ACADEMIC LITERACY IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Rachida Mohamed-Amar [1]
Horía Mohamed-Amar [2]

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this research is to explore the academic literacy of university students, evaluated as a construct composed of five dimensions: academic writing and discursive genres, stages and steps in academic writing, sources of information used, digital literacy, and the use of digital platforms for collecting academic works.

Theoretical Framework: This section presents the main concepts and academic literature that support the research, providing a solid foundation to understand the context of the study.

Method: The methodology adopted for this research is quantitative in nature, with a cross-sectional design, and exploratory and descriptive scope. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire composed of five dimensions, in order to cover all aspects inherent to academic literacy.

Results and Discussion: The study on academic writing in university students reveals significant deficiencies in essential practices and skills. A high percentage of students infrequently engage in writing academic texts and self-assess as deficient in essay writing, which suggests a lack of confidence and critical ability. Moreover, most do not follow proper planning or drafting processes in their work and tend to opt for less rigorous information sources like Google, instead of specialized academic databases. These findings indicate an urgent need to reinforce the teaching of academic writing and digital literacy, with a focus on improving argument structuring and critical evaluation of sources to prepare students for future academic and professional challenges.

Originality/Value: This study provides a critical perspective on the effectiveness of academic writing practices in higher education, identifying key areas for improvement of essential skills and digital literacy among university students.

Keywords: Academic Literacy, Students, University, Digital Literacy, Academic Writing.

LITERACIA ACADÊMICA EM PROFESSORES

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo desta pesquisa é explorar a literacidade acadêmica de estudantes universitários, avaliada como um construto composto por cinco dimensões: escrita acadêmica e gêneros discursivos, etapas e passos na escrita acadêmica, fontes de informação utilizadas, alfabetização digital e uso de plataformas digitais para coleta de trabalhos acadêmicos.

Referencial Teórico: Neste tema, são apresentados os principais conceitos e a literatura acadêmica que sustentam a pesquisa, proporcionando uma base sólida para entender o contexto da investigação.

Método: A metodologia adotada para esta pesquisa é de natureza quantitativa, com um desenho transversal e alcance exploratório e descritivo. A coleta de dados foi realizada por meio de um questionário composto por cinco dimensões, com o objetivo de abranger todos os aspectos inerentes à literacidade acadêmica.

---

[1] Universidad de Cádiz, Cádiz, España. E-mail: rachida.mohamed@uca.es
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3827-5742
[2] Universidad de Cádiz, Cádiz, España. E-mail: horia.mohamed@uca.es
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7895-5817

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

1

Resultados e Discussão: O estudo sobre a escrita acadêmica em estudantes universitários revela deficiências significativas em práticas e habilidades essenciais. Uma alta porcentagem de alunos participa infrequentemente na redação de textos acadêmicos e se autoavalia como deficiente na redação de ensaios, o que sugere uma falta de confiança e habilidade crítica. Além disso, a maioria não segue processos adequados de planejamento ou rascunho em seus trabalhos e tende a optar por fontes de informação menos rigorosas como o Google, em vez de bases de dados acadêmicas especializadas. Esses achados indicam uma necessidade urgente de reforçar o ensino de escrita acadêmica e alfabetização digital, com um foco em melhorar a estruturação de argumentos e a avaliação crítica de fontes para preparar os estudantes para futuros desafios acadêmicos e profissionais.

Originalidade/Valor: Este estudo oferece uma perspectiva crítica sobre a eficácia das práticas de escrita acadêmica no ensino superior, identificando áreas-chave para a melhoria de habilidades essenciais e alfabetização digital entre estudantes universitários.

Palavras-chave: Literacidade Acadêmica, Discentes, Universidade, Alfabetização Digital, Escrita Acadêmica.

LITERACIDAD ACADÉMICA EN DISCENTES UNIVERSITARIOS

RESUMEN

Objetivo: El objetivo de la presente investigación es explorar la literacidad académica de estudiantes universitarios, evaluada como constructo conformado por cinco dimensiones: escritura académica y géneros discursivos, etapas y pasos en la escritura académica, fuentes de información utilizadas, alfabetización digital, y uso de plataformas digitales de recopilación de trabajos académicos.

Marco Teórico: En este tema se presentan los principales conceptos y la literatura académica que sustentan la investigación, proporcionando una base sólida para comprender el contexto de la investigación.

Método: La metodología adoptada para esta investigación es de naturaleza cuantitativa, con un diseño transversal, y alcance exploratorio y descriptivo. La recolección de datos se realizó mediante um cuestionario compuesto por cinco dimensiones, con el fin de abarcar todos los aspectos inherentes a la literacidad académica.

