




**School of Applied Linguistics**

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**Otto Kruse, Madalina Chitez, Brittany Rodriguez, Montserrat Castelló (eds.)**

# **Exploring European Writing Cultures**

**Country Reports on Genres, Writing Practices and  
Languages Used in European Higher Education**



The ZHAW School of Applied Linguistics is engaged in the study of applied linguistics from a trans-disciplinary perspective. The focus is on real-life problems in which language plays a key role. These problems are identified, analysed and resolved by applying existing linguistic theories, methods and results, and by developing new theoretical and methodological approaches.

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## Abstract

At European universities, writing is a traditional way of learning, assessment, and independent study, but it is handled in an implicit, tradition-based way that has only recently been contrasted with and supported by a more explicit writing pedagogy. Still, little systematic knowledge is available about the pedagogical approaches to writing, writing practices, and genres across Europe and much of it is codified in the national languages without correlation to internationally accepted terminology and theories. This book explores the writing cultures of Europe, nation by nation, and reports the idiosyncrasies for each respective country. The reports are based on a 17-item topic list used by the authors to collect data before synthesizing the results. Next to writing practices and genres, a high level of emphasis was placed on the structure of educational systems, the languages in use, and the kind of support provided for student writers.

**Note:** This research project has been conducted within the framework of COST Action IS0703 “European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively”, funded by the European Union. We are also thankful to Christiane Donahue, Eliza Kitis, Charles Bazerman, Helmut Gruber, and David Russell for their cooperation and support in this project.

Wissenschaftliches Schreiben an europäischen Hochschulen ist eine herkömmliche Form des Lernens, Prüfens und autonomen Studierens, auch wenn es in einer impliziten, eher auf Tradition denn auf bewusster Didaktik beruhenden Weise eingesetzt wird. Wenig auf systematische Weise erhobenes vergleichendes Wissen gibt es bislang über Schreibpraktiken, Genres und schreibdidaktische Ansätze in Europa und das, was an Wissen existiert ist oft in den nationalen Sprachen verfasst, die nicht mit internationalen Terminologien und Theorien der Schreibwissenschaft verbunden sind. Der vorliegende Band untersucht Schreibkulturen in Europa Land für Land und berichtet was jeweils hervorsteicht. Die Berichte basieren auf einer 17-Item Themenliste, nach der die Autorenteams Daten über ihr jeweiliges Land sammelten, bevor sie es zu einem Bericht synthetisierten. Neben Schreibpraktiken und Genres werden dabei die Struktur des jeweiligen Bildungssystems, die verwendeten Sprachen und die besondere Schreibdidaktik hervorgehoben.

**Anmerkung:** Das Projekt wurde im Rahmen der COST Aktion IS0703 “European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively” durchgeführt, das von der EU finanziert wird. Wir bedanken uns bei Christiane Donahue, Eliza Kitis, Charles Bazerman, Helmut Gruber und David Russell für ihre Unterstützung und Mitwirkung in diesem Projekt.

# 1 Academic Writing in Europe: an overview / By Otto Kruse, Madalina Chitez, Brittany Rodriguez, and Montserrat Castelló

## 1.1 Framework

How should we explore writing on a continent comprised of more than 50 countries and more than 50 major languages? How can we understand our national writing practices when each country is tied to its own traditions of higher education and follows its own set of teaching routines, examination procedures, career patterns and university structures? And how should we deal with the multitude of languages when complex, interrelated issues are at stake like academic genres, many of which are hidden behind difficult-to-translate, language-specific terminologies? In Europe, we are facing exactly this situation: We don't know much about the ways our neighbors write and we have limited access to the genres by which their students learn to think academically. Would students from Ukraine really understand writing that originated from France and vice versa? And would an exchange between Poland and Portugal or between Italy and Ireland allow students to understand the writing assignments in their respective host countries?

These were the questions we were confronted with when starting to collect country reports. We were a group of researchers from some twenty European countries interconnected through a European funding program called "COST" in which we formed a working group in the COST Action listed as "The European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively". We were tasked with looking for ways of researching writing across the borders and languages of Europe. At the same time, a multilingual questionnaire we had designed was following a similar aim, but creating a questionnaire requires knowledge about the cultures from which the data originates. What we really needed were some robust descriptions of the general situation in each of the countries in order to understand what is happening across Europe in the seminars and writing classes.

The reports resulting from this research come from the following countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. Each describes what academic writing is like in the respective country. We followed the theoretical approach of Russell and Foster (2002) who started assessing the role that writing plays in the teaching of higher education in different countries, rather than follow a simple contrastive research plan that simply compared some writing assignments. Universities are a relatively stable frame for the organization of writing and may be used as a reference point from which we can consider literacy development in the respective cultures.

When universities emerged in the Middle Ages, they were pan-European institutions that were united by shared religious beliefs, with a reliance on the antique

rhetoric and the doctrines of Aristoteles, and by Latin as a shared lingua franca. Differences between the universities grew with the onset of the nation states and the changes to national languages, connected with the tendency of governments to gain control over education through legislation (see Ridder-Symoens, 1992; Rüegg, 2004 for overviews). Today, there are strong forces in the opposite direction that lead to a higher degree of connectedness in university teaching across Europe. One is internationalization and educational migration, which results in a steady exchange between universities and a distribution of information through new media. The second trend results from the strong relations across national cultures within disciplinary communities organized as international societies from the outset.

However, the most important development of the past 15 years has been the “Bologna Process”, which was initiated across Europe in 1999 as a program of transformation. The aim is to create a common European education area, connecting national systems through issues such as shared degree programs, a credit transfer system, qualification frameworks, and accreditation programs to make educational programs in Europe more transparent and more permeable across countries. An overview is given by the EUA (European University Association) in the section “work and policy areas”, which can be located at <http://www.eua.be/Home.aspx>.

## 1.2 Theoretical assumptions

A critical issue facing many intercultural studies is the point of view or standpoint from which the researchers consider the issues in question. Unfortunately, we cannot (yet) compare genres and writing practices in the same way we could, for instance, compare car types or furniture. Writing practices and genres are not context-free subjects but are bound to cultural considerations such as educational practices, linguistic choices, aesthetic preferences, and social relationships. They are embedded in larger and smaller national cultures which give them their meaning and explain their functionality. Previous studies, such as Purves (1992), failed to compare writing practices in different cultures because, as Purves explained, “the construct that we call written composition must be seen in a cultural context and not considered a general cognitive capacity or activity. Even the consensus on goals and aims of writing instruction masks a variation both in ideology of teachers and in instructional practices” (p. 199). This means that direct comparison of literate cultures would be difficult at best unless we focus directly on, or include, cultural-historical factors of each nation as Russell and Foster (2002, p. 4) recommended.

Other pioneering work on the intercultural aspects of writing suffered from similar one-sided viewpoints, such as the work of Kaplan (1966), which led to oversimplified characterizations of national thinking and writing styles. Looking at student papers written in English as a second language, Kaplan set English as the norm

from which papers of all other cultures appeared as deviations. Although at the time Kaplan's typifications satisfied the greater interest in differences between cultures, they are no longer justifiable in a globalized and rapidly changing world.

Following Kaplan and the path of second language learning, Connor (1996) opened the field of "contrastive rhetoric" as a discipline in which she tried to integrate linguistic, rhetorical, and cultural approaches. The main focus at that time remained the "problems encountered by second language writers" (p. 5) and the interactions between first and second languages. Connor (2011) expanded her approach successively to an intercultural rhetoric and moved away from the sole focus on second-language learning to include other approaches such as translation, new literacy, and cultural studies. With this, intercultural differences in writing became a matter of different cultures; they no longer appear as deviations from an English way of writing. Today, we find more attempts to move away from an approach rooted in a single literate culture in order to realize a perspective that spans across cultures or goes beyond cultures (Canagarajah, 1999, 2002; Foster & Russell, 2002; McCool, 2009; Thaiss, Bräuer, Carlino, Ganobcsik-Williams, & Sinha, 2012). Naturally, this leads to renewed discussions about the meaning of writing practices and efforts to find an appropriate theoretical register to look at and talk about it.

In this collection of reports, we offer scholars from various European countries the opportunity to present a view from inside their respective cultures. As a theoretical frame we have utilized the approach of Russell and Foster (2002), who delineated common features of writing in the organization and working principles of secondary and higher education. This leaves ample space for descriptions and interpretations of writing practices and genres in the frame of national self-perceptions while still providing a base for comparing them with statements of other cultures. One of the main ideas of this approach is to avoid the fallacies of an unspecified use of the term "culture" in favor of the more substantial and fine-grained analysis of the differences at the national level, without confounding nation and language.

### 1.3 Uses of a lingua franca

Using a lingua franca like English is a prerequisite for effective communication on a continent that uses more than 50 languages. There seems no other way of coming to an understanding about writing without the unifying power of a shared language. Using English as a meta-language offers the opportunity to re-describe and re-interpret what we do at our universities and, by this, remove ourselves from conventional interpretations contained within terminologies of our national languages. If cultural practices are described like writing, English may work as a linguistic frame of reference which is (fairly) equidistant to each single culture and which may bring them closer to understanding one another.

On the other hand, English is not a neutral symbol system like mathematics but carries with it plenty of interpretive and evaluative connotations with every term it provides. Therefore, the question needs to be asked how a lingua franca like English influences the study of literacy, which, after all, is a widely language-dependent topic. Can we neutralize these meanings or do we always import the values of the Anglophone cultures when using English? We have to be aware that a lingua franca not only stresses certain issues for which it provides words and concepts, but that it also filters things out for which no English words or expressions exist. Not represented in the English lexicon are, for instance, many of the small genres and unusual writing practices exercised within various European university cultures. When there is a genre called *écriture clinique*, for instance, as we found in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, is the literal translation of “clinical writing” an accurate equivalent? It probably is, but this would not explain its meaning as a very peculiar psychoanalysis-inspired writing practice. We also found genres or writing practices for which we did not find a literal, but only a functional translation. The *referat*, for instance, is a genre common to Eastern Europe and seems to be historically related to the German term *Referat*, which is an oral presentation of a student paper within a seminar. However, in Eastern Europe it is a written paper, and while it shows some similarities to the seminar paper, it may also be considered somewhat like a “research paper”.

Problems may also arise from differences of the words employed. Donahue (2007) described a large number of false friends in the writing terminologies between the United States and France. The French genre *mémoire* should not be mistaken for the English “memoirs” but has its proper translation in “thesis”. A *dissertation* in French, in turn, is not a dissertation in the international sense but rather an essay. In the Anglophone world, a “memoir” would be a biographic narrative and not a scholarly paper. But can we be sure that “memoir” and “thesis” are equivalent or does the French term still carry some additional meaning from the original word, considering that *mémoire* in French also means “memory”? Similarly confusing is the French custom to start a scholarly paper with a *problématique*, which in most other cultures would be the “research question(s)”. Although “research question” is the functionally correct translation, the term *problématique* transports different, nuanced meanings of an interpretative act instead of a simple unambiguous question to which the answer is then sought.

An awareness should be realized that when we talk about writing and genres in different cultures, terminologies are not that reliable, not even within similar cultures (see Chitez & Kruse, 2012; Kruse & Chitez, 2012). For this reason, we tried to rely on extended descriptions of what writing means in the respective cultures and for what purposes certain genres are used. We encouraged the use of local terms for genres, which are not obviously connected to any that are internationally recognized, and we have used literal translations, which would transport some of the metaphorical meanings of each genre.

## 1.4 Points of departure

The most common way to inform each other on social realities, especially when they come from different cultures, is through narration. Stories and reports allow readers to picture complex social contexts along with a focus on what seems most salient to them. A report form was selected for this study which was guided by twenty questions found to be crucial to the understanding of national writing cultures. While we are aware that an open description of writing cultures is the most general and broadest approach to contrastive studies, it also seemed advantageous in exposing levels of common ground and differences before then applying more focused and fine-grained research methods such as questionnaires, document analysis, or interviews. The results from these reports show that the writing cultures are not that different after all, which was unknown at the outset. Academic writing seems to share a high number of relatively invariant commonalities across European countries, reproduced independently of the language spoken or the educational traditions followed.

Described in this collection of reports are writing practices and genres within their respective national contexts. We started these reports with the conviction that to understand writing first needs an understanding of the context. Genres and practices are not fixed units outside of their respective teaching and learning cultures. Even a seemingly clearly delineated genre, such as the “essay”, can change its meaning and represent a fairly different kind of text practice when we leave the Anglo-Saxon cultures and move to a country like Germany where the essay is slowly gaining ground against the dominant seminar paper (Kruse, Meyer, & Everke Buchanan, 2015); however, it also changes its definition and meaning when assimilated in this peculiar university culture. In order to make it comprehensible as to what contextual conditions are prevalent in which student writing takes place, we tried to construct a framework in which both writing practices and genres are considered.

The collection of country reports describes and analyzes academic genres and writing practices in 15 different European higher education systems and provides a comprehensive view of writing in European Higher Education. The work originates from COST Action IS0703, “European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively”, which is funded by the EU. Each country report was created by a national group knowledgeable in their country’s traditions, developments and actual current practices. To ensure comparability, the reports were structured with twenty central questions employed to collect and compile the data.

The output from this research project are 15 national reports in which national cultures are described alongside questions such as “which languages are used for student writing”, and “which are the main genres used throughout the country”. The reports provide the basis for an evaluation of responses across all 15 countries. The reports have been restructured in order to make them more comprehensible to the reader. The guiding questions for each country report are summarized in Table 1.



	Topics	Instructions / Questions
	<b>Genre Theory</b>	
A	Definitions, perceptions, and theories	Please write what the term genre means to you.
B	Further details on genre perceptions in your country/at your university	Do you draw your understanding from any particular 'school' or theory of genre?
C	Theoretical particularities of your (country) teaching methodologies in the area of genres	What is special about your teaching of genres in comparison to the main theories of genres? In your teaching, do you adopt a pragmatic notion of genre different than the one you have outlined in A and B?
	<b>National traditions/educational systems – background contextualizing questions</b>	
1.1	Languages and multilingualism	
		How many official languages (L1) are used in higher education? How much of your total university teaching is done in a different L1? Are both written and spoken forms used?
1.2	Role of English	
		How many L2 languages are used in higher education? What role, if any, does English play as a language of teaching and writing in your country? Do students have to write papers or theses in English or other L2s? From which level on? Which are the study programs/disciplines in which the teaching is done completely in L2? What is the approximate percentage of writing in L2 compared to writing in L1?
1.3	University systems	
		Are there different types of higher education institutions in your country and do these differences have an impact on the types of genres used? Are universities differentiated, for example, by age, prestige, research- or teaching-focus, private or public status, vocational or academic orientation? Is there a centralized or decentralized education system within higher education? Do individual institutions devise their own assessment procedures or is there a centralized system? Does that influence the use of genres?
1.4	Role of writing at the university	
		What is writing at your university used for? How much is writing devoted to learning and how much to assessment or evaluation? Are there typical assessment/evaluation routines? For example, are most written texts in-class exams or more out-of-class papers, and so on? How much time is granted to writing in class and how much independent work is needed?
1.5	Variations of thesis writing	
		Are final theses usually required for graduation? In which kinds of universities? In which disciplines? Please indicate the types of final theses used in your country using the original name in your language and its translation in English. How explicit or how clear is the genre of the thesis? Is there any difference between the undergraduate thesis and the master's thesis?



	or even the doctoral dissertation? Are there guidelines to clarify these differences to the students?
1.6	Writing centers and writing development
	Who, if anyone, is responsible for students' writing development in higher education institutions in your country? Is the students' writing coordinated officially or unofficially, consciously or tacitly? Are there any writing centers or writing programs in your country? Is there a national organization that coordinates and fosters scholarly work on writing development? (This a general question related to writing at the university; details on the writing in the disciplines and the teaching of writing proper will be given at question 2.4)
1.7	General use of genres in school versus university
	Are there any particular challenges students have in moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education? What are the main differences between the genres taught in elementary and secondary education and higher education? Are the differences related to the nature of these genres or to the teaching of genres? Can you give some examples of specific genres both in your language and English?
1.8	General use of genres in university versus workplace
	What is the relationship between academic genres and genres used in the workplace? Are there disciplines in which academic genres and professional genres merge or are even identical? Are there any particular challenges students have in moving from writing in higher education to writing in professional workplaces? Can you give some examples of professional genres used in your country with the names of genres both in your language and English? (We ask these questions because many applied disciplines or universities of applied sciences may be changing the genres they teach or expect based on interaction with the workplace.)
	<b>Genres and genre teaching</b>
2.1	Genres in the disciplines
	What do you think are the best known and most frequently used genres in higher education? Which genres are preferred in different disciplines? Are there any studies showing preferences or differences? Please make a start in listing those discipline-specific genres you know of, if possible, both in your language and English.
2.2	Oral genres and their connection to writing
	What oral genres are used by students? What kinds of presentations, speeches, etc. are demanded? Please identify the disciplines to which they are attached, if possible.
2.3	Writing practices
	What are the writing practices students engage in around the genres you identified in questions 2.1 and 2.2? Can you describe a typical assignment for each of the genres mentioned to help picture the kind of work that is expected from the students?

2.4	Teaching of genres
	How do students acquire genre knowledge on written/oral genres in the respective disciplines? How explicitly are genres taught? What kinds of instruction are given, if any? How is writing used for learning disciplinary knowledge? What are the genres used for this kind of learning? Are writing courses (if any) offered as compulsory courses, as seminars, workshops, etc.? How much support is given for genres like the seminar papers, essays, reflection, or thesis?
2.5	Textbooks and their meaning for student writing in the national context
	Which are the typical textbooks on academic writing in your country? Can you provide a short bibliography and translate the titles into English? What is their central message, if any? Are they language/text/process/practice/research/teaching oriented?
2.6	Impact of the Bologna reform in writing
	What is the impact of the Bologna Process on writing? What prior practices are vanishing, what new ones are appearing? What challenges and transitions still have to be addressed?

*Table 1: Guiding questions for the country reports*

Not all of the author teams did, in fact, write in detail about each of these issues. This was partly due to a lack of information, and partly because there was just no differentiation on which to report. In a subsequent stage, we asked authors to restructure their reports in a singular fashion in order to make them more comprehensible and offered an outline with 17 basic questions/topics as a way to organize the reports. They were, however, free to adopt structures that best suited their materials.

As genre conceptions were all but uniform at the beginning of our work, we asked each author or team to specify how they understood the term. Most of the reflections of genre definitions are still shown in the reports, even if it turns out that most refer to the same theoreticians to back their views.

## 1.5 Country reports

The presentation of the country reports follows an alphabetical order, with no other systematic differentiation applicable. Noticeably, each report is written from a different perspective, which emphasizes the cultural relatedness of the authors and their individual preferences. This is not considered to be any lack of objectivity but, rather, that it accentuates the very essence of what this research is trying to address: Instigating a conversation on writing and literacy across cultures and languages.

The Austria country report, written by Helmut Gruber, depicts the typical writing practices and genres used in Austrian universities in light of Austria's research-based teaching tradition. Seminar papers, both theoretical and empirical, are seen as the most prominent genres for students to cope with. Writing seems to be widely used for learning in Austria but until recently has not been taught explicitly.

Filitsa Sofianou-Mullen from the American University in Bulgaria describes a teaching culture there that is based more on learning and reiterating content than on critical thinking and writing. She contrasts the basic teaching practices of the state universities with the introductory writing courses at the American universities. She reports there being no equivalent term for "academic writing" in Bulgaria, which makes it difficult to bring this topic into discussion. There are, however, some exceptions that she was able to describe.

Lotte Rienecker and Peter Stray Jørgenson reported on changes in Danish university writing policies, which most strikingly resulted from the introduction of deadlines for masters' theses as they were, up until recently, granted an unlimited amount of time. This raised fears that quality standards for student writing may be tarnished as a result. Writing seems to pervade academic learning in Denmark, with the research paper being the lead genre, demonstrating the high affinity of teaching towards research.

Isabelle Delcambre introduces her report with a description of the system of higher education in France, which is unique in its division between the elitist *grandes écoles* and the open-access universities, as well as its high degree of centralization. The results of a questionnaire survey with students on genres reveal a rich and fairly unique ensemble of genres at French universities, varying from discipline to discipline. New developments seem to result from a new discipline "French for University Purposes" as a reaction to more international students attending French universities, rather than from specialized writing centers for L1 students.

Esther Breuer and Kirsten Schindler restrict their report to the University of Cologne, one of the oldest and largest universities in Germany, which nonetheless would seem appropriate to allow for generalization of the whole country. They outline the Humboldt legacy of German Higher Education and its decentralized organization that gives each of its fifteen states legislative power over its universities. They also report on new attempts of more closely connecting secondary and higher education and on the changes the Bologna Process has brought about before describing in detail the main genres used in German Higher Education. Though traditionally little support is provided to student writers, the authors see a number of changes in higher education that point towards a more considered and active provision for student writers as is practiced in the newly created centers for learning competences or writing centers.

Eliza Kitis, Ann-Maria Hatzitheodorou, Cleopatra Kontoulis, and Marina Mattheoudakis, from the University of Thessaloniki, Greece, start off their report with a description of a highly centralized university system, complemented by a comparatively weak private sector that is not fully recognized by the government. Though more autonomy for universities has been granted by a new law, this has not yet been fully put into practice. Access to public universities is granted only to students participating in centralized entrance exams, thus disregarding all grades from secondary education in terms of university admission. The authors base their report on a very deep and thorough analysis of the genre concept. The genres they describe in undergraduate education seem to center on in-class assessment papers, with only a few seminar papers being written. Budget cuts, due to the economic crises in Greece, currently prevent new developments like the introduction of writing centers or writing tutors.

Italy's tradition in higher education is described by Irene Vogt as one that is mainly oral in nature and highly centralized; it is highly controlled by federal laws. Since the 1850s, only one thesis, the *tesi di laurea*, was in use leading to the title of a *dottore*. Only recently, two more theses at the graduate and doctoral level have been added. This, however, reduced the *tesi di laurea* at the undergraduate level to a *tesina*, a small thesis, or even into an oral exam while the *tesi di laurea* is now used at the master's level, followed by the *tesi di dottorato*. In spite of this oral tradition, one of Europe's oldest guide books for student writers, which has been translated into numerous languages, is Umberto Eco's "Come si fa una tesi di laurea" (How to write a thesis), first published in 1977.

Ola Majchrzak and Łukasz Salski describe both German and Russian influences on the Polish educational system. However, this has changed significantly over the past 25 years and now follows the Bologna degree system in a decentralized organizational structure. Writing is mainly seen as a means of assessment at Polish universities and less as a means of acquiring knowledge or instigating discussion on a topic although various changes in teaching currently indicate an increase in such views.

Luisa Álvares Pereira, Luciana Graça, Vera Rute Marques, and Inês Cardoso base their report on writing at Portuguese universities on three questionnaire studies, of which two were administered to teachers and the other to students. Portugal's Higher Education has also undergone rigorous change in recent decades and now complies with the Bologna degree system. The most widely used genre used at universities, according to data from the teachers, is the "research paper/assignment", followed by the "monograph" and "synthesis from various sources". Students, however, reported "note-taking" to be the most frequent genre, followed by "reflective" and "research paper", "summaries", and "in-class written tests".

Mirela Borchin and Claudia Doroholschi describe the Romanian educational system as originally based on German and French traditions, which had been superimposed by the Soviet model. Since then, universities have been reshaped along

international standards such as the Bologna Process, leading to a partly decentralized system with fairly autonomous universities. Minority languages in Romania are Hungarian and German, which are used as teaching languages at a few universities. Writing development and writing support only exist on an individual basis and are not part of university policies. The paper provides overviews of genres used in secondary and higher education and shows the continuities and the disruptions between both.

Montserrat Castelló, Mar Mateos, Núria Castells, Anna Iñesta, Isabel Cuevas, and Isabel Solé report a high degree of autonomy within Spanish universities. Since the end of the Franco regime, co-official languages, such as Catalan, Valencian, Galician, and Basque, have been reintroduced as teaching languages at all levels of education, along with English, which is gaining importance at the higher education level. Genres of student writing seem mostly, due to recent questionnaire studies, to be used to display declarative knowledge and relate more to the teacher's explanations than to other sources of knowledge. Direct teaching of writing and specialized centers or programs are not available, and initiatives have only recently commenced looking to rethink writing education. Theses, however, are obligatory at all levels of higher education.

Cornelia Ilie's description of writing begins with a reference to the high degree of diversity of Swedish universities and the great value placed on English as a teaching language. Writing plays a crucial role in higher education for learning and assessment alike, and support for writing seems to be provided at several levels. The genres mentioned are oral presentations, project reports, diaries, journals, logs, and term or project papers.

Otto Kruse, Madalina Chitez, and Elisabeth Peyer try to account for the three languages that are used within the institutions of Swiss Higher Education: that is, German, French, and Italian. The question is also posed as to whether the writing pedagogies in these three languages follow a shared Swiss model or rather those of the respective background cultures of Germany, France, and Italy. A study on genres at teacher education universities carried out in the three language regions provides information on the high degree of similarities of genres across the language borders in Switzerland. They also report on a high number of support measures introduced at Swiss universities for academic writing during the past decade, even though there is no single model applicable nationally. Writing centers are still exceptions at Swiss universities, but many degree programs include writing in their curricula.

Tatyana Yakhontova, Halyna Kaluzhna, Tetyana Fityo, Dmytro Mazin, and Vlodmyr Morenets from Ukraine build their report around a reflection of the country's political conflicts and its short span of independence since the end of the Soviet period. Their report reveals an amazing variety of genres and writing practices such as course papers, diploma papers, *referats*, theses (short papers of 6–12 pages, which conclude a course and are graded), and final theses, which altogether do not fit into any familiar categorization of academic writing known in

other countries. Also, oral genres like one called “topics”, in which students gather information on a self-chosen topic and present it to their teacher/class in the form of a monologue, seems to be unique. A large part of the report is dedicated to the activities of the writing center at L’viv University and the description of the courses on offer there on writing in English as a research genre.

The situation in the UK is presented by Caroline Coffin, Jim Donohue, and Kelly Peake who refer to current literature and their own experience from various universities for an overall picture of the country’s highly diverse and differentiated higher education writing practices. Among the genres used in the UK, the essay seems to be the favorite text type used for learning and assessment (next to ten other genre families mentioned in Nesi & Gardner, 2012) while genres like the seminar paper have no mention. As in other European countries, support for student writers is reported to be with individual lecturers or the students themselves while only few writing centers or other institutions can be found.

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## 2 Austria / By Helmut Gruber

### 2.1 Defining genre in the context of this study

In our conception, genres are abstractions from concrete textual tokens; they are internally structured, typified forms of purposive social semiotic action that are used and recognized by members of “communities of practice”. They emerge as situated rhetorical/communicative responses to recurring communicative “challenges” and comprise linguistic/semiotic, cognitive, and social/situational aspects. Their main formative feature is their communicative/social purpose. Their realization is always context dependent and as contextual demands change, genres also change. The cognitive aspects of genres makes them part of a persons’ habitus in Bourdieu’s sense and their social/situational aspect makes them “situated practices” in the sense of Lave/Wenger.

Genres may be related to other genres if they have similar social purposes and/or are used in same situations. Genres that share important aspects of their social purposes (e.g., all written genres in tertiary education that count as students’ assessments) combine to “text types”, i.e., entities at a higher level of abstraction (for a more detailed definition see Gruber et al., 2006). Genres, which are used in the same situation and have functional relationships (e.g., temporal or causal ordering of genres), combine to systems of genres (Bazerman, 1994). This genre definition draws heavily on the Systemic-Functional linguistics notion of genre (see Martin, 1992; Martin & Rose, 2008 for the terminology that is used here) but also integrates the German research tradition on *Textsorten* (genres) and *Texttypen* (text types) (e.g., Heinemann, 2000).

### 2.2 The language(s) of higher education in Austria – the special role of English

The official language of tertiary education in Austria is German, but there are some exceptions: (a) in philological studies, the language of instruction is often the language being studied; courses on Slavic culture and/or history in the study program Slavic philology may be offered in Russian or another Slavic language; (b) an increasing number of graduate programs in technical studies and in the sciences are offered in English in order to attract an international student population that does not necessarily speak German; (c) courses by visiting professors may be offered in foreign languages (mainly in English) if the respective instructor does not speak (enough) German and if the study program coordinator agrees that a course is offered in a foreign language.

Students have to write papers in English if they study English (of course), and they may write papers in English if they want (e.g., if they are not native speakers of German) and if their course instructor/ supervisor agrees. This regulation holds for all levels of study (i.e., from the bachelor’s level to the master’s and PhD lev-



els). Students also have to submit their papers in English (and theses) in study programs offered in English (see point (b) in 1.1.). In philological studies, students may submit their theses (master's, PhD) in the respective language they study, but this is not an obligation (i.e., the thesis may also be written in German).

## 2.3 Types of higher education institutions and their impact on genre use

There are three different types of universities in Austria: public universities, universities of applied sciences, and (few) private universities:

(a) Public universities are the oldest and most prestigious institutions of tertiary education in Austria. According to the Austrian Ministry of Science and Research (<http://www.bmwf.gv.at/startseite/hochschulen/universitaeten>), about 298,000 students were enrolled at public universities during the winter semester 2013/2014. With the exception of the Donau-Universität Krems, all universities offer courses at all levels of education (from bachelor's studies to PhD programs); the Donau-Universität Krems offers only postgraduate programs.

A general statement about the genres used in all public universities is not possible as they offer a rich variety of study programs that, however, share a general research orientation and an orientation towards providing graduates with a general education (*Bildung* as a component of an individual's personality, as opposed to the applied or vocational orientation of the universities of applied sciences, see below). The Humboldtian ideal or the "research university" is thus still operative in the Austrian public university system (at least as an ideology). Entrance exams to some study programs (mainly for medical studies, some social sciences, and business studies) are obligatory at some universities. General tuition fees do not exist<sup>1</sup>. The seminar paper, the master's thesis, and the doctoral dissertation are central kinds of texts that are relevant in all courses of study. These terms are not genre names but rather cover terms for a whole variety of discipline-specific genres (like "historical recounts", "discussions", "multifactorial explanations", etc. see Gruber et al., 2006).

(b) Universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) have existed since 1994, and there were about 36,000 students enrolled in study programs at these universities during the winter semester 2009/2010. Universities of applied sciences offer study programs with a strong focus on vocational training (mainly in technical and business studies, nursing, and various branches of media production). They have a good reputation in providing graduates with job-relevant training

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<sup>1</sup> The regulations for tuition fees are fairly complicated (and politically contested) in Austria: although at present (beginning of 2015) most students are not required to pay tuition fees, there is no general "tuition fee free system" in the country. Students who do not finish their studies within a (study-course) specific time limit have to pay fees as well as some other (small) groups of the student population (mostly students from non-EU countries, but many exceptions also exist).

skills (*Ausbildung*) but not with general education (see above). Furthermore (and in contrast to public universities), prospective students of universities of applied sciences have to pass entrance tests for every study program that is offered (and where only a limited number of places is available), and tuition fees have to be paid. Study programs at universities of applied sciences are popular among students who want to receive academic job training or who are already working in a profession and intend to deepen their knowledge. These universities offer only bachelor's and master's study programs, and they are not allowed to offer PhD programs. Seminar papers and master's theses are therefore also relevant kinds of texts in these study programs (with the same qualification as above), but vocational genres play a more central role in these programs than in public universities' programs.

(c) Private universities have existed since 1999 and play no major role in the Austrian tertiary education system as they charge (very high) tuition fees whereas public universities do not charge tuition (but see footnote 1) fees for most students, and universities of applied sciences charge only moderate fees.

In Austrian tertiary education, we have a combination of centralization and decentralization insofar as the University Law of 2002 (UG 2002) and the law on universities of applied sciences (FHStG) resp. provide general frameworks for the organization of universities and for curricula. However, each university can decide on the specific courses of study it offers and on how they are organized. Assessment procedures are only regulated insofar as the requirement of bachelor's and master's these as well as PhD dissertations for the respective courses of study is stipulated, but no further definitions are given.

## 2.4 The uses of writing in the higher education system

There are two major factors that influence the kinds and degrees of writing to learn vs. writing for assessment in the Austrian tertiary education system: the type of course in which assessed writing is used and specific regulations in individual curricula.

(a) the type of course: the Austrian university course system differentiates between two basic types of courses: "lecture courses" (*Vorlesungen*) and so called "courses with continuous assessment of course work" (*prüfungsimmanente Lehrveranstaltungen*) with students' compulsory attendance.

Lecture courses are mainly offered as introductions into relevant fields of a discipline. There is no limitation of attendance possible (i.e., they may be offered for audiences between two and, in principle, several thousands of students), and the only possible kinds of assessment are (oral or written) final exams; homework or other kinds of assignments during the semester may only be offered optionally for students but may not be assessed by instructors. In these courses, written

assessments typically take place at the end of the semester and last for 90 minutes, during which time students have to answer a set of questions on the contents of the lecture course. Written exams may have very different formats (from multiple choice tests with a great number of very specific questions to only a few global questions where students are required to write short essays as their answers).

All other kinds of courses are “courses with continuous assessment of course work” (which may be *Proseminare*, *Übungen*, *Seminare*, *Praktika*, etc.), which do not require a final exam. The type of examination may be defined either in a specific course of study or even by a specific course instructor. These courses may have limitations of attendance (which are defined in the specific curriculum), and students’ attendance in the course is compulsory (which is not the case in lecture courses). Only in this kind of course may a written paper be required as a course requirement and may be assessed by the instructor. In most cases, not only written papers but also oral presentations and/or other course requirements are set up as necessary for a passing grade. However, there is one big exception: as course instructors are more or less free in setting up the evaluation criteria for this kind of course, they may define an oral or written exam at the end of the course as the only evaluation criterion. For instance, in courses with permanent assessment character, a written or oral exam may be the only evaluation procedure. If a written text is a course requirement, students normally have time to hand in their texts two months after the end of the semester break (i.e., until the end of April for courses offered during the winter semester and until the end of November for courses offered during the summer semester). This regulation entails that students normally work on their written texts on their own and not during the semester during which the respective course is offered. In terms of supervision, this means that those students who write the major part of their papers not during the semester but afterwards are, in principle, not entitled to supervision by their course instructors as the course they are writing their papers for is no longer offered. In practice, most instructors accept that students seek advice either during office hours or via email when they have problems with the writing of their papers from the previous semester. It is, however, very often the case that students finally submit their papers without having consulted their supervisors. This working habit of many students then results in rather many rounds of “revise” comments by supervisors and “rewrite” attempts by students before a final paper emerges that is sufficient for both sides.

(b) Curricula may differ largely with respect to which kind of courses are the preferred way of education and to which extent they define the assessment procedures in “courses with permanent assessment character”. In most arts, humanities, and social sciences, bachelor’s curricula (at least in the first year of study) comprise more lecture courses than courses with permanent assessment character whereas the number of the latter increases towards the end of the bachelor’s curricula and is the preferred course type in master’s and PhD programs. The extent of “standardization” of assessment procedures in these courses varies greatly.

## 2.5 The status of final theses in Austrian Higher Education

In the majority of disciplines and in all universities, final theses are required with two big exceptions: medicine and law. In both disciplines, a master's thesis (law) or a doctoral dissertation (medicine) may, but need not, be submitted. In both disciplines, a written thesis may be replaced by attending specialized courses in which either voluminous exams (medicine) or final papers (law) are required for graduation.

In all other disciplines, final thesis are required for graduation, but the form of these theses may vary greatly: in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and in many science disciplines and theology, a final thesis text normally realizes an academic research genre in the respective discipline whereas in many technical disciplines a "final thesis" may comprise a technical device (of whatever kind from a "machine" in the classical sense to a computer program) with an accompanying technical documentation; in many art disciplines, the "final thesis" may be a piece of artistic work.

The terminology for the theses in the Austrian university system has changed since the introduction of the Bologna system. Formerly, there were in only two kinds of theses in the Austrian system: the *Diplomarbeit* (master's thesis) and the *Dissertation* (doctoral dissertation). Since the introduction of the Bologna system, there are three kinds of theses: the *Bachelor Arbeit* (undergraduate thesis), the *Master Arbeit* (master's thesis), and the *Dissertation* (doctoral dissertation).

## 2.6 Aspects of students' development of an academic writing competence

The major challenge for students entering higher education in Austria is that secondary school students are more or less unprepared for the kind of writing they are expected to produce at university. There is, at the same time, a growing concern at the political level that secondary school students are ill-equipped with academic skills when they enter university. Therefore, one can hope that there will be some research work concerning these issues in the near future.

Officially, nobody is responsible for students' writing in Austrian Higher Education. Unofficially (sometimes consciously, sometimes tacitly), the course instructor is responsible for students' writing because he/she is the first "first point of contact" if students have any questions regarding their writing. As a consequence, many course instructors provide handouts (or websites) in which they list at least the major formal requirements for students' written texts.

Some curricula introduce basic writing skills to students in preparatory courses in which students learn basic techniques of scholarly work (*Wissenschaftliches Propädeutikum*).

There is one writing center in Austria located at Klagenfurt University (<http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/sc/inhalt/145.htm>). It was founded at the beginning of 2004 with minimal funding and no personnel resources. Since then, it has become a success story and is now equipped with one permanent position and a growing number of external lecturers who offer a variety of writing courses. It cooperates with departments and institutions in and outside Klagenfurt University.

In 2009, the Austrian society for academic writing (*Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftliches Schreiben*, GeWiss, <http://www.gewiss.at/>) was founded with the intention to organize the small Austrian research scene on academic writing and teaching of academic writing and to also to foster all aspects of research on academic writing. So far, however, the activities of the society have not been very visible.

## 2.7 The relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

So far, these issues have not been investigated in Austria. Since spring 2011, there is, however, a PhD dissertation on this topic under way that is under my supervision: Julia Pührer: *Vom universitären zum beruflichen Schreiben. Eine Untersuchung zu Schreibanforderungen an HochschulabsolventInnen nach dem Berufseinstieg und zu einem möglichen Kompetenztransfer zwischen universitärer und beruflicher Schreibdomäne* ("From academic to occupational writing. An investigation in the writing tasks of university graduates in their first job and in the possible transfer of competencies between academic and occupational writing domains").

## 2.8 The best-known and most frequently used written genres in Austrian Higher Education

There are two major groups (not genres!) of written texts that are typically used in the arts, humanities, and social science disciplines: the so-called "empirical seminar paper" and the "theoretical (seminar) paper". Seminar papers of the former group realize discipline specific genre variants of the "social science research article" with its IMRD structure in which the "results" section normally presents the results of small empirical projects the students conduct during the semester in which they are enrolled in the respective course.

Papers of the "theoretical (seminar) paper" group may realize a variety of argumentative and/or descriptive genres. The major argumentative genre realized here is the "discussion" in which arguments for an own theoretical standpoint/position are presented and counter arguments, which are found in the literature, are dismissed based on the findings of students' own literature review. Descriptive genres, which are realized under the heading of "theoretical seminar

paper”, range from “historical recounts” (in history) to different kinds of “explanations” of phenomena (in the social sciences) to “descriptive/evaluative reports” of different positions towards a topic that are found in the literature.

There is only one Austrian study (Gruber et al., 2006) that deals with the question of which genres are preferred in which discipline(s). The results of this study, however, are limited to certain departments of two Viennese universities (Vienna University and Vienna Business University). Furthermore, the study investigated only genres used in advanced courses (“seminars”) and did not deal with other, more introductory, courses and genres. The following overview, therefore, needs to be interpreted with caution and may not be generalized for other universities:

*Business studies:* Discussion; descriptive/evaluative/taxonomical report; multi-factorial explanation

*Psychology:* Social science research article (“empirical paper”); methodological recount (a variant of the above genre).

*Social history:* Discussion; historical recount; social science research article (“empirical paper”).

*Linguistics:* Discussion; social science research article (“empirical paper”).

## 2.9 Typical assignments for written genres in Austrian Higher Education

The typical assignment for an “empirical seminar paper” is to “conduct a project on X”, where X is a topic suitable for a small empirical project. Thus, students are put in the position of a researcher who has to develop a research question, find and review literature on their research question, choose an appropriate methodology, compile and analyze data, and then interpret them and write a research report (i.e., the seminar paper). The role of the instructor consists of guiding students through this process and giving them advice at all stages of research. Often, the IMRD structure of the paper is (superficially) described in course materials that are handed out to students at the beginning of the course. As this description shows, this kind of assignment occurs mainly in courses for advanced/graduate students (i.e., so called “research seminars”).

The “theoretical seminar paper” genres may also occur in earlier stages, especially in its descriptive variants. Typical assignments for “descriptive/evaluative” reports are “what positions towards X do you find in the literature”, where X is a (controversial) issue in the respective field/discipline. The aim of this kind of assignment is to help students develop their bibliographical research skills, raise their awareness for different theoretical standpoints towards issues/phenomena, compare different standpoints, and find open problems/possible research questions. In this respect, descriptive and evaluative reports guide students towards

the more challenging type of assignment they have to deal with in “discussions” (see below).

In the “historical recount” genre, students often have to describe a certain historical event (or period). The aim of this assignment is similar to the above insofar as students are expected to find sources, compare them (and may find contradictions), and finally arrive at their own description of the event/period in question.

The “discussion” genre is the most demanding of the genres, and it occurs in advanced courses. Typical assignments for discussion genres may occur in two variants: (a) the less demanding variant is an assignment of the form: “Discuss X”, where X is an open problem/issue in a field/discipline. Students are then required to research the literature on the respective problem as well as to formulate their own standpoint and defend it against other, competing standpoints they found in the literature. (b) In its more demanding variant, students are only given a certain general research topic and then have to find a problem/research question to discuss in their paper.

In terms of text structure, the “theoretical papers” are generally more challenging for students than the “empirical papers”. In all “theoretical” genres, students have to find their own text structures, without much explicit help by instructors.

This last remark briefly sketches the role of supervisors/supervision in students’ learning to write at university: most students (during the “old” master’s thesis/dissertation system) learned to write through a (sometimes harmful) trial-and-error process without much explicit help from their supervisors. As the time limits and time constraints for students’ writing were rather loose, students could experiment with different genres until they mastered university’s writing demands at least at a very basic level (this previous situation is very well described and compared to the American university system in Foster, 2002). In the new Bologna study architecture, students do not have as much time for experimenting with new genres. It is not yet clear how this new situation will impact writing supervision demands.

## 2.10 Oral genres in Austrian Higher Education

Oral presentations are compulsory in many (if not most) “courses with permanent assessment character” (see above). If students are required to write a paper in a course, their oral presentation is mainly based on this paper. This means that students give one (or more) “progress reports” during the semester in which they present the current stage of their research on their topic and then discuss open questions with their peers and the instructor in the course. Ideally, students also present a “closing presentation” at the end of the semester in which they should present the outcomes of their research. But as students’ papers may be handed in many months after the end of a semester in many studies, students often do



not present and discuss a first version of their paper but rather present another progress report at the end of the semester.

A second oral genre, which students are required to master in these courses, are oral presentations that are not based on a written paper they are required to write. Here, the assignment consists only of one or more oral presentations. In these presentations, students are required to present certain items of the literature on a given topic, evaluate them, and stimulate a discussion at the end of their presentation. This oral genre is similar to an extensive review of selected pieces of academic literature.

## 2.11 Students' acquisition of genre knowledge

In most cases, students acquire their genre knowledge in a process of “learning by doing” and/or by imitating texts/text structures they find in the literature they use for their own research. The (few) exceptions of this general process are described in the following:

(a) In many courses, the genre structure for the “empirical papers” (i.e., the IMRD) is schematically presented in handouts, on websites, etc. to students by their course instructors. Apart from schematically presented text structure, these course materials on “how to write a seminar paper” consist mainly of formal prescriptions on manuscript design (like font size, line spacing, heading formats, etc.) and referencing. In some curricula (e.g., history), the basics of students' writing are also taught in preparatory courses (see above).

(b) The Klagenfurt Writing Centre (see above) offers courses each semester on different aspects of students' academic writing (aspects of the writing process, spelling and grammar, writing style, etc.), and it, additionally, provides the opportunity of personal coaching sessions.

(c) The recently (2009) founded “Centre for Doctoral Studies” (*“DoktorandInnenzentrum”*) at Vienna University offers courses on how to write several relevant genres like abstracts, research proposals, research articles, and dissertations (in English and German).

The courses mentioned under (b) and (c) are mainly offered by the same persons and are theoretically and didactically influenced by the Sydney genre school (e.g., Martin & Rose, 2008).



## 2.12 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing in Austrian Higher Education

This question is difficult to answer as there has been no research into this area (the Austrian Science Foundation rejected three different versions of a research proposal which would have addressed this (and other) question as being "politically oriented" and not "oriented towards basic research"). A major impact of the Bologna Process, which also concerns students' writing and writing practices, is probably the strict formalization of the new curricula in terms of their "modularization"; this means that students have to pass module after module in their bachelor's and master's studies and that they are only allowed to enroll in a new module after having finished all requirements (i.e., courses) of the previous module. This high degree of formalization, which did not exist in many previous courses of study in the Austrian university system prior to the Bologna system, will require students to fulfill their writing tasks much quicker than they used to in the previous system. This resembled many aspects of the situation in Germany, which is described in Foster (2002) where students had very loose time constraints in fulfilling their writing tasks. This enabled them to experiment with new genres as they encountered new writing requirements for which they were not prepared (and not offered any institutional support).

## 2.13 Some typical text books on academic writing used in Austrian Higher Education

For a detailed analysis of several textbooks on academic writing used in Austria, see Gruber, Huemer, & Rheindorf, 2008. The following presents only a selection of the works:

Becker, H. (2000). *Die Kunst des professionellen Schreibens. Ein Leitfaden für die Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften* [Writing for social scientists] (2. Auflage). Frankfurt/Main: Campus Fachbuch.

Although this book is the German translation of a US American publication dealing with academic writing in a university system that is quite different from the Austrian system, it is very popular with both social scientists and social science students alike. Its focus, however, is mainly on the process of social science research and the role writing has in it, rather than with writing itself.

Bünting, K.-D., Bitterlich, A., & Pospiech, U. (2002). *Schreiben im Studium: mit Erfolg. Ein Leitfaden* [Effectively writing at the university: a guide] (3. erweiterte Auflage mit CD-ROM „Der Schreibtrainer“). Berlin: Cornelsen Scriptor. (auch online verfügbar, s. <http://www.uniessen.de/schreibwerkstatt/trainer/>).

This book focuses both on the writing process and the textual and linguistic properties of students' texts. Although offered as a writing guide for students of arts, humanities, and social sciences, it presupposes rather detailed grammatical

knowledge of German and is therefore mainly geared towards students of German.

Esselborn-Krumbiegel, H. (2004). *Von der Idee zum Text. Eine Anleitung zum wissenschaftlichen Schreiben* [From the idea to the text. A guide for academic writing]. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh.

This text focuses mainly on the writing process and on psychological issues of writing. Language issues (text structures, stylistic questions of academic style) are only dealt with very briefly and by presenting language features that “are to be avoided” rather than by guiding readers towards “desirable” language use.

Kruse, O. (2002). *Keine Angst vor dem leeren Blatt. Ohne Schreibblockaden durchs Studium*. [Don't be afraid of the empty piece of paper: studying without writer's block] (Achte Auflage). Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag.

This is one of the most popular writing guides in Austria (and in other German-speaking countries). It focuses on various aspects of writer's block and how to avoid it, but it also presents basic knowledge about the writing process, academic text structures, and a readable academic style.

Gruber, H., Huemer, B., & Rheindorf, M. (2009). *Wissenschaftlich Schreiben. Ein Praxisbuch für Studierende* [Academic writing: a practice oriented book for students]. Wien: Böhlau.

This book focuses both on the writing process and on textual features of students' academic texts like text structure, intertextuality, and argumentation. It is the only book mentioned here that also contains various kinds of exercises for students.

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### 3 Bulgaria / By Filitsa Sofianou-Mullen

#### 3.1 Introduction

I enter this European discussion on genres and genre practices from three different perspectives. I am a Greek national currently teaching at the American University in Bulgaria (AUBG). I have studied in Greece and the United States and have taught in Greece, the U.S., and Bulgaria. But my 30 years of university teaching have been exclusively in the American liberal arts model. Thus it is with some trepidation and humility that I undertake to report on the status of writing in Bulgarian universities and on Bulgarian Higher Education as a whole since my personal contact with the Bulgarian national university system is modest and my knowledge of it is based primarily on research and lengthy discussions with colleagues and students. On the other hand, the young Bulgarians who enter AUBG are products of a high school system that is in many respects very similar ideologically and practically to that of the tertiary education in the country and which prepares students to succeed in exactly that same system. Having educated these students for eight full years, I have also had the opportunity to discuss their previous experiences with writing with them extensively. In the spring of 2011, John Mullen and I conducted a study on academic writing for a different project (Sofianou-Mullen & Mullen, 2011) for which we collected questionnaires from 106 AUBG freshmen (ages 17–19) of whom 39 were Bulgarian. Some of the findings from that study, I think, are relevant here and will be discussed where appropriate.

Since Bulgaria's transition from communism to democracy (1989 and after), quite a few studies have been conducted and articles written on the status of the country's higher education, its system (that many authors found to be in need of radical changes), the brain drain to the west, and the country's implementation of the Bologna Process. Typical studies are those of Sylvia Nikolaeva (2006), Rumiana Marinova-Christidi (2009), and Snejana Slantcheva-Durst (2010). Not surprisingly, however, there are no studies in English or Bulgarian (to my knowledge) that address writing or writing genres in higher education. The main reason is that academic writing, writing in the genres, and writing in the disciplines are just now beginning to emerge either as practiced concepts or even as terms in Bulgarian Higher Education.

Because of the paucity of literature on the subject of writing genres in Bulgarian Higher Education, I will expound here on my own understanding and experience of genre writing in Bulgaria and, where available, I will include comments by colleagues from the American University in Bulgaria and from Sofia University. I will mainly focus on how writing is practiced in the humanities and more specifically in departments of English language and literature, and there will be cursory glances at other disciplines as well.

### 3.2 Genre Theory

“Genre” is a critical concept in my teaching, my own writing, and my teaching of writing. To me it signifies the binary division of perception and expression into the self and the world. In everyday life, there is a constant shift of centers from the self to the other, or the world, and vice versa. In writing, both literary and academic/scientific, the same shift occurs, albeit unrecognized and imperceptible. The self as genre may be articulated in poetry, autobiographical writing, fiction writing, personal journals, and travel writing. In the academic context, however, it is usually ignored as irrelevant. How many times have we instructed students to leave the “I” out of the picture? Yet, the genre of the self finds meaning in academia in the form of the personal essay (usually assigned as reading and writing practice in composition courses), study journals, critical responses to readings, and the vitally important personal statement or cover letter for job and graduate school applications. My own take on the self as genre is a very simple one: all perception and understanding is individual and unique and is filtered through the inescapable “I”. We can camouflage it, but it never disappears. If it does, there is no writer, no thought, no utterance. The genre of the world (or the Other) is most common in academic writing and encompasses a study of everything outside (but still connected to) the self and the writer. Economic analyses, business reports, scientific studies, mathematical theories, literary analyses, whether based on research or personal observation, fall in this category.

Both genres, that of the self and that of the Other, are generated by four tensions: the tension between the writer and the subject written on, the writer and the audience, the writer and style, and the need to write or keep silent: What am I writing about? Who am I writing for? How am I to write? Why am I writing—or not writing? And these tensions are ideological and ultimately political and personal. How do the writer’s personal politics differ from or coincide with those of his audience? How are the writer’s politics determined or shaped as she writes? To what extent does style brand the writer’s politics in the perception of his audience? How are the choice and scope of the subject written on necessitated by the writer’s politics, the audience’s politics, and even contextual (institutional, national, or international) politics? All these tensions call for authorial choices and the willingness to expose oneself in a certain light. The way these tensions are resolved decides the genre of the writing that is produced. In this sense, genre can be fixed a priori within a discipline, but I believe that in essence genre is a fluid concept that accepts innovation and reinvention even in academia.

Inasmuch as the above are true in the real world, they are true in the classroom as well. As teachers of writing we must be aware of genres and the tensions underlying the generation of writing (and speaking) and thus be alert to our own demands on our students. When I ask my freshmen in composition to write research essays, for example, I ask them to do a number of things first: to tap into their own pool of interests to come up with a topic and their own take on it; to imagine a concrete audience and assume this audience’s connection to and perception of the topic and the resulting slant to the topic; and to determine their

own voice. These are the choices of subject, audience, purpose, and style that I believe underscore any form or genre of writing. Finally, my own need as a teacher to communicate explicitly to my students the processes and tensions of writing is in itself a political choice that aims to bridge the gap between the teacher and the student, the sage and the novice.

Although I am more of a practitioner and less of a theoretician of genre, I find that the ideas I have developed over the years coincide with those of Swales (1990) when he speaks of a text as “prototypical of a particular genre” (p. 52) and of “shared communicative purposes” (p. 46) as fundamental in shaping a set of communicative events into genre; Thwaites et al. (1994) and the relationship of textuality and power (chapter 5); and Fiske (1987) about the way we read and interpret a text within or deliberately outside a dominant ideology (p. 114-117).

To what extent explicit instruction in writing genres happens across Bulgaria’s national university system is difficult to determine. Because there is a writing program at the American University in Bulgaria (a private university that subscribes to the American liberal arts model of education and thus differs in curriculum from the national, state-supported universities), all teachers of the first-year mandatory exposition-research sequence have agreed to do what I describe in the preceding paragraphs. And with the inescapable individual variations, they do so. However, even in AUBG, transferring these ideas of genre and writing into other disciplines is a herculean task. With few outstanding exceptions among faculty, writing is deemed the domain of English teachers and thus is expected but usually not taught in the other disciplines.

Within the Bulgarian tertiary educational system at large, similar attitudes seem to prevail and the teaching of genres has not been institutionalized but remains the prerogative of individual departments (mostly English, linguistics, and other humanities) or even of individual instructors, as will be discussed later. Since there is erratic or at best particularized application of genre teaching in the country, there is no overall attendant theory or even the realization that there is a gap to be filled whether it starts from theory to practice or from practice to theory.

### **3.3 The Bulgarian Higher Education System: Tradition and Innovation**

#### **3.3.1 Official languages**

The official language in Bulgaria is Bulgarian, which spoken by approximately 85% of the population. The main minority languages (legally referred to as “mother tongues” in the Bulgarian constitution) are Turkish, Macedonian (deemed by Bulgarians as a dialect of Bulgarian) and Romani (BBC). This ethnic and linguistic diversity is not reflected in the higher education system. Although the rights of minority students to study in their mother tongue at the primary and secondary level are explicitly stated in the Bulgarian constitution, the practice is

quite different. The inclination of students to attend classes in their mother tongue as well as the state's support for such programs has been declining. At the university level, these minority languages are not represented at all. The official language of instruction in Bulgarian state universities is solely Bulgarian, notwithstanding the de facto multicultural nature of the country's present and past, including the still reverberating influences of Ottoman (Turkish) and Russian cultures and linguistic remnants. This linguistic uniformity in higher education is tempered by the presence of a number of L2s.

### 3.3.2 Languages of Instruction (L1 and L2s) in Bulgarian Education

After Bulgaria's emergence from behind the Iron Curtain, there has been a marked tendency and aspiration towards Europe and America, both in politics and in culture. Disregarding for a moment the strains generated by this pull, one cannot help but notice the increasing influence of English language on education in Bulgaria. There are numerous high schools (some of them with very long historical presence in the country, even during communism) in which instruction in English extends over half of the curriculum and not only in the L2 language and literature, but in other subjects like mathematics, history, and science. German and French also enjoy similar prestige as languages of instruction in specialized public high schools across the country, but English is on the ascendant. What happens in high schools has some relevance to university education as well. Young people who have been exposed so heavily in their high school years to the American, German, or French style of education are reluctant to enter the Bulgarian tertiary system; thus they opt either for university study abroad or at those universities in Bulgaria that are closer to their familiar style of education<sup>2</sup>. In this case, it is impossible to separate language from educational culture as thinking and writing conventions are closely connected with the language of instruction.

In Bulgaria, private universities may opt for instruction partially or exclusively in L2, most frequently English. For example, at the American University in Bulgaria, English is the only language of instruction. In public universities foreign language departments have a curriculum solely in the foreign language studied (French, Russian, English, German, etc.). German, French, and English are also used as the languages of some programs in technical universities. In these programs or universities, writing in L2 begins upon entering the university and continues until graduation with varying emphases on instruction in writing. The underlying assumption is that since education happens in L2, there is more need for formal in-

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<sup>2</sup> Some 80,000 Bulgarian students are currently studying abroad. Besides the type of high school these students attended in Bulgaria, there are other reasons for this mass exodus into European and American universities. The main one is that young Bulgarians see their university education in Europe as an opportunity to find better employment in the host country after graduation. This brain drain has created a bleak demographic picture in Bulgaria.

struction in writing in a non-native language other than in the mother tongue. Here we witness the frequent confusion between speaking at the native level and knowing how to write in a given discipline, but reversed: since this is not your native language, then you cannot know how to write properly in general or in the specific discipline. Because of this, there tends to be more writing in L2 than in L1 but the degree or percentage of L2 writing at this level has not been measured, to my knowledge, whether it pertains to a university or to a program.

To concretize the example, I will refer to the American University in Bulgaria and to the English department of Sofia University. At AUBG, all incoming students (regardless of L1) are required to take a two-semester sequence in writing (in English), which is very much the standard practice at American liberal arts universities: 1) exposition and 2) argumentation and research. The students have to draft, write, and revise their papers; they have to write responses to readings, answer questions on authorial choices; and keep progress journals of their writing assignments, among other tasks. The total number of words by the end of the two semesters is between 7,000 and 8,000. Depending on their major field of study, students will write an average of 10,000 more words by the time they graduate. In some disciplines (history, political science, European studies), a senior thesis is either encouraged or required for graduation and that can be anywhere from 13,000 to 25,000 words<sup>3</sup>. In other disciplines writing is minimal and that is why the university has decided to include a WIC (writing intensive course) requirement for all majors. Thus, students must have three WICs within or outside their discipline before they can graduate.

The department of English philology at Sofia University has mandatory writing courses, but the main course (methods of research in the discipline) is offered senior year.

### 3.3.3 The Status of Higher Education in Bulgaria

In 2009 Dr. Rumiana Marinova-Christidi wrote a thorough report on the status of higher education in Bulgaria. According to Marinova-Christidi, there are 51 institutions of higher education in Bulgaria. Thirty-seven of them are state-run and fourteen are private. Ownership is one criterion of classification of Bulgarian universities. Another criterion is the type of study offered by each institution.

Higher education institutions in Bulgaria are divided into universities, specialized higher schools, and colleges. Universities provide education on a large scale of

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<sup>3</sup>The numbers here are approximate since AUBG has not yet conducted a study of the amount of writing that happens during a typical four-year course of study.



disciplines, specialized higher schools provide education mainly in one discipline, which is reflected in the school's name and colleges offer professional higher education.

Whether state-funded or privately run, all institutions of higher learning in Bulgaria and all degree programs within those institutions must pass a rigorous accreditation process by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA). In that sense there is a centralized body of curricular oversight and quality assurance that affects even private institutions that do not fall under the auspices of the state. One of the aims of this narrow supervision is to streamline curricula<sup>4</sup>, but by the same token it may potentially become restrictive and unreceptive to difference or innovation. When it comes to assessment, the NEAA insists only on the presence of some kind of evaluation system, without specifying the type of evaluation of student work<sup>5</sup>. Thus, institutions have quite a wide berth for different types of assessment, as suits their missions and programs. Any reference to student writing is conspicuously absent from the NEAA's criteria for accreditation of institutions or individual programs.

Similarly, it is telling that neither Kaloyanova's 2006–2007 report nor Marinova's 2009 report mentions assessment or genres of writing. One explanation could be that all the educational reforms after 1989 have had to deal with the larger picture of structure, infrastructure, and quality of institutions and that student assessment (through writing or other means) may seem too particularized or micro-managerial a matter to be dealt with in such national reports. This in itself is significant as it points to a gap in educational philosophy and practice at the national level.

### 3.3.4 Academic Writing in Bulgaria

At the institutional level, however, writing does happen (albeit in varying degrees), and its purposes are multiple. I will start with the atypical example of AUBG and then move on to discuss the department of English philology of Sofia University, which I consider to be typical of English departments (and some other humanities departments) across the country.

At AUBG, writing is used both for learning and assessing. As the university's document on Writing Across the Curriculum states, there are two basic reasons why students should write: "first to learn the subject matter or gauge how well

<sup>4</sup>Quoting from Kaloyanova's report, Marinova-Christidi cites among the aims of the NEAA the withdrawal of "courses and study programs that do not correspond to the state requirements" and "to withdraw state recognition for particular programs that do not satisfy the requirements with respect to curricula, academic staff, physical infrastructure, etc." (p. 4–5).

<sup>5</sup>Item 1.3 of the Agency's Criteria for Institutional Accreditation specifies: "The HE institution has developed and announced systems (rules and procedures) for examination and assessment of the knowledge and skills gained by students and for credit accumulation and transfer."

they have learned it, and second, to practice discipline specific communication strategies” (Sofianou-Mullen, 2007). When students write in order to learn (responding to study questions, writing summaries of articles, keeping guided journals, to name a few assignments that would satisfy this aim), they are steered away from sterile memorization and are asked to employ critical thinking skills as they engage closely with a text or their own ideas. This “low-stakes” writing is usually ungraded and frees students from grade-connected anxiety and from writer’s block. This type of writing also helps instructors note the extent to which students are in command of the content of the reading or the lecture and thus make necessary adjustments to their own teaching in order to facilitate student learning. The second type of writing, writing in the discipline, helps students practice discipline specific writing conventions that will be essential in their future professional and academic life. This type of writing may be in the form of memos, reports, research projects and papers, data analyses, etc. Learning the conventions of their discipline helps students become effective communicators in their chosen field (Sofianou-Mullen, 2007).

This is “high-stakes” writing because it is the kind of writing that gets evaluated and graded, and it usually carries more points towards the final grade than the “low-stakes” assignments. Depending on the discipline and on whether a course is writing intensive or not, there will be a variety of written assignments throughout the semester. Yet, most writing indeed happens for evaluation purposes. For all courses, for example, the final exam is mandatory while other writing is not mandated throughout the curriculum. To be more accurate, however, I must note that final exams may not even include a writing component; they can be multiple choice questions or problem solving exercises that will not include a single sentence of writing. Even with writing intensive courses, completion of ungraded assignments usually does not exceed 20% of the final grade for the course while the final exam or the long term project may be from 30% to 50% of the final grade. Most professors at AUBG also seem to favor a mid-semester exam that is often of the same type and even of the same grade value as the final exam.

Overall at AUBG, in-class writing (in the form of exams) supersedes out-of-class writing although in some disciplines (especially the humanities and some courses in business) out-of-class written projects are longer texts than the exams and have a greater grade value than exams. Naturally, out-of-class writing in the discipline is completed over a longer period of time and must demonstrate a variety of skills necessary for its composition (research, drafting, revising, presentation) while in-class writing can vary in length and may take from thirty minutes to two hours (the time allotted to final exams) to complete. In this respect, the value of the exam and the value of the longer project are often disproportionate to the amount of time and effort - not to mention, true learning - that goes into their production. So, although AUBG has a varied writing scheme for learning and evaluating, the dominant assessment culture is still that of the traditional final exam that may or may not include a writing component.

