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ACADEMIC LITERACY AND WRITING IN UNIVERSITY: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE.

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Abstract: The author examines the problem of developing students' academic literacy and teaching writing from the perspective of theory and practice. The article analyzes the nature and structure of academic literacy and puts forward the thesis that the formation of academic literacy is based on the concept of academic discourse. Written language is seen as a key component of academic literacy, and teaching writing is built on learning to translate academic written discourse.

Key words: academic literacy, higher education, language competencies, effectively implement, development of integrated courses.

Today, an important factor in developing research competencies in students is taking into account the growing role of the English language as an instrument of scientific communication. Therefore, in a modern university, teaching writing in English includes the creation of scientific and professional texts, as well as educational writing within the framework of some disciplines taught in English. Teaching writing in English is traditionally conducted within the framework of the "Foreign Language" discipline or specialized courses in academic writing. Subject specialists are also paying more and more attention to the issues of teaching written speech. We believe that the increasing role of a specialist's foreign language competence requires a revision of the theoretical foundations and approaches to teaching writing in a modern university. This article defends the thesis that writing is a meta-subject competency and a core component of academic literacy. At the same time, teaching writing should be built taking into account the specific educational context: type of university, professional specialization, specific discipline, learning goals. The author proposes and illustrates an approach to teaching writing in English as part of the methodology of teaching foreign languages. In the course of analyzing foreign research in the field of teaching writing, it was revealed that written language is a central component of academic literacy. As is known, not so long ago, the model of academic literacy was a set of skills to read, write and study; it was focused only on preparing those who were lagging behind to study at a university. The student here played a passive role, and the development of a certain set of skills occurred without taking into account the social context. New Literacy Studies has put forward the idea that writing is not only a means of communication, but also an important social practice. This means that students must be able to translate different types of discourse, i.e. follow the speech norms of each specific type of discourse, understand its value attitudes and type of identity. In a broad sense, discourse is a socially conditioned organization of speech activity and generated texts of participants in a certain social group, community.

The concept of "academic literacy" is new for the domestic education system. In this regard, an

active discussion of the need for targeted education of academic literacy and teaching academic writing began on the pages of Russian magazines. However, attention to writing (both in the native language and in English) as an important communicative, cognitive and social practice is still practically not paid. The formation of academic literacy is the development of not just reading and writing skills, but a certain way of thinking suitable for specific cultural environment. Thus, we can talk about the presence of a discursive model of academic literacy and the importance of writing as a social practice in the formation of the ability to become a full member of the community. Developed writing skills directly affect the academic progress of students and contribute to their successful socialization. We believe that academic literacy is a meta-subject competence, a kind of complex structural formation that integrates both traditional knowledge and intellectual, communicative, and worldview skills. The concept of academic literacy is very broad, which leads to problems in developing models of its formation within a specific discipline. In this article, academic literacy is defined as the ability to translate academic written discourse based on foreign language professionally oriented academic texts, to think critically, and to improve one's self-educational competence for educational and professional purposes. Academic writing I have identified the general structure of academic literacy based on the well-known interpretation of competencies and the model of media literacy. Academic literacy as a meta-subject competence consists of three main components (*communicative, cognitive, regulatory behavioral*). Communicative includes both narrowly disciplinary skills (*quoting in a discipline, creating written texts of certain genres, etc.*) and interdisciplinary skills (*academic reading, academic writing, etc.*). The cognitive component reflects the social and value aspects of academic literacy: knowledge about the academic community and critical thinking. The regulatory behavioral aspect allows us to take into account the formation of self-educational competence and reflection, as well as pay attention to the motivation of students.

In my opinion, the basis for the formation of academic literacy is learning to translate academic discourse. When determining the status of academic discourse, it is important to take into account its connection with scientific and pedagogical types of institutional discourse. So, A.V. Litvinov notes that in scientific discourse there is not only communication between partners of equal status, but also a tone of communication characteristic of educational activities in which the statuses of partners are different. L.V. Kulikova also notes the interpenetration of functions and genres of these types of discourse and designates this phenomenon as a unified system of specialized (clichéd) scientific and educational interaction. IN AND. Karasik considers pedagogical discourse as a special case of the implementation of scientific discourse, where the scientific style is the main one, and the scientific and educational style is on the periphery of the discourse. We proceed from the fact that academic discourse implies all three types of discourse (scientific, professional and pedagogical); accordingly, teaching it to university students is aimed at mastering their research, professional and educational-cognitive competencies. Thus, academic discourse is an institutional type of discourse in which the interpenetration of three spheres of communication and, accordingly, the interpenetration of three discourses occurs. I believe it can be used to develop an applied model for the formation of academic literacy and implementation in the educational process within the framework of teaching a certain discipline. Again, at the heart of writing as a communicative, cognitive, and social practice is learning to translate academic written discourse. At the same time, writing is not only a method of communication and social practice, but also a means of developing students' cognitive skills. In contrast to the traditional understanding of written text as a chain of statements (*and mastery of the skills to create text*), the concept of "academic written discourse" thus allows us to take into

