

# HERB



Higher Education in Russia and Beyond

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English in Russian Universities: Mind the Gap

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## Dear colleagues,

This issue addresses the problems of integrating faculty and students into the global educational and research environment. Many Russian universities are now challenged to increase publications in English, launch international projects, offer EMI programs, and facilitate academic mobility of students and academics. However, one of the impeding factors that still prevent many universities from making a break-through in internationalization is insufficient skills of academic and research writing in English among academics. The challenges are mainly rooted in the peripheral role of academic writing in Russian university curricula: not all Russian universities offer it as a discipline yet. Another important issue is cultural differences in academic writing conventions in English and Russian. The authors of this issue offer multiple-aspect opinions about current challenges and present examples of best local practices, and various strategies that help to deal with the students' and academics' language problems. The authors analyze the role of writing centers as an instrument of internationalization, share the results of collaborative projects, and voice an urgent need for retraining teachers of English as mediators of the process.

*Higher Education in Russia and Beyond*  
*editorial team and guest editor*  
**Svetlana Suchkova**



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The University transmits up-to-date economic knowledge to the government, business community, and civil society

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What is Your Relationship with English?

# University Writing Centers in Russia: Balancing Unity and Diversity

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Academic writing in Russia is still a novelty. The discipline is just starting to emerge in the Russian higher education, and the currently forming cohort of university writing centers are pioneering the field, exploring new methodologies, educating, and networking. This pioneering role is of major importance for the Russian education because writing centers are seeking new ways to establish academic writing. The experience of Russian writing centers should therefore be examined in terms of global trends in developing writing for academic and especially research publication purposes.

## Why Researchers?

By the time Russian educators and policymakers became involved in issues of developing academic writing, debates about the domineering role of English in scholarly publications had shifted towards the general concession among multilingual scholars to use English as the lingua franca of academic discourse. Research in various geolinguistic contexts shows that international publications by non-anglophone writers have increased in the last decade, and the attitudes of editors and reviewers to their papers have become more tolerant [5].

However, writing in English is more difficult for multilingual scholars. Although academic English is no longer considered the language of a particular culture and needs to be mastered by all neophytes of the academy regardless of their native tongue [3], it requires more effort on behalf of scholars in other cultures not only because of the language, but also the global rhetorical and publishing conventions, which often contradict national traditions of writing and publishing. To be accepted into the global academic community means socialization through learning the “common core” language of this community. Hyland [3: 89 – 90] concludes that teaching academic writing means “raising awareness of the ways language is used to most persuasive effect,” “assisting novice writers with the strategies they might employ in the publication process itself.”

## University Writing Centers in Multilingual Settings

The problems faced by multilingual scholars in writing research papers can be solved in two alternative ways [1]: individual services (“authors’ editors”) and pedagogical support provided by university writing centers or commercial units. Lillis and Curry [6] coin the term “brokers” to define those who help authors: “language brokers,” who improve

the language; “academic brokers,” who also improve the lexis, cohesion, or modality; and “academic literacy brokers,” who sometimes totally rearrange the original text. International experience shows that this work often involves major changes in multilingual scholars’ texts. According to North’s [7] statement that writing centers should improve the writer, not the text, the best alternative for scholars is pedagogy.

However, the development of writing centers took place mainly in the US, and their work has always been aimed at supporting international and anglophone students, who are a very different audience from researchers or professors. Because of this, the US model of a writing center does not work well in the Russian context. The establishment of writing centers is fostered by governmental policies aimed at raising the visibility of research papers published by national scholars, which results in institutional pressure. Until recently, Russian scholars were used to national publications in their native languages, so being urged to publish internationally, they need a very different kind of support.

Russian writing centers provide a good example of how different the functions of writing centers can be. The first two Russian university writing centers were established simultaneously in 2011, but their functions were diverse from the very beginning. The Writing and Communication Center at the New Economic School followed the US model, and it was aimed at students and run by US experts, whereas the Academic Writing Center at the Higher School of Economics followed its own way, providing courses, lectures and consultations for academics and researchers. Two centers established later, one at the Tomsk State University in 2013 and the other at the MISiS Technical University in 2015, followed the bilingual model of support for academics, PhD students, and researchers.

New Russian writing centers which started to emerge after 2015 are still on their way to establishing their methodology. Some combine US writing center pedagogy with courses for students and researchers alike, whereas others use the experience they accumulated while functioning as language units within their universities. This is the case of the Sechenov Medical University (Moscow), which draws from the rich methodological experience of working within the very specific medical discourse with both professional doctors and students. My analysis of the Russian writing centers’ practices based on the theory of system dysfunction [4] demonstrated the low level of applicability of the US writing center model in the Russian sociocultural context.

The model followed or sought by Russian writing centers today is not completely unique. Viewed through the lens of different geolinguistic regions, Russia is not the only country in need of developing academic writing skills for researchers. This support involves the rhetorical and publishing conventions into teaching writing, and such programs are starting to emerge around the world as a new branch of English for Academic Purposes – English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) [2]. The competences developed in ERPP encompass not only the writing process, rhetoric and composition, but also communication with gatekeepers (editors and reviewers),

approaches to finding the target journal, and “metadiscourse,” which shows the commitment of the writer.

Thus, Russian writing centers have intuitively – or deliberately – trodden the path leading in the same direction, but what makes their experience unique (if not yet proven otherwise) is the emergence of a bilingual approach to teaching ERPP. As most competences developed in ERPP are metalinguistic, they can be applied to the national context and taught in the native tongue. This will not only help support all Russian researchers, most of whom are not capable of writing in English, but also raise the quality of the national journals who are willing to accept international publishing ethics and rhetorical conventions.

## The National Writing Centers Consortium

The role of writing centers in Russia is of major importance in promoting teaching writing for research publication purposes. Creating new writing centers is essential to support Russian scholars, but the centers themselves need to be supported methodologically. The recently established National Writing Centers Consortium provides a network for writing centers and supports them methodologically and politically. There is still a host of interrelated problems, such as professional development in academic writing, creating methodology for academic writing in Russian, establishing it as a discipline, and introducing it into the Russian system of education. Maintaining an efficient network can turn writing centers into a melting pot of good practices, materials development and course design on the way to spreading academic writing in Russia in a bilingual format.

The network may also be useful in supporting writing centers internationally. The bilingual model may be further developed into trilingual to be used in the post-Soviet space, where Russian is still a lingua franca for multilingual scholars. A recent example is the request from the Arabaev Kyrgyz State University (Kyrgyzstan) for assistance in establishing a writing center. Stating international membership, the Consortium can also help establish a wider network, developing collaboration with the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA), European Writing Centers Association (EWCA) and College Composition and Communication Conference (CCCC). Trilingual settings may help preserve native languages by national scholarly publications, promote English through international publications, and maintain academic collaboration with Russia through publishing in Russian journals.

Writing centers in Russia have already formed as a specific flexible system easily adopted to particular sociocultural, institutional, and educational contexts. Bilingual and trilingual formats provide a useful model for multilingual scholars in a variety of geolinguistic regions where English is not widely spoken.

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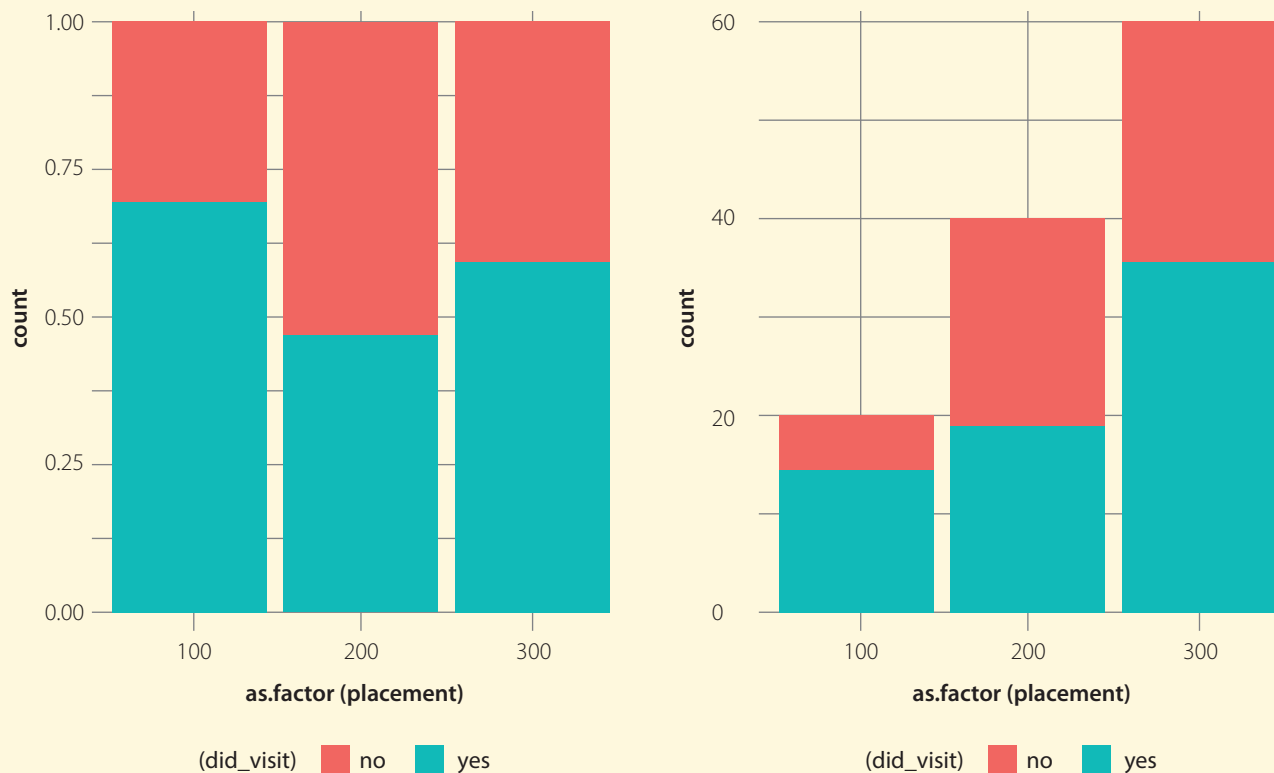
## Who Uses the Writing Center? An Analysis of Visitors from the NES-HSE Joint Bachelor's Program, 2013 – 2018