Resultados y Discusión: El estudio sobre escritura académica en estudiantes universitarios revela deficiencias significativas en prácticas y habilidades esenciales. Un elevado porcentaje del alumnado participa infrecuentemente en la redacción de textos académicos y se autoevalúan como deficientes en la redacción de ensayos, lo que sugiere una falta de confianza y habilidad crítica. Además, la mayoría no sigue procesos adecuados de planificación o borrador en sus trabajos, y tienden a optar por fuentes de información menos rigurosas como Google, en lugar de bases de datos académicas especializadas. Estos hallazgos indican una necesidad urgente de reforzar la enseñanza de escritura académica y alfabetización digital, con un enfoque en mejorar la estructuración de argumentos y la evaluación crítica de fuentes para preparar a los estudiantes para futuros desafíos académicos y profesionales.

Originalidad/Valor: Este estudio aporta una perspectiva crítica sobre la eficacia de las prácticas de escritura académica en la educación superior, identificando áreas clave para la mejora de habilidades esenciales y la alfabetización digital entre estudiantes universitarios.

Palabras clave: Literacidad Académica, Discentes, Universidad, Alfabetización Digital, Escritura Académica.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the field of higher education, academic literature has been positioned as a fundamental pillar in the comprehensive training of university students. This concept, which

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

2

transcends the mere ability to read and write, implies a deep and critical understanding of texts, as well as the ability to communicate ideas effectively in an academic and scientific context. The importance of academic literature in higher education lies not only in its role as a learning tool, but also as an indicator of academic and scientific excellence.

The concept of academic literature has developed significantly in recent decades, evolving from a basic understanding of reading and writing skills to a broader conception that includes critical interpretation, information assessment, and knowledge creation. Academic literature involves several key components. The first is reading comprehension, which goes beyond simple word decoding to include interpretation, critical analysis, and information synthesis. This skill is crucial for autonomous learning and critical thinking. The second component is academic writing, which is not limited to correct grammar and spelling, but also encompasses the ability to organize ideas coherently, argue persuasively, and adhere to specific academic conventions and styles.

Another important dimension of academic literature is digital literacy. In the information age, students must be able to navigate, evaluate, and effectively use digital resources. This includes not only searching for information online, but also critically assessing the credibility and relevance of this information. Digital literacy also involves an understanding of how to communicate ideas effectively in various digital formats and platforms.

Academic literature is also intrinsically linked to academic and scientific excellence. Students who develop advanced academic literacy skills are better equipped to participate in research, contribute to the creation of new knowledge, and communicate their findings effectively. This not only benefits their personal and professional development, but also enriches the academic and scientific field as a whole.

In terms of methodology, research in academic literature encompasses a variety of approaches. Empirical studies, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, have been instrumental in understanding how students develop these skills and how they can be improved. Theoretical research, on the other hand, has contributed to the conceptualization and definition of the term, as well as to the understanding of its importance in the context of higher education.

Finally, it is important to recognize the challenges and opportunities presented by academic literature in higher education. Among these challenges are the diversity of skills and preparation of students entering university, the need to adapt the teaching of academic literature to a constantly changing digital world, and the importance of integrating these skills into all disciplines and curricula. In turn, academic literature offers significant opportunities to improve the quality of higher education and prepare students for a successful and meaningful future.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

3

The objective of this research is to explore the academic literature of university students, evaluated in terms of five thematic blocks: academic writing and discursive genres, stages and steps in academic writing, sources of information used, digital literacy, and use of digital platforms for the collection of academic works. To date, there is no empirical research that evaluates academic literature as a construct with the five dimensions mentioned, assuming this research a valuable and innovative contribution to the empirical corpus of academic literature.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Academic literature in the university context is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. It requires students not only to master language and writing skills, but also to adapt to the conventions and expectations of their specific disciplines, the academic cultures of their institutions, and the growing digital world. Understanding and addressing these contextual aspects is essential for academic success and the development of effective literacies.

