EXPANDING THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF WRITING

A paradigm shift in teaching written communication at a Finnish university

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This article focuses on the changes in the teaching of written communication in Finnish at the Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication at the University of Jyväskylä between 2010 and 2020. In 2013 to 2014, the team of written communication teachers conducted a comprehensive reassessment of its pedagogical goals and content, referred to as learning pathway work. We report on a study which compared the 2010 and 2020 curricula before and after the development work, and examine the underlying approach to scientific writing and writing pedagogy. We drew on Ivanič's (2004) framework, which presents six discourses of writing and learning to write based on different conceptualisations of literacy. These, in turn, are reflected in the beliefs, values, and practices related to writing and writing pedagogy. Our findings show that the development work resulted in major changes in the curricula, particularly in the way writing is conceptualised. The revised curriculum reflects a broader understanding of writing, with greater emphasis on the mental processes involved and the sociocultural context in which writing takes place. We also discuss the importance of uncovering the implicit (language) ideologies that underpin our writing pedagogies. We emphasise that engaging in open and critical discussions on individual beliefs and values regarding languages and learning to write support collaboration among those involved in developing language and communication studies at the university.

Keywords: writing, university pedagogy, curricula, discourses, ideologies, academic literacies

Tarkastelemme tässä luvussa suomenkielisen kirjoitusviestinnän opetuksen muutosta Jyväskylän yliopiston Monikielisen akateemisen viestinnän keskuksessa aikavälillä 2010–2020. Vuosina 2013–2014 kirjoitusviestinnän opettajatiimi arvioi ja jäsensi tieteellisen kirjoittamisen opetuksen tavoitteita ja sisältöjä. Tästä pedagogisesta kehittämistyöstä käytämme nimitystä opintopolkutyöskentely. Vertaamme vuosien 2010 ja 2020 opetussuunnitelmia, ennen ja jälkeen kehitystyön, ja tarkastelemme, miten niissä

lähestytään tieteellistä kirjoittamista ja kirjoittamisen pedagogiikkaa. Hyödynnämme tarkastelussa Ivaničin (2004) viitekehystä, jossa esitellään kuusi kirjoittamisen diskurssia. Diskurssit perustuvat erilaisiin tapoihin käsitteellistää kieltä ja kirjoittamista, ja ne ilmenevät kirjoittamista ja kirjoittamisen pedagogiikkaa koskevissa uskomuksissa, arvoissa ja käytännöissä. Tarkastelumme osoittaa, että kirjoitusviestinnän kehittämistyö sai aikaan merkittäviä muutoksia siinä, miten kirjoittamista käsitteellistetään. Jälkimmäisessä opetussuunnitelmassa käsitys kirjoittamisesta on aiempaa laajempi: kirjoittaminen ei näyttäydy ainoastaan tekstilajien ja kielen hallintana, vaan sosiokulttuurisessa kontekstissa tapahtuvana toimintana, jota voidaan tarkastella myös mentaalisten ja käytännöllisten prosessien kannalta. Pohdimme lopuksi, miten tärkeää on tunnistaa kirjoittamisen pedagogiikan taustalla olevia kieli-ideologioita. Avoin ja kriittinen keskustelu kirjoittamisen opettamista ja oppimista koskevista uskomuksista ja arvoista on keskeistä, kun tehdään yhteistyötä yliopistojen kieli- ja viestintäopintojen kehittämiseksi.

Asiasanat: kirjoittaminen, yliopistopedagogiikka, opetussuunnitelmat, diskurssit, ideologiat, akateemiset tekstitaidot

Introduction

Writing plays a central role in academia, as becoming a member of the scientific community and contributing to it rely significantly on writing. Scientific writing encompasses a range of specific skills, such as reading, (critical) thinking, information management, as well as familiarity with the way knowledge is created in each discipline, including such key aspects as the social practices of interaction and the processes, norms, and conventions of publishing (e.g., Li, 2022; Wingate, 2018). The notion of academic literacies refers to the diverse and fluid practices of the scientific communities in various disciplines, embedded in complex institutional and social/cultural contexts and involving issues of power and identity (e.g., Kiili & Mäkinen, 2011; Kiili et al., 2013, Li, 2022; Lillis & Scott, 2007; Lillis & Tuck 2016). From the students' perspective, acquiring academic literacies plays a crucial role in academic progression (Bailey, 2018), and it strongly impacts students' sense of belonging to the academic community or particular disciplinary communities (Poutanen et al., 2012) and the development of their identity as a student and a member of the academic community (Gourlay, 2009; Korhonen, 2012). To familiarise students with the norms and conventions of academic writing and language use in a given context, explicit instruction is often necessary (Starfield, 2019). This instruction is provided in disciplinary content courses and thesis supervision, but in many countries, including Finland, students receive additional support from writing centres (e.g., Gustafsson & Ganobcsik-Williams, 2016; Kaufhold & Yencken, 2021) or university language centres in the form of language and communication courses.

In Finland, the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2004) stipulates that students must show proficiency in the official national languages, Finnish and Swedish, and in at least one foreign language. On this basis, a certain amount of language and communication studies are included in higher education degrees in Finland, and these studies are often arranged by separate language centres (see Jalkanen et al., 2015; Kuitunen & Carolan, 2019). The amount and scope of language and

communication studies varies for each degree programme at the University of Jyväskylä. For instance, certain programmes require 2 ECTS credits of written communication or speech communication studies in L1 at the bachelor's level, while L1 communication studies are not obligatory at the master's level. However, some faculties require 2 ECTS credits of L1 written communication at the bachelor's level and 3 ECTS credits at the master's level (University of Jyväskylä, 2020). As the number of ECTS credits required for (L1) written communication studies varies from programme to programme, the content and learning outcomes of these studies may also vary. In addition, university teachers have a high degree of autonomy in their work, which means that individual pedagogical approaches, strategies and emphasis on certain topics may also vary.

