



Connecting Active Reading and Academic Writing in A Multicultural Context: Strategies for Syllabus and Material Packet Development

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Abstract

In response to the absence of a module for academic writing courses in a multicultural classroom context and the problems of starting to write and finding ideas for academic writing, this research aims to develop an academic writing module that meets the teachers' and undergraduate students' needs and voices. This study employed ADDIE model of R&D carried out through some steps: need analysis, drafting, developing, implementing, and evaluating. In the steps of need analysis, students claimed that reading contributes to getting ideas and building background knowledge of a certain topic for writing. Brainstorming is another voice they proposed to solve the problems. Moreover, they believe that writing essays can be the starting point for writing journal articles. Accordingly, by considering all findings in the initial step, the products of this R&D comprise students' and teachers' books. The product's specific characteristics are reading preceding essay writing, brainstorming, the syllabus, the scoring rubric with a detailed description, and academic honesty. The study revealed that integrating active reading into academic writing modules can be pedagogically implemented and enhance both students' reading and writing skills. The following studies on developing a module for other levels of education can be carried out to further contribute to reading-writing pedagogy.

Keywords: academic honesty, academic writing, active reading, multicultural context, syllabus and materials packet development

1. Introduction

Reading is the basic language skill that needs to be cultivated among people because this is one of the indicators of being literate. Through reading, people recognize the world, acknowledge each other, improve their knowledge, widen their horizons, increase their career, and achieve success. They can also explore their competence, spread their innovation, and interact with each other. This indicates the essential role of reading skills. Reading and other language skills are interrelated and correlated with each other. People can learn the four skills of a language integrated, for example, reading is proved to have a significant correlation with writing. The skills of reading can also support students' writing skills (Irina et al., 2022; Atayeva et.al., 2019). Another study by Dallagi (2020) proved that there is a strong impact of reading strategies on writing strategies and that the connection between Reading and Writing skills is not only limited to simple knowledge but also to strategies. This means that learning writing can be carried out through reading or vice versa. During the instruction, reading also proved to positively affects students' literacy outcomes as related to cognitive processes which are engaged in the construction of meaning (Irina et al., 2022).

In the EFL teaching and learning practices at the university level in Indonesia, in which students come from different cultural backgrounds, all four skills are taught and learned in depth separately from each other as separate courses. This multicultural classroom context can be more challenging in learning English because the learners' cultures might interfere with their learning English (Hossain, 2024). As a result, they could encounter some obstacles in the grammatical rules, vocabularies, dialects, intonation, and pronunciation, which bring about problems in learning language skills. A study revealed that Indonesian university students' reading literacy is unsatisfactory (Wijayanti, 2020). The EFL students are found not to have good habits in reading (Iftanti, 2012), they do not spend much time on reading activities (Yulastri et al., 2022); the student teachers' interest and frequency of reading as well as their reading habit were poor as well (Aisah, 2019); and the students of Junior High School had low reading habit but they preferred watching TV and surfing the internet than reading for their leisure time (Chairanissa & Wirza, 2019). Moreover, from the result of the observation carried out in the writer's context of teaching academic writing for EFL university students, it is found that students encounter some problems mainly in terms of content, organization, and grammar. This preliminary study is in line with some previous studies which ferreted out that students encounter problems in writing aspects including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics (Toba & Noor, 2019), in linguistics problems, cognitive problems, and psychological problems (Rahmatunisa, 2014). Furthermore, it is hardly found a project that integrates reading and writing skills to support the success of achieving the learning goals of those two courses. These three crucial conditions need to be paid more attention to how to improve the quality of teaching both reading and writing to promote students' competencies in academic writing and improve their reading skills and habits.

Despite growing recognition of the interconnection between reading and writing in academic contexts, there is a limited number of instructional materials specifically developed for multicultural EFL classrooms that simultaneously address students' reading and writing challenges. While several studies highlight the benefits of integrating these two skills, there remains a gap in practical, context-sensitive modules that guide EFL learners, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds, through a structured process of active reading leading to effective academic writing. Existing research tends to emphasize either strategy instruction or genre-based writing, without a comprehensive integration tailored to learners' linguistic, cultural, and cognitive diversity.

Therefore, this study addresses the research gap by designing and evaluating a dual-skill syllabus and material packet for academic writing based on active reading strategies contextualized for multicultural university settings in Indonesia.

Therefore, considering the aforementioned social realities, literature findings, and identified research gap, it is both relevant and necessary to conduct a study on how to enhance students' academic writing skills through active reading, for two main reasons. The first is that reading and writing are the essential indicators of literacy which are very crucial in the people's civilization and advancement. Without having sufficient skills of (critical) reading and writing, students are not able to adequately compete in this global era. Secondly, problems in academic writing will inhibit the publication of the students' innovative thoughts resulting from the research for their thesis and even worsen the quality of their research reports. Thus, integrating their active reading for promoting their skill of academic writing will be very meaningful as revealed in previously mentioned studies. Accordingly, carrying out this present study on how to develop a course syllabus and material packet for an academic writing development project by integrating active reading and academic writing is significant not only for improving the students' skills of both reading and writing simultaneously but also for revealing an innovative technique of teaching writing and reading. This study further contributes to the body of knowledge as well.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reading and Writing Connection

Learning to write and to read are often seen as being two sides of a coin because they both constitute inverse processes of using the same code. Writing is encoding a message from the spoken language, and reading is decoding a message that arises from the spoken language as well. Research has proved that reading has a strong correlation to writing. Alves et al., (2020) portray both reading and writing as Siamese twins who patently share common foundations (written language and cognitive skills) but do develop distinct personalities (particularly through their uses and consequences), and do definitely keep a relationship with each other. It can be expected that the relationship between reading and writing is driven by reading, by writing or to be interactive. As explained by Jiménez et.al, as cited in Alves et al. (2020) that there are three alternative theoretical models of the reading-writing relationship: (a) a reading-writing model which postulates that reading has a direct influence on writing); (b) a writing-reading model which postulates that reading is influenced by writing and; (c) an interactive model which postulates that both skills are influenced reciprocally. In line with this context of research. at the college level, the most important discussion is concerned with what has to do with the integration of the reading and writing areas (Armstrong et al., 2018).

