Academic Writing Patterns Workshop: A Focus Group Report

SAE ADACHI, Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University
TAKASHI IBA, Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University

This paper reports on the Academic Writing Patterns Workshop focus group that was conducted at AsianPLoP 2024 conference. Academic Writing Patterns is a pattern language that supports and gives insight for writing creative academic research papers. In the workshop, 23 participants were divided into groups of two to three people. Participants were then introduced to the patterns one by one by the presenters. Following the explanation of each pattern, participants engaged in discussions centered around their conference submissions. The report outlines the workshop's structure, highlights key findings from the survey, and concludes that the workshop provided a positive platform for participants to enhance their research papers using the patterns.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: pattern language, academic writing, workshop

---

1. INTRODUCTION

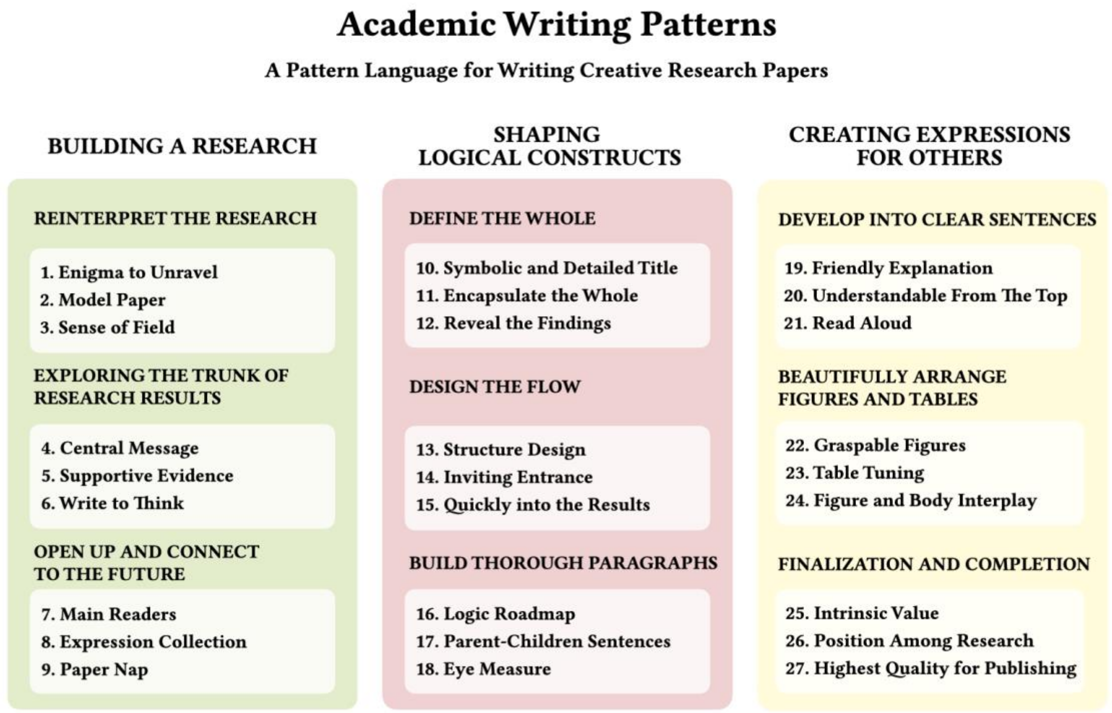
Workshops serve as dynamic platforms for interactive and collaborative learning methodologies, fostering deeper learning and skill development (Sabbaghian and Mir Moiny). Moreover, integrating pattern languages in workshop settings augments creative collaboration (Iba), facilitating rich exchange of insights and experiences among participants can glean insights, thereby enhancing learning outcomes.

This focus group report provides an overview of the Academic Writing Patterns Workshop held at The Asian Conference on Pattern Languages of Programs, Places, and People (AsianPLoP) 2024. This focus group was also conducted at the 30th Pattern Languages of Programs (PLoP) in 2023 as well. Academic Writing Patterns is a pattern language for writing creative academic research papers. The language encapsulates essential patterns important for academic writing, research paper and how to practice them. These patterns serve as tools not only for individuals seeking to better their academic writing skills but also fostering constructive dialogue and feedback exchange.