The department of English philology at Sofia University is more typical of humanities departments across Bulgaria. In the curricular chart posted on its website and as approved of in May 2003, there are 31 final exams that have to be taken before graduation while there are only four continuous assessments necessary for the completion of the degree (Department of English Philology). The out-of-class writing that students do is for the practical English course of the first year, the research papers in the literature and linguistics courses, and the academic writing course in the fourth and last year of study. All exams are for evaluation purposes only while the out-of-class writing has the dual purpose of learning to write in the discipline and evaluating student knowledge on the subject at hand. The traditional imbalance between writing to learn and writing for assessment is more noticeable here.

### 3.4 Development and Visibility of Academic Writing in Bulgarian Higher Education

From the above, it is evident that the development of student writing is not a priority in Bulgarian Higher Education. Curricular emphasis is placed primarily on learning and reiterating content and less on critical thinking and writing. Yet, writing is expected of students in certain situations. I cannot ignore the nagging question: what are the reasons for the gap between expectations for writing and the lack of writing instruction?

David Russell (2002) in his book, *Writing in the Academic Disciplines: A Curricular History*, supplies the answer when he debunks the two “myths” about academic writing: “transience”, or the idea that once a student has learned how to write in one genre, she will be able to write well in all other generic circumstances; and “transparency” of rhetoric, or the idea that language is there to carry content and does not affect the formulation of ideas themselves. Although Russell recounts the history of academic writing in the United States, his observations are right on the mark for Bulgarian Higher Education as well, where there are two assumptions at work. The first one is that once students graduate from high school, they already possess the necessary writing skills to respond to the demands of writing at the university. The second is that how one writes is not as important as rehashing the textbook’s or the professor’s ideas/knowledge on the disciplinary subject. And there is a third assumption, one related to transparency but with different semantics: writing within the conventions of a discipline is in itself transparent - if the professor understands it and practices it, then the students do so automatically as well. Thus, not only is writing not taught in the disciplines, but professors assume that the nomenclature and particularities of genres (documentary report, thesis, research paper, analysis report, etc.) are transparent and need no further explanation.

This ultimately leads to the invisibility of writing at the Bulgarian university; even the umbrella term “academic writing” (*Академично писане*) is not as readily a

recognizable collocation in the Bulgarian language as it is in English. As a result it is generally not a teachable entity nor does it merit conscious coordination. This trend, however, is slowly changing in favor of academic writing and the teaching of academic writing especially among younger faculty who have had the opportunity to study or teach outside Bulgarian Higher Education. These faculty members understand that writing is not a transferable skill and that it is a skill that needs to be taught and refocused at the university level.

One such notable exception to the invisibility of academic writing is the case of the thoughtfully designed course on academic writing offered through Sofia University's department of classical philology. It is the combined work of two professors, Violeta Gerjikova and Nevena Panova, who also team teach the course. The four-year old course is an elective offered in the second semester of the first year of studies and attempts to cover all types of writing typical in the discipline: translation (*превод*), outline (*конспект*), summary or synopsis (*резюме*), research report (*реферат* or *доклад*), and the research paper (*курсова работа*) as well as the style expected in the discipline. Professor Gerjikova in an email communication to me outlined the reasons for creating the course in the first place: "[The course] was proposed by a colleague of mine. I absolutely acknowledged the urgent need to address the problem: our students are expected to write quite a few term papers and their writing skills nowadays are far from good." With its focus on practical instruction, multiple and varied assignments, and constant feedback, this course is an example of the changing attitudes towards writing in Bulgarian universities. The nicely designed webpage for the course is another sign that for some faculty members academic writing should move from the shadows into the limelight.

An additional indicator of the changing trend in favor of writing is that some departments invite specialists in academic writing from abroad to work with the faculty in order to both enhance the instructors' understanding of what is meant by academic writing and the various forms it can take and to help students to hone specific writing skills within a course. For example, during the academic year 2010–2011, the University of Veliko Tarnovo invited Daniel Perez, a writing specialist from the U.S., who worked closely with professors in the English department to teach very specific skills to their students<sup>6</sup>. This international cooperation is perhaps the fastest way towards change.

Another exception to the invisibility of academic writing in the country is the case of the American University in Bulgaria. The university has had a writing program

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Perez in an email communication with me explained: "In our sophomore English philology classes, I will be working on responsive essay writing and summarization skills with their American studies professor. We're meeting this weekend to discuss the readings he'll be using in his class, that I in turn will be using for students to practice summary skills and response essay writing. In our senior applied linguistics class, I will be working with the contemporary British fiction professor to coordinate a response essay to a final presentation that they will conduct in his class. The essay they write in my class will be weighted in both classes and together with the other professor we will evaluate student performance on this task." 2011, February 23.

in place for many years now. This program was revised in the spring of 2007<sup>7</sup> and was aimed at involving as many faculty from as many disciplines as possible. The program directors, in cooperation with the then Provost Ann Ferren, sought practical ways to realize the university's emphasis on communication skills, both written and oral. As most professors were reluctant to commit to writing (either in their discipline or for evaluation purposes), for many years the expectation was that it was job of the English faculty to teach writing<sup>8</sup>. To change that trend, we formulated a description of writing across the curriculum, devised guidelines for writing intensive courses, explained the difference between writing to learn and writing in the disciplines, and conducted workshops with faculty. In the spring of 2011, we also invited John Harbord, a specialist from Central European University, to look into our writing program and write a report as an outsider who could see more clearly the lacunae in the program and suggest ways to make writing more visible at our university. Yet, even within the established writing program of AUBG, getting professors and administrators on board is a hard task. The ability to write and communicate is prized, but the effort and funds necessary to promote it are not readily available.

Another means of enhancing academic writing is the institution of the writing center, which is originally of American provenance but is now an international practice on the rise. The presence of a writing center in a university presupposes awareness of the need for improved writing in universities. In Bulgaria the only writing center is that of AUBG with a twenty-year history of peer support to student writers. Tutors (students themselves in various disciplines) offer half-hour tutorials to their peers at any stage of their writing. They work closely with professors who often refer students to the writing center for help. Thus, the responsibility for the enhancement of academic writing is shared among many individuals (professors, writing program participants, tutors, and the students themselves.) Although for the past 14 years there is a European Writing Centers Association, which was actually co-founded by Tracy Santa, AUBG's former writing center director, other Bulgarian universities have not yet developed similar centers.

### 3.4.1 Writing in Bulgarian High Schools

The traditional perspective on writing feeds on the myths of transience and transparency and is cultivated in high schools and transplanted in universities. The dominant genres in Bulgarian high schools are the essay and the literary analysis. By essay (*ece*), the exposition of ideas on a given topic is meant, usually of a philosophical or abstract nature. By literary analysis (*Литературен анализ*),

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<sup>7</sup> It is currently reconsidered with a broader and more clearly focused scope.

<sup>8</sup> Even the business writing course is taught by an English faculty member, not by a business professor.

the discussion of a work of literature is meant, and is heavily influenced by - if not completely based on - previous analyses by renowned critics or by the teacher of the specific class. Neither genre is taught explicitly nor are guidelines given to students before they write. Students learn what they have done wrong in retrospect when they read the teacher's comments on their papers. The most common method of coping with these assignments is asking older students who had the same teacher what they should do to get a good grade. Neither genre requires originality; therefore plagiarism is not addressed or punished but in many cases encouraged as a show of respect for the source or the style emulated. Similarly, on the rare occasions when research is required, there are no guidelines given nor is there a distinction drawn between finding sources and using them with correct attribution. Reiterating the source verbatim is sufficient for a good grade<sup>9</sup>. Again, students write mostly in language or literature courses with the assumption that once they know how to write in those areas, they will be able to transfer the skills to other genres.

When these high school students enter the university, they assume that their writing competence is sufficient to carry them through their studies, and in most cases this assumption is correct inasmuch as there is little writing demanded of them and that the little that is required is often of the same type, style, and structure as in high school. In the case of theses or research projects, however, their previous education fails them, and it then becomes clear that academic writing is not that transparent after all.

### 3.4.2 Writing in the Professions

If education is preparatory to a profession, then learning to communicate effectively at school will help graduates communicate effectively in the workplace. Ideally, a student with a degree in business will know what a business report or project plan or marketing analysis is<sup>10</sup> and will be able to apply that knowledge on the job. But the amount of actual university preparation for writing in the discipline does not suffice for more focused writing activity in the workplace. In the humanities and in journalism, more - and more conscious - writing happens in preparation for the workplace, and the genres are indeed identical. But while genres evolve in the workplace, instruction at the university may lag behind. In general, it seems that writing genres at the university are not necessarily harmo-

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<sup>9</sup> The sources of this information on high school generic practices are the Bulgarian students who responded to the questionnaire John Mullen and I distributed in the spring of 2011. As a follow-up to the questionnaire, we conducted small group discussions to verify the answers to the questions. Most of the details come from these follow-up sessions.

<sup>10</sup> At AUBG the business department offers a course in business writing, but that course is not mandatory for all business students. Those students who do not take the course become familiar with different types of business writing through their other classes, but the knowledge of business writing is not a focus. Therefore there will be great variations of knowledge in writing in the discipline among individual students. The business department of Sofia University also has a fourth-year elective course, written business communication. In both institutions, one can notice how writing for business purposes is not mandatory and is offered late in the academic curriculum.

nized with writing genres in the workplace. Here, we also have to define “workplace”. For Bulgarian students, their future workplace may not be in Bulgaria at all. Many graduates of Bulgarian universities end up in Western Europe or in the United States. As it is impossible to define *a priori* a student’s future workplace, it is equally impossible to make assumptions about the kind of writing that will be required in that workplace. To complicate things further, quite often genre writing at the university is taught in English or in another foreign language. This is indeed the case in the faculty of economics and business administration of Sofia University, for example. Students can choose to follow the track in English, German, or French. The curricular assumption here is the quite pragmatic internationalization of business, which also implies intercultural knowledge of communication. This in turn becomes the focus of the teaching of writing in the discipline<sup>11</sup>. This is also the case at AUBG. Students learn business in English and may not be able to recognize or apply the same genre in their native language. While such an emphasis on English, in this case, may give these students an advantage in the international market, it may be detrimental (at least at the beginning of their careers) on a local scale.

An additional parameter that obfuscates the question of writing in the workplace is that it is not uncommon for a student who studies and earns a degree in one field to end up working in an unrelated field altogether and will therefore have to learn the conventions of communication (both written and oral) on the job. This is often the case with graduates of the American University in Bulgaria as well as with graduates of national universities in Bulgaria.

### 3.5 Genres and Genre Teaching<sup>12</sup>

#### 3.5.1 Written Genres

Regardless of discipline, in Bulgaria the most consistently encountered written genre is that of the thesis (master’s and doctoral, *Магистърска Дипломна работа* and *Дисертация* respectively) because it is a requirement for the completion of the postgraduate degree. Yet, this genre is not taught intentionally or methodically, and in some cases theses are written not in Bulgarian but in an L2, most notably English. For example, the faculty of philosophy at Sofia University offers master’s and PhD degrees in English for which the thesis in English is a requirement for the completion of the degree.

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<sup>11</sup> For a diploma in business administration in the English track, first year students have to take a course in English for economics, second year students have to take a course in business English, third year students have to take a course in English for banking and finance. There are also elective courses in business communication and public relations, English for marketing, and English for business meetings. But these courses deal more with terminology and oral discourse than with writing.

<sup>12</sup> My thanks to Simona Genkova, administrative assistant to the Dean of Faculty at AUBG, for helping me out with the Bulgarian terms and their explanations in this section.



The research paper (*курсова работа*) and the research project may also be required both at the undergraduate and the postgraduate level but that is usually decided either by departments or individual instructors and is of lesser importance than the final examination. The term *курсова работа* itself means “work for the course”, and it is equivalent in meaning to the American term “term paper”. The notion of research is not automatically nuanced in the term but is usually expected.

The end of the term exam (*Изпит*) is a genre in itself (collectively *Изпити*). The whole exam period is called *Сесия* (“session” or “sitting”) and may last up to three weeks. It is either written or oral and usually does not involve analysis or critical thinking<sup>13</sup> but merely the reiteration of ideas from the textbook or from the lectures delivered during the term. In some sciences (natural and social), this exam, even if written, does not even involve any writing *per se* but is instead in the form of multiple choice questions<sup>14</sup>. These final exams can be repeated up to three or four subsequent terms for students who have failed them.

Another genre (usually not taught, encouraged, or overseen) is that of note-taking. Some students may take copious notes while others may not take any notes at all. Quite often, professors supply their own material in lieu of student notes; the professor’s notes are more relevant and reliable for success in exams than the students’ own notes.

### 3.5.2 Oral genres

The dominant oral genre in Bulgarian state-supported universities is the oral examination (*Изпит*, the same as the general term for exam) at the end of the term. Like the written end-of-term examination, this oral genre is also one of iteration and memorization. Yet, more and more students seek to acquire public speaking skills by joining debate clubs and learning from each other how to put together PowerPoint presentations. In some universities, provided that the number of students in the class is small enough to allow practice in this oral genre, presentations may actually be taught and graded. But this is a rare occurrence. Instead and in recent years, PowerPoint presentations are encouraged to either supplement or substitute the final examination. However, these presentations are not delivered orally but are handed in to the professor in hard copy for grading.

In private universities, where class size is usually smaller than in state-run universities, oral genres are practiced more frequently and in various formats. At the

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<sup>13</sup> The term critical thinking does not have an equivalent term in Bulgarian nor is its practice part of the university system’s strategy or overall pedagogy, at least as far as official documents demonstrate.

<sup>14</sup> Such multiple choice final exams are the norm in the department of computer science at South-Western University Neofit Rilski (Югозападен университет “Неофит Рилски”) in Blagoevgrad.



American University in Bulgaria, all students have to give at least one speech in each of the two semesters of the composition sequence during their first year of studies. The first speech is informative and the second persuasive. Students choose a topic of their own interest, keeping in mind the interests and biases of their audience. They have to decide the slant they will give their topic, the rhetorical strategy that they will use, and the kind of support that they will provide. Style and tone are important as well as these will affect the impact of the speech on the audience. Each speaker should also provide an outline of the main points to the professor so that there is a coherent structure to the content of the speech. Students choose how they will present their speech (reading the complete text, using note cards to be reminded of the main points, memorizing the whole speech or parts of it). Both kinds of speech are graded on content and delivery with a five-minute feedback session at the end of the speech. This is the time for classmates to offer their observations and insights guided by the professor and by the rubric given to each student in preparation for the speech. Each member of the audience also evaluates one or two of the speeches of the semester in writing, again using the same rubric. Thus, listening to a speech actively helps the other students visualize their own performance and prepare their own speech with greater awareness of the pitfalls of public speaking.

In other courses at AUBG, depending on the priorities of the professor, students may also give presentations individually or in groups. Business administration, journalism, economics, philosophy, political science and history are some of the disciplines that encourage oral presentations. Extracurricular activities also include a public speaking platform to enhance classroom learning: the university's debate club often pits teams of students and professors against each other or students from AUBG and Southwestern University (the neighboring public university) against professors. The Model UN is another platform of public speaking. Finally, at AUBG there is also a course in public speaking that students may take in their third or fourth year of study regardless of their discipline.

### 3.5.3 The Teaching of Written Genres in Bulgarian Higher Education

The fact still remains that in Bulgarian universities the majority of genres are not explicitly taught. Even master's theses and doctoral dissertations (*Магистърска Дипломна работа* and *Дисертация* respectively) are usually trial and error under the close supervision of a mentor. Recently, however, philosophy and philology departments in the capital have begun to offer courses in thesis writing for master's and PhD students.

At the undergraduate level, there is even less expectation of writing and therefore even less explanation of the writing process. Senior students in most disciplines across Bulgarian universities are expected to complete a senior thesis (*Бакалавърска Дипломна работа*), but the extent and depth of the guidelines for the actual process and the composition of the work may vary significantly

from discipline to discipline and from supervisor to supervisor. Unlike practices elsewhere in Europe, the graders of these theses are from within the department and the university where the student is enrolled.

To a large degree, writing is used as a means of assessment, not learning, and the distinction between the two types of writing (assessment and learning) is not even pondered. I mentioned earlier the example of how the English department at Sofia University teaches the research paper in the discipline in the fourth year. But it is not clear to me whether it is taught as practice in the discipline or as a means of evaluating student performance in genre writing.

Guidelines for senior theses or senior projects at the American University in Bulgaria are given from each department, but they may vary in length and detail. Again the expectation is that the student will complete the task under the close supervision of the thesis director and will therefore not need explicit guidelines at the outset. At the same university, professors in different disciplines will give guidelines for the completion of a term paper or a written examination but the instructions again may vary from a short paragraph-length description of the assignment to lengthy rubrics or written guidelines. This is all at the discretion of the instructor as departments and even the writing program in charge of writing development in the university have little say in this individual matter. For example, in our composition courses (mandatory for all first-year students), we will give guidelines both in the form of written explanations of the assignment and in the form of rubrics that function both as checklists for following all the necessary steps to complete the assignment and as a kind of contract between professor and students that the project will be graded in as an objective way as possible. These guidelines serve as practice in writing (especially since the composition course is not discipline or content specific) and as a means of gauging student performance. Many professors in the other disciplines, however, have little understanding of what is meant by genre or writing genre. Although they themselves write and publish, they do not see the relevance of student writing in their discipline (for example, in mathematics or computer science.) Even if they do find it relevant (for example, in business or political science), they assume that all the necessary instruction has already happened in the freshman composition courses (taught by English faculty) and as a result their students are ready to tackle any kind of discipline-specific writing without any guidelines to speak of. Similarly, it is very difficult for most professors in traditionally non-writing disciplines to see the value of writing to learn disciplinary content and conventions. Quite often some writing professors or professors in other disciplines, who espouse the idea of writing across the disciplines, will offer two-hour seminars to help students tackle specific writing tasks (writing a curriculum vitae or cover letter or defining and writing a research paper in various disciplines and the differences thereof).

Even though the assistance professors offer to their students at the outset of an assignment may not be enough for the successful completion of the assignment, many professors allow revisions of the assignment and are willing to confer individually with students in order to improve their first drafts. The writing center is

another form of support of writing throughout the writing process, from brainstorming to revision.

### 3.5.4 Textbooks on Academic Writing

To my knowledge there are only a handful of textbooks on academic writing or writing in the disciplines published in Bulgarian<sup>15</sup>. This stands to reason since, as discussed earlier, academic writing is not yet an educational entity as such. On most occasions when textbooks are used, they are textbooks written in English and are thus more relevant for the work of English departments across the institutions in the country. Most of them are research and process-oriented.

## 3.6 Conclusion

Bulgaria has agreed on and implemented a number of initiatives of the Bologna Process: joint degrees, mobility of students, accreditation procedures, higher education management. However, no mention is made in any of the documents that I am aware of as to the influence of the Bologna Process on academic writing in Bulgaria. Despite the efforts of isolated faculty members or departments, academic writing in Bulgaria remains invisible and little thought of. When it does occur, it may be closely associated with learning how to write in English (or another foreign language). And while through this practice there is a tacit recognition of the dominance of English in the world of trade and business, there is also the risk that the Bulgarian academe will miss out on the chance of participating in contemporary effective communication on an equal footing with its European and international partners. On the positive side, there is rising awareness among academics of the importance of writing and the teaching of writing in their universities. From the first draft of this report until its final revision, a number of innovative writing practices in Bulgarian universities have occurred, some so recent that I could not include them in time in this text. I take this as a sign that academic writing will soon become a new and important priority for Bulgarian Higher Education.

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<sup>15</sup> For example, a translation of Umberto Eco's *How to Write a Thesis*: Еко, У. Как се пише дипломна работа. Прев. С. Станчев. София, Ал. Панов, 1999; Мавродијева, И. Академично писане [Academic Writing]. София, СемаРШ, 2005; and Спасов, Д. и др. Методика за написване на студентска научна работа [A Method for Writing Student Scholarly Essays] Свищов, АИ Цанов, 1997.

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## 4 Denmark / By Lotte Rienecker and Peter Stray Jørgenson

### 4.1 Academic Writing at Danish Universities

Denmark is one of Europe's smallest countries and has a total of eight universities and a number of university colleges. Denmark has long since adopted the Bologna structure of university studies, and by now 5 years (plus maximum one year) is being enforced as the total duration of bachelor's and master's studies. The Bologna Process imposed deadlines on writing the master's thesis, limiting it to six months from no deadline at all in the previous system. It also exacted a requirement for timely completion on all levels of study. Generally, all writing and study processes are being sped up. Research, reading, and writing have to be condensed and pressed towards presentational writing as results of modular structure and an "activity requirement" (since 2010) for studies (a condition for receiving a continued government grant that is claimed to be the highest study grants in Europe) which makes postponing and failing exams much more difficult for both students and faculty. The era of unhurried trial and error university writing is coming to a close. This is widely acknowledged and publicly debated, also in a "standards-are-falling" frame where faculty deplore that you may pass university exams with inadequate writing skills (even in the humanities) as well as with scant discipline knowledge. Therefore, instruction for academic writing (process and product, genres, rhetorical stance, argumentation, reader orientation, linguistic registers, etc.) is taking on an increased importance.

A majority of exams in Danish curricula are term papers, projects, reports, and written exams; however, oral exams also occasionally take place. A lot of writing is required at Danish universities but may not be explicitly taught, tutored, or instructed. From the bachelor's project and through master's level research papers and thesis, larger writing projects will be supervised by faculty. In Danish Higher Education, students are expected to write individually and/or in groups from the first semester throughout the entirety of higher education, perhaps starting with shorter tests, written assignments, or essays (*opgaver*) and soon moving into other genres such as the research paper (*selvstændige opgav*; *semesteropgave*), projects (*project*), or report (*rapport*) representing a piece of inquiry with a research question and an empirical and/or theoretical research. A bachelor's project is approx. 25 pages while a master's thesis ranges from 40–80 pages. For these capstone projects, supervision by faculty is always given, approx. 2–5 hours of supervision to a single undergraduate writer and 5–7 hours of supervision to the postgraduate thesis writer. When writing in groups, supervision time will be allotted according to group size. Some programs or individual supervisors organize writing workshops or semester long seminars designed to outline and set deadlines for writing of bachelor's and master's theses.

For 20 years, Lotte Rienecker and Peter Stray Jørgenson worked together at the Academic Writing Centre within the humanities department at the University of

Copenhagen. We tutored and taught writing in a workshop style, mainly to thesis writers. Gradually, we taught writing supervision to thesis supervisors. Both students and supervisors, many of whom were senior faculty members, experienced a great need for reflection, inspection, comparison, discussion, and instruction of genre(s) from the criteria and assessment of written work to the discussion of everything from creating good student research designs to academic written register and word choice. Together we have written a number of textbooks on academic writing and oral presentation as well as on supervision, university teaching, and learning in general. Now we see a gradual move towards more writing, earlier in the curriculum and more continuously through semesters, writing shorter assignments, and writing from parts to a whole research paper/projects through the semester, portfolio-style, and also faculty organizing more peer feedback. But one feature seems to have remained constant through our 25 years with teaching academic writing: there is still too little instruction before writing as well as confusion about effective instruction of academic writing in higher education.

“Soft science students write in Danish, hard science students write in English”

In Danish Higher Education, Danish is the language most written and spoken. English plays an ever-increasing role in university education and university writing; by 2015, 26% of university courses at the master’s level are taught exclusively in English. An increasing number of term papers and theses are written in English, especially in the natural sciences, medicine, and engineering but increasingly also in the softer sciences. At levels below the postgraduate level, thesis and term paper writing in English is always an option. Yet there are no or very few courses in writing academic English for students, only individual supervisor support. Although writing research papers in English in the hard/wet sciences, where it is expected above bachelor’s level, does represent a major challenge to some students, the tolerance for flawed English (called *Danlish*) is usually high. This is a political issue as well as an issue in public debate about higher education policies and pedagogies.

## 4.2 Danish universities

After a number of recent university mergers, Denmark has only eight universities (and a number of university colleges): University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University, University of Southern Denmark, Aalborg University, Roskilde University, Copenhagen Business School, Technical University of Denmark (engineering education), IT University of Copenhagen.

All professional education at the bachelor’s level, i.e., teacher training, nurse training, and many more programs, take place at university colleges.

The universities are all public and quite homogenous with regards to papers and projects written, with the exception of two universities: Roskilde University (RUC)

and Aalborg University (AAU), both of which are relatively new among Denmark's universities. These universities favor problem-based learning and project-oriented group work, and therefore very long group reports are written (often up to 100 pages). They also favor a comprehensiveness and often an empirical basis in the projects researched and written which is not always possible for single writers. The long group projects are part of the thesis genre. Genres are quite similar across educational institution as research papers, reports, and theses written at the traditional universities are, as a rule, equally problem-oriented as the projects written at Roskilde and Aalborg universities; this is most pronounced in hard and wet sciences. The biggest difference from the project-based and the traditional universities lies in collaborative writing. Danish universities exchange external examiners (from other universities, educational backgrounds, or professions in the disciplines) for a minimum of one third of larger, more significant exams and capstone projects; Denmark has the highest number of external evaluations in Europe. Hence individual faculty and their external examiner negotiate the evaluations of bachelor's projects, research papers at the postgraduate level, and master's theses, preventing bigger differences in criteria between assessors from taking root. Danish universities pride themselves on using external examiners more than other European countries, thus securing negotiations over grades and criteria. It is also assumed that this results in more fairness in regards to grading. On the other hand, the system is criticized for being costly and time-consuming regarding the cost of teaching and supervision.

### 4.3 Genres and text types

To be able to teach students how to write at university, there needs to be a clear sense of both the genres and the text types involved. A genre is defined by a set of conventions for content and form (elements, structure, language) that are determined by the use of texts in rhetorical contexts of purpose, focus, writer-reader relationships. Genres are not fixed but remain rather (surprisingly) stable over time. We often find that genres get confused with text types, which are the elements, the textual building blocks of genre (Björk & Raisanen, 2003<sup>16</sup>); i.e., text types in university writing are summary, paraphrase, definition, analysis, interpretation, discussion, evaluation, etc. At high school and introductory university levels, singular text types are used for exams ("write an analysis/discussion of") and are thus confused with genres. However, a text type on its own is text for educational purposes only and is rarely a professional text.

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<sup>16</sup> Definition of genre: We also draw on the notion of genre as described by Swales & Feak (2012), among other Anglo-American linguists. For example, a text linguistic and rhetorical understanding, meaning that what we actually teach is both pragmatic schemas for writing tasks and how to inquire about the demands of the specific rhetorical situation and of the readers.



In the last few years, we have seen a broadening of the genres used in higher education for learning and for assessment, from research to dissemination and professional genres as well as for short communicative genres such as the contribution to a discussion in an LMS-forum.

Research genres	Dissemination, professional, communication genres
Thesis	Article
Research paper	Poster (dissemination)
Synopsis	Review
Abstract	Recommendation to decision-maker
Poster (academic)	Professional report
Oral presentation (academic conference)	Oral presentation (professional)
Proposal	Wiki-contribution
Internship report	Discussion-contribution
Essay, assignment	Webpage, portal
Peer feedback	Professional product
	Instructions, user manuals
	Quiz questions and answers

Table 2: Examples of academic genres in Denmark

Short genres are not often graded individually but as part of a range of deliverables for a course.

#### 4.4 Bachelor's projects and master's theses

The undergraduate education in both universities and university colleges is concluded by writing a 15 ECTS point, 20–25 page long bachelor's project. Generally a few hours of supervision will be offered, often in connection with a discipline course. Final master's theses are required at all departments and are usually 30 ECTS points and 40–100 pages long. In many university settings, 5–7 hours of supervision are offered. Law, medicine, and other hard/wet disciplines are exceptions as these theses are generally much shorter. The research paper (term paper) is the most widespread genre (the bachelor's project as well as the master's thesis fall under the research paper genre) in all disciplines and is indeed the only shared genre across all disciplines. Essays (*essay* or *bunden opgave*) may be found in arts and social sciences as an early training genre. Students in the hard sciences may never write an essay or a short assignment after high school graduation but all will write research papers.

“Supervisors have a big responsibility for their students' writing development”



“Responsibility” is a big word, and so is “writing development”. Below are the common roles in university writing.

- *Students* are responsible for their own writing development as much as the development of any other skill.
- *Faculty* take responsibility for the module, its writing, and written exams. They also decide information about formats for writing, criteria, references to textbooks about writing, supervision and feedback, individually as well as in-class activities such as seminars about papers-in-progress. The main responsibility lies here. Supervision of research papers, theses, and dissertations takes up much of the designated teaching time, and it is the most widespread mode of learning to write in Danish Higher Education. In the project-based universities Roskilde and Aalborg, project group supervision is the overriding teaching activity, and thus the planning, discussion, and feedback on student writing is a main faculty responsibility.
- *Tutors* may take responsibility mandated by faculty, but Danish universities make little use of student tutors.
- *Study boards* take responsibility for the total curriculum and the number of forms of written exams represented, the amount of time for supervision, etc.
- *The universities’ student counseling services* increasingly offer extensive websites with information about tests, quizzes, academic writing, etc. They therefore take on or are delegated responsibilities to inform students about exam tasks.
- *Information specialists at the university libraries* design and implement very professional net-based tests and web portals on the handling and integration of sources. These become sources of free and easy accessible information on academic inquiry processes and writing from sources.
- *Writing centers* are responsible for their offers in terms of courses, textbooks, tutoring, etc. Currently, there are only two small writing facilities in Denmark (and both have other teaching responsibilities): *Center for Undervisningsudvikling og Digitale Medier*, (formerly *Akademisk Skrivecenter Academic Writing Centre*) and at Aarhus University, (workshops and tutorials). *Pædagogisk Center Samfundsvidenskab*, [www.psc@samf.ku.dk](mailto:www.psc@samf.ku.dk) also offers workshops, peer response groups for thesis writers, and tutorials.

It follows that there are numerous agents, many of whom take on responsibility rather than being given a mandate by management or ministry. Most writing instruction and writing discourse happens on individual initiative whereas supervision on longer pieces of writing is an established practice, but it is largely a reactive practice where the initiative and responsibility is on the writer. Also there is little responsibility at the ministerial, institutional, departmental, or program level. Responsibilities are individualized, personalized and generally not standardized or coordinated.

Courses and workshops on academic writing and oral presentations are generally voluntary and non-credit bearing. There is no national organization concerned

with writing alone but a larger organization for teaching and learning in higher education.

#### 4.5 From high school to university – transition towards the research paper as the main genre

In Denmark the gap between high school and higher education writing is generally believed to be ever-minimizing as high school education has become more academic in a recent reform and requires all students to write a 15 page research paper in the final year of high school. Building on a foundation of students' source-based academic writing, courses on scientific theory, a trend that has been under much public criticism for imposing intellectualism on teenagers. The academization trend has been somewhat reversed, but the writing requirements are established and are likely to remain. The reform aims at preparing students, the vast majority of Danish youth, who attend high school for higher education.

One main difference is in the move from the high school essay writing and the teaching of writing in literary genres (*stil*, *kronik*, and *essay*) to the higher education writing wherein the research (term) paper genre (*opgave*) is central, and all high school students have some introductory experience with it. The transition from essay or assignments to research papers does necessitate some writing instruction at the entrance into university/higher education or at the point where the introduction to research papers is relevant. The transition difficulties are related to genre and to mastering a more formal, academic written register and to acquiring a range of writing competencies as well as information literacy.

##### 4.5.1 More professional writing in the hard sciences

Genres written at universities and at workplaces tend to converge more in the hard and applied sciences; for example, the IT university graduate may write a thesis consisting largely of programming and a rationale for the design, or the chemical engineer may write a report on analyzing a chemical substance. In the softer sciences, university and professional genres tend to diverge. It is a possibility to write a “thesis with a product” and the product will be professional communication of the field. Workplace and professional genres at the universities are becoming more frequent, most often combined with scholarly analysis, rationale, and discussion of professional solutions.

#### 4.5.2 The predominant Anglo-Saxon and the “continental” writing in student research paper writing

If you look at the current education system in Denmark as a whole, the Anglo-Saxon research paper dominates. It is characterized by a narrow research question and an emphasis on methodological inquiry (whether it is into empirical or theoretical issues). The predominance is broken in the softer sciences (also including such disciplines as nursing, teaching, pedagogy, some social sciences as well as soft sciences), namely in those fields that represent the first and original university disciplines in the history of universities (excluding medicine, physics, mathematics): theology, philosophy, history, languages and literature, and art studies. The University of Copenhagen is one of Europe’s oldest; it was founded in 1479. In these subjects university writing was and may still be informed and inspired by such genres as philosophical treatises, cultural and theological essays, hermeneutical interpretations, historical narratives, etc. in a cultural, historical, philosophical writing tradition<sup>17</sup>. These traditions have sources in the forefront and represent an interpretation of humans, human thinking, and culture. The university writing in these traditions bears much resemblance to the source texts written. The source texts are written in genres other than that of the Anglo-Saxon style dissertation, thesis, or research paper. The continental, more essayistic, narrative or philosophizing university thesis is a strong minority text culture in humanistic and theological departments especially in the old, established universities. It has strongly influenced writing in the teaching and nursing colleges as well as much high school writing practice, but this influence is decreasing. The continental tradition of university writing is often, but not only, based on German, French, and Italian sources. A prominent Danish example is the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard who has given name to a university center in Copenhagen on Kierkegaard studies. Kierkegaard studies have by now, through the research written by the scholars representing the Kierkegaard Centre, become a written genre that expectedly would differ from, for instance, Lacan or Bourdieu studies. In this case, it employs different text types, gives a more historical account, and gives more narrative and anecdotal evidence of a biographical nature. Traditions of writing are diverse because they emanate from narrow discourse communities inspired by certain great thinkers with their original text formats and styles, and they are therefore not easily instructed outside the discourse communities surrounding them. The sources that a student reads for a piece of writing tend to rub off genre- and language wise on the piece the student writes. Therefore, the sources read by the writer always represent a powerful, though not explicit, source of instruction on how to write. Thus, the diverse, small continental discourse communities may elude the more general academic writing instruction given on courses and in textbooks. Also continental writing calls for local instruc-

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<sup>17</sup> The Anglo-Saxon and the Continental writing traditions have been described and discussed by the authors in their 2003 article. The (Im)possibilities in Teaching University Writing in the Anglo-American Tradition when Dealing with Continental Student Writers.

tion and especially supervision. The textbook on academic writing favored most by the continental writers and their supervisors is Eco (1997): *The Art of Writing a Thesis*.

Sources read in Denmark on academic writing and oral presentation:

Eco, Umberto (1997). *Kunsten at skrive speciale – hvordan man udarbejder skriftlige opgaver*. [The Art of Writing a Thesis]. København: Akademisk forlag – This Italian textbook has been popular in the humanities and the title is known by all thesis writers and supervisors in the humanities, but it is slowly becoming outdated.

Greve, Linda (2010). *Den gode præsentation. Akademisk mundtlig fremstilling og personlig kommunikation* [The Good Presentation. Academic oral presentation and personal communication]. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur – This is a popular guide for both students and teachers.

Hegelund, Signe (2005). *Akademisk argumentation: skriv overbevisende opgaver på de videregående uddannelser* [Academic Argumentation: Write Convincing Papers in HE]. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur – This popular booklet on the research paper assists in argumentation in writing.

Jensen, Leif Becker (2004). *Fra patos til logos – videnskabsretorik for begyndere* [From Pathos to Logos – Scientific Rhetorics for Beginners]. Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag – A book on how to argue in papers and theses.

Katzenelson, Boje (2001). *Vejledning i affattelse af universitetsopgaver og videnskabelige arbejder – Med særligt henblik på psykologi* [Guide to Writing University Papers and Scientific Works – With Special Reference to Psychology]. København: Dansk Psykologisk Forlag – A first edition from the eighties, this was for many years the go-to book about longer academic papers in the soft sciences.

Olsen, Poul Bitsch; Pedersen, Kaare (1997). *Problemorienteret projektarbejde – en værktøjsbog*. [Problem-oriented Project Work – a Tool Book]. Frederiksberg: Roskilde universitetsforlag – This is used in problem-and groupwork based university educations as a main source on writing problem-based projects in groups.

Rienecker, Lotte; Skov, Signe; Stray Jørgenson, Peter (2013). *The Good Paper – A Handbook for Writing Papers in Higher Education*. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur.

Rienecker, Lotte; Stray Jørgenson, Peter; et al. (2012, 4th. ed.). *Den gode opgave – håndbog i opgaveskrivning på videregående uddannelser* [The Good Paper – Handbook in Academic Writing in HE]. 2nd ed. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur – In widespread use across higher education, this handbook is product-, genre-, and process-oriented, and translated into English, Scandinavian languages, and Lithuanian.

Rienecker, Lotte (2014, 4th.ed.). *Problemformuleringer* [Research Questions in Higher Education]. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur – This popular booklet assists in how to pose operational research questions for writers of research papers, from the bachelor's level and onwards.

Stray Jørgenson, Peter (2014). *Klart sprog – i opgaver på videregående uddannelser*. Frederiksberg, Samfundslitteratur [Clear language – in research papers in HE]. A popular booklet that presents academic language norms.

Stray Jørgenson, Peter; Rienecker, Lotte (eds.) (2011, 2nd ed.). *Studiehåndbogen for studiestartere på videregående uddannelser* [Study Skills Handbook for Starters in HE]. Frederiks-

berg: Samfundslitteratur – This book introduces university writing, genres, and researching/writing processes to first-year students.

Stray Jørgenson, Peter; Rienecker, Lotte; Skov, Signe (2011, 4th ed.). *Specielt om specialer – en aktivitetsbog* [Especially on Theses]. Frederiksberg, Samfundslitteratur – A popular booklet aiding in thesis writing across disciplines.

## 4.6 Oral presentations

Short oral presentations (*mundtlige oplæg*) are a very popular learning and teaching activity for educators across disciplines in higher education and are often part of a curriculum's exam requirements in order for students to meet the expectation of preparing short oral presentations and participate in class and group discussions. Some faculty might organize student conferences or seminars where students present their term paper progress in order to get feedback. Much of an oral presentation will be linked to presenting the student's writing; the oral presentation is often part of a synopsis or other written exam requirement. Generally there will be much more writing than oral presentations in the course of higher education. Many faculty are now instructing and giving feedback to oral presentations, and scholarly guides to oral presentations are appearing on the market (i.e., Greve, 2010).

## 4.7 Learning and support activities

The writing practices involved in writing a research paper are the introductory collecting of materials and sources, posing the research question, reading for the state of the art, taking notes, doing empirical studies, analyzing, discussing, critically appraising sources, etc. The writing elements such as writing text types like definitions, discussion entries, etc. are also included. The expectation is the emulation of all research behaviors on a smaller scale in order to fit the time limit of, at best, a few months to complete a research paper or a group project. Feedback between peers is on the rise, and many faculty are engaged in orchestrating peer feedback on- or offline. Having papers supervised and giving peer feedback are important learning activity in themselves.

Students may also acquire genre knowledge on the genres they are expected to produce through the reading of research articles, the reading of other student papers, through instruction and supervision, from textbooks and lectures on academic writing, and, most of all, through the formative and summative feedback students receive from peers and supervisors.

In the traditional universities, support ranges from none to comprehensive outlining, information management, and supervision. Writing instruction may come to an advanced and comprehensive level, but the individual teacher or the specific

discipline will be in charge autonomously. There are, to our knowledge, no university-based schemes for learning to write. Many faculty express that the teaching of writing (teaching how, a general competence) takes precious time away from teaching disciplinary knowledge (teaching what, discipline-specific competences). In the traditional universities, anything is possible as course content is a matter between the individual faculty and the study board.

In the problem-based learning, project-oriented universities, Roskilde and Aalborg, introductions to project writing as well as intensive supervision to groups writing a joint project are offered from day one. These activities will be considered mandatory as a large part of these educations are centered around the writing of projects and group supervision. There will be plenty of supervision but usually little class instruction before or while writing. Faculty are still generally more reactive than instructive to writing.

An increasing, yet probably still small, number of faculty are now instructing all writing and presentation activities in their learning management system course rooms, during sessions, on handouts, on their own initiative, etc. Thesis writing and bachelor's project workshops in the disciplines are becoming more widespread, and here many issues of thesis writing may be discussed and shared. Again, all instruction concerning academic writing and presenting comes from the initiative of individual faculty and disciplines; it is not a norm, and not institutionalized. In the course of a master's degree, there may be lots of opportunities for instructed writing activities and feedback, or there may be very little.

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## 5 France / By Isabelle Delcambre

### 5.1 Introduction

While the topic of writing in higher education has been steadily evolving in France over the past 15–20 years, it has recently become the focus of sharp attention for many reasons, including changes in political and institutional forces bearing on higher education within France, changes driven by the Bologna Process across Europe, and changes in research interests among linguistics and education sciences researchers. This article attends to some specific writing practices and representations by students in five disciplines (literature, history, linguistics, psychology, and education sciences) via a detailed survey administered to 600 students in four institutions, in the context of the rapidly-changing higher education landscape in France. It draws attention to quite specific disciplinary and educational level differences while reinforcing the overall need for increased attention to supporting student writing in context-specific ways in French Higher Education.

### 5.2 Background

#### 5.2.1 The context of French Higher Education

France is a centralized country. Developing the autonomy of universities is part of current reforms, but it is not yet possible to see great changes in the modes of assessment as a result. French Higher Education is composed of three types of curriculum (Boch & Delcambre, 2008), which are very different, even though the Bologna Process and the changes in university stemming from the 2007 law try to achieve a homogenization and to gather them in large structures of higher education (see explanations below). The first type of curriculum involves professional courses of study of varying lengths, which are taught in professional higher education schools, separate from the university. To enter these courses, there is a *numerus clausus* and entry exams of varying difficulty. This system includes, for instance, schools of nursing, schools of engineering, schools of speech therapy, business schools, journalism schools, various institutions for the training of technicians, teachers, etc. Rouffineau (forthcoming) presents, for example, the difficulties encountered in the traditional fine arts schools in incorporating the changes imposed by the Bologna Process. The second type of curriculum in higher education is uniquely French: the “*Grandes Ecoles*” (“grand” or “great schools”) with no strict equivalent in the Anglophone countries, but shares some similarities to the U.S. Ivy League schools. Even though the *Grandes Ecoles* do not belong to the university system, both the Ivy League and the *Grandes Ecoles* share an elitist vision of higher education and both claim an excellent level for their students.



To get into this kind of schools, there are difficult qualifying exams for people who will prepare selective competitive exams to become heads of administration or future engineers.

Courses of study in the *Grandes Ecoles* are of very high quality whether they are general or professional. No doubt massive government investment helps a great deal. Likewise, the student body at the *Grandes Ecoles* is quite homogeneous in terms of common social and cultural habitus, to use a term introduced by Bourdieu. In particular, this is the case in relation to academic writing skills, which seem to be shared by most of the students. Briefly, and to be a bit exaggerated, we can say that the best students are “stolen” by the *Grandes Ecoles*, and they do not go to public universities, at least for the first three years (some of them enter the university later to obtain a master’s degree).

The third type of curriculum is the public university system, which is the last bastion of a democratic vision of mass education. Access to this system is free; there are no entry exams. Even though public universities are now trying to establish links with the professional world, the studies remain quite general and non-specifically professional. Compared to the *Grandes Ecoles*, the state’s financial investment is lower: half for a university student, compared to a CPGE student (*Classes préparatoires aux Grandes Ecoles*, Preparatory classes for the *Grandes Ecoles*): 7,000 € a year/13,880 €. The public is more heterogeneous in terms of social class, cultural background, general formation, etc. Teachers are acutely aware that many students have a complex relationship with academic writing skills. At the moment, in France, there is a large political project designed to increase the rate of success at university; in fact, (and this may come as a shock) more than fifty percent of the students fail their exams in the first three years. One possible way to improve the situation is to help them master academic writing. Since 2010, in order to improve the international ranking of universities, transformations of French Higher Education, named IDEX (*Initiatives d’excellence*, Excellence Initiatives), have offered the opportunity for projects gathering in common structures, traditional universities, and *Grandes Ecoles* to allocate special funding to the best selected projects. The first projects selected concerned only a few of the 82 French universities, mainly in Paris and its surroundings, Strasbourg, and the south of France. These transformations do not as yet affect the public, their difficulties, and the mode of students’ selection.

Thus, the higher education landscape is mainly divided into two parts: the first one contains the selective, sometimes very expensive *Grandes Ecoles* and private professional schools; the second, university, is open to all students and almost free of charge (Vasconcelos, 2006).

### 5.2.2 Transitioning into university writing

The research study described in the second part of this report shows that the move for students into a raised awareness of how to develop a long text based on a personal research question or inquiry is one of the most sensitive transitional gaps between writing in secondary and post-secondary contexts (Delcambre & Donahue, 2011; Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2011a; Delcambre & Donahue, 2012). The comparison of one's writing to others' writing, learning forms of polyphony and enunciation, and the practice of citations and bibliographical references are additional aspects of academic writing that students have to discover at university level in almost all fields. Some fields of study have, however, very strong forms of continuity between secondary and higher education; in France, this is the case in literature with the practice of the literary essay (dissertation), a form already developed in secondary school.

### 5.2.3 The role and the language of writing at the university

Writing is mainly related to evaluation via examinations in which students must write in class, under supervision, and in a relatively short time (two to four hours in general). This is the more general case in the first three years (undergraduate degree levels). At the graduate levels (4th and 5th years), written examinations remain, but their importance diminishes in favor of the assessment of long texts written throughout the year. In certain fields of study, this is also the case in the third year of undergraduate work.

French is the only official language of teaching and of writing. But learning a foreign language is spreading in all university courses, whatever the discipline, as a requirement. The practice of English (written and oral) is becoming an increasingly important feature at the doctoral level (seminars and one-day workshops), without being mandatory. A level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CECRL) in a foreign language is required to obtain any master's degree.

Writing in English is required only for research publications in Anglo-Saxon journals (practices induced by the national ranking of research teams and the evaluation of publications using international standards). Some PhD students expect such practices to be ranked by the National University Council committees (CNU). In the field of linguistics, it is becoming increasingly necessary for candidates for a position as lecturer in higher education institutions to present publications in English even if the published study focuses on French language issues. This is seen by some scholars and teachers as an absurd requirement.

#### 5.2.4 Teaching students to write at the university

In general, writing is not a teaching matter. Each teacher supports more or less explicitly their students in order to help them meet the required expectations for writing. Some believe that students should know how to write and that it is not their role to take over what they consider dirty work, compared to teaching research methodology, for example. Some courses (few and professionalized) focus on professional writing, editing, translation, etc. Writing workshops in vocational training for future teachers have also been developed.

Teaching writing is often considered marginalizing. In 1966, short university courses, IUT (university institutes of technology), were created in France, whose mission was to train 2-year senior technicians. This creation led to the emergence of a new discipline named *techniques d'expression*, coupled with general education, whose function was “to repair the students' deficiencies in the use of language and general culture that they inherited from their social background” (Simonet, 1994, p. 36). The techniques of expression and communication technologies model continued to emerge in many university programs, especially in the first year, with the same function of restoration or compensation for deficiencies. A careful examination shows very large variations in the content of these programs, whose generally very linguistic views are often criticized (Boch, Laborde-Milaa, & Reuter, 2004). At worst, they feature normative grammar exercises and, at best, practical reflections about writing across the disciplines.

To our knowledge, dedicated writing centers do not exist, though some are in development, where writing is supported in conjunction with other methodological skills (information retrieval, mastery of ICTs, etc.). At the University of Poitiers, for example, the research group that studies writing has recently surveyed first-year students to learn about their needs and has piloted a first-year writing course which will lead to developing a writing center. There are courses on academic writing (especially at the master's or doctoral levels) in some universities as a result of local initiatives. Similarly, there are seminars on research writing (especially in graduate schools), whose objective is to help graduate students to better target the specific writing of the thesis, scientific articles, or conference proposals.

Currently, in the massive reorganization of French universities resulting from the recent 2007 law called LRU, *Loi relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités* (i.e., the fusion of the former disciplinary universities into a unique local institution, such as the university of Strasbourg, gathering sciences, technologies, humanities, social sciences, health, law, etc.), there are innovations and creations of learning centers such as the Resource Center for Training Support (CRAF, *Centre de Ressources pour l'accompagnement à la formation*) at the university of Lille III, where students can be supported as they work on master's theses (*mémoires*), create PowerPoint presentations, analyze data, write résumés, syntheses, etc. This support can take the form of working with a tutor or independently, using the center's tools. But these structures are always local innovations.

Some scholarship has revealed the lack of studies on teaching practices in French universities and on the faculty's relationships to students and to teaching (Adangnikou, 2008, p. 606; Paivandi, 2010, p. 33). Pedagogy is not a legitimate preoccupation in French academic research (unlike in other French-speaking countries, where academic pedagogy is developed in professional associations, academic journals, and conferences (De Ketele, 2010)). According to Adangnikou (2008, p. 608), in 2005 only 20% of French universities (i.e., 18/88) offered centers for teaching support. These structures, which may help faculty to have reflexive attitudes about students' practices (e.g., writing practices, among others) or to conduct research on learning and teaching experiences, are again always linked to individual decisions and local initiatives (ibid. p. 609). The February 2012 report of the *Cours des Comptes* about undergraduate student success observes that "the primacy of research in faculty careers does not foster strong faculty investment in the corresponding pedagogical activities" (www.ccomptes.fr, p. 662). A recent issue of *Recherche et formation* (Frenay & Paquay, 2011) deals with the faculty's pedagogical training, but only one French university, the University of Burgundy, is engaged with its Center for Pedagogical Innovation and Assessment. Although this is still to be verified, there are some signs of interest in pedagogy in the development of *Services Universitaires de Pédagogie* (SUP) in the universities.

Similarly, research on academic writing is relatively new (see ANR-06-APPR-019 "Writing at university: inventories, practices, models" (2007–2010), headed by I. Delcambre), which was crafted after four workshops organized by the laboratories Theodile (Univ. Lille3) and Lidilem (Univ. Grenoble3) between 1997 and 2002 (see Dabène & Reuter, 1998; Brassart, 2000; Boch & Grossmann, 2001; Boch, Laborde-Milaa, & Reuter, 2004; Boch & Rinck, 2010). But this was a research initiative, not an institutional one.

### 5.2.5 University writing in relation to professional writing

The study of writing in the workplace has largely developed in France in ethnographic studies, represented in the language and work network (Borzeix & Fraenkel 2001–2005; Lazar, 1999). Inventorying all that has been written on the topic is impossible, but a non-exhaustive inventory can be established and grounded in various research domains: letters and forms (*courriers et formulaires*), projects (*projets*) (for example, institutional projects in health services or education, etc.), reports (*rappports*) (accounting reports or architectural work reports), documentary or press reports (*dossiers documentaires ou dossier de presse*) (for example, in major companies, administrative offices, or unions), social workers' notes on client behavior (*rappports de comportement*), teachers' lesson plans and class notes (*préparations de cours*), class visit reports (*rappports d'inspection*), police reports (*rappports de police*), and so on. This quick inventory suggests how difficult it might be to capture the whole spectrum and to establish how universities may or may not prepare students for professional writing prac-

tices. When we look at the academic discursive genres, such as the ones presented below, no university preparation is linked to the specificity of professional writing, a specificity that is less linked to the discursive genres than to the interrelationship between work activities and language. This embedded relationship renders writing activity almost completely invisible for the actors involved (Fraenkel 2001–2005, p. 244), which means that far from being an individual act, it is often shared among multiple “authors” and linked to multiple collective and individual situations, written and spoken (Delcambre P., 1992), phenomena that are essentially absent from university writing practices. To be sure, some programs focused on professional writing are appearing at universities, but they are rare and they target the professionalization of limited student audiences. The only bridge between professional and university writing is through the professional training offered to students writing professional master’s theses (*mémoires professionnels*). The professional thesis has thus appeared at the university next to master’s research theses as different professional tracks have been introduced. But master’s theses are designed for educational programs in order to offer training; they are not forms of writing required on the ground in work contexts.

### 5.3 Genres and Genre Teaching

In this section, we draw on a study done in 2008–2009 at the University of Lille III, the University of Grenoble II, the University of Paris, and the Free University of Brussels (francophone Belgium), “Writing at university: inventory, practices, models” (ANR-06-APPR-019). The institutions are all, in reference to our description above, standard universities. Six hundred university students in undergraduate and graduate programs in five disciplines (history, linguistics, education, literature, and psychology) completed a detailed survey about their writing experiences and practices as well as their difficulties, their perception of criteria used to evaluate their writing, the types of writing they produced, the support they sought or received, and so on. The students were writing in French in their major-related coursework. As the survey sought to explore the students’ perspective, our report offers a description of their representations of genres and practices. In addition, because we worked within five disciplines at four institutions, the results are to be understood as linked to those disciplines and institutions, rather than necessarily generalizable. Any results that are cited in our answers have already been published; non-cited results are published here for the first time.

#### 5.3.1 Genres? Genre practices?

For our research team, “[t]he genres of discourse are cultural products, specific to a given society, developed during its history and relatively stable. They govern the speech of members of the society engaged in endless situations of social life. [...] The notion of genres of discourse implies principles of categorization of lin-

guistic productions that refer to enunciation, institutional and/or historical contexts and are therefore opposed to a purely internal approach that considers the great verbal masses according to their inherent organizing principles” (Delcambre, 2013).

The concept of genre of discourse has to be traced to Mikhail Bakhtin (1984). With this concept, Bakhtin articulates the historical and social dimensions of linguistic productions (their matters relatively stable, historically produced, shared by all, etc.) and their necessarily individual dimension. Any verbal statement, wrote Bakhtin, [...] materializes a genre of discourse, that is to say, manifests both a common dimension and an “individual form” (1984, p. 269). The notion of genre of discourse is thus opposed to a formalistic point of view about texts, separated from historical, cultural, socio-cultural dimensions, like the text typologies that had prevailed for a time in the didactics of French (in France and Francophone countries) (Delcambre, 2013).

In teaching, however, the terms “genres” or “types of texts” may be used indiscriminately because of the synonymy of the terms “genre” and “type” in everyday French usage is to be understood as a “sort of” text. Another possibility is to see “genre” as it is used in literature studies to refer to rhetorical genres as defined in the Aristotelian tradition (poetry, theater, novels, etc.) and as redefined in the teaching practices (the classical tragedy, the realistic novel, etc.). In didactics studies, the notion of genres refers also to school-based writing genres (the French essay (*dissertation*), description, narrative, and new genres, such as *écriture d’invention*, etc.), sometimes without a clear reference to the Bakhtinian definition. For a large study on literary and didactic genres, see Denizot (2013) for example.

### 5.3.2 Students’ discourse about the genres in their disciplines

For the data in this section, students were asked about the pieces of writing that they consider representative of their discipline of study or of the course they are taking and for their level and discipline (Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2009; Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2010). These representative types should be equivalent to the most frequent or best-known types that students produce.

The genres named by the students vary significantly according to years of study. During the first three years (undergraduate degree levels), the written texts are mostly short pieces that vary by discipline. First-year students name the essay (*dissertation*); second-year students name the survey (*enquête*); third-year students name the synthesis (*synthèse*) or the internship report (*rapport de stage*).

However, the answers of first-year students are not unanimous. For one third of the students, there is vagueness in the answers about the kind of writing re-

quired, and a multiplicity of pieces of writing are named. For them, there is no “typical” piece of university writing.

The following two years (postgraduate levels) are characterized by longer pieces. Master’s students speak of theses (*mémoires*) and course project work (*travaux d’étude et de recherche*).

The homogenization of responses thus becomes more evident at the master’s level. The higher in the curriculum, the more choices are shared; the earlier in the curriculum, the less students identify characteristic shared genres.

The most frequently mentioned written texts (353 of the 452 responses) depend on the discipline. For students, each discipline is characterized by one or more representative texts

- Literature: commentary texts (*commentaires*), essays (*dissertations*). Essays are the most frequently identified texts by all students; this genre, witness of a long history, is found also in history, but it is not named by the students as representative of their discipline.
- Educational sciences: theses (*mémoires*) and course project works (*travaux d’étude et de recherche*).
- History: presentation, an oral genre (*exposé*).
- Linguistics: special reports (*dossiers*), internship reports (*rapports de stage*) and survey (*enquête*)
- Psychology (and, secondarily, linguistics), by contrast, had the greatest number of non-responses or atypical responses.
- If we look at other texts frequently cited or distributions of the precedent pieces of writing, we find that
- History and literature students share texts: essays (*dissertations*), text commentaries (*commentaires*), and to a lesser extent, oral presentation (*exposé*).
- Psychology students are the only ones to note, as representative pieces of writing, note-taking (*prise de notes*) and critical review (*compte-rendu*).
- Research papers (*écrits de recherche*) characterize educational sciences students while syntheses (*synthèses*) characterize educational sciences and linguistics.

These differences can be explained as much by the specific discipline as by teaching approaches implemented locally by a given teaching team. The fact that students in educational sciences say they write long texts is surely because their courses did not start until the third year of undergraduate studies, for example.



### 5.3.3 Exam-based genres linked to academic disciplines

The responses explored here refer only to the types of texts we identified above as “examination” texts. When we question students on what they have to write for examinations, and particularly on the aid they receive on these texts, new text types emerge. In the following analysis, which analyzes the names used by students to answer about examinations, we find three broad categories of responses:

- those that involve genres of discourse, not specifically related to testing situations. Although often represented in examinations, the genres discussed here go beyond the testing situations. We call them academic texts.
- those that cite exercises or specific genres of writing that are only found in examination situations.
- those that refer to examination situations or contexts, without designating a genre of writing.

This analysis will probably seem too enumerative, but its interest lies in the range of text types cited by the students and the similarities or differences of their statements according to the disciplines.

- Literature is a discipline clearly identified by two major genres: the essay (*dissertation*) and the commentary (*commentaire*). They represent 62% of the responses.

This discipline is characterized by the very small number of genres of academic texts cited.

19% of all responses are devoted to genres of written exercises for examination (subject to be treated-*sujet à traiter*; analysis of documents-*analyse de documents*; analysis-*analyses*; questions-*questions*; questions on lessons-*questions de cours*; and MCQs-QCM) and 17% to the mention of testing situations (*Exams-examens*, midterm exams-*partiels*, tests-*contrôles*).

So ultimately, this is a discipline whose genres are very few and well identified.

- Linguistics is a discipline focused on four dominant genres among a multitude of genres of writing whether academic or specific to examinations. This “fragmentation” of denominations is confirmed by the fact that four types are found in only half of the responses in a roughly equal proportion: internship report (*rapport de stage*), synthesis (*synthèse*), special reports (*dossier*), summary (*résumé*). We can assume that these four types represent the dominant genres of discourse in this student population. If we consider, as previously, the different categories of exam texts, we unfold the following list:



- genres of discourse cited and not directly related to the examination situation: internship report (*rapport de stage*), synthesis of documents or articles (*synthèse de documents ou d'articles*), essay (*dissertation*), text to summarize (*texte à résumer*), theoretical report (*rapport théorique*), text commentary (*commentaire de texte*), case study (*étude de cas*), fictional scientific texts (*écrits de fiction scientifique*), investigative work (*travaux d'enquête*), argumentative text (*texte argumentatif*).
- examination papers: course work (*dossier*), master's thesis (*mémoire*). These two types of writing are also genres of discourse, treated as such in many scholarly studies. I consider them here as types of tests because they are related to the assessment of certain grades, including the master's thesis. The other papers mentioned by the students are multiple choice exams (*QCM*), questions (*questions*), analysis (*analyse*), exercise (*exercice d'application*), question to be treated (*sujet à traiter*).
- examination context: examination (*examen*), texts for examination (*écrits d'examen*).

c. Educational sciences provides us with no typical writing.

These students present answers whose configuration is similar to those in linguistics. Five types are found in 50% of the answers. In a roughly equal proportion, we find: course project work (*travaux d'études et de recherche*), examinations (*examens*), questions on lessons (*questions de cours*), master's theses (*mémoires*), special reports (*dossiers*). But this list is much more heterogeneous than in the two disciplines outlined above.

- The genres of discourse cited: course project work (*travaux d'études et de recherches*), essay (*dissertation*), reading report (*fiche de lecture*), class observation reports (*dossier d'observation*), summary (*résumé*), commentaries (*commentaires*), internship report (*rapport de stage*), corpus analysis (*analyse de corpus*), synthesis questions (*questions de synthèse*), definitions (*définitions*), research papers (*travaux de recherche*), text summary (*synthèse de texte*), documents synthesis (*synthèse de documents*), analysis of pupils' texts (*analyse de productions d'élèves*).
- examination papers: questions on lessons (*questions de cours*), master's theses (*mémoires*), special report (*dossier*), multiple-choice exams (*QCM*), questions (*questions*), subject to be treated (*sujet à traiter*), subjects (*sujets*), analysis (*analyse*), document analysis (*analyse de documents*), report (*rapport*), exam questions (*questions d'examen*).
- examination context: examinations (*examens*), examination papers (*questions d'examen*).

d. Psychology provides us with the similar responses. The first two names garner half of the citations: Multiple choice questions (*QCM*) and questions about lessons (*questions de cours*). These are forms of examination and not genres of discourse. The exams seem to be predominant in these responses.

- The genres of discourse cited: course project work (travaux d'études et de recherche), internship report (rapport de stage), case studies (études de cas), commentaries (commentaires), reading report (fiche de lecture), essay (dissertation), analysis results (analyse de résultats), observation report (dossier d'observation), summary (résumé)
- examination papers: multiple-choice exams (QCM), questions about lessons (questions de cours), special report (dossier), questions (questions), theses (mémoires), open questions (questions ouvertes), oral presentation (exposé).
- examination context: examination (examen), continuous assessment (contrôle continu), terminal control (contrôle terminal), examination subjects (sujets d'examen), written test (devoir sur table), entrance examination for teaching training institutions (concours IUFM).

e. History identified two main genres: essay and commentary

This result is quite similar to literature and psychology, for the paucity of different responses amongst 50% of students. The average is the lowest, one text by response (which reinforces the idea that identification is clear and restricted). As before, two kinds of texts cover more than half of the responses: essay (*dissertation*) and commentary (*commentaire*).

- The genres of discourse cited: essay (dissertation), commentary (commentaire), document or text commentary (commentaire de texte ou de document), historical documents commentary (commentaire de documents historiques), text synthesis (synthèse de texte), reading report (fiche de lecture), observation report (dossiers d'observation).
- examination papers: questions about lessons (questions de cours), oral presentations (exposés).
- examination context: midterm exam (partiels).

These statements reveal new dimensions of the performed genres in comparison with previous responses on the representative texts:

- the similarities between literature and history are here confirmed. These two disciplines practice mainly the essay (*dissertation*) and commentary (*commentaire*). It should be noted, however, that only students in literature declare essay writing as representative but not students in history, who write essays for their examinations without giving them a disciplinary status.
- psychology is a discipline that does not offer, in the eyes of students, an exemplary written paper but displays a certain unity when students are led to think of testing situations. It is a discipline that seems to be particularized by specific events related to the assessment of knowledge (and multiple choice questions-QCM). Just as with history students, the vagueness of their answers on representative genres and the consensus of their responses about

the examination papers suggest that students make no links between the specificities of their discipline and writing.

- linguistics and educational sciences are two fields characterized by a large number of various texts, with some texts being relatively well identified by linguistics students while others are much less clearly perceived as genres by students in educational sciences.

