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Theory, Practice and Research on Academic Writing in Europe and outside Europe[2]

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present some central notions on the theory, practice and research on academic writing discussed at the 5ᵗʰ EATAW Conference. The conference, focusing on writing development in European higher education, revealed the different experiences in the teaching of writing acquired by the participants from the English-speaking countries in comparison with those from former Yugoslavia. In addition to possible applications of the findings from the English-speaking countries to this European region, we will present some aspects from the history of European writing centres, as well as give a brief history of the EATAW organisation.

Key words: academic writing, academic writing genres, academic writing centres, writing development

Teorija, praksa in raziskovanje znanstvenega sloga pisanja v Evropi in izven nje

Izvleček: Članek predstavlja nekatere glavne ideje o teoriji, praksi in raziskovanju znanstvenega sloga pisanja v Evropi in izven nje, ki so bile obravnavane na 5. konferenci EATAW. Na konferenci, osredotočeni na razvoj pisanja v evropskem visokošolskem izobraževanju, so se razkrile izkustvene razlike pri poučevanju pisanja med sodelujočimi iz angleško govorečih dežel in sodelujočimi iz nekdanje Jugoslavije. Predstavili bomo možne načine, kako prenesti ugotovitve iz angleško govorečih dežel na to evropsko območje, in bralcem predstavili nekaj pojmov v zvezi z zgodovino centrov za poučevanje znanstvenega pisanja v Evropi, podali pa bomo tudi kratko zgodovino organizacije EATAW.

Ključne besede: znanstveno pisanje, žanri znanstvenega pisanja, akademski centri, razvoj pisanja

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History of academic writing centres in Europe and the EATAW organization

The first centre for academic writing was established at the University of Bielefeld in 1993, Germany, as the first German writing lab. Prior to 1993, there were some initiatives in teaching writing that started during the 1970s and 1980s, with the concern of international students in Germany that were having specific problems during their studies, e.g. language difficulties which they encountered in their writing. These initiatives were mainly focused on improving students' oral skills. Inspired by the growth of research in the writing process, the interest for academic writing in a foreign language began to grow towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

The first writing lab at the University of Bielefeld attracted both international and German students. Developed by Gabriela Ruhmann from 1993 to 1997, it was financed as a university pilot-project. As a tutoring centre for teaching academic writing it aimed to help international students during their study across curricula and to raise the level of their effectiveness and successfulness in finishing their study obligations. The centre offers product-oriented assistance and process-oriented assistance, which means that students should become acquainted with what a well-constructed academic text looks like and what writing steps they must learn to attain such a product.[3] After 1998, the centre became part of the University of Bielefeld's Centre for Interdisciplinary Research. The Centre offers well developed activities: courses for students during the academic year (reading strategies, finding and evaluating literature, writing and rewriting strategies, oral reports etc.), consultations and individual advising on academic writing, discipline-specific academic and general language courses, workshops, mentoring peer-tutors etc.

Some of the developing members of this German writing centre were among the developers and organizers of the EATAW organization, organised in cooper-

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[2] This paper emerged on the basis of participation at the 5th EATAW Conference named "The Roles of Writing Development in Higher Education and Beyond" held at Coventry University (UK) from 30th June to 2nd July 2009. "EATAW" is the English abbreviation for "The European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing."

[3] See Büker, 2003.

ation with members of the European Writing Centres Association (EWCA), which was organized somewhat earlier, in June 2001. The first EATAW conference was held in Groningen, the Netherlands, where one hundred and seventy conference participants contributed.

