Giuli Shabashvili[1]

WAYS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING IN ACADEMIC WRITING COURSE

Abstract

Writing in the higher education environment is one of the basic skills, which on the one hand is related to a complex cognitive process and on the other hand requires practical work experience. Thus, teaching academic writing is a complex task that requires consideration of aspects of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, critical thinking, text structuring, production, research, responsibility, managing the writing process, and discipline specificity. Consequently, the academic writing course and the corresponding learning process should be planned so that the student simultaneously develops writing, research, and critical thinking skills, increases subject competence, and works independently and in a group. This goal can be achieved if a blended approach is introduced in the teaching of academic writing and the principles and strategies of both problem-oriented learning, process-oriented writing, and collaborative learning are considered. The purpose of the paper is to discuss the characteristics and advantages of problem-based learning in teaching academic writing. In the second part of the paper, a specific task related to the issues of multilingual education is discussed. Stages of task performance are presented, and relevant strategies and activities are analyzed. Accordingly, the paper has a methodological character and practical significance.

Keywords: academic writing, problem-based learning, process writing, cooperative learning, teaching methods

Introduction

Teaching academic writing is a complex process that requires integrating and developing a few essential aspects and skills. Namely: analysis, synthesis, evaluation, critical thinking, text structuring, production, research, responsibility, managing the writing process, and discipline specificity. Consequently, the BA course in academic writing in the European Studies program at Tbilisi State University aims to give students a broad and systemic knowledge of characteristics of academic language, adherence to citation and anti-plagiarism rules, characteristics of the argumentative large-scale academic text and research paper, types and the structure of the research paper, requirements, and characteristics of the BA thesis, the role, and significance of the argument, principles of developing argumentative discussion. Accordingly, upon completion of the course, the student understands the characteristics and structure of a large-scale argumentative text and a research paper, defines the rules for citing; can select and work with reliable sources, selects the necessary methods for the research, and defines the research needs and the purpose of the research, finds, selects, and critically analyzes primary and secondary sources. The student discusses research issues in a reasoned manner and summarizes the conclusions. As a result, during the course, students along with the large-scale essay independently create a research paper on a topic of interest to them within the frames of the BA in European Studies program. The academic writing course in this program is taught for one semester and the syllabus includes one lecture and two seminars per week. To achieve the course goals and deliver the given results, it is necessary to define valid and most appropriate teaching methods, which develop students' critical thinking, research, and writing skills parallel to subject knowledge.

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Several models of teaching academic writing were implemented in the educational environment. The traditional approach to teaching writing is based on a process-oriented approach, which involves the step-by-step development of a written text. According to the given approach, the writing starts with a preparatory stage, using brainstorming, planning, and mind-mapping, which, in turn, requires group work strategies. Moreover, before the final presentation of the paper, several drafts of it are developed during the writing process (Palpanadan et al., 2009, p. 790). As it is evident, according to the process-oriented approach, the actual process and each stage of writing are essential. The instructor gives the student proper theoretical materials and provides them with adequate strategies in advance. During these activities, the student completes several written assignments, including creating multiple drafts of an essay.

The second model of teaching writing is the Product approach, which focuses on the final product. In this approach, students are provided with several samples, they work on organizing ideas mostly, and only one draft of the target text can be developed in the writing classes (Klimova, 2014, p. 149). The work format is individual, although the instructor's guidance carries out the writing process.

Another approach used in teaching academic writing is problem-based learning (PBL). It is a student-centered teaching method and aims for the learner to find ways to solve the problem related to the context provided by the curriculum. Correspondingly, students can make a decision independently in the learning process (Ghufron & Ermawati, 2018, p. 659). It can be argued, that such an approach contributes to the development of analytical thinking skills in high. As for the teacher role, the instructor supports and motivates students to work on the problem solution independently.

As a result of the research conducted in the Georgian educational environment, it was revealed that one of the challenging tasks for students to overcome in the writing process is the formation of an objective critical opinion, "determining the reliability of sources, formulating the main statement/research questions, generalization, separating the firsthand and secondary information and concentrating on the main issue, expressing preliminary assumptions and drawing and forming logical consistent conclusions" (Gochitashvili & Shabashvili, 2021, p. 152). Thus, educators should take into account that performing different types of tasks involves a creative process that aims to display declarative knowledge or transform it into conditional knowledge. "New knowledge can be effectively and successfully constructed using metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies" (Shabashvili, 2012, p. 6). Consequently, to achieve an effective result, in particular, to increase subject competence and develop writing and analytical thinking skills, it is necessary to use different types of activities consistently and thoughtfully. This can be achieved by combining problem-based learning and process-oriented writing models.