This analysis and description of discursive genres, based on the students' perceptions, allows us to point out the disciplinary dimensions of university writings. It can also be stressed that, in order for students to better succeed and to fulfil their expectations, they must develop a specific awareness about, and skill in, the disciplinary discourses. This fact that very often is ignored by faculty, as if competent writing were a natural and obvious attribute, unworthy of attention, rather than a skill that needs to be taught and developed.

#### 5.3.4 Writing practices as seen through student representations of writing standards

Writing practices do not only depend on the denominations of the genres the students encounter. Thus, we could analyze the standards students report applying or seeing implemented for the representative genres of discourse. This analysis tells us globally that their practices, as seen through what they prioritize in writing and what they believe faculty prioritize in writing, fall largely into disciplinary categories.

We have identified two different types of standards: those that students say they apply when they write the representative text of their discipline or grade level and those they believe to be implemented by teachers when they correct these texts. We are, therefore, basing our description of practices on statements from students, representations of what they do or what they believe, and not on observing their practices. Similarly, teachers' expectations are those that students reconstruct from interactions with teachers, not expectations set by teachers themselves (at least in the current presentation of our results: group interviews with teachers in the same five disciplines have been analyzed by Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2011b; Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2013).

To conduct this analysis of students' personal standards, we first identified four relatively homogeneous student profiles (constructed by PCR analysis) that became the basis for comparisons between disciplines or levels of study.

All students shared the idea that they should mobilize their knowledge and find the correct answer (profile "responds appropriately"), but the other three profiles were clearly divided by discipline. Students in literature say they pay special attention to style, originality, and the formulation of a personal opinion (we call this profile "self-expression"); those in psychology and educational sciences especially say they "write from texts" (that is to say, rephrasing, discussing the au-

thors, making references and citations); and those in language studies say they pay attention to "writing clearly" (that is to say, ensuring the clarity of form, the correction of language, articulation and clarity of speech in general). On the other hand, history students cannot be characterized as much by any one of these profiles.

### 5.3.5 Acquiring genre knowledge in different disciplines

The French situation (absence of concerted programs of the teaching of writing) makes it difficult to ascertain directly how students acquire genre knowledge. Based on the previous answers, we can say that only the essay (*dissertation*) is a prototypical genre of a discipline, identified as such by the students. It is often present at examinations and is often object of a "methodological" learning even if according to several students, this teaching is not explicit enough and if the elements of this learning are generally not specified by the students. Among all other genres of discourse, some of which are strongly linked to the disciplines, only long texts such as the master's theses (*mémoires*) and course project reports (*travaux d'études et de recherche*), associated with an original research question, seem to be the object of individual support. However, our questionnaire did not identify how this is associated by the students to disciplinary frames.

We can thus develop insight into how students feel they acquire genre knowledge in their disciplines by drawing on what students say they receive as support for their writing practices. Overall, students acquire genre knowledge on genres in the disciplines we studied through commentary and response to their writing, not in a uniform way but rather depending on the discipline. Their responses thus offer an indirect glimpse into the ways students construct genre knowledge, but this latter view is interesting because it allows us to identify teaching practices as they are seen, understood, and memorized by students on the receiving end. This will also be developed below with respect to their conceptions of learning.

## 5.4 The students' discourses on support and feedback

We have built two dimensions that allow us to analyze students' responses about the feedback they receive and what it teaches them: the content of the support and the enunciative forms of teacher discourse (is the support or feedback formulated to be informative, prescriptive, or as just recommendations?). Students comment the most on the content of the support, tending to describe it but not to evaluate it. The italicized material in parentheses in each section is student response, quoted as examples.

Students describe the contents of the support given in various categories:

- Support that is purely "informative", specifying the nature of the work (is it an essay or MCQ?) and of the examinations (locations, times, etc.).
- Support that specifically targets the content of writing, probably more the product than the process of writing as such (*Some hints of what must be learned in the course for the MCQs and issues of course*, Literature, L2).
- Support that affects different aspects of writing: how to write, what to watch out for, the steps, the surface features (*Treating the style and spelling, not use mathematical symbols*, History, L2).
- Support that describes the constraints of writing set out by teachers, their expectations (*For document analysis, essays, texts to summarize, what have to be the content and form*, Psychology, M1; *recommendations to follow to respond, how to respond*, History, L2), and of course the length of the writing, which is a major constraint.

These exam papers are very accurately situated genres, and it is essential to be helped in defining this situation: support concerning the location, duration, writing task(s) as well as the social circulation of these texts (teachers' expectations). Additionally, genres norms are identified primarily by surface features (spelling, vocabulary, length), by the expectations of specific target groups, as well as by specific procedures that are not related to writing.

The enunciative forms of the support or feedback are often mentioned in students' responses: the support is perceived as posing written examination situations "as they are" rather than "as they should be". The comments are also less perceived as recommendations, which would make them more empathetic. The written examination by contrast seems to be an entity that can be distanced as if there were no reader with no expectations. This "objectivity" or "neutrality" expressed in students' discourse about the examination situation suggests to us that there is a tension between the way students experience exams as distanced and the connections they make between these situations and other writing situations (*Notice on the number of pages, on the topic but too vague, a few tracks for the theory, for all these texts*, Psychology, M2; *for all types of writing, teachers provide guidance on how the exam will be conducted, sometimes on the type of issue that will be raised*, History, L2; *About MCQs, for example, the clarity of the written response counts very much, you should write in capital letters in a precise form your name and surname – and do not check the boxes in any odd way*, Psychology, L1.).

#### 5.4.1 Relationship between these descriptive dimensions, disciplines, and levels of study

There are no elements of students' descriptions that are common to a significant number of responses. There is no possibility of building "response patterns". However, many of the students' replies are related to the field of study to which the student belongs and to the students' level of study.

### 5.4.2 Field of study

Students in history and in literature perceive feedback in quite similar ways and in ways relatively opposed to those of linguistics. Students in psychology and educational sciences share perspectives and are halfway between the two groups.

- In history and literature the support focuses, according to students, on teaching them methods of writing that students do not detail.

Both institutions are characterized by a strong emphasis on methods, but the support is formulated in a very vague or generic manner (*Give students a good working method*, History, L2; *it gives us methods, ideas, plan ...*, Literature, L2). The literature faculty appears to organize specific sessions devoted to writing support.

- In linguistics, the requirements relate to surface features; they are explained in the oral instructions for exam preparation.

The responses of these students indicate that in this field the support focuses primarily on surface features, which may be explained by the fact that there are many exam preparations in this discipline. More than in other disciplines, these students find that the instructions for assignments and the verbal explanations help them to learn what they need to know and do.

- In psychology and educational sciences, the students perceive and describe the support they receive and how it helps them in a broad variety of ways; there is no pattern.

### 5.4.3 Level of study

The differences in student perception of support at different undergraduate and graduate levels concern the content of the support; the contents of the discourse and the length of the text are the focus at master's level while support is perceived as focused on the steps of the work at undergraduate degree levels. One could say that at the undergraduate degree level, support is seen as focusing on cognitive processes that are assumed to be related to writing. On the contrary, at the master's level, writing may be more individualized (*The statements are relative to what I give to my director, as my master thesis is being developed, the indications are both in substance and in form*, Linguistics, M2), may be designed more as a "report" or "thesis" or "paper", more intended to be read by others in order to bring knowledge or information to others, in a larger sphere and defined by other issues. This support is more directly related to writing: finding the sources, the authors, finding things to write, and very physical constraints (length), but this helps in writing and in specifying the genre of discourse. The types of aid or support given connect logically to degree levels. Undergraduates continue, as in high

school, to face writing situations that thousands have faced and continue to face, in short to respond in accordance to previously asked questions. At the master's levels, new questions are asked, and support is given in new ways since it is no longer necessary to teach general steps.

What students say about the methodology of the support and feedback they receive can also offer us insight into how they acquire the needed genre knowledge. The number of references to the methodology of support is smaller than to the dimensions of support. We suspect that students become more interested in describing the content of support than the methods of construction thereof, gestures, or actions that define them.

What is striking is the absence of theoretically constructed discourse (with theoretical references?) that would accompany the students in their writing practices. Maybe this is not heard as "support" by students. Perhaps it is not delivered by faculty (we think, for example, of discourses on the construction of the reader, on discursive practices, or on genres that could be offered by faculty that could provide support to students' writing). The methods of support are rather vague and general; they amount to an evocation of *methodological guidance* (Educational Sciences, M1), generally unspecified.

Here (we are still talking about the writing in testing or exam situations), support for acquiring genre knowledge appears to be linked to conceptions of education or assistance based on showing and perhaps conceptions of transparency of teachers' expectations, reproducibility of different learning situations (*nothing changes ... There are examples*, History, L2), or the idea that doing something many times contributes to a skill to "reuse" in the exam (*In class, we work on topics from the lessons and methodology that are the same than in examinations*, Psychology, L3). Again, the immutability of certain features of the examination situation permeates these methods (but what are these immutable characteristics? Students do not specify).

Still, very few students say that distinguishing the genres can be helpful to their writing practices (*We put apart MCQs and open questions*, Psychology, L3) while in fact it is very likely that many of them have actually made these distinctions (students of psychology).

These discourses about the support students receive lead us to question their value. They give us more information about the students' representations of what it means to get support in preparation for an evaluation than it does about the perceptions of support or the usefulness of support offered by faculty. The students' very traditional discourse implies that the support is not affected by the kind of response expected (oral or written); it consists of hearing how to proceed and seeing an example of what to do in ways that allow practicing, reproducing, imitating. In short, the students' discourse about support is in fact a way to hear their discourse about their conception of learning.



Also there are few signs of support or places where such assistance is provided. Some students do report receiving specific support via specific sessions devoted to the accompaniment of the exam writing. This concerns mainly literature courses (course about general essay), education sciences courses, and one or two students in linguistics and history.

These sessions can be interpreted as support that is more or less planned and organized: a regular course (in literature, about essay methodology or in linguistics, a short preparatory course in first year), a specific session, or the constitution of “annals” (*We are given the last year examination issue*, Literature, L1, implying it is not the student who looks for these subjects), or simply advice in preparing for an exam (*For a study of historical geography or study on a historical subject, we were given bibliographies, information on libraries, centers, docs, types of source to be used*, History, L3), etc.

A student expresses a form of grief over this situation (*[they did not] clear indications or even mentioned issues on the entrance examination for the IUFM [a teaching training institution], which is besides rapidly referred to only in educational psychology. However, we do not know the disciplines we will find, as well as the genres of writing [...] fortunately we can find books to learn there*, Psychology, L3).

The appropriateness of the moment such support is given or found by the student is rare. Does it mean that the vagueness we have already pointed out is even more widespread than we imagined? Or does it mean that support in writing is only a set of specific events that is only interpreted as support much later by the students?

A note on oral genres: our study focuses on written texts. However, we encountered, in the statements of students, the genre of oral presentation. Students in history (at all degree levels) cite this oral genre as a “writing” representative of their discipline, and students in psychology cite it as the only form of examination they encounter. And indeed, it appears that the oral presentation is the only oral genre to be performed explicitly at university. It is a monologue genre that allows the student to share a literature review related to course content. At the master’s level, we found a variant: the presentation of a research study that is subject to discussion in the seminar. It may also be preparation for the viva or oral presentation in a symposium.

#### 5.4.4 Student report on resources consulted for writing support

As in the preceding sections, here we are drawing on the humanities student survey data. This information is, therefore, not about the French textbook industry, but gives insights into the daily practices of the students we surveyed.



One of the final survey questions asked students to say whether, in working on their writing, they use any resources that give advice about writing long academic texts such as books, Internet resources, or looking at other students' theses. For each resource, students were asked to indicate whether they consulted it frequently, occasionally, or never. Then we asked them for the titles of any books they consulted.

The results indicate that the Internet is consulted frequently (by about half the population), advice-giving books are consulted occasionally (37% of the students) or never (33%) as is true for looking at other students' theses (occasionally by 39%, never by 34%). About 13% of students left these questions blank. The use of books or manuals designed to support students' writing thus seems to be relatively marginal; a bit more than a third of students say they consult them from time to time. What may be particularly interesting is the competition between these resources and the theses of other students, which can play the role of model or example.

These global results can be refined by an analysis using the variables of discipline or of level of study.

#### 5.4.5 Discipline

The students who left the question blank are almost entirely students in history and psychology. On the end, the students in education sciences appear to consult, in significant numbers, two types of resources: the Internet and books or manuals. A second clear distinction can be made between the students in literature and in education sciences (if we exclude the students who left the question blank): the education sciences students frequently consult books about writing, and never the theses of other students; literature students have radically opposite practices, frequently consulting other students' theses and never consulting support books.

#### 5.4.6 Level of study

The variation in responses by discipline can be completed with the analysis of responses by level of study. The first-year students simply don't answer the question. Students in the second year of the undergraduate cycle and the first years of the master's cycle are not interested in looking at other students' theses or long written texts while the second-year master's students gravitate towards them and say they use them frequently. If we take out the students who didn't reply, we see the Internet jumping forth as a resource. It is predominant in the undergraduate years while non-existent in the master's years. A similar trajectory appears for the consulting of manuals and support texts; it is predominant in the

first undergraduate year, then left aside in later undergraduate and graduate years, thus confirming that the master's students focus almost entirely on looking at previous theses.

The analysis of responses about actual titles of works consulted brings additional information about disciplinary specificities and the way they differentiate student practices. But first, note the very small response to this question. Only 67 students (out of 417) included any specific information about their sources of information on writing. Among these replies, the majority of students are considering resources that helped with the content of their writing as the most important: works in psychology on autism or sleep, in history on the French Revolution, in literature on surrealism, in linguistics on the history of language, in education sciences on high school or middle school students. Responses identifying works that could help the student with composing a thesis were rare. And then, most of these were works that focused largely on research methods, cited in particular by master's students in education sciences and psychology: "Quivy and Campenhoudt", the authors of a famous handbook entitled *Manual of Research in Social Sciences* [*Manuel de recherche en Sciences sociales*] (2011, 3rd ed., Paris: Dunod). There were also methodological guides about doing interviews or surveys. A few interesting individual responses did surface.

- Four students in the third year of history at l'Université Libre de Bruxelles refer to the *Little Guide for Historians* edited by a history student group at the university that gives advice on composing in history.
- Three students in the first year of literature cite reference texts about writing syntheses and literary dissertations. We can add to their comments a student in history at Lille, who mentions a work on writing history dissertations and text commentaries.
- Four students in psychology (master's level) refer to a document available online on the website of one of the research labs at the university *How to Write a course project work-TER* or to photocopied material from their instructors.

The others are silent on the question, to the point where some mention discovering the existence of such a resource because of the question on the questionnaire: "I had never thought there might be reference works dedicated to writing Masters theses; you've given me an idea, and now at least this questionnaire won't have been useless" (History students, master's level).

What we can conclude from this analysis is that writing is not constituted as an object for students in the same way as research methods or course content. And when it is, it is in the form of "grey literature", distributed by student or faculty organizations or by course instructors.

## 5.5 Conclusions: The future of writing instruction in the era of Bologna

We can make several observations about what is changing in French Higher Education as a result of the Bologna Process; these changes directly affect the future of student writing and of writing instruction.

Student mobility, fostered by Erasmus programs and linked to the way the university is evolving because of the Bologna Process, has increased the heterogeneity of students and complicates the teaching situation (Adangnikou, 2008, p. 616) by forcing faculty to adapt their academic demands in terms of academic writing to students who have trouble with French or with the kinds of writing French education can demand (the *dissertation* for example). Thus, a new field is developing within French as a second language, called French for university purposes (Mangiante & Parpette, 2011), which seeks to respond to the problems teachers face with these new students such as understanding course lectures, exam topics, or prompts.

The “Licence-Master-Doctorat” cycle now in place has engendered a multiplication of evaluations, with each semester now ending in an exam period. That entails additional changes (not yet precisely described), for example in the way exam topics are developed. Fields like educational sciences, which had traditionally used writing such as text commentaries or essays, have begun introducing multiple choice exams. There is a desire to lighten the work of correcting as teachers become responsible for large groups of students (up to 350) and repeated exam periods is often cited as the justification for these changes. The secondary effect of “semesterization” has been to center in on discrete parcels of knowledge in the end-of-term evaluations rather than focusing on composing and discursive competencies. This then later creates difficulties when the student encounters research writing.

At the master’s level, the new structure of higher education has led to fragmenting what used to be sustained year-long writing projects (like the old master’s or *Diplôme d’Etudes Approfondies*, *memoires*) into intermediate tasks that fit the semester evaluation requirements. This fragmenting might seem appropriate to the writing process, to the way research writing unfolds in stages when it follows the rhythm of intellectual work, but it risks becoming formalized and solidified when associated with evaluation. What expectations make sense at the end of 13 weeks of research? Do we expect students to present the readings they’ve completed? Can we expect that in that short period these readings be adapted to the research question and be a reflection of the student’s original choices and articulation? Or might it be better to have students construct their methodology and the way they will treat their data? Above all, what status should we give this intermediate writing? Is it a quasi-complete version of the final work that will be evaluated after the second semester? Or is it the first stage of a part of the final work, which the student will necessarily need to revise, taking into account how the work and the student’s reading and research progress? Do we think that for each semester there should be a corresponding autonomous text (some faculty

now go so far as to ask students to choose two different subjects in order to enable students to produce written texts adequate to the time constraints and the support faculty can offer within those constraints)? A good analysis of faculty discourse in education sciences about these topics is Delcambre & Lahanier-Reuter, 2011b.

Very different conceptions of writing underlie these different empirically elaborated solutions to adapting to the “L-M-D” constraints: writing is understood as linear, a consecutive piling of relatively independent parts, or it is understood as a spiral, an ongoing re-elaboration of previous writing moving forward. In the first case, students are required to begin research writing either by reading or by a focusing on developing their methodology, but how can the second be done without the first? Or how can a student read without constantly reflecting on the empirical methods and research questions that the readings help construct? The interaction of intellectual operations involved in developing a research project in the human sciences is difficult to put into place in these short forms of writing in which questions of maturity and temporality are clearly absent.

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## 6 Germany / By Esther Breuer and Kirsten Schindler

### 6.1 Introduction

To give a nationwide report on academic writing in Germany is a challenging task. The contexts of university life are very heterogeneous across the country due to the federal states system and sometimes even within a single university due to different aspects that are the consequence of changes in population size and other recent developments. This heterogeneity creates an area of tension in which all participants, students as well as teachers, are confronted with challenges but at the same time with far-reaching possibilities. Although we still need to learn how to use the potentials of diversity efficiently, we are currently experiencing a productive and fruitful discussion on how to exploit the situation and start putting some of these ideas into action. Since the situation of academic life in Germany in general, and of academic writing in particular, is to some extent unique in Europe (as is probably true for any country in the world), it is necessary to first introduce a brief historical overview of the (change of the) role of universities within German society. We then sketch the international influence on university courses and on the role of academic writing. Finally, we take a look at how heterogeneity could be and is already being made use of.

As described below, there is great variation between the different federal states in the educational context. It is important, for this reason, to note that both authors work at Cologne University in North Rhine-Westphalia, the biggest and, at the same time, the most diverse state in Germany with regards to internationality and the educational backgrounds of students as well as of staff. Cologne University is currently the biggest university in Germany (winter term 2014 had more than 50,000 students enrolled) and is also one of the oldest universities in Europe with its own traditional background. That is, at our university, rules and financial concerns are regulated by the North Rhine-Westphalian government and its financial situation. Due to the size and so background of our university, we often have more potential than other universities not only in terms of the number of courses but also of the diversity of participants. At the same time, however, we need to handle very big classes and have a comparatively small program for teaching and coaching academic writing. Because of this, we as authors might have a slightly biased perspective on the topic. However, due to our different professional backgrounds, (as the head of the writing center and as a professor in the German department) and also due to a growing and very active German network of writing research, we hope that we are able to provide a more general overview of the German state of the art.

## 6.2 Historical overview

University life and academic writing is always oriented in accordance with the views held in the academic community of the countries and with the conditions they are confronted with by their political and social environments. With Alexander von Humboldt's ideas of the functioning of universities, Germany has been the "cradle" of the modern understanding of universities as institutions in which scientific research and advanced learning are combined. This approach has had an effect not only on different aspects of the curriculum but also on the forms of writing that is practiced at our universities. The "seminar paper" (see below), for instance, which is rather uncommon in other European countries, was our most crucial form of written communication in the curriculum before the course restructuring due to the Bologna Process.

### 6.2.1 The research seminar

Academic writing in the 19th century was embedded in the research seminar, an institution that was closely related to the rise of Humboldt's research university (Bertilsson, 1992). In research seminars, a selected group of students were trained for two years to work in various research fields and to use research methods to gather new knowledge for publication. For the first time, systematic training in research-based thinking was offered at universities. Students were perceived as new researchers who were educated in a way in which academic writing was conducted in order to become members of a scientific discourse community (Kruse, 2012; Pohl, 2009). What started as an offer for a small student group became common for all students in the 20th century. Research seminars were subsequently subdivided into introductory seminars (*Proseminar*), regular seminars (*Hauptseminar*), and higher/upper seminars (*Oberseminar*). What remained invariantly the same in all kinds of seminars was the demand for writing an extended paper at least every semester; the seminar paper will be discussed in detail in 3.1.

The role of the student regarding the seminar paper changed in the 20th century; students are no longer expected to be part of the scientific discourse or to produce (and publish) new knowledge but rather to show that they can perform according to the line of the specific genre. In a way, student academic writing nowadays resembles the production of chairs or tables by an apprentice in the training of carpenters. Students need to accept that the only reader they will have is their professor who teaches the course, or possibly their assistants, and that the readers already know everything or at least the greater part of what is discussed in the papers (Hermanns, 1980). This has a negative effect on students' motivation for writing. They do not see this as a chance to generate new ideas and to discuss these with others but simply as a tool to pass courses.



This change in the perception of the role of academic writing took place because 20th century universities started opening up to a larger and more diverse population. Women were also allowed into universities at the beginning of the 20th century, and from the beginning of the 1960s, an increasing number of students that were “first generation academics” began their university studies. Since the end of the 20th century, more students in Germany have a multilingual and multiethnic background because of the immigration into Germany which started in the 1950s. Whereas in former times more pupils attended schools that prepared them for practical jobs, more and more pupils currently attend high schools that prepare them for university; for example, in North Rhine-Westphalia more than 50% of each cohort receives an high school diploma (*Abitur*) these days, and are allowed to start studying at university. That is, we do not have a pure “elitist” student population anymore but rather a highly diverse student population with a variety of educational and linguistic backgrounds. This offers great potential for both the individuals and for the universities as well as for the country as scientific and academic questions are being viewed in different light and more diverse input is being given. However, in order to explore these chances, there is a need for a drastic change in the university curricula, which has only started to be understood by the educators and within the university context.

The problem with this is that not only do the universities grow in size but that the number of students per professor is growing as well. One professor currently has 63 students per semester on average to attend to (Osel, 2013. Note: This number is slightly outdated and has since risen). Regarding academic writing, the feedback system that was an important part of the research seminar can no longer be provided. Seminar teaching has started to erode more and more. The effective writing and research practice is thus no longer effective. It has been progressively replaced by lectures, which do not foster academic writing per se but rely rather on testing or oral presentations (see 3.1).

### 6.2.2 Federal sovereignty, types of universities, and transition from school writing

An important peculiarity of the German education system is that it is decentralized. Each of the federal state (*Bundesländer*) of Germany is responsible for the administration and funding of its universities and schools. Federal laws only provide the general framework for state legislation, but it is the states who create and supervise their own realization of laws concerning education. Universities have traditionally had a relatively high status of autonomy with respect to teaching and research in this system but little autonomy in financial matters even though the degree of financial autonomy has increased lately. Decisions on the assessment of student learning, however, are widely left to the universities although they may partly be based on a regulative frame of the state government (for instance, for thesis writing). The states may decide that disciplines preparing students for public services (teachers, lawyers, medical doctors) are examined by

a state or a national agency. At many universities, this practice has survived the changes due to the Bologna Process as will be discussed in 3.1.

It is not only the legislation that is peculiar in Germany, but also the fact that our educational system consists of different kinds of universities: namely the “traditional” universities, the technical universities (*Technische Universität*), the universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschule*), the pedagogical universities (*Pädagogische Hochschule*), the art universities, and a growing number of private universities. While traditional universities focus on research and have the right to offer doctoral degrees and programs, universities of applied sciences are more concerned with the teaching and the practicing of applied research. Since Bologna, the different kinds of universities have received a standardized degree structure of three-year (bachelor’s) plus two-year (master’s) programs and also the same titles of degrees. While in former times you could easily distinguish whether a degree was from a (technical) university (*Dipl.-Ingenieur*) or a university of applied sciences (*Ingenieur*), this distinction is no longer possible. Additionally, the traditional universities of today are expected to prepare students for professional fields and job opportunities outside the field of science whereas the universities of applied sciences are expected to increase their research activities.

Another factor influencing the teaching and the writing practices are the writing skills students bring with them at the beginning of their university career. Since the high schools are also located in this heterogeneous framework, because of the different curricula in the federal states, and of course because of the different ways of dealing with them at each school, beginner students from Bavaria have different writing experiences than students from North Rhine-Westphalia. Most of the German schools have recently adopted new writing practices and instructional patterns offering propaedeutic skills for academic writing in the form of the *Facharbeit* (topic paper) (Steets, 2011). The *Facharbeit* is an extended paper based on a project (of an academic, artistic, or social nature) that students participate in. The time frame for preparing and writing the paper is usually one term. The quality of academic papers, like citation practices, is expected but is usually only marginally important. Some of the federal states stress the importance of this type of text by making it part of the evaluation for the final diploma (see Schindler & Fischbach, 2014); in other states, it is only optional whether or not pupils write such a paper. How successful the writing of a *Facharbeit* is for the future academic career also depends on the teachers’ attitude and engagement with respect to supporting pupils when producing the texts and to giving feedback on the final texts. Some teachers ask for support from writing pedagogy whereas others allow the pupils to write in an unguided manner.

Although the *Facharbeit* is meant to introduce pupils to academic writing, one should keep in mind that it is still produced in a school environment and that pupils do not necessarily understand that writing in school and writing at university differs to a large degree (Ortner, 2006). Pupils nowadays write essays at school (something that was rather uncommon at universities for a long time but which is changing because of Bologna; see 3.1). They are not explicitly asked to write in

an objective manner, but they are allowed to utter their personal opinions on a topic without the need for objective proof of their ideas. Although high schools are mainly meant to prepare pupils for university, the students become more involved in journalistic genres or literary texts than with the reading and writing of typically academic texts. They do not acquire the knowledge of what makes a text academic and what the different elements of these texts mean; they do not receive explicit teaching or training in the way writing processes work, nor do they learn about the importance of the sub processes (e.g., planning or revising). However, many lecturers at the universities expect first-year students to know about these things and find the teaching of those skills superfluous.

A very obvious example for the importance of understanding the differences between high school and university writing is that pupils do not learn that written texts by other authors are products that need to be explicitly referred to. Students are supposed to demonstrate that their work is based on a wide range of knowledge in the respective field, and, as stated above, it is expected that students either already know or that they learn how to master this crucial point in academic discourse within a short period of time and have the complex linguistic means at hand that are necessary for intertextuality such as summarizing, paraphrasing, citing, and synthesizing others' texts. The teaching attitude has been the consequence of the fact that although plagiarism always has been an issue at universities, it has been seen as a rare exception for a long time.

A series of spectacular plagiarism cases in Germany has recently brought attention to this issue, and it has shown that plagiarism often occurs because students do not understand that indirect quotations, i.e., ideas that they have rewritten in their own words, have to be referenced as well (Steinhoff, 2011). Even when citation techniques are presented in introductory courses of academic writing or in *Proseminars*, the citation practices are often taught in a rather dogmatic and formalistic way so that students may learn the rules well but only slowly understand the motives and the reasons for intertextuality, and thus they are far from being prepared to apply the rules correctly. For example, although special attention is given to direct vs. indirect quotations in their classes, students are still often in doubt about the necessity of indicating both of them in their papers. They declare that some of the ideas that they express in their own words, but have already been developed by others, still do not need any reference because the students had come to these ideas themselves before having read the text in which the idea was already published. In these kinds of discussions with students in writing centers, it becomes obvious that an awareness is missing about the fact that thoughts and ideas are 'inventions'. For example, the invention of the printing press will stay Gutenberg's invention even if another person would have invented the same machine ten years later without knowing Gutenberg's work. Another factor that makes plagiarism even a bigger problem today is that students tend to misinterpret the fact that information published in the internet is 'free'. For a rather high number of students, this freedom of access to the material means that the ideas do not have to be quoted anymore but are 'owned' by the public (Eret & Ok, 2014).

In order to prevent plagiarism, students are required to add a *Selbständigkeitserklärung* to their papers, stating that they have written the paper themselves and have not used illegal support; however, if they have not understood what plagiarism is, this sheet will not help them avoid it. Explicit intertextuality is, therefore, a matter of great concern in all student university papers, in all courses, and in the course offering of writing centers.

In short, because of a lack of awareness of the differences between school and university writing, the transition from secondary to higher education is difficult to manage for most new students.

### 6.3 International influences on academic writing

It is not only the German peculiarities that have an influence on academic writing at our universities, but also the influences of the globalized academic world. In the following, the consequences of the Bologna Process and of the ‘publish or perish in international contexts’ mentality (see Chanson, 2007) will be outlined.

#### 6.3.1 Changes of German academic writing practices due to the Bologna Process

##### Writing before Bologna

The overall academic writing tradition is based, to a large extent, on the understanding that universities are the educational institution for future academics and scientists (see 2.1). For this reason, students need to have knowledge of a diverse set of academic working and writing forms. The German university system has traditionally been based, to a great degree, on independent, self-regulated student learning. Acquiring the ability of *selbstständiges wissenschaftliches Arbeiten* (independent scholarly/scientific work) has long been one of the main aims of university studies. The teaching form of the seminar has introduced the participants into a field of research and has offered them specialized literature for independent study. The seminar paper, which is to be handed in at the end of the semester, has been understood as being one of the most important ways of assessing student learning. In writing a seminar paper, students find an adequate topic for the paper themselves, then narrow the topic down to a manageable size, search for the relevant literature, read and summarize it, find a structure for their paper, write a draft, revise it, and bring it into a proper form. The seminar paper is, therefore, part of a complex teaching arrangement in which writing is connected with reading, discussing, presenting, and a variety of group activities (Kruse, 2012).

Seminar papers are normally between ten and twenty pages long. They are understood as preparation for students in thesis writing (e.g., bachelor’s and master’s theses), which are seen as a more complex pieces of independent scholarly

work (to be followed by the doctoral dissertation). Bachelor's theses are between 30 and 60 pages long while the master's thesis is between 60 to 100 pages; the PhD dissertation ranges from 100 to 600 pages. The number of pages varies widely between study programs and disciplines, for example, between mathematics and English literature.

To write a seminar paper, students are generally given a time frame ranging from two weeks to half a year. Some lecturers do not give any deadlines at all, and they will accept papers even two years after the class has finished. The bachelor's thesis must usually be finished in three to four months and the master's thesis after six months. PhD dissertations need to be finished after two years; the PhD students need to at least present first results after this time frame by presenting their findings. This need to present results is a rather new development. In most cases, the PhD takes more than two years. The average rate lies at three to five years. In the engineering field, finishing in less than three years is very rare. After the PhD, there is the possibility of writing a habilitation, which may take up to five years. To become a professor in the German educational system, the habilitation or a 'second' book is still needed in most disciplines. It is often required by state laws, especially in the humanities, although the numbers of those writing a habilitation had been declining but is starting to rise again (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2015). Positions for junior professors or associate professors are the exception from this rather demanding procedure.

### **Writing after Bologna**

With the beginning of the realization of the demands of the Bologna Process, profound changes in the German university system have taken place. Bologna's main ideas of making different study programs comparable and consequently achieving a greater mobility for students as well as a higher amount of exchange of knowledge and competencies resulted in a complete revision of the university curricula in Germany. Some examples are: terms of content, structure, degrees, or of the examination processes in general. The reduction of study time in bachelor's and master's programs led to a stricter time frame in which the students have less time for conducting writing projects in order to generate knowledge (Galbraith, 1999, 2009; Menary, 2007), which had been the central idea of writing seminar papers (see above). As a consequence, writing has become a process of disclosing knowledge (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) rather than a process of gaining understanding and acquiring it (Swain, 2006).

With Bologna's emphasis on competence-oriented teaching, some innovative writing practices have been introduced. Other forms of writing besides the seminar paper have gained ground, mainly because the policy of continuous assessment demands more examinations than before. Additionally, because of the bigger class sizes, Bologna has also motivated some lecturers to change the mode of the examinations and avoid the time-consuming grading of student seminar papers. Alternatives to the seminar paper are tests, oral examinations, or oral presentations. There are also new forms of teaching that require different ways of writing. In lectures, the dominating mode of writing is note-taking. Other courses

may require several smaller essays instead of one larger seminar paper. These may demand more reproduction of knowledge from class discussions and less knowledge from independent reading. After the Bologna reform, the essay has gained popularity as well. In many seminars, students collect different kinds of shorter academic papers (bibliographies, essays, protocols) in portfolios. This more process-oriented approach, in the ideal case, allows teachers to give feedback on works in progress and with that gives them tools to support students in their writing (if the classes are small enough).

The PowerPoint presentation or the *Referat* (the traditional term for an oral presentation in a teaching context) are valued oral genres in German classrooms. In oral presentations, students have to present overviews of subtopics of the course content in a time slot of ten to thirty minutes. Another kind of oral presentation is the initiation and guidance of group activities by the students in which the speaker instructs the fellow students what to do, provides prompts, and finally gives feedback. Generally, this way of presenting knowledge is used across faculties in all disciplines of humanities, in economics, and in legislation.

The following list summarizes the text types that are common practices at the moment:

- Seminar paper (*Seminararbeit*)
- Term paper (*Hausarbeit*)
- Bachelor's/master's thesis (*Bachelor- bzw. Masterarbeit*)
- Diploma (*Diplomarbeit*)
- PhD dissertation (*Doktorarbeit*)
- Handouts (*Handout; ggf. Thesenpapier*)
- Essay (*Aufsatz*)
- Excerpt (*Exzerpt*)
- Poster (*Poster*)
- Proposal (*Exposé*)
- Research Article (*Artikel*)
- Portfolio (*Portfolio*)
- Protocol (*Protokoll*)
- Presentation (*Referat*)
- Internship report (*Praktikumsbericht*)
- Literature review (*Rezension*)
- Reports (*Berichte*)
- Technical writing (*Technisches Schreiben*)

Although there are a variety of text forms in the different disciplines, there are disciplines in which students are exclusively giving oral presentations instead of writing papers until they have to write their bachelor's thesis. Additionally, writing in class is usually not taught explicitly except for in some writing courses. Generally, in Germany we follow a writing-to-learn model, where writing skills are acquired by immersion. Because of the large size of seminars, lecturers cannot



supervise the students during the writing process. If there are no tutorials or writing centers at the universities, students are left alone in learning how to write by reading and by doing (Breuer, 2014).

As a consequence, the bachelor's thesis in the third year often represents the first complex writing task; a fact that is very negative for the students' performances and their self-confidence.

Most of these genres are not common in the workplace, which stands in contrast with a more profession-oriented role of university after Bologna (Breuer, Newman, & Newman, 2016). This is especially true for the traditional disciplines with a long teaching tradition focusing on basic research. Universities of applied sciences or engineering, on the other hand, are more likely to introduce students to professional writing and to let them write project reports, medical assessment reports, etc. that connect them with the workplace. Here, students also become part of a research project using their own work.

### 6.3.2 English as a lingua franca

In most faculties, the language of academic communication is German. In the respective language courses in humanities, French, Italian, Russian or Spanish may be used as the language of teaching in class. In English philology, African studies, some economics courses, and many courses in engineering, the standard language is English. There is also a general tendency to conduct scientific master's programs and PhD programs in English. The reasons for deciding to use English differ. In African Studies, for example, many students come from countries where German is neither the first language nor taught at school as one of the first foreign languages. The students' German is, therefore, usually not good enough to read or write academic texts. Many publications in this field are also exclusively in English. In economics, on the other hand, English as a language of communication has become rather dominant because it is the main language of business communication. Teaching an economics course in English at university may, therefore, prepare students for their future work situation.

It is also assumed that publishing for an international audience will improve students' career opportunities, especially for graduate students who want to pursue an academic career. Important publications reviewed by the international discourse community are published exclusively in English in some fields (see the research project "Publish in English or Perish in German" at Braunschweig University; [https://www.tu-braunschweig.de/Medien-DB/sprachenzentrum/abstract-ringvorlesung\\_25-06.pdf](https://www.tu-braunschweig.de/Medien-DB/sprachenzentrum/abstract-ringvorlesung_25-06.pdf)). Although writing a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation in a language other than German still needs approval by director of the study program or by the departmental student office, it is still recommended to write a doctoral dissertation in English for those who want to follow careers at university

in research or teaching as English publications are seen to be more prestigious (Lillis & Curry, 2010).

Because of the awareness of the importance of English in academia, one of the central requirements for admission to a study program is a proficiency in English usually at a B2/C1 level or higher. Even in cases when English proficiency does not have to be documented, study programs silently assume that students are able to read English research literature. In order to support this, almost all universities maintain some international study programs demanding English and/or other European languages. Still, for example, in teacher training, especially in the German department, the knowledge of English is rather low. Even though a lot of the academic literature is in English, the students are not competent in reading and comprehending these texts, and they prefer to read and write in German (Knapp & Münch, 2008).

With the need to publish in English, a change in German academic writing has also taken place. Whereas in former times the Teutonic way (Galtung, 1981; see also Clyne, 1987; Siepmann, 2006) of writing was the common way of creating texts, today publishers, lecturers, and textbooks demand or teach the Saxonian way of academic writing. That is, students are asked to produce rather linearly structured texts that aim to answer the question taken up as directly and as strictly as possible whereas the Teutonics tended to write in a broader, less strictly structured way in former times. It was one of the central ideas of academic writing to see “further than the end of one’s nose” but to look at ideas in various aspects, thus broadening the field of discussion. Or, as Swales and Feak (1994, p. 214) described it, today in the Saxonian way of writing there is the tendency of not “telling” one’s ideas anymore but of “selling” them. This attitude asks for presenting ideas differently from how this was done in ‘old-school’ seminar papers but to taking over the English definition and perspective on academic writing.

This change in approach, of course, can lead to difficulties for students as a large number of papers that they read in their courses are written in the Saxonian way. If they have to generate the knowledge about writing in an academic way by reading, they are in danger of not understanding what exactly defines the academic genre (Breuer, 2011).

## 6.4 Outlook

As was illustrated, the teaching of academic writing skills at universities had in the past been a rather non-issue in Germany. Students were expected to acquire genre knowledge and genre competencies on their own. The teaching approach was (and sometimes still is) a pure swim-or-sink didactic or, expressed in a more positive way, an immersion approach in which students are learning-by-doing (Pohl, 2007). Students learned how to write by collecting their knowledge from



original disciplinary sources individually. They were supposed to ‘simply’ read and write in order to acquire academic writing competencies. This construction of knowledge based on disciplinary research has been the most important action of students in German-speaking universities in the seminar tradition (Foster, 2002).

The problems of the writing culture at German universities may thus be seen as being rooted in the fact that little support for mastering the writing process in class or outside class was (and sometimes still is not) provided and that feedback was usually only given on submitted papers but not during the writing process. Even if feedback was given, it focused rather on content matters than on linguistic or genre aspects. Only a minority of lecturers used (and still use) scales for grading or other kinds of feedback, which would help students more explicitly and more directly to improve in aspects of genre, language, or text organization. A traditional form of getting advice is to visit the lecturers during their office hour. Many study programs offer special, additional leaflets (*Merkmale*) on paper writing and plagiarism that cover issues like structure, citation conventions, elements of the table of contents, forms of reference, layout, and the contents of cover page. Most of the knowledge about writing was passed on in an informal way of communication from student to student. If there were (or are) writing classes, a variety of aspects of writing and research processes were (are) taught like time management, reading strategies, summarizing texts, structuring texts, revision, searching strategies, etc., which is too wide of an approach. Still, lamenting about bad writing was (and still is) very common among teachers and the assumptions that good writing follows good thinking and that badly written texts are thus the result of no or of inadequate thinking were and are popular notions in German-speaking contexts (Pohl, 2007).

However, the changes due to the Bologna reform are gradually shifting the discussion to a more supportive and explicit way of teaching. This movement has come over to Germany from the United States, where writing centers and the teaching of writing have been parts of the agenda at the universities for a long time. With the Bologna Process and the higher exchange between European universities also in pedagogical issues, the awareness of the need for teaching and supporting students in academic writing has arrived in Germany. More and more universities are starting to open writing centers and are offering writing courses. In some institutes and faculties, compulsory writing courses are provided for the students. For example, at Cologne University, students of English philology or students of philosophy must attend classes on essay or term paper writing. Although most offers are optional, their numbers slowly are growing. Because of the *studium integrale*, which incorporates classes where students acquire knowledge outside of their strict course curricula, more and more students also attend classes in which not only course based competencies are taught but general academic competencies as well. In this context, they often understand that writing is a competency that can be learned. With the students’ higher awareness of the possibilities of training writing and the better results acquired after having attended classes on academic writing or visiting writing centers, the acceptance of

teaching writing as an integral part of the university curricula becomes stronger not only with the students but also with the teachers.

This is also mirrored in programs financed by the state in which students learn to become “capable for studying”. For example, the Viadrina University (Frankfurt Oder) has installed a center where students learn key competencies regarding writing and doing research. Peer tutoring is here the idea in which trained students discuss the writing processes and the written texts with their fellow students (Girgensohn, 2014). In the last year, a SIG group has been created in which members of different writing centers discuss and create guidelines for the training of peer tutors. The hope is that more students will be able to give help to their fellow students after attending this program and that this help will be based on pedagogical and genre assumptions that conform with the state of the art in both aspects.

There are also efforts to integrate the aspect of writing directly into the course programs. The Centre for Writing Competencies at our university, for example, offers course lecturers the possibility of inviting teachers from the center into their classes. These teachers discuss those writing and learning competencies inside the courses that are directly applicable in the classes. For example, if finishing a course depends on handing in a seminar paper, the students get lessons on seminar paper writing. If exams are needed, the sessions focus on these kinds of texts. There are also teaching formats like the *schreibintensive Lehre* (writing intensive teaching) in Bielefeld, Giessen, and in Frankfurt/Main in which tutors of the writing centers cooperate with the course teachers, and they integrate writing more directly into the classes, therefore using the potential of writing for thinking (Menary, 2007) as well as supporting and training the students’ writing processes and creating a more positive attitude towards writing.

A big help for the spreading of the writing competencies is the network between the writing didactics and the writing centers, which is continuing to grow. In 2013, the *Gesellschaft für Schreibdidaktik und Schreibforschung* (Association of Writing Didactics and Writing Research) was founded and has taken up a very active stance on writing. There are a variety of SIG groups dealing with a multitude of aspects regarding writing at university, and there is a high exchange of ideas in this association. That is, although there is still a long way to go for making academic writing a teaching component that is available to every student, the forecast is quite positive. The awareness of the teachability of academic writing is growing, and the participants in the writing discourse are highly motivated and they gain more respect in the lines of the “real” scientists. Writing teachers and writing centers are no longer the institutions that help those who should not have started to study in the first place, but they have become an integral part of university life and research. With this, a good start has been made to explore in-depth the chances of the heterogeneity of the academic community in Germany.

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## 7 Greece / By Eliza Kitis, Anna-Maria Hatzitheodorou, Cleopatra Kontouli, and Marina Mattheoudakis

### 7.1 Introduction

As the title suggests, this study reports on the linguistic situation in higher education in Greece, and, in particular, it surveys the most prominent genres and writing practices used across the board in higher education, i.e., in all its domains of learning, teaching and assessment. The ultimate aim of this report is to provide a broad description of the country's national writing culture as fostered and practised in higher education within the wider European culture and frame of reference.

The titles of the sections are indicative of a number of related questions raised within the more specific domain; these implicit questions, common to all reports, have been designed to act as a benchmark frame that will allow us to compare genres and genre practices in different systems of higher education in various European countries. The ultimate aim is that this project will provide the necessary background for future interventions and processes that will engage with adjusting relevant practices in higher education and creating a more or less uniform and standardized system of writing practices within the European frame, which will, nevertheless, also allow for some independence and diversity, as may be deemed necessary.

The report draws heavily on our vast experience in the education profession, acquired at various universities both in the country and abroad, but also on our teaching experience at primary and secondary level. One of the authors is also engaged in English language curriculum design for primary education while another teaches at the Open University, as well. Three of us have teaching experience at university level in the United States, but also from private universities in Greece. Two of us have teaching experience from vocational institutions and primary and secondary education in Greece. We also draw on talks we had with both students and instructors from various departments of our university but also from other universities across the country. Additionally, we have resourced academic sites in the country.

First and foremost, it is imperative to give a synopsis of the higher education system in Greece in order to provide the context of this report, and this is the aim of the next section. In section 3, we present prevalent perceptions of genres as entertained by the authors and other qualified language teachers (sampling views), as well as their impact on teaching, and in section 4 we present further aspects of higher education and language politics in Greece. In section 5, we focus on writing policies and cultures within higher education in Greece and present the major genres used in this context, whereas in section 6 we engage in how genre-writing is fostered and practiced in higher education. In section 7, we briefly re-

view the Bologna Process and the possible impact it has had on writing practices, in general, and in Greece, in particular. We conclude, in section 8, with a synopsis of the major problems with regards to our topic in Greek Higher Education.

## 7.2 Structural aspects of Higher Education

By higher education we mean any institutions or organisations that provide degrees at the tertiary level (ISCED 5 and 6) and are recognised by the state or other governmental or public agencies or the general public (Schwarz and Westerheijden, 2004). This definition would include both public universities, funded, recognized and accredited centrally and officially by the Ministry of Education. It also includes private universities in Greece, as yet not accredited officially, some of which are collaborating with, and operating within a frame of, usually, a UK based fully accredited university. We will return to this issue further down.

In Greece, there are two types of higher education institutions: those of the public sector and those of the private sector. The former includes universities (24 in all), technological institutes, and vocational schools. There is also an exclusively technical university in Athens called The National Technical University (NTUA) which is the oldest and most prestigious educational institution of Greece in the field of technology (no commonalities with former UK polys), with various schools of engineering, architecture, city planning, applied mathematics and physical science, etc. and robust postgraduate programs. Another type of university is the Hellenic Open University, which is partially state-funded and the only distance learning institution in Greece. All of them admit students from 18 years onwards. Universities are research- and teaching-focused institutions whereas technological and vocational schools have a vocational rather than an academic orientation. Technological institutes, which can be considered equivalent to former polytechnics in the UK, have been accorded university status rather recently (just like in the UK). While in our collective consciousness they are of a lower prestige (even though entrance exams are required), especially as their intake of students have failed entrance to traditional universities, they can boast a practical –and hence vocational- approach in their study programs with their graduates enjoying good employment rates. However, as Greece is right now (2011–2014) in deep financial recession, unemployment rates are sky high in all fields.

Higher education within the private sector includes private institutions, which are either branches of foreign universities (mostly English) or private institutions affiliated to accredited foreign (UK or the U.S.) universities, and they are all research- and teaching-focused. To date these institutions are not yet accredited in Greece due to present legislation, but there is pressure for granting accreditation status. While entrance to state universities is exam-based and very competitive, private universities do not as yet share the high reputation of state universities, and getting a place in them is secured primarily on a financial basis. Nevertheless, there has been a proliferation of these private ‘universities’ in recent years and espe-

cially before the onset of the financial crisis, despite their unrecognized status by the state or any accreditation agencies. It is fair to note that there has been a clear tendency on the part of successive governments towards granting full accreditation to some of those private institutions, which, however, invoking clauses of the country's constitution regarding the right to free education, is forcefully resisted by public universities' faculty members and their unions. The controversy also revolves around the quality of academic studies offered by these institutions, which might not be independently assured, especially as there's diminished public trust in the independence of recognized agencies and institutions that they would reliably assess them and provide quality assurances. This controversy must also be seen in the light of the method of gaining a place in the tertiary education system in the country. Entrance in the public higher education system of Greece is very competitive as has been noted. All students wishing to take up studies in the more prestigious public sector of higher education, which is their overwhelming majority, need to take the same exams for each bundle of disciplines across the board, that is, across all universities; these exams are centrally administered by the Ministry of Education, and students will gain a place in their preferred university and field of studies on the basis of their cumulative grade. Prior studies in secondary education and their marks are not taken into account, nor do specific universities or faculties have any say about their intake. Studies in public universities usually span four years, with the exception of the medical faculty and the faculty of engineering, are free of charge, and students are also entitled to their board, free books and a place in student halls although the latter may depend on parents' declared income.

On the other hand, entrance into higher education private institutions is mostly determined by the students' ability to afford the fees, but academic potential, or any officially recognized assessment method, does not seem to play any crucial part; hence, the wider perception is that those institutions act as fallback options. On the other hand, there is a clear policy on the government's part to also accommodate those students who cannot make it into the public sector of higher education, and, further, to provide them with an attractive option that ultimately will stop them from pursuing studies abroad, mostly in the UK. Studying at home in private universities that will grant them fully accredited degrees recognized also in the public sector of the employment market once they graduate is an alluring prospect.

A final type of public institutions is the International Hellenic University (<http://www.ihu.edu.gr/>), which was set up in Thessaloniki, in the North of Greece, in 2005 and targets postgraduate students from South East Europe, but also across the world. It consists of the school of economics, business administration and legal studies, the school of humanities and the school of science and technology, all offering various master's degree programs.

The Greek Higher Education system has been rather centralized, with all decisions on study programs (curriculum design, but even curriculum changes, etc.), faculty appointments and promotions, etc. taken locally by the departments, but



officially having to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, even if this ratification was perfunctory rather than real. But this situation has changed together with the whole structure of higher education as a result of a new law that came into effect quite recently (2014 witnessed the implementation of a slightly revised version of the new education law and universities are still in a transitional stage regarding a number of internal affairs). Universities are now in the process of becoming decentralized by having their own governing board (board of trustees), but right now we have to wait and see how this new law will get implemented and play out for all parties concerned.

Until now institutions have been funded exclusively by the state and were required to admit a particular number of students each year determined by the Ministry of Education (despite departmental algorithms requested but ignored each time by the Ministry). Recently, clamp restrictions by the Ministry of Education have been gradually relaxed in an attempt to accord greater autonomy to all universities as the new education bill (which is now a law) had been in consultation.

In the next section, we present perceptions of genre shared by the authors but we also sample impromptu views on the notion adopted by four language instructors, with training in ELT, ESP, and LT, teaching college English at the department of English of Aristotle University. As will become clear from further sections of this report, specially trained instructors to teach academic writing or other types of genre and relevant modules are only to be found in language and literature departments, and primarily in foreign language and literature departments, but also in language centers.

## 7.3 Perceptions of ‘genre’

### 7.3.1 Genre perceptions in language teaching

Genres as different text types (oral or written) can be identified and defined from various perspectives depending on the purposes of one’s engagement with the subject. What follows are perceptions of genre determined by either the researcher’s interest in the subject or the teacher’s and practitioner’s more pragmatic approach and purposes within the teaching engagement. According to Swales (1990, p. 58), “a genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes [...] constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.” Although Swales and Feak (2004, p. 61) considers the above definition of genre as “long and bold”, some of us engaged in academic teaching adopt it because it highlights quite effectively the intertwining of communicative purposes with schematic structure, content, and style. Consideration of audience and purpose affect content and form of a given text whether oral or written. Swales’ ap-



proach to genre mostly informs Anna-Maria's teaching since she is mainly engaged in teaching academic writing as determined by the Language Centre's agenda.

Cleopatra's view of genre is closely related. She defines genre as a set of contextually-defined texts with their own rhetorical characteristics addressed to a narrowly-defined audience. Genre embodies the successful relationship between discourse and culture. It is a construct defined by both its content and form, but, because it is dynamic, its features cannot be narrowly defined. Genres then are a compilation of loose formal conventions. It is also recognized that some texts can be hybrid texts belonging to more than one genre simultaneously. More succinctly, Marina defines genre as referring to types of discourse which may vary according to subject and the purpose of text in the particular context.

At this point, we can report the views of four language teachers working for the school of English, department of theoretical and applied linguistics, Aristotle University, where English 'Language Mastery I/II' are required courses offered in the first two semesters of the study program. These teachers are not all specifically trained in discourse analysis and genre theory, but they are all aware of the significance of the generic type in their English language teaching. Most of them will also organize their teaching modules around genres. We report their views as representative of qualified teachers in the field, bearing in mind that they do not necessarily (or generally) reflect the views of instructors in other fields of learning and other departments.

*English Language Instructor<sub>1</sub>* (MA in Education, UK; PhD in ELT, Aristotle University; native speaker of English): "‘Genre’ is, of course, a French word which has been borrowed by English speakers. To me it means ‘of that type’. But it is used as an umbrella term, so that we can distinguish between oral ‘genres’ and written ‘genres’ and between different media for communication of ideas such as the novel or film. By this I mean that within the broad umbrella of written and oral genres, there are other sub-groups, each of which we can refer to as genres, which for me means a ‘tool for communication of a particular type’. These different genres are distinguished by the conventions they use, the register they use and the style that they use. Now there are also new genres both for communication and teaching – such as blogs, twitters, moodle etc."

*English Language Instructor<sub>2</sub>* (critical discourse analyst; PhD in discourse analysis, University of Lancaster): "A genre is a way of doing things (e.g. Fairclough, 1992). It ‘occurs in a particular setting, that has distinctive and recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure and that has particular and distinctive communicative functions.’ (Richards and Schmidt, 2002, p. 224). To that, I would also add the established participants, the content, the level of formality and whether it is spoken or written. Of course, not all instances that fall within the same genre will have the exact same structure or purpose. In fact, there can be more than one communicative purpose in the same genre. On top, a genre can be embedded within another one, and hybrid genres do exist."

*English Language Instructor*<sub>3</sub> (UK trained; PhD in ESP, Aristotle University; native speaker of English): “At times, influenced by older views of genre, it is what I now see as ‘organizing principles’ of a text. In such a view, describing, narrating, building an argument and so on can fall under the term ‘genre’. The influence of ESP brings out the idea that genre is the text associated with a topic. So there is the genre of medical, of business, of academia, etc. Later views, that follow a more Hallidayan line, take genre to be the whole of the way a piece of text is presented in order for its purpose and important content to be clear so that the text achieves the aims the writer has in mind.”

*English Language Instructor*<sub>4</sub> (PhD in ELT, Aristotle University): “Genre is the style adopted when a person expresses oneself in writing. However, this does not exclude other modes of expression in art, music, painting, or even dance/choreography.”

### 7.3.2 Theoretical perceptions of genre

A more theoretical interest in genre theory (also reflecting Eliza’s perceptions of genre) may stem from the belief that knowledge of the generic type is instrumental in meaning-generating and meaning-making, both at the production end and at the reception end, and, indeed, from its pivotal role in language (utterance) interpretation. So this interest is rather more theoretical than that of the language instructor’s. But it is only fair to appreciate that all methods and approaches in the applied (social) sciences are firmly grounded in theoretical perceptions of issues, which are later made more practicable within specific applied fields of knowledge.

Knowledge of genre encapsulates quite a lot for the producer of the text, be it oral or written: What is the social situation? Who is it addressed to? What is its purpose of production? What are the circumstances (the author’s relation to the addressee)? How does author/speaker draw on previous texts within similar circumstances (intertextuality), etc? Similar questions are raised at the reception end of utterance or text interpretation in the field of pragmatics. It is true that more weight has been placed on interpretation rather than production over the years for obvious reasons. However, both production line and reception end are equally important, especially as readers/hearers of texts need to assess mental states and, more particularly, intentional states of their producers (pivotal for accessing the subtext, too). In this context, it is no surprise that the notion of ‘communicative purpose’ has gained a privileged position in determining genre. On the other hand, we need to be aware of the distinction between communicative intention (tied up to the purpose of the text) and informative intention (cf. Wilson & Sperber, 2004).

But what is genre? Firstly, we may decide that we make no distinction between discourse type and genre (documented in the literature). Secondly, we may also

decide that we make no distinction either, between text and discourse, and consequently between text type and discourse type. But to obliterate a distinction between the two (not always practicable in our view), we need to think of texts as always embedded in their social contexts. This embedding will in effect turn a text into discourse. With this proviso, we can view 'genre', 'discourse type', and 'text type' as equivalent terms. Genre has been defined, mostly in literature, in terms of the literary type (fiction, poem, etc.), but also in terms of its subject matter, journalese, advertising discourse, etc. It has also been described as distinct types according to purpose, such as descriptive, expositive, argumentative, instructive, narrative. This classification of genre mostly relies on feature-analysis; for instance, it has been shown that narrative genre entails the steady use of the perfective that narrates the main events while the imperfective is used to background information that is ancillary to the main thread of the narration of events (description of circumstances in subordinate clauses, etc.). On the other hand, the argumentative discourse type abounds in the use of imperfective predicates that are mostly used for backgrounding information in narratives, but also for eternal truths and law-like statements, and views (often taking the form of 'truths') presented in argumentation. All these classifications assume a clear distinction between homogeneously defined types; this is not true, however, as has been widely established in the literature. Discourse types may intermingle to a great extent, and produce hybrid ones or mixed genres, such as UK university prospectuses, which border on advertising discourse (Fairclough, 1993; Bhatia, 1997, 2000), or narratives intermingled with evaluations and argumentation (Labov, 1972), but it is right on the whole to assume generic types that act as 'guidelines' both at the production and reception end.

A more particular take on genre (or discourse type, as we would call the generic type) focuses on its social and 'hermeneutical' function (the latter term attributed to Eliza's approach by critics, e.g., Unger, 2006), as analyzed in Kitis (1999). Kitis's approach originates from an appreciation and adaptation of Gricean pragmatics and the need to incorporate it into situative discursive events or types of written/oral language interpretation. The functional utility of this notion of genre will cater to coded text but also extend to implicit and inferred meanings generated in discourse. We could define generic types as falling directly into generic or archetypes of social events or 'activity types' (Levinson, 1978). We have proposed the principle of Global Relevance and claimed it to reign supreme in each particular social event type enjoining distinct discourse types appropriately falling within social situation types, defining goals and other parameters (Kitis, 1999). All other Gricean maxims follow suit the application of the maxim of Global Relevance and have a complementary, but not primary role. So Global Relevance is a relevance of a social nature underlying coherence relations and explaining how a text hangs together and fits into its social context. This generic knowledge is manifested, and reconstructed each time it is applied, both in production and reception lines.

In more practical terms, that is in terms of teaching, we propose that for each type of discourse, we need to isolate three levels of analysis: first, the level of the

content or what can be called the propositional level or ideational level (Hallidayan approach) at which information is conveyed (What is it about?). Another most important level is what has been called the metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005). This level focuses mostly on the rhetorical features that are employed each time. But rhetoricity needs to be seen at two levels, too. One may correspond to what Halliday called the interpersonal level at which speakers/authors and hearers/readers assume roles and construct identities in their communicative act. This is the level at which roles are enacted and speech acts are performed. The textual level is the third level at which various strategies and rhetorical features materialize in the language (see Hatzitheodorou, 2008). These various levels are not insular in the linguistic means used, but rather criss-cross in interesting and complicated ways. But first and foremost, they need to be seen as integrated actional structures dominated or determined by the archetype of the social situation enacted each time (Kitis, 1999). Variations, reinforcements, enrichments, and any alterations will be meaningful only in light of the archetypal situation, which is stored in our memory as structured knowledge in the form of frames, schemas or scripts (Minsky, 1979; Widdowson, 1983; Schank & Abelson, 1977). Language teachers must have a working knowledge of how to identify levels, features, and rhetorical structures so that they can see the commonalities and diversities of generic types, and be able to teach them in a methodology that will profitably capitalize on this knowledge in an implicit way and for the benefit of the student.

### 7.3.3 Impact of genre perceptions on teaching practices in higher education

The authors of this report as language instructors are very much influenced by an analysis of genre geared to the teaching of academic writing or of English for specific/academic purposes. Swales's theories are an obvious and major inspiration in this respect, but viewing genres as manifestations of "discourse communities" (Bizzell, 1992; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995) also contributes to more efficient teaching. On the other hand, we may choose not to ascribe to any particular school of genre in our teaching. Whether having read Kress (1988), Fowler (1989), Swales (1990), or Abercrombie (1996), we have probably come away with no one definition of genre as there is none. Our reading has imprinted upon us that scholars have attempted a systemization of genres that seem to comply up to a point before they break loose again and defy any formulization. Even when texts are grouped together, they tend to break free and be themselves. It is similarities as much as differences within a genre that make a genre what it is. So it would be fair to note that we don't draw explicitly our understanding of genre from any particular 'school' or theory of genre, even though in our teaching experience Swales' theory has been the major influence.

While genre theory and genre appreciation underlies and informs our language teaching, it is not taught explicitly as a theory except, perhaps, at departments of languages and literatures. For example, at the department of English language and literature of the University of Thessaloniki, genres are taught in the module of

discourse analysis, a course taught (by Eliza) to prospective language teachers of English while at the equivalent department in Athens two relevant courses within the curriculum are ‘Academic Discourse’ and ‘Genres in English’, both following a genre-based approach (Ifantidou, 2011). Such courses are geared towards advancing students’ meta-pragmatic or meta-discursive awareness and, consequently, their skills in the field. Similar courses can be offered at times in other similar modules in the humanities across departments and universities. But even in this module, we use a hands-on approach and try to rationalize students’ instinctual responses to text types and discourse types (our personal experience and Ifantidou, 2011). In fact, we try to teach students the various levels of language analysis since these students in their vast majority will be called to teach English in their professional lives. They are taught how to recognize distinctive features of generic types, appreciate their significance in creating the genre or specific discourse type, isolate those features that are more specific to particular genres, and on this basis attempt to categorize texts. For our purposes, we use a features-based account, but we also try to make students aware of their own implicit knowledge in the field, intertextual issues, etc.

At the Centre for Teaching Foreign Languages of Aristotle University, a unit whose mission is to foster mainly academic English for students across all departments, and also teach other advanced courses in foreign languages, lecturers prepare their own materials according to students’ needs. In English for academic purposes (EAP) courses, for instance, Hatzitheodorou’s (2008) proposal for a rather radical, but functional, framework incorporating both relevance theory (Wilson & Sperber, 2004) and Hallidayan levels in teaching academic writing, is put to use with noticeable results. In general, in language classes or in discourse analysis modules there is an effort to apply a pragmatic notion of genre trying to sensitize our students to various text types that are part of their “disciplinary cultures” (Hyland, 2004). The general perception seems to be that the texts ‘speak for themselves’ and it is through them, working backwards, that lecturers might point out some systemization of features to students, but without insisting that they ‘learn’ them in any objective or theoretical sense. In other words, where such courses are included within the curriculum, lecturers try to equip students with the performance skills in the field, both as producers and interpreters.

