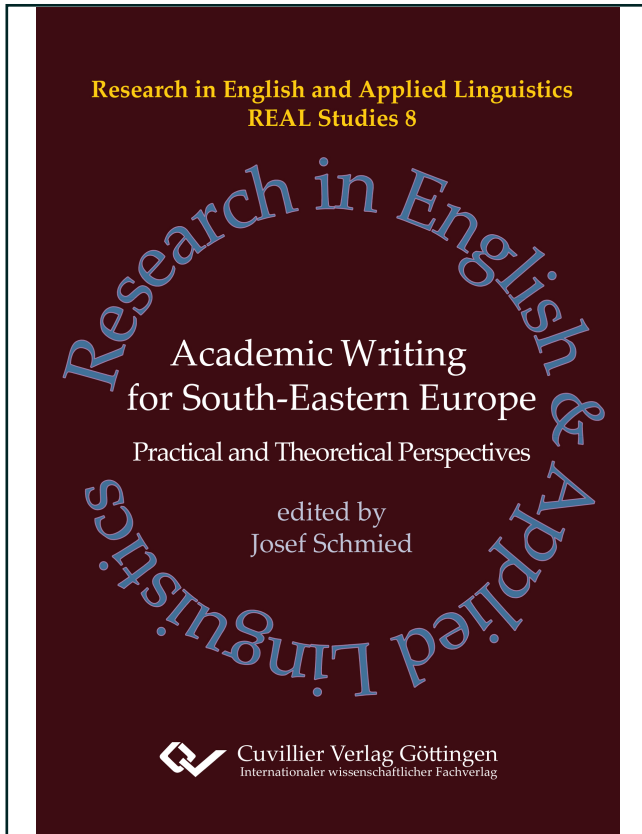




Josef Schmied (Herausgeber)
Academic Writing for South Eastern Europe
Practical and Theoretical Perspectives



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Preface

The present volume draws on the experience of teaching academic writing at Chemnitz University of Technology and the Workshops and Summer Schools developed together with partners from Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo that were organized with the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in South Eastern Europe in 2013 and 2014. The students' perspective is considered crucial, and half of the articles were contributed by MA and PhD students. The cooperation in this project was made enjoyable for everyone by the enthusiasm of the students and in fact it was a major aim of the project to integrate as many students as possible and relate the theoretical part as strongly as possible to the practical experience, so the students' perspective was considered as important as the teachers' perspective and large parts of the volume were discussed among MA and PhD students from the participating universities.

This volume introduces key principles of academic writing. It explains the data compilation and analysis, so that graduates can use their own database to decide which conventions to follow in their own writing. It gives examples from different genres (from term papers to PhD theses) and different university contexts (from Germany, Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Poland, and even China in comparison).

The introductory contribution by Josef Schmied is a state-of-the-art summary for junior researchers in the field focusing on the concepts of metalanguage and genre, it explains the *ChemCorpus* as a reference corpus, shows exploration principles and illustrates empirical approaches through text elements and numerous examples.

The following four contributions focus on teaching practical aspects and the wider context of learning at (post-) graduate levels, i.e. in MA and PhD programmes: Helen Forbes makes a concrete and detailed proposal for vocabulary learning. Elena Ončevska Ager concentrates on the important and current topic of feedback. Irina Petrovska and Bisera Kostadinovska write on a special approach to the teaching of writing. Magdalena Rogozińska analyses the PhD programmes at Polish universities and discusses how students' writing skills could receive "adequate attention".

The following four comparative contributions are written by Chemnitz MA and PhD students on the basis of their theses and/or the *ChemCorpus*: Sven Albrecht tries to prove his hypothesis that connecting adverbials are more frequently or more elaborately used in untimed than in timed student writing in the *ChemCorpus* and comparable text collections. Dana Beyer follows the same students' usage of hedging in their BA and their MA theses. Jessica Küchler compares the culture-specific modal auxiliaries *may* and *will* in term papers, the first academic texts written by Chinese and German students, and proves that a relative small topic can provide empirical evidence for a vast discussion on general and culture-specific writing. Jacinta Edusei compares code glosses with exemplifying and reformulating functions in Albanian and German BA theses



and demonstrates that a relative small, explorative case study may yield interesting results that indicate the need for a more detailed and complex study.

The following five contributions discuss language- and culture-specific writing problems again on an empirical basis of specific Serbian, Macedonian or Albanian corpora: Jasmina Djordjevic focusses on introductions and illustrates negative transfer from Serbian in 50 essays or term papers by third-year students in English, the lowest level of academic writing analysed in this volume. Zorica Trajkova compares commitment and detachment in eleven Macedonian BA theses to eleven German BA theses. Bledar Toska analyses different types of linkers in a big corpus (almost 10 Million words) of 160 Albanian PhD dissertations from different fields (Economics, Humanities, Natural and Social Sciences). Armela Panajoti adds to the well-known debate on authorial identity (i.e. in personal pronouns) in a sample of the same corpus (about 3 Million words) and highlights tentatively some differences between male and female students writing Albanian PhD theses. The final contribution by Silvana Neshkovska and Jovanka Lazarevska Stanchevska analyses a small sample (selected 50 pages from three Macedonian PhD theses) and discuss all errors in detail. All these case studies show that very different corpora and corpus samples can be used profitably for empirical analyses of very different features important in academic writing.

The individual contributions show, also in their styles, the different research and style traditions in European universities. The emphasis on practical approaches in teaching and research allows us to take theoretical backgrounds into consideration wherever needed and still make this project and this volume accessible to young researchers. Author-specific idiomaticity and some grammatical special features (like the well-known article usage by speakers of Slavonic languages) were left untouched, when the general understanding was not affected. Even the formatting of references was only harmonized when functional necessities appeared prominent (e.g. to distinguish independent publications like books from dependent publications like articles). It has to be emphasized at the very beginning of this volume that this is not intended as a model that has to be followed by graduates in various parts of Europe but that this is a documentation of the different conventions and practices of academic writing in different parts of Europe, which graduates in this field must be aware of, so that they can make their own decisions about which conventions to follow and which conventions to neglect in their own writings. Thus they may find a good compromise between the necessities of the field and their own identity as independent scholars.

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