

## Secondary level Students' Lived Experience of Being Involved in Academic Writing in ELT Classroom

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### Article Info

### Abstract

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*This paper explores and analyzes the grade eleven students' lived experience of being involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. For this, I collected the required information taking phenomenological interview with the three purposively selected students of grade eleven from three respective institutional colleges of Nagarjun Municipality in Kathmandu. The collected information was thematically analyzed using ATLAS.ti 9. The lived experience of the secondary level students showed the inner and acquired threats of the students in researched context. The results reveal that both the inner and acquired threats of students have demotivated them to be involved in academic writing except the teacher's supporting attitude which encouraged the students to improve their writing skill. Hence, the study concludes that there is need for using systematic strategies to motivate the students to be involved in academic writing supporting them to overcome the threats that they have been facing. Academic writing in ELT, making it even more appropriate and scientific for the betterment of overall teaching and learning of English in particular, and thereby the system of secondary level education as a whole.*

### Introduction

In the realm of education, academic writing serves as a cornerstone of intellectual development, critical thinking, and communication skills. It is a vital skill that not only equips students with the ability to convey their thoughts effectively in English language but also empowers them to engage in scholarly discourse (Al Badi, 2015). English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms, in particular, play a pivotal role in nurturing these skills among Secondary level students, preparing them for academic and professional pursuits. However, the journey of academic writing in the ELT classroom is far from a uniform or predictable one as it has a significant impact on students' achievement in English language learning (Abdulkareem, 2013). It is a dynamic process that is deeply intertwined with the lived experiences of students, influenced by diverse factors that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

The landscape of ELT has undergone significant transformation over the years. Gone are the days when language education primarily focused on grammar and vocabulary. In the contemporary educational ecosystem, ELT pedagogies emphasize the holistic development of language skills, with a notable emphasis on academic writing. The ability to write academically is not only a requirement for success in higher education but is also considered a global mediation of knowledge (Mahboob, 2014), applicable in various professional domains. Thus, the ELT classroom serves as the fertile ground where students are introduced to the intricacies of academic writing.

However, academic writing is more than just a set of rules and formats. It is an intricate process that involves ideation, research, logical organization, and articulation of thoughts in a coherent and scholarly manner (Budjalemba & Listyani, 2020). Furthermore, it demands critical thinking, argumentation, and the ability to engage with diverse sources of knowledge. For Secondary level students, this journey is not merely an academic exercise; it is a voyage of self-discovery, skill acquisition, and personal growth.

Being a Secondary level English teacher, I have to venture into the world of Secondary level students' lived experiences of academic writing in the ELT classroom. I must recognize the diversity of voices and perspectives that exist within this realm. Each student brings their unique background, motivations, and aspirations to the classroom, influencing how they perceive and engage with academic writing. Therefore, this article will be a mosaic of narratives, providing a platform for the participants' voices to be heard and acknowledged.

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Secondary level is a time of profound intellectual growth, self-discovery, and preparation for the future. It's a phase of life where adolescents transition from the simplicity of elementary education to the complexities of higher learning. In the context of Nepal, Secondary level is regarded as grade 9 to 12; as declared by (Department of Education, 2018) Within this educational crucible, one particular facet stands out as both an essential skill and a formidable challenge is academic writing in English. In my five years of teaching experience at Secondary level, I have uncovered some cases of the students who have undergone the nuances, challenges, triumphs, and transformative moments that shape the educational experiences of these young students. In the flock of transformative adolescents, there are certain students who are unable to handle the flow of teaching learning process in ELT classroom. They have lacking on basic level of English language learning which needs the sentence formation appropriately. Despite being English as a compulsory subject in school education, being in touch with such students who are unable to write their address with proper spelling made me triggered to study this issue in-depth. As stated by Gelfand, Raspa, Briller, and Schim (2005), students' lived experiences of being involved in academic writing are a rich tapestry of narratives, reflecting the multifaceted nature of their intellectual and personal development. In this exploration, I embark on a comprehensive journey into the world of Secondary level academic writing, uncovering their lived experience of being involved in academic writing in ELT classroom.

Understanding the lived experiences of Secondary level students as they navigate the terrain of academic writing is essential for educators, researchers, and policymakers. It allows us to gain insights into the challenges they face, the strategies they employ, and the impact of these experiences on their overall academic and personal development. Furthermore, it enables us to tailor ELT pedagogies to better meet the needs and expectations of students, making the process of academic writing more enriching and meaningful.

This article aims to explore the multifaceted dimensions of Secondary level students' experiences in academic writing within the ELT classroom. By delving into their perceptions, struggles, triumphs, and reflections, this article attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities that surround this critical aspect of their educational journey. This study will also examine the role of educators, curricular approaches, and the broader educational environment in shaping these experiences through the reviewed literature. Ultimately, this study will shed light on how academic writing can be more effectively integrated into the ELT curriculum, fostering an environment where Secondary level students not only acquire essential writing skills but also develop a deeper appreciation for the art of scholarly expression.

### Literature Review

Academic writing is the cornerstone of scholarly communication. It is the means by which knowledge is conveyed, analyzed, and critiqued within the academic community. In Secondary level, students are introduced to the fundamental principles of academic writing, which include sentence structure, use of grammar appropriately, use of punctuation marks correctly and constructing coherent arguments. It is here that they take their first steps into the world of critical thinking skills that will serve as the bedrock for their future academic and professional pursuits.