## **7.4 Higher education and language policies**

### **7.4.1 Official languages in Higher Education**

As noted, higher education institutions in Greece are either public or private. The former enjoy higher prestige and are sought after by students. As Greek is the official language of the Greek state, this is also the language of instruction at all public higher education institutions, except for the International Hellenic University, whose official language is English. Since its constitution as a national state, Greece has been a country with an overwhelmingly homogeneous population,

and Modern Greek is homogeneously spoken throughout the country except for some minor pockets of the population whose mother tongue can be one other than Greek. Kitis (1993, also available online on Kitis' homepage) surveys the linguistic landscape of Greece with a focus on multilingualism and education. However, the linguistic situation has somewhat changed since 1993, due to the influx of immigrants over the last two decades, and more recently through Turkey from countries with severe problems, with consequent changes in the educational system (boost classes in the Greek language, remedial Greek, etc.); the educational system tried to adapt to this new situation and accommodate the immigrant population's special linguistic needs in primary and secondary education. Moreover, even though the constitution of the Greek state dates back to the 19th century, northern parts of Greece (Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus) were not liberated from Ottoman dominion and annexed to the Greek state until early in the 20th century when a population exchange took place resulting in ethnic and linguistic homogeneity.

Languages other than Greek may be used for teaching and assessment in foreign language departments of the University of Athens and the University of Thessaloniki. These are specifically dedicated to the study of those languages, their literature and culture, at an undergraduate and postgraduate level: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish. The extent of their use, however, may vary widely by department and university. English is the sole language used for both teaching and assessment purposes at the International Hellenic University (IHU). Indeed, IHU is Greece's first public university where programs are exclusively taught in English. English may be the language of instruction in particular departments and/or courses where the knowledge of English is considered to be a necessary qualification, e.g., department of journalism and mass communication. Additionally, some of the university departments provide courses in English especially for Erasmus exchange students (e.g., school of law, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; department of European and international studies, the University of Macedonia). When such courses are not operated, teaching faculty may give tuition on a one-to-one basis in English or other languages. Finally, at the centre for foreign language teaching at Aristotle University as well as at the equivalent center at the University of Athens, where languages for specific purposes are taught to students of various university departments, foreign languages are used for both instruction and assessment.

With respect to private higher education institutions, these are very often affiliated with British or American universities and are required to offer an English language or a bilingual program of studies. The latter includes courses that may be taught either in Greek or in English.



## 7.4.2 Other languages: the status of English in higher education

In state institutions Greek is the only language used for teaching and writing (with the exceptions stated above). Thus, when taking exams or writing assignments, students employ exclusively the Greek language. English is used only when postgraduate students wish to submit and publish papers in foreign language journals abroad. In the English departments at the University of Athens and the University of Thessaloniki, English is the only medium employed for teaching, assessment, assignments, research papers, projects, and theses. With respect to the other foreign language departments, the use of the respective foreign language may vary depending on the department and university. Finally, with regards to the Centres for Foreign Language Teaching where languages for specific purposes are taught, teaching, exams, assignments, and projects are all carried out in one of the foreign languages catered for by the particular institution.

However, the overwhelming majority of higher education students in Greece have good English, which they acquired either privately at institutes or in state education, as English is the most popular foreign language taught extracurricularly and is also available within the curriculum in state education throughout all levels, including higher education, where in most departments students are offered classes of advanced English (mostly EAP) that are organized by the highly qualified faculty of the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching. Moreover, most departments require applicants for MA and MSc programs to take exams in English proficiency. This exam or certificates of English proficiency is a prerequisite for students' admittance to postgraduate programs. Some departments participate in Erasmus Mundus programs. In such cases, foreign students receive teaching in the language agreed (often English), which on occasion maybe on a one-to-one basis; they are also examined in English; there are Mundus MA programs conducted in French, too. Erasmus undergraduate students have their exams mostly in English. English may be the sole official language of instruction and writing in the private institutions, which are, however, not recognized by the Greek State, as already stressed, even though most of them are accredited by foreign accreditation bodies.

## 7.5 Writing policies in Higher Education

### 7.5.1 Writing cultures: major genre types

Differences between universities and technological institutes do not seem to have any obvious impact on the type of genres used in the two types of higher education institutions. Even though higher education institutions have been centralized up to this moment, they are independent in designing their program of studies, selection of courses, teaching methodology, and means of assessment. In particular, each institution is expected to devise its own assessment procedures, this autonomy being delegated to each individual instructor; assessment may in-

clude end-of-term exams, various types of continuous assessment, oral presentations and projects, research papers, and diploma theses. Indeed, it is the instructor who will determine the type of assessment best fitting the course and its audiences. As expected, within this range of types of assessment there is variation on the exam genre. Thus, there may be exams based on the descriptive genre (e.g., replies to questions in literature and other disciplines), argumentative (critical), multiple choice, comprehension questions, oral exams and/or presentations, etc. The reality is that at the undergraduate level large class sizes compel instructors to adopt an end-of-term final exam rather than a continuous assessment method that would promote students' practicing of writing.

The types of genres practiced in private universities are assumed to be very similar to the ones of public universities, but there is no research to date to confirm this. Moreover, as the medium of assessment is English in most of them, it is only to be expected that there is a transference of students' writing skills from the Greek they acquired in high school to English writing as is the case for public universities. This transference may cause further problems as the pragmatics of writing in various genres need not always be transferable to any other linguistic culture. However, additional emphasis may be put on teaching writing in some of these private universities depending on subject matter (mostly in humanities) and class size, especially as classes are small. Instructors at those institutions are usually expected to follow the curriculum and assessment types set by the administration of the affiliated university.

### **Assessment genres**

The assessment/evaluation routines may vary greatly by course and institution. It is the prerogative of any instructor/faculty member to determine the kind of assessment. However, we could generalize and say that end-of-term exam is the main written genre. Such examination texts are produced in timed situations where students' access to resources is generally very limited. Research papers and projects are other forms of assessment but these are not generally adopted as the size of student audiences in most universities and university courses is quite large. When this type of assessment is chosen (called '*ergasia*', literally meaning 'work' but considered to be the equivalent of 'seminar paper'), supervision and evaluation of student writing are carried out by faculty members. Furthermore, students may do some writing in class in the form of note-taking or they may be required to do in-class short quizzes, called tests ('*test*'). There is no tutorial system at undergraduate level in higher education except in applied sciences and medicine, where students work in labs and clinics. Students are mostly prone to copious in-class note-taking while at some departments (mainly in humanities) there are specific courses of research methodology, but not all students can take these courses. Out of class academic writing practices may include short writing activities or short exercises and quizzes that may or may not be assessed. In some courses students are given the option of a long written assignment ('*ergasia*', seminar paper) in lieu of the final exam, but this type of assessment is realistic only with the prospect that not many students opt for this type of assessment. All the above types of assessment, both written assignments



and in-class team work, are considered to form part of both learning and assessment.

At the master's level, with student numbers permitting, assessment is drastically changed to continuous assessment, primarily based on written papers (*'ergasia'*) and long projects, in-class presentations (*'parousiasi'* meaning 'presentation'), but also mini-research papers and in-class quizzes (*'tests'*) mostly in combination with a long final assignment and/or final exams, or any combination of the above. Supervision of projects and research papers is conducted by faculty members and the evaluation of the final dissertation (*'diplomatiki'* diploma thesis) is carried out by a committee of faculty members. PhD theses (*doctorates*), which cannot be completed before the lapse of a three-year period, are very closely supervised primarily by the main supervisor, but also by another two members on the supervising committee. The genres used in the theses vary according to the main genres used in the special field, and the supervisor is in a way the final arbiter of the acceptability of the submitted written thesis (*'didaktoriki diatrivi'*, meaning 'doctoral treatise'), not just as content but also as written product. For the viva, PhD candidates present their work, usually in power point presentations and have to orally defend their thesis and results.

#### **Final thesis requirement**

The requirement for final thesis writing seems to vary by discipline. For example, engineering schools (including the departments of architecture, city planning, chemical engineering) require a long diploma thesis/project, called *'diplomatiki'* (in fact, this is the adjective for *'ergasia'* that has taken the form of a noun in the students' parlance, *'diplomatiki ergasia'* meaning 'diploma thesis'); this diploma thesis is required for graduation during the final fifth year of studies, and the school has resisted vehemently the Bologna guideline for reducing their studies to three years and the standardization attempt in this respect. A diploma thesis (*'diplomatiki'*) is not a prerequisite for graduation in other university departments. In some departments in some institutions, undergraduate students may be given the option of writing a long research paper, which will be one of their final year modules, and they may be assigned double the credits of other modules (diploma thesis *'diplomatiki'*, 12 ECTS). There may also be an option for a shorter thesis (6 ECTS) in lieu of a taught course. Both options presuppose the availability of a supervisor.

At the master's level, students are commonly required to also write a major final thesis *'diplomatiki'* (normally worth 30 ECTS), in addition to the assignments and/or shorter research papers (*'ergasia'*) for each course. Students are often required to make in-class PowerPoint presentations and present some topics of the literature or individual or team projects that they present in class or more publicly in seminars and workshops. This practice prepares them and gives them confidence for more public presentations in their later professional or academic domains. At the doctoral level, all students are required to write a dissertation, but at some departments they are also required to present their research progress in staff seminars regularly. All PhD dissertations and master's diploma the-

ses are filed in digital form and/or as hard copies in the libraries. Research findings of in-progress postgraduate studies are often aired in conferences, sometimes in collaboration with supervisors, and a fair number of them end up as published articles in various journals. Such publications are frequently in the English language, hence students' call for courses in EAP.

Both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, bibliography on certain topics and subjects is usually made available in the course's teaching platform or in the form of hard copies. Many instructors also upload a number of topics for assignments on their electronic platforms although students may choose their own topic, which can be adapted after consultation with the supervisor. Digital bibliography, including whole articles and even books in pdf format, is gradually becoming the norm for those courses that enjoy a comprehensive digital teaching platform. Universities in Greece have adopted Moodle, or are converting to it from their original e-class or blackboard learning platforms. In all cases, students are encouraged to conduct their own independent bibliographical research.

### **Disciplinary genres**

Disciplinary knowledge is acquired in the form of lectures given by faculty, subsequent reading in the field of study, through exams, and less often through written assignments such as research papers and continuous assessment; in fact, the latter are more conducive to learning than end-of-term exams as students have ample time to think critically, reflect and, therefore, better acquire disciplinary knowledge. Continuous assessment may involve assigned homework, a report, a literature review, a short quiz on assigned readings, etc. Besides the above text types that are used for evaluation and assessment, students gain disciplinary knowledge through note-taking and annotated reading. Thus, students familiarize themselves with the specific terminology of their field of study, but there is no further work on how to apply various genres in their field (e.g., how to draft a paper, a project, conduct an oral interview, make an oral presentation, etc.). In applied sciences, disciplinary genres are practiced orally in labs or in clinics, where students are pressed to participate under supervision.

Students may be taught disciplinary terminology in the foreign language of their choice at the university's center for foreign language teaching, even though this is mostly realistic with English, as the majority of students have very good English and can take more advanced courses in their disciplinary field; but some may opt to take another language, such as Italian, where courses on offer are less advanced. Those students proficient in English may also take courses in EAP offered by the university's Centre for Foreign Language Teaching. But such courses are scant in other languages and non-existent at centres for Modern Greek language teaching.

### 7.5.2 Operationalization of policies for the development of oral/written genres

In the context of higher education, as in many other educational contexts, it is important to ask the question of which agency, if any, is responsible for operationalizing language and writing policies and whose responsibility it is ultimately to cater to students' writing development in higher education institutions. As we know, in most American universities, there are language or writing centers working alongside actual classes in that they assist writing intensive classes, by welcoming upper-division students who need help with their academic writing and genre-writing, but also freshman, college English classes by instructing students on basic organizing principles of rhetoric (including teaching of structure, paragraph formation, punctuation, etc.). More recently, in the UK too, new centres have sprung up at almost all universities for the development of academic skills catering to the linguistic needs of their prospective students in pre-sessional courses and of their current students in in-sessional ones. This is a very active industry of fostering academic skills in their students developed mainly in recent years as the UK Higher Education system admits a high number of foreign students (cf. Russell et al., 2009).

On the other hand, since in higher education in Greece students are in their overwhelming majority native speakers of Greek, and as the linguistic medium in higher education is the Greek language, there are no pre-sessional classes to prepare students for academic discourses and, in particular, academic writing and listening skills as is the tradition in the UK, where there is a considerable intake of foreign students. In the Greek context, as has already been noted, students are expected to have mastered the skill of writing by the time they start attending university. Writing then is not a skill university instructors dwell on very much even though instructors are quick to point out that their students' writing abilities have steadily deteriorated over time.

There is an implicitly shared assumption that native speakership, in conjunction with tuition in writing in secondary education (high school), is all that is required to foster proficient use of various genres at university level and later in the workplace. Some disciplines in the humanities such as the English departments and other foreign language departments consciously offer freshman required courses on writing in English and in other respective languages, but there are no more writing classes in upper level classes. Moreover, the organization of writing classes is mostly motivated by the real need that writing has to be mastered in a non-native language. The problem is further compounded by the fact that students of public higher education institutions in Greece are not overall obligated to attend classes making any conscious attempt to promote writing extremely difficult. This situation is the result of oversized classes and the absence of a seminar or tutorial system, as has already been pointed out. But it is fair to hasten and add that instructors in foreign language departments, but also in the humanities in general, are acutely aware of the urgent need to foster good writing skills in their students in their native tongue, too, and work on the diversities and commonalities in the respective language cultures and genres. Some poetry workshops or thesis writ-

ing workshops attempt to address the problem and any interest upper level students may have in writing, creative or otherwise.

There are language schools for the teaching of Greek attached to universities; however, those schools or centers are committed to teaching the Greek language to foreign students wishing to pursue studies at universities in Greece or to Erasmus students who wish to acquire Greek but offering courses on academic skills in the Greek language targeting Greek students is not within their agenda. For example, to concentrate on the two oldest and biggest universities in the country, at Aristotle University, the school of Modern Greek language (<http://smg.web.auth.gr/wordpress/?lang=en>) is a unit that offers Greek language and culture courses to foreigners in Thessaloniki, Erasmus students, but also to Greeks living abroad. Equally, the other old and big university of the country, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, operates a Modern Greek Language Teaching Centre (<http://en.greekcourses.uoa.gr/>), whose brief is as follows:

1. The teaching of Modern Greek as a second/foreign language;
2. The certification of the level of knowledge of Modern Greek as second/foreign language;
3. The exposure of foreigners to various facets and themes of Greek culture;
4. Hands-on practical training of students of the master's degree program for the teaching of Modern Greek as a second/foreign language.

Quite clearly, neither of those centres or schools appear to have in their curriculum courses aiming to foster academic skills in Greek students. But this university, just like Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, also operates a center for teaching foreign languages and EAP.

The situation is not different in the International Hellenic University, where English is the medium of instruction and learning, and students are not necessarily native speakers. However, students are admitted to the IHU, amongst other requirements, also on the strength of a proficiency certificate in English, as all teaching is carried out in English; so, a high level of language proficiency is guaranteed. Nevertheless, apart from their academic advisors that will assist students with matters of terminology, and despite the expressed call for more specialized language teaching for academic purposes, there are as of now no such English courses, either pre-sessional or in-sessional, offered by the university.

On the other hand, the centres for teaching foreign languages of the two biggest and oldest universities in the country, Aristotle University in Thessaloniki and Kapodistrian University in Athens, are units whose mission is to teach students foreign languages and other advanced courses. They also wish to foster mainly academic English for students across all departments, as students opting for English already have high proficiency and have the expectation to acquire disciplinary academic skills in English.

All in all, public higher education institutions do not operate writing centers as the perception that acquiring writing skills needs specific resources and organization has not as yet been institutionally adopted, despite the acute awareness of its significance among individual academics. Earmarking resources and funds for this purpose is also a deterrent for putting such centers in place. At present students do not do much writing, and even when they do (write a thesis, for example), they are mostly left to their own devices and guided mainly by their supervisors who are experts in the discipline of the thesis as well as experienced writers themselves. As in many other cases in the Greek context, the individual steps in to counterbalance what is lacking at an institutional level; it is fair to note that many faculty members (like ourselves) have uploaded on their sites or electronic learning platforms specific guidelines for writing a thesis, information on copyright infringement, etc., which students can use as a resource in their assigned writing. We can also add that in pedagogical departments, components on school and academic genres are often included within modules on literacies. But all this does not amount to any systematic program aiming at fostering genre competence in the context of higher education.

On the other hand, centres for foreign language teaching at universities, and more specifically branches for English language teaching, often undertake part of the task of teaching writing, but this is done mostly in English, as has been noted, and less so in other foreign languages taught at the centers. As such centers offer courses of advanced English to various departments, instructors may teach academic and other genres relating to their disciplines in English; but not all students are required to take such courses. This is possible primarily for English language courses, as students of various departments are rather proficient in English, as already noted, thus allowing English language instructors (who are well versed in teaching writing/oral genres) to teach various disciplinary genres rather than remedial English. In effect, it may be that such courses are very similar to some courses offered at the CAPLITS (Centre for Academic and Professional Literacies) of the institute of education in London, a center specifically designed for teaching academic writing in educational settings (<http://caplitswritingcentre.ioe.ac.uk/>). One of the authors (Kitis) spent over a week in 2010 familiarizing herself with their curriculum and policies while she was vice-director of the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching at Aristotle University.

Private higher education institutions offer freshman composition classes; they promote writing, and also attempt to safeguard against plagiarism, through various committees such as Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), and Committee for Academic Integrity (CAI) respectively. Active support for writing is also offered in such institutions through writing centers, whose goal is to advise, help, and create conscious writers.

### 7.5.3 Challenges in moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education

Students are expected to know how to write as they move from secondary education to higher education. High school students have always had to write compositions, but it was only after 1987–88 that a new course titled ‘Composition’ (*Ekthesi*) made it into the school curriculum. For the first time ever, students worked on the paragraph as a textual unit and came across terms like “thesis statement” and “topic sentence.” Also some mention was made of text types. Then in 2003 the term composition gave its place to the term Modern Greek Language. The students were introduced to the study of paragraphs, essays, and summaries by way of teaching them the major rhetorical modes of exposition along with some types of texts depending on the students’ age. In junior high school (*gymnasium*, 12–15), for example, students were taught how to write out an application while in *lyceum* (15–18) students were introduced to more sophisticated text types such as news items, news comments, biographies, memoirs, book reviews, etc.

In higher education, end-of-term exams concentrate mostly on subject matter rather than form; this reality, therefore, does not expand on students’ knowledge acquired in high school about text types and the contexts surrounding. As repeated above, there has been a tacit and pervasive assumption that by the time they enter university, students are linguistically competent and have mastered various genres. This confidence is growing as there is a rising awareness now, even among the so called hard science faculty that our students need further training in mastering proficient genre use.

## 7.6 Genres and writing practices

### 7.6.1 Best-known and most frequently used genres in higher education

#### Written genres

The most common genres used in almost all disciplines are summaries, abstracts, literature reviews, and research articles. Abstracts, for example, may have different forms in different disciplines (research article abstracts in the discipline of mathematics are only two lines long) or they may be similar (abstracts with headings appear both in medical and legal journals). A lab report is obviously preferred in the sciences departments, but the skill of summarizing that is necessary for writing the results of an experiment is one that is necessary in all disciplines. In other words, certain writing skills (such as summarizing, paraphrasing, synthesizing ideas or information) are prerequisites for most disciplines but may be put to use for different text types (i.e., a lab report, observation notes, a book or film review, etc.).

Instruction in higher education is mostly lecture-based. This teacher-centered model is sometimes interspersed with questions on the part of the teacher and answers from students. In general, the most frequently used written text is the end-of-term exam in all disciplines. Note-taking, accompanied by handouts, is another frequently used genre in higher education. With respect to particular disciplines, the humanities and social sciences prefer argumentative and/or descriptive essays while other disciplines, such as the sciences, may prefer multiple-choice tests. The sciences departments and the school of engineering prefer reports and projects; the schools of medicine and dentistry mainly produce medical histories.

The main writing genre that involves active engagement by the student is the assigned paper or seminar paper (*'ergasia'*) that has to be prepared at home on the basis of bibliography given by the instructor in class or individually or as researched by the student. However, apart from the specific departments requiring for graduation this kind of work in greater length and depth of research, which is then called the diploma thesis (*'diplomatiki'*), a relatively small number of students will opt to do such a major thesis in their final year as this is not required by other departments, but rather offered as an option in lieu of one or two other courses, provided a supervisor is available. Nevertheless, in some courses at the undergraduate level, students are given the option to write an assigned paper (the equivalent to the 'seminar paper') on the assumption that only a few students will take up this option.

As already noted above, the situation at the postgraduate level is totally different, where writing up papers and conducting mini research projects is the norm rather than the exception.

### **Oral genres**

The use of oral genres varies depending on the department and course. Exams and presentations are the two main oral genres. Oral exams may be the only form of assessment for a course or they may supplement end-of-term written exams. Oral presentations can be a component of university courses or research projects students participate in. In some courses there may be a demand for field research, carried out in teams, which is then presented in class. In some other cases, the odd inspirational instructor may organize a colloquium with presentations of their students' work that can be also attended by a broader audience.

Students can also engage in discussions on topics set by teachers, particularly in courses that are not only lecture-based. In most foreign language learning courses, developing oral proficiency is a major goal, and, therefore, students have more opportunities to interact orally. Techniques for oral presentations are also taught through models and examples in certain departments in the humanities, with criteria for assessment out in the open and up front so that students know what is expected of them. In pedagogical and teacher training departments, students may be required to practice teaching in various state schools or in experimental schools run by the universities. Further, in applied science departments, it



is expected that there is a greater call for the use of oral genres; for example, in medical school, students practice by the side of the patient and under the supervision of a qualified clinician. In this context, medical students have to actively participate in the process of collecting and collating data, taking patient histories, and reaching diagnoses.

### 7.6.2 Genre awareness and genre teaching

Explicit instruction on the conventions of academic writing is not normally part of the curriculum and may vary greatly depending on the course. Students may receive aid in writing by the course teacher or teaching assistants and/or the course material; additionally, specialized seminars or workshops may be offered so that students can gain knowledge of disciplinary expectations. However, students are expected to master the conventions of academic writing by practicing rather than through systematic training. In particular, we get the sense that students learn how to write at university by becoming familiar with what is common practice in the specific discipline and by recognizing what each instructor/lecturer requires of them.

All in all, there are no 'official' guidelines on how to approach a given academic genre. For example, students receive no instruction in how to respond to an exam question; this is probably because it is tacitly accepted that by the time they get to the university, students should have already acquired this writing skill throughout their high school years. Quite often then, students learn by trial and error. In general, university lecturers place more emphasis on developing students' knowledge of the discipline than on the genres associated with the discipline. However, it is worth repeating that explicit instruction on genres is implemented in specifically designed courses which are offered by foreign language and literature departments and centers for foreign language teaching.

In particular, the English departments in both main state Universities in Athens and Thessaloniki offer introductory writing courses called 'Language Mastery I' and II, where students are trained in note-taking (during lectures and while studying individually), paragraph writing, essay writing, comparisons-contrasts, descriptions, story-telling, argumentation, advertisements, summary writing, and oral presentations. In the department at Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, 'Language Mastery I' courses deal mainly with description and narrative, both written and oral. Thus, techniques for the creative writing genre are taught through models and practice exercises. Two other 'genres' used in teaching 'Language Mastery I' are songs and films, which give variety to lessons and also help to improve vocabulary. Use is also made of articles from newspapers and magazines for lexical enrichment and other purposes. Students may also bring articles to stimulate discussion. Extracts from novels or short stories are used as examples of descriptive/narrative writing.

'Language Mastery II' deals mainly with the 'genre' of academic writing, which includes formatting conventions and rules regarding style, lack of bias etc., but also with the genre of advertising and the various techniques used in text and picture to persuade the audience. Students learn to analyze rather than describe and eventually succeed in reading between the lines (explicatures, implicatures, inferred meanings). They also become conversant with multimodal texts, preparing them for further specialized courses in film and media studies. Equally, at the department of English language and literature of the university in Athens (there are only two such departments in the country), there is a wide range of courses within the curriculum geared to fostering academic linguistic skills: 'Academic Discourse' is offered within the four-year studies program aims to familiarize students with the language of spoken and written academic texts so that students develop the skills needed for the comprehension and production of academic discourse, while 'Genres in English' is another course offered interchangeably, dealing with various media genres, particularly newspapers and magazines, which aims to acquaint students with the structure and the language of these genres (see Ifantidou, 2011). They also offer courses in planning and conducting research and also in writing theories and practices. Similar courses may be offered within the curriculum by other foreign language departments. For instance, the department of French at Aristotle university of Thessaloniki offers courses in 'Text analysis and production in Greek, I/II' and 'Academic writing techniques' as well as 'Creative writing'.

The Centre for Foreign Language Teaching at Aristotle University uses a variation of text types to foster in students the idea of contextualized discourse such as summaries, abstracts, reviews, expository technical essays, reports, etc. Moreover, new genres are generated by new technologies, and students are expected to familiarize themselves with them. Many faculty members use electronic platforms, which are interactive to a certain extent, for uploading teaching materials, quizzes, or even the occasional exam, etc., and for communicating with their students. Several such platforms are made available at almost all universities. Occasionally, courses are offered either centrally by computer services or locally by library services to help students familiarize themselves with the methodology and the new genres involved.

To refer to a specific example of practice, we report below on our teaching of genres at the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching at Aristotle University, which runs courses on 'English for Specific/Academic' purposes. Our aim is to sensitize students to various genres and thus curricula have a genre-based orientation. For example, the English for law syllabus incorporates legal cases, court decisions, case summaries, moot courts, etc.

The humanities and the social sciences as well as the sciences to a lesser extent ask their students to produce essays in which they discuss and analyze relationships, ideas, and meanings. Before the finished product is handed in, students produce notes, stories, and summaries when attempting to describe or argue their case. Typical assignments also involve an oral presentation on a descrip-

tion, a narration of a story, an argumentative topic, and an analysis of an advertisement. There are also written and spoken exercises both in class and at home (before the written and oral assessed assignments) where students practice the aforementioned genres.

Raising the awareness of students about how texts work is also very important. A list of features can be provided to be checked off. This list can be used to compare particular 'kinds' of genre or to compare how writers dealing with the same genre build it in different ways. Such awareness techniques allow for writing exercises of the kind: 'Take a text in one genre and rewrite in another or with another purpose'. What might also be picked out are features to do with text flow and how these differ between writing cultures. (Greek vs. English for features such as 'hedging', transitions, etc.).

### **Sampling how we foster writing competence**

*Sample from literary courses:*

Some typical essay-oriented assignments from the English department are the following:

- a. "The comic and the tragic are mutually exclusive, therefore, to mingle them is to add to the meaning of each." Discuss the relationship between comic and tragic form in any one of the following: King Lear; The Changeling
- b. "For Freud, dreams are the expression of wishes unacknowledged in waking life. Like a dream, fantasy reveals the inner life of the individual." How valid do you find a psychoanalytic reading of Gothic (or "fantasy") novels? Answer this question with specific reference to all three novels read in this course, giving examples from the texts wherever possible.

*Sample from language courses:*

In 'Language Mastery I', one of the instructors uses the Suzanne Vegas song 'Luka' for multiple purposes: first a gapped version of the lyrics is used and students have to give possible alternatives to fill the gaps. Students then listen to identify the actual words. Finally, as homework the students hypothesize about the kind of person Luka is and they write a descriptive paragraph describing his character. These paragraphs are put through a cycle of assessment from peers, themselves, and the instructor, using predetermined assessment criteria. In this way, students profit from reading each others' work and also learn to assess and evaluate in a way that is different from the teacher-led assessment they are used to. Films are also used in this class including 'The Queen' and 'The Devil Wears Prada', which stimulate follow-up discussion about character, attitudes, traditions, and fashion.

In 'Language Mastery II', students watch 'Billy Elliot' and 'The Full Monty', with pre-viewing questions, while-viewing questions, and post-viewing questions. Sometimes there is group writing on some of the themes which emerge from the films such as friendship, loyalty, humour, criminality, prejudice, gender, etc. Students sometimes make use of extracts from films in their oral presentations. In

particular, the ‘Language Mastery’ courses, provided by the school of English (department of linguistics), train students in writing different text types (narration, argumentation, summary writing, etc.).

The instructors who teach at the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching use various text types to familiarize their students with equally varying situations and their respective texts and assist them in understanding discourse in its functional settings. Such understanding is commensurate with accentuating the rhetorical devices and the lexical and syntactic choices students have to make in order to communicate their message in the foreign language. Some typical assignments from the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching include one from the school of engineering and one from the school of dentistry below:

*Sample from Engineering*

a. You are an engineer working for ‘Home Company’ and have to write an email to Contractor A, the company that has been contracted to build a PSA unit at your plant. After revising the emails studied in class (lexical choices, syntactic structures, collocations, terminology, etc.), email Contractor A that they can’t be paid unless their start-up engineer stays on to complete a particular task on site.

Suggested words to use: payment, invoice, inform.

*Sample from Dentistry*

b. A patient has been given an appointment to have a tooth extracted under a general anesthetic. What instructions should be given? Explain why each is important. Briefly describe how you would care for the patient once the tooth is extracted until the patient is ready to go home.

In a course offered to law students by the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching, special emphasis is placed on teaching various text types associated with law (i.e., court decisions, case summaries, etc.).

**Genres, intertextuality, and plagiarism**

Genres are not insular but rather abut on each other in various ways relating to lexical, structural, or rhetorical features. Indeed, we may talk of compositional genres (not related to music) rather than typical ones as the one type may benefit from loans from another. Therefore, texts do not intermingle only within the same type (genre) in a vertical dimension (time/historical axis), but also across various genres on a horizontal dimension. Intertextuality, then, may be defined both vertically and horizontally. Following Kristeva’s (1989, p. 989) claim that “the text is [...] a productivity [...] a permutation of texts”, we view intertextuality as a dialogue of texts. As such, intertextuality can potentially be present in every disciplinary genre and is immensely beneficial for the promotion of research and knowledge. The big issue in academia, however, is how intertextuality is put into practice, namely, how we cite and use the sources we fall back on. To the best of our knowledge, there is no specific research on this issue in Greece, but a lack of knowledge of right use of sources can be anticipated. Hence, we expect issues

of copyright infringement. “Using your own words” is a motto that university students are made aware of. Still, issues of plagiarism are dealt with only within the frame of courses on teaching research methodology; such courses are, unfortunately, few at university level.

Until quite recently, universities in Greece did not seem to have an ethics committee, and, if they did, it was rather inactive. Except for the Open University, university sites did not include any advice on the issue of copyright and the risks of plagiarism to safeguard their students’ interests. However, as often is the case, faculty members have been ahead of their institutions and in their electronic learning platforms, and some of us have included specific links and advice to brief students on the risk of committing, although most often inadvertently, plagiarism. This situation has now changed and universities offer their faculty the use of various plagiarism checkers and software (s.a. Ephorus) to help us check on copyright infringement in students’ research.

### **Textbooks on academic writing in Greece**

To the best of our knowledge, while there is an abundant bibliography in Greek on essay writing for secondary education, also uploaded on the relevant Ministry’s site, there are scarcely any books on academic writing in Greek for tertiary education although these are definitely needed. References cited in the bibliography are some of the books used for classes on academic writing in English at university level. In addition, teachers of English for specific/academic purposes and English department lecturers have compiled booklets/class notes on academic skills in English which they use in their courses. However, most language instructors and faculty members are either competent or proficient in English, and it is assumed that they resource the abundant bibliography in the English language.

## **7.6.3 From academic genres to genres used at workplaces**

Regular classes and pilot classes run by the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching at Aristotle University are genre-based. Some of these pilot classes were designed after the instructor conducted a needs analysis by asking professionals rather than students as the latter cannot fully anticipate what needs the workforce expects them to fulfill. Disciplines in the humanities, with a focus on teaching, offer classes, such as curriculum design and test design, which future professionals will find helpful later in the workplace. When it comes to engineering departments, however, the complaint often voiced by industry is that higher education does not sufficiently prepare graduates for the demands of the workplace. Engineers, for example, are not familiar with various text-types required of them when they work for plants, such as how to write reports and certificates related to the completion of tasks and full-scale jobs. At some universities (e.g., Aristotle University), career services, liaising between the university and the market, often organize sessions familiarizing graduating students with various genres required

by the workplace such as CV writing and interview behavior codes. These career services have faculty delegates to liaise with particular departments (one of the authors, E. Kitis, has liaised between the careers office and the English department for several years).

In the next section, we will briefly review the Bologna Process from the point of view of writing in Europe's Higher Education, and particularly in relation to higher education in Greece, its awareness-raising and development of genre-writing processes, and subsequent or possible institutionalization procedures.

## 7.7 The Bologna Process in relation to writing

### 7.7.1 Part I: General

The first part of this section reports on the more general situation in respect to the Bologna Process, with a close eye on Greece's participation (or lack of it), registering the most relevant sources available mostly online after extensive research (citing all online references would be unrealistic due to their large number). In the second part, we record our perceptions of the interrelationship between the Bologna Process and the issue of writing practices as perceived nowadays in the broader background.

Launched in 1999, the Bologna Process is an initiative to transform education in Europe and create the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010. The declaration signed in Bologna in 1999 by 29 countries has now been signed by 46 countries. All signatory countries agreed to promote:

- Qualifications frameworks based on a three-cycle system
- Mobility of staff and students
- EHEA in a global context
- Joint Degrees
- Recognition of degrees across the EHEA
- The Social Dimension of Education
- Lifelong Learning
- Stocktaking

A Ministerial Conference is held biennially (1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012) and the Bologna Follow-Up Groups (BFUG), preparing the ministerial conferences, are held every six months. Consultative Members include:

- European Commission
- Council of Europe
- BUSINESSEUROPE
- UNESCOEPES

- European Centre for Higher Education
- EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education)
- EUA (European University Association)
- ESU (European Students' Union Council of Europe)
- ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)
- EI (Education International) – Pan-European Structure

According to '*The first decade of working on the European Higher Education Area. Vol. 1 Detailed Assessment Report, The Bologna Process Independent Assessment. Volume 1 Detailed Assessment Report*', devised by the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS), the International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel and ECOTEC, 44 countries have signed the Lisbon Recognition out of the 46 EHEA countries. Italy has signed the convention but has not yet ratified it. Greece has not yet signed the convention as admitted in the 2007 and 2009 Greek National Reports. The Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) is a multilateral legal framework designed to facilitate the international recognition of higher education qualifications and periods of study, and acted as a precursor to the Bologna Process.

One of the instruments mentioned in the LRC is the Diploma Supplement. The Joint European Diploma Supplement (DS) is a tool that can support transparency and recognition. The DS provides information regarding the level of the qualification, the type and status of the awarding institution, and the program followed by the applicant. Information regarding workload, contents, and results is provided together with important additional information (e.g., grading scale applied), thus easing the work of recognition authorities. According to national experts, Greece and Italy have not complied with the DS requirements even though they say they have in their national reports. Specifically for Greece, the 2007 Greek National Report mentions that "Law 3374 issued on 2/8/2005 among other issues regulated the establishment of the Diploma Supplement. Therefore, from the academic year 2006–2007 all students who will graduate successfully from Hellenic Higher Education Institutions will be provided with a Diploma Supplement issued both in Hellenic and English, automatically and free of charge. A Ministerial Decree has ensured that DS issued by HEIs is fully corresponding to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement Format" (15). Similarly in the 2009 Greek National Report it is stated that "Law 3374/2005 determined the issuing of a Diploma Supplement, based on the model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES, automatically and free of charge, both in Greek and in English. According to the above law the award of DS is obligatory for all HEIs"(30) (see URLs in references).

As far as Recognized Prior Learning (RPL) is concerned, which widens participation and access to higher education, Greece is listed among the countries where some initiatives for the development of national level regulations for RPL have been undertaken, but where they are not yet in use. Other such countries include:



Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Holy See, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine.

A study by the 'Education International Pan-European Structure: On the Occasion of the Bologna Process Celebration Conference' (March 2010), titled "Enhancing Quality: Academics' Perceptions of the Bologna Process", presents the findings of a study undertaken with 34 unions representing higher education staff across 26 European countries. It is a study of academics' perceptions of the implementation of the impact of the Bologna Process in their respective countries over the reference period 2005–2009, with an examination of how this has affected academics in particular, together with an appreciation of other ongoing reforms which are taking place in parallel to the Bologna Process, and which also impact on the daily lives and working conditions of academics. Greece does not figure in the table of respondent unions. In responding to the questionnaire sent to them the Unions indicate that while curricular reforms, the increase in courses taught in English, the diversification of programs, and the rise in accreditation processes are a direct consequence of the Bologna Process; other trends do not directly arise out of a direct influence of the Bologna Process. This is the only mention we have come across of English studies in our research in this respect, but there is no specific mention of writing practices and processes per se.

There have been three national reports prepared by each country (2009, 2007, 2005) and submitted to the Bologna Process. We have checked the Greek and the UK reports. They are technical reports evaluating the country's compliance with the Bologna Action lines and objectives. There is never any mention of writing, or any other skill for that matter, in any of these reports. According to the Greek report, Greece has organized one seminar titled "Putting European Higher Education Area on the Map: Developing Strategies for Attractiveness" (June 2006). However, we can note that a conference held in Ukraine in 2008, 'Teaching English Academic Writing in Ukraine: Problems and Prospects', mentioned the Bologna Process in one of the conference themes. The theme was the "Importance of teaching English academic writing in the light of the Bologna Process".

### **7.7.2 Part II: The impact of the Bologna Process on writing**

Firstly, it must be noted that Greek universities have resisted the government's various attempts to enforce the Bologna Process directive for a shorter undergraduate study program, not exceeding the period of 3 years. Consequently, they have not adjusted to the Bologna framework, and as yet most study programs span a period of 4 years consisting of 8 semesters, and in some cases, studies may span a 5-year period (engineering schools) or even a 6-year period (medical school).

As the Bologna Process does not explicitly touch upon academic issues pertaining to teaching skills in the classroom, it is hard to discern what impact, if any, the Process has had on academic writing. It is only indirectly that we can presume such an influence on writing in academia. If the Bologna Process has been the condensation of a general climate about enhancing the quality of education through the promotion of interdisciplinary training and transferable skills and creating flexible learning paths, then it has influenced writing practices even if only abstractly.

In the last decade in Greece, departments especially in the humanities (e.g. English departments, centres for foreign language teaching) have introduced various text-type writings, summary writing, reports, abstracts, reviews, technical essays (cf. Ifantidou, 2011). Other disciplines, which are more intent on teaching content, have yet to make the transition to incorporating writing in the curriculum. The most noticeable omission in the teaching of writing in Greece across the board in all departments is the fact that students are not encouraged to revise their writing. Writing is still treated as a product rather than a process one has to intently labor at. Class sizes are often forbidding for adopting an approach that would treat writing skills as a developing expertise, especially as a tutorial system is almost totally absent in the reality of Greek university.

The writing practices that have been introduced have not been the direct effect of processes like the Bologna Process or directives that have come down from Ministries of Education or other policy centers. They have been, however, the direct effect of changing practices explored by individual academics influenced by their own undergraduate/graduate studies at universities abroad and trained to listen to the workplace. This type of writing is the result of discourse springing from movements/philosophies in academia on both sides of the literature/linguistics divide, such as post-structuralism, phenomenology, pragmatics, discourse analysis, rhetoric, etc., which explore the interrelationships between things, people, ideas, and contexts. The teaching practices of individual academics and departments that arose from this climate, within the context of a European policy for greater unification and harmonization of education programs and degrees in higher education, may have partly initiated, but have definitely contributed to, processes like the Bologna Process, which in turn gave rise, albeit abstractly, to even more such practices. But these practices cannot be accounted for numerically.

Writing practices of individual academics have seeped up into the decision-making rationale of policy makers, and action lines like the Bologna Process have trickled down and affected day-to-day writing practices. This recursive influence indicates a top-down and a bottom-up approach, where it is hard to tell who influenced whom, policymakers influencing academics or vice versa.

## 7.8 Conclusion

Concluding our report, it is fair to note that in Greece's Higher Education system there is a lack of institutional units, centers, or resources (e.g., sites) run by, or attached to, the universities for fostering study skills, research skills, and academic skills in their students. Since universities are still centrally funded to a great extent, units, bodies, and all faculty and parties involved in the field must join forces to raise awareness in decision-makers and governing bodies that students' needs for 'peripheral' linguistic and academic skills, surrounding, or underpinning and propping up, their disciplinary studies, are vital for their academic achievement in their specific fields of study and specialisms. The administration and management of the centers for language teaching that employ highly-qualified competent linguists, familiar with the students' specific needs for academic linguistic skills across the board, lag well behind their lecturers' forward thinking and insight into students' needs. This is probably due to paucity of resources, lack of funding and appreciation of what needs to be done, combined with a reluctance to engage in any major reorganization of those units. On the other hand, foreign language departments, severely hit by the current financial crisis and cuts on funding, struggle to follow international trends in education reflecting their students' needs. Introducing new courses tailored to students' needs in relation to the broader graduate employment market is only a refreshing pocket in the whole student population of higher education, as are the courses in EAP offered by enlightened lecturers in language centers. All this needs to be changed, centrally instituted, and managed so that higher education can boast well organized and adequately funded language centers. Language centers need to become a vital part of the higher education institutional landscape in Greece.

Naturally, one might argue that in the Greek Higher Education context there is no acute need for such language centers since the majority of the student population are native speakers of Greek and the linguistic medium of their studies is the Greek language. However, this is a false perception as is widely acknowledged by tutors and lecturers across departments that their students' linguistic skills are quite poor, thus debilitating their academic achievement and that they need specific courses to equip them with the skills of academic writing, note-taking, lecture-listening, etc. as well as with research methodology skills and awareness of copyright issues. As we have seen, the curricula of schools or centers of Modern Greek are geared towards foreign or Erasmus students wishing to acquire the Greek language and they do not cater to the Greek student population and their academic needs. Language centers for foreign languages, on the other hand, were originally established with an aim to teach foreign languages to university students, and it is only owing to their lecturers' high qualifications and competence that greatly needed EAP courses are offered to students who already are sufficiently competent in the English language. However, such courses are not offered in the Greek language to enable students to cope with study demands and enhance their academic performance as students.

Moreover, both pre-sessional and in-sessional courses in academic English seem to be called for in the newly founded International Hellenic University, especially as the various departments' curricula need to be competitive in competently training their students so as to score high employment rates in the graduate market. It is, however, hoped that the IHU will soon introduce such courses within its curriculum as we are in a position to know that the governing body is aware of this need.

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## 8 Italy / By Irene Vogt

### 8.1 Introduction

One of the first writing guides and a real classic guidebook for thesis writing is the book published by Umberto Eco in 1977. Nonetheless, writing research in Italian academic contexts is generally quite rare. A sketch of recent university history of modern times could give some reasons for today's situation.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the *legge Casati* from 1859 tried to set the course for the following years. Casati, the minister for education, influenced by Humboldt, introduced the freedom of research and teaching, the freedom of studying for students (limited by curriculum) as well as an enlargement of traditional core subjects. The medieval degrees (*baccalaureus*, *magister*, and *doctor*) were transformed in one degree only, the *laurea*. Until today, concluding the *laurea* gives the title of *dottore*. The medieval territorial density of (also very small) once-prestigious universities in the north persisted until the 1970s when universities all over Italy and mainly in the south were founded.

The university reform that basically changed the educational system in modern times is the *legge Gentili*, the reform in 1923 under Umberto Gentili, philosopher and minister of education from 1922 to 1924. One of the aims is the reduction of access for universities, giving space only to the elite. Fascism impeded Gentili's will of promoting new didactic orientations in higher education and more autonomy and freedom for universities.

Until now, the Italian educational system is still affected by those laws and the importance of oral rhetoric competences that trace back to medieval times. After World War II, more than 60 different governments ruled the country. A long-term project in changing educational system was not practicable; only flexibility, creativity and public spirit, and geniality of single personalities still leads to top quality in Italian universities, and also as a consequence, to a very differentiated situation in today's higher education. The so-called Bologna reform (*riforma Berlinguer-Zecchino*) formally changed the structure of curricula, but the didactic inputs, the didactic style, etc., often remain the same as the personal staff.

The data collection from Eurostat in 2014 states that only 22.4% of the Italian people between 30 and 34 years of age are university graduates (cfr. <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>). In comparison to all other European countries, Italy brings up the rear. Moreover, over 230,000 students complete their bachelor's or master's studies at Italian universities every year. And these students also overcome the last obstacle for graduation: the defense of the thesis (*difesa della laurea*). How the degree holder gains the competence for academic working, reading, and particularly writing at Italian universities has not yet been systematically investigated. In the following chapters, I will present some benchmark data on the basis of various literature published until now, adding the results of my pi-

lot study at the universities of Pisa and Rome as well as information from various interviews with experts from different disciplines.

Describing the prevalent demands for writing in the educational system and localizing them in their contexts, it could be easier for university students of other countries to adjust themselves in the Italian university culture and tradition. Prior to describing the single genres and the development of linguistic competences in Italian language at academic level, I will give some insights into multilingualism in Italy, especially in higher education.

## 8.2 Multilingualism – national traditions and educational systems

### 8.2.1 The role of multilingualism in higher education and its connection to writing

The Italian law 482/1999 considers, next to Italian as the main official language, twelve minor languages with regional relevance. The languages are Albanese (50 municipalities mainly in the south and in the islands), Catalan (at Alghero, Sardinien), “Greece antique”, the so-called “*griko*” (in some municipalities of the regions Puglia and Calabria), Slovenian (in the border region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia), Croatian (in three municipalities in Molise), French (in the Aosta Valley), Franco-Provençal (in some valleys in the Aosta region, Piemonte, and Puglia), Occitanian (in some valleys of Piemonte), Friulan (in many municipalities of Friuli), Ladin (valleys in the provinces of Trento, Bolzano, and Belluno), Sardinian (in the island of Sardegna), and Germanic languages (in the South Tyrol, Trentino, some municipalities of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and Veneto as well as Aosta Valley and Piemonte). Other languages are considered by the UNESCO as languages, but are not claimed by the Italian state (Tani, 2006).

Italian is the primary language of higher education and is used for all teaching, research, and assessment within the 67 public and the 28 private (but state acknowledged) institutions of higher education (cf. <http://cercauniversita.cineca.it>). At the pontifical universities in Rome on Italian territory, several languages (Italian, English, German, Spanish, etc.) are accepted. But as they are not Italian universities, they will not be considered in this paper.

As Italian is not the only language used in higher education, there are some multilingual universities: The Free University of Bozen calls itself a trilingual university; for academic purposes, the common languages are Italian, German, and English. At the Università della Valle D’Aosta, language competence in French is part of the admission requirements although the written and spoken language at the university is mainly Italian. As at other universities, the proficiency in at least one additional language apart from Italian is necessary for receiving a degree (cf. law *Decreto 22 ottobre 2004, n.270*).



## 8.2.2 Foreign Languages in higher education, especially English, and its written performance

### English as L2 (L1?)

As described in the “Survey on Education Provision in English Language in Italian Universities” (CRUI [Conference of the Rectors of the Italian Universities] 2008), several universities offer degree programs for the different academic levels [first and second cycle degree programs (*Laurea triennale* and *Laurea Specialistica/Laurea Magistrale*), professionally-oriented post-graduate courses (*Master Universitario*), research doctorate (*Dottorato di Ricerca*), and winter/summer schools] in English language or single units in English language (for detailed data, s. CRUI (2008) Survey on Education Provision in English Language in Italian Universities Year 2007, p. 4–7.) as a consequence of the so-called Bologna Process (cf. CRUI 2008, 3). The number of the universities offering such courses oscillates between 8 and 34, depending on the higher education level and depending on whether only single units or the whole degree course are offered in English (see attachment 2). The bachelor’s and master’s level courses in English are most likely to be found in the faculty of economics while the PhD programs in English are mainly in the fields of physical and natural sciences as well as in medical and engineering fields. It should be mentioned, however, that in most faculties and universities, students don’t have to write papers or theses in English.

As far as I know, at the doctoral level it is generally accepted if the *tesi del dottorato di ricerca* is written in English. In some institutions for postgraduate studies, English represents the only working language; this holds true for the European University Institute in Fiesole, near Florence, a postgraduate and postdoctoral research institute for economics, history, law, political and social sciences, and it is funded by the European Commission through the European Union budget. It also holds true for the *Scuola di Eccellenza* “Scuola IMT – Istituzioni, Mercati, Tecnologie – Alti Studi – LUCCA”.

Other *scuole di eccellenza* accept PhD candidates in different common European languages (for the *scuole di eccellenza* see the answer to question 1.3). As they are open to international students, it is difficult to say whether English is L1 or L2. In most cases, it seems to be rather L2.

The Gelmini reform in 2009 provided an increasing number of English as L2 lessons at school at the expense of other L2 languages. Today, English lessons start during elementary school but may be held by any teacher, specialized or not, provided they took a special continuing education course.

### Other languages as L2

Inside the faculties of foreign languages and literature, students are sometimes used to writing seminar paper or reports, taking oral or written exams, and writing a final thesis in the L2 of their studies.

### Writing in general

Historically, Italian universities never focused on written language practices (cf. Dell'Aversano & Grilli 2009). Academic writing and writing competences were not seen as an independent aim of higher education. Exams were mainly oral in nature, and at the end of the 4-year degree course (*laurea*), the student had to write a *tesi di laurea* that could have sometimes the quantity (and quality) of a doctor-thesis (indeed, the appellation of “*dottore/ dottoressa*” is still awarded with the *laurea*; with the doctor thesis, one achieves the title of *dottore/ dottoressa di ricerca* and sometimes the thesis is partly or completely published. Not until 1984 was the “international PhD” introduced in Italy by law 287/1981. Still, something seemed contradictory about this introduction; there was no preparation for thesis writing, nor were there instructions in academic writing or writing practices that would provide students with the necessary language skills. Dell'Aversano and Grilli explain this contradiction with the traditional secondary education system, which until 1968 was reserved for a small elite and obviously guaranteed the rhetorical and written language competences. With the onset of mass education, the education system did not adjust to the increasing number of students from more diverse linguistic family backgrounds and their missing language skills. In the first two years of the PhD, a paper once a year is requested from PhD students in some faculties.

With the Zecchino-Berlinguer-reform (the national reform for the Bologna Process) the scenery has changed in some way: The length and the scope of the final thesis were more clearly delineated. The final exam of the first academic degree at the undergraduate level is now called *prova finale* (final exam) and has been downgraded to a level in which it does not require the student to “discover something new”). While this seems realistic, it still does not fill in the gap resulting from a lack of training in academic writing (for a critical view, see Dell'Aversano & Grilli 2009, p. 83–85).

It should also be taken into consideration that the landscape of Italian universities is very heterogeneous (cf. DAAD 2010, 14–16). The First writing centers were founded in the mid-1990s (e.g. Venice, Siena, Pisa), partly in the context of the “*Scienze della Comunicazione*” (communication Studies) departments. Their focus was more directed at the upcoming digital text worlds than on paper or thesis writing. In the “*laboratori di scrittura*” (writing laboratories), changing genres were studied and taught as the main subject (e.g., an interview was to be transformed in an article for a journal), but academic writing was no topic at all. The number of writing laboratories increased in the faculties of language and literature after the Zecchino-Berlinguer reform, but this time with a focus on the genre “summary” and on “functional writing”, sometimes on creative writing, but still not specifically on academic writing (cf. Cortelazzo 2007, p. 102). Dell'Aversano and Grilli point out how disproportionate and reductive the attention for the genre “summary” in the writing laboratories was as it does not lead to the kind of academic writing based on one's own ideas or on critical thinking (Dell'Aversano & Grilli 2009, p. 84–85). As described by Maistrello (2006) the teaching of writing in higher education gives attention to “objective texts” (e.g., genres like paragraphs, summaries, descriptions). Writing is still learned in an autodidactic man-

ner and if there are positive results, they are most likely based on imitation and on trial and error learning. If there is support for academic writing, it results from the initiative of a chair or a faculty. Only for the master's thesis (*tesi della laurea magistrale/specialistica*) does a text have to be produced that follows the lines of professional or research communication.

### 8.2.3 Types of higher education institutions and genres used

Apart from the Universities, the Italian Higher Education system has the following types of higher education institutions<sup>18</sup>:

- Nine *Scuole Superiori ad ordinamento speciale* or the so-called *scuole di eccellenza* with offers mainly for postgraduates and with a focus on research [Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane di Firenze, Scuola Superiore Santa Chiara di Siena, Scuola Superiore di Catania, Istituto di Studi Avanzati di Lucca, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna di Pisa, Istituto Superiore Universitario di Formazione Interdisciplinare, Istituto Universitario di Studi Superiori di Pavia, Scuola Internazionale di Studi Avanzati di Trieste] (cf. [http://www.ricercaitaliana.it/scuole\\_eccellenza.htm](http://www.ricercaitaliana.it/scuole_eccellenza.htm)).
- Three *Politecnici*, technical universities specialized for applied sciences in Milano, Torino, and Bari.
- Three *Università per Stranieri* ("University for strangers"), with degree programs for Italian language, literature, and culture addressed to international students (in Siena, Perugia, and Reggio Calabria).
- Eleven *Università telematiche*, which offer distance-studies based on e-learning (all of them are private institutions).

As already written, it is difficult to make general remarks for the situation in Italy as there is a large variety. However, these differences between the higher education institutions do not have a direct impact on the types of genres used. The *scuole di eccellenza* generally should have more prestige, but the ones with a longer tradition (for example, the *Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* (SNS) founded by Napoleon) have still more prestige than newer ones (e.g., the *Scuola Superiore di Catania* founded in 1998). While in the SNS, undergraduates and students with a first academic degree have to write at least one paper every year and can make use of a tutorial system, which other *scuole di eccellenza* don't (Furthermore, the *scuole di eccellenza* offer their programs mainly for the doctoral and postdoctoral levels.). In distance education, I suppose, there may be a more explicit explanation of the genres required.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: <http://www.study-in-italy.it/php5/study-italy.php?idorizz=2&idvert=1&lang=EN>.

Generally, Italy's education system is centrally organized though there are five regions with a special status (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Aosta Valley, Trentino-Alto Adige, and Sicily), guaranteeing more autonomy in legislation and administration. Some of these autonomous regions like the Valle d'Aosta, the province of Bolzano, and the province of Trento have the highest values for the per capita GNP<sup>19</sup>.

One of the aims of the law 240/10 (it is part of the Gelmini reform) was to increase the funding ("*fondo premiale*") for universities with high quality ("*atenei di qualità*"), thus creating a distinction between research universities and teaching universities. However, in the context of this reform, which has been intensely discussed and criticised in Italy, it has to be considered that it started mainly as an economic reform, and one of its main aims "attributing more funds" meant primarily to cut funds and redistribute parts of university funding to the 'virtuous universities' ("*università virtuose*"). Intensely debated at this context were the "international criteria" applied to classify the universities. As a result, many universities in the south, those founded in the 1970s, as well as the huge universities in Rome and Naples had to suffer from budget reductions while the university of Trento has turned out to be the winner with an increase of 10.69% in its public funding.

With several laws (amongst others Law 19.11.1990, n. 341) in the 1990s granting more autonomy to the universities the control and evaluation of the universities was reduced and handed over to the ANVUR, the National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (instituted with the law DPR of February, 1st 2010, n.76 and assumed office in May, 2nd 2011). The effects of this are not clear yet.

Assessment procedures are centralized only for schools. To guarantee fair and equal exams for the A-level, there is an exchange of teachers across the nation during the administration of tests in order to avoid subjective biases. Written exams in secondary education are standardized and since 1998 cover the following genres: "*tema*" (composition), "*analisi del testo*" (text analysis), "*saggio breve*" (short paper or essay), and "*articolo di giornale*" (newspaper article). The discussion about an inclusion of functional texts genre (interviews, letters, script, and others) is still going on.

For university exams, there is no centralized assessment procedure. The law demands a written thesis as part of the final exams for all university degrees (cf. Art. 11 of the *Decreto 22 ottobre 2004, n.270*). However, after receiving an academic degree and before entering the job market, graduates have to pass a state exam ("*esame di stato*") that is necessary to obtain a working license and to be includ-

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<sup>19</sup>The detailed data are available on the internet side of ISTAT:  
<http://www.istat.it/en/>

ed in the register of the different professional guild's province chambers. The dates of the state exams are coordinated at a national level, but assignments can vary as they are chosen by the board of university professors at the university where the exam is held. The genres used, however, should be similar. Once for the admission to school teachers there existed national-wide exams. For several years their reintroduction and the form of the reintroduction constitute a matter of debate; now (2012) they take place again.

#### 8.2.4 What is writing at your university used for?

The answer to this and other similar questions is based on talks with colleagues, on an unpublished survey between students of the Universities of Pisa and Rome made two years ago, and on my own experience at Italian universities.

Generally, writing is used for note-taking during lectures, for completing worksheets, for written exams (in-class, time limited, mainly knowledge-based), and for the “*prova finale*”. The first academic grade (mostly in form of a “*tesina*”, a kind of “composition with references to academic literature”) or the “*tesi*” for the second academic grade. In rare cases (faculty of philosophy, language and literature), other genres (report, journal article, review, summary, composition) were trained and are part of the final course grade.

In distance education the situation should be different but there is no conclusive knowledge about it.

#### 8.2.5 Final theses for graduation

Regarding the first degree: The national decree (*Decreto 22 ottobre 2004, n.270*) demands a “*prova finale*” (final test) for the first degree, but the modalities have to be described by the single “*ordinamento didattico*” (teaching/didactic regulations) (cf. Art. 11 of the *Decreto 22 ottobre 2004, n.270*). In the humanities, this results in most cases in a kind of small thesis (“*tesina*”, printed in A5 to differentiate it from the real “*tesi*”), but an oral exam may also be chosen instead.

Not all degrees (e.g., medicine and surgery, pharmacy, chemistry, and pharmaceutical technologies) have that kind of first degree. Such courses are still designed for 5 or 6 year programs.

Regarding the second degree (“*laurea magistrale*”): The same decree (*Decreto 22,n. 270*) describes the regulation for the second cycle and demands an original work, elaborated by the student under supervision (“*una tesi elaborata in modo originale dallo studente sotto la guida di un relatore*”).

The law does not describe the genre itself more precisely, not even whether it does or does not include non-written elements as the first degree could also conclude with a final oral exam. Mostly the single faculty or department decided for a final thesis; the single faculty or department may issue guidelines with a description of the characteristics of the thesis for first and second degrees (“*tesina*” or “*tesi di laurea*”). If not, the interpretation of the meaning of “thesis” depends on the academic community, represented by the examination board or the single supervisor.

In medicine and other science faculties, it can be a “*tesi sperimentale*” based also on own experiments or a “*tesi compilativa*” based on academic articles. In language faculties, it could be a translation with a reflection or some kind of comment.

Regarding the third degree: The “*diploma di specializzazione* (DS)” (specializing diploma), which aims at a professional education in applied studies according to European norms. The kind of assessment used is not fixed. The DS courses train for specific careers, often careers with regulated access, for example the former “SISS”-Schools instructed for school teachers. DS-courses offer also the advanced training for archaeologists and art historians for working at the inspecting authorities (*Sovrintendenze*). In medicine a (DS-)specialization is needed in one (paediatric, orthopaedic, psychiatric) area; in psychology the DS is needed for a licence to carry out psychotherapy.

The “*dottorato di ricerca* (DR)” (the addition “*di ricerca*” distinguishes the PhD from the title of “*dottorato*” on the second degree level); there exist two ways of obtaining it: a) through a monograph which is most common in the humanities and b) by cumulative publications mainly used in the sciences. Another way that applies to the art and engineering disciplines would include non-written elements such as pieces of art or engineering.

If a faculty or department offers guidelines for thesis writing, the assignment should be quite clear for the students. If not, they may make use of one of the common textbooks on academic writing (see section 2.8). Anyway, for undergraduate theses it is rather difficult to establish such norms as differences between the various thesis genres are hard to understand and not well established.

There is a marked difference between undergraduate and graduate thesis: the undergraduate theses (*prova finale*) does not necessarily need a hypothesis; they may be descriptive in contrast to the postgraduate theses. The difference between the second and the third theses, the “*tesi di laurea*” and the “*tesi di dottorato*”, is not as significant; the “*tesi di laurea*” has no limit of pages and no limit in time, and the same conditions are valid for the “*tesi di dottorato*”. They differ sometimes in quantity and sometimes also in quality of work. But most of all the difference between the “*tesi di laurea*” and the “*tesi di dottorato*” lies in the different conditions of the student’s life context and experience in research.

### 8.2.6 Student's writing development in higher education

There is no explicit responsibility for students' writing development, except for the supervisors who are responsible for the "*tesina*". In some faculties of communication science and literature or languages studies, tutorials are introduced which may be understood as structured courses or writing laboratories (as described in 1.2) with a focus on creative or functional writing. Lately, also courses on academic writing for thesis writing may be found. In other faculties, no need is seen for such course offers. The writing laboratory at the University of Bologna ("*Laboratorio di scrittura per la redazione della tesi*") is open to economy, law, and literature as well as linguistic students. The one in Ancona is open for various faculties in the social sciences. Both institutions are exceptions of Italian Higher Education rather than the norm. Most of the courses accredit ECTS-points.

Research on writing in Italy is focused on administrative writing (cf. Cortelazzo & Viale, 2006) and on rhetoric but also on psychological aspects and the teaching of writing at the school level (in the context of the "*Scienze della Formazione*" teacher education). Studies on Italian for academic purposes (IAP) or on writing in university contexts are rather rare (cf. Tonelli, 2002; Schwarze, 2007). IAP is studied in contrast to other languages, e.g., CERLIS (*Centro di Ricerca sui Linguaggi Specialistici*) in Bergamo that works in the Project of Relevant National Interest (PRIN): "*Identità e cultura nei linguaggi settoriali inglesi*" financed by the Italian Ministry of University and Research and by the Vigoni-Project financed by CRUI-DAAD (Calaresu, Guardiano, & Hölker, 2006).

In Italy there are specific degree programs in writing at the third level of higher education (e.g., "*Scrittura e produzione per la fiction e il cinema*" at the Università Cattolica del Sacro cuore in Milan; or a master's in "*Scrittura professionale*" at the University in Catania; master's in "*italiano scritto e comunicazione professionale*" in Pisa; or courses of journalism at various universities).

### 8.2.7 Challenges for students moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education

In Italy, most degrees in the humanities or social sciences (without laboratory work/ empirical studies) do not require attendance. Students not attending (called "*non-frequentanti*") have particular difficulties in mastering the "new" kind of thesis genres at university. Those not attending classes but taking exams (usually oral in nature) will not even practice note-taking during lectures.

Problems in the transition from secondary to tertiary education arise mainly from the fact that there is little writing done until the first thesis ("*tesina*" or "*prova finale*"). There is nothing schools could prepare students for. Italian study programs provide very little writing-to-learn opportunities so that school cannot prepare for them or if they would, students at university would not need them. The main



problem is the gap between writing at school and thesis writing. Students cannot practice academic writing, and there are no genres like essays or seminar papers which might be used for learning. Students of secondary education are generally not used to attending the library, to enlarging their knowledge independently, or to writing texts with a certain kind of complexity (cf. genre used for A-level exams in 1.3). Therefore they are not very prepared for the challenges of academic writing. Anyway, to my knowledge, there is still no further research about this kind of questions.

### 8.2.8 Relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

In the humanities, the future workplaces for students can be very different so that a genre education with respect to the future does not seem possible. One applied discipline within the humanities, however, is translation. Here, students do have to do quite a bit of writing, but it is not clear how many genres are reflected in their classes.

