

## **“LOOK, IT’S MY FIRST WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE!” THE ATTITUDE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO AN AUTHENTIC PROCESS GENRE WRITING TASK**

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**Abstract.** In the past ten years, in the context of higher education Wikipedia has started to be seen as a friend, not a foe. Hence a number of courses involve a variety of Wikipedia-based tasks. The aim of the present article is to assess the suitability of Wikipedia-based authentic writing tasks from the students’ perspective. The qualitative content analysis of students’ learning journals has indicated that the process of writing is well supported by dividing the task into separate stages and providing feedback at every stage. Nevertheless, the teaching process should also involve raising learners’ genre awareness as the knowledge that students get while reading Wikipedia might not be sufficient for writing an article that would meet all the genre requirements.\*

**Keywords:** academic writing, process writing, feedback, genre, higher education, Wikipedia

### **1. Introduction**

Process writing has become an accepted approach to teaching writing, but in practice it is not always as widely and actively used as it could (Barnard, Campbell 2005: 85; Hint et al. 2020: 136). In Estonia, the focus is often on the text as a product, not on writing as a process, because writing tasks often serve the purpose of checking how much content one has learnt (Jürine et al. 2013: 5–6). From the perspective of learning, it is still predominantly believed that process writing facilitates deep learning (Wright 2007: 88). Combining different stages of writing with written and oral feedback from the instructor and peers is an efficient way of increasing the level of students’ involvement (Banegas et al. 2020: 35–36) to motivate them to work on the text more deeply.

In addition to the process dimension, the opportunity to write an authentic text to an authentic audience supports learners’ motivation (for the definition of

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authenticity see Gilmore 2019: 300). Through an authentic task, learners are more deeply involved in writing, as they perceive the importance of the assignment and the potential for applying their knowledge and skills in real life. The writers have to carefully consider the aim of the text, the audience, the most suitable form etc., because they know that their text may get direct (online) feedback. (Magnifico 2010: 177, 180) This also applies to the seventh most actively used web page worldwide – Wikipedia<sup>1</sup>. Writing a Wikipedia article, a summary based on various sources that is stylistically similar to an academic text (Konieczny 2012), gives an opportunity to learners to develop various skills of academic writing in a way that is appropriate and interesting for them (Tardy 2010: 18). The involvement in the writing process is also supported by the awareness that a Wikipedia article is written for the entire world and anyone can read it (Christensen 2015: 1046).

At the University of Tartu, Wikipedia articles have been assigned as writing tasks in several speciality subjects (Kruusamägi 2022) and writing courses (Reinsalu et al. 2019) for more than ten years. Nevertheless, there is still limited information on how the writing process is organised and how it supports the development of writing skills. The aim of the present article is to assess the suitability of Wikipedia-based authentic writing tasks from the students' perspective. The study focuses on the following research questions.

1. How do students manage different stages of process genre writing?
2. What kind of learning experience do students get from a genre-based writing task?

## 2. Orientations in writing: from the product to the process

Views on writing itself and on teaching it can be broadly divided into the product and process approach. Depending on the selected approach, the focus is on the text, the writer and/or the reader.

**Product writing** is based on assisted imitation (Pincas 1982): learners are provided with models of good writing and are asked to imitate those models with no analysis of the social context of the text, i.e. the target audience, the communicative aim, rhetorical aspects (Coffin et al. 2003: 9). The writer is expected to demonstrate one's awareness of the language structures and rules through creating a grammatically correct text which would be easily understood without any previous knowledge of the context. That is the reason why grammatical correctness has been the aim of teaching and it is achieved through systematic practice (Hyland 2019: 9).

**Genre writing** can be considered an extension of product writing as it also focuses on knowledge that is at least partly acquired through imitating model texts provided by the instructor. On the other hand, the author proceeds from the social context, which influences the aim of the text, the relationship between the author and its audience, the text structure etc. (Badger, White 2000: 155–156). As text is seen as a form of real interpersonal communication determined by established social conventions, in genre writing learners' attention is drawn equally to both language and context (Breeze 2012: 54). That is the reason why the success in the

communication of the text depends on the level of author's awareness of the context and thus also of the target audience (Hyland 2003: 21).

