in those materials in his written segment, which is comparable with previous studies by Barnawi (2011) and Stapleton (2001), who convincingly argued that in EFL writing instruction, most EFL college students adhere strictly to their texts as materials such as course-books, and handouts, because "they have not been taught to think critically and independently in their first language" (p.190). This suggests several reasons: one is that these writers preferred to position the unmarked theme as a point of departure in the subject position in the clause to make sure that their sentences were grammatically and logically correct (Halliday, 1994, p. 33). Another possible reason for these results is that the experience of silencing in the Iraqi writer's voice can be explained by the mismatch between the Iraqi cultural norms of academic writing and the class one in Australian ones.

Another related interpretation is that the use of the main idea and/or author in the subject position stems as a starting point of argument from a belief that authority and scientific argument resides in the voice and ideas of others (Kamler & Thomson, 2006; Rusdinoor, 2009; Wang, 2007). The lack of further rheme development suggests that the student is unfamiliar with how to formulate an academic critical argument. These findings are in line with those (Rusdinoor, 2009; Wang, 2007), who argued that students' weaknesses in their academic argument were due to problems with thematic development in their written texts. Lack of thematic development made their text read "like a list" which is characteristic of descriptive and narrative texts rather than argumentative ones. These writers need to understand that in academic writing, they need to take into an account the intended reader's expectations as writing is linked to culture. These students need to understand that academic writing is not merely about conveying "content, copy thoughts, or borrowing ideas from reading texts, and presenting them as they are; rather than, it is about presetting the element of critical thinking and self-voice as a point of departure for their academic debate. This is because self-voice in the western context of writing is not an optional aspect; rather it's compulsory ones. They also need to bear in mind that using a variety of different opinions and backing them with some evidence from different resources will help them in presenting the elements of critical thinking and self-voice as duel writing competences.

Example, 3 Student Ir 1		
Unmarked theme	Rheme	
Hall (1997) argues that cultural identity <um></um>	is represented through producing and exchanging meanings.	
Hall <um></um>	proposed the term of "Diaspora" to refer to any migrants people that share common ethnic identity such as the African Diaspora in Europe.	
Hall <um></um>	refers to this diaspora and mentions that all cultural practices and forms of representation are putting the issue of cultural identity in question of? Who is this emergent? (p. 392).	

In contrast, in the case of the Australian native writers as shown in Example (4, below), Student A 1 expresses her judgment in the unmarked theme stem more effectively from a general point of view and links her first sentence with the theme of the next clause using internal textual devices, for instance, *and in this way*. Student A1 positions herself authoritatively towards other writers through the use of other citations from other sources such as conjunctions to indicate agreement/disagreement with the presented topic. In other words, the unmarked theme as point of departure clearly shows that the writer has a clear understanding that expression personal judgement is one of the demands in the objective academic writing. Further, the writer has quite a confident dialogic engagement and deals with greater authority with Hall's text. This suggests that the writer is familiar with the requirement that academic written discourse critically evaluate literature- she sees Hall's ideas as only one among many possibilities. This notion suggests that in Student A 1's writing, her confident setting out of her own ideas, were the results of instruction in her Australian education system that emphasized critical engagement. So, judging the ideas of other people served to augment her more greatly visible authorial analytical argument. These finding is consistent with those from previous research, which has shown that Eastern education differs from Western education with the respect to the role critical thinking in forming academic arguments where this aspect is deemed to be peculiar to the western culture (Alagozlu, 2007).

Example, 4 Student A 1		
Unmarked theme	Rheme	
It <um></um>	is represented through producing and exchanging meanings.	
Everyone <um></um>	has a shared sense of history and ancestry, and in this way, is fixed within one essentialised vision (Hall, 1997, 51).	
and in this way, <mt></mt>	is fixed within one essentialised vision (Woodward, 1997, 51).	
From this perspective, the culture of a croup or society, <mt></mt>	is unchanging and the practices they engage in reinforce this unity and	
	sameness.	

