

Torubara Oksana

ORCID 0000-0002-5375-4696

PhD in Education,
Associate Professor of Foreign Languages Department,
T.H. Shevchenko National University «Chernihiv Colehium»
(Chernihiv, Ukraine) E-mail: oksana.torubara@gmail.com

Visiting researcher,
Department of Linguistics and English Language,
Lancaster University (Lancaster, UK)
E-mail: o.torubara@lancaster.ac.uk

ACADEMIC WRITING RETREATS: UNLOCKING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR UKRAINIAN SCHOLARS

In the «publish or perish» era, effective research communication and publishing are crucial for academic success. This paper explores the potential of academic writing retreats as a tool for supporting Ukrainian scholars, especially in the challenging context of the ongoing war.

Purpose. *The aim is to analyse how writing retreats could enhance scholarly productivity, emotional resilience, and community-building among Ukrainian academics facing significant professional and personal upheavals.*

Methodology. *Through a combination of autoethnographic reflection, informal expert discussions, and thematic literature analysis, the paper outlines the functions, structure, benefits and challenges of writing retreats, with particular emphasis on adapting some models to the Ukrainian context.*

Scientific novelty. *The paper discusses how writing retreats can be integrated into Ukrainian academic culture, with recommendations for practical implementation, including hybrid and virtual formats, and international collaboration.*

Conclusions. *Academic writing retreats represent a promising and underexplored opportunity for supporting Ukrainian scholars in a time of ongoing upheavals. By providing dedicated space, time, and community support, retreats can foster academic output, enhance writing skills, and promote emotional resilience. While this concept is still relatively new within the Ukrainian academic context, adapting established models to local needs through both grassroots initiatives and institutional programs offers a feasible and impactful path forward. Careful planning, sensitivity to scholars' circumstances, and strategic partnerships will be essential for success. Further research and experimentation with retreat formats, particularly in virtual and hybrid formats, will help to embed this practice sustainably into Ukraine's evolving academic culture, offering scholars not only a tool for individual advancement but also a means of creating communities of practice and strengthening the broader academic network in Ukraine.*

It concludes by urging further empirical studies to assess the long-term impacts of such initiatives on research output, mental health, and academic careers, thereby contributing to the resilience and sustainability of the Ukrainian academic community during and after the ongoing crisis.

Keywords: *academic writing retreat, Ukrainian scholars, research communication and publishing.*

Problem Statement. Academic writing is a cornerstone of scholarly work, essential for disseminating research, securing funding, and advancing careers. However, producing high-quality academic texts is a complex and demanding process that requires sustained focus, motivation, and discipline. In today's «publish or perish» academic culture, scholars often face intense pressure to produce a continuous stream of publications to secure career advancement and institutional recognition [32; 33; 5]. In response to these challenges, writing retreats have gained recognition as an effective intervention to support scholars in overcoming writing barriers and enhancing productivity.

The term «academic writing retreat» does not have a single, clearly identified origin in the literature. However, structured writing retreats have been recognised and implemented in academic settings for several

decades [1; 28]. Defined broadly, writing retreats are structured periods of time dedicated to academic writing, often conducted in a distraction-free environment and supplemented by peer support or mentoring.

While writing retreats are commonly studied in relation to under-graduate and post-graduate students [17; 31], this article focuses exclusively on writing retreats for academics. Unlike students, academics face the lifelong challenge of publishing, a process that requires continuous skill development, motivation, and resilience from early-career researchers to well-established scholars [6; 8; 28; 32].

Each career stage presents unique writing challenges – early-career academics might struggle with navigating the publishing process, mid-career scholars often face competing professional obligations, and senior researchers may encounter burnout and diminishing motivation. Despite these differences, common challenges across all levels include a lack of institutional support, isolation, and difficulties in maintaining a consistent writing routine [15].

Writing retreats have been shown to be beneficial for researchers at all levels of experience, from novices to experts [1; 29]. They address mentioned above challenges by offering dedicated writing time, a structured approach, and a sense of community to sustain academic writing practice.

