

Multilingual Education

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Łukasz Salski · Dumitru Tucan *Editors*

# University Writing in Central and Eastern Europe: Tradition, Transition, and Innovation

 Springer

# Multilingual Education

Volume 29

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Otto Kruse • Łukasz Salski • Dumitru Tucan  
Editors

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# Foreword

Eastern Europe is home to university traditions that date back, in several countries, more than 250 years. However, the changes over the last 25 years to universities, and to the nations they serve, have been enormous and revolutionary. The revolutions in higher education that accompanied the political ones, combined with the Bologna Process begun almost 20 years ago, have inspired the creation of a region-wide effort to support student and faculty writing—itsself a kind of revolution.

I come from the USA, where vernacular writing instruction has been part of the university curriculum for many years, but for most of that history, it was concerned with what John Harbord (Chapter “[A European Model for Writing Support](#)”) aptly calls “hygiene factors,” issues of spelling, grammar, usage, and format (writing centers in the USA were for decades called “writing hospitals”). It is only in the last 40 years that we have been concerned with HOCs (high-order concerns) as well as LOCs (low-order concerns).

We in the USA are only now reaching the point where higher education institutions are looking at what Camelia Moraru and colleagues call in chapter “[Academic Writing at Babeş-Bolyai University. A Case Study](#)” the “organizational variables and mechanisms that could lead to the development of specific academic writing programs as part of a comprehensive institutional research strategy,” and focus on the relationship between faculty and writing support, where ultimately the battle will be won or lost, as Harbord suggests.

So we in the USA have much to learn from the experience and research of other education systems and other regions, particularly from those where the academic writing efforts are being forged in the crucible of intense institutional and social change, as in Eastern Europe. I was grateful to briefly be part of the COST project Learning to Write Effectively (which produced tools used by several chapters in this volume) and visit universities in Macedonia and Romania.

I was able to see first-hand that the LIDHUM project, which produced much of the work presented in this volume, is a model of not only international collaboration but also intercultural learning. These may be regional or national cultures, institutional cultures, or disciplinary cultures learning from and with each other. More deeply, however, it is what Otto Kruse has elsewhere called “writing cultures.”

Writing is central to higher education—and other modern institutions—because it is the tool and medium with which knowledge is not only communicated but also made and remade. Writing, in various practices and traditions, must also be conceived beyond mere models of “writing support,” important as these are.

To understand writing cultures, joint research of the kind displayed in this volume is essential—and unfortunately rare—even in or perhaps especially in systems such as mine where research is established. This volume shows the breadth of methodologies necessary for comprehending writing cultures: textual and rhetorical studies of various kinds drawing on the rich traditions of the region (argument, contrastive, corpus, and so on), questionnaires, ethnographic observation case studies of institutional interventions, and so on. These studies investigate a wide range of phenomena: first-language and second-language writing and undergraduate, postgraduate, and faculty writing.

This book is a step toward creating what Harbord calls a European model for writing support, which in the end will weave together many models from different European contexts. Eastern European researchers are now very much part of that fabric.

Iowa State University  
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David R. Russell

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# Introduction: Understanding Academic Writing in the Context of Central and Eastern European Higher Education



**Claudia Ioana Doroholschi, Dumitru Tucan, Mădălina Chitez,  
and Otto Kruse**

**Abstract** Academic writing in Central and Eastern Europe remains an under-explored area in both teaching and research. While in many Western countries universities have long acknowledged the importance of writing support and research-based teaching implementations, in Eastern and Central Europe student writing has merely been seen as a personal skill that is acquired in school and improved by practice during university studies. Research in academic writing is therefore needed not only to understand this particularly dynamic and varied region, with its changing institutional landscape, but also to understand how to best facilitate or effect positive change. We wish the present collection of studies to be a first step in that direction.

## 1 Rationale of the Book

Academic writing in Central and Eastern Europe remains an under-explored area in both teaching and research. It should not be difficult to understand why this has happened: After the end of communism, the transition to Western norms in higher education has been a slow and strenuous process. While in advanced Western societies

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universities have long acknowledged the importance of writing support and research-based teaching implementations, in Eastern and Central Europe student writing has merely been seen as a personal skill that is acquired in school and improved by practice during university studies.