Teaching writing in a particular social, cultural and disciplinary context and at a particular educational level is influenced by the way both the surrounding community and teachers as individuals understand and approach writing (Graham, 2018). Different kinds of beliefs, perceptions and attitudes, as well as values and practices, constitute discourses of writing (Ivanič, 2004). Thus, discourses of writing can be seen as socially constructed and identifiable ways of conceptualising writing. For example, if a teacher has been socialised to believe that writing is primarily about the correct use of language, this approach may be central to their teaching. In this sense, Ivanič's (2004) concept of discourse can be seen as related to the concepts of ideology and paradigm. Many established practices are based on tacit, self-evident concepts, beliefs, values and assumptions, which can be called ideologies (e.g., Gee, 2008). In practical terms, an individual teacher may consciously or unconsciously be implementing an ideology of writing and writing education that they have been socialised to believe in.

According to Kuhn (1996), the concept of a paradigm refers to a shared and perceived framework for scientific work, such as a shared understanding of the norms and practices that define scientific activity in a discipline. In this way, a paradigm determines which practices are accepted and valued at a given time, or what is considered in some sense natural and normal in a given discipline. According to Kuhn (1996), the development of scientific disciplines alternates between phases of so-called normal science and paradigm shifts that can be called scientific revolutions. In a paradigm shift, the natural and self-evident facts of the dominant paradigm are challenged, and there is a perceived need to re-examine and challenge established ways of thinking and practicing. In this article we use the term *paradigm* not to refer to disciplinary research traditions and the changes that have taken place in them. Instead, we use it metaphorically to describe the discourses of writing in a particular time and place in our own community, the Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication (Movi).

The authors of this article are teachers of written communication in Movi at the University of Jyväskylä. We discuss the shift in thinking and practice that took place in our own field, the teaching of Finnish-language written communication, in the 2010s. This shift is the result of the development work carried out between 2013 and 2014 that aimed to revise and renew the writing pedagogy underpinning our work, referred to as the learning pathway work. During this period, written communication teachers at Movi created an overall, forward-looking vision and specific goals for L1 written communication in each stage of the studies.

After defining the overall vision for writing pedagogy, the written communication teacher team reflected on the existing courses, focusing on their learning outcomes and contents, with reference to the jointly created vision and goals. All three authors of this article were actively involved in planning and implementing this development work. The outcome of the work seems to reflect a shift in conceptualisations (what scientific writing is), values (what is

considered important in scientific writing), and practices (how scientific writing should be taught). We saw the change in our pedagogy to be so fundamental that it could be described as a paradigm shift within our written communication teacher team at Movi.

This reflective report illustrates how change becomes apparent when observed from a temporal perspective beyond the immediate experience. We report the results of our reflection in which we analysed the discourses underpinning the curriculum of written communication pedagogy in Finnish used at Movi in 2010 and 2020. We examine the underlying discourses to find out what changes have taken place over this ten-year period. In addition, we discuss whether the perceived change can actually be seen as a paradigm shift and what the significance of the learning pathway work was based on.

Our research questions are as follows:

1. What discourses underpin the conceptualisation of writing in the curricula of Finnish written communication in 2010 and 2020?
2. What changes have taken place in the discourses underlying the written communication curricula during this period?

To analyse the change, we draw on Ivanič's (2004) framework, which helps us identify the discourses underpinning academic writing pedagogies. The framework will be presented in more detail in the next section, followed by the description of the learning pathway work. After this, we describe our research methodology, present the results and discuss the main findings.

Discourses of writing

In her definition of the concept of discourse, Ivanič (2004) refers to Gee's (1996, p. 131) idea of discourse as "socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions, and 'artifacts', of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting which can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group". More specifically, Ivanič (2004, p. 224) defines 'discourses of writing' as "constellations of beliefs about writing, beliefs about learning to write, ways of talking about writing, and the sorts of approaches to teaching and assessment which are likely to be associated with these beliefs". Discourses are thus expressed through language and symbols, but they are socially constructed based on people's values, beliefs, practices, and behaviours (Gee, 1996; Ivanič, 2004; Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009).

Drawing on numerous studies of writing and writing pedagogies in Anglophone countries, Ivanič (2004) developed a framework describing six different approaches to writing which she refers to as discourses of writing and learning to write. These discourses are grouped as follows: (a) skills, (b) creativity, (c) process, (d) genre, (e) social practices, and (f) sociopolitical. Ivanič's discourses provide a framework for recognising and describing the beliefs, values, and practices that influence the learning and teaching of writing. In each discourse, she explains which dimension of writing is being emphasised – whether it is the written text, the mental processes of writing, the writing event, or the sociocultural and political context of writing. Additionally, she identifies the beliefs associated with writing and learning to write in each discourse. She also describes the approach to the teaching of writing, including the assessment criteria, specific to each discourse. The essential underlying ideas of each discourse are summarised in Table 1.

According to Ivanič (2004), in the skills discourse, writing is first and foremost about the correct application of language skills in the production of a text. In fact, what is central to the

skills discourse is the construction of an ideal text and the skills needed to do so, which are not seen as particularly context dependent. The focus on skills was offset by the acknowledgement that writing is creative self-expression, which Ivanič refers as the creativity discourse. The creativity discourse emphasises autonomy and agency in writing, in terms of topic choice, style, and writing goals.

The process approach to writing developed when research in cognitive psychology became interested in the cognitive processes of writing (Ivanič, 2004). In writing pedagogies, the practical steps that support the thinking process linked to writing started to receive more attention. The process discourse understands writing as a sequential activity with both a mental and a practical dimension. The process approach has been very prominent in the teaching of writing since the 1980s (Ivanič, 2004).

In addition to process thinking, genre pedagogy has become an integral part of writing pedagogy. In the genre discourse, as described by Ivanič (2004), writing is thought of as a goal-oriented activity, where the goal of writing determines the structure and linguistic choices in the text. Different communication situations thus shape textual genres, the characteristics of which are the focus of teaching and learning.

The social practices discourse and the sociopolitical discourse, as described by Ivanič (2004), emphasise the social context of writing even more than the genre discourse. In the former, writing is seen as part of the social practices of communities: texts and their production processes are linked to social interaction. Writing as a social practice is learned primarily by participating in the activities of the community and embracing its values and beliefs. Finally, the sociopolitical discourse is based on the idea that the ways in which language is used are ideologically constructed and thus not neutral. Raising critical awareness of the interconnectedness of language use and social power relationships is central to writing pedagogy underpinned by this discourse.

