

MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC – METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL



MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC – METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL

<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>



AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT CONDITION OF LEGAL ACADEMIC WRITING PROFICIENCY DEVELOPMENT AMONG UZBEK JURISPRUDENCE STUDENTS

Dildora Rakhmanova

Teacher of Practical Foreign Languages Department

Namangan State University

raxdildora18@gmail.com

Namangan, Uzbekistan

ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: Jurisprudence students; legal academic writing, writing proficiency; English for Academic Purposes (EAP); legal writing genres, higher education; writing skills development; pedagogical strategies, integration ,professional needs;

Received: 27.02.26

Accepted: 01.03.26

Published: 03.03.26

Abstract: This article examines the current condition of academic writing skill development among jurisprudence students, focusing on instructional approaches, learner challenges, and institutional support mechanisms. Through a review of existing research, analysis of teaching practices, and evaluation of students' proficiency levels, the study identifies key barriers such as limited exposure to academic genres, insufficient practice opportunities, and a lack of specialized writing courses tailored to legal discourse. The findings highlight the need for targeted pedagogical interventions and the integration of discipline-specific writing instruction to enhance students' academic and professional competencies. Recommendations for improving curriculum design, teaching strategies, and assessment practices are proposed to support effective English academic writing development in the field of jurisprudence.

Introduction

In the era of expanding globalization and international academic collaboration, English has emerged as the dominant language of legal scholarship, professional communication, and international law[10]. For students pursuing degrees in jurisprudence, proficiency in English academic writing is no longer an optional skill but an essential requirement for academic

achievement and future professional engagement[12]. The ability to articulate legal arguments, analyze judicial decisions, and produce research papers in a clear and academically sound manner significantly influences students' learning outcomes and their integration into professional legal environments.

Scholar J.Richards and others [13] claim that writing abilities are essential for completing academic assignments such as essays, articles, dissertations, projects, and exams. One of the most difficult abilities for students, particularly those who have studied English as a foreign language, is writing.

Despite its growing importance, many jurisprudence students continue to face challenges in mastering academic writing in English. Common difficulties include limited vocabulary related to legal discourse, unfamiliarity with academic writing conventions, insufficient practice in constructing arguments, and limited exposure to authentic academic materials. Furthermore, in many institutions, English instruction remains general rather than discipline-specific, which restricts students' ability to develop writing skills relevant to their field of study.

Given these challenges, examining the present condition of English academic writing skill development among jurisprudence students is both timely and necessary. This article aims to analyze the existing instructional practices, identify obstacles that hinder students' writing proficiency, and evaluate the effectiveness of current curricular and methodological approaches. By exploring these dimensions, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the gaps between current teaching practices and the actual academic needs of jurisprudence students. The findings underscore the importance of implementing targeted, context-specific strategies to enhance students' academic writing abilities and better prepare them for scholarly and professional communication in the legal domain.

Literature review

According to international experience, teaching academic writing in English to law students is considered to be one of the more complex areas that requires further development. Several researchers and scholars have presented their views on this issue in their works.

Some researchers like A.Cumming[2], K.Griggs[4], B.Paltridge [8] explain that law undergraduates, similar to students in other academic disciplines, are expected to enter higher education with an established level of basic writing competence, particularly in terms of clarity of expression and lower-order concerns (LOCs). This foundational proficiency enables them to transition effectively into academic writing practices, including argumentative essays, project reports, and research papers, across a range of disciplines and contexts.

Others such as D.Horowitz [6] B.Street [14] , J.Wilkes and others [15] consider that law school writing instructors expect students to grasp the concepts of “specificity,” “precision,” and “concision” in academic writing. Additionally, students are expected to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant information within a given context and to provide judiciously selected content appropriate for an academic writing setting.

Reflecting on the current state of the field, the researcher H. Chendeb[1] writes:“One of the most common complaints expressed by specialists in the field of law is that English courses are mainly focused on teaching general language skills (i.e., EGP – English for General Purposes), which does not sufficiently develop the specialized legal language required for their professional activities. As a result, a significant gap emerges between the language material being taught and the students’ discipline-specific needs. Therefore, legal English courses should be accompanied by language support that fosters technical and professional language skills.”

E. Liebenberg[7] describes legal English as “a form of professional language in which legal terminology is used, and such terminology is usually not understandable to ordinary people.” He notes that the texts used in legal English courses are complex, and understanding and analyzing them requires skills equivalent to those of a specialist with at least intermediate-level proficiency in English.