In the field of educational research, Carlino (2013) articulates the need to establish a precise distinction between two fundamental concepts: literacy and literacy. This differentiation is not only conceptual, but also draws a dividing line between two essential domains of academic inquiry. In the first place, literacy focuses on the educational process, particularly on pedagogical strategies that allow students to access the literate cultures inherent in various academic disciplines. This approach requires a detailed exploration of teaching practices, including the This spectrum of research, called educational didactics, also extends to the analysis of institutional tools and strategies designed to support academic literacy. In contrast, literature relates to a broader approach that encompasses cultural practices linked to texts in various disciplinary communities. This second approach requires research from linguistic and ethnographic perspectives, which focus on the description and analysis of specialized discourses and textual practices in each disciplinary field. These explorations seek to understand the nature and functioning of texts within specific cultural contexts. Although both fields—literacy and literacy—are interrelated, Carlino emphasizes that they cannot be reduced to each other, nor can the knowledge derived from one automatically extrapolate to the other. Thus, this distinction allows us to identify two different categories of theoretical problems and two different types of research: one focused on didactics and education, and the other on linguistic and ethnographic approaches.

In the transition to higher education, students find texts of great conceptual and discursive complexity that demand a higher level of cognitive processing, making a significant difference

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

4

with the academic materials previously faced. This situation, highlighted in research such as De Brito and Angeli (2005), Echevarría (2006) and Hernández Garre (2009), can be a considerable challenge. Critical reading, an essential competence highlighted by Hyland (2004) and Quintana et al. (2007), becomes a key tool to navigate this new academic territory, allowing access to advanced knowledge and the development of specialized skills.

In this context, Carlino (2005) and Tolchinsky (2000) point out the importance of writing as a vehicle for the development of critical thinking, offering students the opportunity to delve into new fields of knowledge and address complex problems through specific writing strategies. Parodi (2014) highlights, from a naturalistic perspective, that the processes of reading comprehension and inferential strategies vary according to the gender and discipline of the text, which underlines the need to adapt reading approaches to the linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural diversity of academic texts.

Academic literacies, or academic legal practices, as defined by Lillis and Scott (2007), include reading, writing and orality adapted to the different disciplines and stages of university formation. These practices, manifested through specific discursive genres, illustrate the interrelationship between language and human activity, adapting to recurrent and dynamic social contexts. This panorama, outlined by the findings of researchers such as Echevarría and Gastón (2002) and Hernández Garre (2009), demonstrates the complexity of cognitive and linguistic demands in higher education. It also highlights the importance of developing educational strategies that prepare students to effectively face the challenges of understanding and producing academic texts, allowing them to develop effective academic and professional communication.

Lea and Street (2015) proposed three models to explore the development of students' academic literacy: the study skills model focuses on decontextualized and transferable reading and writing skills, while the academic socialization model emphasizes situated learning and familiarity with the norms and communication styles specific to a particular discipline. The academic literacies model takes a comprehensive approach by assessing the creation of meaning in social practice and examining power, identity, and authority at the institutional level.

Today, academic literature is understood as a set of social practices that vary according to context. This involves not only language skills but also the ability to interpret and adapt to different genres and discourses within academic communities. In addition, it is recognized that literacy practices are dynamic and subject to constant change, influenced by factors such as technology and globalization. With the advent of the digital age, academic literature has expanded to include multimodality.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

5

According to Li (2022), academic literature is viewed from a multidimensional perspective encompassing linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural practices. This multidimensional approach recognizes that literacy learning is a complex and dynamic phenomenon, deeply influenced by the sociocultural and historical context. Approaches to academic literature fall into three main categories:

- Language-based approach: Focuses on the development of general or discipline-specific linguistic characteristics. This approach highlights explicit instruction on the characteristics and structures of academic language, heavily influenced by Functional Systemic Linguistics, which specifies the intricate connections between text and context, or linguistic choices and potential for meaning creation under specific communicative intentions and purposes.

- Cognitive or Disciplinary Approach: Considers the development of academic literature as higher-order learning and academic socialization in search of a deep and contextualized meaning. It highlights the cognitive functions of academic literature as deeply related to epistemologies and disciplinary identities, broadly shaped by specific ways of knowing, doing, and thinking.

- Sociocultural Approach: Contends that the learning of literature is a social problem, widely formed by power, structure and ideology. This approach highlights the role of agency and learner identity in transforming individual and community learning practices. Academic literature, in this sense, is seen as a sociocultural construction imbued with meaning, value and emotions as an access door for the distribution of social power and the reconstruction of meaning.

According to Wingate (2015), academic literature is not only about language skills, but also about understanding the conventions and expectations of particular academic communities. Lea and Street (2013), argue that literacy practices are influenced by students' cultural and disciplinary identities. In addition, the advancement of technology has broadened the definition of academic literature to include digital and media skills.