2.2 Using Active Reading in Teaching Academic Writing

Active reading as one of critical reading techniques is more than reading texts and answer some comprehension questions afterward, but it takes place when students can be proactively involved in the reading texts. This includes highlighting, reading aloud, thinking aloud, making prediction, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing (Prihananto & Nurhaeni, 2022) which are the indicators of critical thinking in reading. Another idea about active reading (Khairi et al., 2021) is the process of deliberately engaged in ideas and information in a text being read, then transform the information into notes which record a reader's understanding of and response to a text. This

indicates a sustained inquiry as a reader to have a dialogue with the text author about the ideas within the text during reading practices.

The strategies in active reading may include generating questions, chunking, highlighting key information and main idea, annotating, paraphrasing, looking up unfamiliar words and recording definition, visualizing concepts, drawing pictures or diagram or map to show ideas, reflecting to the relevance of the reading for a course, making connection between or among ideas, and examining visuals within a text such as figures, tables, and making a conclusion. Such kinds of active reading strategies show critical thinking skills which are very meaningful in teaching writing. Teaching academic writing means teaching students an unfamiliar way of looking at their courses and at knowledge itself (Bean & Melzer, 2021). Wahyuni (2017) proved that integrating critical thinking awareness in academic writing is meaningful in increasing the students' soft skills. In short, EFL learners will be introduced with an active reading strategy to write academic writing.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology section describes in detail how the study was conducted. A complete description of the methods used enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of the research methodology.

3.1. Research Design

This study was carried out through Research and Development using the ADDIE model as proposed by Aldoobie (2015) (See Figure 1). This model stands for the essential components in the process of developing the instructional design, namely Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. Those phases are related to and interact with each other. This design is done with the following procedures:

3.1.1. Analysis

At this step, there are two main activities. The first is doing a need analysis to identify what the learners need, what their reading and writing skills are, what their reading and writing constraints are, and what possible solutions they expect. This portrays the learners' profile, their needs, the problem statement, and their expected solution. The steps to do needs analysis are observing the students' activities in the academic writing classroom, interviewing the students to identify what they know and their problems in academic writing, and analyzing the instructional goals. In addition, some related literature like active reading, academic writing, texts, and essays are also reviewed. The second is to determine course objectives, course materials, course syllabus, and course projects regarding the data resulted from this need analysis step.

3.1.2. Designing

In this step, the design of the prototype specifications of the course objectives, course materials, course syllabus, and course projects are determined based on the result of need analysis and reviewing related literature (See Table 1). **The first** is determining the design of the course syllabus which consists of the course objectives which are completed by writing the Course identity and the objectives of the course. Then the course description and policies are designed as follows. a). The course description consists of course objectives, prerequisites, teaching-learning activities, materials, and assignments; b). The design of course policies consist of the description of the participants, mode of teaching and learning, course attendance, and academic honesty. **The second**

is writing course materials consisting of process-based assignment forms, reading guides, prompts for a Summary and Response Essays, Argument map models, and scoring rubrics. a). the design of the process-based assignment form comprises assignment identity, pre-reading questions, passages, task requirement, audience, and purposes, how to complete the assignment / the instruction of integrating active reading and writing, evaluation criteria, and supporting readings. b). reading guides: designing pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post-reading activities. c). prompt of summary and response essay: identity, task requirements, audience and purpose, annotating, planning, and drafting, steps to complete the assignment, evaluation criteria, and resources. d). argument map models: Title and author of argumentative text for analysis, and 4 features such as audiences, claim thesis, support evidence, and reasoning rationale. d). Rubric that consists of criteria, description, and scoring and grading.

3.1.3. Development

In this development step, the products of this research, namely the course syllabus and materials projects were developed based on the results of the needs analysis. They are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table: 1 Outline of Course Syllabus and Materials Project

A. Course Syllabus	
<i>AWC Development Project Component 1 - Course Objectives</i>	
Course Title: Academic Writing	
Course Code	:
Course Status	:
Number of Credit Semesters	:
Instructor	:
By the end of the course, the students will be able to:	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 2 - Course Description</i>	
Course objectives	:
Prerequisites:	:
Tteaching-learning activities:	:
Materials:	:
Assignments:	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 3 - Course Policies</i>	
The description of the participants:	:
Mode of teaching and learning:	:
Course attendance:	:
Academic honesty:	:
B. Course Materials	
<i>AWC Development Project Component 4 – Process-based Assignment Forms</i>	
Assignment identity:	:
Ppre-reading questions:	:
Passages:	:
Task requirement:	:
Audience and purposes:	:
Steps to complete the assignment:	:

Evaluation criteria:	:
Supporting readings:	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 5 – Reading Guides</i>	
Pre-reading:	:
Whilst-reading:	:
Post-reading activities:	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 6 – Prompts for a Summary and Response Essay</i>	
<i>Identity</i>	:
Task requirements	:
Audience and purpose	:
Annotating, planning, and drafting	:
Steps to complete the assignment	:
Evaluation criteria	:
Resources	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 7 – Argument Map Model</i>	
Title and author of argumentative text for analysis	:
Audiences	:
Claim thesis	:
Support evidence	:
Reasoning rationale	:
<i>AWC Development Project Component 8 – Scoring Rubric</i>	
Criteria	:
Description	:
Scoring and grading	:

3.1.4. Implementation

After developing the drafts of the syllabus and the materials projects, installing the project in the real context was carried out through expert validation. The experts were the lecturers of reading and writing with at least five years of teaching those two skills. This step was done to get feedback for the product improvement. After revising the drafts, they were tried out by the subjects who took the academic writing course. Their comments about the projects were meaningful for the betterment of the products.

3.1.5. Evaluation

In this step, the process of determining the adequacy of the products was done. Each step was evaluated under the data collected in the implementation step to make sure that the goals of developing the syllabus and materials projects were well achieved and met the learners' needs. The evaluation was done in a small group discussion between researchers and the lecturers of Reading and Academic Writing. Finally, the revised prototype and recommendation were done.

3.2. Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were undergraduate students who already took and passed Academic Writing Course and took part in this study. In addition, teachers of the course were also

included as the subjects who actively provided the information concerning teaching Academic Writing. They were from an Islamic state university in East Java.

3.3. Instruments

The instruments used to collect data are a). questionnaire sheet, b) validation sheets for the selected experts and students of pilot projects, and c) observation sheets. The questionnaire sheet, which asks about the learners' needs was used to collect data in the step of Need Analysis. Meanwhile, the validation sheets for the experts that ask about the content, face, and construct validity of the products, namely the Academic Writing Course syllabus and materials were used in the step of implementing the products. Additionally, the student validation sheet that asks about their comments on whether it is in line with their needs were also addressed after the pilot project. Finally, the observation sheet, which asks about the student's activities, impressions, and involvement, which indicate their interests towards the products, were used in the implementation step as well.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

There have been three ways of collecting data from both teachers of the academic writing course and students who attended the Academic Writing Course. Those three ways are observation to the Academic Writing Classes, interviewing the teachers who have taught Academic Writing Course, and distributing an open-ended questionnaire to students. These three ways were integrated with the steps of ADDIE, mainly in the steps of need Analysis, Implementation, and Evaluation. All the collected qualitative data were qualitatively analyzed.

4. Results

The findings from the ADDIE steps indicate three main points: 1). Students' and teachers' needs used to develop syllabus and material packets for the Academic Writing Course, 2). the criteria of syllabus and materials packets for academic writing, and 3) the specification of the packets.

4.1. Analysis of Students' and Teachers' Needs

The need analysis results show that students and teachers need to integrate reading into their academic writing due to the complex problems during the Academic Writing Course, their lack of writing experience, and the absence of materials that meet their needs. These findings were used as the underlying basis to determine the teachers' and students' books for their Academic Writing Courses.

4.1.1. Complex Problems in Academic Writing

Students experienced several complex problems like personal, language, and technical issues concerning academic writing and the skills needed to achieve better performance and outcomes in academic writing. For example, to do the assignment on writing essays or papers for publication, they need some knowledge about how to generate ideas, topics of writing, gaps, how to write quotations and citations, and how to set the structure of essays and papers for publication. These are explicitly found in the observation notes: "*...like they need to get more knowledge on how to find research gaps, quotations, and other things for writing on paper for publication.*" T2. This indicates that the students need to have some exercises leading them to find ideas and topics for writing.

Providing them with reading some types of academic writing like essays can be a meaningful learning experience because they can construct their knowledge about what academic writings are like, what the criteria are, how they are structured and organized, and what some other important notes that they can identify and construct. In addition, such complex problems can be gradually solved by providing the students with the easiest activities to trigger them to have better writing performance. They can start by writing descriptive or narrative essays before publishing an article. As found from the students' statements, when asked about what types of essay they think are easiest, they said: *"Maybe like uh.., write a descriptive text and narrative text because it's very important in our life."* S1. This finding demonstrates their need to consider some essays as the sources for students' reading exercises, which give them learning experience on the structure of essays and how they can produce good essays.

4.1.2. Lack of Writing Experience

Another finding indicates that the students do not consistently get actively involved during the Academic Writing class- they sometimes keep silent when attending the class. They are sometimes confused when assigned to write descriptive and narrative essays, but some others enjoy writing those two kinds of essays. They also look confused about writing argumentative essays and papers for publication. "...However, when they were assigned to write argumentative essay and papers for publication, they got confused. The biggest problem is that they got difficulties finding topics for writing." T1. This fact indicates that the learners do not have sufficient experience in writing either before, during, or after Course attendance. The lecturers also claim that their students need the skills to find out the topic of writing and get more knowledge on how to find research gap, quotations, and other things for writing papers for publication.

