

## **‘WE ARE WHAT AND HOW WE WRITE’: HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS’ WRITTEN TEXT PRODUCTION IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE**

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We are what and how we write. Writing is an important skill, a vital tool in everyday life, a way of learning, making sense of a world, discovering things, growing and developing, putting thoughts into words, a need to see what we say to know what we think. Writing is the art of arts as words can do what a thousand pictures cannot. Given a very simple question ‘What is writing in English for?’ the majority of students usually distinguish the following: writing is important for correspondence, for making contracts, for writing CVs, for filling in forms when applying for the job, for writing formal letters, for using a computer or the Internet, and for spreading information on the one hand. On the other hand, they point out that writing is important for communication with people and studying abroad. Finally, they recognize writing as an activity which helps to improve language skills in general, even improves their thinking or flow of thoughts, trains the ability to express their thoughts and ideas better, broadens their vocabulary and in this way expands their general knowledge of English. Thus, according to their considerations, writing is very important for an educated person and is a good credit for getting a good job and effective functioning in the world of work. All students acknowledge writing as important; nevertheless, they stress the priority of speaking. Moreover, students think of writing assignments as a punishment instead of something as a life-long skill. Competent writing in a foreign language as a communicative means plays a very important role in the modern-day world of work. Although writing has always been an important form of communication, it has been a rather neglected area in foreign language classes for many years. Therefore, students’ writing competence has significantly decreased and has become inadequate to the requirements of standard writing, not to mention the requirements of academic writing. Other factors, such as the age of technology, and teaching means of foreign publication based mainly on the method of fragmentary activities

(e.g. gap filling), often result in students' incapability to write logically and coherently. Secondary education graduates and entrants into the higher education institutions are incapable of producing a competent written text in a foreign language or produce it in a very poor language coherence, language structures, adequate vocabulary and grammar. Thus, the existing problem of developing higher education students' written language production competence suggests reviewing the existing foreign language curricula and making corresponding improvements. Thus, the paper is aimed at presenting the description of the existing problem in the field of higher education students' written text production competence, the theoretical background for the research, the analysis of the empirical research data and the discussion based on the results of the empirical research data analysis. The analysis of the empirical research is based on the comparison of the following data: secondary education students' written text production competence assessment results (English State Maturity Examination), higher education students' written text production competence assessment results (English General Achievement Test), and higher education graduates' written text production competence self-assessment and the assessment of its importance in the world of work.