This assumption has also been the starting point for the three-year research project Literacy Development in the Humanities (LIDHUM), wherein a consortium of three Eastern European universities from Romania, Republic of Macedonia, and Ukraine coordinated by the Department of Applied Linguistics of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Switzerland, aimed at studying and improving the field of literacy education in these countries (see chapter “[Studying and Developing Local Writing Cultures: An Institutional Partnership Project Supporting Transition in Eastern Europe’s Higher Education](#)”). This volume is the result of the research synergies emerging from this project. It includes studies carried out in the frame of the LIDHUM project but expands its focus to other countries, collecting studies by researchers from various Central and Eastern European regions contributing to topics similar to those of the project.

With this collection of articles we hope to initiate discussions on academic writing practices in universities across Central and Eastern Europe. Very little has been published so far on this in the region, and even less empirical research has been done in the countries themselves. The book thus contributes to mapping a territory that has yet to be adequately explored and provides general overviews and initial attempts at research in the area of academic writing that document the growing interest as well as the need to focus on the particular problems in national contexts.

Writing, like all academic work, Russell and Foster (2002) argue, “is situated within complex national, regional, and local environments” (p. 6), and in spite of the influences of globalization, many national and regional influences shape the way writing is performed in educational contexts. Using a geographical specification as a focus for this book is thus justified by the fact that the countries in this region share a geopolitical heritage that tied them for a considerable span of time to the ideological and political sphere of the Soviet Union. Though diverse in their respective cultural backgrounds, during the communist period, the systems of higher education in these countries adopted similar organizational and educational modes of operation. Since the reorganization of the eastern world, they have all encountered similar challenges in implementing international models of higher education and university organization.

This volume should be of interest to all academic writing researchers and writing teachers from these countries as well as to those using writing as a means of teaching and learning at the tertiary level. By focusing on academic writing provision in the post-communist countries in Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe, it also addresses a high number of related aspects to which writing is connected, such as multilingualism, the connections of teaching to research, the discursive nature of academic writing, ways of collaborative learning, and the role of genres for the organization of thought and communication.

Additionally, the book presents several recent initiatives and emerging networks providing possible models for academic writing support in universities in the area. The important role of academic writing in English as an innovative agent in the higher education of the post-communist countries is reflected in the sections which focus on writing in English as a foreign language as well as on the impact of English upon national languages. These sections also clarify challenges to which traditional writing cultures are exposed when complex interactions between writing in national languages and writing in a second language are involved.

## 2 Background: Geography, History, and Higher Education

What is Eastern Europe? What are the countries that can be included in this area? Is this denomination only a geographical one? What are, apart from geography, the perspectives that can connect countries displaying considerably different cultural and institutional backgrounds? Although some of the answers may seem simple at first, a short analysis of the historical meanings associated with “Eastern Europe” could be confusing. This is why we need to clarify briefly the various historical meanings of the phrase and its implicit connection to the countries united under this phrase. We also need to explore the best and most useful perspective on studying academic writing in the context of higher education in the region.

The various definitions of Eastern Europe have changed over time according to specific goals and particular needs for legitimization. In the past couple of centuries, the term has acquired various different types of connotations—historical, geopolitical, cultural, or socioeconomic—which have frequently changed the outline of this entity that is only apparently geographical.

Since the eighteenth century, the idea of Eastern Europe began for Western Europeans to denote the other half of the continent, which was “left behind” by the more civilized and industrialized part of Europe (Armour 2013, p. 2; Frucht 2005, p. IX). This engendered a first connotation of the term, a socio-economic one, which generated ample cultural analyses and historical explanations meant to present the cultural differences between Western Europe and the vast region stretching across the eastern borders of Germany and the western borders of the Russian Empire on one side and the Baltic Sea and the Balkan Peninsula on the other side (see, for instance, Okey 2004, for an analysis of the European history of the last two centuries as a continuous search for modernization, or Berend 2003 and 1986 for an analysis of the socio-economic challenges of Eastern Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth century). In this particular context at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was felt that the term itself needed more subtle clarification, and thus the complementary term “Central Europe” slowly entered social and political discourse, itself used to denote various territories centered in and around present-day Germany and Austria (for example, Partsch 1904; Naumann 1915; see also Schöpflin and Wood 1989). This only partially reduced the negative connotations associated with a great number of the countries in the region (the eastern parts of the Austro-