Bazerman (2009) points out how writing conventions and expectations vary widely between fields such as the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Each discipline has its own genres, styles, and modes of argumentation, requiring students to develop specific literacy skills tailored to their field of study. For example, in the social sciences, the ability to critically analyze and construct theory-based arguments is valued, while, in the natural sciences, precision and clarity are emphasized in the description of methods and outcomes.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

6

An institution's academic culture also shapes students' literacy practices. According to Ivanič (2004), a university's norms and values influence how students are expected to communicate and what is considered acceptable academic work. This includes not only expectations for writing and argumentation but also citation standards, presentation, and interaction with academic sources.

Globalization and the rapid evolution of technology have transformed the nature of academic literature. Academic literacy skills should include the ability to navigate, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of digital sources. This has led to a focus on "multiple literacies," encompassing digital, visual, and information media skills. Contemporary challenges in academic literature include linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as differences in access and technological ability among students. the study by Lillis and Scott (2015) highlights how students who are not native English speakers face additional challenges in navigating expectations for literature in predominantly Anglophone universities.

The digital age has transformed academic literature, incorporating multimodality as an essential component. Jewitt and Kress (2014) show that students should be proficient not only in written text, but also in interpreting and producing information through multiple modes, including visual, digital, and auditory. This expansion recognizes the growing importance of digital media and information technologies in academic communication. The digital divide also represents a significant challenge, as Jones and Hafner (2012) point out, especially for students from less privileged backgrounds. Warschauer and Matuchniak (2010) point out that unequal access to technology and digital skills can exacerbate inequalities in higher education. This poses the challenge of how to ensure that all students develop the necessary literacies in an increasingly digitized world. Warschauer (2012) points out that differences in access to technology and digital skills can create significant inequalities in academic literature. Students with limited access to technological resources may be at a disadvantage, both in terms of access to information and the ability to participate in digital academic activities.

According to Marginson (2016), the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in universities has led to increased attention to intercultural literacy practices. This includes recognizing different learning perspectives and approaches, as well as the need to address language and cultural barriers in the classroom. Marginson and Van der Wende (2007) highlight how this cultural and linguistic diversity has posed challenges and opportunities for academic literature. International students and those with multilingual backgrounds bring varied perspectives and literacy practices, requiring a more inclusive and adaptable approach to teaching. Globalization has fostered greater international collaboration in research and learning.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

7

This interconnected environment requires intercultural literacy skills, as Singh and Han (2017) point out. Students must be able to communicate and collaborate with people from diverse cultures and contexts, which implies a deep understanding of cultural and linguistic differences.

According to Borgman (2015), digital tools and online platforms have facilitated new forms of collaboration and publication, requiring students to develop skills to effectively participate in these new academic spaces. Bawden and Robinson (2009) highlight the challenge of developing critical skills to assess the credibility and relevance of information in a world where digital content is abundant. This includes the ability to discern between legitimate academic sources and misinformation or fake news.

The impact of globalization and technology on academic literature is profound and multifaceted. It has led to greater cultural diversity in classrooms, introduced new forms of digital literacy, and transformed academic communication. Addressing these challenges requires an educational approach that is both technologically savvy and culturally sensitive, preparing students for an increasingly interconnected and digital world. Canagarajah (2013) highlights how this diversity presents challenges in terms of equity and access. Students who are not native speakers of English, for example, may face barriers in understanding and producing academic texts, affecting their participation and success in the university environment. Kress (2017) argues that, in the 21st century, students must be able to interpret and produce meanings in a variety of ways, not just written text. This involves developing skills in visual, digital and media literacy, essential in an increasingly diverse and technologically advanced academic environment.

3 METHODOLOGY

This analysis was structured following a quantitative methodology, with cross-sectional design, and descriptive scope. For the collection of the sample, a non-probabilistic sampling of convenience was chosen, selecting 347 students from various university careers such as Business Administration and Management, Tourism, Marketing and Market Research, and Advertising and Public Relations, during the academic period 2022-2023.

The study adhered strictly to research ethical principles, prioritizing informed consent, protecting the confidentiality of information, and respecting the autonomy of participants. Each student received a full explanation of the study objectives, the voluntary nature of their participation and the measures taken to ensure data confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the research.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

8

For data collection, a questionnaire structured in five dimensions and with 45 items was designed, focused on academic writing and discursive genres, writing processes and stages, information sources, digital competence and the use of digital platforms in the presentation of academic works. The analysis of the data obtained was carried out using the statistical software SPSS version 29.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Regarding the block related to academic writing and university discursive genres, 60% of students reported a low frequency in the writing of academic texts. This fact is worrying, since the frequency in writing practice is an important factor in the development of writing skills. According to Graham and Perin (2007), there is a positive correlation between writing practices in higher education and the development of advanced writing skills, the importance of regular practice in academic writing being key to improving both language competence and argument structuring.