In contrast to product and genre writing, **process writing** focuses on the writer as an active participant and writing as a cognitive process. Writing is based on recursive stages involving distinctive types of behaviour (Breeze 2012: 43). Although the number and names of the stages may vary, different authors share the general view that the writing process involves planning, drafting, responding and revising. In addition, a number of post-writing actions may follow, for instance publishing the text. (Seow 2002: 315, 319)

Writing as a process cannot be completely separated from a text (*resp.* genre) as a product (Seow 2002: 315); therefore, Richard Badger and Goodith White have suggested a **process genre approach**. This model is based on the view that writing requires knowledge about the language (focus on the product and genre) as well as the context and aim of writing (focus on genre); moreover, for the development of the writing skill, the potential of the writer should be activated (focus on the process) and one should provide the learner with the necessary input (focus on the product and genre). This input may, for example, originate from the teacher/instructor directly supervising the writing, from the peers one cooperates with in group work or from the analysis of the texts representing a certain genre. (Badger, White 2000: 158–159)

On the basis of the model by Badger and White as well as independently from it, a variety of process genre models have been developed. In all those models, process writing was supplemented with activities and stages where a genre text is modelled and edited with the support of explicit teaching (Breeze 2012: 55). The position is taken that through genres, the social and cognitive levels of writing are joined because genres reflect the way writers understand, construct and reproduce social reality (Hyland 2003: 24). This type of process-focused genre instruction has become predominant in the tradition of academic writing (Dressen-Hammouda 2008: 75) and is also represented in the context of higher education in Estonia (e.g. Org 2019; Reinsalu et al. 2019).

### 3. Wikipedia-based writing

As current students were born in the age of Wikipedia, it is expected that they also use Wikipedia for study purposes. The lecturers' attitude to Wikipedia is somewhat controversial, as people are not certain about the precision and neutrality of Wikipedia articles as well as their academic value; however, lecturers believe that Wikipedia is suitable for getting initial information about various notions as well as obtaining references to sources (Knight, Pryke 2012: 652–653). It is a problem, however, when students use Wikipedia as a primary source of information and summarise it in their work (Crovitz, Smoot 2009: 91) or cite some parts of it in their own text (Tardy 2010: 13). For this reason it is important to raise students' awareness of Wikipedia as a genre.

In order to change students' consumer perspectives of Wikipedia (Reilly 2011; Dawe, Robinson 2017: 7) and move the focus from the product to the process (Di Lauro, Johnke 2017), it is reasonable to integrate Wikipedia-based assignments

into the studies at different levels of university (Tardy 2010: 18; Konieczny 2012). In the course of it, one can focus on some sub-skill of academic literacy, e.g. information search or critical source analysis (for the descriptions of assignments see e.g. Fessakis, Zoumpatianou 2012; Azar 2023), but the entire process of writing research can also be set as the aim. As writing for Wikipedia is similar to writing a research article, which starts with selecting a topic and ends with publishing the article (Dawe, Robinson 2017: 6), the writing task can be based on the principles of process genre writing. The focus on the process is also supported by the essence of Wikipedia: as articles are never completely ready, the focus is not on the final product, but on the process, which is part of communication (Miller 2005: 39–40; Purdy 2020). At the same time, it is important that the Wikipedia article meets the genre conventions. This is, in turn, facilitated by the fact that students are familiar with Wikipedia at least as readers (Reilly 2011).

In addition to a Wikipedia-based writing task giving an opportunity to develop academic literacy (Miller 2014: 74), it also offers an authentic learning experience (Di Lauro, Rohinke 2017: 480). While the assignments that are traditionally given to students are often irrelevant outside of the classroom, in the case of a Wikipedia task learners can write on the topics that interest them and publish their work online, which creates a link with the real world (Forte, Bruckman 2006). As learners know that the content of Wikipedia is available for everyone who is interested in it, students' efforts and responsibility before the audience increase (Vetter 2014: 47; Vetter et al. 2019: 60; Watson Todd, Towns 2021: 87). Consideration of the target audience is an important part of written communication and makes the learning experience more meaningful (Forte, Bruckman 2006).