Hungarian Empire). However, the political and social chaos emerging just before World War II (see Berend 1998) did nothing to improve the West's perception of both Central and Eastern Europe. In fact, this pejorative perception also extended to the concept of Central Europe (Berend 1986).

After the end of World War II, a further geopolitical idea of Eastern Europe (also including Central Europe) came into being: "Communist Europe." The area was constantly caught up in the strategic games of the Cold War and submitted to ideological constraints that succeeded in changing the directions of its economic, social, and institutional development (see, for instance, Judt 2005; Applebaum 2012). After the end of the Cold War, the socio-political perspective on Eastern Europe (again including some of the countries previously associated with the idea of Central Europe) was once again on the agenda during discussions on the potential enlargement of the European Union. At this point, the emphasis had shifted to the need for political and institutional reforms, which were seen as essential for bridging the gap between the two Europes (see Bideleux and Jeffries 1998, especially p. 602–620).

In fact, as noted above, the dominant perspective on Eastern Europe has been related to the socio-economic context, namely to the process of political, social, and institutional modernization. Historically speaking, the countries located in this vast region share a number of features: Their modern organizations are relatively young and they are characterized by an amalgam of cultural influences and by a certain lack of institutional tradition. As a result of the events in the recent history of the region, these countries have experienced a series of metamorphoses of an institutional nature that have prevented the construction of solid institutions and the implementation of organic reforms. If changes did take place, they were often forcibly imposed (see the communization of these countries immediately following World War II) and involved adapting or enforcing an outside model.

For the last 25 years, however, the process of European integration has led these countries along a straight road towards modernization and organic reintegration into the European family. Even though these countries are developing at their own pace, they seem to have a common aim: finding a clear pathway toward institutional modernization. As a discursive sign of this common aim and their new historical destiny, in the last decades "Eastern Europe" has been replaced by the increasingly more popular "Central and Eastern Europe," now used to denote the geographical and cultural area of the so-called "transition countries," i.e., the European countries formerly under Soviet control and now moving from a centrally planned to a market economy (see Berend 2009, Ekiert and Hanson 2003). Many experts concerned with the analysis of educational policies in this region of Europe have also begun to use the latter phrase (for example, Dobbins and Knill 2009). Those who attempt to understand the educational realities of the region seem to have identified the same features: the amalgam of influences and a deficiency in organizational structures, but also a dramatic need for reforms.

Our argument is, therefore, that despite the imperfections, ambiguities, and sometimes pejorative connotations of the phrase "Central and Eastern Europe," and despite the fact that it fails to capture the diversity of the traditions of the various countries in the region, it remains useful as a way of capturing the specificities of a



number of countries that share a range of commonalities in their historical, social, and political backgrounds.

For the practical aim of this book, which is concerned with the practices of academic writing in (Central and) Eastern Europe, acknowledging the shifting geographical borders of the region is less important than acknowledging the imperative need for institutional reform that is common to the countries in the region: Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Macedonia, Hungary, etc. This need has influenced the educational dynamics of the last quarter century and, at the same time, has re-modeled academic writing practices in the region. Research in academic writing is therefore needed not only to understand this particularly dynamic and varied region, with its changing institutional landscape, but also to understand how to best facilitate or effect positive change. We wish the present collection of studies to be a first step in that direction.

