

The Use of LMS Platforms (Moodle And Google Classroom) In Teaching Academic Writing to Future Russian Language Teachers

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Received: 12 May 2026 Accepted: 06 June 2026 Published: 30 June 2026

ABSTRACT

This article examines the theoretical foundations of applying Learning Management Systems (LMS) — Moodle and Google Classroom — in developing academic writing skills among future Russian language teachers. Based on a comparative analysis of both platforms' didactic potential, key methodological techniques for effective LMS integration in Russian academic writing instruction are identified: modular course design, structured peer review via the Moodle Workshop module, learner activity analytics, and collaborative text editing in Google Docs. The necessity of a hybrid model combining the affordances of both platforms is substantiated, and practical recommendations for designing LMS-based academic writing courses aligned with the IMRAD format are provided.

Keywords: LMS platforms, Moodle, Google Classroom, academic writing, Russian as a foreign language, future teachers, IMRAD, digital technologies, teaching methodology, pedagogical education.

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing occupies a central place in the professional preparation of future Russian language teachers: it reflects not only the level of their linguistic and methodological competence, but also their capacity for scholarly communication within an increasingly internationalised educational landscape. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, where a comprehensive higher education reform is being implemented under the “Uzbekistan — 2030” strategy and the “Digital Uzbekistan 2030” state programme, the question of digital tools for developing the academic literacy of future educators acquires particular urgency¹.

An analysis of pedagogical practice at Uzbek teacher training universities reveals that traditional methods of academic writing instruction — lectures, model text analysis, paper-based essays, and oral feedback — fail to

provide sufficient individualised feedback, systematic iterative text revision, or the digital academic communication skills required of a contemporary specialist². Learning Management Systems — and most notably Moodle and Google Classroom — open fundamentally new possibilities for addressing these challenges.

At the same time, the domestic pedagogical literature lacks a systematic theoretical account of the didactic potential of LMS platforms specifically in relation to academic writing instruction for future Russian language teachers. This gap determines the relevance of the present article.

Aim of the article: to examine, through comparative theoretical analysis, the didactic potential of Moodle and Google Classroom in teaching academic writing to future Russian language teachers, and to identify key

methodological techniques for their effective application.

Objectives: (1) to clarify the nature of academic writing as a professional competency of the future Russian language teacher; (2) to conduct a comparative analysis of the didactic affordances of Moodle and Google Classroom; (3) to identify key methodological techniques for applying LMS in academic writing instruction; (4) to substantiate a model of hybrid integration of both platforms.

I. ACADEMIC WRITING AS A COMPETENCY OF THE FUTURE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE TEACHER

1.1. The Nature of Academic Writing in the Teacher Education Context

Academic writing is traditionally understood in the scholarly literature as a genre-conditioned, culturally determined, and processually organised form of written communication (Swales, 1990; Hyland, 2004). Unlike conversational or journalistic discourse, academic writing is governed by strict conventions: it requires a clear thesis structure, logically developed argumentation, command of scholarly register, citation norms, and metadiscursive devices that ensure textual coherence and reader orientation (Hyland, 2005).

For the future Russian language teacher, command of academic writing carries a dual professional significance. First, it constitutes an indispensable dimension of their own research competency: graduates of pedagogical programmes must be capable of producing coursework and theses, methodological papers, and scholarly articles. Second, teachers are expected to develop academic literacy in their own students — a task that is impossible without deep personal command of the relevant genre conventions.

In the context of teaching Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL), academic writing presents particular difficulty, since Uzbek-speaking students encounter cross-linguistic interference at the level of discursive text organisation³. The Uzbek rhetorical tradition is characterised by a deductive-peripheral macrostructure, whereas the Western academic tradition — including that of Russian-language scholarly communication — presupposes a linear, thesis-argument organisation (Egamova, 2025). Overcoming this gap requires purposeful, systematic, and technologically supported instruction.

1.2. The Process-Oriented Approach to Academic

Writing Instruction

Contemporary writing pedagogy is grounded in the process-oriented paradigm (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hyland, 2019), which holds that writing competence develops not through the single-occasion production of a final text product, but through the mastery of sequential stages: planning → drafting → editing → revision → reflection. Iterative, multi-stage editing is widely recognised as the key mechanism for developing academic writing proficiency (White & Arndt, 1991; Graham & Perin, 2007).

The traditional instructional format fundamentally fails to meet the requirements of the process paradigm: an instructor cannot realistically provide timely, detailed, individualised feedback for a class of 25–30 students; text work is predominantly conducted once, without iterative revision; and there is no systematic practice of peer review, which is recognised as a powerful tool for developing critical thinking and writing competence (Topping, 2009). These limitations make LMS platforms a particularly valuable didactic instrument.