4.1.3. The Absence of Academic Writing Materials Suitable for the Learners' Need

Another finding is the absence of materials for Academic Writing that are specifically developed based on the needs and characteristics of the learners. A stated in the lecturer's quoted interview: *"In particular, material for teaching academic writing courses, which I know does not yet exist, So academic writing courses are very important. However, there are no special books or special teaching materials that suit the needs of UIN students."* T1. This means that developing instructional materials for the Academic Writing Course that is in line with the students' needs is a necessity. The lecturer considers that the differences in students' level of writing ability and background knowledge will annoy the process of teaching-learning if they are not put into an equal and appropriate teaching materials. The published materials are not helpful to improve the students' writing because they are not exactly in line with the learners' needs. As explicitly stated in the following quoted interview:

"...But in my opinion, what is truly appropriate is one that is formulated according to the students' needs. And so far, what I know from books published abroad is that there are still no fit ones. There is still nothing that students can easily use in developing courses or in developing their abilities in essay writing." T1

Using materials in academic writing classes that do not align with students' needs can negatively impact their learning outcomes. Inappropriate materials may fail to address students' actual writing difficulties, such as grammar, structure, or topic development, leading to frustration and disengagement. These materials often lack relevance to students' academic or professional goals, making it harder for them to apply what they learn in practical contexts. Furthermore, using

inauthentic or outdated content can limit students' critical thinking and creativity, as the materials may not reflect real-world writing challenges. This mismatch between materials and student needs can ultimately hinder their ability to improve essential writing skills effectively. Thus, to develop Academic Writing Materials as the learners' needs, it is necessary to help them achieve the learning goals- improving their academic writing skills.

4.2 Designing the Syllabus and Materials Packets for Academic Writing

The design of the packets was developed based on these criteria: well-structured and meets both the teachers' and students' needs, like focusing on writing essays before papers for publication, integrating reading in their academic writing to enhance their knowledge and ideas for writing, provide students with learning experiences (See Table 2).

Table: 2 The Criteria for Academic Writing Instructional Packets that the Teacher and Students Need

Criteria	Data
Instructional materials that contain essays from daily life and the one that lead students to practice more	<i>"...I think this will be more complete and the vibe will be more pronounced if students find their own essays on various platforms that exist in everyday life...So, this is a real example when the example is real. It will make it easier for students to understand and ...this is what is actually needed."</i> NSR
Integrating Active Reading into Academic Writing	<i>"Just as I said before, if we want to improve our skill in writing, if we had good skill in reading, we could get more information about something and makes it easier to write something because we already know about the topics."</i> (Hik)
Providing Students with learning experiences like brainstorming	<i>"I think the brainstorming, and researching some paper, sometimes I miss some point in it, so I think I need to improve it so I could write more efficiently."</i> Ang <i>Maybe like I said previously like the e-book that's very complete like the background of the material, and the conclusion. We can make some summary from it."</i> (Adam)

4.2.1. Instructional Materials that Contain Essays from Daily Life and the One that Lead Students to Practice More

Essays serve as the foundational building block for more advanced forms of academic writing. They help students develop essential skills such as organizing ideas, forming coherent arguments, and critically engaging with texts, which are crucial for thesis-driven writing and research papers. By requiring clarity, structure, and analysis, essays prepare students for more complex projects like journal articles, where deeper research and nuanced argumentation are necessary. Writing essays also fosters the ability to communicate complex ideas concisely, which is a key aspect of successful academic writing across disciplines. As students refine these skills through essays, they become more proficient in writing research-based work that contributes to scholarly discussions. As presented by an experienced lecturer of an Academic Writing Course that:

"Indeed, this is quite a difficult course for students because they are expected to be able to write academic writing, usually in the form of articles. Of course, this is very challenging for students because they don't have enough skills to write an article, for example, so I usually tell them to write

an essay first. So this essay is a bridge for students to be able to produce larger academic writing, such as articles. So the essay is a small project that must be completed before they work on a large project. If students can do essay writing, it will also be easy. So, in my opinion, essay writing should be given to students in academic writing courses." T1.

The students also believe that the skill of writing essay can be as a meaningful means to improve their academic writing, as clearly stated that: "for me uh writing essay is the good way to improve my writing skill because it can enhance my critical thinking right." (S2). To read some essays from various platforms will also inspire students to find an idea and develop it into a good piece of academic writing. The essays about everyday life topics is also believed to help students in generate ideas for writing. This is explicitly stated by the teacher below:

"...I think this will be more complete and the vibe will be more pronounced if students find their own essays on various platforms that exist in everyday life. For example, they find essays from newspapers, they get essays from journals or they get essays from websites on the internet. So, this is a real example when the example is real. It will make it easier for students to understand and feel more ooo...this is what is actually needed." T1

When students are familiar with some types of essays or papers for publication, they will get some knowledge on how the ideas are obtained, developed, and organized. Therefore, in accordance her experience, the materials for Academic Writing should contain some essays referred from various sources like magazines or newspaper, or journals.

The materials that are developed should contain essays because they are considered as the important starting point for writing papers for publication as the learning goal in the Academic Writing Course. Training the students to write some kinds of essays, like narrative essays of their own life experiences or their imagination-based narrative essays, can make them better acknowledge the writing organization and the language features used in essay writing. In addition, they can have a better experience on how to write an academic text.

4.2.2. Integrating Active Reading into Academic Writing

The other significant finding is integrating active reading into academic writing. The common problem often found by the lecturers is that their students get confused about what to write, how to write, and how to start writing. This is explicitly stated in the quoted interview except below:

"During my time teaching academic writing, the biggest obstacle experienced by students that I have observed so far is that students are confused about what to write, so they don't know what to write or how to start because they don't have material to write with"- T1

The students' confusion about starting to write is the biggest constraint during attending Academic Writing Course. Both lecturers and students believed that reading can provide them with a wide range of information, ideas, and knowledge to inspire their writing process. A handbook that integrates active reading into academic writing offers students a powerful tool for enhancing their critical thinking and writing skills.