In terms of self-assessment of essay writing skills, approximately 57% of students scored on average or below. This result suggests a possible lack of confidence and skill in the writing of academic essays, a crucial aspect in higher education. Kellogg and Whiteford's (2009) study on self-efficacy in writing in college students noted that students' perception of their own writing skills can significantly influence their academic performance. Research suggests that confidence in writing is derived not only from practice, but also from constructive feedback and support in learning effective writing strategies.

75% of students also showed moderate or low confidence in writing book reviews or articles, which could indicate a need for more guidance and practice in this specific genre. 70% reported average knowledge in terms of the level of knowledge of university discursive genres, only 30% rated their ability to structure arguments in academic texts as good, and 40% reported that they always integrate citations and bibliographic references in their academic texts. Beaufort (2007), under a holistic approach to writing skills in the university context, highlights the undisputed importance of practice and continuous learning in different disciplines. In line with Hyland (2017), it should be noted that different disciplines require different genres of writing, as well as the need to teach these specific genres to university students. On the other hand, it should be noted that constructive and effective feedback encourages autonomous learning and improves academic writing skills (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2007; Lillis and Curry, 2010).

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

9

Based on the results of this dimension, universities should review and enhance their approaches to teaching academic writing, with the implementation of specific programs for writing practice, offer detailed and constructive feedback, and provide more specific training in different discursive genres. These actions could help improve students' confidence and ability in academic writing, an essential component of their success in both higher education and their future professional careers.

Regarding block two, regarding the stages and steps followed in academic writing, 60% of students reported doing writing planning occasionally. As for the use of initial schemes or drafts, about 50% of students use them rarely or never. Academic literature has highlighted the importance of initial drafts in the writing process, being fundamental for the organization of ideas and the clarity of the argument. The conduct of preliminary investigations also showed a similar trend, with only 40% of students indicating that they always conduct preliminary investigations. Planning plays a critical role in academic writing, highlighting the cognitive stages involved, as well as teaching practical strategies that emphasize the importance of structuring arguments and articulating critical thinking (Bazerman et al., 2012; Flower and Hayes, 2014; Graff and Birkenstein, 2018; Martínez and García, 2019).

The findings of this block suggest the need for a more structured approach in teaching academic writing in higher education. Institutions could benefit from implementing programs that emphasize the importance of planning, the use of initial drafts, and conducting preliminary research. In addition, it may be helpful to integrate workshops or seminars that focus on these areas, providing students with practical strategies and opportunities to practice these essential skills. Fostering these skills will improve the quality of students' academic writing, and also better prepare them for writing demands in their future professional careers.

Regarding block three concerning sources of information used, 80% of students reported using Google always for academic research. Although Google is a widely accessible search tool, its suitability for in-depth academic research is highly questionable, lacking the depth and quality of specialized academic sources. In contrast, 40% of students almost always use Google Scholar. The use of specialized academic databases such as Web of Science (WOS) and Elsevier is also low, with only 25% and 30% of students, respectively, always using these sources. This finding indicates a lack of familiarity and skill in the use of academic databases among university students. These databases are essential for accessing high-quality information relevant to academic research. It is important to teach students how to find and use useful sources of information for their academic and professional development, including both generic and specific sources (Bazerman et al., 2012; Head and Eisenberg, 2010; Rowlands et al., 2008).

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

10

These results suggest the need for more training in informational and digital skills among university students. It is imperative to implement training programs that teach students to select and use appropriate and reliable sources of information for academic research. This includes familiarizing students with specialized academic databases, and teaching them to critically assess the quality and relevance of information sources. In addition, it is important to foster skills in critical information assessment, especially in a digital environment where the amount of information available can be overwhelming, and not always accurate or reliable. Integrating these skills into the university curriculum would improve the quality of students' academic research, and also prepare them to meet the challenges of the information age in their future professional development.

Regarding digital literacy applied to the academic literature of university students, 55% of students qualified with acceptable skills in the search and location of academic information online. This result highlights a gap in digital information search skills, crucial in higher education. According to Bennett et al. (2008), the ability to efficiently search for academic information online is critical to success in research and autonomous learning. This study highlights that digital literacy is not only about access to information, but also about the ability to discern and use that information effectively. In terms of confidence in assessing the credibility of online sources, 60% showed moderate confidence. Research suggests that students often have great difficulty distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources of information in the digital environment. 35% of students always use digital tools as reference managers. Faced with empirical evidence, students require training in digital literacy, teaching them to use digital platforms and social networks in their educational context to enrich learning and academic research, and transmitting the principles on digital ethics (Ávila et al., 2021; Greenhow and Lewin, 2016; James et al., 2009; Lin and Yu, 2023).