Since 2001, there has been a series of conferences organised in Budapest, Hungary, in 2003, in Athens, Greece, in 2005, and in Bochum, Germany, in 2007. Throughout these years, the EATAW became an international organization with more than 600 hundred members, teachers of academic writing from all parts of the world. Owing to the conferences it has achieved a respectable impact on the development of academic writing within European higher education. At the 5th EATAW Conference "The Roles of Writing Development in Higher Education and Beyond", held at Coventry University from 30 June to 2 July 2009, there were mainly European presenters from the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. A smaller amount of participants came from France, Spain, Italy and eastern European countries (except for Ukraine, which has contributed much at EATAW conferences) and only a few participants from the former Yugoslav states. Although EATAW is a European organization in its beginnings, every year the organization extends its geographical reach, with members and conference participants from the USA, Canada, Australia, Turkey, Israel, Iran, Japan etc.

The EATAW organization, as is stated on their official web site, is a scholarly forum which seeks to bring together those involved or interested in the teaching, tutoring, research, administration and development of academic writing in higher education in Europe. It is also concerned with the influences of theories or pedagogies outside higher education on writing pedagogies and with the research on academic writing. Writing development may be seen through the development of writing programs, writing centres, writing initiatives and writing research projects. Also, one of the main EATAW aims is to raise the awareness of the importance of teaching academic writing,[4] which is extremely significant especially for those European countries such as some of the former Yugoslav states, where the teaching of academic writing is at a level that gives cause for concern, e.g. in Croatia or in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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[4] See The European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing , July, 2009.

Academic writing

Academic writing is writing for most various academic purposes and in many different genres. If we look at the BAWE Corpus[5] of genres of student writing we will notice that the academic writing genre mosaic is very complex and well developed. This corpus consists of the following genre families: case studies, critiques, design specifications, empathy writing, essays, exercises, explanations, literature surveys, methodology recounts, narrative recounts, problem questions, proposals and research reports. Each item from this genre family has its own social purpose, consists of specific components and participates in the genre network. Also, inside each genre family there is a great number of genres. For examples, we may consider the BAWE Corpus scheme on the example of a proposal. The social purposes of a proposal are to develop the student's ability to make a case for some future action. A proposal includes a purpose, a detailed plan and persuasive argumentation and may correspond to a professional or academic proposal. Proposal genres are book proposals, building proposals, business plans, catering plans, legislation reforms, marketing plans, procedural plans and research proposals[6]. Also, for each genre of student writing across the different disciplines and inside every genre family there is a precise description of the academic purpose which students confront in their studying.

Some of the genres of student writing are public and may be published, while some of the genres are not – this is a notion of Paltridge, articulated in his mentioning of the genre network of academic writing of graduate students, which many students are expected to be familiar with, such as seminar papers, reviews, conference abstracts, conference papers, research articles, theses and dissertations, books and monographs, curriculum vitae, job application, submission letters etc.[7]

Depending on the national educational traditions of academic writing, the teaching of all of these academic genres is not practiced equally everywhere. The teaching of academic writing in the English-speaking educational system has a long tradition. In many countries there are writing centres established within

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[5] "BAWE" is the English abbreviation for "British Academic Written English". The BAWE Corpus was developed by the Universities of Warwick, Reading and Oxford Brookes from 2004 to 2007. It consists of 2761 high-standard student assignments.

[6] See BAWE and BAWE Plus Collections, July, 2009.

[7] Paltridge, 2008, 85.

universities, usually within English departments. According to the presentation by Paula Gillespie at this conference, namely the organization chart of the Marquette University, Milwaukee Wisconsin, USA, where she teaches writing, the writing centre is a part of the English department belonging to the School of Arts and Sciences.[8] In addition, in non-English-speaking countries without writing centres, the teaching of writing classes at universities is very often an integral part of English language department curricula. Despite that, EATAW aims to work on the development of academic writing not only in English; it is also concerned with the development of writing in the native languages of all European and non-European languages.