The journey of secondary level students into the realm of academic writing is marked by a transition from the straightforward narratives and essays of elementary school to the more complex forms of writing encountered in the later years of secondary education. This progression mirrors their own cognitive development, as they move from concrete thinking to abstract reasoning. It is a transformation that unfolds over several years and is marked by distinct phases, each with its unique challenges and rewards.

***The Landscape of Secondary Level Academic Writing.*** Secondary level students' experiences in academic writing are shaped by a diverse array of factors, including curriculum, teaching methods, individual aptitude, and extracurricular interests. The curriculum often dictates the types of writing assignments students encounter. Essays, research papers, literary analyses, scientific reports, and persuasive arguments are some of the common genres they must master. These assignments, while distinct in form and purpose, collectively contribute to students' development as writers and thinkers.

The methods and pedagogical approaches employed by teachers also play a pivotal role. Some educators emphasize structured writing processes, from brainstorming to revision, while others encourage experimentation and creativity. Peer review and group discussions are frequently integrated into the classroom experience, fostering collaborative learning and the exchange of ideas. These diverse approaches reflect the complexity of academic writing as both a creative and analytical endeavor.

Beyond the classroom, extracurricular activities such as debate teams, literary clubs, and writing contests offer students opportunities to further hone their writing skills and engage with their peers in meaningful intellectual pursuits. These extracurricular activities can profoundly impact students' perceptions of academic writing, turning it from a classroom chore into a passionate pursuit.

***The Challenges of Academic Writing in Secondary level.*** Secondary level academic writing is not without its challenges. For many students, it represents a significant departure from their prior writing experiences. The transition from personal narratives and descriptive essays to research-driven, evidence-based argumentation can be daunting. According to Hyland (2002), students must learn not only to express their thoughts clearly but also to substantiate their claims with credible sources—a task that requires research skills, information literacy, and critical thinking abilities that are still in development. Additionally, the pressure of academic performance and the desire to meet high expectations can create anxiety and stress. The fear of receiving a lower grade or the belief that one's writing is not up to par can be demotivating (Hirano, 2014). High-stakes assessments, such as standardized tests and college applications, often place a spotlight on a student's writing abilities, amplifying these anxieties.

Furthermore, the struggle for time management is a common challenge (Kachgal, Hansen, & Nutter, 2001). Secondary level students lead busy lives, juggling academic commitments with extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, and personal responsibilities. Finding the time and mental space for sustained writing efforts can be a delicate balancing act. Moreover, lack of scaffolding to encourage themselves is the another challenge that the secondary level students have to go through.

**The Triumphs and Transformations.** Despite the challenges, the lived experiences of Secondary level students in academic writing are also filled with triumphs and transformations. As students' progress through their Secondary level years, they gradually master the art of crafting compelling arguments, conducting research, and presenting their findings in a structured and persuasive manner. For many, a turning point in their writing journey comes when they realize the power of their words to influence, persuade, and provoke thought. They discover that their essays and writing based on critical thinking can be vehicles for expressing their unique perspectives on important issues, and they take pride in the impact their writing can have on their peers and teachers.

Peer review and feedback from educators become invaluable tools for growth. As stated by (Dochy, Segers, & Sluijsmans, 1999), constructive criticism helps students refine their writing skills, learn from their mistakes, and develop a greater appreciation for the revision process. As they engage in these iterative processes, they not only improve their writing but also gain a deeper understanding of the subjects they explore. Furthermore, Secondary level academic writing fosters essential life skills. The ability to communicate effectively in writing is a transferable skill that extends far beyond the classroom. It is an asset in college, where students are expected to produce advanced research papers, and in the workplace, where clear and concise written communication is highly valued.

**The Intersection of Individuality and Conformity.** Secondary level students' lived experiences in academic writing are further enriched by the intersection of individuality and conformity. On one hand, academic writing demands adherence to established conventions, including proper citation styles, grammatical accuracy, and the use of evidence to support arguments (Awagu, 2021). These conventions serve as the foundation of scholarly communication, ensuring clarity and consistency in academic discourse.

On the other hand, Secondary level students bring their unique voices, perspectives, and experiences to their writing. This individuality adds depth and richness to their work, enabling them to explore topics from diverse angles and infuse their writing with personal passion. It is within this tension between conformity and individuality that the true artistry of academic writing emerges.

Students learn to strike a delicate balance between meeting the expectations of academic writing and expressing their authentic selves. This negotiation between the conventional and the personal is a hallmark of their journey in academic writing.

### Secondary level Education in Nepal

In Nepal, the school-level education comprises the primary level (1–8) and secondary level (9–12). There are a total of 35,055 schools in Nepal, of which 27,728 are public schools (community schools), 6,206 private schools, and 1,121 religious schools (Muslim religious schools, Gumbas/Vihar, and Hindu Ashrams schools) (Department of Education, 2018, Figure 1). The students enrolled in both public and private schools have been involved in ELT process in course of studying English as a compulsory subject.