L. Ashley Squires

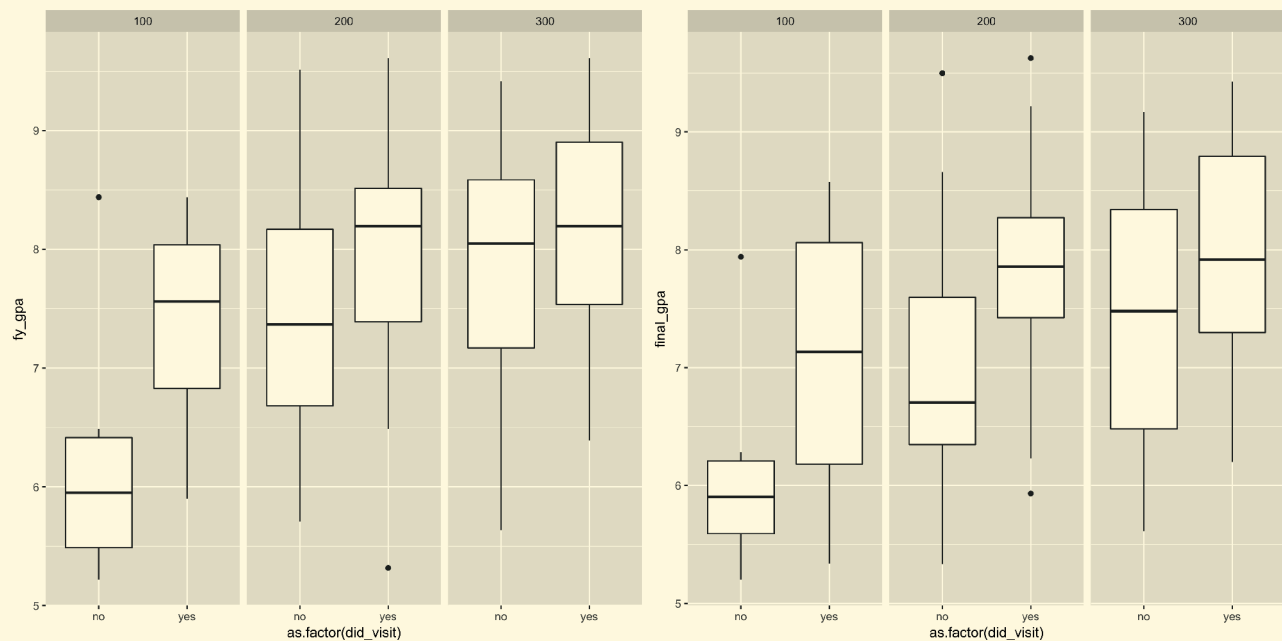
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For an individual to end up in writing center, a number of conditions must be met: she must have a need that the writing center can address; she must recognize that need, and she must have the motivation to actually book the appointment and show up for it. Understood purely in these terms, all writing center clients are alike, but the people who somehow do not wind up in the writing center may be missing any one of these three conditions. There are those who simply do not need us (though many writing center professionals might dispute this) and those who lack motivation due to the inconvenience or time required. And there are those who simply do not know what they don't know.

**Figure 1.** Usage of the writing center by placement group, visualized as an absolute value (left) and as a proportion (right).



**Figure 2.** First-year and fourth-year GPAs of students who did and did not visit the writing center broken out by placement group.



At the Writing and Communication Center (WCC) at the New Economic School (NES), we see about 50% of the students enrolled in the Joint Bachelor's Program at some point during their four years of study. Using data collected over five years and following on previous research conducted by Lori Salem, I seek to better understand the way WCC usage relates to other student characteristics and measures of performance. My findings show that both variables predict writing center usage, but, somewhat sur-

prisingly, it is students with middling English ability who are the least consistent about recognizing their own need and taking steps to fix it.

## Overview of the NES WCC and the Joint Bachelor's Program

The NES WCC, founded in 2011, was created in order to serve the Joint Bachelor's Program in Economics, run in



cooperation with the Higher School of Economics (HSE). It is the only writing center in Russia that exclusively serves students. Students in this program, all Russian, receive a liberal arts education while earning a Bachelor's degree in economics from both universities. Our graduates go on to work for international companies with offices in Russia as well as top Ph.D. programs in the United States and Europe. Preparing for international communication in a professional and academic context is therefore an essential skill. The WCC supports the curriculum of the program and prepares students for their futures by offering one-on-one consultations, workshops, and online resources. Students come to the WCC for a number of purposes, including their coursework; internship, study abroad, and graduate school applications; TOEFL and IELTS preparation; and even simple conversation practice in English.

The WCC offers consultations mainly in English, as English is the lingua franca of the program and a required subject. Our students, however, arrive in the program with varying levels of competency. Upon matriculation, first-year students are tested and sorted into three groups: L100 (roughly corresponding to A1-low A2 on the CEFR scale), L200 (high A2-low B2), and L300 (high B2 and up). L100 students take a full-year beginner's course with a Russian-speaking instructor who can provide explanation in the students' native language. L200 students take a one-semester intermediate language course followed by one semester of Introduction to College Writing. And L300 students enroll in Advanced College Writing, which is the equivalent of a first-year composition course taught at an English-medium university. After one semester, they may enroll in English electives of their choosing. Students initially placed in L100 therefore take five semesters of required English courses and L200 students 3 semesters before they begin English-medium courses. It is the job of the WCC, therefore, to ensure that it is meeting the needs of students at varying levels of English and writing competency.

Since 2013, the NES WCC has been systematically collecting data on student visits to understand who uses the Center and why. At the end of each consultation, the tutor submits a report indicating the characteristics of the student and the content of the session. We now have four years of data on two separate graduating classes (2017, 2018) for a total of 115 students. These completed sets of data allow us to examine writing center usage over the full span of a student's time in the Joint Program. Combining this data with placement and GPA data from the Joint Program, we can also see who might be falling through the cracks in our system.

## Data Analysis

As shown in Figure 1, students placed in L100 at the time of matriculation visit the writing center in the highest proportion relative to their numbers. They are also the most likely to become "superusers" (to make >12 visits in four years). However, the placement group that was second-most likely to visit the NES WCC was L300, while

L200 is the least likely to visit. The relationship between WCC use and placement level, therefore, isn't quite linear.

Further insight may lie in the relationship between writing center usage and GPA. First, there is a straightforward linear relationship between English placement level and GPA both in the first year and at the completion of the program. Students initially placed in L100 have the lowest median GPA (7.17 in Year 1 and 6.87 in Year 4); L300 students have the highest (8.15 in Year 1 and 7.77 in Year 4), and L200 students are in the middle (7.56 in Year 1 and 7.47 in Year 2). GPA is also an even stronger predictor of writing center usage than placement level: visitors have higher GPAs than non-visitors. Indeed, as Figure 2 shows, the median L100 visitor has a higher GPA than the median L200 non-visitor, and the same is true for L200 visitors vs. L300 non-visitors.

Furthermore, if we consider only the L200 and L300 visitors, the difference in median GPA nearly disappears, while the median GPA of an L300 non-visitor is still 0.68 points higher in Y1 and 0.78 points higher in Y4 than the median L200 non-visitor. We cannot say, however, that it is the WCC that is causing students to have higher GPAs. Rather, I suspect that as a voluntary service, the WCC is attracting students who are already likely to have higher GPAs: students who like to study.

## Conclusion

In our program, it appears that students placed in L100 and L300 are the most consistent about understanding their own needs and seeking help with them, while the middle group would seem to contain students who are less consistent. Lack of need does not appear to be the issue here. Indeed, while all GPAs decline a bit over the course of four years (which is to be expected as the coursework becomes more challenging), the most precipitous drop in the median occurred in the group of L200 students who did not visit the WCC (-0.67 points). Whereas in the past, I have worried about needing to do more to reach out directly to L100 students (the seemingly most needy category), it seems that these students are already pretty good at finding us and that we actually need to pay more attention to this L200 group. We plan to follow up with a survey to gauge student awareness and perceptions of the WCC and allow instructors to incentivize their students to use the Center (at the moment, WCC usage is strictly voluntary).

For writing centers servicing faculty, this issue will need to be studied further, but it is to be expected that the category of needy-unaware / needy-unmotivated is substantial even among experienced scholars. It is plausible, in fact, that this status is the most predominant among faculty whose competence in English is enough to get by in many circumstances but may be lacking for high-level academic communication on the international scene (the high-functioning B2 user, essentially). This issue of perception and non-motivation would therefore be a rich vein for further research and should be useful for informing outreach strategies.

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# Increasing Research Impact by Developing Research Communication Skills

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Russian universities continuously striving to move further up to the forefront on the world academic arena are in constant search for best practices and solutions that could help them build recognition and increase their research impact [1]. This quest has materialized itself in the formation of research excellence centers linking major local and international service providers in this field, research administrators and scientometricians around the globe. In a highly competitive research environment, research output is determined by three key factors: general acceptance rate of publications, publications citations, and international research collaboration. One of the bottlenecks preventing increased acceptance of Russian research in the world seems to be its comparatively low visibility and connectivity. This may have many explanations: from linguistic – as lack of proficiency in English, a scientific and educational lingua franca – to psychological, like the researchers' claims for intellectual sovereignty and self-identification as "lone wolves." Some research areas, such as humanities and social sciences, often suffer from too much attachment to "domestic" research subjects focused on the local culture and environment what might have prevented these works from reaching a global significance. Clearly, all these obstacles do not apply to experienced researchers, who are well aware of the importance and positive impact of research data sharing and personal connectivity within the academic environment, but likewise, they are often detrimental to beginners, starting their search for academics with similar interests both at home and abroad.

