

Basics of Academics

Academic writings claim particular arguments. Arguments need to be developed at least two things: definition and proof. In other words, every arguments need to explain what it means, and need to be demonstrate its rationales. They are a minimum requirement for academic writing.

Arguments

As mentioned above, academic writings are composed of particular arguments. Arguments are categorized into 'IS' (empirical) argument and 'Ought' (normative) argument. Empirical arguments explain facts and objective standards or status quo, while normative arguments endorse a sort of ideal or the best way to do.

'IS' (empirical) argument: What it is?

What is per capita GDP in Japan?

How many political parties registered in Japan?

'Ought' (normative) argument: What ought to be?

What policies should the Japanese government adopt?

How should the Japanese government reform social welfare?

Definition

Academic arguments have to be defined (or clarified). In other words, un-defined or un-clarified concepts cannot be used. There have been no general definitions in academic writings. Contents of definitions depend on the context which has been used.

e.g.) We have *politics* in the university

e.g.) We have studies *politics* in the university.

Are the usages of politics in the two sentences above same?

Proof

Academic arguments have to be proved / demonstrated (explain its rationale).

e.g.) Japanese population is more than 126 million.

e.g.) Japan has been the first country to modernize in the nineteenth century.

For Example...

- Do these sentences claim ‘what it is’ or ‘What ought to be’?
 - Which word(s) needs to be defined?
 - How do these claims proved?
1. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the study of Japan needed to no justification.
 2. The economy was booming.
 3. Not only was there money to be made from knowing about Japan, but it was thought to be necessary to learn from Japan.
 4. At the start of the twenty-first century, when the Japanese economy has experienced little to no growth for nearly ten years
 5. and bureaucrats, businessman and politicians are seemingly unable to do anything about it,
 6. no one talks about learning from Japan.
 7. So one might ask why anyone should need to know about Japanese politics.

Citation

Citation is the most common way to illustrate arguments in academic writings.

When the arguments are in doubt or debatable (otherwise difficult to confirm objectively), put on citations!

Do these arguments require a citation? (or depends on reader?)

- Africa is the poorest region in the world.
- China’s perception toward Japan has much warmer in recent years.
- North Korea participated in ASEAN Regional Forum.
- The first academic department of International Relations was created in the aftermath of World War I.
- Instead of League of Nations, the United Nations was formed after World War II.