account the communicative, social and cognitive activities of people in the process of creating written text in specific conditions. The purpose of academic discourse is the socialization of the student at the university and his orientation towards the generation of new knowledge as a terminal value. Strategies of scientific discourse (*carrying out research, its examination, implementation in practice*) and strategies of pedagogical discourse (*explanation, evaluation, control, organization*) can be successfully combined to implement a specific learning task. For example, writing a grant application is a strategy of scientific discourse, but in a situation of studying at a university it will be combined with a pedagogical strategy of explanation. Within the framework of this learning situation, a text of this genre will be created. Genre characteristics of a scientific text can be combined with texts of both pedagogical and professional discourse. For example, learning to participate in a scientific seminar while studying at a university will be built on the basis of mastering adequate rules of behavior, and will also touch upon professional topics during discussion. Accordingly, the texts of scientific, professional and pedagogical discourses will be interconnected. The approach proposed in this article to the formation of academic literacy as the basis of academic discourse and to teaching foreign language written speech based on the translation of academic written discourse has been successfully introduced into the discipline “Foreign Language” for third-year undergraduate students of the Faculty of Sociology at the National Research University Higher School of Economics .

Today, the need to pay attention to the development of competencies related to the ability to produce written texts in the language of instruction is recognized by the heads of many European universities. Most students receive support through academic writing centers, which exist in all leading universities. Those European universities that understand the need for specialized teaching in writing, for the most part, use the American model of teaching writing within academic disciplines (WAC, WID). The initiative, as a rule, comes from teachers of disciplines who have experience teaching at American universities, where, as shown above, much attention is paid to the development of writing skills. However, there are few such universities: today only a few examples of successful teaching of academic writing in the native language can be cited at universities in Western Europe. Thus, A. Declambre and K. Donahue describe the experience of teaching French for academic purposes at universities in France, J. Harbord gives an example of teaching the basics of German academic writing in Germany.

And although there are few special studies on academic writing in the language of instruction, we can talk about an ever increasing interest in the problems of developing academic writing in the native language in parallel with teaching English for academic purposes. The subject of many presentations at the EATAW 2013 conference (European Association of Teaching Academic Writing⁷) was the term “multilinguality,” which implies the development of students’ linguistic competencies in two (native and English) or more languages.

A successful example of using a multilingual approach to teaching is the Center for Academic Writing at the Lviv National University. Ivan Frank, whose tasks include the development of academic and writing skills in both English and Ukrainian. The staff of the center proceed from the fact that the condition for the successful development of academic writing skills in English is the development of multilingual competence, which implies mastering, first of all, writing skills in the native language.

However, if we consider the situation with teaching writing in universities in Eastern Europe and the countries of the former USSR as a whole, this example is rather an exception to the rule. In a study devoted to the development of writing skills at universities in Eastern Europe, J. Harbord notes that before the collapse of the Soviet Union, higher education systems in all countries of

the socialist camp were similar. Traditionally, in these countries, writing has not been a goal of education. Written work was also used quite rarely in assessing learning outcomes. The most common form of writing was taking notes from lectures and literature in the specialty. The written papers known as “abstracts,” which were intended rather to demonstrate that the student had read a certain number of sources, involved only a review of the literature on the topic in the form of a paraphrase. J. Harbord concludes that the concept was this: a student's ability to produce written texts depends on his knowledge of the texts he has read, not on his writing skills. O. Cruz comes to a similar conclusion, noting that traditionally in Europe writing was not perceived as some kind of skill that needed to be specially taught. It was assumed that writing is a continuation of thinking and, accordingly, during training, attention should be paid to the development of critical thinking skills, while writing is exclusively a linguistic competence.

Today, in many universities in Eastern Europe, including Russia, an important issue that often falls out of sight during the planning and formation of training courses in a particular specialty is the need to develop skills and abilities of academic communication in the language of instruction, since it is through the language in which the educational process is carried out, the general academic literacy of students is formed. As noted above, the development of hypertension often occurs only within the framework of English language courses. According to J. Harbord, the idea of developing academic competencies only in English is not optimal, and assigning the task of developing AG exclusively to English teachers is not the most effective. In addition, during the learning process, students increasingly deal with written forms of control (both intermediate and final). To do this, they have to master new genres of writing (for example, the academic essay).

Gradually, the situation is changing at universities in Eastern Europe; the issues of teaching writing in their native language are increasingly attracting the attention of researchers. An example of an international project aimed at creating conditions for the development of academic competencies in the field of reading and writing in their native language is the LIDHUM project (*Literacy Development in the Humanities: Creating Competence Centers for the Enhancement of Reading and Writing Skills as Part of University Teaching*), in which scientists from Macedonia, Ukraine, Romania and Switzerland take part.

The situation with the teaching of academic writing in Russian in Russian universities, although it is of concern to some scientists, has not, as far as we know, become the subject of separate studies. Quite often one hears that practicing teachers point out the low level of development of writing skills among first-year students and the need for special training in writing academic texts.

Conclusions

The above analysis showed that in order to increase the efficiency and quality of education with the goal of systematic integration into the international scientific community, the Russian system of higher education should pay more attention to the development of AG in general and academic writing in particular. Since writing skill is a transferable skill, it seems effective to develop it either on the basis of the native language and then transfer it to a foreign language, or to study both languages in parallel. This requires the introduction of new and flexible models of training courses that will allow for the effective implementation of modern educational concepts and the formation of key competencies related to academic writing as the basis for successful education at a university.

In conclusion, it is important to note that optimization of learning should be based on interdisciplinary research to assess the level of development of students' AG, as well as to

develop models for constructing the educational process that will take into account Russian specifics and avoid the ineffective implementation of learning models that are alien to Russian realities.

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