Since the beginning of the Russian academic internationalization project, top universities have been working on the ways to improve the recognizability of Russian research and academic reputation on a global scale. One quick look at universities' websites is enough to see that research administrators are relentlessly struggling to increase research output and its quality. Measures are manifold: from pro-

viding staff allowances for publications in high-impact academic journals and extra funding for excellence centers and research groups, to encouraging academic writing and translation initiatives, and many others. Russian universities intensively network and share practices in this field. This sharing of experience and best practices is considered a key to success in "promoting" Russian science as a global brand. However, expert assessment is equally important and this requires going beyond national borders and learning from international peers. In 2016-2018, Ural Federal University (UrFU) was actively cooperating with British service providers and experts on increasing its research impact. The partners included Springer Nature and the British Council. The work was carried out with financial support of the British Embassy and British Consulate General in Ekaterinburg, within in the framework of the UK-Russia Year of Science & Education 2017 [2]. The project embraced different activities targeting both researchers and research administrators.

In October 2016, UrFU hosted a workshop "Researcher Connect," which was organized by the British Council and involved about twenty researchers. The whole event was aimed at enhancing communication as a topical skill for an internationalized researcher. During the interactive workshop, the participants were encouraged to share feedback on their research and integrate peer suggestions to their projects. The project "Researcher Connect" consisted of eight modules, with each institution being asked to choose the one most relevant to their scope of work [3]. UrFU research administrators decided to focus on promoting research, improving connectivity during conferences, and building international collaborations. The participants were encouraged to look for the prospects and ways that they could "*benefit from knowledge that would help them to become more experienced members of the research community.*" As a follow-up to this inspiring meeting, UrFU and the British Council subsequently held a series of five workshops of the "Researcher Connect" initiative at Russian universities altogether.

A larger audience attended a four-day seminar "Improving the Impact of Your Research" held by Springer Nature in February 2017, bringing together about 160 researchers from UrFU, the Ural Branch of the Academy of Science and other research institutions of the Ural region. As the event was built around the Nature journal, its target audience consisted largely of specialists from different fields of natural sciences and engineering. This seminar covered such subject areas as effective writing strategies, article structure, journal selection and submission of an article, as well as article revisions and presentation of research results. The central message of the event, as it was set by the key speaker and editorial development manager Joffrey Robens, was to determine and foster key competencies for the researcher as effective communicator. The latter can be broadly defined as an academic writer who keeps readers' expectations in mind, knows how to improve the readability of a text, and how to structure a sentence so that it is easy to comprehend [4].



Another joint project of UrFU in collaboration with Springer Nature was called the “Publishing Academy.” The Nature Research Academies team held an academic editing workshop for 20 members of the academic writing centers and journals on 18-20 November 2017 at the RUDN University in Moscow. The audience included university journal editors, and staff of academic writing and translation services centers. For this project, UrFU cooperated with the Association of Science Editors and Publishers (ASEP). The Nature Research Academies workshop sought to guide the participants on how to render their findings in a proper article format in order to increase their chances of publication and maximize their impact. Participants also focused on how to edit academic manuscripts. The workshop covered such topics as academic writing and clarity, effective editing strategies, and proof-reading. In the end, participants acknowledged that, “*the workshop was very useful for the general understanding of the modern trends in scientific editing.*” The wrap-up report of the seminar indicated that such modules as readability and logical flow of the article were among the most useful. One might ask whether the efficiency of such initiatives can be measured in numbers. It is hardly possible. However, by increasing awareness about such important aspects of a researcher’s job as interaction with other researchers in this field, not only local, but also international, promoting their research in scientific networks, techniques of increasing impact of their research contributes to changing research culture. It is a slow process and it might seem too complicated for research administrators under the pressure of “quick wins.” Yet planting ideas, establishing practices and nurturing a culture of internationalization is a long-term strategy which will impact several generations of researchers. This atmosphere of learning and of expertise sharing creates a common field for discussing efficiency of research organization strategies and practices that is equally valuable for experienced researchers as well as “emerging” research groups and administrators.

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# Reading-to-Writing Approach as a Way to Develop Scholars’ Writing Competence

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In 2015, the University of Tyumen (UTMN) joined the Russian Academic Excellence Project 5-10. The university faculty and researchers faced the demand to get published in high-impact journals. In reality, not many university scholars were ready to communicate their research results to the international community; publication activity was very low. Trying to solve this problem, scholars had their Russian articles translated into English, but their attempts were often unsuccessful. The failure might have been due to the following reasons. Firstly, scholars conducted their research locally, neglecting international experience. Consequently, they referred to other Russian academics in their research papers. Secondly, most translations were made without taking into account the gap between the Russian language writing conventions and the Anglo-Saxon ones. UTMN scholars’ texts did not run smoothly from one idea to the next and tended to have digressions. Even though some studies could be of interest for international readers, researchers were not able to publish their studies in English because of low English proficiency or failing to meet the journal requirements.

To provide assistance to the academic staff, UTMN leadership established the Center for Academic Writing (CAWI) in April 2016. The university authorities charged the Center with a task of contributing effectively to writing-for-publication support for university faculty and researchers. It is essential to emphasize that UTMN leaders were aware of the need to invest in scholars’ continuous professional development, equipping them with scientific communication skills rather than offering them immediate translation services. However, it was necessary to achieve rapid results in terms of the number of quality publications. Thus, from the outset, creating and maintaining productive work at the Center was crucial for meeting the challenges. The Center’s suggested programs were approved and funded by UTMN administration.

The first step was to enhance academic writing tutors’ professional development with the help of Russian and international experts. Tutors were selected among the university’s

English language teachers. Priority was given to those who had their own scientific publications in English and an experience of teaching academic English or English for Specific Purposes. Besides, candidates had to demonstrate high motivation to become scientific writing tutors and an ability to learn fast, acquiring essential tutoring skills. Training sessions conducted by visiting specialists enabled the tutors to make a shift from English teachers to tutors and to become academic writing ambassadors at the University of Tyumen. The tutors have been able to disseminate the gained experience and knowledge by providing consultations and designing tailor-made workshops and courses for scholars. Having studied the experience of international writing centers, the Center's tutors have developed its policy based on collaborative work with researchers to cope with writing challenges.

The second stage was to design efficient training programs helping scholars grow as confident and autonomous second-language writers. Having analyzed the scholars' publishing inexperience in international journals, we started searching for some pragmatic strategies and approaches that could be beneficial. Taking into account researchers' lack of reading scholarly papers in English, we decided to build CAWI's workshops, courses, and consultations based on the reading-to-writing approach. Firstly, researchers can capture key points and issues so that they will be able to participate in the academic conversation and approach their research from international perspective. Secondly, this approach enables our researchers to develop a linguistic repertoire and a writing toolkit, which they will be able to apply purposefully and independently to create their own texts.

Following this approach, we ask scholars to select research papers from their target journals. They read the papers and develop their noticing skills by observing how writers convey meanings through language patterns. Writing conventions are discussed not separately, on a step-by-step basis, but in a non-linear way. Scholars analyze selected papers in terms of their content, structure, and language. They identify the purpose and content elements of each section, discover notable patterns of sections and consider what these patterns mean in terms of what the writer is saying. For example, the Discussion section interprets research results, and to convey modesty authors might use a hedging strategy expressed through modal verbs. Observing such phenomena, scholars make surprising discoveries for themselves and develop a conscious attitude to choosing appropriate language for their purposes. Integration of developing language skills and raising awareness of different writing principles makes scholars more confident writers.

A particular feature of our workshops and courses is that the participants come from different disciplines and backgrounds. They all benefit from eye-opening discussions and become more detail-oriented while preparing their own papers. Collaborative learning is crucial for deeper reflection on how writing works in different contexts and for different audiences. In particular, it might be useful to discuss similarities and differences between various styles. The participants' different backgrounds enable them to find unique features of their styles and common conven-

tions of the English language scientific writing. During the discussions, researchers learn to develop their own academic voice to be effective writers.

We build the reading-to-writing approach around our belief that it is essential to discover effective reading and writing strategies which are particularly useful for individual researchers. Our academic writing support programs have received positive feedback from the participants and proved to be efficient in preparing research papers and conference presentations.

### **Here is feedback from several participants:**

**Elena Silivanova,**

Associate Professor, Institute of Biology, UTMN

"After this course, I started reading international publications more attentively; they become more understandable."

**Elizaveta Sidorovskaya,**

postgraduate, Institute of Chemistry, UTMN

"It is rather difficult for newcomers in a scientific environment to start writing research articles. By reading and analyzing papers from your discipline, it becomes possible for you to move in the right direction. A future author learns to see basic principles of the article structure, pays attention to detail, and forms a strategy of writing."

**Oxana Zhigileva,**

Associate Professor, Institute of Biology, UTMN

"Taking into account the fact that science is developing rapidly, and language is evolving, reading modern scientific papers fosters a more effective communication. Besides, reading specialized literature is the only approach that helps to find adequate terminology for writing your own paper. Moreover, using commonly used expressions (clichés) makes the text clearer for international audience."

**Olga Zakharova,** Associate Professor, Institute of Social Sciences & Humanities, UTMN

"Reading is a way to improve the skills of scientific writing through the study of best practices, which already published articles are. Practical learning of the framework of scientific writing is understandable and clear. In addition, studying articles from a selected journal helps understand the specific requirements for authors that would like to publish in this journal."

Over two years, CAWI has turned out to be a useful option available to the university faculty and researchers, inspiring them to consider English academic writing competence as one of the valuable key competences of a contemporary researcher. Thus, the Center has been named "Impulse" as its mission is to give the researchers an impulse to develop their scientific writing and communication skills. Many scholars have adopted a positive attitude to academic writing and have started seeing its potential as a tool for communicating their research in English.

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# Bottom-up Initiative That Works Against All Odds

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One of the challenging aspects associated with the internationalization of higher education (IHE) in Russia is the question where and how to start. The training of qualified faculty and staff for conducting research and teaching in English should begin, in our opinion, with students. There is a need to change the language policy of Samara University: to re-focus the content of language programs, adding more elements of English for academic purposes, and to create an environment for language support, giving students an opportunity to get help outside the classroom. This is crucial for the implementation of the university's internationalization plans. However, Samara University administration does not always support initiatives of the departments, which is the case with financing Samara Academic Consultancy Center (SACC).