Despite the well-documented benefits of writing retreats in Western academic contexts, their role and effectiveness in Ukrainian academia remain largely unexplored. This article seeks to fill that gap by examining the functions, structure, positive impact and challenges of writing retreats, as well as their potential adaptation for Ukrainian scholars. By doing so, it aims to contribute to the broader discussion on how to better support academics in their lifelong endeavor of scholarly writing and publishing.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The concept of academic writing retreats has evolved over time, drawing from the broader idea of retreats as structured periods of withdrawal from routine tasks to focus on personal or professional development. While the exact origin of the term «*academic writing retreat*» in scholarly literature is not entirely clear, some of the earliest works mentioning a «*writers'/writing retreat for academics*» were published at the beginning of the 2000s [9; 20]. These studies reflect on the experiences and insights gained from organising writers' retreats aimed specifically at supporting academics in their writing journeys, highlighting the potential of such retreats to enhance scholarly productivity.

Subsequent research expanded on these initial insights, examining the social and collaborative dimensions of writing retreats, including how such environments can support academics, particularly women, in developing writing practices [10]. Studies have shown that structured writing retreats are especially beneficial for women as they create a supportive microsystem that fosters positive beliefs about writing processes, performance, and outcomes, while also reducing isolation, promoting community and providing a space for both personal and professional growth [27; 26].

Further studies have highlighted the effectiveness of structured writing retreats as a purposeful intervention to enhance writing productivity and academic output. Research has shown that structured retreats provide a focused and supportive environment that can be integrated into academic practice, bridging the gap between marginal and mainstream scholarly activities [28]. Moreover, such retreats have proven particularly beneficial for novice researchers, providing a space to develop writing skills and build confidence [29]. In addition, the non-writing components, such as group activities and breaks, have been shown to be essential in sustaining the positive effects of the retreat. To support institutions in facilitating these experiences, practical frameworks for structured writing retreats have been developed [11].

One of the formats of such support was offered as an intensive off-campus experience that nurtured a strong sense of community [18]. The study identified several benefits of writing retreats, including protected time and space for writing, improved writing skills, personal growth, and a sense of belonging within a community of practice. These key elements of successful writing retreats were also highlighted in an integrative review of 11 research papers on different aspects of such intervention [15]. Thematic analysis of the data revealed numerous personal, professional and organisational benefits, with participants showing greater publication outputs, particularly when provided ongoing support.

Building on the idea of empowering diverse groups of scholars, writing retreats facilitate the creation of a community of practice, which is vital for academic development. Several studies explore how these communities enhance both personal and professional growth for participants. It has been shown that writing retreats foster cultures of collegiality and «generous scholarship», where academics support each other's work in a collaborative environment [14]. It is also emphasised that a multi-university residential academic writing retreat model can help create and sustain such communities, with shared goals and mutual support being crucial for long-term success [19].

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that cross-disciplinary writing retreats can unite academics, helping them build a strong sense of «community of writing practice» that extends beyond individual disciplines [35]. Additionally, writing retreats have been found to cultivate a sense of belonging, providing academic staff – especially those from marginalised backgrounds – with an environment where they feel included and supported in their scholarly pursuits [34]. Together, these studies highlight the significant role writing retreats play in fostering connected, collaborative environments that contribute to both academic productivity and personal empowerment.

Another crucial aspect of writing retreats is their positive impact on academic psychological health. Research has shown that writing retreats, by combining social interaction, physical activities, and focused writing sessions, create a supportive environment that fosters feelings of confidence, safety, and mental clarity [30]. Further studies have explored positive impact on both hedonic (pleasure and happiness) and eudaimonic

(meaning and purpose) well-being. Structured writing retreats have been found to mitigate common psychological challenges faced by academics, including isolation, conflicting work priorities, and time pressures. However, these positive effects may diminish if the intervention is not sustained over time, highlighting the importance of integrating writing retreats within a broader, ongoing support system [4].

Moreover, the shift to virtual environments during the COVID-19 pandemic led to the emergence of virtual writing retreats, which have proven to be valuable in supporting postgraduate students and enhancing their learning experience. Virtual writing retreats not only help maintain efficiency and combat isolation but also foster a sense of community and provide emotional support. These retreats have been shown to effectively address challenges posed by physical distancing while maintaining a collaborative academic environment [16].