The paper aims to discuss problem-based teaching method, approach, and strategy, which helps students on the one side to handle particular assignments and on the other side fulfill given activities. The first part of the paper provides a literature review and presents a discussion of the importance of problem-based learning in higher education and academic writing courses. The specific task is also discussed and analyzed according to the main requirements of problem-based and process-oriented writing. In the end, specific methodological recommendations are presented. Accordingly, the paper has methodological specificity and aims to provide practical guidance and tools for teaching academic writing. Each activity is analyzed through the context of PBL, cooperative, and process-based writing.

1. Models of teaching academic writing on the Bachelors program in European Studies at TSU

In the literature, PBL is characterized as a process of hypothetical-deductive reasoning, which implies the following: the student must independently find the data, process it, and raise a hypothesis based on the synthesis of the material. Additional primary and secondary sources should be sought to prove the hypothesis. Based on this, the PBL approach is considered a circle of analysis - research - report (Harper-Marinick, 2001, p. 5). Several characteristics of problem-based learning have been identified in various types of research. The main requirement of this approach is student-centered learning, which implies that students should be actively involved in the teaching process and should manage it themselves (Harper-Marinick, 2001:4). It can be said that student-centeredness is one of the fundamental requirements of the given model (Gijselaers, 1996). Thus, in a classroom environment based on the PBL approach, students can independently determine their needs, plan

the learning process, and evaluate both their work and that of other group members (Gallagher, 1997; Reynolds, 1997).

In addition, a collaborative environment should be created in the classroom. Students have to solve the set problems in groups (Harper-Marinick, 2001:4). Problem-based learning develops the student's communication skills, group work, information-sharing skills, and respect for others' opinions. Thus, PBL is considered a group learning method that develops students' general skills and attitudes (Wood, 2003), because, in the process of working together, students learn from each other, exchange ideas, and help each other find ways to solve problems (Blythe & Sweet, 2008).

In the problem-based approach, the teacher is the facilitator. the instructor does not lecture but encourages students to discover, collect data, conduct research, and present analysis (Harper-Marinick, 2001:4). It is believed that the teacher's main function, in this case, is support, problem-solving and cognitive coaching. Such a learning environment ensures increased student motivation, engagement, and participation in research (Torp & Sage, 2002). However, it should be noted that the lesson/lecture/seminar planned with such an approach is associated with certain difficulties and requires the instructor to carry out several preparatory works, in particular, the selection of special materials, time management, motivation of students to actively involve them in the work process, and the use of audio and visual material (Lapiashvili, 2017, p. 11).

It is important to consider that the problem under discussion and its solution should be a stimulus for learning, as a result of which students acquire knowledge through problem-solving (Harper-Marinick, 2001:4). In addition, it is important to consider that the problem at hand must be considered independently by students beforehand, without supporting or mediating information (Harper-Marinick, 2001, p. 5). The instructor must also keep in mind that the problem to be solved must be of real life, and relevant to the student's curriculum. It is better if the problem is complex and has several ways to solve it. Students should be able to analyze the problem to be solved, generalize, conduct research, find data, evaluate and make decisions. In addition, the student should be able to find minimal information related to the presented problem (ibid.). The use of real-life problems helps students to understand the fact that the learning process is directly related to the real-life context and therefore encourages them to make decisions independently and convinces them that it is possible to solve the problem (Aryanti et al., 2018).

In the process of work, students combine their knowledge, facts, and data, which contributes to the development of critical thinking. In the literature, indicators of critical thinking are significantly developed as a result of lessons conducted with a problem-oriented learning model (Ibrahim et al., 2020, p. 3).

The PBL approach's role in teaching academic writing and second language writing has been studied in academia. It is believed that the PBL approach helps to develop and enhance the cognitive competence of the student, which in turn will help to perform the writing tasks effectively (Surya, 2018).

Various studies have shown that as a result of using PBL activities, students can more easily answer questions and describe ways to solve problems. Also, their evaluation points are increasing. However, as noted in some studies, to develop students' writing skills, the teacher should provide them with the theoretical foundations of academic writing in advance and use practical exercises and tasks only after the acquired knowledge and experience (Aryanti et al., 2018).