Since Ivanič's framework (2004) is based on research on writing and writing pedagogies in English-speaking countries, she also discusses its constraints. For example, the meaning of words that embody certain discourses may vary in different cultures and languages. For this reason, Ivanič points out that when the framework is used in a different context, it needs to be adapted. For example, in Ivanič's framework, the word *spelling* reflects the skills discourse, and it is associated with the skill of learning to spell and write words correctly, whereas due to the orthographical transparency of the Finnish language, the word *spell* in the similar sense is not relevant in the context of learning to write. In this case, we did not use the specific expressions mentioned in Ivanič's study, as they refer to a particular discourse in her data. Instead, we examined the curriculum texts to determine the overall concept of writing they represent in light of Ivanič's framework.

The learning pathway work: Background and implementation

The development project referred to as *learning pathway work* was designed and carried out by the team of written communication teachers in the 2013–2014 academic year, and it was part of the 2014–2017 curriculum update at Movi. Its purpose was to reassess the pedagogical goals and contents of written communication teaching in Finnish (L1).

Several internal factors drove this development work. One was the recruitment of new teachers, which required a transparent job description, and the idea of a teacher community with shared values and a shared understanding of academic writing in the context of the

University of Jyväskylä. These formed the basis for the development work, which was then carried out as a participatory and collaborative process, where every teacher was actively involved and had a voice.

One of the reasons for reassessing and restructuring the content and pedagogies of written communication was that the written communication studies in L1 required for bachelor's degree programmes could be taken in courses that did not cover academic writing at all. It was also seen as problematic that only occasional courses were offered to master's and doctoral students. The learning pathway work therefore aimed to ensure that all university students have an opportunity to study academic writing at the appropriate stage of their studies, from undergraduate to the master's and doctoral level, and that their learning needs are met in an appropriate way.

Another factor contributing to the learning pathway work was the development work that started at the university level and aimed to restructure language and communication studies as multilingual and discipline-specific studies (often referred to by the acronym UVK; see Laakso & Taalas, 2019 and the Introduction of this book by Károly et al., 2024). To prepare for the upcoming change, it was important to redefine the basic mission and restructure the core contents of teaching written communication at Movi.

In addition to these internal factors, the need for further development work was reinforced by gradual changes in the conceptualisations of writing at the global level, such as the genre-based pedagogy initiated by the Sydney School in the 1970s (e.g., Rose & Martin, 2012), and the concept of multiliteracy/multiliteracies that emerged with the rapid digital development of the 21st century (e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012; Kress, 2003).

Global changes in the conceptualisation of writing are also reflected in Finnish publications dealing with writing pedagogies. Process writing has been written about in the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Linna, 1994; Linnakylä et al., 1988), about genre-based pedagogy in the 1980s (e.g., Kauppinen & Laurinen, 1988) and especially in the early 2000s (e.g., Luukka, 2004, 2009), and multiliteracies in the 2010s (e.g., Kupiainen et al., 2015; Luukka, 2013). A similar impact of the global level developments can also be observed in Finnish writing research, although most studies have focused on the contexts of primary and secondary education (Kulju et al., 2017; Pentikäinen et al., 2017). The current L1 and literature curricula for basic education and upper secondary schools (valid in 2015 and 2021) are based on a broad understanding of texts, and multiliteracy is seen as a starting point for producing and interpreting meaning (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, 2020). In addition, for example, the current curriculum for primary school defines multiliteracies as one of the transversal competences alongside ICT competence, the objectives of which should be taken into account when defining the objectives and core content of different subjects (Luukka, 2013). Naturally, this development was also reflected in the learning pathway work and thus in the 2020 curriculum. It can also be assumed that teachers of different ages in Movi's writing communication team have been socialised into different conceptions of writing during their teacher training.

In addition to shifts in research-based knowledge and writing culture, changes in higher education during the period were also influenced by university education policy in Finland. At the beginning of the 2010s, the Ministry of Education defined an action strategy for higher education, setting objectives such as reducing the time taken to complete a degree, improving the pass rates, and enhancing the relevance of teaching to working life. Since progressing in and graduating from higher education require the production of written theses, there was

a need to consider how to support students' writing and research processes, also from the perspective of language and communication studies.

The connection between learning pathway work and higher education policy is reflected in the method that was chosen to support the progress of the work. The process was loosely based on the W5W² model (*Walmiiksi wiidessä wuodessa / Graduation in Five Years*) piloted at the University of Oulu, which focused on defining visions and core content, as well as cumulative learning (e.g., Rahkonen et al., 2009). During the 2013-2014 academic year, all eight teachers of written communication in Finnish and a student trainee (one of the authors of this article) participated in the learning pathway work.

The learning pathway work started by exploring the core competences of written communication in a higher education context. The first step in this work was to recognise and share teachers' personal perceptions of writing. In practice, this was implemented by having teachers write down their thoughts on what writing is and what should be taught about writing at university.

Next, the aim was to create a vision for each phase of studies (entry, bachelor's, master's and doctoral), namely, what kind of competence and agency in written communication is sought at each phase. The visioning phase generated a range of ideas. The trainee in written communication deepened the process and linked it to theory by conceptualising the ideas about writing that appeared in the teachers' visions, using Ivanič's (2004) framework. The analysis showed that there was diversity in the ideas generated during the visioning phase and also that there were certain approaches with clear commonalities.

We then summarised and formulated the structured ideas into a set of core statements, which formed a continuum of studies in written communication, that is, the learning pathway (see Figure 1). Our aim was to provide a comprehensive picture of writing, with clear objectives and a shared understanding of the core competences of each phase.