## **4. Case study**

### **4.1. Writing task**

The article introduces a case study focusing on the Wikipedia article writing task that was used at the University of Tartu in 2019 in the course Estonian Orthography and Composition taught to law students. According to the task, the students needed to write a Wikipedia article in Estonian that should belong to their field of study and be approximately 5000 characters long using at least three reliable sources. The structure and the formatting of the article had to meet the Wikipedia conventions. Special attention needed to be paid to sentence structure and word choice, so that the text could be understood by the “average” reader. Grammatical correctness was also expected.

The writing task was based on the principles of process genre writing (see Badger, White 2000: 158–159), consisting of different stages that were covered in nine weeks. At the pre-writing stage, the students familiarised themselves with the conventions of Wikipedia, having analysed the structure of articles, the way of presenting information and language use. Next, the key word related to their field of study was selected for the Wikipedia article either from the list provided by the instructor or following the learner's personal preference. At least three sources on the topic needed to be found. The first draft (a text file) of the article was written

on the basis of the sources; it was supplemented with a cover letter providing an overview of the present state of writing etc. At the seminar the learners worked in groups of three to give to one another oral peer feedback. If there were many comments, they were presented also in writing. At the same seminar learners could also receive brief oral feedback from the instructor or a teaching assistant. On the basis of the comments, the final draft (a text file) was written, which later received detailed written feedback either from the instructor or the teaching assistant. Drawing on the written feedback, the learners made additional changes to their text and finally uploaded it to the Estonian platform *Vikipeedia*. The instructor or the teaching assistant reviewed the uploaded final version of the article, made some formatting changes if needed and briefly commented on the final version.

## **4.2. Data collection and analysis**

At the beginning of the course, the students could choose whether they would like to present at the very end of the course a self-reflection analysing the entire course or they would rather prefer to keep a learning journal throughout the process of completing the Wikipedia writing task (for nine weeks), writing at least ten entries in their chosen form and frequency. 42 students out of the total of 79 participants decided to opt for the learning journal and provided consent for their reflections to be used for research purposes. To guarantee anonymity, the names were substituted with codes (e.g. S1 = student 1). As the posts of two students did not meet the requirements, the corpus of the study involves 40 learning journals (75 pages, min 0.68 pages, max 3.68 pages).

Qualitative content analysis involved both deductive and inductive coding (see Elo, Kyngäs 2008) with NVivo software. During deductive analysis, all the learning journals were read through and then the text units were marked according to the stages of process writing: 1) pre-writing, 2) first draft, 3) feedback on the first draft, 4) final draft, 5) feedback on the final draft, 6) final version, 7) feedback on the final version. During the inductive analysis, all meaningful sub-topics were identified, e.g. the selection of the topic, information search, summarising, structuring.

Below, an overview of the process approach is provided by stages, with the most prominent sub-topics being pointed out for every stage. Then, the genre approach is addressed, the references to which were made at different stages, involving comments on Wikipedia as a genre.

## **5. Process approach in the writing task**

### **5.1. Pre-writing**

Pre-writing involved four sub-stages: getting familiar with Wikipedia, topic selection, information search and reading sources. Those sub-stages are closely inter-related because for selecting the topic one needs to know the conventions of Wikipedia and make sure there are reliable sources available; to assess the suitability of sources, in turn, one needs to read them.

Most of the students wrote for Wikipedia for the first time and therefore they needed to **familiarise themselves with Wikipedia**. Considerable support was provided at the seminar, where criteria for selecting articles were discussed, good articles were demonstrated etc., but students also worked independently, exploring the conventions of Wikipedia with the help of the materials provided on the online platform of the course (1).