It is natural to ask how PBL activities can be implemented in the process of teaching academic writing, specifically what types of tasks should be completed to achieve the objectives set out in the syllabus. Individual studies describe the general stages of PBL model implementation (Trekles, 2012; Arends, 2012, Aryanti et al. 2018). As for using this approach directly in the process of teaching the written component, in this case, students are given questions related to the development of an argumentative text, for example, how to construct a paragraph, how to create the main sentence/thesis, how to choose a title, etc. Sh.

Students are also given some specific samples to consider. As a result of group discussion, students select answers and discuss them (Surya, 2018, p. 351-352). The educational process planned in this way echoes the principles of the problem-based approach and allows for the achievement of specific effective results, however, in this case, students are only given questions related to the theoretical issues of writing, which are related to the stages of creating a written work. In such a planned teaching environment, students only create short responses or assignments and present them to an audience, and no final large-scale written text is developed. In addition, in this case, a product-oriented writing approach is also used, when students are introduced to model

samples. Also, students do not search for additional material and sources independently, but the instructor provides them with mediated information, which in its turn develops students' research skills less. Thus, it is better to plan the seminar work so that the students can simultaneously create a large-scale argumentative text, conduct research independently, discuss the problem at hand and find ways to solve it. The goal can be achieved by combining a problem-based learning model and a process-oriented writing approach by using appropriate activities.

2. The example of a typical assignment (a task) and the template demonstrating the scheme for its accomplishment

The second part of the paper presents and discusses a particular assignment based on the principles of problem-based learning, group work, collaborative writing, and process-oriented writing approaches. The assignment is intended for students of the bachelor's program of European studies. The purpose of the assignment is to create large-scale argumentative text, and the topic of the assignment is to develop and implement a model of regulation related to hate speech in audiovisual services within the framework of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

The issue is relevant, and problematic and echoes the subject provided by the curriculum. The assignment is scheduled to be completed over seven academic weeks, with the activities to be carried out each week corresponding to the topics and issues outlined in the academic writing course syllabus. It can be said that the task has a double burden: on the one hand, students work, discuss and analyze the problem of regulating hate speech in the field of Georgian media services according to the requirements of the European directive. based on the collected and processed data, they discuss the ways to solve the problem in a group and independently make decisions, which will ultimately contribute to the discipline competence raising and developing critical thinking skills.

On the other hand, in parallel, in the seminars, according to the problem-oriented learning approach, students independently discuss the requirements of academic writing. In particular, students discuss the strategies and principles of selecting a topic, creating a title, finding and processing material, as well as the structure of an argumentative essay on the example of the problem of hate speech regulation in the field of Georgian media services. Finally, students independently conclude how to solve the problems concerning their writing tasks towards essay creation. This, in turn, will contribute to developing and improving students' writing skills.

In class, the lecturer summarizes the students' opinions and provides them with additional information. Moreover, as homework, students will find primary and secondary sources. As for the format of the assignment, the assignment is completed in a group. Students should be grouped either on their initiative or with the help of the lecturer. The number of students in a group can be an average of 4-5. The purpose of this assignment is, on the one hand, for students to deepen their soft skills, and on the other hand, to use the opportunity to apply knowledge into practice. Finally, the assignment aims to create an analytical argumentative essay that responds to the principles and requirements of academic writing and in which a problem related to the topic under discussion is resolved. The next part of the paper presents a detailed description of each task stage for each week.

Task description:

I week

The first step of the task includes preparation for writing. Students are divided into groups, after which the lecturer must introduce the topic of the assignment to the audience: *the development and implementation of an effective model of regulation related to hate speech in the field of audiovisual services within the framework of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.* Students are given the following short text to discuss and analyze, in which the problem under discussion is posed and described:

The essence of the problem: *according to the association agreement signed between the European Union and Georgia, Georgia undertook to gradually bring its legislation closer to the EU legislation and international*

legal instruments in the field of audiovisual media services within the specified time frame. The obligation to bring Georgian legislation into compliance with the European Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services is determined by Annex XXXIII of the Association Agreement. From this point of view, one of the main requirements of the EU directive is for the country to develop an effective mechanism for responding to issues related to hate speech and other legal violations in the field of broadcasting. The directive provides clarifications on various types of infringements. The Directive also proposes different forms of response, including self-regulation, regulation, and co-regulation. Part of the norms proposed in the mentioned directive is mandatory, while part is recommendatory and allows Georgia to choose several ways of solving the issue.