Entry

Core content: Getting to know the texts and practices of the scientific community

Vision: A motivated student with the necessary study skills

Bachelor's

Core content: The basics of constructing one's own research

Vision: A student who is empowered to write and has basic scientific writing skills

Master's

Core content: Mastering scientific writing and specialised text genres

Vision: An active expert in his or her field who uses his or her communication skills in a versatile way

Doctoral

Core content: Writing as part of the professional skills of a researcher

Vision: An expert with a personal voice and persuasive communication skills with social impact
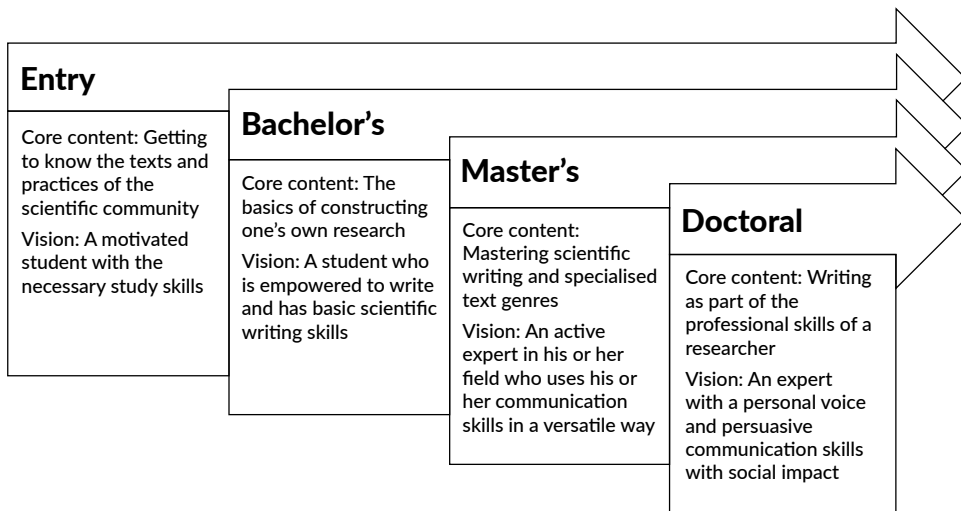
Figure 1   The phases of the written communication learning pathway and a summary of the core content and vision of each phase

At the entry phase, at the start of university studies, the emphasis is on students' academic socialisation, that is helping them to become part of the university community through

helping them internalise the norms, conventions, genres, and practices of the scientific community and learning the processes of knowledge creation. At the bachelor's level, the focus is on increasing students' academic identity and understanding the various phases in the research process and the importance of writing. The master's level focuses on developing expertise in one's own field through writing. Doctoral studies focus on the deepening of skills in scientific writing and the management of the research process, as well as the development of skills in self-expression and the popularisation of science.

The work continued with the practical implementation of the visions. In practice, we looked at how the existing curriculum was positioned on the learning pathway, how it was divided into core substance, complementary skills, and specialised competence, and what were the changes that needed to be made in the curriculum, course contents, and pedagogical approaches and strategies. The results of this phase of the work are reflected in the 2020 curricula, the analysis of which is part of the research reported in this article.

Research data and methods of analysis

The question of the paradigm shift in the teaching of written communication is a complex one, which could and should be examined in a variety of ways, for example, ethnographically through observation of teaching situations. For this study, we analysed curriculum documents from 2010 and 2020. These public documents were well suited for our purposes because they articulate the objectives and content of teaching written communication. These documents have a normative force in the sense that they form the basis of pedagogical practices, but they also play a prominent role in educational reforms and quality control in contemporary universities (e.g., Honkimäki et al., 2022).

The curriculum document can be considered particularly useful as research data when reflecting on underlying paradigms. They can be seen as representing a meta-language (Woolard, 1998), reflecting the norms of language use and communication that are considered desirable and appropriate. In our analysis, we have made an effort to take into account that some beliefs and perceptions reflected in the documents may be so naturalised (and deeply ingrained) that they are not explicitly negotiated (Mäntynen et al., 2012), but are included in curriculum documents because they are considered to be self-evident.

On the other hand, the curriculum is by no means problem-free as an indicator of a paradigm shift. It is possible to study discursive changes in texts, but such changes do not necessarily reflect actual practices. There is, in truth, never a perfect match between the written curriculum and actual teaching practices. When examining paradigm shifts at the curriculum level, we should, therefore, take into account the limitations: by studying texts we can gain insights into changes in linguistically expressed ways of thinking.

The curriculum dataset for 2010 consisted of the descriptions of the courses offered at that time at the BA and MA level. If the content and learning outcomes of several courses were similar, we included only one of them in the dataset. Consequently, the 2010 dataset consisted of data from 32 different courses, and the 2020 dataset consisted of data from 14 different courses. The analysis incorporated course names and descriptions including the target group of the course, learning outcomes, contents, and completion methods.

The curriculum dataset for 2020 consisted of the descriptions of the core courses designed for each phase of studies (entry phase, BA and MA phase) as a result of the learning pathway development work within the written communication team at Movi. In addition to these,

the dataset included descriptions of the UVK courses Academic Literacies and Research Communication from the fields of physics, history, and education. These courses were the result of Movi's university-wide development work, referred to as the UVK process (Laakso & Taalas, 2019; see also the introduction of this book). By 2020, multilingual language and communication studies had already started in almost all degree programmes. We chose to look more closely at the fields of physics and history, as these were the fields where multilingual language and communication studies had been offered the longest. In contrast, the development of UVK courses in the field of education was based on several years of experience in multilingual language and communication studies.

Analysing the discourses underpinning the two curricula

We applied Ivanič's (2004) analytical framework on discourses on writing and learning to write in our analysis of curriculum documents. Ivanič's classification of discourses is based on a multidimensional interpretation of meanings: Individual linguistic choices may refer to a particular discourse, but the identification of the overarching discourse requires in-depth reading that takes into account the context. In this connection, context refers to the culture of writing, which includes, for example, what aspect of writing is considered central, what writing is perceived as an activity, how writing is thought to be taught, how it is approached and how it is assessed.

Therefore, we first looked at the curriculum data as whole and complex entities. In this phase of the analysis, we provided a general overview of the data, paying attention to the name of the courses, target groups, learning objectives, and the content and structure of the courses. We conducted a preliminary analysis both together and separately. We discussed our findings together and reflected on them in relation to Ivanič's (2004) discourse classification. We then carried out a more detailed analysis, that is, we analysed each of the two datasets separately to see what discourses of writing underpin them.