1.3. The IMRAD Format in Academic Writing Instruction

A central element of academic writing instruction is the mastery of the IMRAD format (Introduction — Methods — Results — Discussion) — the international standard for structuring scholarly texts adopted by the majority of peer-reviewed journals. According to Swales's (1990) genre-based approach, each IMRAD section fulfils specific communicative functions and is governed by distinct rhetorical conventions that must be acquired systematically and incrementally. LMS platforms make it possible to organise the stepwise acquisition of each IMRAD section through dedicated modules with explicit assessment criteria, authentic text analysis tasks, and peer-review tools.

II. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DIDACTIC POTENTIAL OF MOODLE AND GOOGLE CLASSROOM

2.1. Overview of the Platforms

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is an open-source LMS with a sophisticated toolkit for course structuring, formative assessment, and

learner activity analytics. The platform is used in more than 250 countries and has over 300 million registered users (Moodle, 2026).

Google Classroom is a cloud-based educational platform deeply integrated with the Google ecosystem (Docs, Forms, Meet, Drive). It is distinguished by its ease of use, mobile accessibility, and extensive real-time collaborative capabilities.

The key distinction between the platforms is as follows:

Moodle functions as a course management system emphasising structural coherence, analytics, and formative assessment; Google Classroom functions as an assignment and communication management system emphasising interaction speed and collaborative work. This distinction has critical implications for the design of academic writing courses.

2.2. Comparative Analysis Across Key Didactic Criteria

Table 1. Comparative Didactic Potential of Moodle and Google Classroom for Academic Writing Instruction

Criterion	Moodle	Google Classroom
Course structuring	★★★★★ Full modular course builder with explicit access criteria	★★★☆☆ Linear assignment feed without modular architecture
Peer review	★★★★★ Workshop module with multi-stage peer review and rubrics	★★☆☆☆ Only via comments in Google Docs
Learner activity analytics	★★★★★ Detailed activity logs, timestamps, progress statistics	★★☆☆☆ Limited analytics, no activity logs
Collaborative text editing	★★☆☆☆ Only via the Wiki module	★★★★★ Google Docs: real-time editing with full revision history
Assignment types	★★★★★ 15+ types (essay, say, wiki, audio response, file upload, etc.)	★★★☆☆ 5 assignment types
Testing and quizzes	★★★★★ 15+ question types, adaptive tests	★★★☆☆ Google Forms (basic question types)
Accessibility and ease of use	★★★☆☆ Requires server configuration; steeper learning curve	★★★★★ Free, intuitive, full-featured mobile app

Inline instructor feedback	★★★★☆ Assignment-level comments	★★★★★ Line-level comments directly in student text (Google Docs)
Learning pathway individualisation	★★★★★ Conditional access, adaptive learning trajectories	★★★★☆☆ Differentiated assignments for student groups
Video conferencing	★★☆☆☆ Via plug-ins (BigBlueButton)	★★★★★ Google Meet, fully integrated

Note. ★ = low potential; ★★★★★ = maximum potential on the given criterion.

2.3. Moodle in Academic Writing Instruction: Key Affordances

Modular course architecture. Moodle enables the organisation of an academic writing course as sequential thematic modules, each corresponding to one IMRAD section or one aspect of academic writing (argumentation structure, metadiscourse, APA 7 citation norms, etc.). The conditional access function opens each subsequent module only upon successful completion of the previous one, ensuring a pedagogically grounded sequence of genre convention acquisition.

Workshop module (peer review). The Moodle Workshop module represents the most fully developed peer-review tool available in any widely used LMS. It provides automatic distribution of student work among reviewers, rubric-based assessment, parallel evaluation of both the submitted essay and the quality of the peer review itself, and an aggregated final grade that reflects both components. Peer review is widely recognised as one of the most effective methods for developing academic writing (Topping, 2009; Hyland & Hyland, 2019): reviewing a peer's text develops the critical reading disposition essential for improving one's own writing.

Learner activity analytics. Moodle provides the instructor with detailed data on each student's behaviour: number of resource access instances, time spent on specific materials, assignment attempt history, and grade dynamics. For academic writing instruction, this is particularly valuable: the instructor can identify how much time a student devotes to text revision and at which stages

difficulties arise, enabling targeted and timely individual support.

Conditional access and adaptive learning trajectories.