Colleagues in law and medicine told me in expert interviews that there is quite no relation between the genre taught at universities and the one used in the field. At the faculties of law in the universities there is, due to tradition, a very theoretical approach in universities. In some experimental settings, for example in physiology and pharmacology at the University in Rome, there is a relation between the genres. Also this question it depends mostly on the initiative of a single university teacher.

## 8.3 Genres and genre teaching

### 8.3.1 The best-known and most frequently used genres in higher education

In literature studies, there are contrastive studies about single genre in comparison to other languages (e.g. tesi and Abschlussarbeit/Magisterarbeit). They are mainly academic in nature (e.g. academic articles, text books or introductions of the PhD in different languages) and no systematic study on genres in higher education has been carried out so far. Two years ago, I started to collect data myself from different disciplines at the Universities of Rome and Pisa for an overview. The following scheme is based on these data, and provides a synopsis on the most frequently used:

Discipline	Oral genres	Written genres
Computer Engineering	esami orali (oral exams)	tesi (the thesis is a project); esami scritti (frasi in Italiano sono sotto il 5% dell'elaborato); (written exams, italian sentences were under 5% of

		the exam)
Physics		esami scritti (soprattutto calcoli) (written exams, mostly calculations); tesi (thesis)
Pharmacy		tesi compilativa o sperimentale (de- scriptive or experimental thesis); rap- porti di laboratorio (laboratory rap- ports)
Medicine	esami orali (oral exams); soprattutto nel secondo triennio (especially in the second triennium); esami su casi clinici (exams about clinical cases)	multiple choice; tema (composition); tesina (Storia della medicina) (paper, history of medicine); calcoli (calcula- tions); tesi di laurea (lavoro sperimen- tale o descrittivo) (descriptive and experimental thesis)
Law	esami orali di nozioni (oral exams about knowledge); pochi esempi pratici (few case studies)	tesi di laurea (thesis); raramente esami scritti (rarely written exams); mostly multiple choice
History	esposizione orale in esami orali (oral topic exposition in oral exams)	tesi finale (final thesis) [scrivere ap- punti, esposizione di un tema, argo- mentare etc. tutte competenze lascia- te alla libera iniziativa e autoforma- zione dello studente] (taking notes, topic exposition, arguing are reque- sted tasks, but not trained or evalua- ted)
Languages and Literature	Esami orali (oral exams); relazione (paper presentation)	Tesi (thesis); esami (temi scritti) (ex- ams, written compositions)
Foreign Languages	esami orali (oral exams); discussione della tesi (discussion of thesis)	Tesine (papers); temi scritti (composi- tions) [scrivere appunti – autoforma- zione] (taking notes, requested tasks but not trained or evaluated)

Table 3: Genres in the disciplines at Italian universities

### 8.3.2 Oral genres in higher education

Every degree at the second and third level of higher education and most degrees at the first level end with the “*discussione della tesi*” (discussion about the thesis). It has two parts: a presentation of the “*tesi*” to the examination board and a second part with questions from the board.

In oral exams of the science faculties, students usually are confronted with problems of their disciplinary content to which they have to find a solution. In medicine, exams at the first level of higher education are written ones, at the second level they tend to be oral (discussions about clinical cases). In the humanities, during the “*esami orali*” (oral exams) expositions of a topic and answers to knowledge questions are most common; in rare cases there are only discussions on a topic or the issue that matters. Group work with a joint final presentation may happen in courses with a limited number of students and with a workshop character, but this is not very common in Italian Higher Education. Language learning courses have a written and if time allows (it depends on the quantity of students) also an oral exam. During the oral exam the student is interviewed by the teacher.

In a small number of courses, students may have the opportunity to be trained for oral presentations through video recordings and feedback. This may be part of language courses. In general, however, university infrastructure is not equipped for this kind of teaching.

For all examinations, students (including the “*non-frequentanti*”) have to be physically present, with exceptions only in the *Università telematiche* (distant learning schools).

### 8.3.3 Writing practices and the kind of work that is expected from students

Typically, Italian students prepare for oral and written exams by taking notes as well as structuring and memorizing the material on which they have to be examined. Writing is often a preparation for oral exams and supports memorization. Apart from this, it is difficult to say what typical writing practices or assignments are.

### 8.3.4 The way students acquire genre knowledge on written/ oral genres

As described in part 1, genre knowledge is not explicit part of the teaching objectives at Italian universities. Only the past years following the Bologna Process, a growing interest in offering writing courses and laboratories for academic genres can be noticed. It is not clear, however, how much training the tutors from these courses receive themselves and whether a “*Laboratorio di scrittura*” (writing laboratories) teaches more than theoretical knowledge about writing. At least, university students acquired and mostly acquire genre knowledge by themselves through trial and error or through informal help from fellow students or parents (if they acquired that competence at all).

If writing is used for learning disciplinary knowledge, it is an individual habit of the single student, not part of the teaching system. Thus, educational genres like the

seminar paper, the essay, or various kind of reports that are usually used for learning are not needed. This is the crucial point about learning to write and learning about learning genres in Italy. In most study programs, writing is not used unless it comes to thesis writing. What seems necessary, therefore, before introducing learning to write approaches is to introduce writing as a way of learning in class.

The kind of instruction provided for thesis writing and the comparatively rare occasions of writing before this depends very much on the single supervisor and on the institution. It should be considered that the proportion of university teachers to students in Italy is 19.7:1, and is one of the highest values for the developed countries (OCSE 2008). The European average amounts to 15.8:1. There is little time for individual counselling and supervision of writing as nearly 20 students are supervised by one faculty member in Italy.

Nationwide, there are no regulations for writing courses, neither about their existence, nor concerning their structure or quality. In some universities writing courses are offered additionally to the regular program; in rare cases they are compulsory. Support for student writing, if not in special L2 language courses or L1 writing courses, is given for the “*tesina*” (short paper) or the “*tesi*” (thesis) by the individual supervisor.

At some Universities, e.g., at the University of Florence, in the *Centro Linguistico di Ateneo* (university language center), language courses in English L2 for “Presentation & Papers” are offered. Students can learn writing and presentations skills in English.

### 8.3.5 Typical text books on academic writing

The following titles are listed in a summarizing publication by Daniela Sorrentino (2008) about textbooks on academic writing in Italian language. She divides the text books in three groups:

- 1) Textbooks that give information about technical and practical steps (searching for and collecting materials in libraries and catalogs, selecting a proper topic, choosing a supervisor, time management, and preparation for the final exam; practical tips for writing are limited to the layout, rules for quotations, or for the bibliography).

Eco, U. (1977). *Come si fa una tesi di laurea*. [How to do a dissertation/final paper] Milano. Traditionally it is still the most recommended text book; an update would be desirable, including the digital catalog research.

Pepe, S. (2002). *Manuale pratico per scrivere una tesi* [Practical handbook for writing a thesis]. Bologna.

This book is aimed towards psychology students; it deals with writing blocks, but also with aspects of the text structure, pieces of advice for introduction and conclusion, and patterns for specific textual operations.

Centanni, M., Daniotti, C., Pedersoli, A. (2004). *Istruzioni per scrivere una tesi, un paper, un saggio* (Instructions for writing a thesis, a paper or an article). Milano.

There is no genre description despite the separate denomination in the title.

Casadei, A., and Tavosanis, M. (2001). *L'italiano all'Università. Tecniche e fonti per lo studio, la preparazione degli esami e la scrittura della tesi in Italianistica* [Italian at the University. Technics and resources for study, preparation for exams and the writing of the thesis in Italian Philology]. Firenze.

The topic concentrates on layout and bibliographic search; there are also short pieces of advice to develop one's own approach through critical reading, to avoid too long sentences, and to write in an objective style.

## 2) Textbooks with single chapters about academic style

Bruni, F., Alfieri, G., Fornasiero, S., and Tamiozzo Goldmann, S. (2006) (2nd.Ed.). *Manuale di scrittura e comunicazione* [Manual for writing and communication]. Bologna, 231–300 – discusses the process of writing, function of intertextual references and composition of introduction and conclusion.

Fornasiero, S., and Tamiozzo Goldmann, S. (2005). *Scrivere l'Italiano. Galateo della comunicazione scritta* [Writing in Italian. Etiquette of written communication]. Bologna, 50–58 – deals also with connectors as means for cohesion.

Spirito, R. (2001). *La scrittura accademica* [Academic Writing]. In: Pallotti, G. (Ed.): *Scrivere per comunicare* [Writing for Communication]. Milano, 205–255 – deals with the academic style regarding the personal deixis, but also regarding connectors and text structure of “academic article”; with examples of journalistic style.

## 3) Text books with different aspects about the academic text production

Cerruti, M., Cini, M. (2007). *Introduzione elementare alla scrittura accademica* [Basic introduction to academic writing]. Bari.

This text deals with formal information (layout and quotations) as well as with the structure of the content.

Dell'Aversano, C., Grilli, A. (2005). *La scrittura argomentativa. Dal saggio breve alla tesi di dottorato* [Argumentative Writing. From the short essay to the doctoral thesis]. Firenze.

This book depicts extensively the argumentative structures with authentic examples (plus exercises), and the structure of the text (function of the different parts of the text and function and form of intertextual references) It presents the reading and writing strategies, explaining and offering exercises for the different steps in the writing process.

Gatta, F., and Pugliese, R. (2006). *Manuale di scrittura. Dalla lettera alla relazione scientifica* [Writing Textbook. From the letter to the scientific report]. Bologna.

The targets are teachers; this book proposes exercises in different contexts, amongst others in academic ones. It is generally very helpful for the text production, but not explicitly for writing for academic purposes.

Italia, P. (2006). *Scrivere all'Università. Manuale pratico con esercizi e antologia di testi* [Writing at the University. Practical manual with exercises and anthology of texts]. Firenze.

This guide book is written for students and wants to provide them with reading and writing competence; it focuses on argumentative types of texts and “*tesine*” as well as “*tesi*”. In addition to tips for delimiting the topic, for the bibliographic search, and for structuring the topic and planning the text, it talks about revisions. It doesn't deal with academic style, but it offers exercises for writing and analyzing argumentative texts.

In the past decade several textbooks on writing (not specifically academic writing) were published

Prada, M. (2004). *Laboratorio di scrittura. Documenti, esercizi, test di autovalutazione per i laboratori di scrittura italiana dell'Università degli Studi di Milano* [Writing Workshop. Documents, exercises, self-assessment tests for Italian writing workshops at the University of Milan]. LED Edizioni Universitarie.

Serafini, M.T. (2001). *Come si scrive* [How to write]. Bompiani, Milano.

Students of the pontifical universities often enjoy a more international approach and are provided with additional manuals

Prelezo, J. M. and Garcia, J.M. (2010). *Invito alla ricerca. Metodologia e tecniche del lavoro scientifico* [Invitation to research. Methodology and technics of the scientific/academic work]. Rome, LAS.

### 8.3.6 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing

As written in chapter 1, several universities offer degree programs or single units of degree programs in English language as a consequence of the Bologna Process (cf. CRUI 2008, 3). So writing competence for these students could be limited in the future by only writing in the L2.

To determine the direct impact of the Bologna Process on writing is difficult. Italy was one of the first nations that transformed the Bologna reform in national law. With the Zecchino-Berlinguer-reform (the national reform for the Bologna Process), a new kind of thesis for the first academic degree (bachelor's level) in the form of the “*tesina*” was introduced. It is definitely shorter and demands fewer skills than the former “*tesi*” which was part of the traditional 5-year study pro-

grams. For this, more workshops and writing laboratories were offered in the past years. Whether this is a consequence of Bologna may be debated. A new awareness, however, seems to have grown about the lack of student writing competences and the corresponding need to teach them. There is a tendency that students accept courses more easily when they are part of the curriculum than as compared to the tutorial approaches.

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## 9 Poland / By Ola Majchrzak and Łukasz Salski

### 9.1 Introduction

Over the years we have been dealing with writing in English as a foreign language in Poland, and we have become particularly interested in the difficulties facing Polish EFL writers. We have realized that these difficulties stem mainly from the general attitude to writing that dominates in Polish education. Teachers who openly state that writing is not just difficult, but also time consuming, tedious, and irksome – what is more, often avoiding assigning written work – cannot motivate students to write. Much of what this report has revealed results from such negative attitudes.

We are both involved in foreign language writing and teaching as instructors and researchers; therefore, the information we include in this report comes from our own first-hand experience which we gained teaching classes, designing courses, and organizing conferences. To ensure a wider scope of the report, we have also carried out interviews with students of a number of faculties (law, psychology, pedagogy, graphic design, information technology, political science, engineering, Polish studies, ethnography) of different tertiary education institutions.

Most of the detailed information presented in this report refers directly to tertiary education institutions based in the city of Lodz. Still, we believe that it is representative of the whole country for two reasons: First, the educational system in Poland is still quite unified even though universities are gaining more and more autonomy; second, Lodz is one of the major academic centers with a wide range of tertiary education institutions, both state and private ones. We are confident that the approach we have taken for this report ensures a reliable picture of the writing instruction at the university level in Poland.

### 9.2 Part One: National traditions and educational systems

The present system of higher education in Poland has been influenced by both German and Soviet ones. On the one hand, the influence of German academic tradition can still be seen, for example in the names of academic degrees, and the structure of higher education institutions reminds of the Soviet system. On the other hand, both traditions have influenced the way Polish academics communicate and the genres it uses. It may be assumed that the present position of and attitude to writing derives from these two traditions. Polish is both highly digressive (Duszak, 1997; Salski, 2012), a feature shared with Russian (Kaplan, 1966), and it is characterized by what Galtung (1985) refers to as the Teutonic style (that is, among others, focus on monolog and theory creation, rather than dialog and thesis formation, which are typical of the Saxon style represented by English). The Teutonic intellectual style is observed not only in German, but also

other languages which it has influenced, e.g., Czech (Čmejrková, 1996). It seems that while the Bologna Process has introduced revolutionary changes in the organization of the Polish Higher Education system, the use of language is much less immediately influenced by the western models it has made easily accessible, and in Hinds' (1987) terms, Polish remains a reader-responsible language (Salski and Dolgikh, forthcoming).

### **9.2.1 The official language in Polish Higher Education**

Polish is the only official language in Polish Higher Education, but English may be used at some institutions, for individual courses taught in English as a foreign language, or for complete programs. Such programs are run, for example by the international faculty of engineering (IFE) at the Technical University of Lodz, where all the courses offered are taught in English or French; these studies enable students to get high qualifications within their field of interest. English-medium programs or courses may be also offered in cooperation with foreign educational institutions. At some Polish universities elective courses taught in English (which is the case, e.g., in the political science program at the University of Lodz). In some fields (e.g., computer science/information technology), English is an indispensable tool which allows students to function within the field, even though it is not the language of instruction. On the other hand, all faculties require their students to take courses in foreign languages among which English is the most popular choice. Some programs involve courses in foreign languages for specific purposes, e.g., business English.

### **9.2.2 The role of English as a language of teaching and writing**

Students who take English as a foreign language as part of their high school curriculum (over ninety percent) are expected to write short papers (letters, essays) for the school-leaving examination (Salski, forthcoming). However, there is no requirement that college/university students write papers/theses in English unless they are English majors or are enrolled in one of the programs or courses taught in English. If this is the case, the requirements vary and depend on the level of language competence and the profile of the course. In programs such as IFE, where all the courses are taught in English, all the written assignments are, naturally, performed in the target language, i.e., English.

### **9.2.3 Types of higher education institutions and types of genres**

There is a division into private and state institutions; they represent different levels prestige, but this does not determine the differences in the genres used as

most curricula at private institutions are modeled on those used at established state schools. Moreover, all universities used to be required to comply with curricular bases issued by the Ministry of Higher Education for each field of study, and it is only recently that they have been granted freedom to develop their own curricula, which have to meet very general state specifications and are then finally approved within the institutions. Apart from institutions with academic orientation, in Poland there are also vocational schools of higher education (*Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa*), which give only vocational preparation, and bachelor degrees. All higher education institutions are, however, periodically inspected by appropriate governmental and academic commissions.

The choice of genres required from a student, including the bachelor's thesis (*praca licencjacka*), and in some cases master's thesis (*praca magisterska*) requirement, varies depending on the area of studies and institution. It may also be up to the individual instructor whether she asks students to write term papers (*praca zaliczeniowa*) or not.

Not surprisingly, students of humanities write more than their peers at other faculties, but, on the other hand, technical universities do require that their students write master's theses while medical schools do not. To give other specific examples, students of law write term papers and master's theses but are not required to practice professional genres which may be presented during internship. On the other hand, students of graphic design at the Academy of Fine Arts are required to write research papers (*praca badawcza*) and a master's thesis; they also practice the professional genre of the art review (*recenzja*). Typically, most Polish students write term papers and master's theses (this is the case for, e.g., pedagogy, philology students).

#### 9.2.4 The higher education system

Tertiary education in Poland underwent significant changes over the last quarter century. First, in the late 1980s, in addition to the five-year master's programs already existing at state universities, new three-year bachelor's programs appeared both at new state colleges and private institutions. With the Bologna Process, it became standard for liberal arts universities to offer three-year bachelor's programs and two-year postgraduate master's studies. Technical universities typically run 3.5-year and 1.5-year programs, respectively. Some institutions like medical schools have not introduced the division and tend to last six years.

The present higher education system in Poland gives universities considerable autonomy, both in terms of course content and assessment. There are no centralized standards for tertiary education and the regulations enforced in 2012 specify only that within the course of studies students earn a required minimal number of European Credit Transfer System points, which leaves the design of coursework and assessment procedures entirely to universities. Detailed curricu-

la are created at universities and do not have to be approved by the ministry as long as they meet the state specifications, which is periodically verified by state agencies. In this system, individual institutions devise their own course content specifications and assessment procedures. This obviously applies to written assignments done both for practice and assessment.

### 9.2.5 The role of writing in learning and assessment

With the product approach dominating any writing done in the educational context in Poland, writing is mainly seen as a means of assessment. Papers may be required to obtain credit for a course, and some examinations, not only in language programs, may take the form of essays. Nevertheless, some students do realize that such writing tasks help them broaden their knowledge. Sometimes students are allowed to choose the topic they are going to write about. It is assumed that writing term papers provides students with writing and research skills which will be helpful later when they write their final theses.

At this point, it should be noted that with the change of the format of the high school final examination in 2005 there can be observed a dramatic drop of the amount of native language writing practice done in secondary education. Within the old format, which required to students to sit a five-hour-long written examination in Polish in which they wrote a several-page-long essay, throughout their school years they practiced writing essays. Even if there had been little overt instruction on how to compose such essays, the sheer volume of practice and the feedback they received led to the development of students' writing skills. The new exam format includes a section of reading comprehension/text analysis questions and a short (250 words) reading-based essay at the basic level and a 250-word literature-based essay at the advanced level.

At universities and colleges, the product approach is typically applied also to bachelor's and master's thesis writing. The bachelor's thesis is, though, hardly seen as a creative task; its aim is to demonstrate the ability to rely on sources. Generally, writing does not take place in class except in FL programs. However, there are faculties (e.g., ethnography) where students write their semester exams in the form of longer assignments. In such a case, writing during the semester prepares them for the final exam of the course.

As far as home assignments are concerned, students typically write them individually but sometimes also as a team. Assignments often concern the topic of a presentation prepared for a class. Their aim is to practice academic writing and citing and documenting sources before students set out to write their bachelor's or master's theses. In the case of some faculties, e.g., psychology, writing tasks are not assigned as homework; students do not write much – they only take notes during lectures and write final exams. Some students admit that they regret

the lack of written assignments as they do not feel sufficiently prepared to function within their future professional field.

There are often no clear assessment criteria; however, the length of the work plays an important role. The form, namely the use of citations and bibliography, may be assessed, especially in those classes which focus on how to write academic papers and on plagiarism (e.g., protection of intellectual property and introduction to research methodology in political science in the case of political science or academic writing in philology).

### **9.2.6 The final thesis requirement**

There are no fixed rules on the final thesis. Generally bachelor's and master's theses are required, but some undergraduate programs end with a comprehensive examination instead. Even within the faculty of philology, at the University of Lodz, students majoring in English and German do write bachelor's theses, and those who study French do not. In fact, as of 2014/2015, at the Institute of English the bachelor's thesis may be replaced with a research project presentation at the advisor's discretion. As a rule, the master's thesis requirements are more unified. Master's programs at universities (in humanities, social studies, and sciences) do end with a thesis. While technical universities do require that their students write master's theses, schools of fine arts, music, etc., as well as medical universities, do not.

### **9.2.7 Responsibility for students' writing development in higher education institutions**

Typically, there is no one officially responsible for the development of students' writing skills, which is not surprising given that progress in writing skills hardly ever appears among the teaching effects of Polish university courses. Responsibility for individual students' writing development is by necessity assumed by the instructors who assign papers. Still, the person most directly – though covertly – responsible for the students' writing development in the final year is the thesis advisor. Working with the student on the thesis, the advisor is naturally responsible for the final product. Still, during the process of writing the thesis, the advisor is able to monitor the writing process and – indirectly – the development of writing skills. It is typically also the advisor who introduces the principles of academic honesty. However, it is worth mentioning that a good specialist in the field may not be dedicated to the role of thesis advisor.

### 9.2.8 Writing centers, programs, and organizations fostering scholarly work on writing development

Unfortunately, there are neither programs nor organizations fostering writing development in Poland. Sometimes conferences on writing are organized by departments of Polish studies or journalism. Also, student societies (Polish studies) may help students write properly by organizing meetings on the topic or publishing articles on how to write correctly. University students may seek assistance in writing a CV or motivational letter at the bureau of professional careers.

As far as writing in English goes, only few instructors nationwide go to conferences like the European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing, European Writing Centers Association, or Symposium on Second Language Writing. Some writing instructors and researchers or teachers of English as a foreign language attend the conference on Teaching English Academic Writing organized periodically by the Ivan Franko University of Lviv.

Finally, since 2009 the department of psycholinguistics and English language teaching of the University of Lodz has organized a biennial conference on theory and practice of foreign language writing titled FLOW (Foreign Language Opportunities in Writing). The conference aspires to create a forum for academics and school teachers interested in developing and researching writing in foreign language.

With the help of Prof. Melinda Reichelt, who visited University of Lodz as a Fulbright Senior Specialist in 2011, the institute of English has established probably the first writing center in Poland. It is a small-scale enterprise offering assistance to the institute students; also, most tutors are recruited from among students of the master's and PhD programs run by the institute. Other writing centers operate – in different formats – at the institute of English at the University of Silesia and at the institute of romance philology at the University of Wroclaw.

### 9.2.9 The relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

How well the genres taught at universities match those used at workplaces depends on the faculty as well as the workplace. For those planning to pursue an academic career, academic writing courses offered in language programs would be considered a perfect preparation.

A few institutions/faculties require practice of professional genres, e.g., at the academy of fine arts in Lodz, students write art reviews. Students of teacher training programs receive instruction in writing genres used by school teachers, i.e., lesson plans, reports, sometimes syllabi.



While it may seem surprising that students of law do not receive training in the written genres they may need at the workplace, it seems partially justified by the fact that it is common for lawyers to use text frameworks, available commercially not only in print, but also in the electronic version, which requires only insertion of data.

It could be said that universities teach students how to seek sources of information and deliver their ideas. It is very often the case that even if students are not familiar with a certain type of writing, there are ready patterns to be used at the workplace.

### **9.2.10 Challenges in moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education**

While high school writing is very general in terms of subject and genre choice, writing in the academia is discipline-specific. As a consequence, most first year students are insufficiently prepared for that switch, and what is more, the typically do not receive instruction in academic writing in terms of style or genres.

Writing is, generally, a problem in secondary education; there is little practice, and it is typically product-based. Most graduates have had little practice in writing and have not developed writing skills in their native language. Pupils are given no information as far as citing sources and referencing are concerned. Generally, it can be hardly said that high schools teach how to develop pupils' ideas or structure paragraphs. Hence, writing an end-of-term paper, not to mention a bachelor's or master's thesis is such a challenge; it is so different from what students have been writing so far. Students are expected to refer to sources, use more specialized language, and generally compose a much longer text. Also, students have to be more analytic in their approach as well as concentrated on a given, sometimes very narrow, subject.

## **9.3 Part Two: Genres and genre teaching in Poland**

### **9.3.1 Written genres used most frequently in Polish Higher Education**

Among the most popular genres in Polish Higher Education is the term paper. The aim of the term paper (*praca zaliczeniowa*) is to create an opportunity for students to revise and explore the topics discussed during the course. Sometimes written home assignments are given after a prepared presentation on the same topic. Then they are usually shorter than a typical term paper. Often a paper requires the students to do extra reading on the chosen topic. In this way, the students learn how to approach academic texts, think critically, and incorporate sources into their own writing. Essay examinations may be given occasionally,

especially in humanities. Such papers are, for obvious reasons, shorter than the term paper and do not require referring to sources.

Topics of term papers may be assigned by the teacher, but they may also be chosen by the students. The same is true for the bibliography. It happens that the teacher suggests some reading, but students often have to research on their own. These papers may take the form of expository or argumentative essays (e.g., The presidency of Aleksander Kwaśniewski—in political science), Magical places: monuments in Łódź—ethnography) or reports (e.g., Calendars now and earlier: their function and development (ethnography). In language programs some common topics are, for example:

- “The influence of X on Y” (Psycholinguistics);
- “The X phenomenon and its presence in Y” (Linguistics);
- “The picture of X in the works of Y” (Literature).

Similar types of topics may be used for bachelor’s theses (*praca licencjacka*) and master’s theses (*praca magisterska*), which are written in all departments, excluding medical studies. The topics are either proposed by the students or may be chosen from a list suggested by the advisor.

It may also happen that some departments, such as ethnography, may use more specific written genres. To give an example, students of ethnography are frequently asked to write reviews (*recenzja*) or reports (*raport*) on visits to museums, galleries, or field trips, including their impressions and feelings connected with a given activity. In these cases, academic teachers are interested to know students’ own reception of the event.

As mentioned earlier, written assignments should aim at consolidating the knowledge obtained in the course of the seminar. However, they are often seen as a means of evaluation, which seems to be the effect of the dominant position of the product approach to writing. At the same time, such conviction and practice leads to further reinforcement of this position. Students are either not given enough time to work on their paper, or they are simply faced with writing a paper that they do not know how to approach as no explicit instruction has been provided. Typically, there is no overt writing practice, yet there may be individual variation among instructors (cf. students’ acquisition of genre knowledge). Often, however, the papers handed in do not only lack rigid organization, which may be seen as a feature peculiar to Polish writing, but also tend to be superficial in terms of context and sloppy in layout. It may even happen that parts – or even whole papers – are lifted from the Internet.

Nevertheless, some students admit that writing a term paper or a final thesis gave them an opportunity not only to consolidate knowledge acquired during the course, but also to explore a topic of interest to them on their own.

### 9.3.2 Typical oral genres in Polish Higher Education

Oral genres used in Polish Higher Education are usually presentations (*prezentacja*) and discussions (*dyskusja*). Presentations very often take place during bachelor's and master's seminars. Students are expected to report on progress in their research or findings of their library research into a topic of their own choice. Although more and more often students make use of PowerPoint when presenting their work, it is still popular to give a mini-lecture, which often means reading a paper prepared earlier out loud. It happens that some academic teachers require students to be spontaneous during oral presentations while others value content more and praise well-prepared speeches. What is connected with the issue raised is the belief that PowerPoint presentations try to mask lack of content of a presentation. Still, the type of oral presentation either depends on the student or may sometimes be imposed by the teacher, depending on the seminar.

The main aim of discussions is to teach students to think critically and make use of theoretical knowledge obtained either in the subject literature or during seminars. Discussions are usually continuations of either a presentation prepared by a student or are based on literature read before the classes. Usually they take the form of spontaneous voluntary participation on the students' part. Sometimes they may be partly directed and the teacher may ask the seminar group to analyze different aspects of a given issue, which results in a small-scale debate during the following class.

### 9.3.3 Students' acquisition of genre knowledge

As has been mentioned in part one of the present report, although the genres used in secondary education and at the university level are different, typically no explicit guidelines are given at the beginning of higher education in Poland. Students may be asked to produce a term paper without being given any help on the issue of formal requirements. This is very often the case when writing is treated as a means to revise the material presented during the course. In other words, what matters in the term paper is the content, not necessarily the form.

The situation changes in bachelor's and master's seminar classes, which focus on specific subject matter and prepare students to write their bachelor's or master's theses. Here students cooperate closely with their advisors, who assist them in choosing the topic, proceeding with the research (if appropriate), help select appropriate bibliography, and advise them on formal matters. Usually the advisor presents the students with all the necessary information connected with writing a thesis. The students are provided with style sheets explaining how to use and cite sources. Also, sample papers are analyzed so that students have an understanding of what a thesis should look like. Also, some institutes provide information concerning requirements for final theses on their websites (for in-

stance, the department of information technology, Technical University of Lodz or the institute of English Studies, University of Lodz). This usually includes technical details of theses.

Still, a considerable number of students admit that information obtained during seminars is not sufficient. That is why they try to look for help on their own. Students decide either to use the expertise of their older friends, who have already completed a thesis, or analyze sample theses available in libraries on their own. In this way, they arrive at a model of a seminar paper or final thesis.

In language programs, more attention is typically paid to genre requirements, which is seen as a part of students' language development. Students learn how to structure various pieces of writing within different genres. Classes such as "Introduction to writing academic texts" (German studies) or "Writing academic texts" (English studies) are offered in which students learn how to structure their work, use and cite sources, and develop different parts of their essays. More and more students, both in state and private institutions, are advised to use online academic writing resources, most commonly the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University.

Problems may arise when a student wishes to pursue an academic career. In contrast to the situation present in Austria (as outlined in the report on Austria in this book), nothing like a centre for doctoral studies exists here, where students could find advice on academic genres, such as an abstract, an article, an annotated bibliography, and dissertations. Such information is mainly obtained in the process that could be described as "learning by doing" or by imitating texts when students try to structure their written works on the basis of sample papers. Again, the advisor is very often the source of information.

While written genres do attract at least some attention on the part of teachers, oral genres are hardly ever taught explicitly. Discussions are seen spontaneous continuations of issues introduced earlier – in readings or lectures – and as such are not believed to need any preparation or coordination. Presentations, including both mini-lectures and PowerPoint presentations, are assigned but rarely discussed as far as their form is concerned. Typically students receive content feedback on them as it is content that matters most during thematic seminars. Hence, students tend not to work so much on the visual aspects of their presentations, such as interesting and eye-catching slides, pictures that attract attention, fonts that are easy to read from a distance. They also do not concentrate on the way they present the material, their body language, or intonation. Since these aspects are neglected, both by students and teachers, the only focus remains on the content matter. If, which is not uncommon, a presentation is either too broad or too narrow in its scope, the audience easily loses interest in it.

### 9.3.4 Issues of plagiarism

In point 1 it was mentioned that some students may try to lift parts or whole texts from the Internet and hand them in as their own work. Sometimes they resort to the practice of incorporating citations or sections of source texts without acknowledging them. Some years ago, this was partly the effect of students' not knowing how to cite sources and not being fully aware that doing that is punishable. Nowadays, however, the situation has changed. Students are explained what plagiarism is in the very initial classes and how to avoid it as well as how to cite sources properly. In the case of English studies, students practice citing sources for a couple of classes using styles such as MLA or APA.

What is more, students are informed about an anti-plagiarism program, which is used for the verification of final theses. On submitting their theses, all students have to sign a statement that their work does not violate intellectual property rights. Still, both at state and private institutions, there have been cases of degrees being denied or revoked on the grounds of the theses pronounced as being plagiarized.

### 9.3.5 Typical textbooks on academic writing in Poland

Generally, students are not recommended any specific books on how to write effectively. Only few students, among them students of departments such as psychology, are familiar with books on writing academic works such as final theses, but also books on statistics. Nevertheless, there are books used by academic teachers. They can be divided into those recommended for the students of departments where teaching is done in Polish and for those in foreign language programs. Depending on the department, different books may be used. In terms of general academic writing, the following titles are the most popular:

Zielińska-Zasko, M., Majewska-Tworek, A. & Piekot, T. (2008). *Sztuka pisania. Warszawa* [The art of writing]- Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

This is a guidebook on how to compose texts, including issues such as planning, editing, reviewing, register, referencing sources, and summarizing. Also, samples together with advice are given on the most frequently used genres, both in formal and informal contexts.

Kuziak, M. & Rzepczyński, S. (2000). *Jak pisać?* [How to write?]. Bielsko-Biała: Park.

This guidebook is aimed at beginners in the field of writing who wish to master such genres as essay, description, summary, as well as more experienced writers who look for information concerning bachelor's or master's theses.

Wiszniewski, A. (2003). *Jak pisać skutecznie?* [How to write effectively?]. Katowice: Videograf II.

This book aims at easing written communication in various contexts, such as school, higher education, professional work, and in private life. It contains samples of formal letters, résumés, scientific papers, and many other types are presented as well.

Pawelec, R. (2007). *Poradnik skutecznej komunikacji w mowie i piśmie* [A handbook of successful written and oral communication]. Warszawa: Langenscheidt.

This is a guidebook on how to write and speak effectively. It provides advice on official correspondence, genres used at school and at workplace, as well as degree theses. It includes sample letters, CVs, essays, emails, and other genres.

At the University of Opole, an EFL academic writing textbook has been published, which is intended specifically for students majoring in English as a foreign language:

Adams-Tukiendorf, M. & Rydzak, D. (2003, 2nd ed. 2012). *Developing Writing Skills: A Manual for EFL Students*. Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego.

Moreover, in EFL programs, the books mentioned below may be used:

Dollahite, N. Haun, J. (2012). *Sourcework: Academic writing from sources*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

This book aims at helping students write their first academic papers. Beside teaching critical thinking skills, refining thesis statements, introductions, and conclusions, revising, students also learn how to use sources by integrating them into their work, paraphrasing, and summarizing.

Zemach, D. & Rumisek, L. (2005). *Academic writing – from paragraph to essay*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

This book is intended for those who either prepare to study or are studying in an academic environment but need to work on their writing skills. Students learn how to evolve from paragraph to essay writing and how to create coherent and cohesive paragraphs of different types used in academia. Also issues such as generating ideas, planning, drafting, and reviewing are mentioned.

Bailey, S. (2006). *Academic writing – a handbook for international students*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

This guidebook is practical for international students who need to write in English in an academic context. The book provides information as well as exercises on the whole process of writing, starting with producing first drafts and finishing with proofreading. It includes information on how to write various types of essays, and it also deals with issues of plagiarism.

### 9.3.6 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing in Poland

The Bologna Process has mainly had its effects on the structure of higher education in Poland. Writing is partly connected with that structure as most bachelor's programs require students to produce a final thesis in order to obtain a bachelor's degree. It means that students need to create an academic piece of writing two years earlier than some years ago. In comparison with the master's thesis, the bachelor's thesis is undoubtedly shorter, does not require students to do as thorough literature review as for the master's thesis, and the scope of problem is usually narrowed. Still, a considerable number of students admit that writing a bachelor's thesis allowed them to prepare for writing, as they call it, "the real thesis", which for many is the final master's thesis.

Changes, however, take place rather slowly. It is only recently that some departments, including English studies, have decided to modify the content of existing subjects within the field of writing so that they prepare students better to write academic papers. In the course of one semester, first year students of the English institute at the University of Lodz are asked to write a research paper on a topic of their own interest. The assumption is that at the end of the semester they hand in an academic piece of writing, which will have the structure typical of an academic text, include references to literature studied, as well as use language appropriate both in terms of proficiency as well as the field researched.

Such changes could suggest that the future looks bright. However, some academic teachers admit that students used to read and write more before the Bologna Process. Even some years ago, students would welcome the opportunity to work on developing ideas and practicing argumentation. But now students tend to conform to the required outline of final theses, which very often consists in complying with the required format rather than a great deal of exploration or originality of the approach towards the topic on the part of the students, which may be particularly true for the bachelor's thesis.



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## 10 Portugal / By Luísa Álvares Pereira, Luciana Graça, Vera Rute Marques, and Inês Cardoso

### 10.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to describe the Portuguese writing and oral practices used in the Portuguese Higher Education. More specifically, this report aims to present the most prominent genres in diverse higher education institutions and describe how these are used for the learning and teaching of academic writing. Concerning the oral genres, since we are aware that students are often required to prepare oral presentations, it seemed to us a good opportunity to gather some data on this modality as well, although only marginally.

This report derives from our vast experience in the education profession, which we have acquired not only at various universities, both in Portugal and abroad, but also on our teaching experience at secondary level. One of the authors is additionally engaged in Portuguese language curriculum design for primary and secondary education.

We begin with a contextualization of Portuguese Higher Education and its academic writing. We will then present the most dominant genres in academic writing from information collected through questionnaires, and the main insights that can be drawn from the results obtained.

### 10.2 Portuguese Higher Education and its academic writing

At the end of and after the fall of the dictatorial regime in 1975, higher education in Portugal has grown rapidly not just in the creation of public institutions, but also in the establishment of private ones. A first division of higher education institutions can be made by distinguishing public institutions from private ones; the latter are not only financed by private capital, but are also less regulated by the state. A further binary division opposes a polytechnic education from a university one. This latter binary division embodies different education objectives. Polytechnic institutions offer “vocational and advanced technical training that is professionally orientated” (Blättler et al., 2013, p. 17) while universities are more “oriented towards the provision of solid academic training, combining the efforts and responsibilities of both teaching and research units” (Blättler et al., 2013, p. 17). However, the aforementioned authors advert making that the distinction between these types of institution are not always clear due to numerous variables, namely “partial integration and co-location of the public polytechnic sector within universities” (2013, p. 19). The two different types of institutions also offer their students courses that vary in length, with the polytechnic ones offering three-year bachelor’s courses whereas students at universities may be required to study up

to four years to also receive a bachelor's degree, which is highlighted in Pereira & Correia (2011, p. 2) wherein the authors state that education in polytechnic facilities is shorter and more professionalizing; however, at the universities (both public and private institutions) the degrees might take longer to conclude and follow a more academic orientation in students' education. Regarding the prestige regarded to each type of institution, some are distinguished by seniority of existence and by the quality of teaching and training. Broadly, teachers avoid making discriminations between different types of institutions even though some believe that the process of teaching/learning is better designed in the public institutions. In fact, concerning specific areas of knowledge, the outcomes in writing and oral practices differ considerably amongst students from different institutions, as we shall demonstrate further on when we present the collected data.

In Portugal, researchers of all educational levels are now, particularly after the implementation of the Bologna Process, realizing that there is a need to pay increased attention to students' writing practices while simultaneously acknowledging that some text genres are not being formally taught to students. Given teachers' and researchers' conviction that the learning of text genres helps students to solve their problems of literacy and knowledge of the Portuguese language, as well as knowledge acquisition in general, this represents a huge gap in Portuguese formal education. In fact, there is evident distance between practices and research principles (Pereira, 2004).

### **10.3 Survey about perceptions of 'genre'**

#### **10.3.1 Goals and aims**

This study attempted to: a) make an accurate diagnosis of the teaching and learning practices that involve writing in higher education institutions in Portugal; b) determine the most frequent text genres across different knowledge fields; c) understand the higher education teachers' conceptions about the acquisition of writing skills; d) gain knowledge that serves as the basis for the development of activities that allow students to attain a more insightful learning of writing and that helps them to use text genres as a privileged tool for knowledge construction within their educational environments.

This report presents the answers to specific questions concerning higher education writing practices as determined by the results obtained from our surveys, trying to draw conclusions from all the data obtained through the various questionnaires. It should be taken into consideration that no effort was made to select representative samples of the national higher education context in Portugal. The surveys were conducted according to the available means to divulge them, particularly by personal contacts' networks and institutional means of information transmission.

### 10.3.2 Procedures

In order to provide accurate knowledge on which text genres are being favored in the different higher education institutions and across the different degree courses they offer, a questionnaire survey was conducted by the Portuguese team of researchers involved in the COST Action IS0703 – The European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively (ERN-LWE), which involved several Portuguese Higher Education institutions of different types. This survey was developed with the purpose of helping diagnosis of the existing practices that would, in the future, allow for the development of new intervention programs for the teaching and learning writing practices in higher education.

The particular objectives of this research were to produce knowledge on: a) teachers' practices concerning the teaching of writing skills in the text genres related to their specific subject matters; b) the specificities of each text genres in each subject area/course; c) teachers' representations about students' writing practices as well as students' relationship with writing and the development of students' writing skills.

A questionnaire was developed based on a previously conducted pilot study and was then made available online and advertised in a number of different higher education institutions nationally. The pilot study consisted of interviews of ten teachers from the University of Aveiro (Portugal) within the academic fields of humanities, science, engineering, medicine, and law (Pereira & Loureiro, 2010). These interviews hoped to determine what text genres were favored within the different schools and degree courses. Based on the faculty's answers, it was possible to restrict the type of practices developed in such schools concerning the teaching and evaluation of writing productions, thus realizing each area's main beliefs on the acquisition of writing skills. The interviews conducted used a list of questions suggested by David Russell at the COST Barcelona Conference, focusing, for instance, on the languages used in teaching, the role of the English language in the Portuguese university courses, the most used genres in academic writing, students' writing production in higher education, and the relation between the academic writing genres and those used in the job market.

The questionnaire was based on results from the aforementioned pilot study that, for example, clearly demonstrated an emphasis on writing assignments for assessment purposes and a lack of formal instruction on writing in higher education in Portugal. The questionnaire consisted mostly of closed-ended questions, and it was made available from February 1st 2011 to April 20th 2011 for the online fill-in process. Its availability was made known through personal and professional contacts of the researchers, which makes this a non-representative sample of the faculty in higher education in Portugal, a condition that was not *sine qua non* for this particular project. Nonetheless, 193 teachers from several higher education institutions, both public and private, from diverse regions of Portugal, from North to South, choose to participate and answered the questionnaire, providing valuable information; this will from now on be called Teacher's Questionnaire 1 (TQ1).

With overlaps in cycle teaching, 72.5% of the teachers were teaching during Bologna's 1st cycle (the first three years – graduation); 54.4% of the teachers taught students in the 2nd cycle (master's); and only 13% of teachers were teaching students from the 3rd cycle (doctoral studies). Furthermore, most of the responding teachers were female (68%). Answers were collected from different knowledge fields: 19.7% of the teachers worked in education, 24.8% in the human and social sciences, 21.9% in the hard sciences (including mathematics, engineering, physics, etc.), 16.1% in arts and humanities, and finally 9.5% in the health sciences.

Two additional questionnaires were also applied between September and November 2011. These were translated from two questionnaires developed in Switzerland by Otto Kruse's team on academic writing in higher education. One was meant for teachers (from now on addressed as Teacher's Questionnaire 2 – TQ2) while the other was intended for students (from now on addressed as Student Questionnaire – SQ). For example, the latter questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended questions and were divided into sub-sections: personal data; general questions on writing in a specific study program; the process of writing and feedback; text types and writing practices; self-evaluation of competences in academic writing; "good writing"; study competences and writing support. After being translated into Portuguese and being slightly adapted to fit the Portuguese education situation, namely, adapting some of the genre descriptions to be better understood by teachers and students. Again the questionnaires were distributed online through personal contacts as well as advertisements on university news sites and mailing lists.

298 answers were collected from TQ2 and only 225 of the respondents answered the whole questionnaire. Since this was the first time this study about higher education writing practices was being carried on, our main goal was to collect data regardless of whether it was representative. Besides that, it was not a requisite to obtain representative samples as we have pointed out. Therefore, the questionnaires' dissemination was accomplished with the support of administrative assistants in our university, who used the common mailing lists containing the great majority of higher education institutions in Portugal. We are not, regrettably, able to precisely estimate how many teachers were working in those institutions and how they were motivated by their institutions to participate. Considering the amount of questionnaires from master's and PhD students and faculty members/researchers that are circulated in a regular basis via email asking for participation, we do think the number we've collected is a sign of interest and commitment.

76.5% of the teachers reached the last page of the TQ2. Following the results obtained through TQ1, most of the answering teachers were female (45.3%), and higher education teachers demonstrated a significant amount experience in teaching as most of them have already accumulated more than 10 years of teaching experience. 35.8% of respondents had 10 to 14 years of experience whereas 45.9% had more than 15 years of experience. Although there was no

specific effort put into choosing different academic areas to distribute the questionnaires, the results showed great diversity in the areas taught by the respondents. 22.1% of the respondents taught in the areas of social science and economy, 14.6% in engineering. 13.6% of the respondents taught teacher training courses, 13.1% were teaching in the sciences, 12.6% worked in art teaching. Another 11.6% taught courses from medicine and health sciences while 10.6% taught humanities courses; finally, only 2.0% taught law courses. It is important to notice that both TQ1 and TQ2 were answered anonymously and, therefore, we cannot relate whether one person has indeed answered to both of them or not.

As for the SQ, 1151 students answered although only 519 answered it in full. Of these, 71% were female and the average age was around 24 years old. The greatest majority of the answering students were currently studying in the 1st and 2nd cycles of the Bologna Higher Education system. Of the respondents, 22.2% were from the social sciences and economics, 16.5% were students of engineering courses. 10.8% stated that they studied science (no further specification) while 10.1% were medicine or health science students. 9.0% were studying to become teachers, 7.7% of responses came from students in the humanities (no further specification), and 7.3% studied art, design, or architecture. Finally 6.0% studied law and 10.4% stated their course area as 'other'.

#### 10.4 Theoretical genre approach

The group involved in this project follows a genre definition based in the socio-discursive interactionism framework (Bronckart, 1996) which states that language is the mediator of the properties of social activity's appropriation by the human organism; the human actions – motivated, intentional, responsible – are the result of this appropriation. So greater attention is given to the social interaction that creates the capacity for language. It is thus clear that the different uses of language by humans create various textual genres through which we act on ourselves and on others. This means that writing and speaking in certain contexts do not only involve linguistic knowledge, but also knowledge of language as can be seen in its social and personal dynamics of use by the subject in an exercise of a deliberate action through language (Bronckart, 1996, p. 101).

This approach argues that the language lessons should consider the textual diversity generated by the social activities of language. This phenomenon led Bronckart (1996) to talk about the metaphor of 'haziness' when referring to the way in which these genres constitute, for the productive subject, a set of possible textualities, which one can resort to and adapt to according to the context of production and a set of elements liable to influence the sort of organization required by the text. In fact, the text is not only produced by an agent enrolled in a set of time and spatial coordinates, it is also constructed within a setting of communicative interaction that is not oblivious to the existing social experience (Pereira, Cardoso, & Graça, 2009). This socio-historical nature of textual genres

led to the perception of these as complex semiotic tools and thus as regulators of particular language actions (Bronckart, 1996; Schneuwly, 1998).

To summarize, we are considering genres as a historical, cultural, and social phenomenon that is here understood as organizing macrocategories as tools of social action, which organize an incredible array of human activities. This is also consistent with other theories of textual linguistics (Adam, 1999), which also gives us elements to better understand the characteristics of each genre (such as argumentative, narrative sequences that intervene in its composition). Examples of genres are scientific articles, letters, emails, instructions, recipes, chronics, opinion articles in a youth magazine, etc.

The previously presented genre conceptions guide our scientific production in the context of didactics of writing (teacher training, etc.). It is our belief that in order to develop a greater command of textual production, there is a need for a systematic learning of a wide range of textual genres. Additionally, we also understand that the development of a textual repertoire includes increased processes of self-regulation and the reduction of task-complexity since the previous knowledge of a specific schematic structure decreases the cognitive effort of writing. However, we recognize that there is a clear distance between classroom practices, research principles (here focusing on what should be the teaching/learning of genres), and ministerial directives regarding the Portuguese educational system in general (Pereira, Aleixo, Cardoso, & Graça, 2010).

## 10.5 Higher Education politics: languages and the role of English

In Portuguese Higher Education, the official language (L1) is Portuguese. According to the data collected from TQ2, 74.8% of the respondents of this survey were Portuguese native speakers (the questionnaire was written in Portuguese, which would be a limitation to speakers of other languages or to those with insufficient knowledge of written Portuguese). This shows the predominance of this L1 in higher education institutions. Nonetheless, it was possible to collect answers from teachers that were native speakers of other languages such as French, Spanish, and English, which had only a scarce presence. In the students' questionnaire, it was also possible to determine that other than the Portuguese native speakers, the higher education institutions in Portugal are also being attended by native speakers of English, French, Spanish, Creole, Bengali, Russian, and Ukrainian.

Mobility programs specific to higher education have greatly contributed to a greater mobility of both teachers and students all over the world, and it has consequently been making an impact on the languages used in higher education Institutions. With this increase in mobility, English for teaching and scientific research purposes has been expanding. Faculty members are becoming conscious of the new linguistic demands that come from this diversity and research is being



conducted; for instance, the University of Aveiro has been undergoing great efforts to study issues such as intercomprehension as well as the development of plurilingual competence in individuals (for more on research in this area of study, see the LALE website – <http://www.ua.pt/cidttff/lale/> (only in Portuguese)).

The role of English is gaining importance in Portuguese Higher Education institutions for its ability to make interaction within the international scientific communities possible. Teachers believe in encouraging students to write papers and other publications in English for the purpose of the internationalization and social affirmation of the institution's position. As a matter of fact, teachers persuade students to work in English, and they motivate students to publish in English as a condition to achieve better grades. Some universities already accept master and doctoral dissertations in English. Data collected from the student questionnaire demonstrates that English has an important role in higher education writing but that it does not yet possess a bigger role than Portuguese.

Less than half of the responding students have to write in English as a foreign language (31%). Of these students, about 40% have to write in English for a course that is taught in English whereas 44% write in English in courses that are not taught in this language (probably being taught in Portuguese as it's the indisputable L1). When analyzing students' confidence about their writing in English as a foreign language, we realize that 58.2% of them feel that they are competent in writing in this language. International openness in higher education institutions in Portugal may account for a development of courses of English for academic purposes, which are being offered in the institutions to 52.5 % of the students.

As an example of the openness of the higher education institutions to the international communities, we would like to mention the reality at the University of Aveiro (UA), where the team of authors is located. In this institution (a public university), the rise of internationalization has gained greater attention over the past years, and according to Professor Gillian Moreira (2011), one of the vice deans in charge of this process, the university has received roughly one thousand international students during the 2010–2011 academic school year through various mobility programs where Erasmus takes the lead in the number of students received. Due to this internationalization, in this university, which already cooperates in 10 different Erasmus Mundus courses (including master's and doctoral Programs), English is becoming more and more frequent in the course offerings. A reflection of this is that all the courses from the Erasmus Mundus programs are taught in English, given the statute that is somewhat attributed to English as a "lingua franca"; indeed, the possibility to take only courses in English has been attracting more international students. Moreover, the institution has gone to great lengths to make sure that every course description is written online in both Portuguese and English (this includes: full course details, program, methodologies, and even evaluation), which helps the international students choose which courses to take during their periods of study at the UA. Portugal's desire of higher education institutions to be nationally and internationally recognized follows the international panorama on mobility promotion where English is gaining great-

er importance. Portuguese still dominates in higher education institutions as the language of teaching and learning as it is the official language of the country. It is also a language of growing worldwide importance with more and more connections being established between the Portuguese-speaking countries.

## 10.6 Academic writing

### 10.6.1 Types of genres

According to our TQ1 data, the most commonly used genres differed slightly between public and private institutions. Accounting for study programs of the Bologna Process, data shows that in public institutions the most commonly used genre is the “research paper/assignment/*trabalho de pesquisa*”, being mentioned equally for all the three cycles. Other genres also used in the public institutions are the “report/*relatório*” (in the 1st and 2nd cycles), the “critical reflection/*reflexão crítica*” (in the 2nd cycle), the “monograph/*monografia*”, and the “synthesis from various sources/*síntese a partir de várias fontes*” (both used only in the 3rd cycle). In slight contrast to this, teachers from private institution presented their mostly used genres as: “synthesis from various sources” (in the 1st cycle, followed by several other genres like the “monograph” and the “commentary”), the “monograph” (in the 2nd cycle, and followed by the commentary), and the “research paper/assignment” (in the 3rd cycle, followed by the “monograph” and the “synthesis from various sources”). The type of institution seems to, therefore, have an impact, however small, on the genres used in higher education institutions.

### 10.6.2 Writing use

Generally speaking, writing is frequently used for evaluation purposes and also for knowledge systematization. Writing is a common activity within higher education teaching where students dedicate many hours per week to it.

According to the SQ, students are requested to write in their courses, frequently with an evaluation purpose. The majority of the students take notes during classes (thus writing is used to systematize contents). Students say that they frequently have to write the following genres: “papers”, “reflective paper/assignment”, “research paper/assignment”, “technical reports”, and “summaries”. For the most part, there is a balance between the amount of writing students are expected to do in-class and out-of-class although with slightly more out-of-class writing. 26.6 % of the students claimed to spend 10 or more hours per week writing. Writing can, therefore, be understood as a common activity performed by the students across the various types of institutions as well as across various disciplinary areas.

The students state that writing for evaluation purposes is very frequent in their courses: 49% of courses taken by the respondents include this type of evaluation. “Written tests” are also very frequent (32.7% of the students have them frequently and 16.6% have them always).

The great importance that writing holds in evaluation in general allows for the consideration that even if these are not compulsory, students will have to write in order to graduate. According to data collected from the TQ1, the respondents state that the “research paper/assignment” is the genre they most frequently request from their students. This text genre was the one most requested before the implementation of the Bologna Process, and is still the one that predominates in the first and second cycles of Bologna. The third Bologna cycle proves to be an exception in the genres used since the two most frequent ones are the “monograph” and the “synthesis from various sources”. By analyzing the data, one can conclude that evaluation through writing is a *sine qua non* condition for graduation (1st cycle of Bologna), but legally the requirement of a “thesis” does not yet seem to exist in reality of the Portuguese Higher Education. The pilot study led us to believe that there are different requirements across different areas, such as “reports” and “research protocols” (in areas of science such as biology); “anamnesis” (within the health sciences); “essay” (for example, in territorial management) are required. Even the “monograph” is sometimes required in scientific courses. However, the thesis is not compulsory overall for graduation. In the polytechnic institutions, students can be required to produce “final reports” for several subjects in order to graduate.

### 10.6.3 Writing development: initiatives and responsibilities

Broadly, across Portuguese Higher Education, there are no professionals whose task it is to be responsible for students’ writing. The use of media tools and the changes brought about by the Bologna Process seem to be raising teachers’ awareness for the need of formally addressing students’ writing skills, but, up to this point, responsibility on this matter has not been assigned to anyone in particular. Writing workshops and guidance from autonomous teachers have recently been on the rise but are still seen as insufficient in the Portuguese Higher Education context. Initiatives like workshops or free courses on academic writing, specifically founded to help master’s and PhD students, have been put into place (for example, by Filomena Capucho, at Viseu’s Catholic University). Moreover, because of the underlying need for these specific initiatives to become more systematic, there is already some research highlighting the difficulties of writing in higher education, and it aims to provide ways of working on this skill at this level of education (Rodrigues, 2010).

Teachers seem to still be relying on misconceived ideas about the way students develop writing skills, generally believing that reading texts is sufficient for this (data from TQ1). However, some teachers also state that they engage in proce-

dures to help students develop writing competence. Generally, the teachers that answered TQ1 gave an account of the procedures they would engage the students in when requesting a written text, and the three most frequent ones were: “I provide a written document with specific guidance on the genre”; “I explain the genre specificities orally”; and “I make myself available”. This demonstrates that teachers are becoming more aware of the importance of providing students with clear directions for their writing tasks in order to achieve better texts.

According to the SQ, students agree that teachers are providing them with specific guidance. Many students (41.5%) stated that they receive oral instructions for a writing task frequently; many (30.3%) stated to sometimes being given the chance to discuss their work with teachers; and almost the same percentage of students (30.7%) stated to have been asked by the teachers to start the writing tasks in- class. Concerning the specific case of plagiarism, students affirmed to frequently being given information on what plagiarism is and on how to avoid it in their texts.

Furthermore, students were asked for suggestions on how to improve academic writing in their own course programs, and they made clear that to “receive more feedback for their written assignments” would be the most useful for the improvement of writing instructions in their study courses (49.8%). Besides this option, many students also stated that it would be useful to “be offered individual tutoring for writing (for example, in a writing center)” (46.8%); to “receive better instructions for writing in the existing disciplines” (45.9%); to “have more disciplines where writing is used as a medium to learn – seminars” (42.8%); to “receive specific training in writing to improve the ability to express ideas” (44.7%); and to also “receive feedback through the internet” (35.0%). Even though all of these options were chosen as useful, students seem to attribute greater importance to the actions that imply a more direct contact with someone who can provide guidance and insights on how to improve; therefore, students believe that receiving feedback at a distance would be less preferable than the other options.

#### 10.6.4 University entrance challenges

Bearing in mind all that has been presented until now, it is hardly surprising that there is a huge conflict between writing practices in higher education and those learned during previous levels of education. Preliminary data from the pilot study, which interviewed teachers, led us to the belief that teachers regarded students as unprepared to pursue university studies, and they implicitly or openly blamed the educational system and the (lack of) preparation in secondary education.

However, according to our first questionnaire TQ1, the majority of the teachers totally agreed that students who are capable of writing well in secondary school are also competent writers in higher education. Most teachers also wholly agreed

that the texts that are requested from the students in higher education are more demanding than in previous levels, demonstrating that even though difficulty increases across these education levels, a good writer can still be a good writer. In a country where research on writing, particularly academic writing, is still just beginning, most of the respondent teachers partly agreed that students learn to write through the reading of texts (such as articles and books), an idea that has been proven by specialized research to be very limiting. Possibly due to the lack of specific guidance and training provided to the students (as stated by them in their questionnaire), teachers fully agree that students have great difficulties in writing a text that is not simply a collage of the sources.

On the one hand, one can understand from these results that teachers are still following some general ideas concerning students' writing competence that have been challenged by specific research on writing. But on the other hand, according to some of the answers from teachers and students, it is possible to understand that there are, in fact, efforts being made to improve this situation.

### 10.6.5 Academic and workplace genres

Regarding the relationship between studied genres of texts in higher education and genres used later on in workplaces and other professional contexts, it seems that proximity varies according to specific areas of study. Unfortunately, all the questionnaire surveys are very limited in addressing this topic. However, results from the pilot study, with its interviews to teachers, indicate that some courses, namely translation studies, chemistry, and biology, among others, do offer students the chance to practice the writing of genres used in the workplace (for example, "reports", "statements to employees", and "accounting or sustainability reports"). Other areas seem to foster writing activities that are more directed towards research purposes such as courses in psychology.

## 10.7 Data surveys

### 10.7.1 Genre frequency

Previously, results on the most used genres in higher education have already been given (please see subsections 5.1 and 5.2 of the previous chapter).

According to the TQ1 data, the most frequent genres used in higher education institutions in general are: the "research paper/assignment", which was the most used in the undergraduate and graduate phases before Bologna. Equally as frequent in the 1st and 2nd cycles of Bologna were both the "monograph" and "synthesis from various sources", which also happened to be more predominant in the 3rd cycle of Bologna. Dividing the data by type of education (public and

private), one can see that the public education institutions are homogenous in the genre most frequently used across all cycles, before and after Bologna, namely the “research paper/assignment”. Private education, however, demonstrates a greater diversity in the genres used from cycle to cycle. Before Bologna, private institutions seemed to particularly use “questionnaire answering” frequently in graduate studies and “research paper/assignment” in postgraduate studies. After Bologna, these institutions use more “synthesis from various sources” in the 1st cycle while they use the “monograph” in the 2nd cycle.

From the point of view of the SQ, the genres most often used by students are: “in-class note-taking” (Always: 54.7%), “reflective” and “research papers/assignments” (Frequently: 44.1% and 39.5%, respectively). Other genres frequently used by students are “summaries” (33.8%) and “in-class written tests” (32.7%).

Although the TQ1 and SQ questionnaires were designed in different ways, the data provided by both demonstrates that “research papers/assignments” is the most frequently requested genre in higher education in Portugal even though there appears to be a variety across different cycles of study and type of institution.

TQ1’s data demonstrates that the oral genres most frequently requested by teachers are the “oral presentation” and “defense of an assignment”. The first of these was the predominant oral genre in the phases before the Bologna Process, and it still is the most frequent oral genre in the 1st cycle of Bologna. In the 2nd and 3rd cycles of Bologna, the “defense of an assignment” appears to be the most frequently used oral genre. “Debate” is used moderately across the cycles of study. “Interviews” and “oral tests” are shown to be used with little frequency in all cycles.

### 10.7.2 Writing practices

SQ’s survey helps identify certain aspects that students consider to be more important for them in their assignments, particularly written ones. Students place great importance on reading and revising their assignments (49.4% and 52.5%, respectively). This demonstrates that the general association between reading and writing competences, from the perspective of the students, is important. The closed-ended question does not allow us to question whether reading helps students with content or genre knowledge, so for the purpose of this report, reading is here understood as generally very important. Students also attribute reasonable importance to the tasks: “brainstorming”, “planning”, and “writing of first draft”.

Despite the fact that we are obtaining data from multiple surveys, which makes the correlation between answers difficult, the practices described by the students

as important in their writing can be understood as the genres they work with most frequently, namely “research paper/assignment”, “monograph”, or “synthesis from various sources”.

### 10.7.3 Genres in disciplines

Although teachers still seem to agree with general ideas concerning students’ writing competence, which have been challenged by specific research on writing, such as the impact of reading on the development of this competence, and efforts are being made to improve this situation. TQ1 data demonstrates that teachers, across types of institution and study cycles, are more frequently concerned with guiding students both in terms of the contents and in the writing of the required text genres. Teachers claim to not only guide students in terms of the contents of a specific writing task, but to also focus on the writing itself. Teachers seem to be improving the procedures they use to request written texts from their students and on the kind of guidance and instruction they now provide the students, namely “written instructions on a genre”, “oral explanations on the genre”, and “availability to discuss with student in person”.

SQ demonstrates that students understand that they are frequently receiving specific instructions to guide them in writing or orally. Many students also affirm to having the chance to discuss their assignments with the teacher (30.3% sometimes and 27.0% frequently). Students seem to be receiving more feedback on their assignments even though a large percentage of them still state that they are only given a mark and nothing else (43.8% frequently and 20.4% always). Most of the feedback students are receiving is oral (40.6% frequently), but some written comments in the end (35.6%) or margins (31.1%) are also sometimes received by the students. When asked whether feedback from teachers helps them develop their writing skills, 59.2% of the students agreed that it does, thus showing the perceived relevance of this procedure in the development of student competences.

Despite past ideas that attributed a major role to reading in the development of the competences of written or oral expression of specific genres, current research demonstrates that specific instruction and feedback can be key factors in the development of students’ skills. According to the data obtained through our surveys, both instruction and feedback (sometimes not specifically on genre) are more commonly given to students.

The amount of textbooks on academic writing has been rising in the past years and a few generalizations can be made on the ones that are typical in Portuguese Higher Education. According to the teachers interviewed from the pilot study, the following are examples of books that some teachers advise students to consult, or they are books that students themselves choose to follow:



APA (American Psychological Association) manual for writing of scientific texts guidelines for citation of bibliography

This guide book is more broadly used than just in the field of Psychology.