Recent studies have also examined the cognitive and behavioral aspects of writing retreats, highlighting their potential to foster sustainable writing habits and positive emotional associations. One such study explores how cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors interact within a faculty writing retreat, demonstrating that retreats can help minimise writing resistance, build positive social connections, and enhance scholarly output [7]. These insights align with social cognitive theory and offer a scalable framework for supporting academic writing practices.

The literature reviewed demonstrates that academic writing retreats have been widely explored in Western scholarship, with studies highlighting their role in community building, emotional resilience, cognitive development, and scholarly progress. However, little is known about the practice of academic writing retreats in the Ukrainian context—research on this topic is scarce, and such initiatives have yet to be implemented in practice. Having personally participated in several writing retreats and experienced their positive effects and efficacy, I am driven to introduce this practice to colleagues and faculty. The following section outlines the methods used in this research.

Coverage of the procedure of theoretical and methodological research with an indication of methods. This study employed a qualitative, reflexive approach, combining elements of autoethnographic reflection, informal expert interviews, and thematic analysis of relevant literature. The initial motivation for the research was personal participation in several academic writing retreats offered within the Early Career Researchers Network of the British Academy. Entering these events with initial scepticism and primarily motivated by curiosity, I systematically documented my experiences and observations regarding the structure, dynamics, and outcomes of the retreats. These experiences demonstrated to me the tangible benefits and efficacy of writing retreats for my own and my peers' academic productivity and professional development.

Building on this personal engagement, I conducted a series of informal, purposive discussions with British scholars specialising in academic writing, as well as with Ukrainian researchers displaced by the war, many of whom had attended writing retreats themselves. These conversations, while not structured interviews, provided valuable insights into different perspectives on the goals, organisation, and outcomes of writing retreats in different academic contexts.

To complement and contextualise these empirical insights, I undertook a thematic analysis of a broad range of academic sources addressing the concept, organisation, and impact of writing retreats. This triangulated approach – combining personal observation, peer dialogue and literature-based thematic analysis – enabled a critical exploration of the applicability and potential adaptation of writing retreat practices for the Ukrainian academic environment.

Presentation of the main research material.

1. Academic Writing Retreat: Exploring the Term Definition and Its Ukrainian equivalent

The word «*retreat*» generally refers to a period of withdrawal from regular activities, often in a peaceful or secluded environment, with the purpose of reflection, relaxation, or focused work. Retreats are commonly associated with spiritual or wellness practices, where individuals or groups distance themselves from daily routines to engage in meditation, personal growth, or rejuvenation. Retreats may occur in various contexts, including corporate settings (team-building retreats), religious practices (spiritual retreats), or personal wellness (yoga or mindfulness retreats). In a broader sense, a retreat can be an organised event where people gather to concentrate on specific tasks, develop skills, or build community.

The use of the term «*retreat*» in academia emerged as scholars began recognising the need for dedicated, distraction-free time to focus on writing and professional development. Drawing from the concept of a peaceful withdrawal from routine, academic writing retreats were conceived as structured, supportive environments where scholars could temporarily step away from their usual responsibilities to concentrate solely on writing. As a result, writing retreats have become an increasingly popular method for fostering scholarly output, offering a structured yet flexible approach to overcoming writing challenges and enhancing publication success.

Scholarly literature offers several definitions of writing retreats. Moore, Murphy, and Murray (2010) define an academic writing retreat as a professional development intervention that provides 'a total immersion experience, writing support and mentoring, focused engagement in the writing experience and a community of practice and reflexivity' [21, 21]. Murray and Newton (2009) highlight their structured nature, noting that writing retreats often involve goal-setting, scheduled writing sessions, and reflective discussions [28]. Similarly, Sword (2017) positions them as a means of improving both writing productivity and scholarly well-being by reducing isolation and increasing motivation. More recently, Wiebe et al. (2023) describe academic writing retreats as 'professional development events that allow scholars to immerse themselves in writing for publication and to receive on-site support for that writing' [35].

For the purpose of this paper, I adopt the definition that views writing retreats as structured, intensive, and supportive writing environments designed specifically for academics aiming to improve their scholarly output and engagement with the publishing process. This definition aligns with the core function of writing retreats as both practical and psychological support systems for researchers at various career stages.