Throughout the following sections, we delve into the structure of the Academic Writing Patterns workshop, outlining how it was conducted. Additionally, we analyze survey data and participant comments to provide insights into the workshop’s impact on participants.

2. WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The one-hour workshop was structured into two primary segments: an initial phase dedicated to introducing each pattern, lasting for 20 minutes, followed by a 40-minute discussion session among participants utilizing these patterns. At the outset, the 23 participants were organized into smaller teams consisting of two or three individuals. Considering the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the attendees, English-speaking and Japanese-speaking participants were grouped accordingly to ensure comfort and effective communication within their respective teams. This arrangement resulted in the formation of one English-speaking group and seven Japanese-speaking groups. Each team was provided with a comprehensive set of pattern cards encompassing all 27 patterns from the Academic Writing Patterns (Figure 1), with each card detailing the Category Name, Group Name, Pattern Name, Context, Problem, and Solution (Figure 2). English-speaking groups received cards in English, while Japanese-speaking groups were provided with cards in Japanese. Workshop presentors then proceeded to introduce each pattern by vocalizing its contents. Following the completion of the pattern introductions, participants engaged in discussions utilizing the Pattern Cards in conjunction with the papers they had submitted for the conference (Figures 3 and 4).



Academic Writing Patterns

A Pattern Language for Writing Creative Research Papers

BUILDING A RESEARCH

REINTERPRET THE RESEARCH

1. Enigma to Unravel
2. Model Paper
3. Sense of Field

EXPLORING THE TRUNK OF RESEARCH RESULTS

4. Central Message
5. Supportive Evidence
6. Write to Think

OPEN UP AND CONNECT TO THE FUTURE

7. Main Readers
8. Expression Collection
9. Paper Nap

SHAPING LOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

DEFINE THE WHOLE

10. Symbolic and Detailed Title
11. Encapsulate the Whole
12. Reveal the Findings

DESIGN THE FLOW

13. Structure Design
14. Inviting Entrance
15. Quickly into the Results

BUILD THOROUGH PARAGRAPHS

16. Logic Roadmap
17. Parent-Children Sentences
18. Eye Measure

CREATING EXPRESSIONS FOR OTHERS

DEVELOP INTO CLEAR SENTENCES

19. Friendly Explanation
20. Understandable From The Top
21. Read Aloud

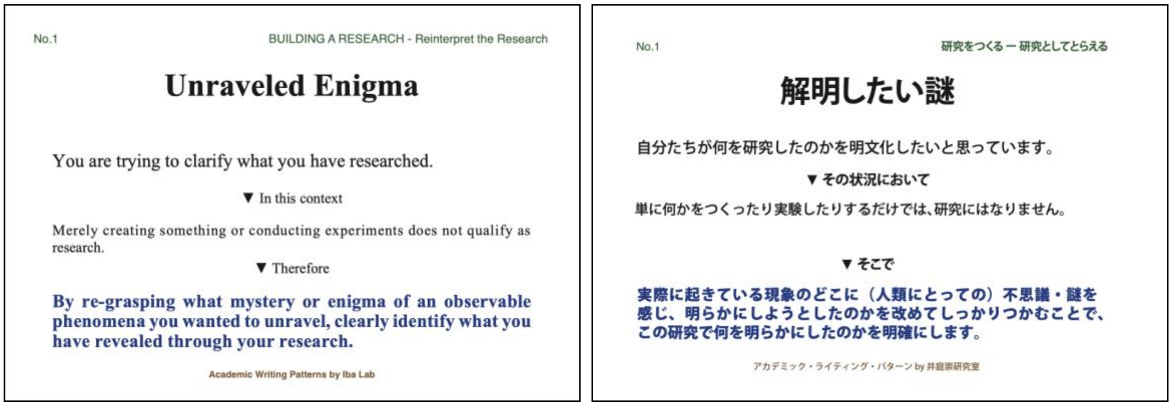
BEAUTIFULLY ARRANGE FIGURES AND TABLES

22. Graspable Figures
23. Table Tuning
24. Figure and Body Interplay

FINALIZATION AND COMPLETION

25. Intrinsic Value
26. Position Among Research
27. Highest Quality for Publishing

Fig. 1. Overview of the Academic Writing Patterns.