Books with instructions on how to write a thesis, for example:

D'Oliveira, T. (2002). *Thesis and Dissertation: Recommendation for elaboration and for organization of scientific Works* [translation from original Portuguese]. Lisboa: Editora RH.

Eco, U. (1998). *Como se faz uma tese em Ciências Humanas* [How to do a thesis in Social Sciences] (7<sup>a</sup> ed.). Lisboa: Editorial Presença.

## 10.8 Bologna Process on writing

Finally, it is important that this chapter focus on the impact of the Bologna Process on higher education writing practices. The Bologna Process, as an attempt to harmonize the higher education organization among different European countries, has brought about the three cycles of study division. With the implementation of the Bologna Process, the 1st cycle and 2nd cycles correspond to 6 and 4 semesters, respectively, both in the polytechnic and the university institutions. The 3rd cycle, previously PhD studies, is exclusive to the university institutions. Notwithstanding the curricular alterations and the greater diversity of students attending higher education, the Bologna Process has become an eye-opener to the Portuguese Higher Education and its need to reflect upon the shortcomings of academic writing (Motta-Roth, 2006).

As previously demonstrated, the implementation of the Bologna Process has contributed to an alteration of the most frequently used genres in higher education. In the case of Portugal, Bologna has acted as a means to greater internationalization of the institutions. Mobility has been increasing, and it is achieving a greater diversity in teaching practices and in languages used.

## 10.9 Conclusion

Writing in Portuguese Higher education has undergone, as highlighted before, significant changes in the last few decades. The survey conducted, with all its questionnaires aimed both at higher education teachers and students, allows us to form a clearer image of the reality of writing practices being implemented in different higher education institutions across Portugal. However, data from the survey also clarifies the need for greater investment in research on writing in an academic context. It becomes evident that gaps between writing practices followed both in context prior to and following higher education studies still exist,

and overcoming these is only possible through significant changes in the approaches to writing in the academic context.

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## 11 Romania / By Mirela Borchin and Claudia Doroholschi

### 11.1 Introduction

Like in many other Eastern European countries, the Romanian educational system underwent a period of rapid change in the decades that have elapsed since the fall of Communism in 1989. Before 1945, Romanian Higher Education was shaped following the nineteenth century German and French (Napoleonic) models, with the latter stronger in Romania than in other Eastern European countries, since, as speakers of a Romance language, Romanians maintained a long-term link with French culture (Charle, 2004). After the Second World War, like in the other countries in the region, the Soviet model largely replaced the traditional ones (Rüegg & Sadlak, 2011). The past twenty years have seen a large number of educational reforms, as well as an increasing impact of UK and US models, due to factors such as the internationalization of higher education, the widespread use of English in scientific and professional communities, and, since 2007, EU accession and the increased mobility of academics, researchers, and students.

This resulted in a dynamic and complex landscape, which is reflected in the academic writing practices and writing genres used at the tertiary level. The genre system is heterogeneous, with genre norms often not consolidated, differing widely between institutions and disciplines and changing rapidly due to external influences or educational reforms. Therefore, it is difficult to paint an accurate picture of genre systems in all Romanian Higher Education institutions, especially since there is still little research in the field of genre (or in the field of academic writing in general) in Romania and little data on genre use. There are, however, several tendencies which seem widespread: a growing interest in academic writing and in teaching specific genres needed for professional and academic mobility; a gradual shift from writing used almost exclusively as a means of assessment to writing used for learning, or for teaching disciplinary discourse, and the increasing influence of English and the Anglo-Saxon genre system.

The present report is based on the data from a small-scale research undertaken in spring 2012 at the West University of Timișoara by the authors (Mirela Borchin, senior lecturer in Romanian linguistics, with a background in pragmatics and orthography, and Claudia Doroholschi, lecturer in English language and literature, with a background in literature, creative writing, and ESL writing). We conducted a series of informal interviews and open-ended questionnaires with faculty in several different disciplines at the West University of Timișoara, we examined existing curricula in our institution and in other Romanian universities, as well as the existing literature on academic writing, and corroborated these with our own experience as teachers and supervisors.

In what follows, we will first outline our own conceptions of genre and place them within the wider context of Romanian conceptions of genre. We then look into the teaching of genre in Romanian universities and focus on our own institution, at-

tempting to establish what genres are prevalent. We also briefly assess the transition between writing genres in secondary and tertiary education as well as the impact of the Bologna Process upon writing genres in Romania.

## 11.2 Approaches to genre

### 11.2.1 Our perception of genre

The notion of genre is the result of a synthesis of theories, which circumscribe it flexibly from a semiotic, structural, and functional point of view. The dominant approach to genre in Romania is based on neoclassical, structuralist, and functional theories, as advanced mainly in the classical domains of philological studies. These are completed unsystematically, especially in newer disciplines such as journalism, by newer theoretical perspectives, whose impact has not been studied or quantified so far. This fluctuation between older and newer theories means that at present the term genre is understood in very different ways: it may denote a certain mode (narrative-epic, dialogic-dramatic, lyrical) as well as the categories of texts which pertain to one of these modes (novel, poetry, tragedy, comedy). It may also mean all the written and oral texts within a certain field (academic genre, journalistic genre) as well as each individual type of text (the written/oral examination, the seminar paper, the essay, the lab report, the bachelor's thesis, etc.).

In our view, genre implies a large class of goal-oriented communicative events which serve as a prototype (model) for further events of the kind in a certain community/domain of social life/culture/arts etc., for instance academic genres (the seminar paper, the diploma paper, the master's thesis, the doctoral dissertation, the essay, the lab report etc.), literary genres, musical genres, journalistic genres. On the one hand, the function of genres is that of a classificatory tool which helps place a text within a certain category. In addition to that, they may be a factor of unity within the system, since there are genres which occur in almost all disciplines (in the case of academic writing, for instance, the seminar paper, the diploma paper or the dissertation), but also a factor of diversity, since various disciplines have their own genre repertoire. Genre represents both a factor of stability since genre norms may be formulated explicitly, taught, and perpetuated institutionally. They may also show a factor of change since genres constantly emerge, diversify, overlap, or are abandoned.

In broad lines, this perception of genre is influenced by the neo-classical and structuralist orientations in literary theory (Genette, 1994; Hamburger, 1986) but also by those in functional linguistics, as genres are seen as cultural, social products having a certain functional structure through which their users are integrated within the community and participate actively in its evolution.

### 11.2.2 Genre theory in Romania

In Romania, there are few theoretical studies dedicated to academic genres and therefore no unitary vision exists in this respect, even in the case of genres generally practiced within the educational system, such as diploma theses or PhD dissertations, which are required in all universities after the whole tertiary system adhered to the Bologna Process in 2005 as stipulated by Law No. 288/ 2004.

The small number of existing academic writing guides and textbooks usually un-systematically follow the international literature in the field (predominantly French or Anglo-Saxon), and they tend to create a hybrid between the structures and norms recommended by these sources and those traditional in Romanian academic writing. Therefore, theoretical approaches are not affiliated to a certain school but instead are heterogeneous and do not define what may be considered a Romanian perspective in genre research. However, due to the study of literary theory in both high schools and philology faculties, the prevailing perception of genre is one derived from literary theory, transferring notions traditional in the understanding of literary genres to other types of texts written in various other academic disciplines.

Traditionally, genres are seen as a system of common text features which function as generative models (of structuring texts which belong to a certain genre). This approach to genre is derived from Genette (*Introduction à l'architexte*, Romanian translation 1994), the Russian formalist school and Käte Hamburger who writes from neoclassical and structuralist approaches which sustain, in broad lines, the idea that genres help not only the structuring/generation of texts, but also that of the social realities or events “in ways that prove important for the teaching of writing” (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 20).

Genette points out the complexity of the structural, thematic, and aesthetic features of literary texts and coins the term architextuality, which he defines as “the relationship of inclusion which exists between each text and the various types of discourse in which it originates” (Genette, 1994, p. 87–88). In *The Logic of Literature/La Logique des genres littéraires* (1986, p. 77), Käte Hamburger speaks of two main literary modes: the fictional and the lyrical. Linking the two theories, Doina Comloșan states that genres are historical categories of literary texts which are subordinated to a historical mode (narrative, dramatic, lyrical). Thus, genres are subordinated to modes which presuppose a certain relationship between fiction and diction as well as between subjectivity and diction respectively (Comloșan & Borchin, 2003, p. 120–129), a perspective briefly illustrated in the following table:

<b>The fictional mode</b>		<b>The lyrical mode</b>
Fiction prevails upon diction		Subjectivity prevails upon diction
<b>The narrative mode</b>	<b>The dramatic mode</b>	<b>The lyrical mode</b>
The epic, the novel etc.	The tragedy, the comedy, the bourgeois drama, the theatre of the absurd etc.	The poetry of the troubadours

Table 4: Discursive modes in Romanian academic genres

Besides structuralist theories, the conception of genre is also shaped by the reception theory outlined by Paul Cornea (1998, *Introducere în teoria lecturii*//An Introduction to the Theory of Reading). In his view, genre offers templates for reading being one of the most important “reading keys”, or ways of controlling meaning and preventing “accidents” in reception. This is a reading response approach to genre consistent with that expressed by Hirsch, who sees genre as an interpretive framework in which a reader’s “‘preliminary generic conceptions’ are ‘constitutive of everything that he subsequently understands’” (in Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 23).

In the field of social sciences and humanities, recent approaches to genre are influenced by cultural studies orientations, which point to the ideological basis of literary and non-literary genres and “define and use genres to examine dynamic relations between literary texts and historically situated social practices and structures” (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 24); “a society chooses and codifies the [speech] acts that correspond most closely to its ideology; that is why the existence of certain genres in one society, and their absence in another, are revelatory of that ideology” (Todorov, in Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p.24). In the other disciplines (natural sciences, mathematics, theology, arts, law), genres are accessed empirically, with the image of genre resulting more or less clearly from the actual practice of genre.

The characteristic aspect of academic writing in Romanian at the moment is that writing genres are practiced intuitively or by imitation, in two main directions: writing to learn and learning to write, with different goals in the various disciplines. The practice of these genres at university is essential for the students’ eventual integration within a certain field of activity. Training in specific writing genres helps them to understand and obey genre conventions, to deal adequately with writing in their respective fields, to understand degrees of formality, text organization, and editing norms. Steps have been made in this direction, with academics beginning to produce studies and textbooks in the field, but these are usually individual attempts with low distribution beyond the boundaries of one faculty or department (e.g. Mariana Brandl-Gherga, *Genuri publicistice. Curs universitar*/Journalistic Genres. A University Course, 1999; Mariana Pitar, *Genurile textului injonctiv*/The Genres of the Instructive Text, 2007), and, generally speaking, genre theory is far behind genre practice in Romanian universities.



### 11.2.3 Genre teaching in Romania

The lack of textbooks and guidelines in the field is probably one of the reasons why professors in the various disciplines resort to an implicit methodology of genre teaching, relying on students' 'intuition' of genre and their capacity for exploration. The fact that students are used to mimetic learning from high school supports this implicit teaching of genre, and they usually rely on their own resourcefulness to cope, sometimes with good results.

Romanian genre teaching is generally consistent with the model proposed by Freedman for the 4-stage learning of genre:

1. The learners approach the task with a 'dimly felt sense' of the new genre they are attempting.
2. They begin composing by focusing on the specific content to be embodied in this genre.
3. In the course of the composing, this 'dimly felt sense' of the genre is both formulated and modified as (a) this 'sense,' (b) the composing processes, and (c) the unfolding text interrelated and modify each other.
4. On the basis of external feedback (the grade assigned), the learners either confirm or modify their map of the genre (in Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 178–179). According to Freedman, "full genre knowledge... only becomes available as a result of having written" (in Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p.179), which is true for many of our students. They know what a bachelor's/master's thesis, PhD dissertation is only after they have completed it. Thus, characteristic to Romanian genre teaching is the impressionist, empirical manner in which genres are taught and learned.

## 11.3 Genres within the Romanian university system

### 11.3.1 Types of higher education institutions and implications for writing genres

#### **State vs. private**

In Romania there are both state and private universities, with the former being more numerous and generally larger. State universities are partly financed by the state and partly self-financed, and they offer both state-funded and fee-paying places. Although an official classification of universities was only made in 2011, prestige is generally held by state over private universities, and by older (pre-1989) universities over more recently established ones. A number of smaller private universities have also begun to build up a reputation, with some of them being the result of international co-operation.

In the case of state universities, the system evolved from a selective one in which prospective students competed in a highly demanding entrance examination for relatively few state-funded places to a comprehensive one in which most state

universities have given up the entrance examination and now select students based on their baccalaureate marks and high school records. There is an increase in fee-paying places meaning that many more students are accepted in state universities.

This “democratization” has entailed a certain loss of prestige of university education in general and has been perceived as a fall in quality. In terms of writing, this has had several consequences:

a) the fact that students no longer take a written entrance examination in the discipline(s) of their future studies as was the case before 1989, but instead they take a broader baccalaureate examination, which means that they focus less on preparing specifically for the subjects that they will study at university, resulting in a perception that they are generally less well prepared (including less well prepared for writing in their chosen disciplines).

b) the fact that state universities have been accommodating larger numbers of students resulted in larger groups of students and more students per tutor. Hence, the number of written seminar papers has decreased, and many tutors do not give feedback on written papers; conversely, the number of written exams has increased because it is easier to manage written exams rather than oral exams with great numbers of students.

### **Universities of education, research, and advanced research**

As far as university types are concerned, some Romanian universities are more vocationally- or professionally-oriented (polytechnics, universities of medicine and pharmacy, universities of agricultural science, and veterinary medicine) while the others are pluri-disciplinary universities which include humanities and science, and possibly law and economics. There is a certain variation in the pattern in the sense that law, economics, or arts sometimes function as separate universities. The 2011 ranking of tertiary education institutions in Romania divides these into universities that focus mainly on education, universities which focus on education and research, and universities of education and advanced research. This classification is used as a criterion for ministry funding, with universities of education and advanced research awarded more funds and more places for PhD programs.

### **Centralization and decentralization**

The educational system in Romania is partially decentralized, in the sense that recent educational reform has managed to move away from the centralized pre-1989 system to a hybrid system which at least in theory promotes the autonomy of universities, but which in practice maintains a significant degree of control both through the Law of Education and through the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). Since Romania adhered to the Bologna Process, all universities have adopted the three-tiered system: bachelor’s degree/*licență* (usually 3 years; exceptions are 4-year bachelor’s programs in law, theology, music, or engineering and 6-year bachelor’s programs in medicine or

architecture), master's degree/*masterat* (2 years), and PhD/*doctorat* (3 years). By law, each degree concludes with a thesis, irrespective of the discipline, and PhDs are validated by a national board. While universities may choose and devise their own programs of study, they need to undergo an accreditation process by ARA-CIS. Study programs have to fall within domains approved by the ministry, and they have to obey certain general or discipline-specific requirements among which the length in weeks of each semester (14), the number of credits per semester (30), the number of hours per week (20–28), the ratio between lectures on the one hand and seminars or other practically-oriented classes such as laboratories on the other (1:1), the number of written exams (at least 4 in each session) and, at the bachelor's (but not the master level) level, a number of core subjects which must be included within a particular type of program. Beyond these, universities are free to include other relevant subjects and devise their own assessment procedures, with study programs normally devised by faculties or departments, and each individual lecturer is free to establish the content and syllabus of his or her own course.

Consequently, there are writing genres which are universally required within each stage of the educational system such as the bachelor's thesis, the master's thesis, and the PhD dissertation. There may also be an in-class written examination as well as others which are implicit in the traditional division lecture/seminar/practical class (laboratory, etc.), for example, notes, seminar papers, or lab reports.

### 11.3.2 Official languages in academia. The role of other languages

In Romania, the official language is Romanian, and it is used as the main language of study in most universities. However, there are numerous minorities in several areas of the country, including a significant Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Consequently, there are several universities which offer courses in different L1s or a combination of Romanian and another L1. For example, the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj offers courses in Romanian, Hungarian, and German as L1 (at present, out of the 21 faculties, 17 offer programs in Romanian and Hungarian and 11 in Romanian and German). Two of these (reformed theology and Roman-Catholic theology) courses are exclusively in Hungarian. The University of Medicine and Pharmacy and the University of Arts in Târgu-Mureş, as well as the private universities Partium of Oradea and Sapientia of Cluj, also offer courses in Hungarian.

Apart from Romanian and minority languages, a number of second languages are sometimes used as languages of education. The most popular of these is English, which is taught in most schools. There are many high schools in which a modern language is taught intensively and also in some 'bilingual' high schools (which implies that some of the subjects are studied in a second language). The national high school graduation exam, the *baccalaureate*, also involves a foreign

language test, which results in many high school graduates handling a second language, usually English, at least at a conversational level.

After 1990, many Romanian universities, especially in fields such as engineering, computer science, or medicine, have started to offer some courses in English (and sometimes German) aimed at foreign students, students who want to prepare for an international career, or those intending to work in multinational companies in Romania. Within languages departments, in which students usually study two foreign languages or a foreign language in combination with Romanian language and literature, the teaching and writing within L2 courses always takes place in L2, and students are expected to produce a diploma thesis in L2.

The West University of Timișoara, for instance, offers various bachelor's programs in L2: computer science in English and international relations and European studies in German. It also has four master's programs in English: two in physics and two in mathematics and computer science (the programs in L2 represent approximately 12% of the study programs offered by the West University of Timișoara). In addition to these, the faculty of letters, history, and theology offer courses in modern languages and literatures and applied modern languages which follow the Romanian tradition described above. Students study two foreign languages or a foreign language in combination with Romanian. Besides the courses that take place in L2, they also have several core courses that are taught in Romanian.

### 11.3.3 Genres required for graduating an academic cycle

The 2011 Law of Education stipulates that bachelor's programs in all disciplines conclude with a bachelor's thesis (*lucrare de licență*) or diploma paper (*lucrare de diplomă*), which must also be defended in front of a board of examiners. At the bachelor's level, in addition to submitting and defending their thesis, starting with 2012 (according to the 2011 Law of Education), students also have to sit a final examination, which may be oral or written and should evaluate the fundamental knowledge and level of competences acquired. Possible types of tasks include text analyses, multiple choice tasks, translations, etc. At the master's level, all students are required to produce a master's thesis, which is also submitted in writing and then defended.

Recently, faculties have begun to post brief guidelines and requirements for the diploma paper that include structure, citation styles, formatting, etc. on their websites, but implicit assumptions and distinctions (such as how much original research is to be conducted by the student or what original research means in a certain discipline) are not always made clear to students and differ from one tutor to another, even within the same department. Despite the fact that there is a national board that approves all PhD titles awarded by the individual universities,

there are few official guidelines for the PhD thesis, and each individual PhD supervisor often sets his or her own set of requirements.

Master's theses are the least clearly defined genre, and they are generally seen as an intermediate stage between the diploma thesis and the PhD thesis, usually longer than the former and shorter than the latter, but the differences between the three types of theses are often not made explicit. The assumption is that there should be an evolution in terms of quality from one to the other, as well as in terms of the significance of the student's original contribution, but what exactly this means is often decided by each supervisor.

#### **11.3.4 Academic writing at the West University of Timișoara**

The amount of writing done, as well as the way in which writing is used vary across the disciplines, with some of them (e.g., sciences such as mathematics, computer science, or arts) using writing less than, for example, the humanities. Writing is frequently used for assessment purposes, with many courses ending in a mandatory in-class written examination, especially at bachelor's level. At the graduate level, in-class written exams tend to be replaced by out-of-class papers.

University courses may include lectures (talks given by the professor to a large group of students) and seminars (smaller group sessions, often discussing in more detail or applying the knowledge provided by a lecture) or practical classes (workshops, laboratories, or practice sessions, depending on the discipline). Some courses traditionally combine a lecture and a seminar, with the input given during the lecture tested through a written or oral examination with a separate seminar mark or seminar points (awarded for attendance, participation, seminar paper, or a combination thereof) often included in the final assessment.

There is generally little in-class writing (except, for course, notes and written examinations), with more in-class writing produced in disciplines such as languages and literatures or applied modern languages. In most disciplines, the approach is product- rather than process-oriented, and students are assessed on finished written pieces which seldom undergo redrafting.

#### **11.3.5 Writing support**

In Romania there is no coherent national policy on writing development, and little out-of-class support is provided to students and researchers. There is no tradition of maintaining writing centers within universities. At university level, there is an assumption that students' secondary education should prepare them for aca-

ademic study, including academic writing, and there is a degree of frustration on behalf of tutors that students' skills upon enrollment at university are insufficient.

In universities, writing development is mostly the work of individuals and usually not undertaken systematically. Seminar tutors who read students' written assignments or thesis supervisors are the ones who decide how much advanced guidance and feedback to give students on their writing, although some departments and faculties are increasingly offering writing courses, especially at the graduate level.

The relative amount of freedom means that norms are often arbitrary, these vary largely in value, and so does the amount of support students get for their writing. However, it also has the advantage that it offers opportunities for bottom-up reform in the system, with many supervisors improving their own work and disseminating good practice.

The need for extra writing support is often voiced by students, researchers, and teachers, with the latter deploring the lack of extra teaching time to be devoted to developing writing skills. Writing centers would be a very good solution to help deal with this issue as they would provide support and guidance for academic writing to both staff and students and also act as a research center to help understand writing practices, to foster research-based teaching, and to act as a hub for writing development in the various departments of the university. We are aware of two initiatives to open writing centers in Romania: West University of Timișoara and Ștefan cel Mare University in Suceava. The Timișoara writing center was initiated by a group of researchers at the faculty of letters, history, and theology as a result of the LIDHUM project, a SCOPES partnership among several countries (Macedonia, Romania, Switzerland, and Ukraine). The main goals of the center are to promote the introduction of writing courses in the university curriculum, to provide teaching and training resources to staff and students, and to create a group of well-trained teachers and researchers with an interest in academic writing. The writing center is not funded by the university, but rather it relies on the members' interest in promoting writing and on their using part of their regular workload for writing-related activities (teaching writing courses, undertaking research, workshops for staff and students). There is as of now no one-on-one tutoring for students, but there are plans for creating a peer tutor team in the future.

### 11.3.6 The relation between genres used at secondary and tertiary level

Traditionally, teaching in Romanian high schools has been very teacher-centred, with teachers seen as information holders and students' main responsibility being to accumulate as much knowledge as possible. In recent years, various reforms have attempted to change this, with what seems to be a partial degree of success.

In school, writing genres are connected to the several ways in which writing is used: functional (objective, practical), reflective (implying interpretation, argumentation, subjectivity), or imaginative (related to fiction, personal expression). High school teaches a number of functional genres which students later use or expand upon at university. The baccalaureate syllabus for 2011 and 2012 (*Subiecte examene naționale 2010–2011*) outlines the specific writing competences which are tested within the high school graduation examination in Romanian language and literature (obligatory for all students as part of the baccalaureate) and enumerates the genres that students should master. Students are expected to use writing techniques that are “compatible with the communication situation”; to obey general writing “rules” (“text organization, task achievement, stylistic appropriacy, layout, legibility”); to master citation norms, Romanian spelling and grammar, and to be able to express their opinions on literary and non-literary texts. It also mentions a number of specific functional genres: *relatarea unei experiențe personale* (account of a personal experience), *descriere* (description), *povestire* (narrative), *argumentare* (argument), *știri* (news items), *anunțuri publicitare* (advertisements), *corespondență privată și oficială* (personal and official letters), *cerere* (application), *proces verbal* (minutes), curriculum vitae, *scrisoare de intenție* (letter of intent), *scrisoarea în format electronic* (email) (letters in electronic format – e-mail). Some are related to literary analysis or more broadly academic: *argumentare* (argument), *rezumat* (summary), *caracterizare de personaj* (characterisation), *analiză* (analysis), *comentariu* (commentary – by which in the Romanian context a comprehensive type of literary analysis is understood, containing elements of biography, context, narrative technique, stylistics, etc.; it is often prepared by a teacher and learned by the students to be reproduced at the baccalaureate), *sinteză* (synthesis), *paralelă* (parallel/comparison), *eseu structurat* (structured essay), *eseu liber/nestructurat* (free/unstructured essay). These genres are taught explicitly during Romanian classes while some of them (such as the essay, text analysis, or synthesis) are used in other subjects as well.

Despite this fact, the quasi-general perception is that by the time they get to university students have not acquired adequate writing skills and cannot master most of the genres enumerated above and that indiscriminate compilation of sources and plagiarism are extensively tolerated in high school. Most tutors complain that university students have difficulty in several major areas:

- note-taking
- undertaking independent work
- doing library research, gathering and citing sources, avoiding plagiarism
- reading sources critically
- spelling and grammar
- text organization

More research should be undertaken to identify the extent to which this perception is accurate and the underlying causes. We can speculate that, starting from high school, students are often used to the passive role of an information receiver.



er, which they also transfer to the way in which they deal with writing tasks (compiling sources rather than interpreting them), and feel unprepared to be independent and take responsibility for their research and their ideas. Other factors may be related to the type of teaching undertaken in high schools: from the crammed high school syllabi and to the fact that educational reform at the secondary level is usually implemented top-down, with each of the post-1989 governments formulating their own educational policies, often in contradiction with the previous ones. Thus, for example, 2011 reforms issued by the Ministry of Education, some of which specifically target writing improvement at secondary level, are often regarded as inefficient. A recent ministry directive requires teachers to introduce an “orthographic moment” within the Romanian language and literature classes at the secondary level in order to improve students’ spelling (a measure criticized by teachers, who argue that its introduction within regular lessons is time consuming and that there is not enough time to devote to correction and explanations within a regular lesson, rendering the task ineffective). Also, the new Law of Education stipulates the evaluation of students at secondary level through national exams every two years, which should stimulate students to improve their knowledge and level of competences, including writing competences. Teachers, on the other hand, worry that sitting frequent examinations will increase anxiety in the students rather than learning. However, given the fact that these reforms are only beginning to be implemented, their long term effects cannot yet be estimated. The fact that there are clear attempts to improve teaching strategy through coherent national policies is a positive development, and so are several other reforms undertaken in recent years, such as shifting (at least in theory) the focus of secondary education from the acquisition of knowledge to the development of competences.

In what follows, we will try to give a personal view of the evolution of writing genres from high school to university, based on our experience at the West University of Timișoara.

Taught in high school (within Romanian language and literature classes, according to national curricula)	Used and/or taught at university
<b>FUNCTIONAL</b>	
relatarea unei experiențe personale (account of a personal experience), descriere (description), povestire (narrative)	Little or not at all
știri (news items), anunțuri publicitare (advertisements)	Taught (and diversified) in disciplines such as journalism; little used otherwise
corespondență privată și oficială (personal and official letters), scrisoarea în format electronic (e-mail) (letters in electronic format – email)	Used – correspondence between students, students and teachers, etc. Sometimes taught explicitly in L2 courses, with differences between L1 and L2 norms highlighted

cerere (application), proces verbal (minutes), curriculum vitae, scrisoare de intenție (letter of intent)	Used – applications for hostels, for transferring to another university, for defending a diploma thesis, letters of intent for scholarships or course enrollment etc.
<b>LITERARY ANALYSIS (OR GENERALLY ACADEMIC)</b>	
argumentare (argument)	Used – but expectations change from predominantly personal opinion in high school to impersonal, academic argument
rezumat (summary)	Used
analiză (analysis), paralelă (parallel/comparison), eseu structurat (structured essay), sinteză (synthesis)	Used, but with changes in assumptions and demands, depending on discipline.
eseu liber/nestructurat (free/unstructured essay).	Probably less used than in high school
caracterizare de personaj (characterization)	Sometimes used in literature courses (as part of the languages and literatures degrees), at the bachelor's level
comentariu (commentary – by which in the Romanian context is understood as a comprehensive type of literary analysis, containing elements of biography, context, narrative technique, stylistics etc.; it is often prepared by a teacher and learned by the students to be reproduced at the baccalaureate)	Not used. Students in literature courses often transfer the rules of the “comentariu” to literary analysis assignments, even when they specifically require a different genre (e.g., an argumentative essay).
	Multiple new genres, general or discipline-specific: the seminar paper, the lab report, the archeological report, the lesson plan, the interview, the case study, the conference paper; the bachelor's/master's/ PhD thesis etc.
<b>ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION</b>	
Test papers (brief in-class tests), used at least once or twice in each subject	Rarely, in-class quick check tests
Term papers (teză) – a more extensive written test which students must take at the end of each semester in a few major subjects	Written exams, usually at the end of the semester, sometimes also mid-term
Out-of-class projects or portfolios	Projects, portfolios
baccalaureate examination	Bachelor's examination
Atestat (certificate) examinations – written and defended mini-theses used in certain types of	Bachelor's, master's, and PhD theses

high schools to obtain a final certificate (e.g., bilingual high schools, where students produce a not necessarily very original paper on a subject related to the modern language and literature they have been studying intensively)	
	New genres: semester papers, seminar papers, research papers, etc.

Table 5: Genres taught at secondary level vs. genres taught at tertiary level at Romanian universities

In conclusion, although the high school curriculum does aim at preparing students for a number of genres that they will use in their future work and/or study, it seems to prepare students better in what the genres of functional writing are concerned, and leave students less prepared for the academic writing requirements of university.

### 11.3.7 The relationship between academic genres and genres used at the workplace

The relationship between academic genres and genres used at the workplace differs widely from one discipline to another. In some cases it plays a role in whether students find employment in the field in which they have been trained at university (fields such as political science, public relations, European studies, arts etc. notoriously attract a large number of students, few of whom work in a related field after graduation).

In disciplines such as mathematics or computer science, little writing is undertaken at university, and only a limited amount of writing is later required at the workplace. In the humanities, academic writing genres such as the seminar paper, the research paper, and the thesis are no longer used unless the student is employed in research. In some disciplines, on the other hand, university prepares students directly for the kind of writing they are expected to use at the workplace: students who are preparing to become teachers learn to write lesson plans and course syllabi, law students write pleas, sociology students are trained to produce interviews and questionnaires, and journalism students extensively practice most types of journalistic writing. However, for a definitive conclusion, more research should be undertaken into the amount of writing and the genres required at the workplace in Romania, since our perception is that comparatively little writing is generally required in most types of employment.

## 11.4 Genre practices at the West University of Timișoara

### 11.4.1 Writing genres

There are genres used across all the disciplines taught at university such as course notes, the referat (which may mean different things depending on discipline or tutor, from the compilation of sources to case study, argumentative essay or seminar paper presented orally in class), the essay, the bachelor's thesis, the master's thesis, the PhD dissertation, the conference paper. However, individual requirements for each of these differ from one discipline to another, and there are numerous discipline-specific genres. In what follows, we will exemplify some of these.

Disciplines	Genres	Observations
<b>A. Biology</b>	<i>Protocoale experimentale</i> (experimental protocols)	Detailed outlines of the stages of an experiment
	<i>Lucrări de laborator</i> (laboratory papers/reports)	Present the results of laboratory research on a given topic
<b>B. Physics</b>	<i>Lucrări de laborator</i> (laboratory papers/reports)	Present the result of laboratory research which checks a law or a hypothetical result
<b>C. Journalism</b>	<i>Știrea</i> (the news item) <i>Articolul de informare</i> (the informative article) <i>Anunțul</i> (the announcement) <i>Relatarea</i> (the account) <i>Reportajul</i> (the feature) <i>Comunicatul de presă</i> (the press release) <i>Interviul</i> (the interview) <i>Cronica</i> (the review) <i>Tableta jurnalistică</i> (the commentary) <i>Editorialul</i> (the leading article) <i>Analiza unui produs media</i> (the analysis of a media product)	
<b>D. Communication and Public Relations</b>	Functional writing genres: <i>memoriul de activitate</i> (report of professional or scientific activity) <i>curriculum vitae</i> , <i>scrisoarea de intenție</i> (letter of intent), <i>referatul</i> , <i>procesul-verbal</i> (minutes);  Communicating within the organization: <i>E-mailul</i> (the email), <i>raportul de</i>	

	<p><i>activitate</i> (the activity report), <i>dosarele/fișierele de presă</i> (the press folder), <i>newsletterul</i> (the newsletter)</p> <p>External communication of the organization: <i>Raportul anual</i> (the annual report), <i>buletinul informativ</i> (the information bulletin), <i>broșuri</i> (brochures), <i>pliante</i> (leaflets), <i>fluturași</i> (flyers), <i>reviste</i> (magazines)</p> <p>Communicating with the media: <i>Comunicatul de presă</i> (the press release), <i>declarația de presă</i> (the press statement), <i>anunțul</i> (the announcement)</p>	
<b>E. Drama</b>	<p><i>Portofoliul dramatic/traseul dramatic</i> (the drama portfolio)</p> <p><i>Portretele unor personaje</i> (character portraits)</p> <p><i>Scenete</i> (sketches), <i>texte dramatice</i> (dramatic texts)</p>	Used by acting students to understand a part or to develop creativity and a personal theatrical language
<b>F. Law</b>	<i>Pledoaria</i> (the plea)	Used by law students to practise argumentation for and against and using evidence; practice for their workplace, where pleas are normally written before they are delivered in court
<b>G. Theology</b>	<i>Predica</i> (the sermon)	Practices the language and message required by a sermon
<b>H. Sociology</b>	<i>Interviul</i> (the interview), <i>chestionarul</i> (the questionnaire)	Are devised and then applied by students in order to obtain and interpret data
<b>I. Philology</b>	<p><i>analiza literară</i> (the literary analysis)</p> <p><i>analiza gramaticală</i> (the grammatical/linguistic analysis)</p> <p><i>analiza pragmatică</i> (the pragmatic analysis)</p> <p><i>recenzia</i> (the review)</p>	

Table 6: Examples of discipline-specific genres

### 11.4.2 Oral genres

Oral genres frequently used at the West University of Timișoara include some genres which occur widely in all disciplines such as responding in class during seminars and lectures, presenting papers, essays or reviews, oral exams (involving narrative, argumentative, explanatory, or descriptive discourses), conference presentations, thesis defences as well as some genres which are discipline-specific: pleas (law), sermons (theology); debates, panels, workshops, group discussions of certain themes (for instance, in communication and public relations); interviews (journalism or sociology).

In some cases, oral presentations are given on the basis of written notes or a written paper (e.g., pleas, sermons, some seminar papers). Genres, such as the referat (seminar paper), may be understood as a) a written paper submitted by the student, not presented orally; b) a written paper submitted by the student, presented orally in class; c) an oral presentation during a seminar, based on an informal paper or notes not handed in to the instructor.

### 11.4.3 Examples of writing assignments

1. Political science – essay (often includes a theoretical component and a case study):  
Students are given a question, e.g., “Why are some states that are rich in natural resources underdeveloped?” and are asked to research the topic and give arguments in support of their own view.
2. Journalism – news item:  
“Transform the following press release into a developed news item” (the text of the press release is attached).  
Feature: “Write a human interest feature on the following subject:” (clear instructions given).  
Paper (*referat*): “Write a paper on the following topic: ‘Pressures and tensions in the work of a journalist’” (bibliographical resources and specific requirements regarding the form of the text are given).
3. Physics  
Lab report (*lucrare de laborator*): “The study of the gravitational pendulum as linear harmonic oscillator. Determining the value of gravitational acceleration with the aid of the elastic pendulum”. Students normally work in pairs, with one of them making the measurements and the other writing up the results; the aim of the activity is that of validating a law or a theory through practical measurements recorded in tables or represented as graphs.
4. Philology
  - a) Pragmatic analysis (*analiza pragmatică*) (course in pragmatics, graduate level): students are given a text:  
“*Tu ar trebui să faci ca alții să nu îndrăznească a mă săruta*”

and are asked to analyse the global context of the communication, characteristics such as subjectivity, intention, desired effect, as well as the communicative value of the statement.

- b) Essay (*eseu*) (American literature, American studies, graduate level): write a 2–3,000 word essay focusing on a book or books of choice from the course reading list. The essay should make a clear argument about a well-defined topic (have a clear thesis that it demonstrates) and should properly referenced bibliographical background. The thesis has to be approved by the tutor in advance.

#### 11.4.4 The acquisition of genres

At the West University of Timișoara, the teaching of genre is usually implicit. In many disciplines, usually the sciences or those that see themselves as more applied (mathematics, physics, arts, music), there is little or no writing support. The approach is often trial and error, with students receiving little feedback beyond the final mark, and the amount of explanations and feedback they receive depending largely on the instructors.

On the other hand, in disciplines where writing is seen as central for the students' future career, such as journalism or languages and literatures, there is far more support for writing and opportunities for practice are given. In journalism, for example, there are specialized courses and workshops and students are given regular feedback on their work.

The following is an example of explicit teaching of genre as undertaken within the course entitled "Writing Journalistic Texts":

1. The genre is presented theoretically, either in writing (printed course/seminar materials) or orally (explained during the lectures or seminars);
2. The genre is illustrated through one or more written texts which are read and discussed;
3. The genre can be done individually or collaboratively, the students write a text in the genre;
4. The text is feedbacked and accepted as such or has to undergo revisions/ re-writing.

As far as writing courses are concerned, many disciplines offer none, but there are a few in humanities departments. Examples are the compulsory course for first and second year students at languages and literatures and applied modern languages or the first year optional course on academic writing for students in political science. Some master's programs also include writing courses or courses on how to do research. At the faculty of letters, history, and theology, master's programs include a course on dissertation writing in the last semester. A similar course exists in the communication and public relations graduate program in the first semester.



### 11.4.5 Romanian books on academic writing

There are no standard, widely read textbooks on academic writing in Romania. There are several more widely recommended books on writing a bachelor's thesis or a research paper (our English translations of the titles are given in brackets):

Eco, U. (2006). *Cum se face o teză de licență* [How to Write a Thesis]. Iași: Polirom.

Rad, I. (2008). *Cum se scrie un text științific: disciplinele umaniste* [How to Write a Research Paper: the Humanities]. Iași: Polirom.

Chelcea, S. (2003). *Metodologia elaborării unei lucrări științifice* [How to Write a Research Paper]. București: Comunicare.ro.

Spelling, grammar, and punctuation guides:

*Dicționarul ortografic, ortoepic și morfologic al limbii române* (DOOM). [Orthographic, Orthoepic and Morphological Dictionary of the Romanian Language]. (2005). București: Univers Enciclopedic.

Borchin, M. (2007). *Manual universitar de ortografie și punctuație* [A University Textbook of Spelling and Punctuation]. Timișoara: Excelsior Art.

Petraș, I. (2004). *Mic îndreptar de scriere corectă* [Brief Guide of Correct Writing]. Pitești: Paralela 45.

In addition to these, there are several guides written by tutors in various disciplines, in many cases with local, rather than national circulation. Here is an incomplete list of examples from the West University of Timișoara:

Brandl-Gherga, M. (1999). *Genuri și stiluri jurnalistice. Reportajul* [Journalistic Genres and Styles. The Feature]. Timișoara: University of Timișoara Press. (course textbook)

Brandl-Gherga, M. (2002). *Reportajul jurnalist* [The Feature]. Timișoara: ArtPress.

Pitar, M. (2007). *Genurile textului injonctiv* [The Genres of the Instructive Text]. Timișoara: Excelsior Art.

### 11.4.6 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing

In theory, the long three-tiered university system implied by the Bologna Process, ending in a PhD thesis, should create a favorable environment for the practice and development of writing in a variety of genres. Each stage of academic study ends in a written thesis, and the PhD also involves writing and defending 2–3 papers and two written/oral examinations.

However, the impact of the Bologna Process on student writing is generally perceived as a negative one. According to colleagues we have interviewed,

- shortening the duration of bachelor's programs from 4–5 years to 3–4 has meant that students end up writing less over their course of study and have less time to develop their writing skills;
- there is insufficient time to prepare a good thesis;
- theses have to be written too soon after one another;
- there is insufficient time for students to practice 'professional' genres, which prepare them for their workplace.

In addition to these, we have identified several changes and challenges related to the theses students have to produce within the three-tiered system adopted as part of the Bologna process.

1. *The bachelor's thesis:* Before Romania adhered to the Bologna Process, the duration of undergraduate studies in most disciplines was 5 years, then 4 years. In the 5-year version, the last semester was devoted exclusively to writing the bachelor's paper. At the moment, 3rd year students have much less time to devote to what is often their first academic paper or their first extensive research project.
2. *The master's thesis:* There are no clear guidelines for the thesis to differentiate it from the bachelor's thesis. Thus, the content of the genre is still not clearly established.
3. *The PhD dissertation:*
  - a) The length of PhD programs has been reduced from 6 years to 3 years, without a clear revision of requirements regarding content, structure, length, etc. This affects the way in which theses are written, and it results in what is sometimes perceived as the destruction of a better tradition.
  - b) Before they write their thesis, PhD students are required to write and defend 2-3 papers (*referat*) with unclear genre requirements. Before Bologna, the *referat* was a brief research paper related to the thesis, but not part of it, and it was used for reviewing literature, clarifying methodology, etc. At present, with the duration of the PhD reduced to 3 years, the *referat* is often an actual chapter of the thesis.

More research (over a longer period of time) should be undertaken to establish whether the increased student mobility entailed by the Bologna Process has an impact on the writing genres used and to identify the challenges studying in another institution/culture places on students.

## 11.5 Conclusions

Beyond what the Bologna Process involves, the increased mobility of staff and students after 1989 has created a very dynamic environment in which new gen-

res have appeared or genres have changed their content. While some of the genres enumerated above have retained their features, others (such as the journalistic genres) are relatively new transplants from abroad. Others (such as the *referat*) have sometimes changed, becoming assimilated to genres practiced in Western universities.

The major changes that have occurred in the Romanian educational system after 1989 have brought about both challenges and major possibilities for improvement. Genre teaching is usually implicit, but it varies widely across disciplines and is mainly the responsibility of individual tutors rather than the result of coherent institutional policies. At present there is a clear need for more extensive research in both theoretical and practical aspects of genre in order to understand the various phenomena that are taking place and to correlate institutional policies on writing development in higher education with the needs of students as they move from high school to university. On the other hand, there is also a need to help future graduates meet the demands of their workplace.

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## 12 Spain / By Montserrat Castelló, Mar Mateos, Núria Castells, Anna Iñesta, Isabel Cuevas, and Isabel Solé

### 12.1 Structural aspects of Spanish Higher Education and language politics

#### 12.1.1 Languages

In Spain, different autonomous communities (regions) have authority over university education. This means that, although there is a general regulation for the entire Spanish territory, these communities make specific decisions concerning the university context, which creates a decentralized picture of the system. Five official languages are used in Spanish universities. Although Spanish is the official language of higher education, in some autonomous communities there are other co-official languages. Therefore, Catalan is used in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, and the Valencian Community (Valencian); Galician is used in Galicia, Aranese in the North of Catalonia, and Basque in the Basque Country. Both Spanish and the other co-official languages are used orally and in writing. These co-official languages are normally used as the teaching and learning languages, and all the academic writing practices are also in these languages (i.e. doctoral dissertations are written in Catalan in Catalonia or in Spanish in Madrid). Although we do not know the amount of the L1s used at the same time, it is obvious that, at least for Catalan universities, both Spanish and Catalan are used both in writing and orally.

#### 12.1.2 Foreign languages

To our knowledge, no specific studies have focused on the role of English at university. From our experience, Spain's access to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has increased the use of English, which varies depending on the disciplines. While in some scientific and technical studies (engineering) the teaching and learning of some subjects are conducted in English (mostly for Erasmus students), in social sciences this is much less frequent. Nevertheless, in PhD studies, English is always a requirement (at least for reading and attending specific seminars), and in recent years a remarkable number of theses have been developed in accordance with the European Doctorate, which implies that at least a part of these doctoral theses has to be written in the official language of another European Union member state, and this is usually English. Some master's courses are also being taught in English while the presence of English in the bachelor's studies is still testimonial.

### 12.1.3 Types of higher education institution

The university system in Spain does not currently distinguish among different kinds of universities according to the academic/scientific disciplines to which the different undergraduate and graduate degrees being taught belong. It is true that a distinction in this respect was applied some years ago whereby those universities offering programs on the different branches of architecture and engineering were considered 'polytechnic'. At present, the focus of the distinction between universities lies in the modality of their funding. According to this, universities may be 'public' (funded by the state and regional governments) or private (not receiving any funding from the state or regional government). One could even consider that Spanish universities also differ in their philosophical/religious orientation, ranging from the most frequent laicism to different currents of Catholicism.

In Spain, private universities have only been allowed (by law) since 1992, so public universities are more numerous and traditional. All the universities should be research- and teaching-focused although the scientific production and the number of research projects differ according to the published statistics and international rankings. We do not have any evidence of changes in the use of genres depending on the institution as we are not familiar with any studies devoted to this aspect in our country. In Spain, different autonomous communities have authority on university education. This means that, even though there is a general regulation for the entire Spanish territory, these communities make specific decisions concerning the university context, which creates a decentralized model in some aspects but not in the general ones such as the structure of the studies and the framework of general regulations for their development. Therefore, individual institutions devise their own assessment procedures; however, we do not know whether this has any influence on the use of genres.

## 12.2 Genre Definition

From our perspective, the notion of genre is inextricably tied to the notion of discursive community (Swales, 1990). In terms of sociocultural psychology, discourses are systems of possibilities to know, be, and act that have been socially and culturally defined, with discursive practices being their social and semiotic manifestations (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). From the perspective of critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 2001) and of critical literacy (Cassany, 2004), text production and comprehension are considered to require awareness of the existence of such discourses as well as of their influence for the selection and organization of information.

Therefore, genres reflect the characteristics of the practices shared among their users. The linkage between genre conventions and the socially and culturally determined action has been signaled by Miller (1984), who speaks of genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (p. 159). At the same

time, Lemke (1988) considers genres as “patterns of action, activity structures (...) [that] specify regular sequencing of types of action, of the functional constituents of an overall activity” (p.82). Those contributions primarily rely on the consideration of genres as social actions (Miller, 1984). This is expanded upon with the complementary assumptions of the socio-cultural and historical Vygotskian approach, Bakhtin’s theory of genre, and systems of genres as proposed by the activity theory (AT). The result of the integration of these perspectives has gradually led to a conceptualization of genres as patterns of functional actions, culturally and historically situated through which writers’ participation in different systems of activity is mediated (Camps & Castelló, 2013).

Finally, we consider genres to be flexible in the sense that members of a discursive community not only can use their knowledge of the genre conventions but also go beyond them. As Camps (2009) suggests, the use of language is a creative application and combination of conventions that transforms and at the same time reproduces such conventions in permanent tension between what is given (convention) and the active process of creating new forms that may also become conventions ultimately.

### 12.2.1 Relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

Since research on writing practices in our country is still scarce and mostly focused on social sciences (Castelló et al., 2012), it is quite difficult to address this issue. To our knowledge, there is only one recent study (Corcelles, Oliva, Castelló, & Milian, 2015) aimed at extensively analyzing: a) the characteristics and functions that students and faculty attribute to genres in the Spanish university; b) the extent to which these representations are shared by both groups; and c) how these genres and their functionalities contribute to the construction of disciplinary knowledge in Spanish Higher Education. Participants were students (n = 725) and faculty (n = 178) from the field of social sciences. The faculty were asked to label and to describe the two most frequently used genres they ask their students to write. The students were asked to label and to describe the last genre they had written at the university:

Students’ and teachers’ responses were classified into 12 genre families, grouped into 5 functions (following Nesi & Gardner, 2012): Disciplinary Knowledge (CD) (notes, explanation, and exercise), Critical Analysis (AC) (critique, essay, and debate), Personal Reflection (RP) (personal appropriation), Research (I) (literature review, methodological report, research report), and Professional Practice (PP) (case study, professional genres). The results of the study showed a certain coincidence between students’ and teachers’ representations in relation to the most and least often mentioned categories. In terms of functions, demonstration of disciplinary knowledge appeared as the most frequently mentioned goal for both groups. The genres that are aimed at research were the less frequent ones along with genres dedicated to personal reflection. As for genre fami-



lies, the most common for both groups, faculty and students, was Explanation, which was linked to demonstration of acquired knowledge in the discipline (Corcelles, Oliva, Castelló, & Milian, 2015).

### **12.2.2 Challenges when moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education**

Following are the results of research carried out at three different educational levels (Solé et al., 2005): compulsory secondary education, post-compulsory secondary education, and university education show differences between tasks proposed and tasks carried out among the different educational levels. Thus, those tasks that according to participants are significantly more proposed and/or carried out at university than in previous educational stages are: taking and organizing notes, writing practice reports, and writing a synthesis or monograph of two or more written sources. On the contrary, those tasks that are proposed and/or carried out with a significantly lower frequency at university are: summarizing, drawing concept maps from a text, writing opinion texts or – what is the same – commenting on a text, writing a reflection on one's own learning, and copying.

## **12.3 Genres and writing practices in Spain**

### **12.3.1 Best-known and most frequently used genres at the Spanish universities**

Firstly, according to results from recent studies (Castelló et al., 2012; Corcelles, Cano, Bañales, & Vega, 2013; Castelló & Mateos, 2015; Castells, Mateos, Martín, Solé, & Miras, 2015), students and faculty situate genres related to disciplinary knowledge as the most frequent ones, and they consider those included in the explanation category as prevailing. These genres imply the display of declarative knowledge, and their purpose is basically to demonstrate the acquisition of this type of knowledge. They are mostly based on teachers' explanations without using alternative sources of knowledge. This seems to indicate that the Spanish university, in the field of social sciences, still acts as a vertical distributor of knowledge within a traditional model of teaching, which promotes reproduction of disciplinary content, at least from the texts that students are required to produce. The genres related to the workplace, such as case studies and professional genres, were only mentioned as relevant by faculty (they ranked them in second place), but not by students. The aim of these genres was defined as quite different since students are expected to acquire the discursive tools that characterize disciplinary practice and to think of their professional communities. From the faculty's perspective, writing in these simulated or real situations serves as an opportunity to learn how to manage prototypical problems and to develop professional competences (Camps & Castelló, 2013; Nesi & Gardner, 2012; Russell,

1997). However, it does not seem that Spanish students are aware of these genres purposes or of their benefits.

It is important to mention that genres related to research were considered less frequent by both faculty and students. Although it is true that their frequency increases during the last years of undergraduate programs and in graduate studies, their scarce contribution to the students' education gives rise to concern and poses a serious challenge in terms of adjustment between the explicit objectives of university education and the real practices developed to accomplish these objectives in the Spanish context.

To sum up, results of the revised studies show firstly that Spanish faculty and students' perceptions regarding their writing practices seem to scarcely respond to the competencies required by professional communities in the 21st century (Robinson-Pant & Street, 2012).

The predominance of the genre families more related to explanation than to personal reflection or critical argumentation seems to indicate that writing is mostly used to demonstrate acquisition of knowledge, i.e., as a tool for knowledge-telling instead of as a tool for transforming knowledge (Castelló et al., 2012; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2005).

Secondly, results also evidence the plastic and situated nature of writing genres in the academic context. The great diversity of labels that teachers and students assigned to a specific genre, as well as their polysemy and interchangeable use, seems to indicate that different members of a single community have their own particular representation of each genre. This makes the shared understanding of the meaning and the purpose of academic writing practices by faculty and students even more difficult. In this respect, it is urgent that members of the academic community negotiate and promote clarification of what writing is and on why they write.

### 12.3.2 Oral genres

Results from previous research (Castelló et al., 2012; Castelló & Mateos, 2015; Castells, Mateos, Martin, Solé, & Miras, 2015) indicates that, even though faculty consider reading and writing very important in promoting learning, oral genres are still considered significant. Moreover, they think that their students are not very competent in oral presentations and debates. We do not have data related to which kind of oral presentations are demanded, but from our own experience, we know that the most frequent ones are the explanation of a topic, which usually has also been the topic of a written report after reading and understanding two or more sources, followed by a class debate. In some cases, when working in small groups, debates after reading some texts are also promoted. In recent years, a new oral genre, i.e., the oral defense of the final studies dissertation, has been

required for Spanish students. This is a new practice; it started with the 2010 cohort of undergraduate students, but we are fairly certain that it will have an impact on oral genres practices and their teaching.

### 12.3.3 Writing in the disciplines

As already mentioned, writing is still hardly taught at the Spanish university. We do not have writing centers or writing programs as part of the institutionalized curricula. Some particular initiatives might be developed by some universities, but they are not frequent or known by the rest of the universities. Some writing courses or workshops have been developed, especially at a master's and PhD level, but they are still isolated cases. Given this scenario, it seems possible to assume that most teachers, although probably not all, have the implicit thought that writing should not be taught at the university and genre acquisition is not part of their work, at least it is not present in their regular teaching activity. We know from previous research (Castelló & Mateos, 2015; Castelló et al., 2012; Castells, Mateos, Martín, Solé, & Miras, 2015; Corcelles, Cano, Bañales, & Vega, 2013) that teachers consider all the academic writing practices and scientific reading to be important tools for learning disciplinary knowledge. Nevertheless, they do not frequently ask students to write. Besides, they assume that their students are not highly competent in writing to learn, except for taking notes, which has been traditionally a writing practice directly associated to learning. All in all, these results draw a complex picture. On the one hand, teachers value writing for learning in their disciplines, but they do not ask students to write too much. On the other hand, teachers consider that students are not competent enough in writing and reading in the disciplines except for the use of writing as a learning tool. It seems that, although they recognize the importance of writing for learning, they are not used to reflect on how to use it in their disciplines.

### 12.3.4 Writing practices

According to Solé et al. (2005), writing practices that were significantly more frequently proposed and/or carried out at university than in previous educational levels were: taking and organizing notes, writing practice reports, and writing a synthesis or monograph of two or more written sources. These results were provided by 59 university teachers and 171 students (from sciences and social sciences). The tasks most frequently assigned by teachers and performed by students shared some characteristics (Mateos, Villalón, de Dios, & Martín, 2007; Miras, Gràcia, & Castells, 2005). These tasks, which were seldom assessed, were considered easy by both teachers and students, who also agreed that the main source of information used to solve the tasks was the textbook, and that such tasks were assigned and carried out on an individual basis. With regard to the type of learning promoted, teachers regarded taking notes as promoting the ac-

quisition of new knowledge, and reading a text and summarizing it as deepening and relating knowledge.

The least frequently assigned and performed tasks, such as summarizing, drawing concept maps from a text, writing opinion texts or commenting on a text, and writing a reflection on one's own learning, were perceived as difficult by both teachers and students. In particular, the students emphasized the difficulty involved in writing an essay and reflecting on what one has learned in writing. The teachers, on the other hand, stated that they suggested students should use sources other than the textbook as the primary source for carrying them out. These tasks were also assigned and carried out on an individual basis, and the teachers pointed out that they all promote deepening knowledge. Finally, these tasks were always assessed.

Moreover, writing tasks vary according to the area of knowledge (Solé & Castells, 2004). Thus, university teachers in the area of social sciences (history and social psychology) reported having proposed text analyses and essays more often than teachers in the area of natural sciences (biology and psychobiology), who, on the contrary, proposed writing practice reports and organizing notes more frequently.

These results provide us with an insight into why other research studies dealing with the students' representation of writing (Castelló, 2002) find that only 1% of students report using writing to learn whereas 57% of students relate writing with the possibility to improve remembrance.

As for assessment practices, from our experience, we can confirm that almost all the assessment activities in Spanish Higher Education are written assignments. Results from the Writing Skills Appreciation Inventory (5 points likert-scale), developed by Kruse (2009), offer us a more accurate perspective (Castelló et al., 2012). Data comes from 106 professors from 4 Spanish universities (U. Autònoma of Barcelona, U. of Barcelona, U. Ramon Llull, and U. Autònoma of Madrid from different knowledge areas although most of them taught in the field of psychology (bachelor's degree). Tasks assigned by teachers with higher frequency (2–3 times throughout the term) are writing an assignment after source consultation and text analysis, followed by writing a practice report or a similar paper; the less frequent ones are writing an essay and answering open questions of an exam. Among other types of texts that teachers assign between once and 2–3 times throughout the term there are case analyses, PowerPoint presentations, answering questions about a text, diaries, autobiographies, reflections or assessments about their own learning, argumentation and opinion texts, summaries, intervention or research projects, creative texts (poems, tales, etc.), and participation in blogs or forums. Some reports, assignments, and exams may involve students writing in the classroom although most of the writing is probably produced out of the class and without the teachers' supervision (Castelló et al., 2012).

### 12.3.5 The influence of the Bologna Process on the writing at the Spanish universities

Results of the mentioned study (Castelló et al., 2012) were collected when changes promoted by the Bologna Process were implemented, so they display the impact of this process in writing. Nevertheless, this process is just starting and new curricula are just in their second year of implementation in Spain (we have just had a complete cohort of students graduating within the Bologna Process system in 2014).

Within the framework of the required changes to adapt to what is known as the Bologna Process, i.e., the convergence in European Higher Education Area (EHEA), one of the most important curricular changes at the national level is the requirement for students to write a graduation thesis, which in Spain is also called the undergraduate dissertation ("*Trabajo Final de Grado*" in Spanish, "*Projecte Final de Grau*" in Catalan). Spanish students have to write this kind of texts at the end of their undergraduate studies and when they finish a master's degree in the sciences, and they also need to write a master's thesis for research degree programs (see also Castelló & Iñesta, 2012; Corcelles, Cano, Bañales, & Vega, 2013).

Despite the compulsory nature of this piece of writing, its final form, its writing process, the main features and demands vary from one study program to another. The panorama is even more complex since, except for some disciplines (architecture and some engineering degrees), there is no tradition in most of the Spanish universities of this writing practice at the undergraduate level.

### 12.3.6 Writing support in higher education

Despite the new scenario of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), in which some required curricular changes in many cases are related by teachers with a growing interest in student writing practices, writing is still hardly taught at the Spanish university as we have already mentioned. In the last few years, attention to writing is starting to increase, partially thanks to the creation of educational innovation centers in most of the universities. Nevertheless, these centers are just starting and their focus is on providing educational counseling to teachers, helping them to rethink their teaching practices rather than on improving writing specifically. We do not have writing centers or writing programs as part of the institutionalized curricula. Some particular initiatives might be developed in some universities, but they are not frequent or known in the rest of the universities. Some writing courses or workshops, especially at the master's and PhD level, have been developed but they are still isolated experiences (Castelló & Iñesta, 2012; Castelló, Iñesta, & Corcelles, 2013; Castelló et al., 2007; Solé, Teberosky, & Castelló, 2012; Tolchinsky, Escofet, & Rubio, 2003).

A similar situation concerns the doctoral level although in this context interest in writing and the need to provide guidelines to the students in order to help them finish their dissertation and publish scientific articles is increasing much faster (Castelló, González & Iñesta, 2010; Castelló, Iñesta & Monereo, 2009).

Given this scenario, it seems possible to assume that most teachers, although probably not all of them, implicitly consider that writing should not be taught at the university, yet that helping students in academic genre acquisition is not part of their work, especially at the undergraduate level. This would explain why such activity is not present in their regular teaching practices.

### 12.3.7 Typical textbooks on academic writing

An important book is:

Castelló, M. (Coord.). Iñesta, A., Miras, M., Solé, I., Teberosky, A., Zanotto, M. (2007). *Escribir y comunicarse en contextos científicos y académicos. Conocimientos y estrategias* [Writing and communicating in scientific and academic contexts]. Barcelona: Graó.

One of the challenges that this book tries to address is to equip students with the knowledge and the tools to communicate in scientific contexts. Aimed at helping both students who face the academic research writing for the first time, or those who have already tried to write such texts and have felt overwhelmed, and their tutors, teachers, or advisors. It is a research-based book written as a resource to make students start writing and to direct them to understand and to address the processes and products of scholarly communication.

Montolío, E. (2000) (Coord.). *Manual práctico de escritura académica* (cuatro volúmenes) [Practical handbook of academic writing (Four volumes)]. Barcelona: Ariel Practicum.

This textbook is a useful tool to help create planned, coherent, clear, and objective texts that meet the requirements of the academic discourse. It offers linguistic knowledge and exercises to acquire some linguistic resources necessary for academic writing development.

Tolchinsky, L., Escofet, A. and Rubio, M.J. (2003). *Tesis, tesinas y otras tesituras. De la pregunta de investigación a la defensa de la tesis* [Theses, dissertations and other writings. From the research question to the defense of the thesis]. Barcelona: Edicions UB.

This manual attempts to answer the questions that any starting researcher asks when confronted with the development of a research study in the area of humanities and social sciences – How do I start? How should I cite a book? How do I focus my work? – The aim of this manual is to address graduate students' concerns on these matters, and it covers all the phases and activities of research.

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## 13 Sweden / By Cornelia Ilie

### 13.1 Academic literacy practices in Sweden

The entire Swedish Higher Education system, centralized and uniform in structure ever since the Higher Education reform in 1977, has gradually moved towards increased diversity in the sense of growing differences among institutions, programs, and students. This development was facilitated by the extensive new educational reform in 1993.

One of the distinguishing features of Swedish Higher Education, which traditionally consists of a liberal system of modularized courses giving students a certain freedom to individually select combinations of courses, was a significant challenge during the implementation of the Bologna reform. Another concern was the need to broaden student recruitment from both upper secondary school and adult education, developing an educational system that should attract both national and international students. One of the measures taken towards this aim was the possibility to offer master's programs in English, which has gradually led to a more diversified student population and to adopting new approaches to academic literacy. According to these new, progressive approaches, academic writing is seen as a part of a more general academic meaning-making social practice where academic communication involves skills in critical thinking, in reading and writing academic texts as well as in critically evaluating scientific information.

By virtue of Sweden's becoming a more heterogeneous and multicultural society, Swedish universities have increasingly reinforced the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) as well as the parallel-language environment featuring both Swedish and English in learning, teaching, and assessment activities. On the one hand, many courses that are normally taught in Swedish also involve the use of English through lecturing in English, assigning research materials in English, and offering the opportunity to write undergraduate theses and postgraduate dissertations in English. On the other hand, a growing number of courses and degree programs are delivered entirely in English. According to several informants, the use of English is considered an obvious choice in academic disciplines with an international terminology such as medicine, engineering, and computer science.

In order to bridge the gap between high school and university (especially as more students with non-academic backgrounds have been recruited for pursuing university studies), several initiatives have been implemented at Swedish universities: introductory courses (containing both rhetoric and disciplinary writing modules), pedagogical training courses for university instructors and, last but not least, writing centers (for example, *Språkverkstan*, the writing center at Södertörn University College and *Textverkstad*, the writing center at Växjö University). Moreover, several universities have special educational entities with a "writing in the disciplines" profile that deliver tailor-made, integrated courses and modules

in written or oral proficiency in Swedish and/or English for specific disciplines. One such example is the division for language and communication at Chalmers University of Technology. Another important development is the holistic approach to the connection between oral and written communication promoted by Swedish universities through the active introduction of rhetorical training in Swedish and English public speaking (e.g., at Södertörn University College, Lund University, and Uppsala University).

In an effort to better address the relationship between culture and academic proficiency, some universities have taken one further step by actively tailoring introductory courses to the cultural background of specific groups of students. For example, an intercultural communication course (“An Introduction to Academic Studies in English”, 12 ECTS credits) has been specifically developed at Kristianstad University College for Chinese students (undergraduates as well as post-graduates from Ningbo University with which Kristianstad University has a close bilateral collaboration). This course focuses on differences between academic practices in China and in Western countries, including Sweden.

## 13.2 Personal Genre Approach

### 13.2.1 Understanding the meaning of the term “genre”

As has often been pointed out, it is difficult to pin down the concept of genre in a straightforward or exhaustive way. It is a generally accepted view that there are as many definitions of genre as there are theories. What we can agree on is that we internalize specific knowledge of individual genres as we start socializing within particular communities of practice, such as academia, by acquiring particular thinking and communication skills.