However, the term «*academic writing retreat*» does not have a direct Ukrainian equivalent in most authoritative Ukrainian lexicographic sources such as the Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language (1907-1909) by Borys Hrinchenko, the Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language in 11 volumes (1970-1980) and Ukrainian Explanatory Dictionary (2001, 2016). This fact reflects the term's relatively recent emergence in academic practices. The closest possible Ukrainian terms, such as «*усамітнення для науковців*» or «*резиденція для академічного письма*», capture the essence of the retreat but still lack the specificity of the original term. This gap presents an opportunity to adopt a concept that, while borrowed, aligns with global academic practices and could prove beneficial for Ukrainian academia.

While it is preferable to avoid unnecessary foreign terms and prevent the cluttering of academic discourse with borrowed words for the sake of «scientific prestige», in this particular case, the absence of an established Ukrainian equivalent makes the careful use of the English term both reasonable and appropriate. Rather than repeatedly turning to lengthy explanations, it may be more practical to adopt the anglicism «retreat», especially given its gradual integration into broader public usage over the past decades, which suggests its relevance and acceptability within academic contexts as well.

In terms of possible Ukrainian translations to consider, three options emerge. «*Академічний ретрит*» is the most neutral and general term, encompassing a retreat focused on academic activities without narrowing the scope to a specific group or purpose. «*Ретрит для науковців*» narrows the scope slightly, directly targeting scholars, researchers, or academics. While this variant focuses on the participants, the idea of academic writing is still implied, as writing is a fundamental skill for all those involved in research and publishing. Finally, «*ретрит для академічного письма*» is the most relevant, highlighting the writing aspect of the retreat. Although this phrase is highly specific, it may be preferable in contexts where the focus of the retreat is indeed on writing productivity rather than broader academic activities.

All three terms reflect the central role of academic writing, which is essential for all scholars, researchers, and academics, as writing is a key part of publishing and communicating research. Therefore, any of these translations is appropriate depending on the exact emphasis of the retreat, but they all recognise the importance of writing within the academic profession.

2. Function: Providing Space for Focused Writing

The primary function of academic writing retreats is to create a dedicated space for focused, uninterrupted writing time, away from the usual distractions and pressures of academic life. These retreats are designed to support scholars in advancing their writing projects – whether that means drafting, revising, or completing papers, articles, or other forms of academic output. Importantly, writing retreats also serve as a space for professional development, helping scholars not only with writing but also with building a sense of community and exchanging feedback.

The key function of academic writing retreats is to foster an environment where participants can concentrate deeply on their work without external distractions. This is particularly crucial for scholars who often juggle multiple responsibilities, including teaching, administrative duties, and other professional obligations. By removing these distractions, writing retreats allow participants to dedicate uninterrupted time to their writing, leading to increased output and clearer thinking.

In addition to enhancing writing progress, writing retreats provide opportunities for scholars to engage in professional development. These retreats often include sessions where participants can discuss strategies for improving their writing skills, share experiences and difficulties, and learn from peers and facilitators. The collaborative nature of these retreats can be especially valuable for displaced or isolated scholars, as it offers a sense of connection with others in similar fields or circumstances.

For displaced Ukrainian researchers, academic writing retreats can be particularly important as they provide both a productive and supportive environment amidst the uncertainty and challenges of displacement. These retreats offer a unique opportunity for scholars to reconnect with their academic work, find solidarity with other researchers facing similar situations, and regain a sense of professional identity. The isolation often experienced by displaced researchers – whether due to physical distance from their home institutions or emotional struggles linked to the ongoing crisis – can make it difficult to maintain academic productivity. Writing retreats provide not only the time and space to focus on their writing but also the emotional support and motivation needed to continue their research despite personal and professional upheaval.

However, it is essential to approach the organisation of such events with careful planning, particularly regarding safety and security. For retreats held in Ukraine, the current security situation requires a heightened level of precaution, both for participants' physical safety and emotional sustainability. This includes ensuring safe venues, potentially offering online options for those who cannot attend in person, and considering the mental health needs of participants. Psychological support and trauma-informed approaches should be incorporated to address the emotional challenges participants may face, especially in times of crisis. For online retreats, special attention must be given to ensuring that digital platforms are secure and accessible for all participants, considering varying levels of internet connectivity and technological resources. The design and delivery of these events must prioritise both the professional development of researchers and their safety, ensuring that they are able to engage in these valuable opportunities without compromising their well-being.