- (1) ‘.. I have read through the instructions how to write Wikipedia articles and what layout to use, because it was completely new for me.’ (S6)

As there was a competition of legal Wikipedia articles going on at the same time as students were taking the course, the **topic selection** could be based on the list provided for that competition. Overall, the list of suggested topics facilitated the topic selection, but some students were frustrated because some of the topics had been chosen before them. Although they were also allowed to select topics that were not on the list, usually students did not do so, but they did consider this opportunity to be useful from the real life perspective (2).

- (2) ‘.. the free choice is actually more reasonable because, well, we are at the university and in the future life no one is going to hand us everything on a plate. It’s just how it goes: first come, first served.’ (S39)

The main criterion for the topic selection was personal interest (3). In addition, simplicity was at play here: it was considered important that the topic is easy due to previous knowledge on it and it is also easy to find relevant sources (4). At this stage, few students actually paid special attention to whether the topic would be relevant for the audience (5).

- (3) ‘It was difficult to choose a topic because the choice was so big, but finally I found the topic that interests me the most.’ (S18)
- (4) ‘I was also trying to choose a topic that I have already known before or I knew that there should be information about it. This way it is easier for me to write the article because I do not have to start from scratch.’ (S11)
- (5) ‘.. it seems to be a topic that many people know nothing about and the article would help them to get the overview more easily.’ (S28)

**Information search** involved both electronic databases as well as the options provided by libraries. Although in some cases it was discovered that there were not enough (reliable) materials on the selected topic (6), no one related it to one’s limited skills in information search.

- (6) ‘I also investigated what sources could be of help in writing the article and I found the necessary sources online and at the library. I am not sure if the texts that I have found are informative enough; not all of them seem to be reliable.’ (S32)

Even though it was necessary to study the content of the sources in order to assess their suitability, **reading** was mentioned just a few times. Only one student described their reading strategy in more detail (7).

- (7) ‘I am sitting on a train going to Tallinn and underlining the most important information so that I will remember what I can add to the article.’ (S20)

The analysis of learning journals revealed that more time was dedicated to pre-writing compared to other stages of the writing task. The greatest number of entries dealt with information search; moreover, the learners returned to information search also at the draft and final version stage.

## 5.2. The first draft and the feedback

Quite expectedly, it emerged that **drafting** is easier when enough time has been dedicated to pre-writing (8). If a student has understood the selected topic well enough, there is also a better understanding of how to present the information in a logical way. At the same time, most of the participating students mentioned that it is difficult to structure the article because it is a great challenge to decide what information should be presented and in which order it should be done. While outlining, the students mostly started with the titles of subsections and then determined and/or wrote down the topics of different paragraphs.

- (8) 'It took me a lot of time to choose the topic and find the sources, but it has paid off: the content was written down pretty quickly and I had no problems.' (S4)

The other challenge was summarising and referencing. Although the learners were familiar with general principles, they were afraid that some plagiarism could unintentionally appear in their articles if they fail to paraphrase the original text well enough or use the referencing system incorrectly. There were also doubts in one's skills of conveying the message as effectively as it was done in the original text (9).

- (9) '.. summarising and paraphrasing are very difficult for me because I feel that I cannot write as well as it was done in the original text and I do not feel competent enough.' (S34)

The first drafts were posted to the online platform of the course and **oral peer feedback** was given in groups of three. In their learning journals the students wrote that the peer feedback was *useful*, but also *relevant*, *practical*, *constructive* and *good*, although some students also mentioned that language-related comments could be given in writing as one just cannot take notes quickly enough to write them all down. The content of the articles was improved after receiving peer feedback, paragraphs were rearranged, summaries and paraphrases edited, wording, style and language structures corrected. The learners suggested that it is always useful to hear peers' opinion when writing (10).

- (10) 'I got some recommendations and advice from my group mates how to make my article more clear and comprehensible, because it often happens that you think the text is clear and logical, but for another person it is actually a bit confusing.' (S15)

The students appreciated receiving feedback considerably more than the opportunity to give feedback. They did find it interesting and beneficial to read other students' work, but only a couple of students considered it to be a learning opportunity, saying that when giving feedback they could compare and contrast different papers (11).