Georgia pledged to bring its legislation closer to the mentioned directive, for which purpose the draft law was developed, namely amendments to the Georgian Law on Broadcasting. Although the draft law was developed in 2019 and the deadline for fulfilling the above-mentioned obligation was in the same year, the process of parliamentary review/adoption of the draft law was stopped due to the strong reaction from the representatives of the broadcasting sector.

The draft law, namely the amendments to the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting, was developed by the National Communications Regulatory Commission of Georgia, which is an independent regulator in the field of communications. Based on the directive's recommendations, the draft law authors have developed a model according to which, in the case of the use of hate speech, the regulatory commission is responsible for regulating the issue. The mentioned model was perceived negatively by some of the media representatives. They believed this authority would most likely be abused by the commission and would lead to the closure of opposition television channels.

On the other hand, the Georgian National Communications Commission states that the model is absolutely in line with the European directive, and it is clear from the wording of the directive that in the case of hate speech, only the regulation carried out by the relevant authority should be used. The commission relied on the recommendation of the EU expert while developing the draft law. The 2019 ERGA report was also considered.

A document was developed by the experts of the Council of Europe, according to which, taking into account the Georgian reality, Georgia is proposed to introduce a co-regulation mechanism. Experts say that in the case of hate speech, co-regulation is compatible with the directive and is the most acceptable form for Georgia in the given situation. However, at the same time, it is noted that to develop the proposed model, there should be a common opinion and a balanced position among the broadcasters. However, it should be pointed out that no form of co-regulation is used in any EU country's context of hate speech.

Students should discuss in groups the essence of the presented problem and the difficulties related to implementing the mentioned directive.

The next task stage is to select the working title of the argumentative essay. The lecturer presents the students with several titles related to the discussed topic. The students should discuss in groups the weak and strong points of each title, select the option that, in their opinion, best responds to the principles of academic writing, and justify the answers with good arguments. Below are the header options to choose from:

• Association Agreement signed between the European Union and Georgia;

• Basic requirements of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement;

• European Union Directive;

• The issue of the need to adapt Georgian legislation to EU legislation and international legal instruments in the field of audiovisual media services;

• The need to create response mechanisms to issues related to hate speech;

• Hate speech in mass media;

• Directive of the European Union on the regulation of the use of hate speech in the Georgian mass media;

• Difficulties in implementing the European Union directive on the regulation of the use of hate speech in the field of media services and their analysis;

• Difficulties in implementing the obligations under the association agreement related to hate speech regulations in audiovisual media services in Georgian legislation and their analysis.

After reviewing the titles, students should summarize the discussion and identify and write down the

strategies and characteristics of effective headline selection. The lecturer discusses the results with the students and gives them direction if necessary.

About the problem under consideration, students should find primary and secondary sources, and theoretical literature in groups and begin to process them using the principles of the critical reading approach. The lecturer, in turn, offers the following material to be processed:

• *Euro Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services;*

• *DIRECTIVE (EU) 2018/1808 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL changes implemented on November 14, 2018, in the 2010/13/EU Euro Directive;*

• *Excerpt from the draft law on "Amendment to the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting";*

• *Excerpt from the Law of Georgia "On Broadcasting";*

• *recommendations of experts;*

• *ERGA report, 2019*

• *Experience in other countries.*

II week

At this stage of the task, students should consider the principles of processing the theoretical and empirical data, approaches to the critical reading of the text, strategies for creating a literature review, and the characteristics and structure of this type of text.

The instructor then gives the students some examples of basic statements or research problems related to the same problem under discussion, which are given below:

1)

Hate speech is a form of expression that establishes a negative attitude in society and promotes the spread of hatred, discrimination, and hostility towards different groups. Thus, in the modern democratic world, regulating the use of hate speech should be one of society's main tasks. This is due to the European Union directive regarding the regulation of hate speech in the field of mass media services, which implies the existence of an effective mechanism for responding to issues related to hate speech and other rights violations in the field of broadcasting. Within the framework of the EU-Georgia association agreement, it is necessary to implement the requirements stipulated by the mentioned directive.

2)

Within the framework of the association agreement, the Georgian side has an obligation to implement within the Georgian legislation within the field of mass media services such as an effective model of hate speech regulation, which, on the one hand, corresponds to the directive of the European Union, and, on the other hand, takes into account the specifics of the Georgian media sphere.