3. Structure, Models and Design: Balancing Writing with Supportive Activities

The structure of academic writing retreats can vary, but they generally aim to strike a balance between independent writing time and group-based activities that foster collaboration, feedback, and mutual support. Most writing retreats are designed to allow for long, dedicated blocks of writing time – often ranging from several hours to full days – interspersed with shorter sessions for discussion, peer review, or skill-building workshops.

For example, a typical writing retreat schedule might include:

- morning writing sessions where participants write independently, with minimal interruption;
- afternoon group sessions with time for participants to meet and share their work, receive feedback, or discuss writing strategies;
- breaks and social time to encourage informal interactions and networking among participants, which often leads to valuable connections and collaborative ideas;
- optional workshops or training sessions focused on specific aspects of writing, such as writing for publication, managing writing time, or overcoming writer's block.

This flexible structure ensures that participants can focus on their writing while also gaining insights from peers and mentors, creating a holistic and supportive environment for professional growth.

Academic writing retreats can take several forms and models such as structured or facilitated retreats and self-directed retreats, depending on their goals and structure. Structured retreats typically follow a carefully planned schedule, balancing blocks of focused writing time with workshops, group discussions or even one-to-one mentoring sessions. Such retreats are usually facilitated and led by experienced writing coaches or academic developers who guide participants through exercises aimed at improving writing productivity, overcoming barriers, and developing sustainable writing habits [28; 1]. Such retreats serve as environments designed to foster collegiality and community among participants. In contrast, self-directed retreats emphasise autonomy, offering participants unstructured time to work independently, often with minimal intervention, under the assumption that individuals best manage their own writing process. Each model offers distinct benefits: structured and facilitated retreats provide accountability and community support, while self-directed retreats appeal to more experienced writers seeking uninterrupted time.

Academic writing retreats can also be categorised into residential and on-campus ones, each tailored to specific academic requirements and contexts [10; 14]. Live-in retreats are typically held in secluded locations and provide a distraction-free setting that encourages deep focus on writing tasks. They often attract participants from various institutions and disciplines, promoting a diverse exchange of ideas and experiences. Such retreats foster sustained improvements in writing productivity and a stronger sense of academic identity [14]. On-campus retreats are more convenient, allowing academics to participate without the need for travel, thus minimising disruption to their schedules. Such events often require fewer resources, making them a viable option for institutions facing budget constraints [3]. Both live-in and on-campus retreats are in-person events which offer immersive, collaborative spaces that nurture focused writing and collegial exchange. Very common nowadays online format extend those benefits by providing even more accessible and low-cost opportunities for engagement, allowing participants to integrate writing into their routines without the barriers of travel or location.

In addition to differences in format, some researchers also distinguish between discipline-specific and interdisciplinary retreats [12]. Discipline-specific retreats are tailored for specific research areas and provide uninterrupted writing time, mentorship, and peer support for the participants joint by a common research field. Interdisciplinary or general academic retreats are open to a broader audience and aim to improve writing competencies and foster a sense of belonging among diverse academic groups. They often include structured activities that promote relationship building and self-efficacy [15, 35].

The design of academic writing retreats can vary depending on the needs and goals of the participants. For some retreats, the focus might be on providing a quiet, distraction-free environment for solitary writing. In others, there might be more emphasis on group interactions, with regular opportunities for participants to present their work and receive feedback. Understanding these different approaches is crucial when designing retreats that best suit the diverse needs of Ukrainian scholars, especially given the varying stages of their academic careers and the additional challenges they may face due to unprecedented circumstances of war or displacement.

For Ukrainian scholars, retreats could be particularly beneficial if they are designed with flexibility in mind, recognising the diverse challenges that academics at risk face. For example, retreats could include hybrid formats (with both in-person and online participation) to accommodate those who cannot travel easily. Additionally, the design could allow for integration of personal or professional development sessions to address the emotional and psychological issues that displaced researchers often face, such as isolation, imposter syndrome, and the stress of adjusting to new academic environments.