### **3 Higher Education Development in Central and Eastern Europe**

In the period after the Fall of Communism, tertiary institutions in Central and Eastern Europe underwent a process of rapid transformation and redefinition, which took place against the backdrop of these countries' individual histories and educational traditions. With a few notable exceptions, university tradition in the region is relatively young, with many of the institutions established in the nineteenth century under the influence of pre-existing models – most notably the Humboldtian model and its Austro-Hungarian version – which were adapted to local needs (see Charle 2004 for a detailed discussion), traditions, and ideologies. Romanian universities, for example, maintained close connections to the French educational system, given the country's Romance heritage (Charle 2004, p. 43). After 1945, the countries in the region underwent a process of radical Sovietization that had dramatic effects on the structure of their tertiary institutions, which were transformed to comply with the requirements of a state-centered planned economy. The Soviet system (rooted in the Napoleonic system and practically incompatible with the Humboldtian background used in most of the region) replaced the local educational systems. As Neave (2011, p. 35–36) shows, the Soviet system was imitated throughout the region to varying extents and differently from one country to another, but it followed a similar philosophy of subordinating universities to the state and to the requirements of the planned economy. This resulted in an emphasis on economy-oriented specializations, changes in the discipline structure of universities (with technical, medical, or agricultural studies often breaking off to form independent “universities”), and a separation between university teaching and research, with the responsibility for research mainly shifting towards specialized academies (Neave 2011, p. 37-39). The old institutions in the region were transformed while new ones quickly became established. In many countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, the

majority of tertiary education institutions were established during this period (Neave 2011, p. 46) and followed the Soviet model.

After the Fall of Communism, following the social, political, and economic transformations in Central and Eastern Europe, higher education institutions also entered a period of redefinition and reform. This once again took different shapes in individual countries but often had very similar purposes: responding to the needs (and constraints) of the newly established market economy, distancing themselves from the Soviet educational model and from state control and (re)gaining their place within Europe. To these post-1990 transformational factors was later added the Bologna Process, which came in as a further vector for change, modernization, and European integration. At present, these transformations are far from being complete and have yielded different models for tertiary institutions in the countries in question. However, they seem to be driving towards convergence along the lines of the Bologna Process and towards the adoption of an American-inspired market-oriented model (see Dobbins and Knill 2009 for a detailed discussion of these transformations in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania).

## 4 Academic Writing in Central and Eastern Europe

Present-day academic writing practices in higher education in the region need to be understood in the context of these historical, political, and economic evolutions. How much writing is done at university and what genres are used and how they are taught varies from one country to another and is partially a reflection of the heritage of different university traditions (German, French, and Slavic). However, the common post-1945 history of these countries has done much to obliterate these differences, leaving each of the Central and Eastern European countries with many of the same institutional weaknesses in the wake of communism (Harbord 2010). This shared history has also resulted in a number of common features in what academic writing is concerned with, as they result from the few existing reports on academic writing in countries in the region.

Firstly, although there are varying amounts of writing undertaken by students at university, the teaching of writing as such is “relatively new” at the university level (Harbord 2010), as is writing as an academic discipline and as an object of scientific inquiry (e.g., Sofianou-Mullen 2016 on Bulgaria; Yakhontova, Kaluzhna, Fityo, Mazin, and Morenets 2016 on Ukraine). Consequently, there has also been little research on academic writing-related topics (Sofianou-Mullen 2016 on Bulgaria; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016 on Romania). Despite the fact that writing has been used for assessment in many Central and Eastern European countries (e.g., Yakhontova et al. 2016 on Ukraine; Sofianou-Mullen 2016 on Bulgaria; Machrzak and Salski 2016 on Poland; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016 on Romania), the ability to produce written text was generally considered to be a matter of talent and intuitive assimilation of models rather than a skill that can be taught, which means that in most higher education institutions in the region there were no specialized writing

courses, no forms of institutional writing support such as writing centers, and no coherent national or institutional policies for writing support. There was also no explicit writing instruction in traditional university settings (with the exception of foreign language departments). Students were supposed to have acquired writing skills intuitively, ideally before entering university, and the responsibility for helping them develop their writing skills belonged to individual instructors or thesis supervisors (for a discussion of these aspects in different national contexts, see Yakhontova et al. 2016 on Ukraine; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016 on Romania; Sofianou-Mullen 2016 on Bulgaria; Machrzak and Salski 2016 on Poland; Čmejrková, 1996 on the Czech Republic). Some authors (Machrzak and Salski 2016; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016) also mention an emphasis on writing as a product rather than process and the fact that writing as a means of assessment is used to reproduce rather than construct knowledge, with students mainly asked to compile sources with little critical thinking (e.g., Sofianou-Mullen 2016; Machrzak and Salski 2016; Yakhontova et al. 2016; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016; Gonnerko-Frej 2014).