Writing centres at American universities have a tradition of more than fifty years and at Western European universities of almost thirty years. Educated teachers of academic writing teach and guide student writing for their academic purposes, from seminars or conference papers to theses and dissertations. Also, many writing centres have well developed peer-tutoring systems, writing libraries with manuals for writing and workshops or mentoring for lecturers to include the written assignments in their teaching classes or to improve their writing teaching. Such sustained academic traditions where the graduate students normally write in the broad domain of different academic genres unfortunately is not the case for most of the former Yugoslav states, e.g. for Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where there is not enough teaching of academic writing, neither at the undergraduate nor at the graduate level; there is also a lack of teaching the diversity of genres for graduate students.

Overall, in many of the former-Yugoslav states, there is a serious lack of research, practical teaching of students for writing and education for university lecturers for academic writing teaching, which was obvious from discussions with participants from Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo or through their presentations. This situation is somewhat different in Slovenia where there is the "Slovene Association of LSP[9] Teachers". This organization, with their own online journal "Scripta Manent", which was founded in 1997, is similar to the EATAW organization in their interests in the promotion of the professional growth of LSP teachers, the introduction of new approaches in teaching and testing of LSP, the improving of teaching materials and the use of information technology in

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[8] Gillespie, 2009.
[9] Abbreviation LSP refers to "Languages for Specific Purposes".

teaching.[10] In addition, at most Slovenian universities the teaching of writing is to some extent at a higher level than in the other former-Yugoslav states because the teaching of writing is practiced in most of the universities' programmes. Although writing courses form part of many programmes at the Filozofska fakulteta in Ljubljana – at the English department, German department, Sociology department etc.[11], at the Fakulteta za družbene vede in Ljubljana – modules "Introduction to Academic Writing", "Practice of Reading and Writing", "Diploma Seminar"[12] and at the Filozofska fakulteta in Maribor, the "Introduction into Methodology of Scientific Work" as an obligatory module at all university programmes,[13] the Slovenian students, "particularly freshmen, regularly have difficulties in writing solid academic texts."[14]

Despite this Slovenian educational context, in most of the former Yugoslav states the requisite attention is not paid to student written assignments and stereotypes still exist, namely that academic writing needs no learning, that it is a special talent one can never learn, that students good in oral evaluation will probably write well etc. These stereotypes were undermined in many Western European academic communities and the teaching of academic writing in these countries showed the complexity of a great number of techniques for improving the writing process and writing skill, as well as improving in terms of style, the practicing of different academic genres, referencing appropriately etc.

The 5th EATAW Conference was a review of practice in teaching writing and research made by experts on teaching writing, with presenters both from universities in English-speaking countries and from non-English-speaking countries. It has affirmed academic writing as a developed social practice. In that educational context academic writing proved to be a sort of social practice as Bourdieu points out when he talks about discourse practices, i.e. the social practice of academic communities.[15] This practice is lacking in post-communist and former Yugoslav states where it is necessary to raise the academic awareness of the importance of academic writing and to integrate the teaching of academic writing in the higher educational context.

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[10] See The Slovene Association of LSP Teachers, July, 2009.

[11] Programmes, Filozofska fakulteta, University of Ljubljana, July, 2009.

[12] Study Programs, Fakulteta za družbene vede, University of Ljubljana, July, 2009.

[13] Programmes, Filozofska fakulteta, University of Maribor, October, 2007.

[14] See Roter, 2007.

[15] Bourdieu, 2007, 16–22.

The 5ᵗʰ EATAW Conference "The Roles of Writing Development in Higher Education and Beyond"

The 5ᵗʰ EATAW conference, entitled The Roles of Writing Development in Higher Education and Beyond, was held at Coventry University from 30ᵗʰ June to 2ⁿᵈ July 2009.

In the conference programme there were more than 300 hundred participants, mostly teachers of academic writing that participated with paper presentations, in workshops, round table discussions, demonstrations and symposiums. Three keynote speakers who are among leading teachers and researchers of academic writing and also developers of EATAW organization, Sally Mitchell (Queen Mary, University of London), Gabriela Ruhmann (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum) and Cristian Schunn (University of Pittsburg), opened the parallel sessions, which took place over three days and followed their speeches.