"Just as I said before, if we want to improve our skill in writing, if we had good skill in reading, we could get more information about something and makes it easier to write something because we already know about the topics." (S3)

Active reading encourages students to engage deeply with texts through strategies like annotation, questioning, and summarizing, helping them to better understand and evaluate the material. By incorporating these practices into the writing process, students can construct more informed, well-supported arguments in their academic essays. The combination of active reading and writing enables students to effectively analyze sources, structure their thoughts clearly, and produce more coherent and persuasive written work, essential for academic success.

4.2.3. A Packet of Books that Can Provide Students with the Learning Experience

The students expect that the handbook of Academic Writing contains some exercises that are useful to train them to write academic works such as brainstorming. Through brainstorming, they can make some notes for their writing so that they will not miss any important points in their writings. This can be seen in the student's quoted statement that: *"I think the brainstorming, and researching some paper, sometimes I miss some point in it, so I think I need to improve it so I could write more efficiently."* S₄. The need for a comprehensive handbook on Academic Writing, particularly one that emphasizes the brainstorming process, has become essential for students. Brainstorming serves as a critical step in academic writing, helping students generate and organize ideas before they begin drafting. A well-structured handbook would provide practical guidance on how to effectively brainstorm, guiding students through techniques such as mind mapping, listing, and free writing. By integrating these strategies, students can enhance their ability to develop clear, well-supported arguments and improve their overall writing skills. Such a resource is crucial in preparing students to tackle complex academic tasks with confidence and precision. The package of syllabus and learning materials for Academic Writing was designed based on the students' and the teachers' needs (See app 1).

4.3. Developing the Syllabus and Materials Packets for Academic Writing

In this stage, the integration of the Course Syllabus and Materials Packets for the Academic Writing Course is to put the syllabus into materials. It encompasses teachers' and Students' books (the sample of the packet can be seen App 2). Each book with some specifications. Each book was organized into two sections: (1) the course Syllabus explaining Course Objectives, Course Description, and Course Policies, and (2). Course materials describing process-based assignment forms, reading guide, prompt for a summary and response essay, map model, and scoring rubrics. However, the Teacher's Packet is completed with answers for components of active reading. Each component is also completed with a deliberate instruction and exercises triggering the learners to find topics and or ideas for writing. Then, they can put their ideas into a certain kind of academic writing, like narrative essays, descriptive essays, persuasive essays, explanatory essays, and argumentative essays. The content of the packets has been developed based on the teachers' and students' needs, such as the texts provided for active reading taken from various resources like articles and newspapers showing various kinds of essays as kinds of academic writings. This specification can lead the learners to simultaneously find out ideas for writing and to recognize the language features, text organization, and academic writing content. These structures of the packages can be as the guideline for both teachers and students to achieve the goals of the Academic Writing Course so that the constraints that so far have been encountered by the learners can be reduced or solved.

4.4. Implementing the Syllabus and Materials Packets for Academic Writing

The implementation of the draft of the product was conducted after the expert validation on five elements, namely the appropriateness of the materials with the course objectives that have been determined so far, design and the structure of the materials package, the accessibility and clarity of the drafts of the package, the involvement and motivation, and supporting materials. The experts in this context of research were experienced teachers of Academic Writing. The results of the experts' validation indicate that concerning the suitability of Learning Objectives, it is stated that *"this book clearly reflects specific and relevant learning objectives for the development of academic writing skills. The goals formulated in this book are in accordance with the academic needs of students, as well as providing the right direction for improving academic writing skills."* - T2. The second one, the material design and structure are stated to have good organization. This is clearly claimed that *"The structure of the material in the book is well-structured and follows an effective project-based approach. The topics discussed are systematically ordered, ranging from basic concepts to more complex topics. The presentation of the material also pays attention to complexity and usability for communicative purposes."* - T1.

In addition, the draft of the package is also declared to be accessible and clear, as seen from the instructions that is presented in clear and easy language. It also uses language at the students' level of difficulty. This finding can be seen in the teacher's comment: *"Instructions and explanations in the book are delivered in clear and easy-to-understand language. The book provides easy-to-follow guidance, including grammar and vocabulary that matches the student's level of competence"* - T2. Meanwhile, in terms of engagement and Motivation, it is found that this book is designed to attract students' interest in learning academic writing. All visual design, such as pictures, material presentation, and learning activities are integrated into it so that they contribute to student motivation and attract them to be actively involved in the learning process. The last element is the availability of the supporting materials. The draft of the package is sufficiently supported with some supplementary materials that are taken from real-life contexts: *"This book is equipped with a variety of supporting materials such as relevant examples, exercises, and guidance. This ensures that students can better understand and apply the concepts taught."* T2

In short, the implementation of the drafts of the syllabus and materials package was done after having some feedback and comments from the experienced teachers who are supposed to use the package. They were implemented to a group of students who passed the Academic Writing Course. All in all, there is no significant feedback about the package, except for technical cases like the use of colored words, diction, and paragraphing. Subsequently, try out of the draft was done and followed by evaluating the packets by distributing survey questionnaire to the participants of the try out session, to find out their opinion about the usability and feasibility of the draft to help them to solve their problems concerning academic writing and improve their academic writing skills as well.