The Department of Modern Languages and Professional Communication (MLPCD) of Samara University launched a project aimed at modernizing English language curriculum and implementing courses of academic writing at all levels: undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate, and faculty professional development. Part of the project is Samara Academic Consultancy Centre, which we introduced as part of the curriculum. MLPCD staff are mostly involved in teaching languages for specific purposes, where one part concerns academic writing. We came to a decision to unify the requirements and create a syllabus according to current trends in academic writing to train our students to communicate globally. Two main parts were included in the syllabus: face-to-face workshops and individual consultations. This is an example of a successful department-led project that has survived despite all the difficulties.

## How It Started

In 2014, we successfully applied for a grant from the English Office of the US Embassy in Moscow, which allowed us to bring English Language Specialist Eve Smith to Samara University. Being on the Department staff, she helped establish the Center, organized tutor training, and started consulting the faculty. SACC tutors had the opportunity to observe sessions and create materials, and started running workshops themselves. Together with Svetlana Suchkova, volunteering director of the Center, Eve Smith worked out a system of tutor assessment. The work of the SACC team resulted in the publication titled *Writing Centers in Multilingual Settings* [1] – a practical

manual for those who want to start a writing center. This successful experience was disseminated in other Russian cities, including Kazan (Kazan Federal University), Irkutsk, Ekaterinburg (Ural State Pedagogical University), Smolensk (Smolensk University for Humanities), Tyumen (Tyumen State University), Saint Petersburg, Tupase Region in Krasnodar (ICC “Orlyonok”), under the program “Professional Development for Writing Centers’ Tutors in Training” supported by the US Embassy. Eve Smith played a vital role in the project at its beginning stages. Unfortunately, the university administration is not willing to invest in the Center. For two years, the SACC team worked for free. Then the Department came to a solution to include SACC activities as part of language instructors’ regular working load at the department. Despite the lack of financial and administrative support, Samara Academic Consultancy Center is working and improving its services.

## The Way SACC Works

The main aim of the Center is to boost academic writing skills among all those affiliated with Samara University. Our objective is to provide help with writing and promote academic literacy. Our main target group now is students as we hope – in the long term – to raise a new generation of professors and scholars who would be competent in academic communication skills.

SACC developed a three-stage comprehensive model of delivering an academic communication training program inside MLPCD. For bachelor's and master's students, SACC workshops are mandatory, and they are held on a regular basis as part of their curriculum. We also provide one-to-one consultations for students on different aspects of academic writing. For postgraduate students, we offer an optional course called Academic Communication in English, in which there are various modules postgraduates can choose from, for example, “Writing a CV,” “Effective Abstract,” “Plagiarism and How to Avoid It,” “Writing Introductions,” “Writing Conclusions,” etc. This model allows providing services to all students without extra payments to SACC tutors.

There are several major reasons why the Center has started working with undergraduate students. Firstly, at this stage of education, focus on abstract and critical thinking plays a principal role because when bachelors move forward to a master's degree, they are obliged to conduct scientific research and write articles in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard. Bachelor's students have to gradually develop the skills of critical reading and academic writing. Secondly, students often participate in mobility projects and student exchange. They need to pass Academic IELTS – an international exam for people applying for higher education, where they also need to demonstrate academic writing skills: write an essay and a graph description. Thirdly, it takes time to develop the skill of writing, which is considered as one of the most complicated language skills. Bachelor's students need a fitting environment to gain individual help and guidance before they

become more autonomous as writers.

The Center creates a friendly space for students where they can communicate in English, organizes professional development activities, and even has some interesting traditions already, for example, Academic Writing Day with SACC: an event that comprises five concurrent workshops on different aspects of writing. We were pleased to welcome more than 100 participants each year.

We are gradually moving toward enabling faculty professional development in academic writing. We already offer two such courses. The first one is called Academic / Professional Profile of a Scientist in English. It is helpful for creating academic profile, describing personal information, professional interests, and achievements of a scientist. The second course is called Writing Academic Proposals for Professional Purposes; it has already turned out to be such a success that we have decided to launch it via the Moodle platform.

## Conclusion

Despite all the efforts to explain to Samara University administration that there should be a complex strategy for creating a language environment that would help to communicate research globally, including specific management of the curriculum, a new policy for changes in the English language teaching, and uniting the efforts of many university units, we have failed. However, a local department-led initiative helped us integrate certain elements of academic writing into undergraduate education. As a result, SACC currently offers students training to improve language, interaction, and communication skills. We have found appropriate space in the curricula to fit in our workshops. We have made SACC more visible for students, providing them with consultations and other services. This initiative is entirely in line with one of the university's priorities – namely, internationalization of education. It enhances the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into teaching, research, and service functions of the university. It can also fulfil employers' expectations: a good employee should have an ability to absorb new information, have well-developed written and oral communication skills, and demonstrate an ability for self-learning – all the skills that could be developed with the help of our academic writing programs. We do hope that this initiative will eventually be appreciated and supported.

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# Internationalization of Higher Education in Russia: English Language Teaching Landscape

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## Context and Background

The purpose of this article is to describe some major trends related to reforming English language teaching/learning provision at Russian universities over the last four years linked to the launch and the first implementation stage of the Academic Excellence Initiative, widely known in Russia and beyond as Project 5-100. In Russia, the process of higher education internationalization following the Bologna agreement of 1999 started later than in other countries and developed slowly. It was the awareness of the low position of Russian universities in global universities rankings that played the major role in changing the government policy in 2013 to accelerate internationalization by initiating the first national Academic Excellence Initiative. Its goal is to enable five Russian universities to enter the top-100 group in global university rankings. Currently, the participants of the project are 21 leading Russian universities, competing to improve their international ranks. The acceleration of internationalization through Project 5-100 had an immediate impact on universities' English language policy and teaching/learning provision. Before that, even though English was considered a lingua franca in the academia, changes in teaching/learning provision were very slow or not deep enough as it was revealed by the British Council baseline research conducted in Russia in 2002 and 2012.

## Main Changes in Policies and Practice

### English Language Policies and Planning at the Institutional Level

Policies related to using and teaching English in universities are fragmented. Though varying across universities, they share some common aspects, such as launching university sites and producing marketing materials and course documentation in English; introducing English-language signage on premises; introducing staffing and recruitment policies that provide additional financial incentives for faculty to publish and teach in English. Some universities conducted auditing of English-language proficiency levels of students, academics, and staff based on the six-level scale of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in order to set realistic "benchmarks" for the English language target levels.



## Changes in Curriculum for Students

In Russian universities, English is taught at all educational levels. In the absence of common rigid standards, universities have certain flexibility in decision-making regarding the number of study hours and syllabus.

### *Bachelor Degree Level*

Currently, there is no standardized approach to the hours taught and the balance between English for General Purposes (EGP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which includes English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Traditionally tuition hours were limited to 140 for bachelor programs, but there was no clear understanding about proficiency levels, as they had never been measured. After language auditing, a serious problem – students with a low level of English-language proficiency – became evident to university leaders. Although English is taught in secondary school, it is not a mandatory subject during the school-leaving exams. Many graduates, especially potential STEM students, take mandatory Russian and mathematics and focus on optional STEM subjects rather than English. To respond to the problem of low proficiency, some universities found ways to allocate more time for teaching English at the bachelor level as it was easier to have flexibility within a four-year curriculum. Realizing that this might not be enough, some universities offered additional services, including language centers that provided General English courses and administered Cambridge English exams.

Another aspect of the problem is lack of clarity about transition to academic English. Part of the problem is low proficiency, but another part is teachers' reliance on course books by international publishers for General English because of their quality and availability, even if they are not totally appropriate. Often the solution was a "soft" or "broad" English for Academic Purposes approach, which included elements of teaching academic writing, study skills, and some materials for preparation for international exams, e.g., IELTS or TOEFL.

Experiencing problems with assessment, some universities introduced external assessment, e.g., IELTS or Cambridge Exams, which was a positive move towards international perspective as they are accepted by universities across the world. This also contributed to opening more opportunities for individual students in terms of international academic mobility at further educational levels. Some Russian universities started to accept these certificates for Russian students applying for Ph.D. programs in Russia. In some cases, universities aligned their internal assessment with the formats of international exams.

### *Master's Degree Level*

There is less flexibility for allocating additional time for English within two-year professional master's programs. With low proficiency and a small number of tuition hours (often as few as 25-30) the dilemma between General English and English for Specific purposes is even more difficult. With low institutional capacities for syllabus development and a deep-rooted tradition of a "narrow" approach

to English for Specific Purposes, this is still a problem for many institutions. Some attempts are being made to accept certificates received for professional courses on Coursera and organizing language support for taking such courses. But since cases of co-operation between language teachers and subject professors are still rare, models of content and language integration are also rare. Thus various combinations of a narrow English for Specific Purposes approach and a "soft" Academic English approach provide a big variety of programs with a limited number of contact hours.

### *English Language Teaching/Learning for Academics*

To support English-medium Instruction (EMI), special language courses were introduced for faculty at many universities. The courses included elements related to teaching in English and socializing in academic context as well as preparing papers for publication. A good example is the English for Academics course book developed by a team of Russian English teachers in collaboration with the British Council and published by Cambridge University Press. Other resource initiatives included establishing academic writing centers and services to support researchers, professors, and Ph.D. students. Recent administrative decisions permitting Ph.D. theses to be written and defended in English opens up a completely new area and creates space for new needs in English provision.

## Limitations and Challenges

Though a lot of efforts to reform the provision for the teaching and learning of English in the university system are still underway, there is a question about how efficient English programs are. This is particularly important as teachers need to teach different kinds of English: English for general purposes, English for specific purposes, and "soft" and "hard" Academic English to students with various proficiency levels. Problems of academic literacy, teaching communication in a wider sense, teaching transferable skills, and the ways of bridging the gap between General English and Academic English are to be addressed by syllabus developers.

All the answers are linked to teachers' qualifications and skills. Pre-service teacher education still does not provide special qualifications. There are no professional requirements related to university English teachers and no official system for their professional development. In-service professional development for university teachers is often limited to the training provided by international publishing houses and National Academic Writing Centers Consortium training events within professional development conferences. Some universities also use international Certificate in English Language Teaching (CELTA) training courses for raising standards of teaching. It is a good step forward, though it remains only an interim solution because of the limited relevance to contexts beyond General English.