In addition, the development of writing skills in legal education has not received sufficient attention, as it has traditionally been assumed that many tasks performed by lawyers require oral communication skills rather than the preparation of written documents. For example, conducting interviews, negotiating, and courtroom advocacy have been considered priorities. This view is also supported by S. Harris[5] who emphasizes that “academic legal writing is an underdeveloped area” and stresses the important role of writing.

T.Pospelova [9] also mentions that the most challenging problem of academic writing among law students is associated with their failure to follow some stages of writing academic papers or essays, especially the last stage of postwriting. University or college students are not often skillful in the written language and face some difficulties of different kinds.

As Y. Deutch [3] notes that the lack of legal education among language instructors is a major problem for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses in the legal domain. In fact, it is very difficult to find individuals who are specialists in both law and linguistics and who can approach these two areas with equal competence.

Methods

In order to determine the current situation, a survey was conducted among first- and second-year students in Namangan state university, Tashkent state law university in the field

of jurisprudence. More than 70 percent of the respondents stated that they feel insecure when writing scientific articles, term papers or their law related writings in English, while 60 percent reported difficulties in correctly using legal terminology in English. In addition, some students noted that they do not clearly understand the difference between “legal writing” and “academic writing.”

When we ask some questions in order to identify the matter the answers were submitted the following:

How often do you write academic papers in English for your law-related courses?	Sometimes 61,2%	Often 22,4%	Never 11,9%	Always 0%
What challenges do you face when writing academic texts in English?	Vocabular(Legal terms) 58,2%	Grammar 23,9%	Sentence structure 13,4%	Referencing 0%
Which types of academic writing samples are you familiar with?	Essays 61,2%	Case analysis 23,9%	Research papers 11,9%	Legal memorandums 0%
How would you rate your knowledge of academic writing in English?	Exellant 9%	Good 53,7%	Fair 29,9%	Poor 7,5%

Table 1. Survey questions and answers of the questionnaire

The survey results indicate that most jurisprudence students engage in academic writing in English only on an occasional basis: 61.2% report writing papers sometimes, and only 22.4%

do so often, which suggests limited but consistent exposure rather than systematic practice. This irregular use may hinder the development of advanced writing proficiency. The most significant difficulty identified is legal vocabulary (58.2%), underscoring the need for focused instruction in legal terminology and phraseology. In contrast, referencing was not reported as a challenge, which may reflect limited involvement in research-intensive writing tasks rather than strong referencing competence.

Students demonstrate the greatest familiarity with essays (61.2%), a genre typically emphasized in general academic writing, while professionally relevant genres such as legal memorandums and research papers remain largely unfamiliar. This reveals a gap between academic training and the practical writing demands of the legal profession. Although 53.7% of respondents rate their academic writing knowledge as good, this self-assessment suggests moderate confidence that may not fully align with the complexity of legal academic and professional writing, indicating substantial potential for further skills development.

In addition to the survey, an analysis was conducted of the coursebooks and syllabus commonly used in higher education institutions for law-related English courses. This analysis revealed that instructional materials tend to place greater emphasis on general academic English skills rather than on discipline-specific legal writing. Most coursebooks focus primarily on essay writing, grammar, and general vocabulary development, while offering limited coverage of professional legal genres such as case briefs, legal memorandums, and research-based legal writing.

Furthermore, the syllabus often prioritize theoretical knowledge over practical writing tasks, resulting in insufficient opportunities for students to practice authentic legal writing aligned with real professional contexts. As a result, there appears to be a mismatch between curricular content and the actual academic and professional writing needs of jurisprudence students. These findings reinforce the need for curriculum redesign that integrates legal writing genres, targeted legal vocabulary instruction, and practice-oriented tasks to better support students' academic success and future professional competence.

results and discussion

The findings of the analysis demonstrate the urgent need for a comprehensive and systematic approach to fostering English academic writing proficiency among students of jurisprudence. To achieve sustainable progress, the implementation of specialized writing-focused courses tailored to legal discourse is essential. These courses should incorporate structured instruction on genre conventions, argumentation strategies, and discipline-specific terminology characteristic of academic and professional legal communication.

In addition to coursework, the establishment of practical writing workshops is strongly recommended. Such workshops provide students with opportunities for hands-on engagement in drafting legal analyses, case commentaries, research summaries, and argumentative essays under guided supervision. Integrating analytical writing tasks based on authentic international legal documents—such as court rulings, academic articles, and treaty provisions—further enhances learners' ability to interpret complex legal materials and express their understanding in written form.