Table 1 describes the discourses identified in the 2010 and 2020 curricula. It has to be noted that the original curriculum texts are in Finnish, so the English translation of the example terms does not always have the exact same meaning (basic and associative meanings) as the Finnish terms. During the analysis phase, we also adapted the analysis framework to suit the Finnish language. Thus, the function of Table 1 in English is mainly to demonstrate our method, but at the lexical level it cannot be considered an accurate description. The discourse descriptions in the left-hand column summarise the main features of each discourse, including the underlying views as well as pedagogical approaches and practices. Based on these, we identified linguistic expressions (words or phrases) that represent each discourse in the curriculum texts (listed in the middle column). It should be pointed out that the words and phrases in the table have been extracted by close reading from a specific context, and as such, they do not represent a particular way of thinking. What matters is the meaning that the word or phrase in question takes on in a particular (this time in the Finnish) context. The right-hand column of the table contains a few illustrative excerpts from the curricula as examples of each discourse. Again, what matters is the meaning in context. Due to the space restrictions of the table, the right column does not contain examples of all the expressions listed in the middle column. The year in brackets indicates the dataset it is taken from, and the letters *b* and *m* indicate whether it concerns the curriculum of a bachelor's or a master's course.

Table 1   Discourses identified in the curriculum documents

Discourses of writing and learning to write and their underlying views and pedagogical approaches/practices according to Ivanič (2004)	Topics in the curriculum data that indicate the underlying ideas of a particular discourse	Translated extracts from curriculum texts that reflect the discourse in their original context
Skills discourse		
The written text is central. Writing is seen as the application of knowledge of (decontextualised) linguistic patterns and rules, or linguistic skills. The correctness of the text (and its structure) determines the quality of the text. Explicit teaching of grammar is considered important. In an academic context "correct usage and adherence to conventions for the formal features of academic writing" (p. 228). A normative approach to writing, as reflected in the choice of words such as *correct*, *accurate*.	Norms and conventions of scientific writing Technical aspects of writing Grammatical correctness of writing Adherence to style standards Language revision, guidelines and recommendations Grammar and usage Characteristics of a good text, such as *fluent*, *clear*	*The course provides an in-depth look at the most important aspects of language revision.* (2010b) *The presentation manuscript is thoroughly checked for structure, language and conventions of scientific writing.* (2010b)
Creativity discourse		
The written text is central. Writing is seen as an author's creative activity / self-expression that is valuable in itself. Content and style determine the quality of the text. Construction of meaning is essential. Writing is learnt by writing and reading and receiving feedback. Reflected in the choice of words such as *creative writing*, *writer's voice*.	Creativity, creative writing, creative process Encouragement Motivation Reflection Barriers to writing Writer's personal experience Writer's personal voice	*The students are expected to be exposed to and encouraged to read and produce a variety of scientific texts.* (2020b) *They are expected to be able to reflect on their actions from the perspective of the creative process involved in conducting research and to develop working methods that suit them. The aim of the workshop is to support an active and motivated thesis writing process.* (2020m)
Process discourse		
The processes of writing are central as well as the writing event. Learning to write is about learning cognitive and practical processes of writing. Practical processes are taught explicitly. Writing is done in stages such as generating ideas, planning, drafting, working with feedback on the drafts, revising and editing. Reflected in the choice of words such as *plan*, *draft*, *editing*.	Process writing and the stages of the writing process Feedback as part of the writing process Process management methods Texts and writing in relation to cognitive processes Writing as part of the research process	*In the course you will work on your bachelor's thesis text using the process writing method.* (2010b) *The students are expected to be able to manage their writing process.* (2010b) *The students will understand the role of feedback in the writing process and will be able to give and receive feedback at different stages of the writing process.* (2020b)

Genre discourse

The written text and the writing event are central.
Learning to write is about learning different text types shaped by social context.
The appropriateness of a text to its purpose determines what is a good text.
The linguistic characteristics of particular text-types are taught explicitly.
"Learning the established conventions for the types of writing which are highly valued in the academy" (p. 233).
Reflected, for example, in terms of the names of text types/genres and the linguistic terminology used to describe them.

Different genres (study-related genres, work-related genres)
Names of sections of text, e.g., introduction
Structural and stylistic features of texts in relation to the genre
Text analysis

The students will learn about the characteristics and requirements of the most common textual genres in studies and working life and how to apply them in their writing. (2010b)

This course is for developing writing skills by examining and writing different types of texts. (2010b)

The students will be able to identify textual genres and their typical features in their field and understand their communicative function. (2020b)

Social practices discourse

The writing event is central, and the text and the processes of composing it are an integral part of the social interaction of the writing event.
Writing is seen as a set of social practices (literacies perspective).
Writing is learned by taking part in these practices and by identifying oneself with the community that has created them.
Good writing is determined by effectiveness in achieving goals.
Reflected, for example, in references to the events, contexts, purposes and practices of writing.

Academic literacies
The significance of writing in the scientific community
The discipline-specific nature of writing
The process of scientific knowledge construction
The communicative function of the genre in the social context
Connection to the teaching of the department

Students are expected to understand the role of scientific writing and its conventions for the functioning of the scientific community. (2020b)

Students are expected to understand research text as a dialogue between various data and their own thinking, and to be able to compose their own text by applying the main principles of argumentation and demonstrating source criticism. (2020b)

Sociopolitical discourse

The sociocultural and political context of writing is central.
Writing is seen as being shaped by social forces and power relations, but also as participating in the shaping of these forces.
Learning to write requires understanding why certain discourses and genres are the way they are, and that writing has consequences (critical awareness of the impact of language use).
Reflected, for example, in references to the social, cultural, political context of writing, power, social action, identity.

Critical thinking and critical reading
A motivated student who is willing to think critically and express their ideas
(Critical) reflection of communication practices
Encouragement for having own ideas and views

During the course, the students will observe the public scientific discussion in their field and contribute to the course blog with a post demonstrating critical literacy. (2020b)

By working with a multidisciplinary peer group, students will increase their knowledge of themselves as writers and experts in their field. (2020m)

The analysis of the curriculum documents provided valuable insight into the underlying discourses and their interrelationships. The focus was on understanding the fundamental changes and priorities given to certain discourses.