- (11) 'It was very good that we could also read other students' drafts: we could see how they have structured their articles, what vocabulary used etc.'  
(S9)

At the seminar was also possible to ask for **oral feedback from the lecturer or the teaching assistant**. Although the feedback session was not organised in the most efficient way due to time restrictions, the students still appreciated it. Based on feedback, students made a variety of additional changes to the article, determined whether peers' comments were relevant and got advice on overcoming the discrepancies between the summarising and referencing conventions for Wikipedia articles and student papers (12).

- (12) 'It [the feedback] opened my eyes because she explained to me what the requirements for a Wikipedia article are and what layout should be used.'  
(S28)

The feedback by peers and the lecturer or teaching assistant was considered necessary, but it was suggested that it would have been easier to write the draft if more detailed instructions on the structure of a Wikipedia article and the language use were provided at the first stage of the writing task.

### 5.3. The final draft and the feedback

The activities of the **final draft stage** depended on the level of readiness of the draft. If the length of the draft did not meet the requirements, the learners needed to look for additional sources and write a longer text. If the draft was of an appropriate length, however, one could take the received feedback into account and just make the necessary changes. Special attention was paid to the correctness of paraphrasing, as students knew that the final versions of their articles will be scanned by the plagiarism detection system. Before the work was presented, the students made sure there were no elementary grammar mistakes and the layout met the requirements (13).

- (13) 'I reread my written text, tried to use the layout as it was described in the instructions and also to correct the mistakes I have found, so that by the deadline I could present as appropriate a paper as possible.'  
(S15)

At the final version stage the audience was considered more than before: the sentence structure and wording were simplified and the number of in-text references to legal acts reduced (14). It was also suggested that an effective way of making the article more reader-friendly is to provide examples.

- (14) 'I got rid of my so-called legalese, so that ordinary people would also be able to fully understand what I am trying to say in my article.'  
(S3)

The students also received **written feedback** on their final version **from the lecturer or the teaching assistant**. Learners said that the feedback was very detailed and helped to edit the text considerably (mainly wording and language structures). Most of the suggestions were accepted, as students agreed that these changes would make the text more clear and correct language-wise (15).



Nevertheless, there were also comments where students had a different opinion; these were predominantly cases of the word choice resulting from the original text, including terminology use. In those cases it was up to the student to decide what to choose because it is the author who is responsible for the text.

- (15) ‘As I know this topic quite well, everything seemed very simple and comprehensive to me, but when I made the changes, I understood that my so-to-say original would have been really difficult to read for a person who knows nothing about the law. Now the work is more reader-friendly.’ (S25)

Most of the students could move to editing after having presented the final draft of their article; however, here one could also see the recurring nature of the writing process because some learners also needed to return to the activities of previous stages of writing.

#### 5.4. The final version and the feedback

On the basis of the feedback given to the final draft, students edited their text and uploaded the **final version** to Wikipedia. Although for some students it took more time than expected because they were unfamiliar with the Wikipedia environment and attention needed to be paid to details, most of the students commented that it was not that difficult to complete the task if one followed the instructions (16). The most challenging and tedious task was editing the references, as the Wikipedia system was different from the one used in the students’ field of study.

- (16) ‘I uploaded my article to Wikipedia and it was surprisingly easy. I appreciated the help of the video, which was very clear. As there were many references in my text, it took some time to edit them.’ (S34)

**The lecturer or the teaching assistant gave written feedback** on the uploaded Wikipedia article. In some rare cases students were asked to slightly edit the article, for example, make some changes in the layout, but mostly the confirmation was sent that the article meets the requirements. Students were happy with the positive feedback (17).

- (17) ‘I liked it that I got some praise and it was said that my work looks good and I could take part in the legal article competition.’ (S1)

As the feedback provided on the final version of the article concluded the writing task, some students used the opportunity to share general comments on the organisation of the task. The process writing approach was considered to be a good addition to the writing assignments given in other subjects, where only the final result is assessed. Students shared the opinion that dividing the writing task into stages supported learning because it gave learners an opportunity to go in depth with the topic and continuously improve one’s text for several weeks (18). Moreover, such division into stages also helped students who are not very good at time management – they had to complete different parts of the task on time and therefore could not leave the entire writing task for the very last minute (19). One

student also mentioned that in terms of time management, it was also useful to keep the learning journal.