4.5. Evaluating the Syllabus and Materials Packets for Academic Writing

The evaluation of the packets was done through a questionnaire survey at the end of the tryout of products. The questionnaire was distributed in a Google form covering several elements: Objectives of the Course, Topics provided in the package, materials and learning activities, the design of the package, the approach used, the impacts of the package on students' academic writing skills and critical thinking, language and grammar used, the appropriateness of the package with the students' needs, the appropriateness of writing activities with the student's needs, the suitability of

the teaching strategies reflected in the package with achieving the students' writing competence, and the flexibility of the syllabus and materials package usage with various media to help students to improve their academic writing skills.

The results of the survey (See Picture 1) demonstrate some important notes. First, the evaluation shows that 15 out of 20 students (75%) strongly agree that the packages reflect specific learning objectives to improve their academic writing skills. In addition, it was found that 65% of the students strongly agree that the learning objectives in the course description section are clear, detailed, and complete, which reflects efforts to improve students' academic writing skills.

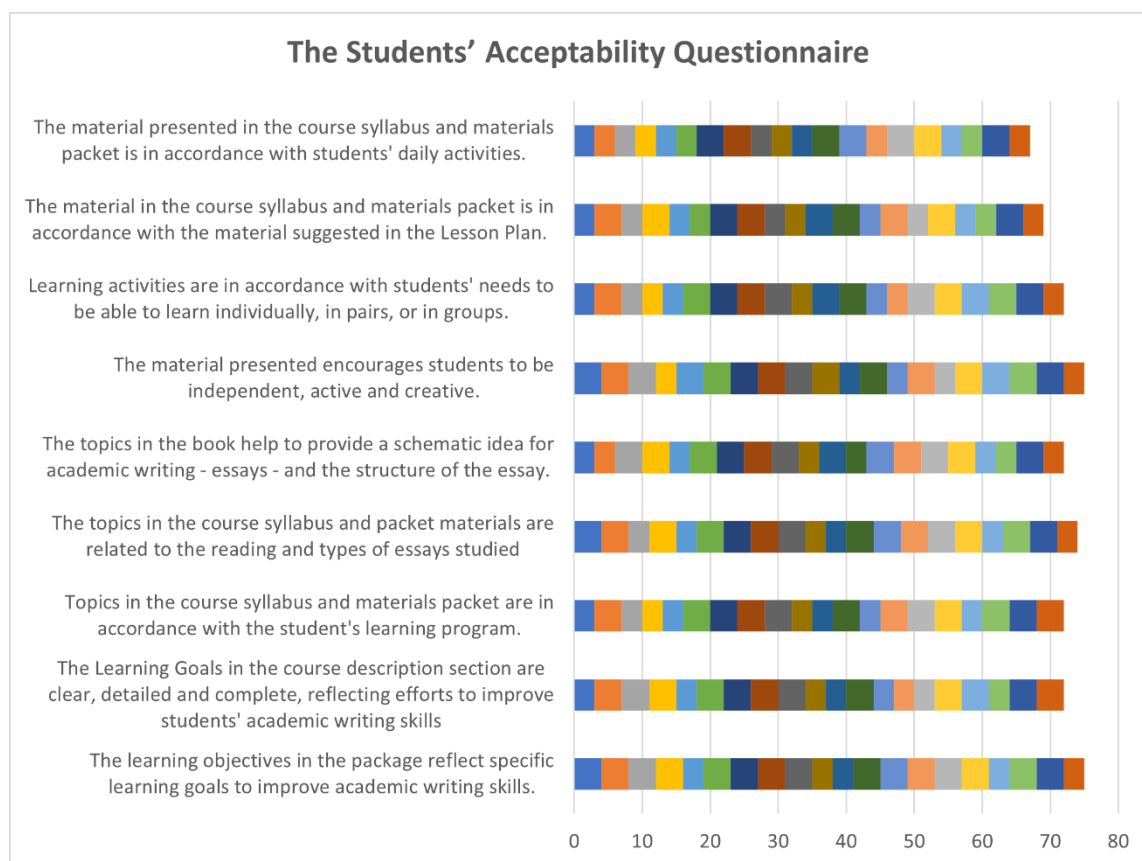


Figure: The Results of The Students' Questionnaire Survey

The second is that the topic selected in the packets of the books follows the student's learning program. 75 % of the students also claimed that the topics in the packets help to provide a schematic of academic writing ideas- essays- and essay structure, and the material presented encourages students to be independent, active, and creative. Third, 60 % strongly agree that the materials and activities in the syllabus encourage them to be independent, active, and creative. Most also feel that the learning activities are in line with their needs and can be implemented to do the exercises individually, in pairs, or in groups. The flexibility of the learning mode gives students a chance to create a more meaningful and attractive learning atmosphere.

Fourth, the materials in the books are following the material recommended in the existing Lesson Plan (*Rencana Perkuliahan Semester*) and are in line with the students' daily activities. This

indicates the appropriateness of the materials and activities. The materials and activities in the syllabus encourage them to be independent, active, and creative. The fifth is that the books have an attractive design and organization that can attract students to learn Academic Writing. It was also found that the package was organized based on project-based learning in which the students are assigned to do some projects of essay writing.

The sixth is the approach applied to the books is suitable for the characteristics of the students and the material presented in the book reflects the learning outcomes of essay writing skills. Moreover, 80 % of the students strongly agree that the material presented in the book encourages students to think critically. The seventh is that 65% of the students strongly agree that instruction uses clear, understandable, and non-ambiguous language. The eighth is that 60 % of the students agree that the reading sections and related activities are structured according to the level of students' competence, interests, and needs.