From a multidisciplinary and transcultural perspective, genres can be seen as purposeful instantiations of socially-based and goal-oriented interaction processes which help to shape and are shaped by institutional practices (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). In academic settings, students become acculturated into their respective disciplinary fields by gaining insights into theories and practices of academic thinking and writing and by applying them through the various practices of producing specific purpose-oriented disciplinary (or inter-disciplinary) genres. Genre acquisition and knowledge of rhetorical and formal conventions are inextricably linked to what Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) describe as procedural knowledge (knowledge of when and how to use certain disciplinary tools; how and when to inquire; how and when to frame questions; how to recognize and negotiate problems; and where, how, and when to produce knowledge within disciplinary contexts). Consequently, in the institutionalized context of academic socializing practices, genres serve to enable the consolidation and transmission of socio-culturally established norms, principles, and values (Maingueneau, 2002;

Tomasello, 2003) while enabling the critical formulation and expression of new thoughts and ideas.

### 13.2.2 Approaches to genre in Swedish academia

The concept of 'genre' generally used in Swedish academia originates in the three main schools of genre theory: the rhetorically-oriented North American school (often associated with New Rhetoric), the SFL-oriented Australian school (also referred to as "the Sydney school"), and the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) or SLA (Second Language Acquisition) school. The tenets of these three schools tend to be evenly distributed across Swedish Higher Education, perhaps with a slight emphasis on the SFL/Australian and the ESP/SLA schools.

More recently, a broader and more dynamic view of genre has brought into focus some crucial insights that have had a profound impact on genre analysis with particular emphasis on genre interrelatedness and interdiscursivity.

Swales's (2004) notion of genre 'repurposing' is relevant with regard to academic training in that it implies that genre identification is a construct and the attribution of a text to a genre is a continuous process in which several participants play a role: the writer, the reader, and the corpus of texts. Berkenkotter and Huckin's approach to genre (1995) is particularly useful; they define genre in keeping with five main features: situatedness, community ownership, duality of structure, form and content, and dynamism. According to Berkenkotter and Huckin, these five features underpin our comprehension of genres: genres are inherently dynamic in that they combine stability and change and they evolve in time adjusting to new contexts and adapting to the changing needs of their user, as they are connected with a range of socio-cultural variables; genres typically involve situated cognition, "being inextricably tied to procedural and social knowledge" (1995, p. 4). Genres embrace form as well as content, so genre knowledge is not just knowledge of formal conventions, but also of appropriate topics, accompanied by the possession of adequate background knowledge. Genres are characterized by a duality of structure as they are constantly being reproduced as they are being enacted. Finally, genres are 'community owned' as generic conventions instantiate a discourse community's norms, values, epistemology, and ideology.

When designing/updating training programs it is also necessary to take into consideration two phenomena: the emergence of new genres (digital teaching resources, such as e-learning platforms and online discussion forums) and hence the growing tendency towards genre mixing and genre embedding in teaching processes in higher education. At the same time, priority needs to be given to the context, which also changes due to the dynamics of the discipline and the varying degree of interdiscursivity. Specific genre-related pedagogical methods have to be used/developed for particular discipline-based programs which require

students to acquire particular knowledge and skills (concerning problem-solving, theory development, etc.).

### 13.3 Structural Aspects of Higher Education and Language Politics in Sweden

#### 13.3.1 Official languages (L1) used in Swedish higher education

Swedish is the main language in Sweden, i.e., the common language in society that everyone has to have access to and that can be used in all sectors of society. It is used for both spoken and written communication (Government Bill Language for All – 2008/09, p. 153). Since the 2009 Language Act (2009, p. 600), Swedish is also the official language in Sweden. The language of the public services is Swedish, which is also used as the official language of Sweden in international contexts. The status of Swedish as an official EU language is safeguarded. Six languages have official status as ‘minority’ languages: Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib, Sami, and Yiddish.

In higher education, Swedish and English dominate. The use of English is motivated by the increasing internationalization of universities. At the same time, introductory courses in Swedish language and culture are offered to foreign students and researchers. However, where a particular language is the object of study, that language will generally be used in both its written and spoken forms (Danish and Norwegian are accepted languages for students and teachers alike, but are not actively promoted).

#### 13.3.2 L2 languages used in higher education. The role played by English play as a language of teaching and writing in Sweden

English as an L2 language has become widely accepted in Swedish Higher Education (many fear domain loss in Swedish). Students are never forced to write in English if their course or program is given in Swedish. But when it comes to reading material in higher education; even at undergraduate levels, including the first year of a bachelor’s program, part of the course literature is often in English. At higher levels (graduate and doctoral programs are often in English), many courses and modules are offered in English. A recent report from *Språkrådet* (the Language Council of Sweden) indicates that nine out of ten Swedish PhD dissertations are written in English. At the graduate level writing a thesis or dissertation in English is an option.

All published master’s theses and PhD dissertations should include an extensive summary in “the other language”, i.e., Swedish publications should have an English summary and vice versa. At some several universities, such as the Swedish Royal Institute of Technology, the University of Gothenburg, Uppsala University,

Chalmers University of Technology, and Södertörn University College, the new Language Act (2009, p. 600) has prompted the development of local language policies. These are meant to promote the employees' and students' parallel bilingualism, defined as a form of bilingualism that systematically gives equal status to Swedish and English (or another foreign language) in academic work.

English is also used in departments of English/American language and literature, just as French, Spanish, etc. are used in departments of romance languages, Russian, Polish, etc. are used in departments of Slavic languages, to name but a few.

### 13.3.3 Types of higher education institutions in Sweden and their impact on the types of genres used

All higher education institutions in Sweden fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education except for the University of Agricultural Sciences (Ministry of Agriculture). Sweden's Higher Education is overseen by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education which is also responsible for reviewing the quality of institutions. Higher education is divided into undergraduate studies (courses combined towards a first degree) and postgraduate studies and research. The country's public and private universities offer bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Many of the universities and university colleges offer a broad range of subjects while others specialize in areas such as medicine, technology, fine arts, social sciences, and psychology. University colleges, of which there are over 20 public and close to 10 private, offer diplomas, bachelor's, and master's degrees although a few have obtained permission to offer limited doctoral degrees. In addition, there are three independent higher education institutions which are entitled to offer postgraduate programs. The three independent higher education institutions are Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, the Stockholm School of Economics, and Jönköping University.

There are also a number of independent course providers that are entitled to offer certain undergraduate programs.

There is no institutional divide between vocational and academic orientation since Sweden incorporated the major vocational training centers (for nursing, teaching, engineering, etc.) into the universities some decades ago. The Swedish Higher Education system includes not only traditional university studies, but also teacher training, health care training, technical training, etc.

The most prominent divide in Swedish Higher Education is between the old, established universities and the (many) newer institutions of the last few decades. The latter started as teaching institutions (*högskolor*), colleges, or polytechnics, some of which have subsequently been upgraded to university status and receive government research funding. In practice, research is carried out and promoted

at all higher education institutions, but to examine PhDs, *högskolor* must apply to the National Agency for Higher Education on a subject area basis.

There is now no differentiation between types of institutions, but rather between long and short-term programs of higher education, which are offered by both universities and university colleges, and which have the same admission criteria and status wherever offered. However, the university colleges in Sweden cannot offer doctorates and must be accredited by the National Agency to offer *Magisterexamen* (Swedish equivalent of Master's degree); but their graduates can proceed to doctoral studies elsewhere.

The older institutions carry more prestige of a traditional kind and their student population comes largely from academic families while the newer (and more numerous) institutions have generally been more successful in widening participation and in promoting multi-disciplinarity. Naturally, there are accompanying genre differences, but they are more immediately related to educational area rather than the higher education institution that offers the education.

Written examinations tend to outnumber oral examinations in many disciplines at Swedish universities. In certain subjects, such as languages, music, and other performing disciplines, oral examination is a natural form of assessment. Nevertheless, a combination of written and oral assessment techniques is still considered effective for certain disciplines. Such a multi-mode examination is used, for example, in engineering and science courses at Chalmers University of Technology. Similarly, in technical disciplines and natural sciences at Uppsala University, the final examination consists of a written paper or project report which is also presented orally.

#### 13.3.4 Purpose and function of writing at Swedish universities

Writing fulfils several functions and may be used for different purposes at different universities in Sweden as individual teachers are free to choose their own pedagogical approach and assessment routines. Examination generally includes written exams complemented by seminar presentation/discussions, project work, laboratory and/or field reports. In the humanities, there is a tendency towards out-of-class papers although in-class exams are still very common. In distance education, writing is very much part of the learning process as most communication between students and staff is written.

In Sweden, studies take place in a slightly different format than in other countries. Instead of studying several courses at once throughout an entire semester or year, students generally study just one course at a time for a shorter period of several weeks. The Swedish semester is therefore made up of a series of shorter courses, each followed directly by an examination. The spring term of the final



year of the master's program is usually spent writing a thesis whereas the spring term of the third year is spent on the bachelor's degree project.

For the master's degree, the courses consist mainly of seminars. For MSc degrees, however, there are still many courses offered but a large majority of them are electives. Irrespective of the instructional format, the students are required to complete one or several papers during the courses. At the end of each course there will normally be a written examination. Relevant course material and literature may sometimes be used at the examination. The master's thesis has to be written by the student during the academic year under the supervision of one of the professors or researchers at the faculty according to what is agreed upon between the professor or researcher and the student. On occasion there is also an industry supervisor for the students who do their master's project in industry, business, schools, etc.

Six universities in Sweden offer complete study and research programs in law: Uppsala, Lund, Stockholm, Göteborg, Umeå, and Örebro. Each university has its own study program syllabus. At faculties of law, the most common forms of teaching at undergraduate level are: seminars, lessons, tutorials and other group-based teaching, and lectures. Usually the examination consists of a written exam at the end of the course. Books and other materials that the students are allowed to bring to the exam may vary from course to course. Before a student is allowed to take an exam, the student must fulfil all compulsory elements (e.g., full participation in seminars) of the course. In most courses written and occasionally, oral performance during the course affects the final grade of the course and is taken into account together with the result of the exam. If a student fails to pass the exam he/she can retake the exam at a later date.

In the field of mathematics, Dahlberg (2004) found that all courses end with a written exam at Swedish universities while other forms of assessment are rare. 30% of the courses in mathematics allow students to have examination tools such as a calculator and a paper with formulas typical for the course, which are often written by the teacher. Other forms of assessment, such as oral exams, homework assignments, or projects, which are often considered more didactical or pedagogical, are not used since they are too time-consuming for the courses that have very high numbers of students. The tasks in the written exams tend to be focused on instrumental understanding. Dahlberg points out that research about mathematical understanding indicates that different ways of understanding mathematics is important. Skemp (1987) distinguishes between two types of understanding, which he calls relational and instrumental understanding. Relational understanding is expected to happen when the learner knows both what to do and why. Instrumental understanding is described as rules without reasons, and the learner only knows how to provide the right answer. Skemp argues that both types are needed and have their specific benefits. Final theses are required for graduation at all levels (by law and by the Bologna declaration agreement).

### 13.3.5 The responsibility for students' writing development in higher education institutions in Sweden

Basically, students are responsible for their own writing development while the course instructor takes responsibility for the course, for paper/thesis supervision, and for providing appropriate information and guidelines. At the institutional level the faculty boards are responsible for quality assurance regarding compliance with curriculum provisions, the extent and quality of the supervision, the structure and content of written forms of examination, etc. Hierarchically, the ultimate responsibility lies with the National Agency for Higher Education.

Some universities have writing programs – generally creative writing degree programs. During the last decade there has been an increase in the number of universities offering 'writing/language workshops' on an extra-curricular, voluntary basis for students who feel that they need more support in academic writing. These are primarily in Swedish, but some offer English as well. Foreign language programs include mandatory and/or optional courses in academic writing and writing for specific purposes.

Some of the writing centers that have been set up at several universities are called '*språkverkstad*' (language workshop), and they provide students with advice and help regarding style, language, outline, presentation, and form of their written assignments as well as guidance about how to make their texts easy to read and graphically appealing. Many of the teachers acting at these writing centers assume the task of helping students with both written and oral assignments. The notion of peer tutors promoting the development of writers in the writing centers has not been widely adopted in Sweden yet, but the writing center at Chalmers University of Technology is a peer tutor center, and students can take a credit-bearing course to become tutors.

### 13.3.6 Challenges experienced by students in moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education

Most students find this transition difficult. The main challenge consists not so much in learning the vocabulary of the discipline, but in academic expectations and the required manner of thinking and writing in relation to the subject matter. Moving from subjective description to objective analysis, often theory-based, students are faced with cognitive challenges they are not used to. This is now a matter of serious concern for political decision-makers, and several investigations have been commissioned in order to examine the current situation and find appropriate solution. In order to bridge the gap between secondary education standards and higher education requirements with regard to writing skills, concrete steps have recently been taken, starting with updating and optimizing the teaching of reading and writing in primary and secondary schools. A case in point is the campaign called "reading-writing-counting" (*läsa-skriva-räkna*), which was

launched a few years ago all over Sweden and which focuses on directing schools to increase the teaching of basic skills in reading literacy and mathematics.

One of the Swedish government's recent initiatives to promote reading and writing literacy resulted in the newly established Center for Literacy (*Nationellt Centrum för Språk-, Läs- och Skrivutveckling*), whose mission is to stimulate schools and school authorities to work actively with language and literacy, including the improvement of writing skills.

### 13.3.7 The relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

Different workplaces have different requirements regarding professional writing practices. In disciplinary areas such as medicine, health care, pedagogy, journalism, and engineering, students are given opportunities to get socialized into the genres used in the respective workplaces through interaction-based research, professionally tailored traineeships, and project work documentation forms. Barring the vocational programs (3 or 5 years long), there appears to be less overlap between the genres taught at universities and the genres found in various industry sectors, and students rarely have the opportunity to incorporate work experience into their studies.

## 13.4 Genres and Writing Practices

### 13.4.1 The best-known and most frequently used genres in higher education

The forms of teaching in Swedish universities vary from large-scale lectures to individual tutorials (given to individual students or small groups of students). They take the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, group work. Laboratory sessions are particularly common in the natural sciences and in technology departments. In the fields of biology, geography, and human geography, many courses include some sort of fieldwork where students individually or in teams collect material, map, observe, make interviews, and make various analyses in the field.

Both oral and written genres are practiced in most departments of humanities: oral presentations, project reports, diaries, journals, (web) logs, term or project papers, (which can often be a take-home exam).

*C*-essays (bachelor's thesis) can be empirical studies.

*D*-essays (master's thesis) are often regarded as pilot studies for future PhD dissertations.

Swedish departments of teacher education may use different assessment strategies of written tasks. Departments of mathematics and psychology have rather traditional assessment with written exams at the end of each course as only means of assessment, and they do not use any written grading criteria. The exams in mathematics and psychology are mainly focused on controlling how students master definitions of key concepts, facts, and theories. The teacher education courses are more focused on the development of students' reasoning and analytical skills than on facts. This means that the examination tasks often have an investigating goal. The students are expected to read specific literature and reflect on the content's relevance for their future roles as teachers. Formal written exams are rather rare – the assessment is dominated by home assignments, writing tasks with or without an oral presentation, and group work. The assessment is cumulative, in the sense that different course goals are covered by different assessment tasks, and the course grade is a cumulative summary of them. A problem with this form of assessment is that the amount of students' texts to be read and analyzed by the teachers is too large to enable constructive feedback. The cumulative assessment with many open analytical tasks might have a number of pedagogical advantages, but it requires much more time and engagement from the teacher educators.

### 13.4.2 Oral genres used by students

The oral examination is a standard form of assessment in a number of disciplines, such as languages, law, engineering, music, and other performing disciplines. In the humanities, students are normally expected to give an oral presentation on a course-related topic that has been assigned well in advance. Reports on group work may be written and/or oral. Depending on whether the assignment was carried out individually or in groups, the presentation is made by one or several students. In Sweden, at certain universities, such as Södertörn University College, the students' oral presentations may be followed by peer reviews, i.e., evaluations conveyed orally by their class mates. Similarly, the 'critique' is a common oral assessment form in architecture; the defense of the thesis (Swedish '*opposition*') is common in theses/project presentations in many disciplines, and peer instruction as employed in lab environments is another oral genre students in Swedish higher education encounter.

Other oral genres in which Swedish students in the humanities and in law are trained belong to the field of rhetoric: public speaking and debating pro and contra. Students are expected to become familiar with rhetorical theory and practice as well as with the use of rhetoric in important areas of human activity. They are given the opportunity to practice their public speaking skills by delivering prepared, as well as improvised, speeches pertaining to different rhetorical genres, and by doing exercises meant to apply particular rhetorical devices to various situations. Students are expected to become familiar with the general and particular prerequisites for public speaking and with the expectations of various types

of audiences. They are expected to prepare (written) outlines of their speeches, to structure the main topics of their speech in a coherent way, to formulate consistent and convincing arguments, to use varying rhetorical strategies to pursue a particular line of argumentation, and to deliver their speeches in an accessible and captivating style.

The training in debating techniques is meant to develop the students' awareness of their own participatory role in a debate, controversy, etc.; to improve their analytical and critical attitude to their purposeful use of various linguistic strategies and of their interlocutors'/opponents' purposeful use of language; to identify invalid or misleading arguments (fallacies) in their own and in their opponents' argumentation; to motivate and persuade their audience.

### **13.4.3 The writing practices that students engage in around the genres**

Students in Sweden are expected to put a great deal of individual work into their studies. At seminars, attendance is always compulsory and students are expected to participate actively in the discussions. In many courses students have to present – at a seminar – reports and papers, often completed together with one or two fellow students. They are encouraged to summarize, evaluate, and analyze the ideas, facts, and/or processes they present.

At undergraduate level both written examinations and essay or report writing are normally required. There is nowadays a growing tendency to write essays or reports (and even articles) within the framework of research projects that students are involved in together with their teachers. The purpose is not only to check the breadth and depth of students' disciplinary knowledge, but also to make sure that they have developed adequate communication and critical thinking skills.

Written “sit-down” examinations are quite common in the first cycle courses. Instead of or in combination with regular “sit-down” examinations, students in the humanities and social sciences, as well as in engineering, may be asked to hand in assignments and participate in seminars or to complete a “take-home” examination. When taking a take-home examination, students are given a number of days to answer a set of questions. The questions generally require them to think critically and to provide concrete illustrative examples.

Swedish students are required to produce a range of different genres of assessed written work, reflecting a range of different discipline-related communicative purposes. Within broad discipline areas, certain genres are favored and others are produced only rarely, if at all. For example, in the humanities, critical essay writing is very common whereas field study reports are much less common. In addition to the final (written or oral) examination, continuous assessment applies to most courses and is based on compulsory attendance as well as classroom presentations of specific assignments (literature reviews, comparative stud-

ies, case studies, etc.). In engineering, technical, project, design, feasibility, implementation, lab reports are common as are design specifications, and, to some extent, instructions and user manuals.

#### 13.4.4 How students acquire genre knowledge on written/oral genres in the respective disciplines

In general, the forms of assessment determine the ways in which students are learning during a course. A written exam can easily be designed to obtain relatively accurate feedback on the ability of the students to describe/interpret facts and solve particular problems. It is more difficult to assess if students have internalized the concepts presented in the course and if they are able to apply them in various situations. For such purposes, oral exams might be more appropriate.

Students acquire practical genre knowledge through (i) practical instructions (written guidelines) provided by the course teacher; (ii) recommended textbook(s) on academic writing; (iii) peer-review seminars during which students present their own draft essays and also review each other's drafts (before the teacher's final review); and, obviously, (iv) teacher/facilitator feedback.

Additional support is now offered by staff at the writing centers that have been set up at several Swedish universities. These centers offer tutorial sessions and sometimes courses or workshops where students are taught to write clear, concise and coherent essays/term papers by systematically going through the required stages of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, writing, rewriting, peer review, and editing). Thereby, students are made aware of the meta-cognitive processes of effective academic writing, which enables them to acquire relevant critical thinking skills.

#### 13.4.5 The typical text books on academic writing in Sweden

Some of the frequently used studies in academic writing teaching are:

Björk, L., and Räisänen, C. (2003). *Academic writing: A university writing course*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Rienecker, L. and Stray Jørgenson, P. (2002). *Att skriva en bra uppsats* [How to write a good essay]. Malmö: Liber.

Schött, K., Melin, L., Strand, H. and Moberg, B. (2007). *Studentens skrivhandbok* [Students' writing textbook]. 2 uppl. Stockholm: Liber.

Swales, J., and Feak, C. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

### 13.4.6 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing

In the case of Swedish universities, a direct consequence of the Bologna Declaration on the harmonization of European education and higher student mobility has been an increase in the number of undergraduate and master's courses taught in English (as well as parallel courses in Swedish and English), which have attracted many international students. This phenomenon has been particularly noticeable at the postgraduate level in natural sciences, medicine, and engineering. Particularly for the schools of engineering, redesigning the individually graded bachelor's project has involved greater emphasis on writing.

One of the important effects of the implementation of the Bologna Process at Swedish universities consists of the continued promotion of interdisciplinarity in both educational and research-based activities. Above all, the introduction of easily recognizable and comparable academic degrees and the adoption of outcomes-based curriculum design required a stronger focus on students' enhanced oral and written communication skills, as required by the new cross-European evaluation systems. As a result, a recalibration of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary focus as well as of challenges and visions has taken place in the case of several Swedish academic programs, which has eventually facilitated a greater transferability of academic knowledge and skills.



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## 14 Switzerland / By Otto Kruse, Madalina Chitez, and Elisabeth Peyer

### 14.1 One Country, Three Languages: Academic Writing in Switzerland

The Swiss Higher Education system is divided into three distinct language regions, each of which is ruled by particular university cultures. This report explores the role writing plays in each of these cultures even though there is little systematic information on what the differences and commonalities in these three regions are. It seems as if Switzerland manages to assimilate ideas from the linguistic background-cultures of France, Germany, and Italy; but nonetheless it follows a unique Swiss model of higher education, which differs from its neighbors not only by a more solid funding, but also by its own interpretation of the Bologna Process.

The following report is based on the personal knowledge of the authors as well as on our own research. We will present an overall view of context, history, and current situation in the teaching and learning of writing at Swiss universities. Similar to most European countries, the pace of development in Switzerland's higher education has increased considerably, and any description of it will only depict a momentary state of affairs. Due to its federal constitution, most decisions in educational issues are made locally, which makes an overall view difficult to obtain.

#### 14.1.1 Structure

Swiss Higher Education is publicly funded with only few private institutions. A federal law provides the overall legislation and defines three different university categories:

- A. The traditional universities: They are funded and controlled mainly by the cantons that maintain them: Basel, Berne, Genève, Fribourg, Lucerne, Lugano, Neuchâtel, St.Gallen, and Zurich. Five of them are German-speaking (Basel, Berne, Lucerne, St. Gallen, and Zurich), and two are Francophone: Genève and Neuchâtel. One is Italian-speaking (Lugano). Fribourg is the only university bilingual in French and German.
- B. The federal universities of technology or polytechnic universities (ETH Zurich and EPFL Lausanne). They are funded by the Swiss federal government with a strong emphasis of the technological disciplines. The former is located in the German-speaking, the latter in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.
- C. The universities of applied sciences (UAS): They are a relatively new type of university, which opened in the late 1990s. The eight applied universities have emerged from former higher level vocational schools; two of them are private.

They offer study programs in disciplines such as engineering, architecture, business and management, applied linguistics, applied psychology, and social work. Recently, new disciplines have been added, for instance, physical therapy, nursing, occupational therapy, and facility management. The public schools are located in Zurich, central Switzerland, Northwestern Switzerland, eastern Switzerland, Bern, western Switzerland (French) and the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland (Svizzera Italiana, Ticino). The two private UAS are located in Zurich and Les Roches-Gruyère (western Switzerland).

Pedagogical universities and art universities have the same status as the universities of applied sciences (UAS). While universities are mainly academically oriented and have the mission of basic research, the UAS are oriented towards professional education and applied research. They offer bachelor's/master's programs and continuing education but no doctoral programs. Some disciplines like architecture, engineering, and business administration can be studied at either a traditional or an applied university.

Decisions about education in Switzerland are primarily the domain of the cantons, not the federal government (with the exception of the polytechnic universities). There are two federal agencies that fulfill coordinating tasks. One is the State Secretary of Education and Research, which is responsible for the two federal institutes of technology in Zurich and Lausanne, for about 20 research institutions outside the university circuit, for the promotion of research, and for all international cooperation concerning research and education. The other, the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology is responsible for professional education and technology, and it coordinates the universities of applied sciences (jointly with the cantons). It approves newly created study programs at the universities of applied sciences but has little impact on the kind of teaching or the types of assessment. Each university is free to devise its own assessment procedures. New degree programs have to be approved by both the federal and the local educational authorities.

## 14.1.2 Languages

### Native languages

Three national languages are used in Swiss higher education. Standard German is used in the German-speaking part of Switzerland (65% of the population), French in the French-speaking (22%), and Italian in the Italian-speaking (8.4%) part both for spoken and written communication. There is only one bilingual university in which study programs in French and German are offered simultaneously, and that is Fribourg.

The language situation in the German-speaking part of Switzerland is commonly called diglossic as two varieties of the same language are used in different situations: Standard German is mostly used for official written communication and the

Swiss German dialects are for oral communication (and increasingly for unofficial writing). Both varieties differ considerably with respect to lexis, grammar, pronunciation, and idiomatic expressions. While Standard German is used as a medium of instruction, teachers and students speak Swiss German dialects outside the classroom, for instance, during office hours or in informal communication situations. The various Swiss German dialects differ considerably from each other (although all are mutually intelligible) so that Swiss German has never been standardized as a language of its own. Many students feel uneasy when writing Standard German although both primary and secondary education use Standard German as the language of instruction. Some universities of applied sciences still offer compulsory German lessons for their students, which requires the teaching of writing.

While universities in the French and German-speaking parts of Switzerland have existed for several centuries (Basel University was founded in 1460, Lausanne 1537, Geneva in 1559), the universities in the Italian-speaking part are of recent origin (Università della Svizzera Italiana in 1996, Scuola Universitaria Professionale Svizzera Italiana (SUPSI) in 1999). The fourth national, but only semi-official, language, Rhaeto-Romansh, is spoken as a first language by roughly 50,000 inhabitants (0.6% of the population) and can be studied as a subject at the universities of Zurich and Fribourg. Apart from the university of teacher education of the canton of Grisons, it is not used as a language of instruction beyond secondary education.

### **Foreign languages**

Traditionally, English has been the second foreign language taught at school in Switzerland, with French or German being the first. During the last decade, however, the importance attributed to English increased so that in many Swiss German cantons English is now the first foreign language taught. At the university level, students are generally expected to be able to read research literature in English. In many master's degree courses, especially in natural sciences, students are also supposed to be able to write in English. Recently, several universities have introduced English as a medium of instruction for undergraduate teaching (Studer & Konstantinidou, 2015). In order to improve student writing in English, universities offer academic English writing courses. Usually, students are free to choose English as a language for their final theses.

Furthermore, an increasing amount of courses are taught in English in the natural sciences as well as in economics. At the University of Berne, for instance, every 6th course was taught in English in 2009 (Binder, 2009). To increase "internationalization at home", each Swiss university offers a master of business administration in English. Furthermore, many universities offer "joint degree masters" with universities outside Switzerland. In these graduate courses, students are usually expected to write in English. All universities maintain language centers to offer foreign language teaching to their students.

## 14.2 University writing policies in Switzerland

### 14.2.1 Writing cultures

We have to assume that the writing cultures of the three main language parts of Switzerland have emerged from the university traditions of the background countries of France, Germany, and Italy. The universities of the German-speaking part used writing in the way as it has been developed in the Humboldtian research university. The model for this is the seminar as a place for independent, research-based learning, where seminarians had to write a paper for each seminar they chose (Kruse, 2007). For the French-speaking part of Switzerland (the “Romandie”), not only the terminology but also the genres and writing assignments have been borrowed by the French educational system, which has been similarly influential at its time as the Humboldt tradition. The situation is somewhat different for the new universities of Ticino, where several influences have shaped the teaching of writing and influences from both national and international sources have been integrated. The influence of a genuine Italian culture is visible to a higher degree in secondary rather than in higher education.

One of the few studies comparing German and French writing (Pieth & Adamzik, 1997) found in a comparison of instruction materials from language and literature institutes in the German- and French-speaking regions that German institutes had at least one instruction sheet for student writers while this was true only for a small number of the institutes in the Romandie. Some of the German-speaking institutions also provided their students with instructions for how to do literature searches, the use of references, and the use of the library. None of the institutes of the Romandie had anything similar. It seems that, at that time, the institutes in the German-speaking part were more aware of the necessity to instruct students on intertextuality than were those of the French-speaking part. While this study certainly depicts some of the historical differences in the French and German writing cultures (Chitez & Kruse 2012), we doubt whether these differences still exist today (more than 15 years later). We will present some data on this later.

Today, university teaching in all three parts of the country relies to a large extent on writing as a mode of learning. The differences between university categories and between disciplines seem to outweigh the differences between languages. The Bologna changes and the internationalization of higher education shifted teaching in similar directions and led to an assimilation of international standards for examinations and grading. In most disciplines, the student paper has become the primary source of assessment. Theses at the bachelor’s and master’s level are compulsory and have become similar in length and scope in all parts of the country.

The student paper usually makes up the most critical element for receiving course credit, not simply attendance or any other kind of examination. There are, however, noticeable differences between the disciplines with respect to the gen-

res that are used for learning and grading (see, for instance, Kruse et al., 2015). In general, universities of applied sciences tend to focus less on writing and use a greater variety of genres including those used in professional fields.

### 14.2.2 Writing support in higher education

Traditionally, responsibility for student development in writing (as for all other skills) rested upon the students themselves. In the traditions of seminar teaching, however, it was in the professor's responsibility to support student writing, which in some cases the professor would delegate to his assistants who advise student writing and correct the draft papers.

At least some study programs like English language and literature or history have adopted first-year writing courses and support for thesis writing. Several first-year writing/German courses exist within the university of applied sciences study programs; however, these courses are rooted in the teaching of German rather than the teaching of writing. Today, these courses are becoming increasingly equal to writing courses. Many applied universities have German/writing/communication departments which offer such courses. While this is true for the universities in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, we do not know whether it applies to the French and Italian parts as well.

Writing centers have been created at several pedagogical universities. These universities are responsible for teacher education in preschool, primary, and (partly) secondary education. The first writing center to open was at the Zurich University of Teacher Education (PH Zurich) in 2004 (<http://www.phzh.ch/de/Dienstleistungen/Schreibzentrum/>). It gives a support structure for students and offers tutoring, workshops, creative events like writing competitions, and online support for student writers. It had a strong influence on the writing politics of the university, which has a very sophisticated system of portfolio, academic, seminar, and reflective writing throughout its study programs (<http://www.phzh.ch/content-n317-sd.html>). Recently, it has been connected with the library and the Digital Learning Centre to a "learning forum" at the new campus of the university. The North-West Swiss Teacher's University (PH FHNW) maintains a reading center, which also offers tutoring, online materials, and workshops (<http://www.fhnw.ch/ph/zi/schreibberatung>). The Berne University of Teacher Education opened a writing center but closed it shortly after. It seems to be maintained at a small scale by its supporters offering workshops and tutoring. The University of Teacher Education Lucerne (PH Luzern) maintains a small writing center for writing in French and English but not in German.

At other universities, a number of facilities offer at least some kind of support for student writers but are differently organized. Here is a list of those that are known to us:

- The Plant Science Center at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH) introduced “writing platforms” to support student writing at the graduate (WiSch) and postgraduate levels (SKriPS) (<http://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/teaching/masters/writingplatforms.html>). The writing platforms are offered to students writing their papers and theses, and they seem to be integrated into regular courses.
- The University of Technical Sciences Rapperswil maintains a language and communication support unit, which offers writing courses within study programs, especially in technical writing.
- University of Zurich: Writing courses are offered within the German (Deutsches Seminar) and the history (Historisches Seminar) departments.
- Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) maintains a center for academic writing next to a (much larger) unit of German teachers offering both writing and communication courses within such study programs as engineering, translation, architecture, and several health sciences disciplines. Both units are part of the Language Competence Centre of the school of applied linguistics, which connect the teaching of language-related competences.
- The Institute of Applied Media Studies (IAM), a part of the ZHAW, offers an intensive writing program for journalism students which focuses on the main genres of journalism.
- The Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Art, which is maintained by six Cantons of Central Switzerland, offers several writing courses and writing programs for the students of its five schools of technic & architecture, economy, social work, design & art, and music. Writing is part of communication courses, in which oral, intercultural, technical communication may also be involved. There is no writing center or central institution for language competencies.
- The University of St. Gallen requires an introduction into academic writing for all of its first-year students and offers tutors to support them. The program is not run by writing teachers but by faculty members from different disciplines (see: <http://www.unisg.ch/en/studium/bachelor/assessmentjahr>).

It doesn't seem possible at the moment to account for all kinds of teaching of writing at Swiss universities. Most offers are local and hidden in the curricula of disciplinary degree programs. What we can say is that writing finds its way into teaching at the disciplinary level and is often connected with other skills.

A network of researchers and teachers in the field of academic writing makes up the Forum for Academic Writing (*Forum wissenschaftliches Schreiben*), which was founded in 2005. It has approximately 50 members and, among other things, organizes a bi-annual national conference on academic writing (<http://www.forumschreiben.ch/>). The forum maintains the “*Zeitschrift Schreiben*,” a journal publishing in English and German on writing in university and the professional world (<http://www.zeitschrift-schreiben.eu/>).



### 14.2.3 Writing in the disciplines

Genre knowledge at German and Swiss German universities means, first of all, mastering the seminar paper. For most German teachers and students, the term “academic writing” (“*wissenschaftliches Schreiben*”) is a synonym of “writing seminar papers”. It is usually not recognized that what is called “academic writing” follows rules that are only valid for the seminar paper but not necessarily for all other genres. Genre learning, therefore, means learning how to write seminar papers and understanding their logic and rules. The most prominent form is learning by doing even though instructional materials provided by the seminar teachers seem to have increased. Process-oriented writing guides are available (see point 9) and the students are usually referred to them.

In general, there is very little explicit instruction concerning scientific writing. Most study programs do not offer specific courses on academic writing. They provide guidelines of what is expected from the paper with regards to structural, organizational, and formal aspects (such as citation rules), as well as assessment criteria and aims of the assignment. Today, there are probably more courses offered for academic English as a foreign language than for academic writing in German. As many master’s programs require papers and theses written in English, it is a general belief that students need special training in writing academic English.

Writing is one of the main ways of teaching and of learning disciplinary knowledge. This certainly holds true for almost all disciplines in the hard sciences, humanities, and social sciences; however, it is not true for the technical and medical disciplines. The only study ever performed looking at the number of courses that use writing for learning and examination from Ehlich and Steets (2003) shows that disciplines like philosophy, sociology, theology require writing a seminar papers in almost every course. At the time they collected their data (which was before the Bologna reform), almost all courses in the second part of the study programs (which today would be the master’s programs) used writing. Only the technical disciplines seemed not to use writing as a means of learning. It is not clear, however, how these data apply to Swiss universities after the Bologna reform.

We do not know of any study looking into genre writing at Swiss universities. It seems easier to say which genres are used across the disciplines (see 2.1).

The seminar has a strong emphasis on the reproduction and transformation of knowledge extracted from sources. The general practice connected with the introduction of the seminar in the 19th century was to provide a seminar library for use by the seminar students to make sure that the necessary literature was on hand.

To a large extent, seminar writing at German and Swiss German universities was an exercise not only in reading and evaluating sources, but also in using correct

quotations and references. Traditionally, each university study program provided (and many still provide although this may have changed after Bologna) a course in “techniques of academic work” (“*Techniken wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens*”) in which the use of proper references and the creation of scientific devices were taught. Along with the reproduction of readings, literature searches, filing, and documentation of readings, as well as structuring papers, the different possibilities of quoting references were most important.

#### 14.2.4 Typical text books on academic writing

We believe that genres cannot be sufficiently defined on linguistic grounds alone. Linguistic and formal aspects may often vary considerably within a genre so that it is necessary to study the social purpose of the text in order to identify the genre. Therefore, genres may be seen as “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language” (Hyland 2002, p. 16). The amount of exposure to a genre is responsible for how easily we are then able to recognize the genre of a particular text. Furthermore, we see genres as culturally defined and therefore constantly evolving and changing as the culture they stem from changes.

In the French part of Switzerland, the following text books are most widely used:

Greuter, M. (2003). *Bien rédiger son mémoire ou son rapport de stage: 150 conseils pour écrire un mémoire brillant... et utile* [To successfully write one's final paper or one's training report: 150 tips to write a brilliant and useful final paper]. Paris: L'Etudiant.

This book is very practically oriented and gives – as the title suggests – many tips on how to plan and organize the writing process. The first part of the book is dedicated to finding a research topic and a tutor. The second part addresses questions of the actual reading and writing process, such as how to cope with the abundance of available literature. The third and final part focuses on structural and formatting issues as well as on the defense of one's thesis.

Lani-Bayle, M. (2006). *Ecrire une recherche, mémoire ou thèse* [Writing a research paper, final paper or doctoral thesis], 3rd edition. Lyon: Chronique Sociale.

Lani-Bayle has a much more fundamental approach to discussing topics such as the creative power of writing and what it means to be a writer. Furthermore, the necessity of a great amount of practice and rewriting is stressed. The second part is more directly concerned with the writing process: how to research one's topic and organize the workload as well as the style and structure of a *mémoire* (thesis) are discussed.

Maccio, C. (2007). *Savoir écrire un livre, un rapport, un mémoire...: de la pensée à l'écriture* [Knowing how to write a book, a report or a final paper...: from thought to writing], 5th edition. Bruxelles: Vie ouvrière; Lyon: Chronique sociale.

In comparison to German text books, Maccio (2007) is far more concerned with questions of style. He explains, for instance, how to handle neologisms, euphemisms, and anglicisms. Furthermore, the most frequent rhetorical devices are listed and explained (such as hyperbole, parallelism, etc.). In addition, the most frequent orthographic difficulties of the French language are listed as are rules on how to avoid them. Structural issues are also discussed in great detail.

In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, numerous textbooks on writing are in use, almost all of them written or published in Germany. There are no specific references to Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Some of the books cover writing in all disciplines while others are specific to certain disciplines.

Kruse, O. (1994/ 2007). *Keine Angst vor dem leeren Blatt. Ohne Schreibblockaden durchs Studium* [Don't be afraid of the empty piece of paper. Studying without writer's block]. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.

This book was one of the first to describe writing from the perspective of the writer. It connects a subjective perspective on writing with an introduction into thinking in the sciences and humanities. Theoretically, the book is in line with the process-oriented approach to writing but only the 12th edition (revised in 2007) contains a description of different genres. The most important part is a step by step description of the production of seminar papers.

Krämer, W. (1999). *Wie schreibe ich eine Seminar- oder Examensarbeit?* [How do I write a seminar paper or a final thesis?]. UTB.

The first chapter describes the situation of the writer at the beginning of the writing process and helps understand the task of writing a paper or thesis. The next 60 page block is dedicated to doing literature searches. Another 60 pages describe formal aspects of the layout, creating tables and graphs, and writing precisely. The formal aspects of quotations as well as the use of numbers and measures cover another 50 pages. The final script, revision and proof reading make up the end of the book.

Frank, A., Haake, S. and, Lahm, S. (2007). *Schlüsselkompetenzen: Schreiben in Studium und Beruf* [Key competences: Academic and professional writing]. Berlin: J.B. Metzler/UTB.

The authors, all members of the writing lab of the University of Bielefeld, present a thorough introduction to all relevant aspects of student writing: writing process, genres, writing problems, and conventions of academic writing.

Kruse, O. (2010). *Lesen und Schreiben. Der richtige Umgang mit Texten im Studium* [Reading and writing. The right way to deal with text at the university]. Konstanz: UVK/ UTB.

This book provides an introduction to reading and writing at the undergraduate level. It introduces students to tasks, problems, essentials, and procedures of academic text production. It includes information on the writing process, the

conventions of academic writing, using language as a tool for writing, and planning one's own skill development.

## 14.3 Genres and writing practices in Switzerland

### 14.3.1 Challenges when moving from secondary to higher education

Students in Swiss secondary education normally write short argumentative essays or narratives in class. Only in their final year of secondary education are they required to write a longer paper, the “*Maturaarbeit*” or “*travail de maturité*” (both meaning literally translated “matura paper”). “*Matura*” or “*maturité*” are the names for the final examinations of the long-term school track of 12 years allowing students to enter university. Depending on the canton, between 15% and 30% of all students choose this path. Since 1990, there is another way of gaining access to universities (mainly the UAS) through the dual education system (on-the-job training plus school) after 10 years of regular school and subsequently attending another year of school to receive the “*Berufsmatur*” (professional matura), which entitles a student to enter a university of applied sciences (UAS).

Between six months to a full year of time is granted for the production of the matura paper. Depending on school regulations, students may work on a topic of their own choice, choose a topic from a provided list, or enter a seminar on a certain theme from which they choose a subtopic (cf. Huber et al., 2008). Students may carry out their own research, do an art project, or just summarize relevant literature. Most regulations demand interdisciplinary work. Students are well prepared for this writing practice, in most cases by a preparatory week and are closely tutored during the research/writing process.

The reason for introducing the matura paper as a genre (which happened in 1995) was to improve on research propaedeutic and to better prepare students for university writing. Even if the papers resulting from the “*Maturaarbeit*” in most instances may not be considered “scientific” due to a lack of disciplinary specificity, they certainly help develop some of the skills that academic writing requires and provide students with the experience of carrying out a larger writing project. According to a nationwide evaluation of 437 “*Maturaarbeiten*”, students in their final year of secondary education have for the most part acquired the basic academic competences necessary to write such a paper as documented in Huber et al. (2008). The *Maturaarbeit* has been established in all three language regions and is seen as a useful practice from students and teachers alike.

In spite of the success of this writing experience, students in higher education still find it difficult to adjust to academic writing. According to our own research (a self-assessment questionnaire answered by 659 students of journalism, health disciplines, and economics at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences), academic writing is the study skill in which students feel most insecure, followed by

“giving an oral presentation” and “reading and understanding academic texts”. Regarding various subskills in academic writing, only half of the students feel very secure in “handling writing problems and crisis” (49,7%) and in “understanding and reflecting on research methods” (49,6%). Furthermore, less than 55% of the students feel secure in the following subskills of academic writing: “finding the right style of academic texts” (51,6%), “discussing scientific theories” (50,9%), “interpreting and integrating scientific findings” (51,9%) and “coping with the huge amount of literature” (52,2%).

### 14.3.2 Most frequently used genres at universities of the German-speaking part of Switzerland

Among the most frequently used papers at all German-speaking universities is the seminar paper, also called “*Hausarbeit*” (literally “home work”). “*Arbeit*” (“work”) is the German word for any serious academic paper at any level. Both names, “seminar paper” and “*Hausarbeit*” are used interchangeably although *Hausarbeit* seems to be a slightly wider in terms of scope. The term “seminar paper” will be the preferred term here. There are only a few studies examining the seminar paper (Kaiser, 2003; Gruber et al., 2006; Steinhoff, 2007), but there are many descriptions of genres within writing textbooks and how-to books (Bünting, Bitterlich, & Pospiech, 1996; Krämer, 1999; Kruse, 2007, 2010; Frank, Haacke, & Lahm, 2007).

Next to the seminar paper, the different kinds of theses are certainly of central importance at the Swiss universities. Theses play a main role in the grading procedures of any degree program. A relatively common measure for the amount of work to be invested in the bachelor’s thesis is the equivalent of six weeks of work, i.e., 240–300 hours or 10–12 ETCS credit points, and the master’s thesis generally garnishes 30 ETCS points. However, the number of credit points granted varies considerably (see below). In some disciplines, theses may equal an extended seminar paper and may be judged by the same criteria. In other disciplines, theses may demand empirical research and the structure of the paper may rather equal a research report. A generally accepted definition of the function of a thesis (which is valid for all German-speaking countries) is that it should prove the ability to carry out independent scientific (or scholarly) work (“*Befähigung zu selbständiger wissenschaftlicher Arbeit*”). It does not say “to carry out research”, as this would definitely include the use of research methods. “Scientific work” in German-speaking universities traditionally means to deal with sources in a proper way, to interpret findings, state a research problem, perform literature searches, and synthesize findings in a coherent way.

Next to the seminar paper and the thesis genres, there are several genres that are widely used across the disciplines. Kruse (2010) organizes or classifies the genres along the following categories:

- *transitory genres:*  
Genres like notes, excerpts, and proposals function as intermediate steps on the way to another text: some of them are well known, often used and regularly discussed in textbooks, as, for instance, the excerpt, a summary from a source, or a documentation of reading. A second one is note-taking, which demands the transfer of an oral practice like a lecture into a text. Proposals or dispositions (in German called “Exposé” or “Disposition”) are writing plans for seminar papers or theses, which are usually done before students start writing.
- *writing-to-learn genres:*  
The seminar paper is the best known of these genres, but in fact all kinds of theses belong in this category. They are a means of learning and specialization in a certain discipline.
- *minutes and documentations:*  
These are also genres like the seminar protocol, log books, or learning journals. The seminar protocol as part of seminar teaching demands a summary of the oral discussion in class. Seminar protocols are supposed to give documentation of the course of the seminar. Log books and learning journals are of newer origin and are supposed to accompany learning processes. They should document learning but even more so reflect it.
- *professional genres:*  
In many study programs at the universities of applied sciences, students have to practice genres that are of a more professional nature like a medical history, or case or project report. These genres are intended to bridge the study program and the workplace.
- *research communication:*  
In research intensive study programs like biology, geology, or environmental studies, students have to use the same genres that are used in research communication, mainly the research paper or literature reports. These papers demand the mastery of the conventions of research communication and documentation.

In the French part of Switzerland, the most commonly used genres are the “travail de séminaire” and the “mémoire/travail de master”. “Mémoire” is the French term for “thesis”. In the French-speaking part of Switzerland, the term “travail” is often preferred, which is the translation of the German word “Arbeit” (work). The “travail de séminaire” is mostly used in the humanities, in legal studies as well as in economics. It corresponds to the “Seminararbeit” in the German-speaking countries. Students usually have to define a research question and answer it by referring to the relevant literature and/or doing their own research. The exact aim, structure, and function of a “travail de séminaire” (seminar paper) are likely to differ from one discipline to another. Usually an important purpose of this genre is to familiarize students with academic writing and to prepare them for the “mémoire de master” or “travail de master”. The “mémoire/travail de master” (master’s thesis) is the final thesis written in all master’s programs. Students have to prove that they are able to reflect on a research question, choose an appropriate

research method, and analyze the data gathered. However, aims, number of credit points, size and time allotted for the writing of it varies widely from one discipline to another.

### 14.3.3A comparison of Genre terms between the three language regions (French, German, Italian)

There is only one research project that compares genres used for writing in the three language regions. Kruse and Chitez (2012) collected questionnaire data at three teacher universities of different languages (French: HEP Bejune; German: PH Zurich; Italien: Supsi) and conducted interviews with faculty to validate the questionnaire data. Their approach is an attempt at a systematic genre mapping that allows identifying the main genres and contrasting the genre systems between the language regions.

Genre family	Listed in survey as:
<b>Thesis</b>	mémoire/travail de bachelor [bachelor's thesis] mémoire/travail de maîtrise [master's thesis] mémoire/travail de master [master's thesis] mémoire/travail professionnel [thesis, unspecified]
<b>Lesson plan</b>	préparations de leçons [preparations of lessons] description d'une situation d'enseignement [description of the teaching situation] unité de formation des sciences de l'éducation [teaching unit in the field of educational sciences]
<b>Practical training report</b>	rapport d'observation [observation report] rapports, observation des stages [reports, internship observations] travail pratique [practical paper] description d'une situation vécue [description of a real life experience] bilan d'un module [assessment of a module] une restitution de stage pratique [internship report]
<b>Reflective text</b>	réflexions spontanées [spontaneous reflections] représentations [representations] carnet [book] journal de bord [journal]
<b>Seminar paper</b>	des travaux d'analyses de données [data analysis papers] analyse d'article, de textes sur des thèmes [article, text and theme analysis] prise de position sur une problématique [written comment on a topic] séminaire [seminar] texte scientifique [scientific text] travail de recherche [research paper]



<b>Summary</b>	rédaction de résumé des textes [summary writing] synthèse/compte-rendu de lecture [synthesis / minutes on readings] synthèse de textes argumentée [synthesis on argumentative texts] résumé [summary]
<b>Minutes or notes</b>	prise de notes [note taking] transcription d'un échange conversationnel enregistré [transcription of a recorded conversation]
<b>Essay</b>	préparation d'exposés brefs, essais variés, texte argumentatif [preparation of short compositions, various essays, argumentative text] travaux de pape [essay] dissertation [essay]
<b>Exam</b>	contrôle de connaissances [assessment of knowledge]

Table 7: Genre inventory at the Teacher Education University HEP-Bejune with a first classification into genre families (including literal translations). From: Kruse & Chitez (2012)

The French genre system seems to resemble basically the same main genres (or genre families) as the German and Italian systems. The research-based papers are subsumed under the seminar papers as in the two other languages.

<b>Genre family</b>	<b>Listed in survey as:</b>
<b>Thesis</b>	<i>Didaktische Abschlussarbeit</i> [didactic thesis] <i>Master Thesis</i> [master's thesis] <i>Vertiefungsarbeiten</i> [in-depth study]
<b>Portfolio</b>	<i>Auf der Basis der 12 PHZH StandardsTheoriearbeitsteil, Praxisbeschreibung, eigene Interpretation und Konklusion</i> [based on the 12 standards of PHZH/theoretical part, practical part, interpretation and conclusion]
<b>Lesson plan</b>	<i>Kommentierte Unterrichtsplanung</i> [commented lesson plan] <i>Unterrichtsplanung (mit Begründung, Material)</i> [lesson plan] <i>Prüfungsarbeit zu Didaktik des Bildnerischen Gestaltens Sek 1, Unterrichtsplanung</i> [exam paper on the methodology of visual arts, Secondary 1, lesson plan] <i>Unterrichtsplanungen mit Begründungen des Vorgehens, Legitimation des Unterrichts durch Zitieren von wissenschaftlichen Texten, Lehrplan etc.</i> [lesson plan with explanations on the procedure, legitimacy of the lesson plans through quotations, teaching plan etc.] <i>Didaktische Analysen</i> [didactic analyses] <i>Unterrichtsvorbereitungen</i> [preparation for lessons] <i>Fachdidaktische Planungsarbeiten mit didaktischen Analysen und Präparationen</i> [didactic planning with didactic analyses and preparations] <i>Sachanalysen, didaktische Analysen und Umsetzungsbeispiele für den</i>

	<p><i>Unterricht/ Unterrichtsplanung</i> [practical analyses, didactic analyses and applications examples for lesson/lesson plans]</p> <p><i>Unterrichtsprojekte</i> [lesson projects]</p> <p><i>Planung von Lektionen</i> [lesson planning]</p> <p><i>Lernprozessdokumentationen</i> [learning process documentation]</p> <p><i>Eigene, theoriegestützte Konzepte für den künftigen Unterricht</i> [personal theory-supported concepts of the future lessons]</p>
<b>Practical training report</b>	<p><i>Falldokumentationen mit Kommentaren (kleinere Aufträge)</i> [case studies with comments (short papers)]</p>
<b>Reflective text</b>	<p><i>Persönliche Reflexion</i> [personal reflections]</p> <p><i>Persönliche Reflexion mit thematischer Vertiefung</i> [personal reflection with thematic immersion]</p> <p><i>Reflexive Texte</i> [reflective texts]</p> <p><i>Reflexionen zu eigener gestalterischer Praxis und zu individuellen gestalterischen Projekten</i> [reflection on personal creative practical activities and on the individual creative projects]</p> <p><i>Reflexionen zu einzelnen Seminarveranstaltungen</i> [reflections on seminars]</p> <p>Learning journal: Students write a log on their teaching experiences reflecting on their experience and the planning process</p> <p><i>Reflexionstexte zum Mentorat</i> [reflective texts on tutoring activities]</p>
<b>Seminar paper</b>	<p><i>Literaturarbeit, Diskussion von wissenschaftlichen Grundlagentexten</i> [literature report, discussion on basic scientific texts]</p> <p><i>Wissenschaftliche Texte</i> [scientific texts]</p> <p><i>Leistungsnachweise, die einen theoretischen sowie einen praktischen Teil beinhalten</i> [papers which include both theoretical and practical aspects]</p> <p><i>Prüfungsarbeit mit Literaturrecherche, Cluster, didaktischer Analyse, Grobplanung und exemplarischer Feinplanung</i> [graded paper with literature review, didactic analysis, rough planning and exemplary detailed plan]</p> <p><i>Beschreibung und Erklärung von Experimenten bzw. Phänomenen.</i></p> <p><i>Zusammenfassen des Hintergrundwissens</i> [description and explanation of experiments and phenomena. Summary of basic knowledge]</p> <p><i>Vergleichbar mit Seminararbeiten an der Universität. Basierend auf einer eigenen Fragestellung/ These zu einem fachwissenschaftlichen oder fachdidaktischen Them</i> [comparable with seminar papers at the university of Basilea. Based on a research question in the purely scientific or didactic field]</p> <p><i>Geschichtsseminararbeiten (Miniforschungsarbeiten)</i> [seminar paper in history (mini research paper)]</p> <p><i>Fachwissenschaftliche Hausarbeit</i> [topical scientific paper]</p> <p><i>Längere Arbeit – orientiert am Modell des wissenschaftlichen Diskussionsbeitrages</i> [elaborate paper – modelled on the scientific debate]</p>

	<i>Zusammenfassung von Wissen aus der Literatur zum Thema Lernen und Beschreibung deren Umsetzung bzw. Einbezug im Schulalltag</i> [summary of knowledge from literature on the topic of learning and description of applications in schools]
<b>Research paper</b>	<i>Research Paper</i>
<b>Essay</b>	<i>Beschreibung eigener berufsspezifischer Reflexionen bzw. Stellungnahmen zu einer Fragestellung auf der Grundlage von Fachliteratur zum Thema</i> (Umfang je nach Aufgabenstellung: 1–2 Seiten) [description of personal job-related reflections or a research question based on literature in the field (size depending on the requirements: 1–2 pages)] <i>3–4 seitige schriftliche Arbeit über ein Thema, meist nicht empirisch, aber literaturgestützt</i> [3–4 page written paper on a topic, generally not empirical but literature-supported]
<b>Proposal</b>	<i>Projektskizzen/ Protokolle des Arbeitsprozesses</i> [project drafts / notes on the work processes]

Table 8: Genre inventory at the German-speaking Teachers University PH Zurich with a first classification into genre families (including literal translations). From: Kruse & Chitez (2012)

The German responses to the question of which texts students write for their classes resulted in descriptions of writing processes in a rather individual way.

<b>Genre family</b>	<b>Listed in survey as:</b>
<b>Thesis</b>	lavoro/tesi di diploma [diploma thesis] lavoro/tesi di diploma del bachelor [bachelor's thesis] lavoro/tesi di diploma [diploma thesis] progetto di lavoro di diploma [diploma thesis project] progetto di ricerca per il lavoro di diploma [research project for the diploma thesis]
<b>Lesson plan</b>	progettazione di itinerari didattici con introduzione teorica e metodologica [plans of didactic itineraries with theoretical and methodological introduction] progettazioni didattiche [didactic/teaching project/plans] progettazioni lezioni [lesson projects/ plans] progetti didattici [didactic projects/ plans] documentazione su un itinerario didattico [didactic/ documentation] la documentazione della pratica professionale [documentation of the professional practice] progettazione di un'attività per la scuola dell'infanzia [planning an activity for the pre-school level] testo descrittivo [descriptive text] testo descrittivo e interpretativo a riguardo di un avvenimento realmente

	<p>accaduto [descriptive and interpretative text on a real even]          testo espositivo [expositive text]          didattica della disciplina [didactics of the discipline]          piani lezione, riflessioni, sintesi e lavori di ricerca [lesson plans, reflections, syntheses, and reserach papers]          piani lezione, schemi di itinerari [lesson plans, itinerary drafts]          preparazione di una lezione (riflessione teorica + analisi del lavoro da svolgere) [lesson preparation (theoretical reflection + analysis of the future work)]          scrittura di progetti di lavoro (lezioni) [project writing (lessons)]          trasposizioni didattiche di obiettivi generali didattici e pedagogici [didactic presentations of the general didactic and pedagogic objectives]</p>
<b>Practical training report</b>	<p>documentazione visita pratica professionale [documentation on the professional practice]          documentazioni della pratica professionale (dossier) [documentation of the professional practice (file)]          dossier pratico per un itinerario relativo ad una classe di scuola elementare [practical file on a elementary school lesson]          dossier sulle pratiche professionali [file on professional practice]          rapporto su un colloquio [report on an intervies]          resoconto di una lezione [report on a lesson]          bilanci legati alle pratiche professionali [conclusions on professional practice]          documentazioni relative alle pratiche professionali ( tirocinio) [documentations on professional practice]          presentazioni di percorsi esperenziali [presentations on experiential paths]          rapporti di ricerca [reserach reports]          rapporto di ricerca empirica [empirical research reports]          testi di sintesi, bilanci di attività, risposta ad interrogativi [synthesis texts, statements of activity, responses to questions]</p>

Table 9: Genre inventory at the Italian-speaking Teachers University SUPSI (Locarno, TI) with a first classification into genre families (including literal translations). From: Kruse & Chitez (2012)

We listed the genres from universities of the three languages in full length to demonstrate that the overall structure of the genres used at these three universities show amazing similarities. Basically, there are three main purposes for writing (if we exclude the thesis genres) each covering several different genres: genres for writing about practical (pedagogical) issues, genres to write about research, and genres for reflection and (self-) evaluation.

The thesis is a chapter of its own. Basically, the typical bachelor's and Master's theses can be found at all three universities, but the university in the German-speaking part of Switzerland has additional thesis genres. One is the "*didaktische*

*Abschlussarbeit*” (didactic thesis), the other “*Vertiefungsarbeit*” (in-depth study); both are required at the bachelor’s level. The didactic thesis requires the elaboration of any topic from teaching and learning connected with one’s own teaching project. The in-depth study requires a disciplinary project from any of the school subjects (like German, biology, arts, media studies, etc.). What is also unique for the German-speaking context is the use of a portfolio, which is created in connection along with a mentoring scheme. Each student has a mentor, most of them are teachers from schools rather than faculty who accompany students in their professional development. The portfolio is seen as a tool documenting this developmental and mentoring process. Like the theses, the portfolio has to be submitted as a graduation requirement.

It has to be noted that teacher universities have a profile of writing assignments and genres that is not comparable to other universities. We have documented it here to show that Swiss universities have developed similar writing cultures even if the languages differ. The discipline seems to exert a much stronger influence on genre use and writing cultures than the language.

PHZH/ German	HEP/ French	SUPSI/ Italian	English
Abschlussarbeit	Mémoire/travail professionnel	Lavoro di diploma/Tesi die diploma	Thesis
Essay	Essay	Saggio	Essay
Forschungsbericht	Ecriture de recherche	Ricerca	Research paper
Praxisbericht Praktikumsbericht	Rapport de stage	(Rapporto sulla) pratica professionale	Practical/professional training report
Protokoll	Rapport	Rapporto	Minutes
Reflexion	Réflexion sur les pratiques	Riflessione	Reflective text/reflection
Seminararbeit or Hausarbeit	Travaux en science de l’éducation	Paper	Seminar paper
Unterrichtsplanung	Trame de projet/projet de leçon	Pianificazione	Lesson plan

Table 10: Comparison of genre terms between French, German, and Italian (with English reference term)

### 14.3.4 Oral genres

Seminar teaching traditionally connects the writing of seminar papers with the oral practices of class discussions and student presentations. The routines of seminar teaching demand that students choose one of several topics the seminar teacher provided together with a list of relevant literature. The teaching consists,

to a large extent, of student presentations on these topics. Students are expected to get acquainted with their topic, prepare a presentation, and support their presentation with either a handout or power point slides (or both). To structure student presentations, the “*Thesenpapier*” (thesis paper) has been used both as a handout and a structure for the presentation. The *Thesenpapier* is what remains of a much older teaching routine: the disputation in which statements (theses) were prepared for the sake of a ritualized kind of debate between a discussant and an opponent. There are several guide books supporting students with their oral presentations. The function of the *Thesenpapier* is not to cover the whole topic in question but to provide the listener/reader with some clues about what to discuss. The *Thesenpapier* today seems to merge with the handout as a short paper documenting important parameters of a speech (authors, affiliations, topic, abstract, figures, references) without any prompts for discussion.

### 14.3.5 Writing practices

Depending on the genre, instructions and assignments vary. We will first give short descriptions of writing practices connected with the seminar paper and thesis writing, and then we will mention assignments that may be connected with some of the other genres.

**Seminar teaching:** The seminar as a form of teaching is typically centered on a narrow research topic and explores this topic through reading, student research, class discussions, and student presentations. The professor in charge of the seminar will prepare a list of significant subtopics, provide all important books on a library bookshelf for exclusive use of the participants, and prepare guidelines for the formal requirements like deadlines, number of pages or characters, citation style, manuscript type, kind of group work etc. Today, this may be supported by a learning platform with a discussion forum, digitalized literature, instructions for writing, facilities for peer feedback, and links to significant websites. The students select one of the subtopics, either individually or in small groups, then receive a date on which it is their turn to present their first findings on the topic. They know that it is their task to start reading the literature and prepare the class presentation. The seminar paper is usually due at the beginning of the following semester.

**Final theses:** The final thesis is part of the examination and not a writing assignment that is open for negotiation between student and advisor. Students receive their assignment from the registrar’s office and are granted a limited time span to work on it. The process of defining the assignment before the registrar’s office hands over to the student may be different. There are three common ways organizing this:

A. **Individual solution:** Students present their idea for a topic to a professor who helps them to write an assignment. The professor passes this along to the of-

fice which then in turn informs the student. This solution is common in the social sciences and humanities. Students decide individually when to start writing their thesis and which professor to select.

- B. Suggested assignments: In some disciplines, mainly in the sciences and technical fields, students receive suggestions from their professors or from laboratories. These suggestions usually provide a certain research method that can be used for their study.
- C. Collective solution: A more economical procedure used mainly in the UAS provides a “kick-off week” for all students about five to eight months before graduation. Students receive help to find individual assignments (like in Variation A), or they are invited to collaborate on ongoing research projects (like in variation B). During the kick-off meeting, several workshop offers about thesis writing may be provided such as on the use of research methods or on research writing. Also, individual counselling may be offered. The kick-off week usually results in students writing proposals, which are then allocated to professors for negotiation and further supervision.

During the writing process, students may be offered various forms of guidance. Some advisors offer group supervision while others are open to individual consultations with their students. Supervisors may read at least a small text segment of the thesis in advance. The amount and intensity of supervision varies greatly among professors.

For all theses, no matter which level, a graded statement or report has to be written by the advisor and often by a second expert. Theses are filed and are usually accessible through the library. Many regulations require a colloquium to defend the thesis. Usually, they receive a separate grade for the colloquium, which is shown on the certificate together with the title and grade of the thesis.