Moreover, academic writing retreats could be designed to foster community-building among Ukrainian scholars. This could involve creating opportunities for participants to share their personal and academic journeys, exchange resources, and build a supportive network that extends beyond the retreat itself.

a. Personal Reflections and Broader Insights: Benefits and Challenges

As many academics will agree, consistent engagement in writing is crucial for scholarly productivity; ideally, every day is a writing day, or at least every week is a writing week. However, maintaining this consistency became significantly more challenging for me in the context of displacement and the hardships caused by war. Against this background, my incidental experience of participating in an academic writing retreat

proved particularly valuable. Initially, I registered for a retreat for scholars at the University of Nottingham out of curiosity – to visit the city and meet new people. However, what I discovered exceeded my expectations.

The retreat itself was structured simply yet effectively. Sessions were open to all participants regardless of academic position or departmental affiliation, and were based on the Pomodoro Technique, which encourages short periods of focused work followed by regular breaks. In this case, writing sessions lasted 90 minutes, followed by 15-minute breaks, with a longer lunch break in the middle of the day. During breaks, participants were encouraged to stretch, relax, or engage in informal conversations either inside or outside the venue. Each session began with a brief round where attendees shared what they were working on and what they aimed to achieve, ranging from writing doctoral theses to analysing data or addressing unfinished research papers. Facilitators also enriched breaks by offering short productivity meditations and yoga sessions, both of which were well received.

To maintain focus, participants were advised to leave their phones outside the room, close social media, and minimise distractions, creating a shared atmosphere of concentration. Although there was no formal pressure to write, the subtle presence of peers working intensely fostered a natural sense of accountability. Some participants chose to read, analyse data, or work on research posters instead of writing, and there was no competition over output – whether someone wrote 1000 words or 100, both outcomes were equally valued.

Personally, I found the experience transformative. I arrived with a draft article that I had struggled with for months, frustrated by my inability to finish it. During the retreat, I managed to reorganise and restructure the piece, completely rewrite the introduction and conclusion, and edit the entire text, leaving only the references to complete later. The results exceeded my expectations. Rather than feeling drained or exhausted at the end of the retreat, I was, quite the opposite, energised and brimming with ideas about the research directions I should pursue further. There was a deep sense of fulfillment from the work I had accomplished that day. I found myself wanting to share these feelings and exchange reflections with the other participants. While I was astonished by the progress, more experienced colleagues were unsurprised, as they already recognised the effectiveness of writing retreats in enhancing writing progress, fostering professional development through peer learning, and supporting psychological well-being.

This personal experience reflects broader findings reported in the literature, which highlight the multiple benefits of academic writing retreats for researchers across different disciplines and contexts. This multitude of benefits enhance personal, professional, and organisational outcomes [15]. Academic writing retreats offer substantial individual benefits, including enhanced productivity, improved writing quality, the development of sustainable writing habits alongside a reduction in writing-related anxiety, which fosters a positive mindset towards the researchers' writing endeavors [10]. Structured environments free from daily distractions enable participants to focus intensively on their projects, often resulting in measurable increases in writing output [28]. Retreats also provide academics with strategies to overcome writing barriers such as procrastination or writer's block, while fostering greater self-efficacy and confidence in their scholarly writing abilities [26]. Additionally, these retreats help build publication profiles that are essential for career advancement, including promotion and tenure opportunities. Importantly, by establishing regular writing routines, retreats contribute to long-term improvements in time management and work-life balance [15]. In contexts marked by disruption or displacement, such as among Ukrainian scholars affected by war, writing retreats can also play a critical role in supporting psychological resilience and re-establishing professional identity.

Beyond individual gains, academic writing retreats also create important collective and community-level benefits. They foster a sense of scholarly belonging and collegiality, helping to counteract the isolation that often accompanies academic work [28; 9]. Through informal peer support, shared goal-setting, and collaborative reflection, participants benefit from increased motivation, accountability, and opportunities for professional growth [26]. These collective dynamics not only support immediate writing achievements but also contribute to the formation of longer-term scholarly networks and communities of practice, both of which are essential for sustaining research careers, particularly for displaced or early-career researchers. From an organisational perspective, writing retreats can significantly increase peer-reviewed publications, which are vital for enhancing the institution's research output and status [15]. Thus, retreats serve as both personal development interventions and catalysts for strengthening academic communities.