There has been different provision regarding the academic institutions' student evaluation and monitoring system, schools and universities in Nepal. There is an annual examination system with midterm and internal evaluations for the basic level students under the direct supervision of respective schools and local governments. Furthermore, students are evaluated by annual examinations for the school level, including internal and midterm evaluations by the respective schools and the local government. However, National Examination Board (NEB) regulates the conduction and regulation of examination of grade 12 (Department of Education, 2018).

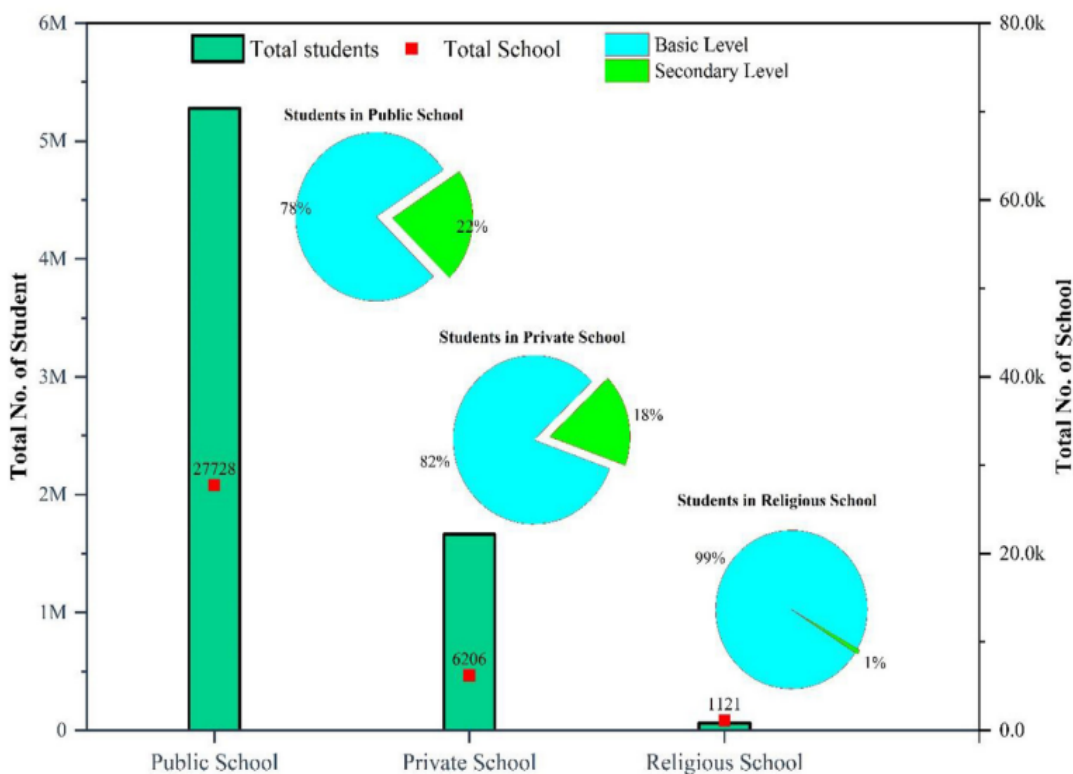


Figure 1. Students' enrollment in public, private and religious schools in Nepal.

Adopted from (Pal et al., 2021)

### Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure

I approached inductive thematic analysis of data using ATLAS.ti9 – a computer aided qualitative data analysis software, for data

analysis and interpretation procedure. As I transcribed the original field data, I saw how they looked. Then, I sorted them and tried to see the patterns. After several revisions, I coded the documents using the software. I saw that participants' responses were different in many ways but within the diversity, there were patterns, a kind of homogeneity. So, the responses of the same pattern and similar in meaning were put together (called code grouping or creating themes in the software). Once this grouping was done, I thematized them based on the literature review and my research questions using the software to make the data analysis systematic. Some themes also emerged as the interpretation went on. When the themes and the data made sense, I interpreted them. During the interpretation and analysis, I made sure that the meaning making was the main focus.

I have cited the quotations from the research participants using the same formatting as for other quotations. That means, I have presented a quotation of fewer than forty words or more in block quotation, followed by the in-text citation within parenthesis following the system provided in the report of the analysis generated through ATLAS.ti project as: (A: B ¶ p1-p2 in document name indicating the participant), where 'A' refers to the document No.; 'B' refers to the ordinal number of the quotation in the document in terms of time; ¶ is the sign for paragraph; 'p1-p2' refers to the location of the quotation in terms of the numbers of initial and final paragraphs in the documents; 'in' is the structural term followed by the name of the document indicating the method of data collection and the concerned participant. For example, in the citation, (1:2 ¶ 3 in P3):

