

DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING THE DISCIPLINE OF ACADEMIC WRITING TO STUDENTS TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES

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Annotation: *In this article, the author will try to consider the possible causes of difficulties in teaching the discipline of academic writing to Uzbek students. The article will consider the topic of the existence of the discipline of academic writing in the higher school curriculum. The purpose of the work is to find a solution to the problematic issues of teaching this discipline, which, according to the reviews of colleagues reflected in publications, have already accumulated a lot. As a way out of the problematic situation, the author suggests dividing the discipline into three levels, each of which covers a number of educational competencies necessary to create a certain result within the genre of academic text.*

Keywords: *academic writing, discipline, genre of academic text, scientific article, competencies, errors in writing.*

Introduction: Over the past five years, the discipline of academic writing in one form or another has become part of many university programs in Uzbekistan. The purpose of academic writing is to develop academic literacy. As part of the state policy in the field of education and the need to increase publication activity, the discipline should teach students, graduate students and researchers to write scientific articles and in accordance with the requirements of reputable journals.

This course focuses on teaching the technique of the genre of academic writing and familiarizing students with the basics of visual literacy. The course is aimed at teaching academic writing skills, such as logical reasoning in thesis and thematic sentences and the ability to write smooth transitions between topics and paragraphs. Students will also master basic practical skills such as the ability to cite and quote, draft, discuss effectively, revise and write critical comments.

Academic writing is the most important basic competence. The ability to express your thoughts concisely, accurately and impartially will always be useful to you after graduation. Although we expect our students to present their research results clearly, logically and accurately, the quality of our students' academic writing, starting with abstracts and essays and ending with final qualifying work, is extremely unsatisfactory. Academic writing skills and academic literacy are not innate, they must be acquired. Various university courses on the methodology of scientific work, even if they are properly structured, cannot be effective without constant practice of writing scientific texts, receiving constant feedback from teachers and working on mistakes.

In Uzbek education, the model of teaching academic writing was adopted from the Western educational discourse. Since the 2010s, university teachers have been implementing, in fact,

author's courses, focusing on the experience of Russian colleagues and sharing the results achieved. Researchers of academic writing point out a number of problems in student learning. It is noted that students have difficulties in mastering the competencies of the course, and teachers are not satisfied with the results achieved. A number of articles appear in the media discourse, the authors of which express doubts about the practice of academic writing borrowed from the Western educational space. Indeed, in Western educational institutions, the development of academic writing skills begins at school, and then universities have an extensive standard program covering various subject and inter-subject areas within which the discipline is taught.

In Uzbekistan, university students are faced with a new field of knowledge for themselves and find themselves in a whirlpool of new rules, skills, competencies that they must master in a short period of study, in fact, already at the bachelor's level. The adaptation of the Western academic writing program is difficult to comply with the realities of Russian education. The discipline "Academic writing" is present in the curricula of a very limited number of universities in the country. Similar modules can be found in the schedules of several domestic universities: such as Tashkent University of Information Technology and its branches in Samarkand, Ferghana, Nukus, Karshi Khorezm. And is taught for one semester at the undergraduate level, including practical classes. Starting in 2019, the Academic Writing course has been introduced as a university-wide discipline and is taught during the semester. This discipline is also devoted to academic writing. The purpose of the work is to find a solution to the problematic issues of teaching this discipline, which, according to the reviews of colleagues reflected in publications, have already accumulated a lot. The general trend of introducing a course in academic writing into university programs is quite clear: firstly, the amount of information in society has become so large that students need help in structuring and analyzing it. Secondly, clip thinking, which is often called characteristic of the younger generation, creates a low ability to systematically evaluate data, interpret printed text, form one's own opinion and, in general, leads to cognitive reduction [1]. Thirdly, and this reason is often the most important, higher education has been challenged by a public challenge created in the current geopolitical situation. In this situation, universities are given the mission to increase the competitiveness of the state in the global arena, to promote the development of a national economy based on knowledge. The latter is associated with the well-known imperative of increasing the number of publications of employees and students of universities, which is directly the scope of application of competencies acquired within the framework of the above-mentioned disciplines. To master the competence of research writing, students must master a number of skills and abilities that will allow them to create a text, express their research position and the result of their own scientific activities in it, and finally ensure the publication of the generated text in a highly rated journal. For this purpose, in general, the course of academic writing is being introduced, from the point of view of the university's resource. The indicator of publication activity is an important criterion for the competitiveness of the university. In this case, it turns out that academic writing courses should also set the achievement of this goal as their final result. Actually, this is reflected in the definition of the phenomenon of academic writing, which is given by various Russian researchers on this topic [2-5].