Many universities still have de-centralized teams of English teachers working with students from different disciplines. Lack of connectivity at the institutional level impedes the implementation of an effective core syllabus and the monitoring of standards and student progress. More

connectivity is also needed at the inter-institutional level for wider and better dissemination of best practices as the challenges are to be addressed by wider professional community. There is more need for specific training and support, particularly in the area of syllabus design and assessment in academic English, in teaching pronunciation for intelligibility, in developing content and language integrated models of teaching at universities, and materials design especially keeping in mind the growing use of technology and the use of language in technology-rich environments. There are some successful cases of blended learning models of teaching English at bachelor level and the trend should continue at all levels. Also, a wide range of courses in English are currently offered by Russian universities on Coursera and similar platforms. With this trend underway, there will be a growing need in tutors capable of working in English in a digital environment.

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# Role of Teachers of English in Publication Rate Growth at Universities

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## Introduction and Background

Clearly, an increase in publications in peer-reviewed journals indexed in Web of Science and Scopus databases is impossible without raising researchers' level of proficiency in foreign languages, primarily English. However, needs analysis conducted at Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology showed that only a small number of the University's faculty know a foreign language for professional purposes at the level that would allow them to read authentic sources competently. Even fewer authors can create solid scientific publications in English. They do not know how to structure an English text as a whole; they are not skilled in persuasive argumentation; they are not aware of English academic writing conventions. This can be explained by the fact that they have never been taught academic writing in English. The same is true about teachers of English. That is why, we at Reshetnev University have decided to train teachers of English first, so that they could assist non-linguistic faculty in preparing publications more effectively.

## Challenges that Teachers of English Face

Traditionally, English teachers have been responsible for all language-related activities at our university, including translating, interpreting, editing, proofreading, and creating foreign language environment. Recently they have been charged with one more task: teaching academic writing skills to non-linguistic educators and researchers in order to assist them in publishing the results of their research in international peer-reviewed journals and presenting at international conferences. However, the professional competence of English teachers lies mainly in teaching General English and methods of teaching. Unfortunately, there is no such discipline as academic writing yet in many teacher training colleges, so teachers of English have to self-study a lot to gain expertise in teaching academic and research writing.



We did research into the deficiencies of our English teachers' academic English competences. The survey showed that teachers of English either had no experience in publishing their papers in peer-reviewed international journals or their experience was insufficient. They were not aware of English rhetorical conventions of academic writing, were not equipped with techniques for teaching text flow and coherence, had difficulty with text organization and editing, and it was hard for them to analyze reviewers' comments. Therefore, it was obvious that the first target group for upgrading academic writing skills was the university's departments of foreign languages. The results of this needs analysis shaped our retraining programs for teachers of English.

## Retraining: Steps and Solutions

Firstly, we applied for and received a Tempus grant (2006 – 2009) to develop language environment at the university. The focus of our project was to develop several professional and academic English courses for all categories of university students and for non-linguistic faculty. It resulted in language retraining of 40 English teachers, 10 non-linguistic faculty members, and 10 senior students. We created basic teaching materials about writing and presenting for academic purposes.

Retraining teachers was the next step; therefore, we applied and won the grant for that purpose. The Fulbright (2014) grant was aimed at English teachers only; its goal was to design an Academic Writing module for different specializations. A Fulbright specialist certified 30 members of foreign language departments, and their modules were probed with different student groups representing different specializations.

All the above mentioned practices have become the prerequisites for establishing Academic Writing Center. In 2016, we started the Center with the idea to offer proof-reading services, to review scientific articles accepted for publication, and to prepare modules for retraining university staff so that the certified English teachers could help the university overcome the current challenges of internationalization. One of the Center's first activities was a training course "Preparing an Article for Publication" for staff of the University foreign language departments. The program included basic principles of presenting an English-language article to foreign journals, article structure, and the reader's expectations at every stage of publication submission. A special module was devoted to the philosophy of tutoring. Twenty prospective Center tutors were trained on this course.

The second retraining program was organized for both linguists and non-linguists who already had international publication experience. The focus of that program was to help with selecting an appropriate journal, to raise awareness of how to interpret data on the Scopus site and to help understand journal policy. Twenty-five university specialists were certified.

The well-thought-out retraining program enabled teachers of English to create teaching modules tailored to the needs of their fellow faculty: 1) public speaking and academic writing in a foreign language; 2) use of a foreign language in teaching activities; 3) academic writing principles; 4) writing for scientific purposes. As a result, 138 specialists have been trained; since 2016; the quantity of Reshetnev University-affiliated publications has doubled - 80 articles per year. Having worked under pressure, we have realized that an academic writing center is an efficient tool to introduce and promote global trends; it can greatly contribute to increasing the number and quality of Russian scholars' research publications.

To sum up, we would like to underline that investing in English teachers is one of the crucial conditions for creating an academic environment that would stimulate international research collaboration. Skilled English teachers need thorough and focused retraining to be able to meet the challenges flagship universities currently face.

## Academic Writing Within Russian-American Undergraduate Program: Challenges and Decisions

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The idea of obtaining an undergraduate degree from an American university without leaving Russia sounds inviting – but unreal to some sceptics. Irkutsk State University (ISU) has had such a program for more than 25 years. Although the program does not go as smoothly as one would hope because of some political, financial and other issues; it brings encouraging results for further improvement and dynamic development.

### Background

The Dual Degree program in Management Studies between Irkutsk State University and University of Maryland University College (UMUC) was launched in 1991. At first, it was delivered by a group of American professors in different disciplines. Well-thought-out and thoroughly pre-

pared, the program seemed unique and realistic enough to be implemented as it had been originally performed in the USA. However, cultural background differences between teachers and students, and the peculiarities of the approaches to teaching posed some difficulties. There were a lot of misunderstanding at the beginning, often due to different cultural behavior and language patterns in communication. It took both ISU students and teachers, and American professors a while to adjust to each other's academic culture.

Cooperative spirit of Russian and American professors, and students' high motivation helped all of us cope with some serious academic challenges, including academic writing. This discipline as a separate subject had not been taught either in high school or even in the university. Moreover, in Russia we had a tendency to teach students what to write about but not how to do it appropriately. As a result, American professors did not know how to correct students' works in management, statistics, and other disciplines. Students' papers earned many commentaries like "foggy, too wordy, makes no sense, inappropriate grammar structure, no logical connectors to make sense," etc. The students, who were well trained in mathematics and other sciences in Russian high schools, had very little experience in writing in English. They did not understand why their grades were so low; in fact, their knowledge of all these disciplines was estimated highly through oral presentations of the material.

The students' dissatisfaction and bargaining for the grades became a dramatic turning point for the program. The administration of both universities took that problem seriously, and after detailed discussions and negotiations, some Russian teachers of English were trained at Maryland University so that they could provide writing support to students. Observation of American programs in academic writing, class visits, and discussions with those who conducted other classes than English contributed to the realization that academic writing should be considered as a key component of academic literacy in general. After the retraining, a few Russian teachers of English started working for the American part of the program, teaching Introduction to Academic Writing 101 and Research Writing 291. Later a Russian discipline instructor, who had spent half a year at UMUC as a visiting professor, started working for the American part of the program on a regular basis.

## Syllabus Changes

A survey of ISU Management majors showed that in addition to limited English language proficiency, which needed to be upgraded to intermediate and advanced level, our students had pretty vague awareness of what academic writing as an independent discipline was. The students faced such problems as lack of experience to collect, analyze, and organize materials; compare various authors' points of view and synthesize information avoiding plagiarism; express personal opinion in an appropriate academic style; summarize and draw conclusions in accordance with the required academic genre. Therefore, the task of how to

change the students' erroneous opinion that knowledge of grammatical tenses would lead them to academic success became the priority for us, teachers of English and moderators of the program. We decided to create a new English syllabus with a focus on academic skills and to introduce Academic Writing as a new discipline. We started changes with the first year, which helped students improve their academic skills through English language classes before enrolling in the dual degree program.

Firstly, we crucially changed the approach to teaching grammar and mainly focused it on syntax. We analyzed typical syntactic structures in academic texts from different disciplines taught on the American program, e.g., Management, Leadership, Organizational Behavior, etc. Then we compiled a series of exercises of different types. Paragraph writing became one of the main tasks in grammar classes.

Secondly, we gave a lot of time to academic essay writing, which included discussing different essay types and their peculiarities, writing, and rewriting. Only repeated practice with the teacher's detailed feedback on each piece of writing helped advance students' writing skills. No doubt, the process of writing for both students and teachers is time-consuming, but providing individual feedback plays a vital role. Another popular form of American academic writing preparation – journal writing without the teacher's grades – did not work in the Russian context. That is where the difference of cultural background lies. Russian students got used to having all their papers checked and analyzed by the instructor.

Thirdly, we cooperated with American professors and double-checked students' essays together to analyze different types of mistakes from a cultural perspective. American professors, in particular, turned our attention to wordiness and a chaotic way of organizing ideas. It is interesting to recollect the situation when one American professor explained to our students how to organize their thoughts using a simple pragmatic model: Introduction, First..., Second..., and Finally. "I don't want to penetrate into your deep Russian souls, make everything simple and clear. Be precise." These joint efforts helped not only our students to improve their writing skills, but also helped Russian teachers to better understand the expectations of foreign colleagues.

## New Perspectives

The joint program with the American University has been changing from year to year but Academic Writing requirements are becoming even stricter. Now all disciplines within the American program are delivered online, we have to teach our students not only how to write different types of essays, but also a great number of other academic genres such as Response/Reaction, Summary, Analysis, and Persuasive Argument, most of which belonged to oral communication classes when American professors taught students in class. In the context of online education, academic writing skills are becoming even more important



than they used to be when a team of American professors communicated with students face to face in class. As mastering academic writing skills is crucial for students' success, Maryland University added one more course of writing for Russian students, Critical Thinking Writing, which gives us new challenges to cope with.

In our case, this joint program experiment proved the idea that an international academic dual program is a reality, and that mastering academic literacy, especially academic writing proficiency, is strongly needed to become successful in the international university community.