On the first day of the conference the keynote speaker was Sally Mitchell, coordinator of the curriculum development initiative at Queen Mary, University of London (entitled Thinking Writing), and a teacher of academic writing concerned with connecting writing to the learning process. Her presentation was entitled "Now you don't see it; now you do: Writing Made Visible in the University", and was about experiences with the Thinking Writing project – a project which is intended for students writing for all disciplinary fields across the curriculum. Although this project is part of programmes for the support of international students, she underlined the need that the Thinking Writing initiative be connected with a "wider educational development" and with "student-facing support".[16] She pointed out that the university supported this project and formed the working writing group for higher educational requirements. Her presentation had in focus the issue of good writing as her leading ideal and the success in managing to lend writing a higher status. It revealed a great awareness of the importance of academic writing connected with the critical thinking process, which is totally different from the underestimated status of teaching of academic writing in former Yugoslav states, e.g. in Croatia or in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The keynote speech entitled "'But you can't make a horse drink': What I learned by Working as a Writing Developer" by Gabriela Ruhmann, currently director of the Writing Centre at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, who had developed the first German writing lab at the University of Bielefeld in 1993, was also

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[16] Mitchell, 2009.

instructive. It was especially exciting to listen to the experiences of the writing developer of the first writing centre in Europe. In a humorous, metaphorical and ironical way, she familiarized the listeners with her dealings with the resistance of many students and university teachers to the teaching and practicing of academic writing at her university. However, in an educational system such as the German one, where the writing programmes are implemented in many universities, she is able to struggle against student and teacher resistance and not to be discouraged in continuing her teaching practice. Her notion of the double demand of the Bologna process for students to be both educated as specialists in a particular academic domain and to provide universal knowledge and skills, was very similar to the demands within the Croatian educational system after joining the Bologna Convention, where these demands are very unrealistic. In this educational system, where there is not enough teaching of writing at any study level, where workshops on academic writing both for students and teachers are a rarity, where there are no manuals for writing or appropriate literature about writing, etc., these demands are also very frustrating, especially for students.

The third-day keynote speech "Using a Web-Based Peer Review System to Support and Study Student Writing," by Christian Schunn (University of Pittsburg), was about the web-based peer system named SWoRD (Scaffolded Writing and Rewriting in the Discipline), which he innovated in 2002. He talked about the advantages of peer reviews and emphasized the many roles of teachers of writing as a pedagogical strategy, but also stressed the suspicion of students, teachers and administrators towards the peer system despite the verification of empirical benefits of peer reviews that are largely practiced. With a large group of students and colleagues, using the web-based peer-review system SWoRD, he researched advantages and disadvantages of peer reviewing of student writing. They concluded that SWoRD, besides the standard documentation and feedback distribution, automatically grades students for reviewing exactness and for reviewing helpfulness by their peer tutors through SWoRD, all of which produces more learning opportunities and leads to reviews of a higher quality. He said they had found there are benefits of the peer review system for both the recipient and the provider of the reviews and argued that this online tool with face-to-face teaching gives significantly enhanced student results. Finally, he emphasized "the synergies that need to be fostered between instructors using peer reviewer and researchers studying writing development"[17] to

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[17] Schunn, 2009.

improve the teaching practice. This presentation on the importance of the peer review and the student appreciation of this practice aimed to improve their writing was a very significant issue of student and teacher engagement in writing development. It is of importance for some of the former Yugoslav countries, i.e. for the region where there is a lack of a writing centre, such as Croatia, where some kind of a peer system was recently attempted among students of law.[18]