The results of our analysis are presented in the next section. We begin with an overview of the curriculum of each period under examination, followed by a more detailed observations of the discourses (research question 1). We then outline the changes that have occurred in the discourses of written communication curricula during the period under examination (research question 2).

Results

Discourses underpinning the 2010 curriculum

The 2010 curriculum was underpinned by several discourses of writing: writing was approached through the skills discourse, creativity discourse, process discourse, genre discourse and social practices discourse. However, the data did not reflect sociopolitical discourse. The descriptions of individual courses typically reflected one or two discourses, most prominently the skills discourse and genre discourse.

The written communication courses offered in the 2010 curriculum included courses in written communication open to all students (6 courses in our data) as well as courses aimed at students in specific fields or disciplines (altogether 26 courses in our data). There was also considerable variation in how writing instruction was targeted at different groups of students. For example, the different subjects in the Faculty of Humanities had their own written communication courses (11 such courses), while the Faculty of Mathematics and Science had only one course which was common to all students. On the other hand, one written communication course was aimed at both social sciences and economics students. These findings also suggest that despite having specific courses for each discipline, writing has been understood as a rather generic skill, transferable from one disciplinary context to another.

The large number of discipline-specific courses suggests that the teaching of written communication intended to take into account the social context of writing: the teaching of written communication involved working on texts related to the students' intermediate-level studies, such as bachelor's and master's theses and seminar papers. The requirements often stated that "the students are working on, or, during the semester, will start working on a bachelor's thesis, master's thesis or a related text." Some courses were implemented in collaboration with teachers in the departments, and the courses were designed and scheduled to be interconnected with the goal of mutually supporting learning, such as in the following example: "The Research Communication Skills [for journalists] course is integrated with the journalists' Proseminar course, and both courses are to be taken in the same semester."

This line of thinking can be seen as reflecting a social practices discourse, according to which writing is learned through participation in the practices of the certain community (Ivanič, 2004). However, when we looked more closely at the descriptions of the ways in which teaching was delivered, we discovered that teaching of writing could mainly consist of proofreading texts. Therefore, it can be inferred that the social practices discourse did not necessarily constitute the primary approach to teaching writing, even though the course was field specific and the writing tasks were related to an authentic writing situation.

Instead, there were many indications of skills discourse in the data. For example, the term "grammatical accuracy" (*oikeakielisyys*) was frequently used in the 2010 data. Other examples of frequently repeated expressions were "grammar-related issues" (*oikeinkirjoitusseikat*) "grammar and style norms" (*oikeinkirjoitus– ja tyylinormit*) as well as "language guidance and recommendations" (*kielenhuollon suositukset*).

Grammatical accuracy was highly valued, as evidenced by the prominent presence of grammar-related topics in the course descriptions. For example: "In addition, the students will learn to revise the language of their own texts..." and "the students are expected to demonstrate the ability to revise the language of their texts".

The data indicates that, in addition to the skills discourse, another dominant discourse was the genre discourse. The significance of genre discourse is exemplified by the fact that the 2010 curriculum emphasised various types of texts. The course descriptions included mentions of several genres. Depending on the focus of the course, the genres could be related to studying (e.g., report, essay, learning diary, seminar paper, or research report), working life (e.g., newsletter, memo, or job application), or creative self-expression (e.g., poem, short story, or column). Texts were often examined from the point of view of language, style, and adherence to conventions. The main pedagogical focus was on mastering the structural, linguistic, and stylistic features typical of particular genres. In other words, writing was conceptualised as the mastery of a genre.

As mentioned earlier, in 2010, genres were learnt, at least to some extent, in authentic writing situations, as can be seen in the following passage from the course description: "The topics studied (thesis structure, style, referencing conventions) are applied to your own bachelor's thesis text." It can be argued here that genres were, in a sense, considered as part of the social context of writing. However, the course descriptions placed more emphasis on following conventions than on understanding their meaning as part of the socially constructed practices of writing. The understanding of genre that emerges in the data can be seen as reflecting an autonomous conceptualisation of literacy (see, e.g., Street, 1997; Luukka, 2009), where individuals' cognitive skills are central, and skills were seen as universal and static.

The words and phrases describing the writing process also point to this static and universal conceptualisation of literacy. For example, one of the course descriptions states that, after completing the course, "the student has practised process writing during the course". This example shows that in the 2010 curriculum, writing was also approached from a process perspective, but the writing situation and its related objectives were excluded from (disregarded in) this process and, the writing process was largely seen as an individual process. Teachers of writing or peer writers were only mentioned in the context of feedback. Feedback was specifically linked to the final phase of writing the text. For example, the following was noted about the teaching methods in one research communication course: "The course consists of... opening lectures and thoroughly reviewing and refining the language and scientific writing conventions of your bachelor's thesis in a small group with your teacher and opponent." Another common feature was that the students had a passive role and were seen as the receiver of feedback: "Guiding feedback is given on exercises [= various texts produced]". The writing process was thus mainly presented as a linear sequence of steps, resulting in a text that conforms to the conventions of the (textual) genre. A central part of the writing process was feedback during the final phase, as well as (maintaining) spelling and grammar standards.

In the 2010 curriculum data, competence in writing largely referred to mastering the conventions of genres and being able to produce grammatically accurate texts. Based on

the course descriptions, it seems that a combination of the skills and genre discourses was predominant as these perspectives permeated the entire teaching of written communication at the time. Although the 2010 curriculum included various writing discourses, we cannot call it a comprehensive writing pedagogy, as presented by Ivanič (2004), which takes into account a wide range of approaches from different discourses.