Over the last 25 years, the desire for institutional modernization and the political move towards overcoming the gap existing between East and West, but also the general movement towards globalization in academia, have had an impact on the way in which writing is understood and taught in the region, particularly through the influence of Anglo-Saxon models. These have left Central and Eastern European academia in a “state of flux” (Bardi and Mureşan 2014, p. 121). In what writing is concerned with, this means that the diverse existing traditions are changing rapidly. The English language and publication in English are seen as a means of integration into the international community for academics and students alike. As a result, in many countries, forms of writing support have begun to appear at universities in the shape of writing courses. Many of these are in English as L2, but increasingly courses are being offered in the national languages. There are several writing center initiatives, some of them established soon after 1990 in American-style universities (such as the Center for Academic Writing at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, and the Writing Center at the American University in Bulgaria), and more recently further writing center initiatives have begun to appear throughout the region (e.g., in Ukraine, Poland, and Romania), although there is generally little funding available for writing development.

However, there is still a scarcity of research concerning writing and the teaching of writing in Eastern Europe, and there is currently little understanding of how all of these transformational phenomena have affected writing in Eastern European countries, of the individual characteristics of writing in each country within the larger regional context, and of what may be the best means to design writing instruction and institutional policies regarding writing development in the context of the ongoing changes.

One of the attempts at filling that gap is the book that resulted from the COST IS0703 Action entitled “Learning to Write Effectively”: *Exploring European Writing Cultures: Country Reports on Genres, Writing Practices and Languages Used in European Higher Education* (2016), edited by Otto Kruse, Mădălina Chitez,

Brittany Rodriguez, and Montserrat Castelló. This book undertakes a study of writing genres at the tertiary level and provides opportunities for comparison among several European countries, including four in Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine). It is from this book that many of the above observations on writing in the region have been derived. However, the literature on writing with a specific focus on the region is still particularly sparse despite the fact that there has been an increased awareness of the importance of writing. Writing is organically linked to the developmental processes in higher education institutions in many different ways: It is the main means of disseminating research; it is one of the main ways in which students acquire and learn how to construct disciplinary knowledge during all three study cycles, particularly at the master's and doctoral levels; and in some fields, writing is part of professional training. Some of the changes that have occurred in Eastern European education have had significant effects on writing and have created further needs for writing instruction. For instance, as mentioned above, in many Eastern European countries, the Bologna Process is synonymous not only with finding ways to make university systems compatible, but also with the very processes of modernization, European integration, and transnational cooperation. At the same time, however, the adoption of the Bologna Process has entailed certain specific challenges. One of these has been the reduction of the length of bachelor's degrees and the introduction of compulsory bachelor's theses at the end of the first cycle of study, which has meant that in many countries students now have to produce a large piece of written research during their first degree with less time to learn how to do so. It has also brought the master's and doctoral cycles into focus, further highlighting the importance of thesis writing, of writing as a vehicle for original research, and of creating a need for supporting students in these areas. The increase in student mobility has meant that students now need to cope with different educational environments, often in a language that is not their native tongue, and it also suggests that universities should prepare students for writing across different cultures, different writing traditions, and possibly in different languages. As elsewhere, but probably more intensely in Central and Eastern Europe, where internationalization is often perceived as synonymous with progress, there has been pressure for staff to publish internationally (see, for example, Yakhontova et al. 2016 on Ukraine; Borchin and Doroholschi 2016 and Bardi and Mureşan 2014 on Romania; Čmejrková 1996 on the Czech Republic; Petrić 2014 on Serbia), thus creating a need for writing training as part of staff development.