The presenters explored a broad range of themes at presentations, workshops, round table discussions, demonstrations and symposiums. There were experiences in writing centres and writing tutoring: experiences of different roles of writing tutors, researches on problems of student writing and the ways teachers could encounter them (e.g. improving their assignments), discussing the role, training and promoting of peer tutoring etc. Teachers of writing presented their experiences, from working with dyslexic students to their ethnographic researches about the development of academic writing of international students. Many teachers discussed the use of reference literature in writing academic texts. Nigel Harwood and Bojana Petrić (University of Essex, Colchester, UK) made an interesting presentation entitled "Uncovering the functions and motivations of academic writers' citations". In their research they explored the functions of citations and motivations for citing in expert and student academic writing and found that they have difficulties regarding the choice of format or style and regarding motivations as to why to use citations, i.e. what is their function.[19] They confronted two research methods in their presentation: textual analysis, in which they found weaknesses and the method of interviewing writers on the reasons and motivations of using citations. After classifying the most frequent citation functions, they observed that students had revealed fewer as well as less exact quotation functions than experts. This research made them conclude that students should be more thoughtful when using quotations, while professors should share research findings with students and acquaint them with citation functions both in expert texts and in student texts, all together analysing citation functions in different parts of the text etc. The importance of this research is great, especially in the educational context were the teaching of writing is constantly developing, but it is also motivating for a similar research in former Yugoslav states, such as in Croatia.

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[18] Students' Union Lawyer, July, 2009.
[19] Harwood and Petrić, 2009.

There was a very interesting presentation on textual borrowing issues by Alma Jahić (University of Tuzla, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina) entitled "Textual analyses of the use of source texts", on the use of source texts and on the issue of plagiarism. She presented the main influence factors on textual borrowing as a cultural background, previous education and the influence of L1[20] when students write L2[21] texts. She compared the influence of previous education on textual borrowing in educational systems, such as in English-speaking countries, where student writing is given an important role, with the Bosnian educational system (which is very similar to the Croatian one), where the most attention is given to oral assessment, while writing is neglected. She pointed out that students are faced with writing for the first time at their final exams at the end of their secondary schooling, and that their written works are very often unintentionally plagiarised because they do not know how to cite properly. As is the case with Croatian universities, at Bosnian universities there is also a lack of teaching of writing, and although students write seminar papers, they almost never get professors' comments on their work, and in the process of writing their final paper they are left on their own. She also presented her results from the research she conducted in analysing student academic texts, namely on how they incorporate quotations and paraphrases into their texts. From six analysed texts she found that no less than 53% of textual borrowing was without any reference. As a method for dealing with the use of literature without referencing and with inappropriate referencing, she suggested that the teaching of academic writing also involve the awareness of unintentional plagiarism, as well as the change of the view on plagiarism to a criminal sphere.[22]

Ida Klitgård (Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark) presented a similar attitude on plagiarism with her presentation entitled "Plagiarism in the International University: From Kidnapping and Theft to Translation and Hybridity". She, having explored unintended international student plagiarism in the context of the second language academic writing, explained that Western and non-Western societies have different concepts of plagiarism. She found out that their inappropriate use of literature and writing in L2 depends on their cultural and educational background and the demand to write in a foreign language,

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[20] The abbreviation L1 refers to native language.
[21] The abbreviation L2 refers to foreign language.
[22] Jahić, 2009.

and that academic writing in English represents a process of "trans-cultural translation"[23] with imitations as a first step in student learning strategies. Klitgård contrasted the view on plagiarism represented as a crime through dictionaries of English for foreign students and universities in English-speaking countries with the plagiarism from the cultural and linguistic point of view. She gave the example of the Chinese perspective, in which original thought in student writing may be understood as egocentric, too individualist, and may seem to authorities to be a lack of respect for them. From the linguistic point of view, there are differences in discourse styles between Western and non-Western academic writing. While Western writers like to develop their own thought, non-Western writers prefer voices of other authors in their own texts. Klitgård concluded her presentation with giving importance to cultural and linguistic aspects of plagiarism in international students and with understanding it as a stage in the student writing development.[24] In her description of non-Western aspects on the use of other authors' voices in student texts, there was a great similarity with this issue in Croatia, where it is also commonly appreciated that student texts be full of integrated opinions and the theories of authorities. These explanations of plagiarism by Jahić and Klitgård could be useful for understanding a great occurrence of inappropriate use of literature in Croatian student writing practice.