Discourses underpinning the 2020 curriculum

The discourses of writing that underpin the 2020 curriculum have been influenced by learning pathway work described in detail earlier in this article. This work had already begun to develop a comprehensive approach to writing (see Ivanič, 2004; Svinhufvud, 2007). Ivanič's idea of comprehensive writing pedagogy is based on a multifaceted or multilayered view of language. According to Ivanič, a text and the mental processes involved in producing a text are intertwined with the writing event and the sociocultural and political context in which the writing takes place. Therefore, writing is not only seen as producing text, but also as social practices that are constructed in concrete language use situations. This was reflected in the 2020 curriculum data in the emergence of the social practices discourse and sociopolitical discourse alongside other discourses (genre, process, skills and, to some extent, creativity).

Connected to the social practices discourse and the sociopolitical discourse, the teaching of writing became in the latter curriculum data closely linked to the practices and objectives of the different phases of studies (entry, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral), each with its specific characteristics that determine the content and methods of teaching (see Figure 1). As part of the learning pathway work, the core contents of written communication studies for each phase were defined, and based on these the following core courses were designed: Foundations of Written Communication (entry level) and Basics of Research Communication (bachelor's level).

These core courses are for students from different faculties at these particular phases of their studies. Although the courses were not discipline specific, the discipline-specific nature of writing was seen as a pedagogical premise aimed at supporting students' academic socialisation process as actors in their own fields (see, e.g., Rantala-Lehtola & Kuitunen, 2021). This reflects the social practices discourse.

Underlying the social practices and sociopolitical discourses is the so-called ideological concept of literacy (Street, 1997), according to which all language use is situational and permeated by values and ideologies (see also Gee, 2008). From this perspective, literacies refer to a variety of textual and social practices, and therefore in the higher education context they are referred to by the plural form "academic literacies". This decision indicated that writing was no longer seen as a generic skill that was transferable from one context to another.

With more emphasis on the social dimension of writing, the role of texts in teaching became more diversified: texts were no longer considered as products, but as part of the ongoing interactive process of scientific discussion linked to the diverse activities of the scientific community in a given cultural and disciplinary context. For example, in the 2020 curricula, the perspective of genre is linked to the social discourse. Examining what the texts of a scientific community are and how they work was central, as the following learning objective shows: "The students will be able to identify genres and their typical features in their field and understand their communicative function."

Consequently, the importance of knowledge construction processes was also highlighted, and in the 2020 curriculum, the process approach was prominent. The broader consideration of the context of writing pointed to an understanding of writing processes as being more than just practical steps. Both individual cognitive processes of knowledge construction and the collective/collaborative development of ideas and texts, such as that done in peer groups, were brought to the fore: "The students are expected to understand that writing is an integral part of the research and thinking process, including giving and receiving feedback at different stages of the writing process."

Thus, the expansion of the process discourse is accompanied by a change in the meaning of feedback. While in 2010 feedback discussions focused on characteristics of the text, in 2020 the emphasis was on feedback interactions (dialogues) and their vital role in learning and the development of thinking. For example: "The students will recognise the importance of feedback interaction for their learning and academic communication."

In the 2020 curriculum data, the goal of teaching writing was to provide students with the skills and abilities to function in a variety of communication situations. As a result, the skills discourse, for example, through which writing can be understood as following context-independent rules, ceased to be dominant. In general, the notion of writing as the mastery of conventions and norms has become less significant, as the idea that the varying objectives and practices of communication situations require different writing skills has gained ground. For example, language revision has become a more integral part of finalising a text and is related to the idea of clearly conveying the intended message and using the appropriate style.

In short, the 2020 curriculum reflects a comprehensive writing pedagogy. The data provide evidence that in 2020, texts, writing processes and writing situations were seen as interconnected and linked to the wider sociopolitical context. As Ivanič (2004) argues, a curriculum can combine perspectives from all six discourses.

Changes in the discourses underpinning the curricula of written communication in L1

Our second research question concerned changes in the discourses of the written communication curriculum over a ten-year period. Based on our analysis, the main shift between the two curricula is the increased importance of social practices discourse and sociopolitical discourse and the disappearance of the skills discourse as such. The contents and procedures associated with the skills discourse were not disregarded but were treated more explicitly as part of the writing process and the communicative purposes of the texts. Consequently, it can be said, that the conceptualisation of writing as a universal, static and uncontextualised activity was marginalised in the 2020 data.

In fact, the discourses (all six of them) are somehow recognisable in both sets of curricular materials, but the essential change is whether they appear separately in the curricula or whether they are all (and thus the holistic conception of writing) visible in the background of each course. This is the situation in the 2020 curriculum data, and it can be attributed to the expanding of the concept of writing and the emphasis on social discourse in academic writing studies.

The emphasis of the social discourse can also be seen in the Movi's reform of the compulsory language and communication studies (UVK studies) on a large scale. In UVK studies, the development of language and communication was more closely linked to the university context

and the students' studies in their own field, and the language and communication studies included in bachelor's degrees were restructured as discipline-specific and multilingual units spanning the first three years of studies and forming a continuum. In 2020, the language and communication studies required at the bachelor's level were mainly taught in this restructured format, but due to the varying individual situations and needs of students, core courses in written communication were still offered.

The analysis of the curricula revealed that the instruction of writing is focused on becoming a member of the scientific community and understanding the significance of writing as a central component of scientific knowledge creation. For example, knowing the norms and conventions of scholarly writing, which appeared on its own in the 2010 data, was put into a broader perspective in the 2020 curriculum: "Students are expected to understand the necessity of scientific writing and its conventions for the functioning of the scientific community."

To illustrate the changes, we have summarised our findings in Table 2, based on Ivanič's (2004) description of the beliefs underlying each discourse of writing.

Table 2   Summary of key findings from the 2010 and 2020 curricula[1]

The aspects observed	Curriculum 2010	Curriculum 2020
The discourses in the data and the relationships between them	Skills discourse and genre discourse are prominent. The social practices discourse is reflected in the use of authentic writing situations. The process discourse is present in varying degrees and refers above all to the practical/technical aspects of editing the text.	The social practices discourse is central, and the skills, genre, and process discourses are seen in relation to this. The process discourse has expanded to cover mental aspects of the research and writing processes as well as practical ones.
Elements and aspects central to the teaching of writing	Texts are in the focus of teaching. The text is seen as related to a specific writing event, and produced through an individual writing process that progresses through practical steps.	The teaching of writing considers the (field-specific) scientific community as the sociocultural context for writing. Texts are produced through a mental and practical writing processes that are linked to the writing situation and its communicative goals.
Beliefs about writing	Writing is the mastery of language, style, and conventions, linked to the characteristics of different genres.	Writing is an activity that takes place within a social context, and students learn to consider different goals and practices of writing in different situations.