## Looking for a Writing Researcher? Look for an Instructor with Academic English

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### Introduction

In Russia, there is an urgent need in researchers who have a sufficient level of academic literacy to communicate their ideas worldwide. Recent publications in top education journals are devoted to various solutions regarding training young faculty in academic writing. They highlight the situation with academic writing centers, focus on specific genre requirements, and update the aims and the contents of academic writing (AW) courses syllabi [1; 2]. A limited number of articles analyze the roots of low academic language proficiency in English. Researchers conclude that no educational standards in Russia include the requirements of academic language proficiency [3].

As a teacher training university, we may further state that standards do not specify the requirements for academic literacy and competency in EAP (English for Academic Purposes) of would-be language instructors as well. The situation is probably unique, as in the Russian system of higher education, academic writing is not compulsory for teacher training programs. However, high demand in writing researchers tends to influence the system of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher training, which introduces a number of academic English courses as optional ones.

At Samara Branch of Moscow City University, we have been teaching academic writing as a course for 14 years. It should be assumed that we do not train students for tutoring at academic writing centers. Our primary aim is to prepare students for teaching at higher education institutions. Our target audience is bachelor students aiming for a teaching career. Obviously, to fit into the modern educational context, language students need additional training in academic English, in academic writing in English and in methods of teaching academic writing.

It is known that adaptation of AW courses to specific students' needs may increase their efficiency. Thus, AW syllabus should reflect unique teaching aims, contents, and adequate techniques. In this article, each aspect of professional training will be gradually explored.

### Course Aims Analysis

Well begun is half done. To organize a productive beginning of the course, students are generally asked to list their expectations and share their needs in academic language in one paragraph. The paragraph provides both the initial practice in academic writing for students and a diagnostic test of students' needs for the instructor. While analyzing students' needs, it was found out that before the course started in groups of language students (Table 1), there was a significant gap between personal and professional goals.

**Table 1.** Comparative analysis of students' needs.

Target areas noted by students	Students specializing in translation / linguistics	Students specializing in foreign language teaching
Overall language competence	56 %	32 %
Academic language competence	36 %	32 %
Professional needs (academic language for further career)	8 %	36 %

The majority of linguistics students express more interest in language practice: 92% perceive AW course as an opportunity to advance their language competence. Very few of them – only 8% – intend to apply academic writing in their career. The number of would-be teachers intending to employ the specific knowledge and skills in their teaching-oriented or science-oriented career paths is 4 times higher: 36% compared to 8% of linguistics students. Future teachers are already more professionally motivated from the very beginning. Additionally, they are rather adequate in perceiving their professional prospects in academic language area.

## Contents of AW Course for Instructors

Differences in student needs further influence the syllabus structure. Traditionally, non-linguistics students, who do not generally have extensive practice of foreign language, require much focus on practical language use, for instance, exercises for developing a formal writing style, activities to practice linking words, hedging expressions or intensifying expressions, punctuation exercises, etc. Since this audience hardly realizes further application of academic language knowledge beyond research in professional sphere, it is essential to add to the course special sections examining and illustrating the use of some universal academic writing

skills in study and professional life, i.e., structuring clear texts, making presentations, writing and corresponding in English, editing with one's target audience in mind, etc.

On the contrary, students specializing in methods of foreign language teaching are ready to apply the gained knowledge in their teaching career. Consequently, they primarily analyze tasks they do from another perspective. First of all, they analyze methods and techniques of teaching writing as future teachers. Secondly, they train writing skills as writers. They tend to reflect deeper on the process of writing, mistakes it involves, and ways to reduce mistakes. Variations in AW course design are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Course content adaptation.

Name of the course	The course outline
Academic Writing (for non-linguistics students)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Get acquainted with academic writing</li><li>2. Develop your style of writing</li><li>3. Structure your ideas in a linear way</li><li>4. Use academic writing in study and professional life</li><li>5. Develop verbal presentation skills through speech writing</li></ol>
Socio-cultural Peculiarities of Academic Writing (for students specializing in foreign language teaching)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Writing culture in the modern world</li><li>2. Socio-cultural peculiarities of academic writing in English</li><li>3. Argumentative texts. Structuring an argument in Russian and English rhetorical cultures</li><li>4. Writing process: from brainstorming to editing. Ways to minimize mistakes at different stages of a writing process</li><li>5. Studying different genres of academic writing</li><li>6. Reflection on methods, materials and tasks to teach writing [4]</li></ol>

## Teaching Strategies and Techniques

Several differences in student motivation and course expectations certainly cause changes in the content. However, some common landmarks remain for both target groups. Teaching experience in Russia reveals that besides the universal subject knowledge, i.e., general requirements to academic writing, we also need to use two basic strategies: cross-cultural comparison of what is taught about writing in English and reflection on the goals students set and the outcomes they may demonstrate eventually. In this respect, the course generally opens with writing a paragraph Why I Need to Take Academic Writing Course and finishes with a Report on the Course Completion. Within the course students are able to analyze numerous model texts under the teacher's guidance or with the help of checklists that a) help students focus on certain text aspects and b) stimulate self-development, leading from unconscious to conscious learning.

As far as teaching strategies concerned, it is worth mentioning that students of different specializations tend to have opposite views on their autonomous work organized

by the teacher. Generally, a balanced teaching approach combines work on genre-specific forms with activities that develop ideas for further writing. In this way learning a new genre may be organized around a text, including topic discussion and genre conventions analysis. Surprisingly, students turn to perceive these two types of material in different ways. Research-oriented students tend to focus on the content, discuss the topic with more enthusiasm, generate new ideas, and search for some factual information on the topic. In the case of "research-oriented reading" [5], text is primarily a source of information. As a result, the instructor tries twice harder to bring genre conventions to students while the content causes little problem to them.

Future teachers also practice another type of reading that is called "teacher-oriented" [5]. It is based on a more thorough examination of instructions, reflection on logic of activities before, while and after reading, interest in text type rather than text content. Working with such students, the teacher keeps in mind that additional information sources are required, that generating ideas is more difficult for such students, and that they tend to be more passive in brainstorming and searching for arguments.

Another striking difference lies in the way students weigh the role of the teacher and their group mates in the learning process. Research-oriented students are more reluctant to participate in peer correction activities. They prefer the final assessment to be done by the instructor. Thus, the teacher should be prepared for students demanding a final comment both in class and out of class. Future teachers, on the contrary, are more inclined to treat their peers' help with respect. They trust peer comments and use them for further action. This trend may be explained by the fact that during their teaching practice, they partly adapt to a teaching position and respect their peers as colleagues as well.

## Conclusion

Teaching academic writing at a university, outside the framework of a writing center, involves intensive work with a large group of students at a time. As a result, teaching AW for bachelor students may consist of (1) teaching multi-level students simultaneously; (2) teaching "non-academic" students, i.e., students who may still have no particular goals in writing in Academic English; (3) teaching students with various professional perspectives, i.e., research-oriented and teaching-oriented students.

Teaching academic writing could be optimized by adapting the contents and teaching strategies to students' needs. In order to train academic writing teachers, it is reasonable to balance genre approach with writing process approach during classes. Taking future teachers through the whole journey of text creation, we should expose them to the backstage of writing process and teacher's craft. Teaching-oriented students should experience writing challenges to feel the nature of their future learners' mistakes. We should also couple writing practice with the theory of how writing teaching could be organized. It allows to pay attention to various writing aspects along with getting explanations for the strategies, materials and possible techniques that may assist writers at work. We should simulate teaching situations through arranging pair work and group work with guidelines and checklists and reflection activities. It could be productive to implement various interaction patterns in writing classes. For instance, some students are possibly not ready to perceive peer work as a reliable way of learning. In this case teachers would have to rearrange the activities to consult students individually within the class work. For the benefit of further teaching practice, students should experience varied forms of work, interaction, and feedback.

Everything future teachers try in writing classes could be regarded as a model for their teaching careers as they belong to the "non-academic" generation and have possibly had no academic writing experience. Therefore, teaching future instructors obviously requires careful selection of teaching materials and teaching techniques. Still, proper results can be obtained by instructors who have mastered general methods of teaching academic writing alongside with specific strategies of teaching Russian students.

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## Foreign Language Use by the Russian Academia

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*The limits of my language  
are the limits of my world.*

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Inevitably, the role of a foreign language at universities is becoming more and more important in the globalizing world. Faculty's linguistic skills mean a lot for universities because of the need to compete for foreign students and academics and because of the competition on the global research market. Foreign language proficiency helps academics expand their opportunities, shift from a local



academic community to the global one, and therefore enjoy greater academic freedom. Foreign language proficiency allows direct communication with the international research community, it helps expand the pool of potential co-authors, spread one's ideas and, of course, closely follow the news of global science, which, in its turn, helps one communicate cutting-edge ideas to one's students. Moreover, knowing a foreign language helps a scholar with finding research funds and improves his or her opportunities on the international academic market. Therefore, foreign language proficiency is becoming more and more relevant at both the institutional and the individual levels.

English is commonly accepted as the language of international science [2; 3; 8]. English gained substantial weight in the middle of the 20th century, but its position had not always been the same. In the 19th century, German was the main language of science, while before that a major role had belonged to French.

In the Soviet times, the Russian language played a considerable role in global science. In 1965 – 1988, Russian was outperformed only by English in terms of abstracts in relevant scientific databases [1] in such areas as maths, biology, and chemistry [4]. The share and number of English-language abstracts grew significantly over the same period. In many other disciplines, Russian shared the second place with three other languages: French, German, and Japanese. Nevertheless, Soviet science was in a way isolated. In the USSR, international publications were actually part of state policy rather than individual researchers' decisions. It was the organizations who would decide which articles and monographs should be translated. Mir Publishers was responsible for translating academic literature from Russian into other languages and also for translating selected foreign publications for the Russian audience. This was done by professional translators, who could simply leave some important scientific ideas out of the final text. There was a substantial delay in learning about the achievements of foreign colleagues, which is evident in the case of information science: for example, Soviet mathematician Kolmogorov re-discovered some of Shannon's results [9].