The conditional access feature in Moodle allows each module to be gated behind successful completion of the previous one. Applied to academic writing instruction, this means a student will not progress to the "Methods" module without having mastered the "Introduction" conventions. This architecture ensures a principled, scaffolded sequence of genre acquisition.

2.4. Google Classroom in Academic Writing Instruction: Key Affordances

Collaborative editing in Google Docs. The integration of Google Classroom with Google Docs enables collaborative academic text editing in real time. The Version History feature records all document changes with timestamps, making it possible to demonstrate the process of text improvement to students, analyse the nature of revisions (substantive vs. surface-level), and foster metacognitive awareness of the writing process. The "visibility" of revision, as Hyland (2019) argues, is a key condition for the development of writing competence.

Inline feedback. Google Docs allows the instructor to leave annotated comments directly on specific sentences and paragraphs in a student's text — precisely localising the problem and enabling immediate targeted revision. Research demonstrates that localised written corrective feedback is substantially more effective than general comments for developing L2 academic writing (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

Accessibility and mobile availability. Google Classroom is fully functional through a mobile application — particularly important in Uzbekistan, where many students have more reliable internet access via smartphone than via desktop computer. The capacity to work on an academic text at any time aligns with the principle of personalised learning pace (Zimmerman, 2000).

Google Forms as a formative assessment tool. Integration with Google Forms allows the creation of quizzes and surveys to assess mastery of IMRAD genre conventions: tests on section identification, diagnostic surveys of student difficulties, and reflective questionnaires. Automatic marking with instant feedback reduces instructor workload while providing students with timely information on their progress.

2.5. Platform Limitations and the Case for a Hybrid Model

Moodle limitations: requires server-level configuration and technical administration; the interface presents a steeper learning curve for new users; limited real-time collaborative text editing capabilities; mobile app functionality is inferior to the web interface.

Google Classroom limitations: absence of a fully

developed peer-review module with rubrics and automatic work distribution; limited analytics without detailed activity logs; linear (feed-based) content organisation without modular architecture; narrower range of assignment types compared with Moodle.

A comparison of the strengths and limitations of both platforms leads to a clear conclusion: neither platform individually provides the full didactic potential required for effective academic writing instruction. This finding substantiates the necessity of their hybrid integration: Moodle compensates for Google Classroom's limited structuring and analytics; Google Classroom addresses Moodle's insufficient collaborative text editing capabilities.

III. METHODOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES FOR APPLYING LMS IN ACADEMIC WRITING INSTRUCTION

3.1. The Hybrid Moodle + Google Classroom Integration Model

On the basis of the comparative analysis conducted above, a hybrid model of LMS application for academic writing instruction is proposed, in which each platform fulfils specific, mutually complementary functions (see Table 2).

Table 2. Division of Functions Between Platforms in the Hybrid Model

Didactic Task	Platform	Tool
Course structuring by IMRAD modules	Moodle	Modular course architecture
Sequential mastery of genre conventions	Moodle	Conditional access between modules
Testing on academic writing theory	Moodle	Quiz (15+ question types)
Structured essay peer review	Moodle	Workshop module with rubrics
Student progress monitoring	Moodle	Activity Logs, Gradebook
Forum discussions on genre conventions	Moodle	Forum module

Collaborative writing and iterative editing	Google Docs	Collaborative editing + Version History
Inline instructor feedback	Google Docs	Inline comment function
Final written work submission	Google Classroom	Assignment submission portal
Reflective surveys and diagnostic testing	Google Forms	Automated quizzes and questionnaires
Individual text consultations	Google Meet	Synchronous video interaction

The principal advantage of the hybrid model is its synergistic effect: Moodle provides the structural coherence and analytics lacking in Google Classroom; Google Classroom addresses Moodle's insufficient capacity for real-time collaborative academic text production and revision.

3.2. Key Methodological Techniques

Technique 1. Modular IMRAD acquisition. The academic writing course is organised as 8 thematic Moodle modules: (1) Introduction to academic discourse; (2) Introduction section — the CARS strategy (Swales, 1990); (3) Methods section — procedural description; (4) Results section — data presentation; (5) Discussion section — interpretation and hedging (Hyland, 2005); (6) Argumentation and cohesion; (7) APA 7 citation norms; (8) Final project. Access to each subsequent module opens only upon successful completion of the preceding written assignment.

Technique 2. Iterative editing in Google Docs. Every written task is completed in Google Docs, providing automatic recording of all revisions in Version History, simultaneous instructor and student access to the document, and localised inline feedback. Students are required to complete a minimum of three editing iterations for each IMRAD section. Analysis of Version History allows the instructor to evaluate not only the final product but the quality of the revision process itself.