## 5 The Contributions of This Book

Through the collection of these individual studies of different universities in various countries in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, the book will provide an image of current trends, initiatives, and conversations in university writing in the region. There are also several comparative studies or broader overviews that attempt to transcend national boundaries and probe potential connections between

countries. We hope that this volume will not only demonstrate the newly grown educational innovations in the Eastern part of Europe but also connect them with the research agenda of writing and literacy studies.

The book is divided into three main parts; what follows is an overview of the cultural, institutional, and academic contexts of the book and its contributors.

**The first part** discusses models, directions, and several strategies of developing writing support in Central and Eastern Europe.

In the chapter “[A European Model for Writing Support](#),” John Harbord provides a wider framework for the discussion of the specifics of academic writing support in Europe. Analyzing the options available to those teaching academic writing in non-English-speaking countries, the author proposes a European model for writing support that combines existing models in a way that can be adapted to local needs and resources.

In the chapter “[Studying and Developing Local Writing Cultures: An Institutional Partnership Project Supporting Transition in Eastern Europe’s Higher Education](#),” Otto Kruse, Mădălina Chitez, Mira Bekar, Claudia Doroholschi, and Tatyana Yakhontova describe the experience of the LIDHUM project in which three universities from the East (Macedonia, Romania, and Ukraine) and one from the West (Switzerland) engaged in studying and changing local writing cultures. Creating new writing courses, creating writing center conceptions for their respective universities, and studying local genres and writing practices were among the most important activities of the three-year project.

The chapter “[Academic Writing at Babeş-Bolyai University: A Case Study](#),” by Camelia Moraru et al., presents the initiatives that have been developing concepts for academic writing support at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca over the last few years as part of a comprehensive institutional research strategy.

In the chapter “[Institutional Writing Support in Romania: Setting Up a Writing Center at the West University of Timișoara](#),” Claudia Doroholschi examines current types of writing support in Romanian higher education with the aim of emphasizing not only the institutional difficulties that emerge when establishing writing centers in Romanian universities, but also some of the organizational difficulties. The chapter argues that existing (Western) writing centers can function as models which must be adapted to local institutional conditions.

**The second part** of the book compiles four empirical studies on academic writing done in the native languages of Russia, Poland, and Romania.

Irina Shchemeleva and Natalia Smirnova’s study in the chapter “[Academic Writing Within a Russian University Setting: Challenges and Perspectives](#),” which is based on a survey research, reports the results of the current role of academic writing in L1 and L2 in Russia, reflecting at the same time a number of developmental needs that the authors consider relevant for the non-English-speaking European academic context.

In the chapter “[Reader Versus Writer Responsibility Revisited: A Polish-Russian Contrastive Approach](#),” Lukasz Salski and Olga Dolgikh start from Hind’s distinction between reader- and writer-responsible languages and then describe the textual elements of reader and writer responsibility. The authors also advance a tool for

investigating these features and report the results of a research project in which they put this tool into practice.

In the chapter “[Perceptions About “Good Writing” and “Writing Competences” in Romanian Academic Writing Practices: A Questionnaire Study](#)”, Cristina Băniceru and Dumitru Tucan investigate the perceptions of “good academic writing” in the Romanian educational context in order to emphasize some of the problems emerging from writing practice in Romania (for instance, the lack of explicit instruction when writing is used as a teaching strategy and the lack of connection between the writing and the research process).

In the chapter “[Research Article as a Means of Communicating Science: Polish and Global Conventions](#),” Aleksandra Makowska analyzes a corpus of 401 technical research articles written in Polish and English in order to investigate whether the articles follow the formal IMRAD text pattern and the CARS (Swales 1990) model. The study shows that following patterns relies on the nationality of the authors and the language they use, and thus the local writing tradition is an important variable in shaping academic writing products.

**The third part** focuses on research case studies in academic writing in the region, mainly in English as a foreign language.

In the chapter “[Corpus Linguistics Meets Academic Writing: Examples of Applications in the Romanian EFL Context](#),” Mădălina Chitez explores the advantages of corpus-based exercises in teaching academic writing, extracting the relevance of the proposed applications from three types of theoretical approaches: contrastive linguistics, academic phraseology, and move analysis.