1. Column 1 in this table is largely inspired by Ivanič's original figure in Discourses of writing and learning to write (2004, p. 225).

The aspects observed	Curriculum 2010	Curriculum 2020
Beliefs about learning to write	Learning to write involves recognising the characteristics of genres, writing various types of texts independently, and revising the language of both own and peers' texts.	Learning to write involves understanding the social context of writing, discussing the goals and practices of writing, and practising the processes of writing scientific texts in a collaborative way.
Approaches to the teaching of writing	The teaching of writing involves explicit instruction on the norms and conventions of genres, as well as the practical phases of the writing process. Teaching involves instructing language revision, reviewing texts, and providing corrective feedback.	The teaching of writing involves exploring the processes of writing and knowledge construction, as well as discipline-specific communication practices. Teaching involves guiding students to become aware of their own perceptions of language use and communication and reflect on their own processes and practices in various situations in different contexts.

Discussion

We examined what discourses underpinned the conceptualisation of writing in the curricula of Finnish written communication in Movi between 2010 and 2020 and what changes took place in the discourses underlying the written communication curricula during this period. We were motivated in this examination by the question of whether the paradigm of teaching written communication shifted between 2010 and 2020 as a result of the learning pathway work, which was conducted by the written communication teacher team in 2013-2014. As mentioned earlier, we have used the concept of paradigm metaphorically.

Based on the discourses in the curriculum data, it can be said that the teaching of written communication has changed from a skill and genre-oriented approach to a broader focus on the mental processes and social context and ideological dimensions of writing. Such a change suggests that between 2010 and 2020, Movi's teaching of written communication showed signs of a paradigm shift, or rather the emergence of a holistic, comprehensive writing pedagogy as introduced by Ivanič (2004). This approach to writing is based on the idea that different dimensions of writing (the written text, the mental processes of writing, the writing event, and the sociocultural and political context of writing) are simultaneously present and interconnected. Consequently, comprehensive writing pedagogy draws on different ways of approaching the teaching of writing, specific to each of the six discourses of writing.

As previously mentioned, the 2010 curriculum data reflected various discourses on writing as a whole, but individual courses may have had a relatively narrow approach to writing. According to the 2010 written communication curriculum, there were variations in the aims and content of teaching writing, as well as differing views on what writing is and how it can be learned. Research has confirmed that teachers' beliefs can have an impact on their pedagogical practices (Tien, Graham, & Wong, 2018; Hsiang, Graham & Yang, 2020; Li & Xu, 2023). Therefore, the instruction that students receive may depend on individual teachers' beliefs about writing. The learning pathway work was conducted to ensure that every student had access to written communication studies that were appropriate to their phase of study and provided a holistic understanding of writing.

Probably for this reason, the 2020 curriculum demonstrated a more multifaceted approach to writing across all courses, potentially reducing the influence of individual teachers' beliefs. From the student's point of view, this is a significant change, because an individual student will study just one or a few of the courses described in the curriculum, not all of them. By approaching writing from multiple perspectives in every course, all students will be more equal in terms of learning opportunities. In this sense, the learning pathway work seems to have achieved its objectives.

The impact of the learning pathway work on the discourses of the latter curriculum data deserves critical examination. It is possible to criticize our analysis on the grounds that the 2013–2014 learning pathway work automatically produced certain discourses in the 2020 curriculum. However, it is important to note that the 2013–2014 learning pathway work no longer directly influenced the 2020 curriculum texts, as the development of this latter curriculum was its own process, separate from the learning pathway work. It is possible that the beliefs and views of individual teachers may have had a strong influence on the curriculum. However, this did not occur.

We described and contextualised the learning pathway work in such detail earlier in the article because we recognised that as a process it has greatly impacted the written communication teacher team's understanding of writing. By reflecting on our beliefs about scientific writing together, we were able to observe the contextual and temporal layers, as well as individual variations in our perceptions of writing. We observed that teachers of different ages, trained at different times, emphasised different aspects in the teaching of writing. Above all, we became aware of our own conceptualisations of writing. The open discussion among the written communication team revealed different, mutually challenging views, but as a result of the discussion it was possible to harmonise the learning objectives, content and working methods of the courses. This process can be viewed as the negotiation of language ideologies (see, e.g., Mäntynen et al., 2012). Through this process, the team's understanding of writing expanded and diversified, which also laid the foundations for diversifying pedagogies.

Looking back, the learning pathway work and the holistic understanding of writing that emerged from discussing meaning within the subject group has helped the writing teaching team to deal with various challenging situations in their everyday work. This type of open and critical discussion is particularly important when our work environment as teachers is changing, or when we are anticipating future changes. For example, the rapid development of artificial intelligence applications is currently challenging teachers to consider what kind of writing instruction university students need now and in the future as, while also driving us to re-examine what we as teachers base our views on.

The learning pathway work carried out by the written communication teacher team and the UVK development work in Movi have created a culture of discussion in which both philosophical and pedagogical issues of teaching are considered more collectively. What is significant for our conclusions is that the paradigm shift – in a metaphorical sense – was not about the content of teaching writing, but about the way in which the curriculum was negotiated together. It was this negotiation that made the learning pathway important. The changes in the working practices have also led to more coherent and shared curriculum texts.

Although reconciling different views when negotiating language ideologies can be challenging, it is important to have the courage to engage in open dialogue where concepts are unpacked and meanings negotiated. Only open dialogue can create genuine opportunities for challenging ideas and, more crucially, engaging in constructive cooperation.

We therefore suggest that paradigmatic reflection on the discipline and the negotiation of language ideologies should be a permanent, periodic part of the development of language and communication studies. We have detailed the implementation of the learning pathway process in this article to encourage such development work, with the hope that it can be a useful example for other organisations and units.

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