The results of this block suggest the need to strengthen digital skills training in higher education. Courses or workshops should be integrated that focus on skills such as effective online information search, critical assessment of digital sources, and the use of digital tools for information management. Fostering these skills will improve the quality of students' academic research and prepare them to manage information overload in the digital age. In addition, it is crucial to teach students how to navigate and critically evaluate information in an increasingly complex digital environment. This includes understanding how to search for relevant information, discern the quality and relevance of sources, and effectively use digital tools for information management and organization.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

11

The fifth block of the study addresses how university students use digital platforms to access academic work, such as final degree and final master's degree work. This approach is crucial to understanding how students interact with shared academic resources and how this influences their own learning and writing. A significant result is that approximately 75% of students reported using these platforms at all times. Confidence in the usefulness of these repositories for research or own academic work is also high, with 78% of students perceiving them as very useful. In terms of the ability to find relevant jobs on these platforms, 61% of students rated the skill as excellent. Regarding the quality and reliability of the information found on these platforms, 72% rated their perception as very high. The results indicate the need for a greater integration of these resources in academic education, and to provide students with the necessary skills to take full advantage of them. Training sessions on how to use these platforms effectively should be included, including how to search, evaluate and apply the knowledge gained from these resources, in your own writing and research projects.

This study, by addressing the integration of digital technologies in academic writing processes among university students, provides valuable perspectives. However, like all research, it faces certain limitations that it is important to recognize and that, in turn, outline future research directions in this field.

One of the main limitations lies in the sampling technique used. By using a non-probabilistic sampling for convenience, the results obtained are not generalizable to the entire university student population. The selection of participants focused on students from a specific set of academic programs, which could limit the representativeness of the conclusions and their applicability to other academic contexts or disciplines.

Another important limitation is the exclusive reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires. While questionnaires are valuable tools for collecting large amounts of information efficiently, they are subject to biases such as social desirability or subjective interpretation of questions by participants. This may affect the accuracy of the data collected and thus the conclusions derived from the study.

In addition, the cross-sectional approach of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between the investigated variables. This design provides a snapshot of attitudes and behaviors at a specific time, but does not allow one to observe how these aspects evolve over time or how they influence each other in the long run.

As for future lines of research, it is imperative to expand the diversity of sampling to include a wider range of academic programs and universities, possibly by adopting a probabilistic approach that allows generalizations. In addition, it would be valuable to

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

12

incorporate mixed methodologies that combine questionnaires with interviews, focus groups and document analysis, to obtain a deeper and nuanced understanding of digital literacy practices in academic contexts.

Finally, given the rapid evolution of technology and its impact on education, it is essential to maintain ongoing research that not only keeps pace with these changes, but also anticipates future trends and prepares students for the challenges and opportunities that will arise in the dynamic digital landscape of the 21st century. This research should strive to be inclusive, considering the diverse needs and contexts of students, to ensure that higher education remains an equitable and enriching learning space in the digital age.

5 CONCLUSION

Currently, it is recognized that academic literature goes beyond basic language skills, encompassing a set of social and cultural practices that are essential for the understanding and production of knowledge at the university level. This conceptual evolution reflects a shift towards understanding literacy as a dynamic and contextualized practice, deeply rooted in students' experiences and identities. Under this approach, it is understood as a complex set of practices that include the ability to interact with written texts, the ability to understand, analyze and produce knowledge in an academic context. This evolution reflects a recognition that academic literature is multifaceted, integrating cognitive, social, and cultural skills.

Academic literature manifests itself variously in different university settings, influenced by factors such as discipline, language, and academic culture. The diversity of disciplinary approaches and institutional expectations play a crucial role in the way students access and participate in literacy practices. This contextualization underscores the importance of adapting literacy teaching strategies to the specific needs and contexts of students, recognizing that there is no single approach to the development of academic literacy skills.

Academic literature does not operate in a vacuum, it is deeply influenced by the educational context. Different disciplines require different forms of literacy, meaning that what is considered competent in one field may not be competent in another. In addition, each institution's academic culture sets its own standards and expectations for literacy. This diversity requires a flexible and adaptive approach to teaching academic literature, one that can be tailored to students' varied needs and backgrounds.