3)

Within the framework of the association agreement, the Georgian side has an obligation to implement such an effective model of hate speech regulation in the field of mass media services in the Georgian legislation, which, on the one hand, corresponds to the directive of the European Union, and, on the other hand, takes into account the specifics of the Georgian media sphere. From this point of view, we can consider the co-regulation mechanism as one of the effective models. Therefore, the paper aims to answer the following research questions:

• *Is the co-regulation mechanism provided by the Euro Directive the most effective model in the context of hate speech?*

• *Does the use of co-regulation comply with the requirements of the Euro Directive in the case of hate speech?*

• *Taking into account that co-regulation in the case of hate speech is not used in any European country, how adequate is the introduction of the mentioned form of regulation in Georgia?*

Students should consider each option and discuss which one comprehensively reflects the target issue, allows for a comprehensive analysis of the problem, and contains the sub-issues to be addressed. At the end of the discussion, students conclude how to formulate a research question and how to pose a problem in an analytical text, and what strategies and linking words are most effective in this regard.

As homework, students should complete the following task in groups, namely, process the collected data and, taking into account the rules of citation and the requirements of academic language, create a text in which the issue and relevant theoretical literature will be reviewed. In addition, the students should rework a selected version of the main statement/problem analyzed in the workshop and use it in their essays after some modification and elaboration.

Based on the overview of the problem, students should pose a problem to be discussed, in which the sub-issues will be defined.

III week

In the third week of the task fulfillment, students in groups read a text created by each other, which includes a review of the literature and the problem, discussing the problem statement and sub-issues formulated by another group, and distinguishing and analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.

In the same week, the sentencing issue is related to the essence of the argument. Students should discuss in groups what is the primary function of an argument, what can serve as an argument, a sub-argument, and a counter-argument. Students should also consider strategies for constructing argumentative reasoning. After comparing opinions, students have an idea about the requirements and format of argumentative reasoning. At the same seminar, the instructor provides students with information about SCQA and SWOT analysis approaches and presents relevant examples.

In the homework format, students must analyze the data available to them, analyze what can be used as an argument, sub-argument, and counter-argument, and connect relevant arguments to each above-discussed issue to be able to form their discussion. Students can use SCQA or SWOT analysis approaches that are acceptable to them and construct corresponding concept maps.

For example, if the students have selected the following sub-issue to be discussed - *the co-regulation mechanism provided by the Euro directive is the most effective model for Georgia in the context of hate speech* - they can use the following arguments and sub-arguments:

• *Information contained in the European Directive*

• *Types and forms of co-regulation mechanisms*

• *Co-regulation mechanisms functioning conditions, scope, and existing international experience*

• *Compatibility of co-regulation mechanisms with the Georgian legislative framework*

• *Compatibility of co-regulation mechanisms with the media service in Georgia*

• *Opinions of EU experts*

• *Opinions of Georgian experts*

• *Results of separate independent research*

• *Analysis of student-recorded interviews (if any)*

IV week

At this stage of the task, the structure of the essay is considered. Students independently discuss the structure of the essay and the principles of building the main discussion. The participants of the groups discuss the structure of the paragraph, as well as which strategy can be effective for the construction and development of the paragraph, and what type of linking words and phrases can be used in this regard. Before making a final decision, students review two sample paragraphs provided by the instructor and discuss which one is effective and why. The lecturer checks the final results of the group work. Below are sample paragraphs to consider:

1)

In the case of the adoption of the presented bill, the legislation of Georgia will comply with the currently valid version of the 2010/13/EU Euro Directive on audiovisual media services. In the case of the adoption of the draft law, several rules are determined by the legislation. The rules will take into account trends in technological development and provide a uniform level playing field for new types of audiovisual media appearing on the market. The purpose of the rules defined by the draft law is to preserve cultural diversity, ensure access to audiovisual media services for persons with disabilities, protect minors and users, ensure media pluralism and

effectively respond to the spread of hate speech on various grounds, programs and advertisements containing incitement to terrorism, programs and advertisements that do not comply with current legislation, creation of an effective prevention mechanism for risks and consequences[2].

2)

Adoption of the draft law on amendments to the Georgian Law "On Broadcasting" is an important step in the direction of the implementation of the obligations assumed by the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, because in the case of the adoption of the mentioned draft law, the legislation of Georgia will be in line with the current version of the Euro Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services.