The current situation differs drastically from the Soviet times. Now it is primarily up to researchers themselves to define their level of participation in the international academic community with due regard to the incentives offered by their respective institutions. In order to integrate into the global academic community, a researcher has to know English. Studies [5; 6; 7] show that the idea of English proficiency as an important requirement for career progress is becoming more and more widespread among Russian faculty.

The HSE Monitoring of Education Markets and Organizations helps us trace the dynamics of foreign language use by university faculty over the past decade (2006 – 2017). We have excluded foreign language teachers and faculty working at private higher education institutions, and have analyzed how the rest of the respondents use foreign languages both for teaching and research.

The results show a structural shift in foreign language proficiency among faculty. The share of those who admitted they could not speak a foreign language has dropped from 6-8% in 2006 – 2007 to 3% in 2016 – 2017, especially among those above 35 years of age. At the same time, the share of faculty who believe their foreign language proficiency is above average has dropped even more dramatically: from 30% to 22%. Young faculty members are significantly more likely to think highly of their language proficiency; this was the case both in 2006 – 2007 and in 2016 – 2017. The share of faculty who realize that they need additional foreign language training has grown, too: from 51% in 2006 to 60% in 2016. This shows that faculty are aware of the importance of foreign languages.

The respondents have started using English more often both in teaching and research. There are nearly no statistical differences in foreign language use among different age cohorts.

Faculty in Russia use foreign and research publications more often in order to prepare for classes. In 2017, 16.5% of the respondents reported using foreign textbooks as opposed to 11.5% in 2006 – 2007. There has been an even bigger rise in the use of foreign academic literature: from 17% to 24%. However, there is little change in the number of faculty who teach in English. In 2012 – 2017, their share fluctuated between 6% and 8%.

When it comes to using English for research, changes can only be observed with respect to a limited number of skills. We have not noticed any changes in terms of oral communication: the share of faculty who gave presentations in English at conferences or workshops remained around 7-9% in 2012 – 2017. The share of those who happened to have moderated academic events in English was even lower: only 3% over the whole period.

Reading foreign academic literature is relatively common, but in 2012 – 2017 only 38-40% of the respondents did so. There are, however, some age disparities: in 2017, young faculty read foreign academic literature more often than their older colleagues. Nevertheless, in 2007 – 2010, the share of faculty who used foreign literature for their own research increased from 29% to 34.5%.

The main linguistic skill that has improved over the past decade is writing: the share of faculty who wrote publishable articles in foreign languages grew from 21% in 2012 to 28% in 2017. The share of those who actually had publications in international journals rose, too: from 11% in 2014 to 14% in 2017. At the same time, the share of faculty acting as academic reviewers in foreign languages remained around 3-4% in 2012 – 2017.

Therefore, we can confirm that Russian faculty's structure of foreign language proficiency has indeed sustained significant changes under the influence of the new environment. So far, passive language proficiency needed for communication with the international academic community has been developing better than other skills. We can see that faculty now more often use what they have learnt from foreign textbooks and academic publications, but the results

of the survey do not allow us to understand whether the respondents have been reading foreign publications in the original or in the Russian translation. There are some positive changes in terms of writing skills, too, but not in the sphere of conversational skills. Still, bearing in mind that young faculty are becoming more active when it comes to foreign language use, we can hope that Russian faculty will eventually better integrate into the international academic community. We see the need for special language courses that would be aimed at improving faculty's linguistic skills and that would help them better communicate with international colleagues.

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# Looking Behind the Writing: “Cultural” Difficulties Facing Novice Postgraduate Second-Language (L2) Writers in English

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To the untrained eye, the main difficulties that international students face are simply to do with language. However, my nine years of experience as the Director of Academic Development & Training for International Students at the University of Cambridge has shown me that whilst these difficulties may seem to manifest themselves as linguistic, the root cause is usually far more a lack of awareness of the expectations of written academic English within their discipline.

For the first couple of years I grappled with students' writing whose first language was not English, aware that the weaknesses of their texts were not simply linguistic in nature. It was clear to me that in order to assist the student in putting it right, we needed to look beyond the sentence, paragraph, even section level and work with their approach to the whole text. It was largely through trial and error that I happened upon a notion that finally provided me with an insight as to what might actually be going on in their writing, namely contrastive rhetoric. In 1966, the American Applied Linguist, Robert B. Kaplan, wrote in his now seminal article that

[a] fallacy of some repute and some duration is the one which assumes that because a student can write an adequate essay in his native language, he can necessarily write an adequate essay in a second language. [...] Foreign students who have mastered syntactic structures have still demonstrated inability to compose adequate themes, term papers, theses and dissertations. [...] The foreign-student paper is out of focus because the foreign student is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native reader. [5: 13]

That the difficulties that the students were facing may lie far more in the “cultural differences in the nature of rhetoric” [5: 11] with rhetoric basically concerned with “factors of analysis, data gathering, interpretation and synthesis” [8: X], was the insight I had been looking for.

Whilst cross-linguistic transfer is a complex phenomenon

in second language acquisition [9], as one's proficiency and literacy in a second language increases, within the context of postgraduate study, it has been my experience that the nature of this transfer changes – from linguistic to, what I have termed, rhetorical transfer; the interferences caused between the target language and the speaker's first language in intercultural communication situations due to the fact that the rhetorical patterns of a language are unique, culturally-coded phenomena [5]. This is most pronounced in writing since writing is a cultural phenomenon [4], whilst at the same time being a challenging cognitive activity, and this latter even more so at postgraduate level where the student is at the apex of the revised taxonomy of Bloom's [3] cognitive learning domains [1], where they are essentially "creating knowledge." Since cultures, both national and disciplinary, do not write using the same assumptions, strategies and goals, developing arguments is a culturally embedded topic. It is therefore necessary for students to have an understanding of how this knowledge construction and representation may be different, not only in different disciplines, but also in different linguistic cultures.

Within the UK context the problem seems to be compounded by the fact that despite the growing internationalization of and widening participation at UK universities, issues of "language" – and for this read "writing" in particular – are often marginalized. As Turner notes, there seems to exist a "traditional academic pedagogy, or rather non-pedagogy, of osmosis" [10: 21] when it comes to supporting the development of written academic articulacy, whilst Andrews contends that "it is assumed that something magical will happen in the student's mind and that it will be expressed in perfect argumentational form in writing submitted for assessment" [2: 197]. Even first-language speakers of English would find this model for the acquisition of postgraduate-level writing skills a challenge, and so it almost goes without saying that those for whom it is a second language, this acquisition is all the more daunting.

So, for the past six years or so Kaplan's notions of the cultural influence on rhetoric, and by extension, argumentation, have informed my teaching. In discussing with students his now infamous "doodles" [6: 9] – where he graphically represented the movement of argument across a paragraph written in English by university students whose first language was not English – I get them to think behind the writing process. I have found that this approach has been beneficial both to second- as well as first-language speakers of English, as it prompts them to consider the factors at play behind writing at this level – both cognitively in terms of their thinking as well as representationally in terms of how this is consequently expressed in writing.

Yet whilst providing a theoretical notion that provides a context to explain the difficulties that L2 students face when writing in English, on a practical level, there is still much that remains unanswered. Many of those who have taken up the contrastive rhetoric baton have explored how

the rhetoric of other languages may be different linguistically to that of English. But none have provided a response to Kaplan's comment in his 1966 paper, namely that the issues that he saw in the L2 papers in English were due to the fact that they were employing a rhetoric and sequence of thought that violated the expectations of the native reader. What are these expectations of the native reader? Where have they come from? And, more importantly, how can the (L2) student adopt them?

As Kaplan himself later noted, "there is a strong probability that the way in which written text is organized is influenced by cultural features more powerful than any possible language universals" [7: 42]. This is true both for other languages as well as it is for English. For example, with respect to first language (L1) Russian speakers, my experience has been that their argumentational structure when writing in English tends to be arguably too content-rich and at times digressive in nature. But as Kaplan also noted, such culturally based organizational schemes are "made manifest in the product; while they are perceptible in the process, they are so far below the level of consciousness that it may be difficult to deal with them" [7: 41 – 42]. I contend, however, that it is only by uncovering these that a coherent and pedagogically useful support framework for the development of written articulacy can be devised, both for those whose rhetorical heritage is not English as well as for those whose it is but who are, for whatever reason, novices in this particular trade. And it is this area that I am currently researching with academics and postgraduates at the University of Cambridge, and trialling in discussion with several Russian universities, both to better inform my pedagogical paradigm as well as to hopefully inform their own EMI provision.

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## Supporting Academic Writing for Non-Native Speakers of English: Piloting a Model for Academic Socialization at the University of Portsmouth

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### Interculturality

There is very little literature about how Russian students cope in the UK. Most studies written date back to the turn of the 21st century. A recent insightful account is given by Shkvorchenko in 2017 in the *International Student Experience Journal*. She offers a student perspective on the distinctions between essay writing in the Russian and UK context, the former being based on traditional literary studies, the latter requiring analysis of sources and positioning of the writer's perspective. Shkvorchenko

recalls initially feeling very frustrated about the nuances that she needed to access, understand and apply to her own work. She soon, however, made sense of a number of discourse conventions to make her writing “truly academic” and develop a clear(er) argument [1]. Certain rhetorical similarities between Russian and other cultures, like Chinese, can be observed in respect to cultural difference to English.

The academic field that concerns itself with differing writing styles in different cultures is called contrastive rhetoric. It is highly interdisciplinary in that it draws on findings from applied and text linguistics, rhetoric, discourse analysis, literacy and translation studies. Writing is socially constructed and anchored in the cultural, rhetorical and linguistic traditions of the language we grow up in [2]. It lies at the heart of a skills set required for university study. People from diverse backgrounds are expected to initially struggle with what is expected. However, “academic” writing is nobody's first language! Writing tutors need to be aware of the differences in the styles, conventions and contexts their students come from and work in. Only then can they successfully attempt to facilitate instructions towards the target language. For students it is common to start almost every writing task at a stage of confusion. Academic writing has to be contextually acquired; only then can a text be produced for a target audience and convey meaning.

Our international students need to apply an array of study skills, ranging from clarifying a brief, managing time, identifying appropriate reading sources, referencing, paraphrasing, redrafting. Demands are high and multiplied when students study in another language. They want to settle in fast to accommodate the requirements of the host culture. However, the new academic system is “a new game with new rules,” and students need to decode these rules first [3]. All this could lead to various degrees of culture shock which we aim to alleviate.