Experimental methods

S.V. Bogolepova [2] believes that academic writing means the creation of texts in academic discourse. G.V. Makovich [3] points out that academic writing is "not just the creation of written

texts in academic discourse, but the organization and expression of the original knowledge obtained in accordance with the research criteria of the relevant field of knowledge, the specifics of the subject cognitive activity in a certain form of the genre of academic writing." Probably the most authoritative Russian researcher in the field of academic writing, I.B. Korotkina [4], describes academic writing as a discipline that studies methods and technologies for creating academic (educational) and scientific texts. According to I.B. Korotkina, the purpose of academic writing is to develop the competencies necessary to create a text in accordance with international rhetorical conventions and nurture independent-minded researchers. In this context, teaching rhetoric involves a number of tasks, ranging from creating a convincing argument to strategies of scientific discourse. In this definition of the phenomenon of academic writing, we can identify a set of components. In general, the components of academic writing can be placed in two groups: 1) related to the creation of a text and an emphasis on linguistic expression, logic and argumentation (student essay, synopsis, abstract); 2) focusing on the rhetorical conventions of the scientific genre (research article, dissertation). The second group of components focuses on writing higher-order texts aimed at an audience of a certain disciplinary or interdisciplinary field within the global academic community. The idea that is invariably associated with the field of academic writing is the idea of academic literacy. This collective term combines metalinguistic competencies, which are a condition for the development of the competence of scientific research writing. Smirnova [6] defines academic literacy as the ability to communicate effectively in the modern academic community. This includes intercultural communication skills regarding professionally oriented texts in English as the language of international communication, critical thinking skills and the ability to educate oneself. In addition to the skills of "correct" reading and writing, the importance of developing a certain way of thinking suitable for a given cultural environment is emphasized. Thus, the following components are distinguished in the structure of academic literacy: • narrowly disciplinary skills (quoting, creating texts of professional genres), • interdisciplinary skills (reading, writing, oral speech, listening comprehension), • knowledge about the values of academic discourse of speech genres, • critical thinking, • ability to self-education, • motivation, • reflection. The development of all these components is included in the content of the academic writing course by I.B. Korotkina [7]. At the risk of using a rather long fragment of someone else's text, I will nevertheless provide a list of competencies that, according to the plan, students should develop in the course of academic writing. So, "as a result of mastering the course of academic writing, students should: know • the basic principles of the nonlinear construction of a scientific (academic) text as an integral system; • the fundamental differences between a scientific text from a journalistic and artistic one; • international norms and requirements for a scientific text; be able to • logically organize the text and organize its elements; • use various models and technologies of academic writing in working on the text; • interact with the reader, understand and respect someone else's point of view; • put forward and substantiate your own hypothesis, formulate a thesis and build a text from hypothesis to conclusions; • critically evaluate, select, summarize and use information from various sources; • impartially, objectively and reasonably pursue your own line of proof based on logic and facts, avoiding various types of plagiarism; • write a syntactically consistent and logically coherent text; • express your thoughts in clear and precise language; • technologies for generating your own ideas; • skills for constructing text based on models; • skills for paraphrasing and quoting; • skills for constructing a coherent and

logically ordered text; • skills for using academic text evaluation criteria in application to your own and someone else's text; • skills for correcting complex syntactic and logical errors" [7].

Development of oral speech skills

The list of competencies looks quite threatening. Is there an opportunity in the university's programs to include a course in which there is a time resource to teach students of various fields of study such a large amount of knowledge, skills and abilities? At the same time, it should be assumed that such a course should be included in bachelor's degree programs, since master's degree programs involve serious research activities as part of their content. This means that, having enrolled in the master's program, the student should already be ready to create scientific publications, albeit under the guidance of a supervisor. By including an academic writing course covering all these competencies in a bachelor's degree program, for example, in a technical or engineering field, we use a huge amount of the watch fund. "When should we teach special disciplines?" - teachers of a narrow profile will ask. And they will be, in a way, right. There are a number of publications that raise the problem of teaching academic writing at the university [8-14]. Having analyzed the described difficulties of students in the process of mastering academic writing skills, they can be divided into the following categories: 1. insufficient command of language skills (word selection, use of terms, knowledge of grammar and punctuation rules); 2. stylistic problems (semantic accuracy, brevity and objectivity of presentation, use of parallel syntactic constructions and connecting elements, superfluous, "empty" words); 3. insufficient knowledge of text organization skills at the level of a paragraph and a whole text; 4. lack of argumentation skills; 5. lack of logic and critical analysis; 6. difficulties with the methodology of scientific research; 7. poor knowledge of the genre of scientific publication, the format of a scientific article;

Activity monitoring

In general, the described problems are quite predictable and understandable to those teachers who work with these groups of students. Bachelors master the basics of academic writing, their work does not yet require knowledge of scientific methodology and conventions of publication discourse. Therefore, these difficulties end at the level of language, text structure and logical analysis skills.

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Conclusion

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