Moreover, expanding access to multilingual academic resources and digital platforms can significantly support students in acquiring the linguistic, conceptual, and stylistic competencies required in legal academia. Encouraging independent study through assignments that involve close reading of English-language legal scholarship fosters critical thinking and strengthens students' ability to synthesize and apply information effectively.

Finally, developing compositional skills through exposure to exemplary models of scientific and legal writing plays a crucial role in improving coherence, cohesion, and clarity in students' academic texts. By studying high-quality legal research papers, case briefs, and doctrinal analyses, students gain a clearer understanding of academic conventions, organizational structures, and stylistic expectations relevant to the field of jurisprudence.

Conclusion

The present study underscores the critical importance of developing English academic writing proficiency among jurisprudence students as an integral component of their professional and scholarly formation. The analysis revealed that despite the growing demand for legal specialists capable of engaging with international academic and professional discourse, existing instructional practices often fail to provide the systematic, genre-specific, and practice-oriented training required to meet these expectations.

A key finding of the study is the necessity of implementing targeted pedagogical interventions that address discipline-specific needs. These include the introduction of specialized academic writing courses tailored to legal contexts, the establishment of practical workshops focused on analytical and argumentative writing, and the integration of authentic international legal texts into classroom activities. Such measures not only enhance students' familiarity with legal genres but also cultivate essential competencies such as critical analysis, precision of expression, and effective organization of ideas.

The results indicate that expanding access to multilingual academic resources, together with structured opportunities for independent engagement with English-language legal scholarship, significantly contributes to strengthening students' compositional and research

skills. Exposure to high-quality models of legal and academic writing also plays an important role in shaping students' understanding of disciplinary conventions and expectations.

In summary, improving academic writing proficiency in jurisprudence programs requires a coordinated institutional effort and a pedagogically informed curriculum that prioritizes practice, authenticity, and discipline-specific literacy. By adopting these strategies, higher education institutions can more effectively prepare future legal professionals to participate in global academic dialogue, contribute to scholarly research, and engage confidently with complex legal texts in English..

References:

- 1.Chendeb, C. M. 2020. Evaluation of CLIL approach in Legal English pedagogy. *Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 9(2), 108–116.
- 2.Cumming, A. 1989. Writing expertise and second-language proficiency. *Language Learning*, 39(1), 81–135.
- 3.Deutch, Y. 2003. Needs analysis for academic legal English courses in Israel: A model of setting priorities. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 2(2), 125–146.
- 4.Griggs, K. 1996. A legal discourse community: Text centered and interdisciplinary in social and political context. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 10(2), 251–269.
- 5.Harris, S. 1992. Reaching out in legal education: Will EALP be there? *English for Specific Purposes*, 11(1), 19–32.
6. Horowitz, D. M. 1986. What professors actually require: Academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(3), 445–462.
7. Liebenberg, E. 2012. Using images as an effective tool to facilitate teaching legal concepts. 44–59.
- 8.Paltridge, B. 2018. Discourse analysis for the second language writing classroom. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1–6.
- 9.Pospelova, T. 2016. The influence of self-editing in micro skills development in academic writing in English as a second language. *Journal of Language and Education*, 2(1), 30–38
- 10.Raxmanova D.A. The Role of Writing Skill in Foreign Language Fluency// - *Miasto Przyszłości -Vol. 31 (2023): ISSN-L: 2544-980 X.Kielce,2023.382-385*
- 11.Raxmanova D.A. Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Teaching Academic Writing for Law Students // - *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics- ISSN: 2835-1924.Volume 04 Number 03 (2025).101-106*

12.Raxmanova D.A. Uzbek students' Academic writing challenges and their reasons//
-International Bulletin of Applied science and technology-ISSN:2750-3402.Volume 2.Issue
3.March,2024.112-116

13.Richards, J. C., Renandya, W. A. 2002. Methodology in language teaching.
Cambridge University Press.

14.Street, B. 2004. Academic literacies and the 'new orders': Implications for research
and practice in student writing in higher education. Learning & Teaching in the Social Sciences,
1(1), 9–20.

15.Wilkes, J., Godwin, J., & Gurney, L. J. 2015. Developing information literacy and
academic writing skills through the collaborative design of an assessment task for first year
engineering students. Australian Academic & Research Libraries, 46(3), 164–175.