B. Marked Point of Departure Relations in the Students' Written Segments

The result of the data in terms of the marked themes for the critical thinking and self-voice showed that the marked themes occur more frequently in the segments of the Australian native writers (5%) than in those of the Iraqi non-native writers (2%), as shown in Table 1. In the segments analysed, the Australian native writers used more marked themes as a point of departure in their written segments than the applied by these Iraqi non-native writers. The Australian writers had a high incidence of marked themes as a point of departure in conveying their argumentative text. In the argumentative texts segments, the Australian writers tend to take a stance by positioning themselves (sharing their own identity) to authorities and other writers in their texts. This usually happens when writers develops the rheme of one clause into the theme of the subsequence clause with high incidence of cross references links resulting in having the clear presentation of these dual competences in their argument.

In the case of Student A2 as shown in example 7, she uses `we` + `positioned/ourselves` voice served to either co-opt her reader into unfolding argument as well as to strengthen her claim by building a shared identity to a wide group. This type of writing results in presenting strong argument with visible self-voice to persuade or convince the reader of the writer's point of view. Student A1 also uses same strategy for presenting her argument like "We + the people" to express the function of self-voice or thoughts in her text without only accepting the idea of Hall's argument. These writers have been used these dual competence of critical thinking and self-voice as a point of departure through the marked themes for the purpose of to act locally and globally for the reader who read their texts. A possible justification for this is that since these westerns have early and continues exposure to English in their daily social interaction; this made them familiar on how to judge the idea of others by showing their authorial presence in their writing. These findings are compatible with the research of Barnawi (2011) who showed that "western student writers seem to judge the idea of others to show their authorial presence in their writing" (p. 193). This high incidence of marked themes in the Australian postgraduate students is exemplified by the writing of Student A1, who mostly employed the dual elements of critical thinking and self-voice as appoint of departure as a requirement for their academic success.

Exam Example, 6 Student A1		
Marked theme	Rheme	
And the practice <m-c-a></m-c-a>	they engage in reinforce this unity and sameness	
From apolitical standpoint <m-c-a></m-c-a>	it is useful to develop a sense of a unified "we the people"	
Marked theme	xam Example, 7Student A2 Rheme	
In this way, <m-c-a></m-c-a>	we are positioned as well as position ourselves (Hall 1997, p 52).	
Because of different histories traditions, behaviors and	language in its various forms is unique to the culture of its users.	
beliefs <mt></mt>		

While the elements of critical thinking and self-voice as a point of departure by marked themes were more common in the Australian writers, they were invisible in the Iraqi non-native writers. These Iraqi writers did not displaying their authorial presence as a point of departure as they simply accepting the idea of others. It seems that the elements of such critical thinking and self-voice are not emphasised explicitly within their education system. This suggests why these

writers in their arguments have suffered in expressing the original thought in the texts. In the case of Student Ir 1, he preferred to emphasise the grammatical subject in some clauses as a starting point for their written segments, but he did not demonstrate a critical understanding of the complexities of Hall's argument, rather demonstrating a descriptive ones. This writer did not take a stance in putting the element critical thinking and self-voice as a dual competence together with some supported evidence; rather he failed to defend them. In similar writing style, Student Ir 2, did not constructed the aspect of critical thinking as he only rely on copying on what he has read from the course's texts without filtering the argument with some basic evidence to defend his argument. Therefore, in most of their claims, they have shared somebody else's viewpoint rather than putting their viewpoint in the marked theme as a point of departure for their argument into their text. These findings are in line with the work of Barnawi (2011), which has shown that EFL writers were incapable in demonstrating the element of critical thinking and self-voice skills, as they merely presented the summaries of the worked reviewed based on their readings. This suggests that their expectations of the academic writing requirements at the Australian universities were not similar to those in their home country's assessment practices in Iraq. These findings are line with those of previous research (Ebrahimi & Ebrahimi, 2012). In written texts, non-native writers "were less argumentative in nature compared to those developed by native writers" in the use of marked theme pattern (p. 3), an example of which is provided from Student Ir 1 and Ir 2 in example 8 and 9.