1 = first document

2 = second quotation in the document in terms of time

¶ = the sign of paragraph

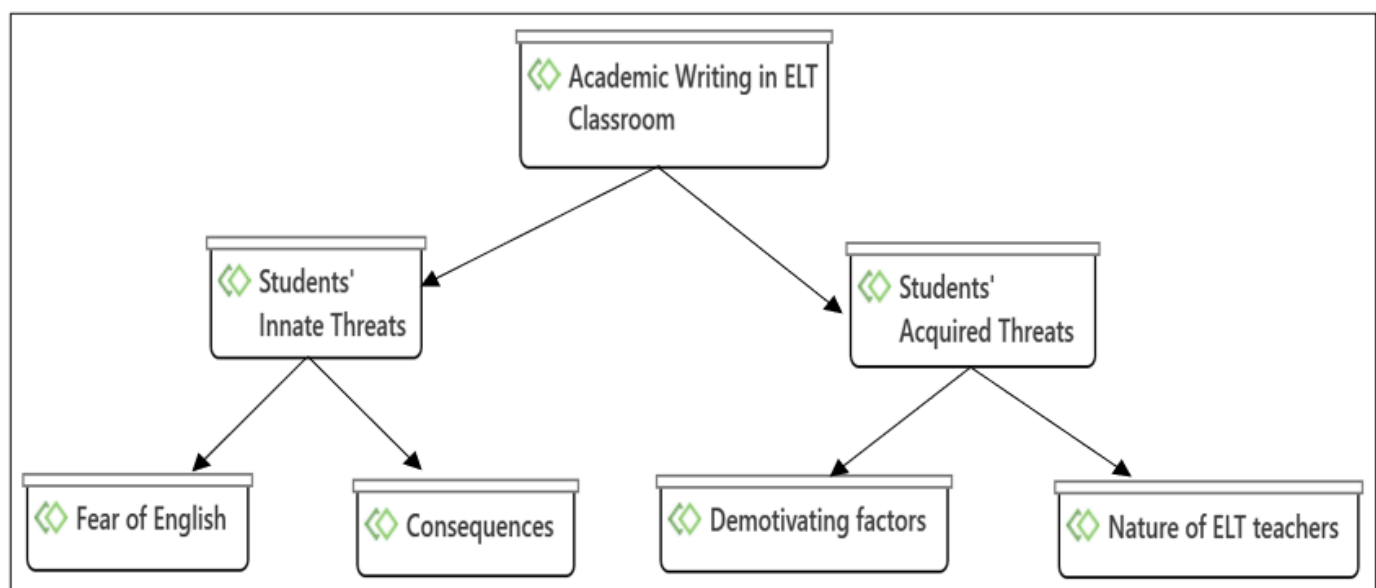
3 = the quotation is located in third paragraph

P3 = the third participant/student 3

## Result

Adding and organizing the set of three written documents, prepared from the oral information, to a project in ATLAS.ti library, and analyzing and synthesizing the information using the software as a tool, this study identifies both the students' innate threats and acquired threats as lived by the participants in the research context—secondary level ELT classes in grade 11 of Kathmandu.

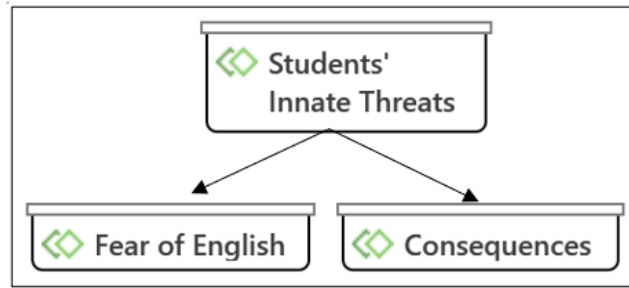
Therefore, in this section I describe the overall findings from the field data under two superordinate themes: Students' innate and acquired threats of being involved in academic writing in ELT classroom (see Figure 2). As shown in the figure, the first theme incorporates two subordinate themes: Fear of English (supported by four grounded codes) and Consequences (supported by four grounded codes); and the second theme includes two subordinate themes: Dominative factors (supported by four grounded codes) and Nature of ELT teachers (supported by three grounded codes).



Note: ELT= English language teaching;  = theme;

Figure 2. Overall classification of qualitative themes.

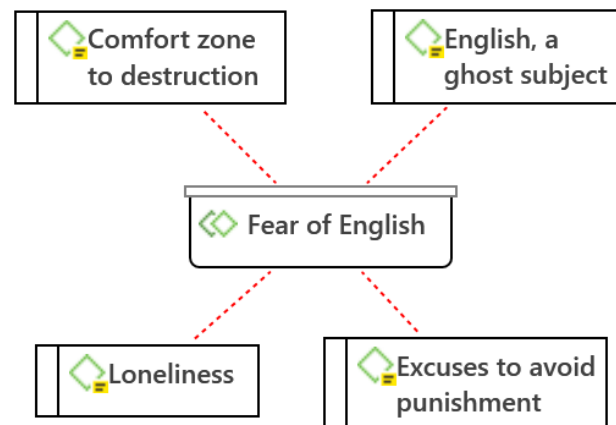
**Students' Innate Threats.** Each day, students have to face various challenges to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. In this research, students' innate threat represents to those obstacles that they have been facing due to their inborn incapability. The term innate threat is used to describe their fear of English subject and the consequences of that fear. This finding is in line with Jones (2008) as he stated that students' self-confidence in their capabilities play a significant role in their ability to learn how to write. The interpretive analysis of the field data shows that the students' innate threat is supported by two interrelated subordinate themes: Fear of English and consequences and supported by four grounded codes to each of them (see Figure 3).