Reports: At many stages of their studies, students are required to write reports of which reports on internships are the most prominent. Their function is the reflection of practical work and to make it accessible for discussion and to secure the learning effects. Similarly, reports have to be written by students from teacher education programs when documenting teaching experiences in schools. In other disciplines, field trips may have to be reported. In the medical disciplines, case reports have to be written when students are involved in diagnosing patients. In science study programs that require experimentation, students may have to write lab reports or research reports.

Logs and learning journals: A rather new practice is the use of logs and learning journals. Many guide books suggest the use of learning journals and some courses require such writings.

Portfolio: In some disciplines, portfolios are popular and may be accompanied by individual courses or a whole study program.



### 14.3.6 Relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

This question is difficult to answer and we only can offer anecdotic evidence for such a change. It seems, however, that the situation is different at the universities as compared to the universities of applied sciences and in the new disciplines as compared to the older, well-established disciplines. Students enrolled in applied disciplines such as journalism, applied psychology, nursing, physiotherapy, or occupational therapy are confronted to a much higher degree with genres used in professional fields while students from the more classical university disciplines such as sociology, history, psychology, or biology learn the discipline-specific codes of academic writing and the respective genre characteristics. For them, it might be harder to transfer their genre knowledge and language skills to the workplace.

According to our own research, health students are trained in writing genres common at their future workplace such as case/client reports. A collection of genres in a faculty workshop with faculty from a nursing study program revealed that the following kinds of texts were used in class: analysis, report on research conferences, excerpt, case report, case discussion, glossary, handout, info material, written exam, report on bodily examinations, learning documentation, learning journal, literature review, master's thesis, notes from classes, client report, care report, portfolio, poster, PowerPoint presentation, internship paper, internship report, proposal, oral presentation, reflection, seminar paper, script, newspaper article, and summary. It is not clear whether each of these kinds of texts deserves to be called "genre". What seems more important is the multitude of texts that is being reported. We received similar lists from occupational therapists, physiotherapists and midwifery.

## 14.4 The influence of the Bologna Process on the writing at the Swiss universities

### 14.4.1 Bologna process in Switzerland

Switzerland was among the 29 countries that signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999 and started immediately thereafter to restructure its higher education system. The basis of the Bologna reform in 2000 was a contract between the State Secretary for Education, Research SER, and the universities, and it resulted in a strategic paper of the Swiss University Council in 2003 (see <http://www.admin.ch/ch/d/as/2004/3003.pdf>). In 2004, the first bachelor's degrees were given to students. In 2006/07, all newly beginning study programs had changed to the Bologna structure. Even medical schools were transformed to a bachelor/ master structure as early as 2007/08 (see <http://www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/hochschulen/02474/index.html?lang=en>).

For the universities, this meant a change in the partitioning of study programs from former 5-year diploma structures (with a “middle exam” after 2 ½ years) to a 3 plus 2-year bachelor/master structure. For the universities of applied sciences, it resulted in a reduction from 4 to 3 years with the chance of adding a specialized master’s program of 1 or 2 years.

Unlike Germany, the Bologna changes in Switzerland caused little controversy. Universities used the opportunity to introduce new ways of teaching and re-shaped study programs from 5-year to 3 plus 2 year structures. Students received two diplomas instead of one but had a similar amount and intensity of teaching. For the more practice-oriented UASs, in contrast, the bachelor’s degree is not seen simply as a step on the way to a master’s diploma but is a degree qualifying for a professional field. The reduction of bachelor’s programs to three years led to a higher compression of teaching matters and a decline of opportunities for internships and exchange stays. While at universities most students go on to postgraduate studies, at the UASs only a small part of the student population is willing do so.

#### 14.4.2 Changes in writing after the Bologna Declaration

Assessing the impact of the Bologna Process on the writing activities in higher education is a challenging task. This is due to the fact that the multitude of information on the Bologna Process focuses mainly on the three directions of change that were implemented in 46 countries until 2007: encouraging student mobility by setting up a European Higher Education area (EHEA); creating a framework of academic standards (equivalent ECTS-point system, two-cycle study programs); and describing qualifications (learning outcomes). Most changes, however, have taken place at the university level and little of it has been communicated publicly. For this, the impact of the Bologna Process on academic writing practices can only be estimated.

For the universities of applied sciences, the introduction of the Bologna structures took place shortly after they had been established in the late 1990s. This process was connected with an assemblage of smaller schools to universities and with a change of school-like curricula to teaching arrangements relying more on independent and self-directed learning. Teachers were promoted to professors or lecturers, and their work portfolios were extended by research and continuous education. Thus, the Bologna changes in the first half of the 2000s were superimposed on a transformation process already under way. Many changes received a new legitimation by the Bologna philosophy and gave university development a unified direction that included independent learning, competence-oriented teaching, modularization, continuous assessment, and research-oriented learning. Which of these changes, however, are due to the new status of a university and which to the Bologna Process, cannot be singled out.

For the Universities of applied sciences, a common problem proved to be the reduction of the study programs from four to three years. Unlike other European countries, the Swiss educational administration insisted on limiting bachelor's programs to 3 and master's programs to 2 years while other countries would also accept 4 plus 1 year solutions. To compensate for the missing years of the first study cycle, many bachelor's programs had to delete some courses or compress their learning offers. Internships and exchange stays had to be reduced as well. As only a small fraction of students from the universities of applied sciences tends to proceed to a master's program, the bachelor's programs have to offer basic qualifications for professions like engineering, business, architecture, translation, social work and the like in only three years.

One of the ways to compensate for the loss of time at the UASs, is intensifying academic learning by teaching study competences more carefully. Some of the former vocational schools already had German departments offering language education to their students and used these to better prepare student writing. Some of the newly evolving programs integrated writing into a communication program while others introduced specialized writing instruction for disciplines like engineering, translation, or architecture. Some universities chose to set up a general writing program, which was to be followed by discipline-specific courses. As a general tendency, it seems that at the UAS degree programs there is a preference for professional writing over academic writing. This means, that students are not well-prepared for their bachelor's theses.

Changes at the traditional universities are different. Unlike the UAS, the traditional universities already had ample writing-to-learn structures and regularly involved students in seminar writing. This practice has not changed much but many study programs adopted a more thorough way of introducing seminar writing to students. No university thus far, however, has set up a writing center, and only a few first year writing courses have been introduced.

Another change from the Bologna Process on the traditional universities is a different way of handling student papers. The pre-Bologna university placed little emphasis on a strict time regime for the submission of student papers. Students were free to decide when to submit and it was up for negotiation with the professor how much time was granted. Today, deadlines are set by the study programs and papers not submitted in time lead to a "fail" for the respective course. Paper writing has thus become a more regulated and more strictly handled matter than before. Students have a higher risk of failing when starting a paper and usually have less time for it.

For all study programs today, it holds true that a shift in responsibility from the individual teacher/professor to the study program has taken place. A high emphasis is placed on making curricula manageable for students. The emphasis on self-organization, which the Humboldt tradition had burdened onto the students, has yielded a practice in which planning is done by the management, for instance, by calculating the exact number of ECTS points for each activity; by

providing strict time management; by reducing the course selection; or by continuous testing of any skill acquired.

One of the genres directly influenced by the Bologna structure is the thesis, which was already required in the old structure, but has doubled in the new one. Master's programs tend to demand a clearly research-based thesis and thesis writing usually absorbs a high percentage of the ECTS points given. Several of the master's programs have included writing courses to prepare students for thesis writing. There is, unfortunately, a lack of information on the exact number of such offers.

At the bachelor's level, only the universities of applied sciences require theses regularly while some university degree programs want one or two lengthy papers to be written with a smaller work load and less credit points assigned than a thesis would demand. The reason behind this is probably rooted in their understanding of the master's degree as the traditional, "real" university degree while the bachelor's degree is still regarded as an intermediate step towards the master (as was the "mid-term exam" in pre-Bologna times).

#### **14.4.3 Learning outcomes and writing practices**

One of the Bologna objectives refers to the realization of learning outcomes that must be clearly described and validly assessed. In fact, all modules and programs must specify their outcomes, "the three Bologna cycles are based on generic descriptors of learning outcomes, so it is clear that describing higher education programmes in terms of learning outcomes is a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010" (Bologna Process Stocktaking London 2007, p. 51). This directive had different consequences for the Swiss universities. One is a growing number of assessments at all stages of higher education and a reduced amount of time for self-selected and independent work.

The higher number of assessments has not led to reduced number of writing assignments but seems to have increased them although this may prove to be different for different degree programs. The need for assessment has led many courses to demand a paper to be graded instead of giving credits simply for attendance. New forms of writing practices have evolved by this practice as the traditional seminar papers tend to be too voluminous and too demanding for an assessment.

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## 15 United Kingdom / By Caroline Coffin, Jim Donohue and Kelly Peake

### 15.1 Introduction: what is genre?

Genre is, in general, a commonsense label used to categorise texts in relatively broad terms from a commonsense perspective (e.g., poetry as opposed to drama). How ‘genre’ is defined and how it is used as a concept and/or text-analytical tool in academia in the UK differs in relation to the epistemological traditions of the discipline (e.g. linguistics or ethnography) and theory (e.g., New Rhetoric or systemic functional linguistics) in which it is located. For example, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) focuses on the relationships between context, text and language and theorises genre as a socially recognised, linguistically patterned way of achieving a task. In other words, genres are abstract schemata of text form, content, and language which are realised in actual texts designed to achieve purposes. Genres emerge partly in response to the logic implied by the purposes and partly in response to social conventions and expectations about how such purposes are to be met.

There are two main reasons for why genre as a concept has been taken up in UK Higher Education. First, by focusing on the linguistic patterns of texts, which have particular disciplinary goals, we gain insight into some of the key knowledge structures and meaning-making practices of a specific domain or community against which the processes of differentiation and change in these structures and practices can be better understood. Genres, in other words, like language, dynamically evolve in line with social and cultural change. Second, as recognized by the New Rhetoric school of genre, they provide “the keys to understanding how to participate (our underlining) in the actions of a community” (Miller, 1994, p. 38–39), a perspective adopted by those drawing on an academic literacies paradigm (see discussion in Coffin & Donohue, 2012). Genre is a particularly common tool in language teaching and learning programmes for international students (generally referred to as English for academic purposes or English for specific purposes in the UK) where learning the discourse and texts of a particular discipline area or domain of work is seen to constitute an important part of learning to participate in a new community or “discourse community” (Swales seminal publication on genre, 1990, p. 3).

### 15.2 Structural Aspects of Higher Education and Language Politics

#### 15.2.1 English in relation to other languages as the medium of higher education

In England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland the primary language of high education is English for all teaching, research, and assessment; in Wales, both English

and Welsh are used for these three purposes, and it is possible to do a degree entirely in the medium of one or the other.

Languages other than English (L2) may be used for teaching and assessment in departments and/or courses specifically dedicated to the study of those languages (e.g., teaching and assessment in Spanish on a course in Hispanic studies in a modern languages department or as part of a degree programme in international business and management studies) but this varies widely by course, department, and university. In Wales as stated above, Welsh may be used for teaching, research, and assessment.

### 15.2.2 Types of UK Higher Education institutions and relationship with genre use

Common lines of differentiation for UK Higher Education institutions are whether they tend to be research-intensive or teaching-focused institutions; when they were established (older universities and many of those built in the 1960s vs post-1992 universities, which are former colleges of higher education and vocationally oriented polytechnics) and whether they are a member of a particular group or association (primarily the Russell group or the 1994 group). As all but one university in the UK receive government funding, the private-public distinction is not relevant. There are only a few private universities in the UK, e.g., the University of Buckingham. More prestige is associated with older universities which tend to be research led and academic orientated; although newer universities do offer a range of traditional academic courses in addition to vocational courses, they are often perceived as being less academic and have lower status. There may be more genres being used in teaching and assessment in universities that have vocational courses in addition to academic courses as these tend to make more direct links to professions with the accompanying range of professional genres.

Another type of institution that is playing an increasingly large role in UK Higher Education is the further education (FE) college, an institution which traditionally offered upper secondary, vocational, and diploma courses. These days, many FE colleges are taking on degree-level teaching, offering foundation degrees, which are a preparatory year for study in particular disciplines (for example science and engineering), and offer access to UK Higher Education for international students, students who are switching disciplines, mature students, students from non-traditional backgrounds, and so on.

Other elements that characterise universities may be their age (the medieval universities of Oxford and Cambridge are accorded special status, being seen as the most prestigious in the UK; their discipline focus or strengths, for example, Goldsmiths is known for arts and design whereas Imperial College is known for sciences) or the extent to which they offer distance learning: The Open University is an entirely distance learning institution, the only one of this type in the UK; other universities are increasingly adding distance learning elements to their courses.



es, off campus (The University of Nottingham, for example, has a campus in Malaysia and Ningbo, China) in addition to their face-to-face learning. Each of these may influence the use of genres. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge tend to have an intensive tutorial system where students are expected to write essays or papers on a weekly basis for discussion with their tutor; universities with a particular discipline strength will require students to write genres connected to those disciplines. In distance education there may, and probably will, be more explicit explanation of the genres required.

### **15.2.3 The overall uses of university writing**

Writing is used for both learning and assessment. Some writing is done by students in their classes and most commonly involves taking/making notes or completing worksheets or note books linked to practical laboratory work; there may also be short writing activities whereby students produce a text that may or may not be assessed, but these are rarer. Students also engage in out-of-class academic writing, particularly reading, making notes, and producing mostly long texts for course work. In distance or mixed mode courses, students may do online writing within their courses, writing collaboratively in a group, on a wiki, in chat rooms, or through emails. As a very general rule, most long texts for coursework assessment are written out-of-class but allow students access to whatever resources they need, and most final examination texts are written in timed, resource limited exam situations, largely on campus.

### **15.2.4 The role of final theses in graduation**

This tends to vary by degree course and to some extent type of institution. In some disciplines/departments in some institutions, undergraduate students are given the choice of writing a thesis as one of their final year modules; this often counts for double the points of other modules. In other disciplines/departments, students are required to do a thesis or a large piece of writing in one of their courses that may be equivalent to a thesis but may not be labelled as such. At the master's level, it is more common for students to have to write a final thesis; in some degrees this is the only form of assessment. At the doctoral level all students are required to write a long dissertation although the form may vary in certain subjects. Creative arts, design, and computer science dissertations may include non written elements.

### 15.2.5 Responsibility for students' writing development in higher education in the UK

Responsibility for writing is very hard to locate in UK Higher Education. It is frequently tacit, and will be championed by individual lecturers or small groups in departments; the spread of this activity is varied and difficult to track. In certain departments or institutions it may be seen to be an implicit part of the job. In The Open University, for example, disciplinary lecturers will sometimes take responsibility for writing development as it is a specific learning goal on some subject courses.

Where there is some official responsibility for writing, it is often part of the remit of student services, student/learning support units (who are often responsible for disabilities and dyslexia as well), or departments that deal with skills and language teaching, and it may happen through tutorials, workshops, and courses. These may be aimed at all students in the form of a skills course/workshop or at second language English speakers in the form of a language course/workshop (or both). The first/second language divide may be important in some institutions in which case it may be reflected in there being a skills or support unit and a separate language teaching unit; in other institutions there may be one unit for both groups. In some institutions these units (or sections of them) are overtly tasked with working with students' writing, either through university directives or through the initiative of the unit head; in others this happens less officially. Attention to writing occurs both in the form of internal activities of the unit and as work between the unit and other academic departments where learning development staff act as teachers or advisors for curriculum/pedagogic change. Examples of the latter at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) is team-teaching of the features of a particular text type in geography, collaborative redesign of a course in history so that it focuses on how history is written, a support course around writing reports within the biology department taught by a writing specialist but administered by the department. Certain academic departments also have posts (often part time) that deal with supporting students' communication or literacy (engineering at QMUL, engineering at Imperial) while others have courses run by members of that department that highlight writing in some way (English and history at QMUL) or elements of courses that seek explicitly to improve students' writing (geography at QMUL).

Some institutions have writing centres as well as support or skills units (see below) while at least one university (QMUL) currently has a working group tasked with reviewing policy around the attention to writing in the curriculum. In most universities, some responsibility for writing lies with the library, often in collaboration with a skills unit and/or academic departments. Writing is often dealt with overtly in pre-sessional courses or within degrees which are aimed at international students, students from non-traditional backgrounds, or students entering a new area of study. In these contexts there is often a strong English for academic purposes (EAP) approach to developing writing.

At The Open University, a range of approaches to writing across the curriculum are in existence or development. These include a credit bearing subject specific writing-in-the discipline course, a credit bearing online general EAP course, a postgraduate MBA language preparation course, and several forms of writing provision within subject course curricula; in addition there is a range of generic self-access material and workshops provided by student services. All of this provision can be put up against the strong emphasis on study skills (including writing) which is built into all OU course designs and which OU tutors are encouraged to address in their tuition and feedback.

The Royal Literary Fund (RLF) runs a UK-wide fellowship scheme whereby published writers are based at UK universities and act as writing tutors to students who want feedback. The RLF has also funded research into student writing and published a report in 2006, *Writing Matters*, which outlines issues with writing in higher education.

Several universities have physical writing centres, online centres, or both; examples of these are the Write Now centres at Liverpool Hope and Aston Universities (<http://www.writenow.ac.uk/>), and the Centre for Academic Writing at the University of Coventry (<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/study-at-coventry/student-support/academic-support/centre-for-academic-writing/>). There are no whole degrees devoted exclusively to writing at undergraduate level, and no courses exactly equivalent to “Freshman Composition” or rhetoric as in the US, but some universities offer courses in professional writing or English for academic purposes which will have a strong focus on the use of language and writing. There are also undergraduate courses in creative writing. At the postgraduate level, there are degrees in creative writing, professional writing, or journalism where writing is the focus of the entire degree.

Although there is no UK organization for coordinating writing, many UK writing developers are connected to the Interuniversity Academic Literacies Research Group based at the Institute of Education in London; there are also many who are connected to the European Writing Centres Association (EWCA); additionally there are two key biennial conferences that focus on writing, the Writing Development in Higher Education (WDHE) conference based in the UK, and the geographically broader (European Association of Teachers of Academic Writing (EATAW) conference. BALEAP, the UK association for EAP lecturers, is an active, nationwide body with a strong focus on writing development, traditionally aimed at international students but increasingly including home students (both L1 and L2 speakers of English).

### 15.2.6 Challenges for students in moving from writing in secondary education to writing in higher education

There are many challenges facing students entering higher education, not least from students who come to higher education directly from secondary education. In the UK, as well as the more traditional route from school to university, there are multiple trajectories into higher education, including students entering through access courses, transferring from FE, mature students entering higher education some time after they left secondary school (perhaps not having completed their qualifications), and/or entering from work contexts. These may be students resuming degrees after a hiatus, studying part time, or studying by distance. Each of these situations will bring with it unique writing challenges. These would include (but are not limited to) challenges arising from differences in the expectations of staff and students, differing predispositions towards academic meaning-making, and of how these relate to institutional meaning-making and values (see Coffin & Donohue, 2014; Lillis & Scott, 2007, for discussion of these aspects). Ways in which these are manifested at text level include developing and sustaining an argument in a discipline-appropriate way, drawing usefully on literature, using academic discourse.

In terms of students moving into higher education directly from school, research conducted into argument in undergraduate writing (Andrews et al., 2006), suggests that students in history and biology draw on their experience of learning English at GCSE and A level to construct arguments in their essay writing in higher education; staff setting these essay assignments are often frustrated at the types and extent of argument that they find in students' writing, suggesting that development of disciplinarily appropriate argumentation is a particular challenge. The literacy challenges faced by non-traditional students and EAL students have been highlighted in an ESRC research project (Leung et al., 2012).

### 15.2.7 The relationship between academic genres and genres used at workplaces

There is some overlap between academic and workplace genres in more vocational courses and in courses where students have involvement with workplaces such as through community research and interaction. Disciplines that have industry sectors connected to them like health care, law, business management etc. often use genres that are found in these sectors (see Gimenez, 2008 for a discussion of nursing). Because personal development plans (PDPs), in which students keep a written record of their progress through university, are now a more common part of student life, and continuing professional development (CPD) is increasingly part of working life in some jobs, there is intended crossover here, both with students writing texts that are situated in the workplace (like business letters, CVs, etc.) and with professionals writing academic texts. An example of this is that radiographers now have to include a reflective statement in their CPD portfolio which resembles the kind of academic writing they did at uni-

versity. Regarding the challenges, there is often little connection or follow up with students once they have left university, so it is hard to gauge the difficulties they have in workplace writing.

## 15.3 Genres and Writing Practices

### 15.3.1 Common genres in higher education

In common parlance, assessment genres include the short answer (often in examination conditions), the essay, and the report (technical report, scientific report, laboratory report, research report); at the postgraduate level there is also the thesis or dissertation. Essays tend to be written in all disciplines related to arts, humanities, and social sciences, and they are also used at times in the sciences; they have a range of functions that include presenting an argument or making a case through review, exposition, challenge, comparison, or commentary. Undergraduate essays in science-related courses tend to be more focused on scientific explanation and application of theory to examples. The latter is also true of many social science and applied disciplines, particularly in the early stages of study. In the sciences, reports tend to be used and tend to contextualise a study or experiment, outline methodology, present results and findings through analysis and discussion (this may be in an IMRAD structure - Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion); there may be an element of making a case but reporting and explanation are more common than argument at undergraduate levels. Like “essay”, the term “report” encompasses a great deal of purposes, and these may vary even within sub-disciplines of the same field. For example, in one medical engineering module, one assignment, labeled a report, asked students to recount the procedures of an experiment, and report and explain the findings, while another, also labeled a report, asked students to make a case to a company for hiring a particular specialist medical engineer, in a form of promotional argument.

Recent research by Nesi and Gardiner (2012) into academic genres at UK universities has identified what they refer to as the genre families listed below across a wide range of disciplines:

- Essay
- Methodology Recount
- Critique
- Explanation
- Case Study
- Exercise
- Design Specification
- Proposal
- Narrative Recount

- Research Report
- Problem Question
- Literature Survey
- Empathy Writing (a type of writing where the hypothetical audience is not an academic one; e.g., writing a report for the chief executive officer for a company)

### 15.3.2 Oral genres are used by students

Science subjects like engineering, health and social care, and medicine as well as applied subjects such as business studies or law often have problem-based learning classes where students work as a team to answer a question or solve a problem. These require a great deal of informal discussion with the purpose of exploration, identification of issues, proposal of solutions, negotiation of paths of action, and often a final more formal presentation of results and, sometimes, explanation of process. Presentations are common across many disciplines, but the purpose depends on the assignment brief and the level of module. There is often some element of reporting or recounting and in certain assignments this will serve as contextualisation or establishing of premises for a later claim or theory. These may happen in seminars or small tutorial groups and may also have the function of leading or starting a group discussion. In disciplines which deal with creative arts like drama, dance, music, design, presentations are at times connected to an artifact like a performance piece or drawing, and they may serve to give motivation or explanation around this. In law, students will have moots where they present a case and defend a client in a mock trial situation. Most language learning courses have a large oral examination component, where students will have an interview or conversation with a tutor in the target language; there are also coursework opportunities for work in language laboratories where students develop their proficiency by using computer software to record themselves. In distance learning situations there are also online opportunities for students to interact using written dialogue.

### 15.3.3 Students' writing practices

Writing practices are very often linked to reading practices and to discussion. In theory, students are expected to read extensively to research their question, using textbooks and websites as well as journals accessed through the library and online; they may then have opportunities to discuss or present the results of their research (in tutorials and seminar). They are also expected to plan their text and then draft and redraft it before submission. In reality, writing practices vary from student to student; most students consult some literature but often rely more on internet resources than lecturers would like, and this can lead to cutting and

pasting sections of text, often without appropriate acknowledgement. There is often little evidence of students redrafting their writing but without detailed case studies. It is difficult to tell what the actual writing practices are. It is very hard to identify typical assignments as even within a single assignment of a single module of a single course there may be significant variation in the focus of the content and, therefore, the purpose of the writing.

### 15.3.4 Students acquisition of disciplinary genre knowledge

In terms of what guidance is offered or available, departments and individual lecturers tend to provide written guidelines both of what is expected generally in the department (departmental assessment criteria) and what is required for particular courses and assignments (assessment criteria, length, structure, content, purpose). The extent to which this contributes to genre knowledge varies greatly depending on individual cases or courses; lecturers will also often supplement this with additional guidance in their classes or in response to individual student questions. Some lecturers offer students examples and/or models of the genres they expect or actively encourage students to read each other's work. The relationship between what is provided, what is taught, and how the knowledge is acquired is similarly diverse. In some explicit genre teaching situations, activities around raising genre and language awareness are incorporated into the disciplinary course, or are available in foundational or adjunct writing courses. In these courses, lecturers will draw students' attention to the guidance and instructions, possibly with an explanation or some additional guidance but with no explicit teaching. Although these are increasingly rare, there are other courses still where students are given no explicit guidance. It is important to underline how varied all of this activity is; there is no average experience as often every lecturer and every student will approach teaching and learning about writing in different ways.

Many universities also run workshops or short courses on generic presentation skills or writing skills; these are often aimed at students working in their second language, but the first/second language (L1/L2) distinction is increasingly blurred.

All of this guidance contributes to students' development of genre knowledge in some way but how exactly is unclear. Many students say they learn how to write at university by osmosis or acculturation, by getting to know what a particular lecturer wants or likes, but again the mechanics of how they do this are vague. Their exposure to other students' writing may be a factor. In discussing how they learn to use oral genres well, students cite seeing other students' presentations, so it is reasonable to think that where they do have the chance to read peers' work it might have an impact. In some universities model answers are used to support students in understanding what is expected from assignment tasks. Another mechanism through which students may learn about genres is feedback on assessed writing and again this varies greatly across departments and individuals in amount and depth, timing (before the final deadline so students have a chance



to rewrite, before the next similar assignment, after the course has finished, etc), mode (hand written comments, track changes, emailed comments, oral feedback, ticks on a standardised assessment sheet, etc), and focus (language features, structure, development of argument, use of sources, referencing, grasp and development of ideas, etc). They may also consult books on how to write or on study skills; there are a wide range of these for generic writing skills and some levels or discipline areas have specialist texts too (for example, *How to Write a Thesis*, Murray, 2002 or *Writing for Science and Engineering*, Silyn-Roberts, 2000). All of these will affect the usefulness of the feedback and the ways in which it contributes to students' development of genre knowledge.

Students also bring extensive genre knowledge from their previous experience but how this relates to the writing they do at university is complex (see section 2.6). Writing is central to learning at university. There are some types of text that are often, but not always, not for assessment purposes, which are explicitly aimed at encouraging review or reflection and, again by implication, learning. These tend to be learning journals, diaries, portfolios, blogs (often found in arts, humanities, and social sciences), reviews, critiques (found in a range of disciplines), short answers often with the goal of explanation (again found in a range of disciplines, and common in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) subjects. Students will also do informal writing for their own benefit such as note-taking in lectures or seminars and annotating reading.

The genres chosen within each discipline will also have an effect on how students come to learn that discipline, on how knowledge is constructed, and on what the disciplinary knowledge of a particular subject is.

### 15.3.5 The impact of the Bologna Process on writing

In contrast with mainland Europe, there is little evidence that the Bologna Process has had any noticeable impact on writing in UK universities.

### 15.3.6 Typical text books on academic writing in the UK

The following is small selection of the popular books connected to writing in the UK. Some of them are textbooks that students might use (marked with \*) while others are books that lecturers or writing developers might consult for use in their teaching or research.

Alexander, O., Argent, S., and Spencer, J. (2008). *EAP Essentials: a teacher's guide to principles and practice*. Reading: Garnet Education

- Burns, T., and Sinfield, S. (2008). *Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University* (2nd ed). SAGE Publications Ltd. \*
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## 16 Ukraine / By Tatyana Yakhontova, Halyna Kaluzhna, Tetyana Fityo, Dmytro Mazin and Volodymyr Morenets

### 16.1 Introduction

Ukraine is a rather new (in a historical perspective) independent state with a rich and complicated history of struggling for freedom and democracy. During the 23 years of its existence, the country has experienced drastic changes in all spheres of life, which are interconnected and which could not leave education apart. In Ukrainian Higher Education, reforms are mostly connected with the country's joining the "Bologna Process" in 2005. They have become evident, for example, in making the assessment system comparable to or compatible with that of European universities, by introducing new approaches to teaching and learning, promoting changes in curriculum and subjects taught, etc.

It has appeared to be a challenging endeavor since the education in Ukraine as well as in the other post-Soviet countries significantly differs from western education; for instance, Ukrainian academic institutions have only relatively recently started to grant bachelor's and master's degrees. Introduction of new programs and disciplines at Ukrainian educational institutions requires new approaches and reconsideration of learners' skills and competencies, literacy being the central one among them.

Regretfully, literacy support and development has never been the focus of Ukrainian education. Even now, when writing has already started to attract the attention of university teachers, Ukrainian students continue to experience serious problems with academic reading and writing assignments. These problems seem to result from the absence of regular writing courses and explicit and consistent writing support at all educational levels.

This literacy situation typical of Ukrainian education will be described further in this report together with new tendencies which are gradually becoming prominent. The report is based upon the information on education available in Ukrainian sources as well as upon personal experiences and publications of its authors, university language teachers and researchers. The paper is theoretically framed by the current concept of genre viewed as central to the present day learning and teaching of academic literacy skills.

### 16.2 Concept of genre

The understanding of genre underlying this paper primarily arises from the concept of Mikhail Bakhtin based on the idea of the communicative function of language. For Bakhtin, genre is a social phenomenon born by the specific goals and

circumstances of communication in various spheres of life. The functional orientation towards achieving communicative goals and particular social spheres determine genre as an inseparable unity of thematic content, style (linguistic choices), and compositional structure.

Bakhtin treated genres as the forms of speech utterances, which are, as he wrote, “mandatory” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 80) and free at the same time. The nature of genre, therefore, is simultaneously static and dynamic: genre is a model, or a schema since through its normativity and regularity it serves as an example for constructing new utterances. However, any newly born utterance inevitably modifies the model, adding to it some new individual features and therefore turning the schema into a creative process. This vision of the dichotomy of genre appears to have a direct relevance to educational needs as Bakhtin stated, “to learn to speak means to learn to construct utterances” and, further, “the better our command of genres, the more freely we employ them, ...the more perfectly we implement our free speech plan” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 78, 80). Such conceptualization provides a pedagogical framework, which, as will be further shown in the report, can be utilized for teaching academic genres (Yakhontova, 1997).

Bakhtin’s genre concept is consistent with J. M. Swales’s genre analysis and his definition of genre as a communicative event, with a communicative purpose as a privileged criterion recognized by the parent discourse community (Swales, 1990). Proceeding from his theoretical assumptions, Swales offered a sociorhetorical genre-based approach to teaching writing, the efficiency of which has already been widely recognized. The applicability of Bakhtin and Swales’s theoretical frameworks to educational tasks allows considering them as tools for teaching academic and professional writing, especially in the contexts where the traditions of explicit writing instruction do not exist or are only emerging.

## 16.3 Ukrainian educational context

### 16.3.1 Structure of Ukrainian Higher Education

As of 2014, there were 803 higher educational institutions (HEI) according to the data of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine (<http://www.mon.gov.ua/>). Compared to the 1991 data (910 HEI), the number of institutions of the tertiary level decreased. However, when comparing the types of institutions one can notice that there are more HEIs of the 3rd–4th levels of accreditation (325 as compared to 156 in 1991), which means that numerous colleges and technical schools have acquired the status of universities.

According to the current legislation, Ukrainian Higher Educational institutions are classified based on their accreditation level. Those providing bachelor’s programs (3-4 years) and granting a bachelor’s degree have Accreditation Level II (as a rule, they are colleges and institutes). Those providing bachelor’s and mas-

ter's programs and granting bachelor's and master's degrees (also, a "specialist diploma", which is a rudiment from the past of Soviet education) possess Accreditation Level III. Those institutions that have the right to prepare bachelor's, master's and postgraduate students have the highest Accreditation Level IV. It should be noted, however, that the postgraduate studies system in Ukraine still differs from the system in the west. There are two scientific degrees in Ukraine: Candidate of Sciences (granted after defending the first candidate dissertation and more or less equal to a PhD degree) and Doctor of Sciences (granted after defending the second, postdoctoral dissertation).

The accreditation level is supplemented with the status of educational institutions, which are classified into state (or private) institutions and national universities. There has been an attempt to distinguish a narrow circle of the most progressive universities granting them autonomy and the status of "research" universities. This attempt is in the process of practical embodiment, and its realization depends on the new Law on Higher Education of Ukraine which has been adopted in 2014. One of the most active participants in the process of drafting this new law was the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Among the institutions of the higher level of accreditation, there are universities of three different types. Classical universities, like the Ivan Franko National University of L'viv (<http://www.lnu.edu.ua/en/>) or Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (<http://www.univ.kiev.ua/en/>), are multidisciplinary educational establishments that follow a classical university model. They are oriented at training researchers, scholars, and analysts with wide background knowledge rather than producing pragmatic and skillful practitioners. Polytechnic universities (e.g., the National University of Ukraine, "Kyiv Polytechnic Institute") are more involved in providing applied technical knowledge and developing appropriate skills, and specialized universities usually focus on some particular professional field (medicine, agriculture, pedagogy, economics, or arts). However, since the demand for certain professions, like lawyers and economists, is extremely high, polytechnic and specialized universities are now also offering degrees in the areas they did not previously include. It is still more prestigious to have a degree from a university with a long tradition of training specialists in a certain field, and it is also easier to find a job after graduating from such a university.

In the Soviet times, education was free of charge and universities were all state-owned; at present, only fifty one percent of the universities belong to the state. However, all higher educational institutions function subject to licenses and attestation by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. The study programs and curricula also require approval of the ministry.

### 16.3.2 Languages of instruction

Languages of instruction at Ukrainian Higher Educational institutions are highly dependent on the general language situation in the country. Although the only state language is Ukrainian, there are two widely spoken ones, both used for oral and written communication in different spheres of life: Ukrainian and Russian. The linguistic map of the country is complemented by several other languages representing ethnic minorities: Romanians, Hungarians, Moldavians, Polish, Tatars, Bulgarians, Slovaks, etc. The linguistic division of the country is geographically-based, with the west of the country being Ukrainian-speaking, and the eastern and southern regions generally preferring the Russian language. The areas close to borders are often bilingual.

According to current legislation, the instruction in higher educational institutions has to be carried out in the state – Ukrainian – language. Nevertheless, many Ukrainian higher educational institutions have allowed the Russian language in their charters as a language of instruction. Accordingly, the main languages of instruction are Ukrainian in the west and Russian in the south and east. In the central and eastern parts of the country, students may sometimes speak Russian out of class, while the classes are conducted in Ukrainian. At higher education institutions in Chernivtsi and Uzhgorod regions, which border Romania and Hungary respectively, Romanian and Hungarian languages are partially used as languages of instruction together with Ukrainian.

In the majority of cases, therefore, university instruction is conducted in the students' native language and more rarely in an L2 (English/German/French/Spanish).

At classical universities, and also at some polytechnic and specialized ones, there are faculties of foreign languages and/or philology. In different variations they teach English, German, French, Spanish, some Oriental languages like Japanese, Arabian, Persian etc, and also Slavonic languages such as Russian, Polish, Serbian, Slovakian, etc. At these faculties students are at least partially instructed in the languages studied although the ratio is different. For example, at the Ivan Franko National University of L'viv (henceforth LNU), the number of courses within the bachelor's program in English at the department of English philology is 17, and is 14 at the department of German philology. The students are supposed to write their course (term) papers and their master's papers in the language of their major. At the faculty of philology, department of Oriental languages, the number of courses held in Japanese is three while students majoring in other Oriental languages are instructed in Ukrainian. Finally, at the department of Slavonic languages the number of courses held in Croatian, Slovenian, etc. is five.

English, German, French, or Spanish are compulsory for university students of non-language majors at all levels as the course of L2 is included in the curricula of all areas of academic training throughout the country. Usually, students con-



tinue to study one of the four mentioned above languages, which they began to learn at secondary school (in the majority of cases, it is English). The university course offered in these languages is an LSP (Language for Specific Purposes) course with a special emphasis on professional terminology and translation, which lasts 1–2 years. According to new requirements, the students wishing to enroll into a master's program have to pass an examination in a foreign language of their choice. Doctoral students studying at the postgraduate school (*aspirantura*) have to attend the LSP/EAP course of one of these languages as well, and, finally, a foreign language examination is required to be passed as a necessary precondition of defending a doctoral dissertation.

The university LSP courses are not always concerned with developing communicative competence and focus on discipline-specific material assuming considerable lexical and grammatical knowledge, which students usually do not manage to acquire. Therefore, as many Ukrainian educators emphasize (e.g., Smotrova, 2009), efforts must be made to broaden the effectiveness and scope of foreign language education in the country.

There is, however, a university, the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (henceforth NaUKMA), with a more specific situation of language instruction. Ukrainian and English are the university's working languages, as confirmed in the NaUKMA's Charter. At the same time, by a decree of the NaUKMA's Learned Council, the instruction can be realized through any language if it is required by the educational process and knowledge acquisition. The main regulatory policies (Code of Practice) are placed on the university website in Ukrainian although the policies important for cooperation with the west are available in English as well. In general, the NaUKMA provides teaching of all major European languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian, and sometimes Swedish or Finnish as a "second foreign language", in addition to mandatory English) as well as Slavonic languages (Polish, Czech, Croatian, and Bulgarian), the Near East languages (Turkish, Arabic), and East Asian Languages (Chinese, Japanese). The selection of the offered languages depends on the student demands and the possibilities to provide a course with a highly qualified instructor.

Within the framework of foreign language teaching, all the regulatory and resource materials, including curricula, are developed and disseminated in two languages: in the language being learned and in Ukrainian to use for administering various university activities. Bilingual (as a rule, English and Ukrainian) regulatory and resource materials are a common practice of the NaUKMA.

The requirements for qualification papers (bachelor's and master's papers), corresponding to the regulations demanded by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, exist in Ukrainian, but they are also valid for such papers written in English.

### 3.3. Traditional Ukrainian approaches to writing and its teaching

The pedagogical traditions of the explicit teaching of writing have started only relatively recently to develop in Ukraine. The only place in the country where writing has been straightforwardly taught is secondary school. There writing is still viewed as a kind of verbal art that is assumed to be mastered in its three aspects: orthographic, grammatical, and stylistic. Teaching composition, which is traditionally a prerogative of the teachers of the Ukrainian literature, is also closely connected with its linguistic dimension; in particular, much emphasis is put upon the so-called “culture of the word” that reflects a striving towards grammatically and stylistically correct written texts which also have to invoke a certain aesthetic impression. The importance of this special attitude towards the effective use of language in writing for Ukrainian educational context can be, for example, rather vividly illustrated by the two following titles (given here in the English translation): *Culture of the Word* (Ukrainian scholarly journal published on a regular basis by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine) and *Dictionary and Handbook of the Culture of the Ukrainian Language* (Hrynchyshyn et al., 2006) At the same time, the overall structuring of the text, as well as such widely accepted parameters of written communication as the context of situation, the purpose of the text, or the specifics of the potential audience, have been up till now rarely addressed.

As to academic writing, the understanding of its nature, as well as the character of research into it in Ukraine, is considered to be greatly influenced by functional stylistics derived from the classical ideas of the Prague School. Within this methodological paradigm, functional styles are usually considered in opposition to each other; thus, the language of scientific style, which aims to disclose the internal laws of existence, development, and relations between different phenomena is viewed as tending to be objective, precise, unemotional, and devoid of any individuality (in contrast, for example, to journalistic style marked by high degree of persuasiveness and emotionality).

The incorporation into stylistics of some theoretical insights from pragmatics and Hallidayan systemic-functional linguistics as well as the increasing growth, since the beginning of the 1970s, of textlinguistic studies has led to the development of a theoretic-descriptive framework used, in particular, for investigations of various linguistic and textual features of research discourse (in Ukrainian, English, and major European languages) based on the general perspective of scientific style described above. However, the numerous findings resulting from the considerable body of research in this area have often been presented as theoretical constructs rather than as recommendations applicable to language education and teaching academic writing. Not surprisingly, “academic writing” has never had any direct equivalent translation in Ukrainian, usually being translated as “scientific style”. Also, due to the predominance of these theoretical perspectives, applied linguistics continues to have lower scholarly prestige than the more theoretically oriented philological disciplines.

This highly theoretical stance seems to correlate with such features of Ukrainian academic discourse as preoccupation with content in writing, a writer-based character (i.e., the responsibility to understand the text rests with its readers), avoidance of textual organizers, a low degree of formal structuring, and an inclination towards theorizing and generalizations (in the humanities). Good writing has traditionally been treated in Ukrainian culture not as a skill that can be acquired through deliberate training but rather as a gift, which may be smaller or greater depending on the level of an individual's intellectual abilities. Therefore, it is a general belief that writing ability could be taught only to a certain extent and writing instruction, consequently, has always been implicit.

This culture-specific vision seems to account for the absence of writing courses at Ukrainian universities. Ukrainian university curricula have never included academic writing or any other subject related to writing and composition, either in the native or in a foreign language. Therefore, Ukrainian students have had to develop their writing abilities by imitating exemplars of writing in areas of study or research interests. In linguistic terms, it is through the phenomenon of intertextuality (Bakhtin, 1986; Fairclough, 1995), i.e., drawing on preceding texts or templates of language use that Ukrainians have always learnt to write and gradually acquired the conventions of the professional communities they wish to enter.

Thus, various national inclinations and theoretical orientations have shaped a specific linguistically-driven vision of writing in Ukraine and molded attitudes towards its teaching and learning (Yakhontova, 2001). Certain social and ideological circumstances, such as the isolation of Ukraine as a part of the former Communist empire from the rest of the world for many years, also did not facilitate interest in studies of communication and, in particular, in the interactive aspects of writing. Using the written channel in a controlled, repressive society could be potentially dangerous (Stevens, 2000, p. 46), and, historically, the populace of Ukraine was not given reason or chances to develop a pragmatically-oriented writing culture.

Nowadays, however, new sociopolitical and educational realities, such as globalization, transformation of Ukrainian education in the spirit of the Bologna Convention, and the introduction of new teaching methods and online learning tools, stimulate the growth of awareness and interest in writing as a form of learning and personal and professional development. These new for Ukrainian context developments will be described further in this chapter.

## 16.4 University written and oral genres

### 16.4.1 Challenges when moving from writing in secondary schools to writing in higher education

The main difficulty for a young person who has just graduated from high school and started his/her study at a university lies in the transition from mainly “technical summarizing” to the analytically conscious and independent search for essence: defining and recording the main and the subordinate.

In Ukrainian secondary and high schools, there exists such a genre as “literary composition”. Its writing requires formulating and recording one’s own thoughts and opinions based on the texts of national and foreign literature. The genre itself is generally closer to creative writing than to critical analytical writing, and the skills of its textual construction are insufficient for academic study at the university level.

Therefore young people enter the universities without the developed skills of extracting the main meaning from the source material who are unaware of how to paraphrase the ideas of the read/heard material in their own words; without the skills of evaluating the content, obtained through individual intellectual operations and unable to hierarchically position this new content within the topic being considered; lacking the experience of dealing with literature sources, bibliography rules, etc.; and not capable to clearly understand the purpose of each written act. These significant problems may be overcome by introducing regular academic reading and writing courses, both general and discipline-specific.

### 16.4.2 L1 genres

The three major types of university writing in L1 at Ukrainian universities are course papers (*kursova robota*), diploma papers (*dyplomna robota*), and the so-called referats.

Students are asked to write a course paper once a year during the second and third years of their bachelor’s studies. This is a comparatively short paper (30–50 pages) which is characterized by a formal structure, use of sources, and impersonal language. Students do not usually develop or choose the topic themselves. Topics for prospective course papers, together with the names of the professors who supervise these papers, are placed at the corresponding department where students can choose the topic and the supervisor. After finishing writing, students submit the course paper to the department and later defend it orally in front of other students and their supervisor.

A diploma paper is written in the last year of the bachelor’s program, and a master’s thesis is produced at the end of the master’s program. All students generally

defend a final thesis (diploma paper) as a requirement for their graduation. However, sometimes there is an option of taking a final examination in several disciplines instead of writing a diploma paper. The diploma paper always includes individual research performed by a student and is longer than the course paper (up to 100 pages).

Referats are extended literature summaries on a certain topic. They make rare use of in-text citations but provide lists of references at the end. At universities, referats are often written in the subjects, which are not the student's majors, e.g., philosophy (a compulsory discipline within all bachelor's programs). This culture-specific genre can potentially promote plagiarism and discourages from the fair use of sources.

Nowadays, students of some universities may be asked to write academic essays although distinct criteria defining this genre and distinguishing it from the referat within the Ukrainian educational context have not yet been elaborated. There exist also faculty-specific genres, for example, the faculty of culture and arts of the LNU has such assignments as written analysis of musical piece for conducting, written analysis of a role in a performance, and written preparation for a performance. Some faculties prefer to conduct examinations in the written form (narrative answers to questions or multiple choice tests); however, oral examinations still tend to dominate the process of knowledge evaluation at Ukrainian universities.

Most typical oral genres in the humanities include student reports at the seminars in different disciplines, presentations during course, and the master's papers defense.

Such a university, as the NaUKMA, makes use of some additional and more specific genres, for example, the "thesis" (*naukova robota*). A "thesis", often referred to as a "research thesis", is a more enhanced academic genre, which implies not only the demonstration of student's understanding of a topic area, but also clearly puts an emphasis on independent thinking. As a rule, writing a "thesis" concludes a course taken by a student, and the assessment of the "thesis" is an integral part of the total rating for a particular course. In the humanities, a "thesis" usually consists of 6–12 pages although the requirements as to its length are not very strict.

The repertoire of the NaUKMA's written genres also includes presentation abstracts (*tezy dopovidi*) which are prepared for participating in conferences (however, not written by all students). Close to the aforementioned genre (although not identical) is the genre of the "presentation" (*prezentaciya, usnyi vystup*) itself. Since the student skills of delivering presentations require improvement and special attention, some departments conduct public speaking events, such as the "presentation contest in Ukrainian" (held by the faculty of law) or "public speaking contest in English" (held by the department of English). Other genres, rather widespread in the NaUKMA, include a written response (*pysmovyi vidhuk*), a re-

view (*retsenziya*), an analytical report (note) (*zvit*), or an official letter (*ofitsiynyi lyst*).

There are no general rules for academic writing at the NaUKMA at present. The University offers the “Requirements for Qualification Papers”, which provide some global recommendations. Also, there is a specific policy document called “The Provisions against Plagiarism”, which offers a detailed, albeit indirect (since this document treats plagiarism as a phenomenon clear to everyone) description of the rules to be observed in order to prevent plagiarism. Within specific courses (such as “Literary Creative Writing”, a propaedeutic course “Introduction to the Bologna Process” among others), special attention is paid to the issues of writing. However, so far there has been no holistic, “all-university” introduction to the topic of academic writing at the beginning of either the bachelor’s or the Master’s programs.

### 16.4.3 L2 genres

In teaching/learning foreign languages in Ukraine, the priority has been traditionally given to the acquisition of oral communication skills. At the same time, despite the general interest to interaction and dialogic speech, the practice of asking students to prepare the so-called “topics” has still been retained and is used nationwide. The task consists in asking students to prepare information on a certain topic and present it to the teacher and sometimes to the whole group in a form of a monologue. Alternatively, the newer and more progressive approach is practiced aimed at making students prepare oral presentations in accordance with suggested requirements.

There is a difference between written genres practiced in the teaching/learning of L2 as a major and as a part of curriculum for students specializing in other academic areas.

The main genre students majoring in foreign languages have to master within their bachelor’s program is a course (term) paper (*kursova/semestrova robota*). Its preparation usually involves some critical reading in the language studied. Taking lecture notes (*konspekt*) is another general practice; students have to do it in two languages depending on the language of instruction and whether it is their native language or their major. Often the genre variety students master depends on the selection made by the authors of the textbook used during language classes. The framework of the curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine allows variations, and usually teachers enjoy certain freedom in choosing the textbooks and content of their courses. Most usual genres will include various letters, CVs, reviews, and summaries. Sometimes students will be introduced to narration techniques and paragraph structure as well as to the notions of topic and supporting sentences. Within master’s programs, students’ writing practice is mostly directed at producing a final thesis (*magisters'ka robota*).

Students of all other majors practice L2 genres within LSP courses. Again, the range of genres is closely connected with the course content the teacher decides to choose. Usually, the students of non-language majors have to produce various kinds of letters, CVs, summaries, and, more rarely, essays. Certain faculties may require L2 discipline-specific genres. Thus, students of the faculty of culture and arts are more likely to write a review and a narrative within their LSP course while students of the law department will probably write some types of formal letters. Doctoral students of both language and non-language majors are supposed to be familiar with a wider variety of L2 genres, including research articles and conference and paper abstracts.

It should be emphasized that all students have to write tests, which mostly check the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. The increase of interest in testing was caused by the changes in educational requirements and practices due to Ukraine's signing the Bologna Declaration. Also, students regularly do written translation for practicing certain grammar phenomena as the grammar-translation method is still used. Often students are asked to write the so-called "composition", which would most probably equal the essay, the only difference being a blurred character of the requirements as to its organization and structure. Often, the genre requirements in L2 writing are not clearly stated, and students may not fully understand what they have to produce.

### **Teaching English academic writing at Ukrainian universities as a new pedagogical experience**

However, current socio-political and sociocultural processes in Ukraine stimulate the interest of Ukrainian students and academics in mastering academic writing in the English language, which is lingua franca of science, technology, and education. Such circumstances give rise to new personal motives, e.g., desires to study or work abroad or to participate in world professional communities as equal members. Furthermore, the "Bologna Process", with its accent on social mobility and transfer of human capital, also contributes to the interest in mastering English writing. A deeper reason for acquiring the skills of English for academic communication arises from the need for changes in the ideology of Ukrainian tertiary education. Throughout its history, it has been based on passive listening to lectures with further memorization. Nowadays, the importance of developing thinking is being realized by many Ukrainian educators; therefore, writing, as one of the best ways of building cognitive skills, comes to the forefront. The interest in writing, especially in English, is steadily increasing mostly due to the teachers of English, who, because of their knowledge of the lingua franca, have appeared to be a group of Ukrainian educators most open to innovations and new approaches.

This new, emerging social and educational situation became visible in the last decade of the previous century. In 1999, an academic English writing course for master's students majoring in sociology was first delivered at the LNU. The course, entirely based on US writing materials, aimed at developing the skills of producing research papers in English. The impact of the course was best sum-



marized by one of the students, who mentioned the following in an anonymous survey, “Even if I never become a famous Ukrainian academic writer, but open my private business, I will still need English academic writing for the purpose of good, clear communication with people” (Yakhontova, 2001, p. 404).

In 2002, the first Ukrainian textbook on English academic writing (Yakhontova, 2002) was published. The textbook is based upon a genre-centered approach, which offers such pedagogical advantages as explicit and systematic character of teaching, attention to students’ needs, support of students’ learning and creativity, their empowerment via access to the patterns of variation in texts, development of critical approaches by providing resources to understand necessary discourses, and consciousness-raising in the process of learning writing (Hyland, 2004). The textbook implements to a certain extent an earlier elaborated pedagogical model of teaching academic genres, which is the practical two-level realization of Bakhtin’s genre dichotomy, with the first level devoted to the mastery of genres as normative schemata and the second dedicated to the development of the skills of their free and creative use (Yakhontova, 1997).

### **CEAW and its role in promoting teaching English academic writing in Ukraine**

The rising interest in teaching English academic writing at Ukrainian universities has naturally led to an outstanding event for East European education: the establishment of the Center for English Academic Writing (CEAW) at the LNU. The CEAW, financially supported by the Partnership Program between this Ukrainian institution, the University of Oregon, Eugene, and the faculty of foreign languages, was founded in 2006. It has its own premises, a website ([www.ceaw.org.ua](http://www.ceaw.org.ua)), basic technical equipment, and a small library, but it does not receive any permanent funding. Currently, the center unites about 12 professors of English from the LNU who dedicate their time and efforts to their voluntary and highly enthusiastic work.

The purposes of the CEAW are different from those of the writing centers widespread in the US as well as in some European countries. While “traditional” writing centers mostly focus on providing tutoring services to students wishing to improve their writing skills, the CEAW global objectives include:

- popularization of teaching and learning English academic writing at Ukrainian universities;
- creating a vibrant community of English writing teachers from the LNU and other Ukrainian universities;
- developing the CEAW as a site of educational innovation and change.

As seen from this list, the CEAW mostly focuses on the dissemination of the idea of learning and teaching English academic writing as a tool for creating new pedagogical approaches and contexts, which seems to be of primary importance for Ukrainian education at the present moment. However, the CEAW also pursues a

number of immediate goals, such as introduction of English academic writing courses into the language curriculum of the LNU, development of distance writing courses, organization of short-term trainings on English academic writing for Ukrainian researchers, and holding national and international conferences.

In accordance with these goals, the activities of the CEAW are realized along a number of lines. First, attention is paid to the preparation of English academic writing and teaching materials. So far two textbooks with a strong writing focus have been published (Ivashchyn, 2011; Maksymuk & Dudok, 2006). Second, specialized writing courses, for example, “English Research Writing for Doctoral Students in Sciences” and “How to Write a Paper for a Degree in English” have been developed and delivered at the University under the auspices of the CEAW. Third, the activists of the CEAW are engaged in the elaboration of appropriate distance courses and language learning computer technologies. Fourth, the CEAW conducted a number of English academic writing trainings for mature researchers (see 4.3.3). Finally, the volunteers of the center realized some other projects related to the development of academic literacy in the English language, for example, they organized Internet-conferences for students majoring in applied linguistics, supervised student research work, and implemented joint professionally-oriented projects in the course of English for Special Purposes. All these activities not only had a positive effect on drawing the attention of Ukrainian educationists to English written academic communication, but it also helped to build up the community of university teachers who value innovation and creativity and are open to the wind of change.

The CEAW also managed to become known outside the borders of Ukraine. Many of its activists are members of internationally recognized professional associations such as EATAW (European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing), EWCA (European Writing Centers’ Association), and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). The center volunteers maintain contacts with writing specialists throughout the world and actively participate in conferences. The international interest in the CEAW and its activities has been aroused by the first and second international conferences: “Teaching English Academic Writing in Ukraine and Elsewhere: Problems and Prospects” held in 2008 and 2011.

In 2011–2013, three activists of the center participated in the international project “Literacy Development in the Humanities: Creating Competence Centres for the Enhancement of Reading and Writing Skills as Part of University Teaching (LIDHUM)”, funded by the Swiss Science Foundation. Since the project focused on multiliteracy writing support, the CEAW broadened the scope of its activities by conducting the “Role of Writing in the Teaching of Humanities” Conference (L’viv 2013) for LNU teachers of the humanities and several writing workshops for students, such as “Ukrainian doctoral dissertation as a genre” or “The basic guide to English essay writing”. Also, the members of the project team distributed a questionnaire among the university students and faculty members focusing on their genre and writing practices in native and foreign languages. The results

of this survey were compared with appropriate findings on writing practices at the home institutions of project partners in Romania and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia.

### **Teaching English research genres to mature learners**

Ukrainian academic context possesses an extremely interesting, if not unique, pedagogical experience of teaching writing to an unusual group of learners who are highly motivated to master at least the fundamentals of academic writing in English. They are mature researchers interested in presenting their research findings in English, mostly in international refereed journals.

In an attempt to respond to these urgent needs, a special English academic writing training focusing on “English for Research Publication Purposes” has been elaborated by T. Yakhontova and, later some CEAW volunteers, and was conducted at a number of Ukrainian research institutions and CEAW within the period of 2004–2010. The participants of the trainings were researchers of different ages (25–60) with intermediate or upper-intermediate level of English knowledge working in various fields (applied linguistics, mathematics, biology, economics, information technology, medicine, physics, and sociology). The trainings were either organized on competitive participation based on application forms and statements of purpose or specially arranged for the staff of certain research and educational institutions, universities, and National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in the cities of L’viv, Ternopil’, Kyiv, Poltava, Kharkiv, and Dnipropetrovs’k. There was also one “internationally” co-authored training consisting of two parts: the first one dealing with academic research in social sciences, its process and methods (conducted by Dr. Yi-Lee Wong, Oxford University) and the second one devoted to English research writing (T. Yakhontova). The trainings lasted for 1–2 workdays and included various types of writing activities elaborated with due regard for the East European cultural and educational context. All the participants of the trainings received specially elaborated handouts in the form of a booklet. After the training, they were asked to fill in an anonymous questionnaire summarizing their feedback. Financial support for the trainings was, in the majority of cases, provided by external, mostly US funded sources, e.g., by the NIS (Newly Independent States) College and University Partnerships Program or the Consortium for Enhancement of Ukrainian Management Education (CEUME).

The training program included the consideration of such issues as strategies of writing in English, cultural differences in writing, English academic style and language, typical structure of the English research paper and conference abstract, ways of avoiding unintentional plagiarism, and communication with reviewers and editors. The application of two theoretical frameworks, a genre-based approach to writing and the notion of intertextuality, contributed to the rapid development of research texts construction skills of this specific group of learners. This effect has been enhanced by the use of various templates, such as stereotypical phrases and certain textual models, offered to participants of the training during almost all types of activities. As Broekhoff (2008) rightly states, “templates provide accessible ways for academic learners to generate the sections of a re-

search paper, from a 'bottom-up', or inductive perspective; and at the same time to grasp the 'moves,' or basic sections of a research paper, from a 'top-down,' or deductive perspective" (p. 129).

As the trainees indicated in the evaluation forms, participation in such educational events considerably raised their awareness of the norms and conventions of English academic discourse and helped to develop the most important writing skills. The trainees also emphasized the importance of such a theme as features of English academic style and language, usefulness of text models and templates, and practical focus of writing conference abstracts. Teaching English research writing within the framework of these trainings has appeared to be a rewarding experience which seems to be potentially applicable to learning situations in L1 and L2 languages at a postgraduate level.

### **Teaching English research genres to doctoral students through a distance course (a case of the NaUKMA)**

In 2008, the NaUKMA established a doctoral school which initiated a PhD program quite different from what a usual postgraduate program in Ukraine offers. The students of this PhD program have to take numerous interdisciplinary and thematic courses and are required to have a publication in an international peer-reviewed journal. They may have two scientific supervisors, from a Ukrainian and an international university, and can write and defend their research proposal and PhD dissertation either in Ukrainian or English. Not surprisingly, the mastering of English academic writing is considered to be of considerable importance at the NaUKMA doctoral school. During the first three years of its existence, a distance mode for academic writing training was chosen, partly because students were sometimes physically at a distance. The first course was an online essay writing course developed in 2006 at the CEAW, LNU (Markelova & Kaluzhna, 2006; Markelova & Kaluzhna, 2007), and the second one was the writing for publication course developed at the NaUKMA (Kaluzhna, 2009).

#### 1. "Fundamentals of Academic Writing: Writing an Essay"

The course objectives were defined as (1) introducing the conventions of English academic writing and pinpointing differences between the English and Ukrainian academic discourse features and (2) giving the general idea of an academic essay in English and practicing initial skills of its writing. The "Fundamentals of Academic Writing: Writing an Essay" course was conducted entirely online, and the platform used for the course creation was WebClass KhPI (<http://dl.kpi.kharkov.ua/>), a virtual learning environment developed by Ukrainian programmers at the Laboratory for Distance Learning of the National University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute" in Ukraine. The "Fundamentals of Academic Writing: Writing an Essay" course lasted for six weeks. Some of the topics discussed were the process of writing itself, cultural differences in writing, brainstorming techniques, the ways of avoiding plagiarism, etc. Throughout the course participants were involved in a number of tasks such as group discussions via a discussion list, performing online exercises, keeping a writing journal, writing and

revising an essay in English, and providing a peer review to their partners. The course used the process approach to teaching writing which, is concerned with the development and formulation of ideas in writing and usually involves several stages, such as prewriting, revising, editing, and evaluation.

## 2. “Advanced Academic writing: Writing a Research Paper”

This online course was developed for postgraduate students in the second year of studies and used Moodle VLE as the medium of instruction (<http://gradschool.ukma.kiev.ua/moodle>). When the course was conducted for the first time, there was an attempt to actually write a paper within a six week online course, but it appeared to be unfeasible since writing also involved working with scientific supervisors, analyzing the findings, and many other related issues. Therefore, next time the course was divided into two parts. The first part was conducted entirely online and was aimed at revising and deepening the knowledge of the main features of English academic discourse, learning about the structure of a research paper in English, practicing the skills necessary to write an article, enlarging academic vocabulary, and further developing research skills. The second part was planned as regular face-to face-meetings targeted at discussing the actual writing of the paper.

The online course discussed an overall structure of the research paper and used all available published resources, including well-known Swales’ writing textbooks (Swales & Feak, 1994, 2000, 2009a, 2009b). The course lasted for four weeks. Topics discussed focused on research genres in general and on the writing of an abstract, introduction to a research article and literature review, and on the methods, results and discussion sections of the article. The activities included participating in online discussions, doing exercises, and performing individual tasks with the tutor’s feedback. The final task was a rather short draft of a research paper that was reviewed by the tutor. The experience of conducting a course had many positive facets as well as some challenges inevitable in this novel teaching and learning situation.

## 16.5 The “Bologna process” and its impact on writing at Ukrainian universities

So far, the “Bologna Process” has most significantly influenced the knowledge assessment system in Ukrainian Higher Education and caused the replacement of a traditional 5-point evaluation scale by a 100-point scale. Also, this process stimulated the rise of interest in testing and widely promoted the application of multiple choice tests in various disciplines as a method of current and final knowledge evaluation and control, leaving less space for written tasks as instruments of knowledge assessment. At the same time, the implementation of the Bologna principles has led to a certain reduction of classroom hours with the purpose of better organizing students’ individual work. This, in turn, caused a still wider use of the notorious genre of the referat as students are more often asked

to produce it, being assumed to have more time for extensive literature reading and compiling sources.

Overall, the “Bologna Process” is viewed positively in Ukraine as it lays emphasis on student mobility which, potentially, bridges the gaps between cultures, traditions, and countries and facilitates individual growth and personal development. In addition, the “Bologna Process” provides powerful stimuli to learn European languages with the aim of discovering new educational and cultural horizons. The preceding generations of Ukrainian students who were living behind the “Iron Curtain” did not possess a similar motivation to study languages and acquire western academic practices. Today, however, young people learn and know languages much better than before, which results in their intellectual enrichment and more successful professional careers. It should be noted that inclusion of students into the mobility guaranteed by the “Bologna Process” is largely dependent upon their language knowledge and level of academic skills, including academic writing.

Some more reserved attitudes to Ukrainian participation in the “Bologna Process” also exist. Some Ukrainian educators fear that study abroad in foreign languages will negatively influence the students’ literacy in the native language and will cause contamination of Ukrainian language norms and writing conventions with foreign words, grammatical structures, and rhetorical patterns. Such worries usually have some historical roots because the Ukrainian language and culture were seriously suppressed by the totalitarian regime and have relatively recently gained opportunities for free development. However, the modernization of Ukrainian university curricula and introduction of academic writing courses in native and foreign languages with a strong focus on cultural differences in writing can essentially soften the above outlined problem.

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