Technique 3. Structured peer review via Moodle

Workshop. Following each IMRAD section, students complete a mandatory peer-review cycle. The procedure comprises four stages: (1) the student submits their work; (2) the system automatically distributes works among reviewers (each student reviews two works); (3) reviewing is conducted using a pre-designed rubric (criteria: section structure, argumentation, cohesion, linguistic accuracy, and genre convention compliance); (4) the student revises their text in light of the feedback received. The final grade incorporates both the essay quality score and the peer-review quality score.

Technique 4. Authentic academic text analysis. Each Moodle module includes a set of 3–5 authentic academic articles in Russian from peer-reviewed journals. Students analyse texts using purpose-designed tasks: identifying CARS elements in the introductory section, locating hedging constructions in the Discussion, analysing metadiscursive devices. This work provides immersion in genre conventions through what Bhatia (2004) terms “encountering genre in context.”

Technique 5. Reflective forum discussions. Following each module, students participate in a Moodle forum discussion responding to reflective prompts: “Which aspect of this IMRAD section presents the greatest challenge for you and why?”; “What have you learned about genre conventions from reviewing your peers’ work?” Forum discussions simultaneously develop Russian-language academic writing skills and foster metacognitive awareness of the writing process.

Technique 6. Progress monitoring and timely support.

Moodle analytics tools (Activity Logs, Gradebook) enable the instructor to track weekly: each student's resource engagement, grade dynamics, revision iteration count, and forum participation. Students demonstrating low activity receive personalised messages through Moodle and are offered individual consultations via Google Meet.

Technique 7. Final project — complete IMRAD essay. The culmination of the course is the student's production of a complete academic essay (500–600 words) in IMRAD format on a topic related to Russian language teaching methodology. The final project passes through a complete cycle: drafting → Moodle Workshop peer review → revision → expert assessment by two instructors using a validated rubric. The final grade comprises three components: 40% — essay quality (expert rubric); 30% — peer-review quality; 30% — revision volume and character (per Google Docs Version History data).

3.3. Pedagogical Conditions for Effective LMS Application

The effectiveness of the proposed hybrid model depends on four pedagogical conditions:

— **Methodological condition:** The instructor must command LMS platforms not merely as a user but as a content creator: designing Moodle modules, configuring the Workshop, developing assessment rubrics. In Uzbek teacher education institutions, this requires specialist training or professional development.

— **Technical condition:** Stable internet access, a server-hosted Moodle instance at the institutional level, and student access to Google Workspace for Education are necessary prerequisites.

— **Motivational condition:** Students must appreciate the professional value of academic writing for their future teaching careers. This requires explicit emphasis on the relationship between academic writing and real-world pedagogical tasks.

— **Systemic condition:** LMS application must be systematic rather than episodic: embedded in the official curriculum, supported by a full teaching and learning resource package, and allocated sufficient instructional time (no fewer than 60 academic hours).

CONCLUSION

Finding 1. Academic writing constitutes a complex, genre-conditioned competency whose development among future Russian language teachers requires systematic, technologically supported instruction that transcends the limits of the traditional classroom format.

Finding 2. Moodle and Google Classroom possess mutually complementary didactic potential for academic writing instruction: Moodle surpasses Google Classroom in course structuring, peer-review organisation, and learner analytics; Google Classroom surpasses Moodle in collaborative editing capabilities, inline instructor feedback, and mobile accessibility.

Finding 3. The hybrid integration model, realised through seven methodological techniques (modular IMRAD acquisition, iterative editing in Google Docs, structured Workshop peer review, authentic text analysis, reflective forum discussions, progress monitoring, and the final IMRAD project), provides the conditions for fully realising the process-oriented approach to academic writing instruction.

Finding 4. The effective implementation of the hybrid LMS model in Russian language teacher education at Uzbek pedagogical universities requires the fulfilment of four pedagogical conditions: instructor methodological readiness, technical infrastructure, motivational scaffolding, and systemic curricular integration.

Directions for future research include: experimental validation of the proposed hybrid model under real instructional conditions; development of diagnostic instruments for assessing academic writing proficiency in future Russian language teachers; and investigation of the potential of artificial intelligence tools as an additional component of the hybrid LMS environment.

NOTES

¹ Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. UP-60, 28 January 2022; Presidential Resolution No. PP-3832, 2018.

² According to departmental data from the Faculty of Russian Philology, USWLU, approximately 80% of philology students are native Uzbek speakers.

³ Egamova, N. (2025). Academic writing challenges for Uzbek-speaking RFL learners. *Journal of Central Asian*

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