Note:  = theme

Figure 3. Subordinate themes supporting the students' innate threats

**Fear of English.** This is the first subordinate theme under the superordinate theme, 'Students' innate threats'. The central idea of this theme is related to the students' incapability to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom due to the various excuses that they create in order to avoid the possible punishments. Also, those excuses hinder them to move forward from the comfort zone and ultimately leads them to the loneliness. According to Shang (2013), when the students are involved in academic writing in ELT classroom, they get anxious as they are afraid of making mistakes in language forms. Hence, nervousness as their innate threat obliges them to create excuses to avoid being involved in academic writing in ELT class. In this research, this subordinate theme 'fear of English' is supported by four codes; comfort zone to destruction, English a ghost subject, excuses to avoid punishment and loneliness (see Figure 4). The quotations supporting most of the codes center on fear of English, and therefore the codes are interrelated with each other. However, they are named differently on the basis of the tone of the participants' words.



Note:  = commented code;  = 'code group' or theme

Figure 4. Codes supporting the subordinate theme, fear of English.

**Comfort Zone to Destruction.** Here, comfort zone refers to the students' inability to accept the teacher's strategy implemented to enhance their achievement in English language learning. They prefer Nepali language as a medium of instruction which leads them to decrease their English language learning capacity.

This code is grounded in one document, and supported by a participant (P1) and two quotations. The participant's experience revealed that fear of English triggers the students to live in comfort zone which might lead them to the destruction. P1, for example said, "the way we could understand the essence of the chapter was to explain in Nepali, but we never knew how to express our understanding in written form in English class" (3:6 ¶ 2 in P1).

**English, a Ghost Subject.** English is a ghost subject for those students who have no option but to find the excuses to skip learning English. There is no platform to vent their awkwardness, frustration, fidgety and unwordiness.

This code is grounded in one document, and supported by the participants (P1 & P2) and three quotations.

Students' "awkwardness" (1:1 ¶ 2 in P2) in English class makes them feel inferior among their classmates and the English teacher. In this regard, P2 has shared his experience as

"I still remember an incident that I was absent for 10 days with the excuse of eye infection and high fever. Actually I wasn't sick neither I stayed at home. I always dressed up in college uniform and left home but never went to college. I spent my 15 days of college time on the hillside watching downloaded movies on my phone. I did this because I wanted to skip her class and wanted to be ignored by her" (1:15 ¶ 4 in P2).

Such pressure from the teachers make the students categorize an English subject as a ghost subject.

**Excuses to Avoid Punishment.** In this research, excuses to avoid the punishment refers to the students' excuse that they make to avoid the punishment in English class. Skipping the English class, avoiding to face the English teacher, choosing the last bench are some of the strategies that they use to be in safe side.

This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by participants (P1 & P2) and four quotations.

The fear of English subject has made them choose various unusual excuses to avoid being involved in ELT classroom. Skipping the English class with various excuses like “diarrhea, stomach ache, headache and so on” (3:8 ¶ 2 in P1) make their relation with English subject as a distinct one. That’s why they intentionally choose the corner seat of last bench to avoid the teacher’s questions (1:3 ¶ 3 in P2). In the name of excuses, the students suffer a lot as they have to “wear cap and mask” (1:2 ¶ 2 in P2) always to hide their face.

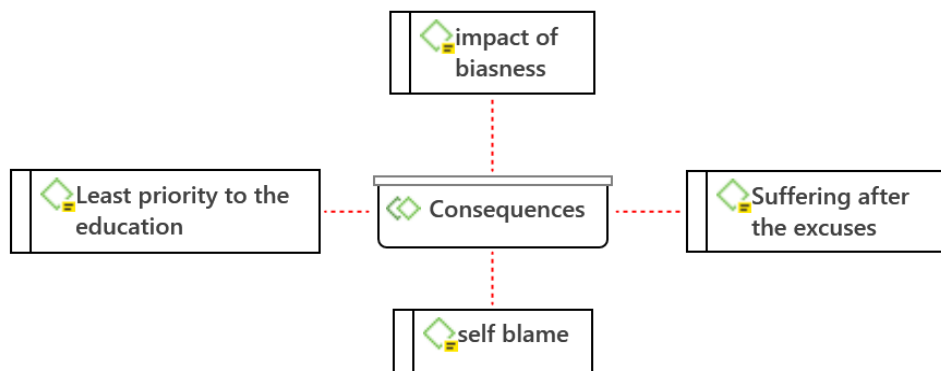
*Loneliness.* Despite being among the classmates, the students feel loneliness due to the biasness and ignorance that they have to face in ELT classroom. Their excuses to avoid the English class, their awkwardness, and their fear of facing the English teacher makes them alone.

This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by participants (P2 & P3) and four quotations.

Loneliness is an ultimate consequence that they have to face due to the fear of English subject. They get tired of being “laughingstock” (1:16 ¶ 4 in P2) among their friends in the classroom and try their best to avoid the English subject. They expect their teachers, friends and parents to be patience but they receive their “impatient” (4:12 ¶ 8 in P3) from them. In this regard, P3 has shared his experience of being alone in the classroom as he stated “Everyone was discussing among their bench mates after listening the teacher’s instruction but I had no one to talk” (4:5 ¶ 5 in P3). This code is supported by P2 as well, as he said that “I have become alone. Some of my bench mates barely talked to me” (1:17 ¶ 5 in P2).