As a result of the adoption of the draft law, several important rules will be determined by the legislation, which will take into account the trends of technological development and provide a uniform level playing field for new types of audiovisual media appearing on the market. The purpose of the rules defined by the draft law is, on the one hand, to preserve cultural diversity, and on the other hand, to ensure access to audiovisual media services for persons with disabilities, and to protect minors and users. In addition, the draft law aims to ensure media pluralism, create models for regulating the spread of hate speech on various grounds, and develop effective response tools to programs and advertisements containing incitement to terrorism. Within the framework of the draft law, a mechanism for effectively preventing the risks and consequences of disseminating programs and advertisements inconsistent with current legislation will be developed. As a result, a healthy democratic environment will be created in which the rights of citizens will be protected and, at the same time, the demands of media subjects will be taken into account. However, it should be noted that to achieve this, it is necessary to develop such effective mechanisms for the regulation of hate speech, which, on the one hand, will be based on the requirements of the European Directive, and, on the other hand, will take into account the Georgian reality and the interests of all actors to whom the regulations adopted by the said law will apply.

As part of independent work, students create the main body of the essay and the corresponding paragraphs.

V week

Before starting work on new issues, students check each other's texts and discuss strengths and weaknesses as a group, make appropriate arguments and offer each other appropriate recommendations.

The fifth week of the assignment is devoted to the rules of developing the author's position and creating the final part of the essay. In this case, students also discuss in groups which strategy will be effective in creating the relevant part of the essay, what type of information should be included in the conclusion, and how the author's assessments, positions, and ways of solving the problem should be formed.

During the homework, students take notes and revise the main body of the essay, while creating a conclusion and formulating their assessment and, therefore, ways of solving the problem. Based on the created argumentative discussion, students should draw a conclusion, which model of implementation of the European Directive and regulation of hate speech in the field of media services is the most effective and why, as well as which strategy and means of implementing the selected model are the most adequate and why.

VI week

After reviewing the homework, students should discuss the function and structure of the introduction, as well as effective strategies for creating an introduction. Students should consider several sample introductions provided by the lecturer and should select the most acceptable option. Answers should be substantiated with appropriate arguments.

As homework, students must create an introduction to an essay related to the topic of the assignment.

VII week

The seventh week represents the final summary stage of the assignment. Students should independently develop essay evaluation criteria, discuss them with each other, and then evaluate each other's essays. The final assessment of the assignment is carried out by the instructor. Based on the essays created during the assignment, the lecturer should provide comprehensive written feedback to the students.

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[2]   Explanation of the draft law of Georgia "On Broadcasting" regarding amendments to the law of Georgia (the text is adapted based on the needs of the course).

The role of the lecturer:

The described seminar work is practical and student-oriented as much as possible. As for the role of the lecturer, during the course of the seminar, the supervisor helps the students to make decisions, draw correct conclusions and select adequate strategies. In addition, the lecturer helps students find material and guide the writing process effectively. At the end of each seminar, the lecturer gives verbal feedback to the students. Accordingly, during the conduct of this type of work, the teacher is an observer, facilitator, and supporter.

3. Teaching methods and strategies

The task is based on several teaching models, namely problem-based learning, process-based writing, product-based writing, and collaborative writing. In addition, problem-based learning carries a double burden in this activity. On the one hand, students discuss the solution to the problem related to the topic under discussion, and on the other hand, they discuss the problems related to the creation of an academic paper. It is important to consider that both types of tasks are solved synchronously, are directly connected, and complement each other. In addition, in both cases, students discuss in groups and independently make decisions and choose appropriate strategies. The final results are checked together with the instructor. The work process can be shown schematically as follows:

Table N1. Scheme of the task to be implemented with the problem-oriented learning approach:
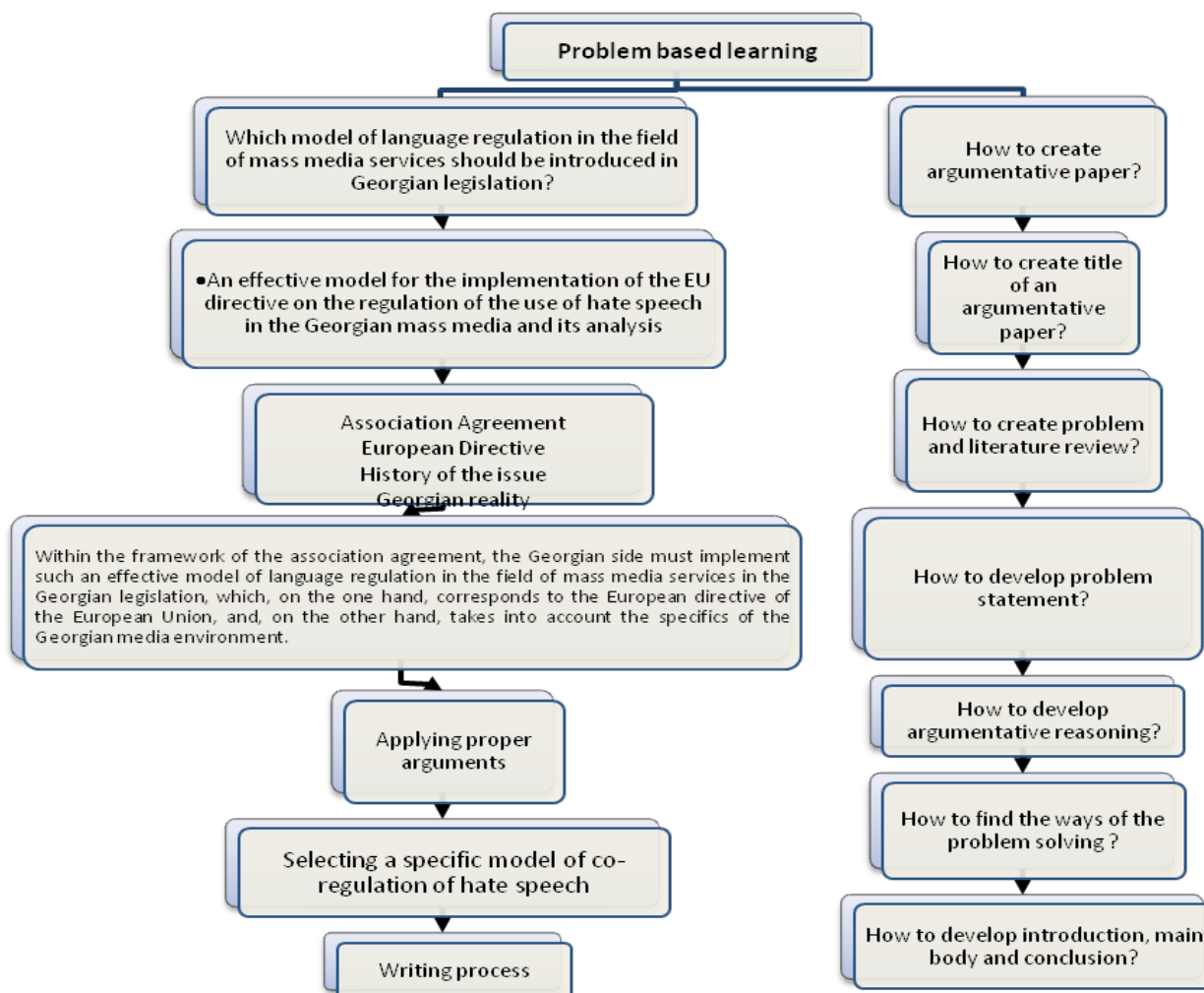
During the execution of the tasks given by the instructor, the BA students across various programs at TSU usually opt for the following strategies: group work, discussion, making assumptions, SCQA and SWOT analysis, and working on sources.

4. Types of assessment

One of the important strategies to achieve the goal of the assignment is an adequate and effective assessment system. From this point of view, the teacher should use a summative assessment in the work process, the score obtained as a result of group work will be equally assigned to all participants. In addition, ongoing formative assessment should be used. Verbal and written teacher feedback plays a crucial role in motivating students and assessing progress. During feedback, the lecturer should explain to the students the weaknesses and strengths of the completed task so that the learners can avoid further risks in the writing and problem-solving process. Another form of assessment is important, students evaluating and reviewing each other's papers, and providing written and oral feedback.

5. Weaknesses of the task

Although the task is discussed above is completely student-oriented, several risk factors and weaknesses can be identified in the implementation process. First of all, the problem may be, on the one hand, dividing students into groups, and, on the other hand, maintaining the composition of these groups during all seven weeks of the assignment. Additionally, when working in groups, not all students may be equally engaged and active, which may demotivate less active students. These risks can be avoided by assigning roles and tasks to the students for which each of them will be independently responsible when forming the groups and before carrying out each activity. Another challenge that can hinder effective task performance is the collaborative writing activity. In the Georgian educational environment, the strategy of creating a written text in groups is rarely used, so it may be a less comfortable task for students. However, this issue can also be solved by redistributing roles, when within the framework of one activity, each student will be responsible for performing different tasks, they will find different materials and create a written assignment based on this.