Globalization and technological advancement have significantly transformed the nature of academic literature. Cultural and linguistic diversity in universities have led to increased

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

13

attention to intercultural literacy practices, while technology has introduced new forms of digital literacy. These changes have created new opportunities and challenges for students, requiring skills to navigate and evaluate information in a variety of formats and platforms. Contemporary challenges in academic literature include linguistic and cultural diversity, the digital divide, changing academic expectations, and the impact of online information and social media. These challenges underscore the need for an educational approach that is both technologically savvy and culturally sensitive. In addition, they emphasize the importance of developing critical and multimodal skills in students so that they can successfully navigate the current academic environment.

In conclusion, academic literature in university students is a dynamic and multifaceted field that has undergone significant changes in recent years. The evolution of its conceptualization, the influence of globalization and technology, and the need to address contemporary challenges, highlight the importance of an adaptive and holistic approach in teaching and learning academic literature.

REFERENCES

Ávila Reyes, N., Figueroa, J., Calle-Arango, L. y Morales, S. (2021). Experiences with academic writing: A longitudinal study with diverse students. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *29*(August - December), 159. https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.29.6091

Bawden, D. y Robinson, L. (2009). The dark side of information: Overload, anxiety and other paradoxes and pathologies. *Journal of Information Science, 35*(2), 180-191. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165551508095781

Bazerman, C. (2009). Genre and cognitive development: Beyond writing to learn. *Pratiques*, *143*(144), 127-138. https://doi.org/10.4000/pratiques.1419

Bazerman, C., Dean, C., Early, J., Lunsford, K., Null, S., Rogers, P., y Stansell, A. (Eds.). (2012). *International advances in writing research: Cultures, places, measures, Perspectives on writing*. WAC Clearinghouse. https://tinyl.io/9sbH

Beaufort, A. (2007). *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction*. University Press of Colorado. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgnk0

Bennett S., Maton K. y Kervin L. (2008). The 'digital natives' debate: A critical review of the evidence. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *39*(5), pp. 775-786. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2007.00793.x

Borgman, C. L. (2015). *Big data, little data, no data: Scholarship in the networked world*. The MIT Press.

Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Routledge.

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

14

Carlino, P. (2005). *Escribir, leer, y aprender en la universidad. Una introducción a la alfabetización académica.* Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Carlino, P. (2013). Alfabetización académica diez años después. *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa, 18*(57), 355-38. https://tinyurl.com/4x84kwcm

De Brito Cunha, N, y Angeli dos Santos, A. A. (2005). Comprensión de lectura en universitarios cursantes del 1er año en distintas carreras. *Paradígma, 26*(2), 99-113. https://tinyurl.com/47awv3h2

Echevarría, M.A. (2006). ¿Enseñar a leer en la universidad? Una intervención para mejorar la comprensión de textos complejos al comienzo de la educación superior. *Revista de Psicodidáctica, 11*(2), 169-188. https://tinyurl.com/3yhdxh58

Echevarría, M. A. y Gastón, I. (2002). Dificultades de comprensión lectora en estudiantes universitarios. Implicaciones en el diseño de programas de intervención. *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, *10*, 59-74. https://tinyurl.com/3sdtcfvr

Flower, L., y Hayes, J. R. (2014). A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing. *College Composition and Communication, 32*(4), 365-387. https://doi.org/10.2307/356600

Graff, G. y Birkenstein, C. (2018). *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (4ª ed.). W W Norton & Company.

Graham, S., y Perin, D. (2007). *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools. A Report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Alliance for Excellent Education. https://tinyl.io/9sVB

Greenhow, C. y Lewin, C. (2016). Social Media and Education: Reconceptualizing the Boundaries of Formal and Informal Learning. *Learning, Media and Technology, 41*(1), 6-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2015.1064954

Head, A. J., & Eisenberg, M. B. (2010). How today's college students use Wikipedia for course-related research. *First Monday*, *15*(3). https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v15i3.2830

Hernández Garre, C. M. (2009). *Comprensión lectora y ortografía en el ámbito universitario*. Actas del Congrés Internacional Virtual d'Educació CIVE 2009 (1–10).