- (18) ‘.. I liked it that this work progressed from one stage to another. From time to time I could correct and improve my work. I am very happy.’ (S31)
- (19) ‘It was also good that the article was not left for the very end of the course, because otherwise I would have probably kept putting it off until the very end.’ (S11)

A small fraction of the students also commented on the connection between the writing task and the topics addressed at the seminars. It was said that the topics that were the most useful for writing this article were summarising and paraphrasing, referencing, paragraph structure, word choice and stylistic conventions.

## 6. Genre approach in the writing task

In addition to the learning journals reflecting students’ opinions on process writing, they also reported on learners’ attitude to writing a Wikipedia article as a genre. As three students had previous experience in writing a Wikipedia article, they reacted to the task well. However, the students who lacked any previous experience with Wikipedia articles reported on some fear and anxiety associated with the writing task (20). Most of the students had a neutral position.

- (20) ‘At the moment I am a bit scared because I have never written Wikipedia articles. It is especially frightening because Estonian is not my mother tongue and I am not sure how I will manage to complete the task.’ (S17)

Although the students were familiar with a Wikipedia article from the reader’s perspective, it required certain metaknowledge to write such an article. Additional information was provided at the opening seminar and on the online platform of the course, where one could find the Wikipedia style guide, a list of some good articles as well as the winning articles of previous Wikipedia article competitions. At the same time, it turned out that at different stages the students would have needed more detailed instructions on the structure of the article, summarising and referencing to be provided by the instructor (21).

- (21) ‘When writing the final draft, the most difficult part will be to put aside my usual habits and rules, because the format of a Wikipedia article differs greatly from that of the Department of Law.’ (S2)

The learning journal contained only a few comments regarding how writing for Wikipedia motivated students to make more effort than in the case of a traditional report/essay. One student was quite explicit about one’s preference for Wikipedia (22), while the readiness to make an effort was also expressed more implicitly through the desire to consider the audience (23). At the same time, there were also a number of students who used the external motivation by registering for the legal article competition (24).

- (22) ‘I would definitely prefer this kind of task over writing a report.’ (S3)

- (23) 'What made it difficult for me is that at every sentence I thought that this text is meant for everyone to read. It is much easier to write a report for a lecturer.' (S33)
- (24) 'An official competition makes me work harder to have a quality article that could be a reliable source of information in the future.' (S30)

At the end of the writing task most of the students had a neutral attitude to writing a Wikipedia article. Those who reflected on the entire task mostly shared the view that writing a Wikipedia article was an interesting experience, which however does not automatically mean that they would also be ready to contribute to Wikipedia in the future. Some participants pointed out the importance of the quality of the article and its usefulness for readers, commenting also on the article they have written – whether it seemed good enough or they have certain doubts in terms of the quality. There were also more emotional entries, where a student expressed pride over the uploaded article (25) as it seemed to be quite an achievement for them.

- (25) 'Overall, there was nothing impossible about writing a Wikipedia article. I rather gained new experience and it was interesting to do the task. At least it was great to send the link to my mother, saying, "Look, it's my first Wikipedia article" and my mother made me feel at least for a moment that I have done something wonderful.' (S28)

In some entries, the broader benefits of the Wikipedia writing task were pointed out. It was stated, for example, that in the future one would pay more attention for the message to be conveyed more plainly when communicating with someone who does not belong to the field of law (26). It was also noted that more attention will now be paid to orthography in other texts, not only in written assignments (27).

- (26) 'With hindsight, it was a very useful experience because I understood that when I am writing about the law, I tend to use very field-specific wording that might be virtually incomprehensible for the people unfamiliar with legal studies. I will try to keep that in mind in the future.' (S25)
- (27) 'Orthography and correctness suddenly became interesting and now I notice many more mistakes that others make.' (S39)

It can be concluded that students' attitude to the task of writing a Wikipedia article was neutral. There were some learners who took it just as another writing assignment, but there were also the students who believed that the task was interesting and useful for them and the benefits of the audience were also considered.