While academic writing retreats offer numerous benefits, they are not without challenges that require careful consideration. One common issue is the risk of unrealistic expectations, where participants anticipate immediate breakthroughs in their writing productivity, leading to frustration if progress feels slower than hoped. Balancing structured activities with the need for flexibility can also be difficult, as overly rigid schedules may stifle creativity and autonomy [28]. Group dynamics plays a crucial role as well: tensions can arise if participants have differing levels of commitment, work styles, or expectations about interaction during breaks. Furthermore, competing workload demands and limited institutional resources often prevent academics from prioritising writing or attending retreats [9; 8].

Logistical issues, such as securing an accessible and distraction-free venue, poor organisational and personal planning can also compromise the retreat's overall impact [2]. Tailoring the retreat structure to meet diverse participant needs and reinforcing engagement protocols are essential yet complex undertakings [2]. Moreover, the success of such retreats often depends on the availability of senior academics to provide mentorship and feedback, the support that is not always guaranteed [10]. Gender-specific barriers further complicate inclusivity, particularly for women scholars [10; 9]. Additionally, economic pressures on institutions to demonstrate return on investment present a challenge, especially given the current lack of robust evidence

linking retreats to measurable publication outputs [15]. For displaced researchers or those affected by trauma, retreats may trigger emotional strain if adequate psychological support and safe environments are not provided. Thus, while retreats have significant potential to support academic writing and community-building, their design and facilitation must be approached thoughtfully to maximise benefits and minimise possible drawbacks.

Recognising both the benefits and potential challenges of writing retreats highlights the importance of thoughtful adaptation, especially for specific academic communities. In the context of Ukrainian scholars – many of whom are navigating the realities of displacement, war, or disrupted academic environments – tailored approaches are essential to maximise the effectiveness of writing retreats.

4. Discussion. Adapting Writing Retreats for Ukrainian Scholars: Rationale and Implementation Strategies.

Following the discussion of the benefits and challenges of academic writing retreats, this section turns to how such initiatives could be adapted for Ukrainian scholars. In Ukraine, writing retreats are not yet a familiar practice, and research into their use within universities is very limited. Although there have been various efforts to support academic writing, such as workshops and online courses, these formats don't offer the same immersive, community-focused experience that defines traditional writing retreats [28; 9]. As a result, introducing structured writing retreats could fill an important gap and provide new ways to support scholars in their writing journeys.

Given the many pressures Ukrainian academics face, such as geopolitical instability, displacement, disrupted careers, and limited institutional support, retreats could be a powerful way to boost research progress, build a sense of belonging, and strengthen peer networks. With so much focus on international publishing and heavy teaching and administrative loads, finding time and mental space to write is often a major challenge. Writing retreats could offer dedicated, protected time for writing, along with the encouragement and accountability that comes from working alongside peers [15; 28; 9].

When thinking about how to make retreats work in Ukraine, practicalities matter. Options could include residential retreats, one-day events at universities, or even virtual sessions, depending on what resources are available [16; 10; 14]. A realistic starting point might be low-cost day retreats sponsored by universities, combined with online follow-up groups to keep up the momentum. Partnering with international organisations could also help with funding and expertise.

There are a few ways to go about organising retreats. A top-down approach, led by university administrations, could help with funding and make retreats part of professional development programs. However, top-down efforts can sometimes get bogged down in bureaucracy. Alternatively, retreats could start at the grassroots level, with academics organising informal gatherings on their own. These bottom-up initiatives tend to be more flexible and responsive but might lack long-term support. Perhaps the best way forward would be a mix of both allowing retreats to start informally and grow into more formal programs once their value is demonstrated.

It's also important to recognise that Ukrainian scholars might face particular barriers to participating in retreats. Financial limitations, uncertainty about new practices, and the emotional toll of living through war all mean that retreats need to be designed with care, flexibility, and sensitivity. Other regions that have rebuilt academic communities after crises, such as parts of Eastern Europe and South Africa, offer valuable lessons for how to adapt retreat models effectively.

Overall, writing retreats could be a meaningful and powerful addition to Ukrainian academic life. With thoughtful planning, flexible approaches, and a focus on both productivity and stress management, retreats can help scholars reconnect with their writing, support each other, and move forward, even in difficult times.