Social and political issues of educational context were an important aspect of the presentation entitled "The challenges of teaching academic writing to undergraduate students in post war Kosovo" by Blerta Mustafa (University of Prishtina, Prishtina, Kosovo). She gave an overview of the social and political context of Kosovo's educational system from the beginning of the 1990s until recent days, a context which was undermined by rough political changes. She pointed out the lack of critical thinking abilities in her students, both in written and oral assessment, such as their not being used to questioning authorities and their practice of taking up information without searching for evidence or asking questions. In this way, Kosovo students are in a particular sense similar to Croatian students, which is probably the same feature of many students from former Yugoslav states who are not taught enough through their schooling to become engaged with problem solving activities and provoking questions. She presented the principles of "inquiry"[25]

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[23] Klitgård, 2009.
[24] Klitgård, 2009.
[25] Dew, 1997 cited in Mustafa, 2009.

and "panning for gold approach",[26] a pedagogical method for questioning student opinions on familiar questions in order to develop their critical thinking abilities, which is important for argumentative academic writing texts. Her extraordinary optimism and courage in dealing with teaching difficulties in a cultural environment in which new generations still suffer from patriarchal and authoritative social relations was remarkable.

Besides these thematic strands, there were interesting experiences of presenters on writing and new technologies. For the most part, these experiences dealt with online writing workshops, i.e. teaching academic writing using online environment or tutoring the students in writing using an online peer-feedback to their works. The presenters explored the advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face tutorials and online tutorials, which offer resource repositories or e-mail responses to students and synchronous chat. Generally, these presentations tried to find out if online writing labs are adequately effective, to determine the way students are engaged with online writing resources and what the advantages of computer-mediated communication are.

Many of the presentations were about teacher feedback and assessment, and student self-assessment. There were workshops about responding to student texts and presentations about the use of peer assessment, which is well developed in many universities in English-speaking countries. At many of these universities, writing teachers pay great attention to student writing in L2 and their self-assessment, i.e. how self-assessment can help international students in learning and better understanding learning objectives, also to the importance of teacher feedback and peer reviews of teachers on their self-assessment.

Great attention was paid to disciplinary writing, i.e. writing in the disciplines presented by the participants of the International WAC (writing across curriculum)/WID Mapping Project,[27] which is aimed at the promotion of academic writing abilities across the curriculum. There were a great number of presenters that gave presentations on reflective writing through collaborative writing tasks, on comparative analysis of guidelines of different scientific fields written by writing tutors, on academic writing programmes for intercultural engagement, on improving student writing skills by means of online projects, on graduate writ-

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[26] Browne and Keeley, 2004 cited in Mustafa, 2009.
[27] International WAC/WID Mapping Project is the project that began in 2006 aimed to develop writing in disciplines.

ing projects for students from different disciplines and programmes, on ethnographic investigation of multilingual PhD students to become participants in academic literacy in their academic discipline, on the importance of developing academic writing for professional work, on cultural and linguistic issues regarding academic writing etc.

There were important themes about innovative methodologies and pedagogies in the teaching of academic writing, i.e. developing student skills for good academic writing. There were interesting presentations about building an argument in essays by L2 students, on choices about pronouns in academic texts (do we have to choose the pronoun "I" or "we" when writing academic text), on cognitive processes and reading practices of learners, research into the impacts of critical thinking skills on writing by international students whose educational backgrounds did not include critical thinking skills. Many presenters emphasized the development of critical thinking abilities in students for their better writing practice, as well as difficulties of non-native students of English coping with difficulties in language and the norms of academic writing for which they are exploring methodologies to help them in their writing.