## 7. Pedagogical implications

Similarly to previous studies (Miller 2014: 83; Watson Todd, Towns 2021: 87), the present research has also indicated that Wikipedia-based writing tasks are suitable for a university-level writing course. While writing a Wikipedia article, the same stages of a research process are completed as in the case of a thesis and other academic texts. However, as through Wikipedia one addresses the public, not just a lecturer, the interest in writing of at least some students is enhanced (see e.g. Vetter 2014: 47; Vetter et al. 2019: 60) – learners feel that their work might be of use to

someone outside of the course. Moreover, students find a Wikipedia article as a genre to be quite interesting as most of them have never written such an article before.

The key to the success of a Wikipedia article as a process genre writing task consists in the topic choice. As the opportunity to select an interesting topic is one of the factors of motivation (Bruning, Horn 2000: 28), it is worth supporting it. Although some students may benefit from a list of possible entries, avoiding limiting their choice to the list is important. It is useful to create a special Wikipedia subpage for the task where students can reserve the topic for their article. When entering the topic to the subpage, the students have the first contact with the technical side of Wikipedia because they need to create a profile in order to make changes to the subpage.

Feedback plays an important role in process genre writing as it allows one to develop one's article further step by step. Although students appreciate receiving peer feedback, they do not point out the process of giving feedback as equally beneficial; therefore, it should be demonstrated in the course that peer feedback is valuable in two ways. One could also give students clear instructions that at the first draft stage it is reasonable to limit the feedback to comments about the clarity of content, article structure etc., leaving the more specific issues concerning orthography and orthology for the discussion that would follow the final draft stage. It helps the students to prioritise the changes better. Moreover, it would also be possible to use the feedback of the Wikipedia community more effectively at the very end of the task (after the article has been uploaded to Wikipedia) by setting a post-task, for instance asking the students to check whether Wikipedia administrators or readers have made changes to their articles or added comments.

Throughout the task, special attention should be paid to the genre, not just to the process. As most of the students have not written a Wikipedia article before, it is not enough at the beginning of the task just to introduce the quality standards and the style guide of the article as well as demonstrate some examples of good articles (as products). To enhance genre awareness it is necessary to consider also the article structure and language use for the students to have a clearer idea of an article that meets the genre conventions. None of the analysed learning journals, for example, indicated that students would deal with questions concerning the concept, term or definition, while every Wikipedia article starts with the key word that is followed by a definition. Therefore, in the writing task it would be reasonable to draw more attention to the relation between the concept and the term and how a concept can be defined.

While it is well known that a Wikipedia article is meant for the general public to read, the results of the study have demonstrated that relatively little attention was paid to the question of audience when writing the article. Only the students who thought about the benefits for the general audience already during the topic selection also considered the audience later, at various stages of the writing task. For the rest of the learners, the reader-centredness mainly became relevant only at the stage when feedback was given on the first draft, as the peers or the instructor pointed out the aspects of the article that could be difficult for the audience to understand. To produce more reader-centred articles, the issue should be addressed in more detail already at the first stage of the writing task, where the essence of a Wikipedia article as a genre is introduced. It would also be possible to enhance the

prominence of reader-centredness if seminars focused on composing reader-centred texts written in plain language instead of addressing the skills of academic writing like information search, reading etc.

The analysis of the students' learning journals provided valuable information on the organisational aspects of the task, making it possible to plan modifications to the course. However, as the students were free to decide on the topics for their learning journal entries, the collected data does not provide an adequate overview of some important aspects of the writing task, for example the different aspects of students' motivation and the development of academic writing skills. Furthermore, it would be important to supplement the data with first drafts, final drafts and the final versions of students' papers, to determine which changes were made at different stages and how these influence the quality of the final version of the article. As the next step, it would also be necessary to involve other groups in order to obtain a more comprehensive overview, also studying the experience of groups who are asked to write a traditional report instead of a Wikipedia article.