Final results and conclusions

The task under consideration is important in terms of obtaining several results. First of all, in the process of completing the task, students will deepen their knowledge of the field (both in the direction of academic writing and the EU-Georgia Association Agreement) and increase their skills in applying knowledge in practice. Based on the acquired knowledge, they will be able to find ways to solve the problem, which, in turn, will contribute to the development of critical thinking skills. Locating sources and working with sources will help students develop research skills. Moreover, completing all of these tasks will ultimately enable students to produce an argumentative, analytical text that will serve as a foundation for developing writing skills.

Table N2 Description of the results of the practical task
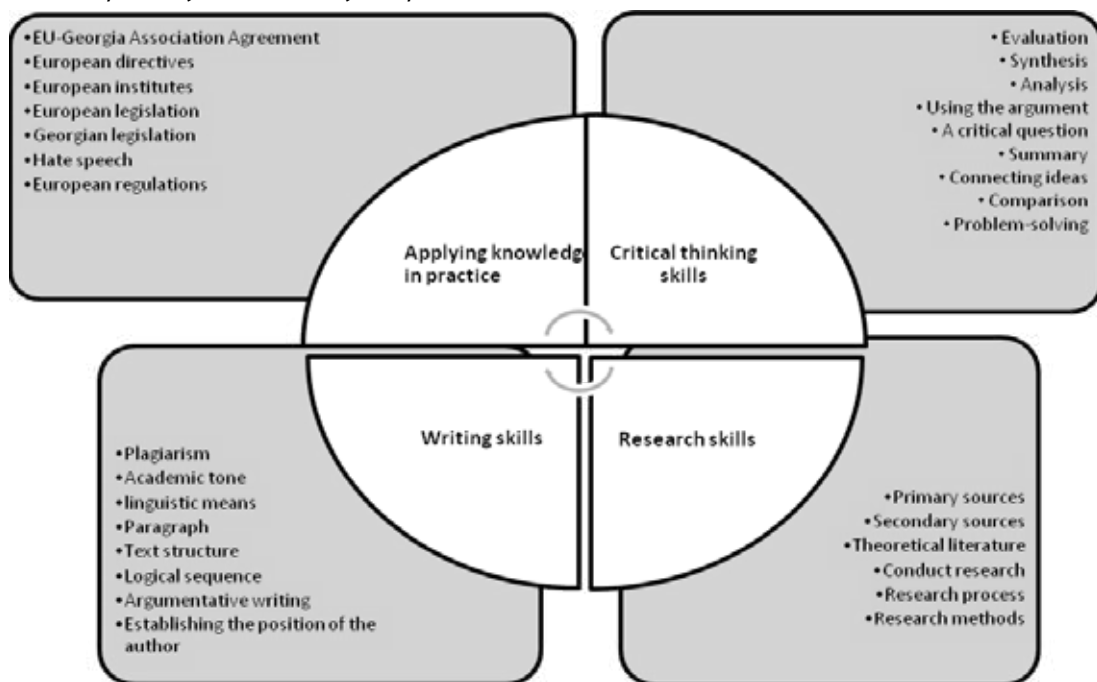
When planning this task, the teacher should consider the following noteworthy aspect: students should select and work on a real problem related to subject competence and real-life issue, find ways to solve the problem and present an argumentative text. In parallel with working on a real problem, students must discuss the principles of academic writing and strategies and ways to perform an analytical text, which is a complex task that requires maximum involvement and a variety of activities from students.

It can be concluded, that a similar task can be performed on any critical and problematic issue related to the curriculum, which will help increase students' subject competence. On the other hand, according to problem-based teaching approaches, students independently think and discuss the steps and principles of creating an argumentative essay without the help of an instructor and, at the same time, create a large-scale paper within the group within the time allotted for the task. Students work independently, they decide what data to use and how to process it. In this case, the instructor plays the role of observer, supporter, and facilitator. As a result, students develop writing and independent research skills, group work, and collaborative learning skills. Ultimately, these activities develop analytical thinking, which is one of the basic components of problem-based learning and one of the main goals of an academic writing course. In conclusion, it should be said that one of the effective approaches for the development of writing skills is to combine several teaching models, namely, cooperative teaching, process-oriented writing, and problem-based learning, and to consistently include relevant strategies and activities in the teaching process.

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