Example, 8 Student Ir1		
Marked theme	Rheme	
In this sense, identity <m-c-a></m-c-a>	is not fixed or static,	
From apolitical standpoint <m-c-a></m-c-a>	it is useful to develop a sense of a unified "we the people"	
	Example, 9 Student Ir 2	
Marked theme	Rheme	
Through daily activities <mt></mt>	the way people deal with others and speak can distinguish them from others.	

This suggest that while the unfamiliarity with the academic writing requirements was more visible as having an impact on the Iraqi non-native postgraduate writers of English, familiarity with academic genre was not seen as surprising for the Australian native writers of English. This suggests that the Iraqi postgraduate students (Ir 1 and Ir 2) had not been fully equipped and/or trained, nor did they have the combination of both standards of Western and Eastern academic writing requirements, which in turn caused their unfamiliarity with the specific genre as a global requirement for writing. This is consistent with previous research work (Kamel, 2000), who argued that the comprehension and production of academic function such as argumentation depends on training rather than merely on language proficiency. However, Iraqi students' social context and learning activities govern their prior experiences which in turn can cause poor academic writing skills in Western academic contexts. This shows the usefulness of explicit over implicit approaches in teaching academic writing.

In short, the analyses of the student's segments have shown differences between the Iraqi postgraduates and Australians as native writers of English. As we have seen, there were only differences rather similarities in capturing the marked/unmarked themes as a point of departure in demonstrating the elements of critical thinking and self-voice as a dual competence in the students' written segments. In the case of the Iraqi students, their critical thinking as a self-representation was invisible as they gave their loyalty to their textbooks and course materials. In contrast, the Australian native writers of English were more visible in displaying the elements of critical thinking and self-voice. As a result of the analysis, the segments that captured strong authoritative and critical voices are those ones which constructed the elements of critical thinking and self-representation which are the requirements of academic writing at many Australian universities, particularly (though not exclusively), at postgraduate level. In contrast, the segments that were more descriptive and developed less argument were those which provided less critical reflection and self-voice. This does not match the requirements of the academic writing style in the Education Faculty at Monash University.

V. CONCLUSION

The data analysis indicated that there are differences rather than similarities in the functional use of Marked and Unmarked themes as appoint of departure in forming the critical arguments. The analysis of unmarked themes in both segments shows that the successful segments by the native writers introduce personal judgment in the theme position stems and link that judgment with the other sentences in a very effective and consistent way. On the other hand, the Iraqi postgraduate non-native writers tended to repeat the nominal subject as theme instead of using an internal textual theme to link the sentences in that segment to build up a sense of clarification of focus. These Iraqi non-native writers in their writing mostly focused on word and sentences level structures rather than the structures at the level of their whole written discourse.

The difference between these two groups indicates that segments developed by Iraqi postgraduate students were descriptive rather than argumentative. This shows that critical thinking has taken different forms in different cultures. The results of this study will benefit the Iraqi English language students in their context of teaching critical thinking elements in writing English in Iraq. This will help the Iraqi postgraduate students to be fully equipped with the standards of Western and Eastern academic writing requirements, and their unfamiliarity with the specific genre as a

global requirement for writing. The study showed that Iraqi postgraduates students seems to share similar thinking behavioural patterns as those mentioned in the previous academic researches of Alagozlu (2007), Barnawi (2011), and Moodie (2000). The study has pinpoint to identify the existence problem of lacking teaching the elements of critical thinking and self-voice in forming academic arguments in the Iraqi education system of writing. A further step of integral both elements of critical thinking and self-voice in the Iraqi academic writing would be beneficial for the students to form health academic argumentative without imposing one curriculum above the other.

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