There was a group of presentations on academic writing history, scholarship and meta-narratives. There were experiences on choosing an appropriate journal for publishing of academic writing research, on mentoring teachers and writing tutors to become more effective in their teaching of academic writing, on examinations of research on writing and their effects on writing development, such as longitudinal analyses, surveys, interviews, action-research and historical studies. It was interesting to become acquainted with such a diversity of experiences of teachers of writing where writing histories differ in national traditions, i.e. the roots of writing practices in different cultures and, especially, with regard to the new demand for teaching writing following the Bologna Convention.

The presentation entitled "Use of Literature in Writing of Academic Texts" was focused on the use of literature and paid a great deal of attention to the general picture of academic writing issues in Croatia, regarding the historical view and the description of the issue of teaching writing before and after the Bologna university reform. Although demands for a greater student writing are very similar, there are great differences in coping with such requests in educational systems in English-speaking countries, where the teaching of writing is at a high level and in the Croatian or Bosnian educational systems. For undergraduate stu-

dents in Croatia, the new demand for writing papers for all modules through the disciplines presents an enormous difficulty because of the lack of teaching of writing. At five Croatian universities, there are only two teaching modules for writing, one in the first year of Philosophy and the other in the fourth year of English language at Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, and some linguistic modules that contain elements for teaching academic writing. Beside that, a one-semester teaching module of writing was recently stopped at the University Centre for Croatian Studies in Zagreb. This picture is even worse because of the lack of workshops, peer-tutoring and manuals for writing.[28]

However, it was important to point out some theoretical linguistic interrogations in Croatia in the field of academic discourse, which are mostly concerned with the linguistic and stylistic aspects of this discourse. There are respectable Croatian linguists, e.g. Kovačević and Badurina, that argue in their academic discourse interrogations that the academic discourse is divided into the spoken and the written part, and according to the Saussurrean dichotomy of langue and parole, they put both parts at the level of Saussurrean parole. Therefore, they are primarily concerned with written academic discourse and its linguistic features and not with the academic writing practice.[29] Indeed, their analyses followed the line of Croatian linguists who are mainly concerned with the description of written language based on the functional styles and stylistic aspects of language.[30] Therefore, regarding academic writing, these linguists are mostly concerned with the stylistic features of the written academic discourse of published texts by experts in scientific magazines or in books. But, as Büker emphasized, it was the theoretical basis, comprising among other things the analysis of writing processes, studies on vocabulary, terminologies, morpho-syntactic and pragmatic characteristics of particular discipline languages, general academic language, etc., that preceded the development of the first German writing centre.[31] The history of the first academic centre in Europe may be the ideal model for the region of former Yugoslav states, for example, for Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in leading the research of their scientists towards the practical domain of implementation of teaching writing in higher education.

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[28] Janković-Paus, 2009.

[29] Kovačević and Badurina, 2002.

[30] See Tošović, 2002 and Silić, 2008.

[31] Büker, 2003.

Conclusion

In this paper, we wanted to present some issues of teaching of academic writing in higher education in Europe and beyond, as well as acquaint readers with the history of the first European academic centre, the EATAW organisation and different traditions in the teaching of writing. While considering wide conference thematic strands or particular presentations, we tried to reflect possible impacts of the presented experiences in teaching of academic writing at higher education level on the teaching of writing in former Yugoslav states, particularly in Croatia. The participants from the former Yugoslav states found the 2009 EATAW conference of special significance as it allowed them new insights – namely, they could gain new information from experts in the teaching of academic writing, consider similar problems regarding academic writing issues in the educational and cultural contexts of the former Yugoslav region and think about the way to improve this area of study, research and practice. In addition, it would be important that Slovenian teachers of academic writing participate in the next EATAW conference and present the experiences in their teaching practice. It is necessary to make a visible educational and cultural environment in this region, which lacks a writing centre, while also raising the awareness of the importance of teaching academic writing in the educational systems of former Yugoslav states.

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