No.1 BUILDING A RESEARCH - Reinterpret the Research

Unraveled Enigma

You are trying to clarify what you have researched.

▼ In this context

Merely creating something or conducting experiments does not qualify as research.

▼ Therefore

By re-grasping what mystery or enigma of an observable phenomena you wanted to unravel, clearly identify what you have revealed through your research.

Academic Writing Patterns by Iba Lab

No.1 研究をつくる ー 研究としてとらえる

解明したい謎

自分たちが何を研究したのかを明文化したいと思っています。

▼ その状況において

単に何かをつくったり実験したりするだけでは、研究にはなりません。

▼ そこで

実際に起きている現象のどこに（人類にとっての）不思議・謎を感じ、明らかにしようとしたのかを改めてしっかりつかむことで、この研究で何を明らかにしたのかを明確にします。

アカデミック・ライティング・パターン by 井庭崇研究室

Fig. 2. Examples of the English (left) and Japanese (right) pattern cards given to participants.

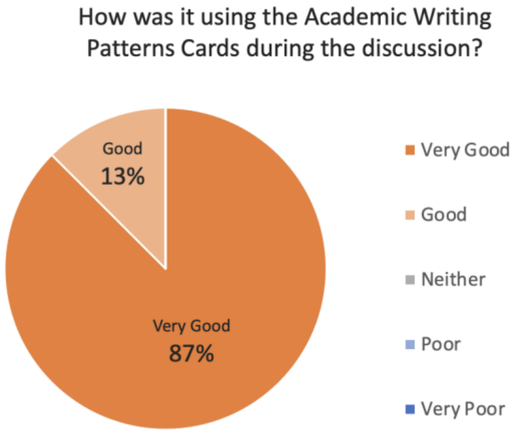
Fig. 3. Participants discussing their paper using Academic Writing Pattern cards.

3. SURVEY RESULTS

Here, we introduce the survey results conducted after the workshop. Out of the 23 participants, we received responses from 8.

When asked, “How was the workshop using Academic Writing Patterns?” all respondents gave the highest rating of very good. One participant reasoned, “By confirming the patterns in actual papers, our understanding deepened. Since these were papers already considered with these patterns in mind, we realized once again that they were well-written. Understanding the reasons why they came out well is also helpful.” Another also commented, “Having patterns enabled us to have good discussions, including with people we were meeting for the first time.”

For the questions “How were the patterns?” (Figure 5), “How was the discussion time with your discussion partner(s)?” (Figure 6), and “How was it using the Academic Writing Patterns Cards during the discussion?” (Figure 7), all respondents answered either good or really good.



How was it using the Academic Writing Patterns Cards during the discussion?

Fig. 5. Responses to the question "How was it using Academic Writing Patterns Cards during the discussion?" [N=8].

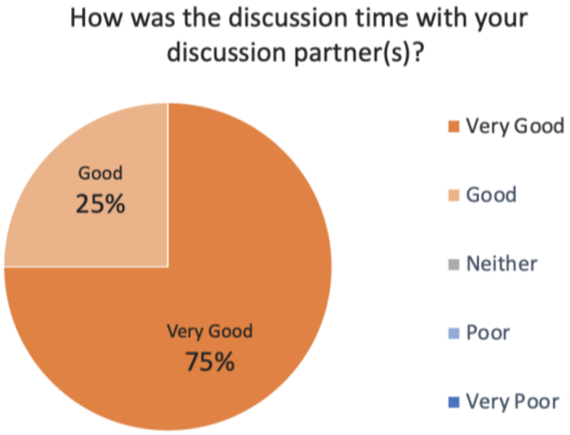


Fig 6: Responses to the question "How was the discussion time with your discussion partner(s)?" [N=8].