Gyula Tankó and Kata Csizér report in the chapter “[Individual Differences and Micro-argumentative Writing Skills in EFL: An Exploratory Study at a Hungarian University](#),” on a mixed methods study concerning the written argumentation produced by top EFL students at a Hungarian university. The study aims to identify the weaknesses that need to be addressed in academic writing courses in order to improve the quality of students’ writing.

In the chapter “[In at the Deep End: The Struggles of First-Year Hungarian University Students Adapting to the Requirements of Written Academic Discourse in an EFL Context](#),” Francis J. Prescott builds on an ethnographic study of 20 first-year bachelor’s degree students in English at a large Hungarian state university in order to construct a grounded theory that aims at explaining how new students become familiar with written academic skills in an EFL context.

In the chapter “[Assertion and Assertiveness in the Academic Writing of Polish EFL Speakers](#),” Jacek Mydla and David Schaffler study the linguistic devices (i.e., pronouns, verbs, and adverbs) used by Polish students in English to express fact, opinion, or assertion in academic writing. The authors’ conclusion is that there are two conflicting influences on students’ writing that misrepresent the role of the authorial voice in English academic writing: that of their native language and that of their training in academic writing.

Relying on her experience as an academic writing tutor, Katalin Doró, in the chapter “[Extended Patchwriting in EFL Academic Writing of Hungarian Students: Signs and Possible Reasons](#),” investigates instances of patchwriting as

a student strategy used to avoid plagiarism. Her analysis offers not only a functional taxonomy of patchwriting, but also some practical propositions that can be considered in order to improve the academic writing skills of EFL students.

Ola Majchrzak and Łukasz Salski's contribution, the chapter "[Peer Review and Journal Writing in the Eyes of First-Year Students of English Studies: A Writing Course at the University of Łódź](#)," builds on a questionnaire study conducted with 91 students of English studies enrolled in the first-year writing course at the Institute of English, University of Łódź, Poland. The questionnaire, which was designed to explore three aspects of the course, the forms of feedback on written work, peer review, and journal writing, is seen as an important tool to measure whether the objectives of the course have been met.

Marina Katic and Jelisaveta Safranji, in the chapter "[An Analysis of Dissertation Abstracts Written by Non-native English Speakers at a Serbian University: Differences and Similarities Across Disciplines](#)," make an analysis of a corpus of abstracts across various disciplines from the Digital Library of the University of Novi Sad. By examining the length, the types, the frequency and the position of moves applied in the selected abstracts, the authors present a variation of strategies connected with the specifics of the disciplines and at the same time a number of influences of Serbian cultural conventions.

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**Part I**  
**Academic Writing Provision in Central  
and Eastern Europe: Models, Directions,  
and Strategies**

# A European Model for Writing Support



**John Harbord**

**Abstract** The recent growth of writing initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe has created a situation where the natural solution is to look to countries where models for teaching writing are well established, most notably the US, but also to a lesser extent the UK. While the US provides highly developed models for teaching and supporting writing in English as a first language at the undergraduate level and in the context of a liberal arts model of higher education, the UK offers models for teaching writing in English as a second language at the graduate level so as to integrate them into the British education system. Neither of these models considers what it might be like to teach writing in a first language other than English or in English in a non-English-speaking country. In this sense, transferring models across new contexts involves a degree of risk for mismatch. In this chapter, I deconstruct the options available to those teaching writing in Romania and consider how institutions can combine elements in new ways in order to create a European model of writing support.

**Keywords** Academic writing · Teaching writing · Writing model · Writing support · Writing course

## 1 Introduction

In the first few years of this century, writing initiatives in East Central Europe (ECE) were still rare, and those that did exist were largely tied to American universities (such as Central European University) or English departments (such as at the Universities of Szeged and Vilnius; Harbord 2010). Happily, this is now changing for the better, for reasons that are beyond the scope of this chapter, and increasingly the idea that good academic writing is not inextricably connected to the English language is beginning to take hold. It is true, however, that historically the vast bulk

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