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## **“VAATA, MU ESIMENE VIKIPEEDIA ARTIKKEL!” ÜLIÕPILASTE SUHTUMINE AUTENTSESSE ŽANRIPÕHISESSE PROTSESSIKESKESSE KIRJUTAMISÜLESANDESSE**

**Riina Reinsalu**

Tartu Ülikool

Kuna Wikipedia on kasutussageduselt seitsmes veebisait maailmas ja üliõpilased puutuvad sellega tahes-tahtmata kokku, on viimase kümnekonna aasta jooksul jõutud arusaamiseni, et Wikipediasse tuleb suhtuda kui sõpra, mitte kui vaenlasse. Seetõttu on eri õppeainetes ülikoolides lõimitud mitmesuguseid Wikipedia-põhiseid ülesandeid. Muu hulgas on Wikipedia artikli kirjutamist õpetatud (žanripõhise) protsessikeskse tekstilooma põhimõtetest lähtudes, kuid vähe on uuritud, kuidas üliõpilased sellesse ülesandesse suhtuvad. Üliõpilaste suhtumine on aga oluline, sest see on tihedalt seotud õpikogemuse tähenduslikkusega. Artikli eesmärk on hinnata Wikipedia artiklil põhineva autentse kirjutamisülesande sobivust üliõpilaste kirjaliku väljendusoskuse arendamisel, otsides vastust küsimusele, kuidas tulevad üliõpilased toime žanripõhise protsessikeskse tekstilooma etappidega ja millist õpikogemust žanripõhine kirjutamisülesanne üliõpilastele pakub.

Artiklis käsitletakse 2019. aasta sügissemestril Tartu Ülikooli väljendusõpetuse aines kasutatud ülesannet, mille raames pidid õigusteaduse üliõpilased koostama erialase eestikeelse Wikipedia artikli. Ülesanne koosnes seitsmest etapist: eeltööst, mustandist, kaasüliõpilaste tagasisidest, puhtandist, õppejõu/õppeassistendi tagasisidest, lõppvariantist ja selle tagasisidest. Artikli kirjutamise ajal (9 nädala vältel) pidasid üliõpilased vabatahtlikult õpipäevikuid, kuhu tegid vähemalt kümme sissekannet vabalt valitud teemal (kokku 40 õpipäevikut; u 75 lk). Andmed kodeeriti kvalitatiivse sisuanalüüsi põhimõtetest lähtudes nii deduktiivselt kui ka induktiivselt, kasutades tarkvara NVivo.

Nii nagu varasemates uurimustes, leidis ka praegusel juhul kinnitust, et Wikipedia artikli kirjutamine sobib kirjaliku eneseväljenduse aine õppeülesandeks. Selle käigus läbitakse samad uurimistöö protsessi etapid nagu näiteks referaadi kirjutamisel, aga kuna Wikipedia kaudu edastatakse teavet avalikkusele, mitte lihtsalt õppejõule, suurendab see vähemasti osa üliõpilaste huvi kirjutamise vastu (eeldusel et on õnnestunud valida huvipakkuv teema). Samas pööravad üliõpilased kirjutamise ajal lugejatele siiski võrdlemisi vähe tähelepanu: vaid need, kes lähtusid kasust laiemale auditooriumile juba teema valimisel, arvestasid lugejaga ülesande eri etappides, ülejäänute puhul ilmnes vajadus arvestada lugejaga peamiselt mustandijärgse tagasiside etapis. Lisaks peavad üliõpilased huvitavaks Wikipedia artiklit kui žanri, sest sellega ei olda kirjutajatena varem kokku puutunud. See aga tähendab, et õppetöös ei piisa sellest, kui tutvustada artikli kvaliteedikriteeriume ja vormistusnõudeid ning näidata häid artikleid. Žanriteadlikkuse suurendamiseks on vaja põhjalikult käsitleda ka artiklite struktuuri ja keelekasutust, et üliõpilastel tekiks selgem arusaam žanritavadest.

**Võtmesõnad:** akadeemilise teksti kirjutamine, protsessipõhine tekstilooma, tagasiside, žanr, kõrgharidus, Vikipeedia