To sum up, the results of the evaluation indicate that the syllabus and materials package for Academic Writing is in line with the students' and teachers' needs and expectations. This package integrates active reading into academic writing that is developed in clear language use and appropriate to the student's level of cognition. It is also organized gradually from the easiest materials the students need. However, some minor revisions such as the diction used, the paragraph alignment, highlight line and colored sentences are also given and further taken into action to meet the better quality of the product of R and D. In a nutshell, the syllabus and materials packets for academic writing that consist of students' packet and teachers' packet is proved to be in line with the users' needs, so that it is hoped to be meaningful to solve the students' problems encountered during attending Academic Writing Class, to fulfill the need of the materials that are in line with the users' need. More importantly, the product of this R&D can contribute to improving the students' academic writing skills.

5. Discussion

The results of this study disclose the integration of reading and writing into a syllabus and material packets (books) for the Academic Writing Course and the specification of the products. Developing a comprehensive handbook for Academic Writing Courses covering both the syllabus and materials packets that aligns with the needs of both students and teachers is essential for fostering effective writing skills in higher education. Such handbooks serve as valuable resources, providing structured guidance on academic writing conventions and critical thinking. This finding aligns with Mohamed (2020), who emphasizes that integrating cognitive reading strategies into writing enhances students' comprehension and idea development. Similarly, Lee & Lee (2021) found that reading strategy instruction significantly affects EFL learners' essay organization and coherence. These findings strengthen the claim that structured reading-to-write methods are essential in building writing proficiency.

Unlike studies such as Hyland (2020) that primarily focus on genre-based writing without integrating reading tasks, this research contributes by combining genre exposure (e.g., essays) with active reading strategies. It supports a step-by-step transition from reading to composing essays and eventually to scholarly articles. Matsuda (2021) further supports this by highlighting the importance of genre familiarity in academic writing development. Similarly, Hwa et.al. (2020) found that aligning instruction with children's learning levels has resulted in large gains in student learning. An inappropriate or inadequate academic writing handbook can significantly hinder students'

development of essential writing skills, thereby impacting their academic success. Adi et al. (2024) also found that resource limitation contributes to writing errors that affect the students' writing performance. Such handbooks may fail to address common writing challenges, provide insufficient guidance, or lack alignment with students' needs, leading to confusion and frustration. The results of this study demonstrate that integrating active reading and writing is important because reading can enhance students' knowledge, reveal facts, and find ideas necessary to write. This is parallel with a study by Sihombing & Napitupulu (2025) uncovering that active reading can enhance the students' English writing skills. In addition, Partnership Comprehensive Literacy (PCL) as a reading strategy can also improve students of arguments (Hadianto et al., 2021, November). Thus, the constraint of starting to write and develop ideas during writing can be resolved by reading any kind of text, like essays.

This study also proved that reading, researching, and brainstorming essays is believed to help students to self-construct knowledge about not only the structure of the texts but also the language used. Similarly, a study proved that a mind map helps develop ideas for writing essays (Oktavianti et al. 2021). This study also reveals that writing essays can be the ladder to writing academic texts like scholarly articles for publication. It serves as a foundational exercise in developing the skills necessary for writing journal articles. This process not only enhances critical thinking and analytical abilities but also fosters a deeper understanding of academic discourse conventions. This study indicates that writing essays forces people to research subjects, consider different viewpoints, and develop well-reasoned arguments. The analytical and critical thinking abilities that are honed by this intense intellectual activity are crucial for writing scholarly publications that significantly advance scholarly discussions. As found by Aprizani & Islamiah (2019) that reading and writing are crucial elements necessary to foster students' critical thinking. In addition, people are exposed to the forms and conventions common in academic writing through the practice of writing essays. Developing the skill needed for scholarly articles is greatly aided by this experience. According to studies, students' participation in a variety of writing projects enhances their academic writing abilities and gets them ready for the rigors of scholarly authorship. This research result support studies by Larasati (2015), Khulel (2022), and Hidayati (2023) uncovering that writing projects improve the students writing skills. Thus, the syllabus and materials packets produced in this study were developed from writing essays, triggering them to write articles for publication. For academic writing, where ideas must be presented clearly and methodically, these organizing abilities are immediately applicable. A greater awareness of structural diversity in academic writing is fostered by the creation of multigenre research papers, which, for example, highlight the usage of several genres to express a study topic.

This study also indicates that the learners do not have sufficient experience in writing either before, during, or after Course attendance. This finding supports Ho's study (2024) demonstrating EFL postgraduate students' problems with academic writing-, such as lack of academic writing knowledge and experience, and the difference between English and their mother tongue. A lack of writing experience significantly impacts students' academic performance and their ability to express ideas clearly. Kemalsyah et al. (2022) proved that lack of experience can lead students not to have the skills they need to write well. Without enough practice, students often struggle with structuring their arguments, maintaining clarity, and applying proper grammar and vocabulary. This lack of exposure can lead to anxiety and poor self-perception in writing tasks, further decreasing their confidence to engage in more complex writing assignments. A study proved that stronger self-perceptions of writing self-efficacy is related to improved writing overall (Lawson et al., 2021)

Additionally, students with limited writing experience may have difficulty producing coherent and well-organized content, as they may not have developed essential skills such as outlining, drafting, and revising their work. As a result, their overall academic success can be compromised, especially in tasks that require in-depth analysis and critical thinking. Thus, the exercises, like making mind maps from the texts, can train students to get used to generating ideas.