### Intervention

The Faculty of Creative and Cultural Industries is proud to have attracted a number of Bulgarian, Romanian, Lithuanian students, a lot of whom share Russian as a second common language. The as yet small number of students from Russia will hopefully increase in the near future. Our pilot study is aimed at a group of Chinese 2nd year direct entry students studying Film Production, who have been identified as most in need of support at the stage of entry. Once the pilot is fully functional, there are plans to roll out the scheme to include other European and overseas students. Social learning principles advise it is always favorable to mix groups to aim at quicker socialization and acculturation. Direct entry students not only struggle to catch up with their fellow discipline students but, more so, with the writing culture of the host country. This clash of cultures is expected but also brings challenges for our teaching practice. Of particular interest here is how students actively interpret new ma-

terial in a new context, appropriate it and create required assessment pieces.

A collaborative peer assisted intervention was set up to enhance an existing series of face-to-face sessions with a new e-learning tool. The general aim is to support a quicker integration into the new paradigm, combat isolation and resolve misunderstandings. Students are encouraged to participate and develop an increasing understanding of the connection between course content and assessment and to scaffold their written assignments. "Students need to learn how to negotiate the context of writing by actually experiencing the process [...] involving a discourse community [...] and allow the writer to see [...] how other people approach the same task [4]."

The following flow chart was devised containing key elements:

[1] Induction > [2] skills audit > [3] group selection > [4] group moodle test > [5] assessment task analysis > [6] interpretation of criteria / translation > [7] identification of resources > [8] skills required > task management grid > [9] writing development > [10] sharing box > think-pair-share > [11] discussion & creation of scaffolded answers > [12] finish individual assignments.

The last step is carried out by students on an individual basis to meet the requirements of the assignment. Objectives are set as follows (related to stages):

- orientation and setting learning goals [1, 2, 3];
- preparing learning activities [5, 6, 7, 8];
- carrying out learning activities [9, 10, 11];
- giving feedback [5 – 11];
- clarifying, creating scaffold for assignment [11];
- finishing individual task(s) to deadline [12];
- evaluation.

A close integration of learning goals and activities as well as feedback at strategic points is offered. The students are engaged in an asynchronously threaded discussion in small groups of three or four. I am facilitating this e-learning process by encouraging questions, guiding and signposting. Students need to comprehend what is valued in the new culture and how to scaffold their own work.

Experiences from the first year show the implementation takes up much more time than initially planned. There were teething problems with students using different devices – Google sites cannot be accessed in the same way on mobile phones for instance. Due to timetable restrictions at set up stage and technical issues student engagement so far is disappointing. The participation in this unassessed intervention is under par and needs to be readdressed. The best way forward in the new academic year will be to work in closer cooperation with subject tutors and offer a tighter structure for the students with measurable interim results.

## English as Lingua Franca Academic (ELFA) Influences

Language contact leads inevitably to language change. Perspectives of the dominant native versus non-native model raise a number of questions when it comes to student assessment. Should we accommodate more what international students bring into the discourse, just as we have to do for students with learning differences? To what extent will non-standard English guide and influence ELFA in the future? ELFA has become a vibrant field of study with large corpora of texts helping researchers to identify what is acceptable in terms of intelligibility [5]. Some argue English already moved from being a "learner language" to becoming a "user language."

Finally, due to the increasing internationalization of academic discourses, functionality needs to be addressed in Writing Centers, academic skills sessions and e-learning provisions worldwide. With growing international audiences, it will be interesting to see whether insisting on linguistic imperialism and the Anglo-Western style will remain the dominant model. Some rethinking is sought for the future to adapt a shared discourse community which includes Russian students and researchers. The pressure of conforming to "old norms" needs to be released for writers and readers alike. Let us embrace cultural and linguistic diversity!

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This article has also been overall informed by:

Xing, M., Wang, J. and Spencer, K. (2008) Raising Students' awareness of cross-cultural contrastive rhetoric in English writing via an e-learning course. Language Learning & Technolog. N. 12 (2). P. 71 – 93.

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# What is Your Relationship with English?

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*Until you make the unconscious conscious,  
it will direct your life and you will call it fate.*

Carl Jung

## Introduction

In addition to traditional reasons for learning English: interest in foreign languages and cultures, meeting new people, travelling, enjoying literature, or giving your brain a boost, Russian academics now perceive English as a survival tool for pursuing a successful career in academia. The contract of employment at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) implies instrumental use of the language for research and international collaboration. However, coping with the pressure to publish in English is obviously not an easy task for multilingual writers.

The HSE Academic Writing Center (AWC) [1] decided to analyze how prospective young researchers perceived English. In 2018, we launched a diagnostic module Finding Your Route to Research Writing, which aimed to learn about researchers' previous experience of learning English and their learning preferences. One of the creative activities of the Module was "My Metaphor of Learning English," which involved drawing a metaphor and presenting it to the peers with the focus on teacher and learner roles, and the learning process. It is known that metaphorical concepts govern our perceptions and actions without our noticing them [2]. We need to unveil them to set new goals and develop. Assuming that metaphors can serve as "an important instrument of analysis" [3] of experiences and can also help to define the way people act and plan their learning strategies, we were interested in researchers' relationship with English. This information is important for making AWC services efficient.

## Target Group

Unlike many other Russian universities, the HSE can boast a good level of English proficiency among its researchers: 76% of a high-potential research team of the university faculty (with the total number of 106) demonstrated B2 level (according to CEFR) and above. They are a diverse group of teachers and researchers, who differ in language training background, particular language needs, and dis-

cipline areas. They are all, however, very motivated, ambitious, and career-oriented. They challenged themselves to apply for the talent pool program [4], supported by the university. This program aims to strengthen the HSE academic culture and form a new generation of high achievers. For this group, publications in English are crucial for getting financial bonuses from the university. They are primary clients of AWC, so we strive to find ways to assist them in their writing journeys.

## Metaphors They Live By

The participants' metaphors provided a rich source for reflection and analysis. The images can fall into several basic categories according to the concepts they conveyed (Table 1).

Table 1. Metaphor categories.

Category	Examples of metaphors
fight, struggle	dense trinkets of bushes, struggling with waves, labyrinth, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, walking on a tightrope
sports, competition	playing ball games, badminton, weight lifting
cooperation, teamwork	theatre, excursion planned together with a guide and a tourist, cooking, supplying a factory, archeological dig
growth	gardening, fish farming, construction building
road, motion	flight into space, sea voyage, driving, walking, climbing a wall / mountain / ladder, crossing a bridge
systems, networks	solar system, neuron networks, molecule structure

Almost half of the metaphors represent motion and growth, which is interpreted by Jungian analysts as "dynamic regeneration," "life's journey, path to individuation," and "transition from one state to another." [5] Learning process is often associated with competitiveness, e.g., crossing a narrow bridge together with a crowd of people. Interestingly, many growth images accentuate that learning English is a never-ending process and that the participants are in dynamics.

There are positive images that highlight that the process brings enjoyment and pleasure (a family stroll, basking in the sun). Although this process may also involve hard



work (climbing, construction building), ultimately, the efforts will be paid: they will bring career move (flight into space – per aspera ad astra), benefits (delicious food), opportunities to communicate (opened window /door, packed suitcase). Some learners refer to their professional domains and present discipline-oriented metaphors, underlining their belonging to a group, e.g., solar system, neuron networks, matrix, algorithms, etc.

Predictably, many metaphors of Russian learners entail that learning the language outside the language environment presents certain difficulties. The majority of the images, unfortunately, are associated with obstacles and risks to life: winding through dense trinkets of bushes, walking on a tightrope above an abyss, breathing under water, jumping over the fire, etc. Some participants, conceptualizing themselves as language failures, compared the process of learning English with a jail imprisonment, a sinking ship, or swimming among sharks. Such negative perceptions may emerge from learners' emotionally unpleasant experience. Therefore, we see it as a challenge to make AWC a learner-friendly space for such clients.

If we look at the metaphors from the point of view of teacher and learner roles, the analysis shows that in two-thirds of images there is no teacher at all. Such images emphasize that the whole environment may serve as the teacher (restaurant, walk in the forest). This demonstrates a mature attitude to learning as the primary responsibility of the person himself. In some cases, the respondents have highlighted collaboration between the learner and the teacher (supplying a factory, cooking together), in which the teacher takes the role of a facilitator or advisor (beach lifeguard). However, some people still give a leading role to the teacher as a guru, Mr. Know-all (the sun, gardener, farmer, sports coach, designer) and see themselves as passive but obedient recipients of the information.

For the Center, this activity not only helped to understand our audience as individual persons, but also allowed to assess the researchers' speaking skills. The participants' performance shows that the majority of this high-potential faculty group are capable of producing academic texts (both orally and in writing). However, they need focused training on certain aspects of academic communication: text coherence and cohesion, organization of ideas, stating an argument clearly, formal text characteristics, and academic conventions in English. These aspects will be the foci of the Center's courses and seminars.

## Conclusions

This cognitively challenging task allowed the researchers to come out of the comfort zone and look inside, for some people for the first time. As many participants noted, the journey of making "the unconscious conscious" was an exciting experience. The uncovering of their relationship with English will definitely be an impetus for restructuring their views on their further language development.

## References and Notes

- [1] The HSE Academic Writing Center was established in 2011. The Center provides educational services to help researchers master their academic writing and public speaking skills via courses and workshops; it also offers individual consultations on draft papers. To better cater for the needs of the HSE researchers, AWC regularly conducts surveys and organizes adaptation seminars.
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*Higher Education in Russia and Beyond (HERB)* is a quarterly informational journal that has been published by the National Research University Higher School of Economics since 2014. HERB is intended to illuminate the transformation process of higher education institutions in Russia and countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The journal seeks to voice multiple-aspect opinions about current challenges and trends in higher education and share examples of the best local practices.

Our audience represents a wide international community of scholars and professionals in the field of higher education worldwide. The project is implemented as part of cooperation agreement between the Higher School of Economics and the Boston College Center of International Higher Education.

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