*Consequences.* This is the second subordinate theme under the superordinate theme, ‘Students’ innate threats’. The central idea of this theme is related to the students’ suffering after their avoidance to the English subject. According to Winarso (2016), in order to complete a task successfully, both physical and mental readiness are essential. But in case of Nepal, students’ fear has ruled over their confidence and they aren’t ready to be involved ELT classroom.

In this research, this subordinate theme ‘consequences’ is supported by four codes; impact of biasness, suffering after the excuses, self-blame and least priority to the education (see Figure 5).



Note:  = commented code;  = ‘code group’ or theme

Figure 5. Codes supporting the subordinate theme, consequences.

*Impact of Biasness.* The impact of biased behavior towards those weak students in English class leads them to be speechless introvert who lose their confidence to face any kind of situation.

This code is grounded in one document, and supported by a participant (P3) and five quotations.

The participants shared their experience of facing the impact of biasness as a consequence of avoiding to be involved in ELT classes. As a consequence, they have shared to be ignorant towards the education along with developing the sense of self-blame. In this regard, P3 has shared his experience of facing ignorance from the teachers and friends towards his curiosity. As a result, he lost his interest in English subject (4:4 ¶ 4 in P3). The finding shows that the students’ pre-assumption towards the teachers’ behavior is one of the considering factor to lose their self-confidence. P3 has shared his experience as “She came to my bench and stared at my copy for a long time. I could not move my hand forward as I was expecting some comments as like as my grade (9-10) English teachers” (4:7 ¶ 6 in P3). P3 has shared an incident of being unable to ask the English teacher to check his copy despite being the copy unchecked for a long time due to the lack of confidence to speak in front of his friends. He stated his reason as “It’s because I didn’t dare to face the same incident that I have been facing since my childhood” (4:6 ¶ 5 in P3). This shows that the participant’s innate threat of being biased while being involved in ELT classroom resulted to be an introvert.

*Suffering after the Excuses.* Due to the various factors like inequality, biasness, demotivating learning environment and teachers’ ignorance, students tend to create unusual excuses which leads them to suffer in their future.

This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by two participants (P1 & P2) and four quotations.

The participants shared their experience of suffering due to their unusual excuses during their previous English classes to avoid being involved in academic writing. Regarding this concept, P1 has shared his obliges of copying the assignments from his friend’s copy despite being aware of its consequences. He said that “Somehow, I submit the regular assignments copying from my friend’s but I can’t pass this subject in class test and terminal examination” (3:12 ¶ 6 in P1). He has also stated, “I can’t understand the teacher’s explanation. I can’t write those question answers now. I’m not able to form even a single sentence” (3:11 ¶ 6 in P1). Similarly, P2 has also shared his experience of being unable to introduce himself in front of the class as a result of his avoidance being involved in ELT classroom.

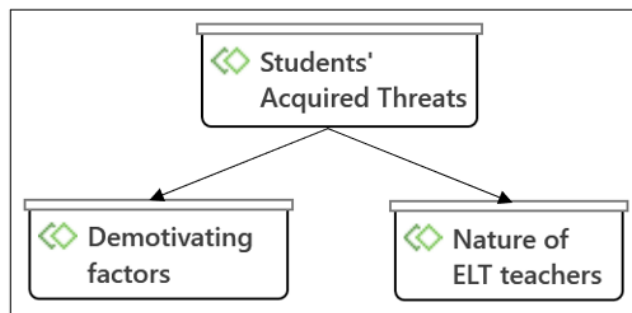
*Self-blame.* As a result of humiliation, teachers' ignorance and classmates' indifference the weak students start to blame themselves for being unable to learn in ELT classroom.

This code is grounded in a documents, and supported a participant (P2) and one quotation. In this regard, P2 has stated that, "I don't blame her, it's my weakness. I could never understand this subject since my school time" (1:12 ¶ 4 in P2). This shows that the students are habitual with the indifference and biasness of their teachers. They don't try to seek for the solution but avoid the situation blaming themselves.

*Least Priority to the Education.* When the students can't overcome the problems in ELT classes, they choose to ignore English subject and try their best to skip the English class. In order to avoid the English class, they deprive themselves from the education.

This code is grounded in a documents, and supported a participant (P1) and one quotation. Supporting this code, P1 has stated that "Schooling was always the least priority as I had to accomplish several household chores before 9:30. Also, house hold chores could be the best excuse to avoid English subject. So I never tried to ignore the household chores for the school" (3:14 ¶ 2 in P1). This shows that the fear of English resulted them to ignore the schooling prioritizing the house hold chores.