The study also provides new insights into student engagement through collaborative reading and writing tasks. According to Alharthi (2022), collaborative reading tasks significantly improve EFL students' academic writing fluency, supporting the use of peer discussion and group analysis in the material packet. Engaging students with essay writing assignments can also provide worthwhile educational opportunities that can greatly reduce the difficulties associated with academic writing. In addition to improving writing ability, these activities promote critical thinking, organization, and clarity—skills that are crucial for academic publications. Students can improve their writing abilities by regular essay writing practice, which enhances the coherence and fluency of their academic writing. A recent study unveiled that the use of free weekly writing technique is declared effective to improve students' ability in essay writing (Humaira, 2019). To produce academic publications that satisfy publication criteria, this development is essential. It has been demonstrated that including creative writing components in academic assignments boosts students' motivation and resilience, which in turn strengthens their writing skills. Students who regularly write essays improve their ability to recognize and get past common writing challenges including writer's block and time management problems. Academic writing techniques become more effective and efficient because of this improved skill. Research shows that both planned and unstructured writing assignments can improve students' writing abilities and learning. Students are encouraged to think creatively and innovatively in their scholarly work when creative writing skills are incorporated into academic assignments. More interesting and unique academic writing may result from this inventiveness. Increased empathy and self-awareness, traits that enhance academic writing, have been associated with creative writing. Indeed, providing students with essay writing assignments is an important tactic for improving their academic writing abilities. These activities provide diverse learning opportunities that tackle a range of scholarly writing difficulties, ultimately assisting in the creation of excellent academic works fit for publication.

According to the above-mentioned significant research findings, the specification of the Academic Writing packets are both students' and teachers' books were similarly organized leading them with active reading on essays like narrative, descriptive, argumentative, to writing essays. This is intended to allow the students to have reading experiences leading them to find ideas for writing (Sari et al., 2023) and improve their critical thinking (Sari & Prasetyo, 2021) to produce an academic writing such as articles for publication. A study proved that there is a significant relationship between metacognition, critical thinking skills, and academic writing (Teng & Yue, 2023). Moreover, the products of this research were also equipped with some learning commitments like academic honesty driven from the students' academic cultural perspective. This is very significant to build upon their strong academic character. In the context of this academic writing, this focused on their academic commitment, honesty, and integrity. Thus, violations to academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating, submitting others' works will not be tolerated and are subject to failure.

The novelty of this study lies in designing a student- and teacher-oriented syllabus that integrates critical reading practices (highlighting, annotating, paraphrasing) with writing production in a multicultural context. This addresses an often-overlooked area, as Kessler & Pusey (2022) noted

the lack of digital and cultural literacy in many EFL academic writing programs. Furthermore, Wang & Zhang (2021) demonstrated that longitudinal metacognitive strategy training has strong positive effects on writing performance. This reinforces the importance of the reflective and iterative activities designed in this study's syllabus. Complementing this, Zhou (2020) found that students positively perceive integrated reading-writing tasks when these tasks are clear, scaffolded, and contextually relevant.

This study also touches on the identity-building process in academic writing. Chen (2020) emphasizes how critical reading helps students develop a sense of authorial identity, which is essential for ownership of ideas and academic honesty. Accordingly, our study's integration of academic ethics and citation exercises fosters such identity and responsibility. Pedagogically, the strategy supports students' critical thinking, echoing Tian & Low (2020), who argue that metaphorical and analytical reading helps students express abstract concepts clearly in writing. Additionally, Lim & Graham (2021) demonstrate that reading-to-write scaffolds help low-performing EFL learners generate and structure ideas more effectively.

The implication of reading habit formation is also evident. Zhang (2021) confirmed a positive relationship between regular reading practices and academic writing proficiency. Similarly, Yin & Zhang (2021) highlighted how extensive reading improves learners' grammatical accuracy and idea clarity. Task-based learning practices embedded in the syllabus reflect the conclusions of Qian & Chou (2020), who showed that task-based integrated reading-writing leads to better language retention and coherence in student texts. In sum, this study advances the field by combining genre-based pedagogy, active reading strategies, and student-centered materials in a culturally responsive framework. It responds to what previous research has indicated—such as the gaps in identity, scaffolding, cultural literacy, and authentic task exposure—and offers an empirically grounded, pedagogically sound model for EFL academic writing instruction.

6. Conclusion

The results of this study highlight two key points: the usability of the research product and the needs of the users as determined by the need analysis. First, a thorough Research and Development (R&D) technique was used in the study and creation of the curriculum and materials package for the Academic Writing Course for English Department students. This approach focused on the unique requirements of academic writing instructors and students. The findings of the need analysis, which was conducted through several stages, including observing the academic writing class, interviewing the teachers, administering a questionnaire survey to the students, and conducting random interviews with a few chosen students who took part in the survey, showed that they require an academic writing handbook that can address their issues with academic writing, such as how to generate ideas for academic writing, how to develop ideas in academic writing, how to organize ideas in academic writing, and how to brainstorm ideas. They must begin reading essays to get ideas for writing. Then, they start writing essays preceding writing articles for publication. Considering the students' multicultural context- their preferences, learning styles, beliefs, or attitudes obtained from doing need analysis is necessary to develop a syllabus and materials packet for academic writing that meets their needs. However, the products of this R&D- teachers' and students' books for academic writing have not been experimentally researched yet. Thus, further research is suggested to measure the effectiveness of the books.

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