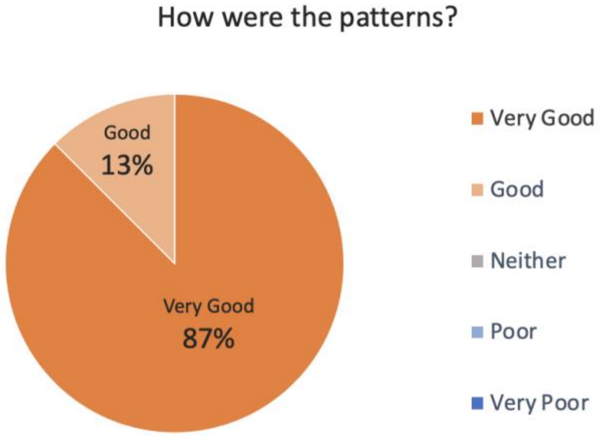


Fig 6: Responses to the question "How were the patterns?" [N=8].

Several participants highlighted the positive impact of using patterns on the quality of discussions. One participant noted that despite the diverse backgrounds of team members in terms of fields, expertise levels, and years of experience, the utilization of patterns facilitated a process where each individual could enhance their understanding. Another participant shared an observation regarding the tendency for discussions about what is desirable to often result in clashes of beliefs. However, they remarked that the structured approach provided by patterns helped the group navigate such potential conflicts, effectively averting discord and maintaining constructive dialogue.

Participants provided affirmative responses regarding the effectiveness of utilizing patterns during the workshop. They noted that applying patterns and checking their application led to new discoveries, while also serving as a valuable milestone in combating the tendency for self-centered writing. One participant highlighted the comprehensive and practical nature of the patterns, noting that they can function effectively as a checklist. Another participant emphasized the tangible benefits of using patterns, stating that they facilitated effective discussions by examining the paper in order. Furthermore, participants appreciated the clarity and ease of understanding of the patterns, noting that they helped deepen individual understanding across diverse backgrounds and experience levels. Overall, participants found the patterns to be practical tools that contributed significantly to the workshop's success in fostering learning and collaborative discussion.

4. CONCLUSION

Overall, the survey results from the workshop overwhelmingly reflect a positive reception of the Academic Writing Patterns and their integration into the workshop activities. Participants consistently rated the workshop as “very good,” emphasizing the deepening of understanding through the confirmation of patterns in actual papers and the facilitation of constructive discussions. The effectiveness of the patterns in guiding discussions and combating self-centered writing was underscored, with participants highlighting their practicality and clarity. These findings affirm the value of utilizing patterns for academic writing and for workshops, providing a structured framework for learning and collaboration across diverse backgrounds and expertise levels. We aim to continue developing workshops centered on Academic Writing Patterns and strive to expand the dissemination of these patterns to benefit writers worldwide.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to sincerely thank all participants for joining in on the workshop. Thank you very much.

REFERENCES

Sae Adachi, Kiyoka Hayashi, Elly Shimamura, and Takashi Iba. 2023. “Academic Writing Patterns: A Pattern Language for Writing Creative Research Papers,” In 28th European Conference on Pattern Languages of Programs (EuroPLoP 2023), July 05–09, 2023, Irsee, Germany. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 12 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3628034.3628074

Takashi Iba, 2014. Takashi Iba, “Pattern Languages as Media for Creative Dialogue: Functional Analysis of Dialogue Workshops,” Peter Baumgartner, Richard Sickinger (eds), PURPLSOC: The Workshop 2014, pp.212-231, 2015.

Zahra Sabbaghian and Leila S. Mir Moiny , 2004. “The Effectiveness of Educational Workshops: A Case Study,” Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education, vol. 10, no. 33, pp. 0–0, 2004.