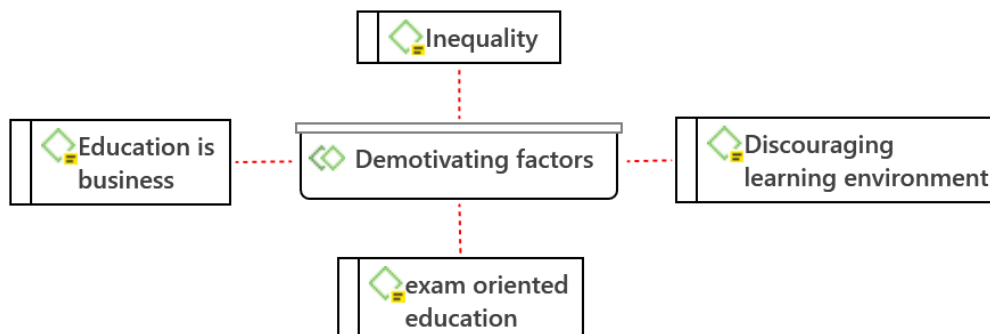
**Students' Acquired Threats.** Students' acquired threats represents to the external factors that hinder the students to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. In this research, demotivating factors like: exam- oriented education, inequality, poor economic status of the students and the teachers' nature are revealed as the external threats to the students in course of being involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. This finding is in line with Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) as their finding also shows that teaching methods, the examination system, heterogeneous classroom are the external factors that makes students unable to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. The interpretive analysis of the field data shows that the students' acquired threats is supported by two interrelated subordinate themes: demotivating factors and nature of English teachers which are supported by four and three grounded codes respectively (see Figure 6).



Note:  = theme

Figure 6. Subordinate themes supporting the students' acquired threats.

**Demotivating Factors.** This is the first subordinate theme under the superordinate theme, 'Students' acquired threats'. The central idea of this theme is related to the students' incapability to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom due to the various demotivating factors. The finding of this research shows that several demotivating factors like inequality, exam oriented education, discouraging learning environment and education as a business are the acquired threats of the students that hinder them to be involved in academic writing. According to Nunan (1989), writing requires the students to have control over various factors that demotivate them to move forward. But, the external threats that they face in course of being involved in academic writing makes them give up on their endeavors in many situations. In this research, this subordinate theme 'demotivating factors' is supported by four codes; inequality, exam oriented education, discouraging learning environment and education as a business (see Figure 7).



Note:  = commented code;  = 'code group' or theme

Figure 7. Codes supporting the subordinate theme, demotivating factors.

*Inequality.* In this research, inequality means an unfair situation that the students have to face due to their weakness. Such biased environment by the teachers makes the students think of themselves as an unsuitable participant among their friends. This code is grounded in a documents, and supported by a participant (P3) and one quotation. As stated by P3, "I could not pronounce properly and that's why I never got chance in reading activity in school" (4:1 ¶ 2 in P3) students have to deal with such biased situation despite being interested to be involved in ELT classroom.

*Discouraging Learning Environment.* In this study, discouraging learning environment refers to the situation within ELT classroom where the students have to face unavoidable circumstances like teachers' rude and biased behavior, classmates' uncooperativeness, unanswered curiosities and so on. This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by two participants (P2 & P3) and five quotations.

The participants shared their experience of being discouraged by their teacher in ELT classroom. In this regard, P2 said;

“Sometimes she shouts with angry face when she finds my empty copy and sometimes tries to teach me but she gets irritated to find me unable to write even a single word. That’s when I feel insulted because not only her but all my classmates start to stare at me” (1:10 ¶ 3 in P2).

Similarly, P3 expressed his dissatisfaction towards his classmates' impatient to let him express his ideas. He said;

“Even if my teacher allowed me to read sometime, all my friend would start making noise getting bore of my long time (time taking) reading with improper pronunciation. Sometimes I get frustrated when I don't get idea to make sentences using those vast vocabularies but I can't voice out that feeling” (4:13 ¶ 8 in P3).

His statement discloses his frustration and anxiety for being suppressed due to the biased concept of his friends and teachers. He even shared an incident as;

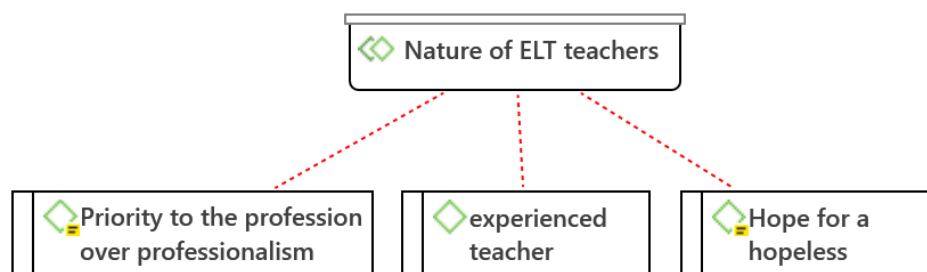
“I remember I asked a question regarding grammar to my teacher, when I was in grade 9. As soon as I began to speak, all of my classmates started to laugh for my mispronunciation. I could not make my teacher understand about my query and finally I gave up” (4:3 ¶ 3 in P3).

*Exam Oriented Education.* Exam orientated education represents to the today's education where the focus is on students' achievement in exams' result rather than their competencies. The weak students are never prioritized during the teaching learning process but are expected to achieve at least pass grade in exam. Even the curriculum has prioritized to accomplish the level based educational goals ignoring the fact that the moto of education is to make them educated and empowered. This code is grounded in three documents, and supported by three participants (P1, P2 & P3) and three quotations.

Supporting this code 'exam oriented education', the statement of P2 “I was never noticed by my teachers during my school life except on result day” (1:13 ¶ 4 in P2) shows that weak students are ignored during the teaching learning process as they take time to acquire the new information due to their cognitive incompetence. Not only the teachers but their parents also attempt to fulfil their responsibility during the result day. Regarding this, P1 said “I still remember our parents being furious towards the English teacher on result day of first term exam of grade 6 for 80% failure result” (3:9 ¶ 4 in P1).