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and Second Language Writing*. University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, K. (2017). Metadiscourse: What is it and where is it going? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 113, 16-29. https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.03.007

Ivanič, R. (2004). Discourses of writing and learning to write. *Language and Education, 18*(3), 220-245. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780408666877

James, C., Davis, K., Flores, A., Francis, J. M., Pettingill, L., Rundle, M., y Gardner, H. (2009). *Young People, Ethics, and the New Digital Media: A Synthesis from the Good Play Project*. MIT Press. https://tinyl.io/9tZt

Jones, R. H., y Hafner, C. A. (2012). *Understanding Digital Literacies: A Practical Introduction*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203095317

Kellogg, R. T., y Whiteford, A. P. (2009). Training advanced writing skills: The case for deliberate practice. *Educational Psychologist, 44*(4), 250–266. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520903213600

Kress, G. (2009). *Multimodality, learning and communication: A social semiotic frame*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315687537

Lankshear, C., y Knobel, M. (2011). *Literacies: Social, cultural and historical perspectives*. Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers

Lea, M. R., y Street, B. V. (2013). The 'academic literacies' model: Theory and applications. *Theory into Practice, 45*(4), 368-377. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4504_1

Lea, M. R., y Street, B. V. (2015). Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education, 23*(2), 157-172. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079812331380364

Li, D. (2022). A review of academic literacy research development: from 2002 to 2019. *Asian. J. Second. Foreign. Lang. Educ.* 7, 5. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00130-z

Lillis, T. y Scott, M. (2007). Defining Academic Literacies Research: Issues of Epistemology, Ideology and Strategy. *Journal of Applied Linguistics, 4*(1), 5-32. https://doi.org/10.1558/japl.v4i1.5

Lillis, T., y Curry, M. J. (2010). *Academic writing in global context: The politics and practices of publishing in English*. Routledge.

Lillis, T. M., y Scott, M. (2015). Defining academic literacies research: issues of epistemology, ideology and strategy. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice, 4*(1), 5-32. https://doi.org/10.1558/japl.v4i1.5

Lin, Y. y Yu, Z. (2023) Extending Technology Acceptance Model to higher-education students' use of digital academic reading tools on computers. *Int J Educ Technol High Educ 20*(34). https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-023-00403-8

Marginson, S. (2016). *Higher education and the common good*. MUP Academic.

Marginson, S. y Van der Wende, M. (2007). *Globalisation and higher education. Education working paper, (8).* https://tinyl.io/9sIu

Martínez, G. R. y García, R. (2019). Literacidad Académica. Interpretación y producción de textos para la formación académica y profesional en educación superior. *Revista Caribeña de Ciencias Sociales*, *12*(Diciembre). https://tinyl.io/9scL

McGuinness, C. y Fulton, C. (2019). Digital Literacy in Higher Education: A Case Study of Student Engagement with E-Tutorials Using Blended Learning. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Innovations in Practice, 18*, pp. 001-028. https://doi.org/10.28945/4190

Nicol, D. J. y Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2007). Formative Assessment and Self-Regulated Learning: A Model and Seven Principles of Good Feedback Practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, *31*(2),199-218. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070600572090

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

16

Parodi, G. (2014). *Comprensión de textos escritos. La teoría de la Comunicabilidad*. Buenos Aires: EUDEBA.

Quintana, M. A., Raccoursier, M. S., Sánchez, A. X., Sidler, H. W., y Toirkens, J. R. (2007). Competencias transversales para el aprendizaje en estudiantes universitarios. *Revista Iberoamericana De Educación*, *44*(5), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.35362/rie4452213

Rowlands, I., Nicholas, D., Williams, P., Huntington, P., Fieldhouse, M., Gunter, B., Withey R., Jamali H. Dobrowolski T. y Tenopir, C. (2008). The Google Generation: The Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future. *Aslib Proceedings, 60*(4), 290-310. https://doi.org/10.1108/00012530810887953

Singh, P., y Han, J. (2017). *Pedagogies for internationalising research education: Intellectual equality, theoretical plurality, and global citizenship*. Palgrave MacMillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2065-0

Solé, I. (1998). *Estrategias de lectura*. Graó.

Tolchinsky, L. (2000). Contrasting views about the object and purpose of metalinguistic work and reflection in academic writing. En A. Camps y M. Milian (eds.) *Metalinguistic Activity in Learning to Write.* Amsterdam University Press

Warschauer, M. (2012). The digital divide and social inclusion. *America's Quarterly, 6*(2), 130-135. https://tinyl.io/9sFi

Warschauer, M., y Matuchniak, T. (2017). New technology and digital worlds: Analyzing evidence of equity in access, use, and outcomes. *Review of Research in Education, 41*(1), 179-225.

Wingate, U. (2015). *Academic Literacy and Student Diversity. The case for Inclusive Practice.* Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783093496

Rev. Gest. Soc. Ambient. | Miami | v.18.n.8 | p.1-17 | e06247 | 2024.

17