While this paper offers an initial exploration into the adaptation of academic writing retreats for Ukrainian scholars, it is limited by its largely conceptual nature and reliance on personal experience and existing literature. Further empirical research is needed to evaluate the practical implementation of retreats in different Ukrainian contexts, considering regional disparities, institutional capacities, and scholars' diverse needs. Future studies could also investigate long-term impacts of writing retreats on research progress, mental health, and career advancement among displaced and home-based Ukrainian researchers.

Conclusion and prospects for further research. Academic writing retreats represent a promising and underexplored opportunity for supporting Ukrainian scholars in a time of ongoing upheavals. By providing dedicated space, time, and community support, retreats can foster academic output, enhance writing skills, and promote emotional resilience. While this concept is still relatively new within the Ukrainian academic context, adapting established models to local needs through both grassroots initiatives and institutional programs offers a feasible and impactful path forward. Careful planning, sensitivity to scholars' circumstances, and strategic partnerships will be essential for success. Further research and experimentation with retreat formats, particularly in virtual and hybrid formats, will help to embed this practice sustainably into Ukraine's evolving academic culture, offering scholars not only a tool for individual advancement but also a means of creating communities of practice and strengthening the broader academic network in Ukraine.

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Торубара Оксана

ORCID 0000-0002-5375-4696

Кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов,
Національний університет «Чернігівський колегіум» імені Т.Г. Шевченка
(Чернігів, Україна) E-mail: oksana.torubara@gmail.com

Гостьовий професор
кафедри лінгвістики та англійської мови,
Університет Ланкастер (Ланкастер, Великобританія)
E-mail: o.torubara@lancaster.ac.uk

РЕТРИТИ ДЛЯ АКАДЕМІЧНОГО ПИСЬМА: НОВІ МОЖЛИВОСТІ ДЛЯ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ НАУКОВЦІВ

У часи, коли панує гасло «публікуйся попри все», ефективно просування досліджень та їх публікація є вирішальними для наукового успіху. Ця стаття розкриває потенціал ретритів для академічного письма як інструменту підтримки українських учених, особливо важливого в складних умовах війни.

Мета. Робота має на меті проаналізувати, як академічні ретрити можуть покращити наукову продуктивність та емоційну стійкість, а також сприяти єднанню українських дослідників, які переживають значні професійні та особисті потрясіння.

Методологія. На основі поєднання автоетнографічного підходу, неформальних бесід із спеціалістами галузі та тематичного аналізу наукової літератури, стаття окреслює функції, структуру, переваги та можливі труднощі у запровадженні ретритів для академічного письма, приділяючи особливу увагу адаптації деяких моделей до українського контексту. Автор також розглядає, як ретрити для науковців можуть бути інтегровані в українську академічну практику, надає рекомендації щодо впровадження гібридного та віртуального форматів ретриту, залучення до участі міжнародних партнерів.

Висновки. Академічні письмові ретрити є перспективною та маловивченою можливістю для підтримки українських науковців у часи постійних потрясінь. Надаючи спеціальний простір, час та підтримку громади, ретрити можуть сприяти академічним результатам, покращувати навички письма та розвивати емоційну стійкість. Хоча ця концепція все ще є відносно новою в українському академічному контексті, адаптація усталених моделей до місцевих потреб як через громадські ініціативи, так і через інституційні програми відкриває перспективи для реального та ефективного шляху вперед. Ретельне планування, врахування обставин, у яких опинилися науковці, та стратегічні партнерства є важливими чинниками, які варто враховувати для досягнення успіху. Подальші дослідження та експерименти з форматами ретритів, особливо у віртуальних та гібридних форматах, допоможуть стійко впровадити цю практику в академічну культуру України, що розвивається, пропонуючи науковцям не лише інструмент для індивідуального розвитку, але й засіб створення спільнот практиків та зміцнення ширшої академічної мережі в Україні.

Наголошено на необхідності проведення подальших емпіричних досліджень для оцінки довгострокового впливу ретритів для академічного письма на дослідницьку продуктивність, психічне здоров'я та професійний розвиток українських учених. Подібні ініціативи покликані сприяти підсиленню життєздатності та стійкості української академічної спільноти під час та після війни.

Ключові слова: ретрит для академічного письма, українські вчені, просування та публікація наукових досліджень.

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