*Education is Business.* Education has become a business in a sense that all the involved people in education sector try to escape from the reality blaming one another in case of failure. The teachers blame the system, the admin blame the teachers and the parents blame the school and teachers. None of them try to accept the reality that all of them are responsible for the students' failure but they try to escape using money as a powerful weapon. This code is grounded in a document, and supported by a participant (P1) and one quotation. The statement by P1 “I can't convince my parents regarding my capacity, because they always scold me saying that they have paid enough money to the college to make me able to pass the exam” (3:13 ¶ 6 in P1) shows the desperation of parents to wipe off their responsibility towards their children.

*Nature of ELT Teachers.* This is the second subordinate theme under the superordinate theme, 'Students' acquired threats'. The central idea of this theme is related to the students' incapability to be involved in academic writing in ELT classroom due to the various natures of ELT teachers. The finding of this research shows that the nature of teachers plays a significant role on the students' involvement on academic writing. This subordinate theme emphasizes on the teachers' feedback and their response towards the students. As stated by Can and Walker (2011), inconsistent feedback provided by teachers might lead to the lack of students' confidence in their writing skills. In this research, this subordinate theme 'Nature of ELT teachers' is supported by three codes; priority to the profession over professionalism, experienced teacher, hope for a hopeless (see Figure 8).



Note:  = commented code;  = 'code group' or theme

Figure 8. Codes supporting the subordinate theme, nature of ELT teachers.

*Priority to the profession over professionalism.* Due to the English language teachers' nature of prioritizing to the profession over professionalism, students are unable to acquire the essence of ELT. Instead of facing with the weak students, they ignore them and try to suppress their creativity. This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by two participant (P1 & P2) and three quotations.

Evaluating the professional ethics of the English teacher, P1 disclosed the fact that the teachers give priority to save their profession over the professionalism. In this regard, P1 shared an incident as “Grade 6 onward, there was an English teacher who tried his



best to use English language to teach us but we never allowed him to do so. We used to shout at a single voice “SIR WE DON’T UNDERSTAND YOU!”. After the half month or so, he finally gave up and started to explain in Nepali” (3:5 ¶ 2 in P1). This quotation shows the unwillingness of the students to accept change but it also shows the teacher’s lack of strategic motivation to encourage the students to accept English language as a medium of instruction. P1 expresses his dissatisfaction towards the teacher’s solution to avoid the obstacles in his professional career but not to uplift his professionalism. He said,

“Our teacher came up with a solution that is writing all the free writing, guided writing, and question answers on the board and making us rotate those question answers. He made us pass the exam then onwards asking the same questions that we used to rotate in the class. That was fine for that time, but now I feel that, his solution suppressed our creativity and curiosity. That method made us unable to write even a single sentence” (3:10 ¶ 5 in P1).

Similarly, P2 shared his frustration of being ignored by the subject teachers who chose their job over their professionalism. He said, “Even the subject teachers have started to ignore me because they decided that I cannot improve no matter what effort they make” (1:18 ¶ 5 in P2).

*Experienced Teacher.* In this research, the experienced teacher refers to the teacher who is well known about the students’ behavior and their performance based on their level in ELT classroom. This code is grounded in a document, and supported by a participant (P2) and two quotations. Despite being familiar with the students’ behavior, the teacher doesn’t seem to understand the feeling of students when they have to face the awkward situations. In this regard, P2 shared his experience of being threatened indirectly by his teacher as he said, “she was different, she directly asked me to introduce myself standing in front of the class. I mean, I was the first one. She started from me. I felt like it was her silent threat” (1:4 ¶ 3 in P2).

*Hope for a hopeless.* The teachers’ cooperative behavior can be the hope for those hopeless students who are obliged to be squeezed among the smart classmates, ignorant teachers and educational system along with their parents. Hence, teachers’ attitude towards the students is a significant external factor to make them involved in academic writing in ELT classroom. This code is grounded in two documents, and supported by two participants (P2 & P3) and four quotations. In this regard, P2 shared his experience of being supported by his current English teacher who made him realize the actual responsibility of a teacher towards his students. He stated, “My English teacher started to pay more attention to me in her class. She immediately checks my copy as soon as she gives some class work” (1:9 ¶ 3 in P2). This code is also supported by P3 as he said,

“She smiled at me and borrowed my pen to do the correction of my writing. She indicated to several grammatical mistakes in my writing and asked me to do from first including those corrections. I was surprised to meet a teacher in my life who was supporting me to improve my writing without making me speak. I couldn’t understand completely but somehow I felt relieved” (4:8 ¶ 6 in P3).

## Conclusion

Secondary level students’ lived experiences of being involved in academic writing represent a complex and transformative journey. From the foundations of basic writing skills to the challenges of research and argumentation, and from the triumphs of self-expression to the negotiation between conformity and individuality, their experiences are a microcosm of their broader educational development. Academic writing in Secondary level is not just a skill to be acquired but a means through which students develop as critical thinkers, effective communicators, and confident individuals ready to face the challenges of higher education and the professional world. Hence, the students need to be understood from each corner to make them able to explore and enhance their involvement in academic writing in ELT classroom.

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