

## Facilitating Character Building through an Academic Writing Practice

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### Abstract

This paper aims to show how an academic writing practice can facilitate character building to the student teachers of English education department of a private university in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The academic writing practice implemented the genre-based approach teaching stages. Two instruments were used to collect the data. First, an open-ended questionnaire filled by thirty-six students regarding their reflections on the academic writing practice. The data then analysed thematically. Second, the student's writings. The researchers selected purposively two writings from a student teacher constructed in the diagnostic test and independent construction stage. The student's writings were analysed by using functional grammar. The findings show that the academic writing practice can facilitate character building through the application of explicit teaching and group work throughout the teaching stages. The student's writing constructed in the academic writing practice showed an improvement of the student's academic writing knowledge, skills, and characters. The findings suggest that character building should be practised in any subjects across the university curriculum.

**Keywords:** academic writing, character building, character education, genre-based approach, systemic functional linguistics

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## Introduction

In the higher education context, the students demanded knowledge and skills to develop their academic achievements. However, without proper characters, the students might achieve their academic achievements through an unethical way. The knowledge, skills, and characters are inseparable domains that are required for the students to be productive, active, and effective in the school and even in the society. In order to achieve them, an effective character building is required (Battistich, 2005; Berkowitz, 2011).

One medium to facilitate character building is writing (Lickona, 1999). Academic tasks mainly are in a form of academic writing. Without sufficient academic writing knowledge, skills, and characters, students may do, for instance, an act of plagiarism intentionally or unintentionally. This certainly shows that the students require a good practice of academic writing to achieve the required aspects.

Accordingly, this paper will elaborate an academic writing practice that can facilitate character building to the students specifically in Indonesia's higher education context while at the same time developing the students' knowledge and skills in academic writing. The academic writing practice will be based on a well-known literacy-based teaching approach, that is, genre-based approach (GBA) developed under systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Previous research has discovered that GBA through narrative writing can develop secondary school students' characters in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia (Hardini, 2013). The difference with the previous research is that this research involved students in Indonesia's higher education context where little research has been conducted to Indonesian students at this level of education. To begin with, the following section will discuss the concept of character building followed by academic writing practice with genre-based approach teaching stages underlying the practice.

## Character Building

Character consists of three psychological dimensions. They are awareness, attitude, and action (Lickona & Davidson, 2005). As an illustration, ideally, students who have sufficient knowledge and skills of academic writing should be followed by changes in their attitudes such as following the ethics of academic writing. Then, their actions will be reflected from their academic writing. In their academic writing, the way the students think or reasoning should eventually change. Instead of limited to logical reasoning, moral reasoning will help the students to provide moral consideration (Chaffee, 2012; Williams, 2011).

The illustration shows that knowledge, skills, and character will lead the students to do their best to improve their academic achievements. To achieve that ideal illustration, effective strategies are required in character building. The strategies, as suggested and adapted from Lickona (1999), are as follows: (1) using academic subject, in this case, academic writing as a subject to learn characters; (2) being a good role model in the academic writing practice; (3) encouraging moral reflection through academic writing; and (4) using cooperative learning to develop the students' characters as they will be working with their peers (p. 80). Explicit guidance itself is suggested by the character building

proponents (Slote, 2014) and genre-based approach proponents (Emilia, 2005; Hyland, 2007), which makes genre-based approach is suitable to facilitate character building in the academic writing practice.

Throughout the academic writing practice, to provide an effective character building, a lecturer should be the role model in the academic writing practice such as by providing explicit guidance to the students. Then, academic writing practice should be more than just reading and writing activities. The students' communication with their peers will also help them to learn characters. This section has delineated the brief concept of character building. The following section will discuss the academic writing practice for students in Indonesia's higher education context.

### **Academic Writing Practice**

This section will delineate the academic writing competencies followed by the teaching stages, which is based on systemic functional linguistics genre-based approach (SFL GBA). Academic writing competencies in this research cover knowledge, skills, and characters. To be more specific, knowledge here is related to the topic that will be written (Irvin, 2010). Skill is related the way the students communicate their ideas into writing by using a certain genre and its linguistic features, which is also known as discourse competencies (Bruce, 2013). This research focuses on argumentative writing, specifically, exposition genre that is used to present one side of a topic that will be written. It has three important elements. They are: (1) thesis-the main idea; arguments-points of information that are elaborated to support the main idea; and (3) reiteration of thesis-the summary of the text followed by a recommendation if necessary (Coffin, 2004; Martin, 2006).

The last competency is characters. Characters are divided into performance and moral characters, which are related to each other (Davidson, Khmelkov, Baker, & Lickona, 2011). Performance characters here are guidelines for the students to perform well in their academic writing practices. Examples of the performance characters are diligence and discipline. Then, moral characters are characters that define the qualities of the students' academic writing practices. Examples of the moral characters are honesty where the students should learn to follow ethics of academic writing including avoiding act of plagiarism that can harm their own academic achievements; and caring, respect, and cooperation where the students should learn social skills to communicate their ideas in writing and to work with their peers (adapted from Davidson & Lickona, 2007). After knowing the competencies in academic writing, an effective academic writing practice can be planned.

This research applied systemic functional linguistics genre-based approach teaching stages in conducting an effective academic writing practice. The academic writing practice consisted of four stages that are commonly practised in Indonesia. Before applying the teaching stages, diagnostic test and introductory sessions to characters in the academic writing practice and group work were conducted as the students in this research had limited knowledge and skills in academic writing as delineated in the findings and discussion section later on. The four stages applied in this research were building knowledge of the field, modelling, joint construction, and independent construction in one

curriculum cycle (adapted from Emilia, 2005). Throughout the academic writing practice, explicit teaching and group work were applied as suggested by character building and genre-based approach proponents (Emilia, 2005; Slote, 2014). Further descriptions of the activities conducted in the teaching stages will be outlined in the findings and discussion section.

In conclusion, academic writing practice theoretically should be able to facilitate character building through the application of explicit teaching and group work to the students. The reading and writing activities are surely also beneficial for the students to grasp more good characters and to build not only logical reasoning but also moral reasoning. The following section will delineate the method applied in this research.

### **Method**

To know how academic writing practice can facilitate character building to the students, this research applied a qualitative research method. The participants were thirty-six student teachers of a regular class who were selected purposively for this research. The participants' department was English education of a private university in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The students were heterogeneous and their age range was between 18-23 years old with 11 male participants and 25 female participants. Before the data collection began, the students agreed and signed a consent form to participate in this research.

The data collection applied two instruments. The first instrument was an open-ended questionnaire. The participants were invited to fill an open-ended questionnaire at the end of every teaching stage to gather their reflections regarding the teaching stage, including the researcher who acted as the lecturer; and their peers' performance and character development. The second instrument was the participant's writings. One writing from the diagnostic test and one from the independent construction stage were selected purposively to see the student's academic writing knowledge, skills, and character development before and after the academic writing practice. The writer of the two writings was Heri (in pseudonym). Heri, based on the diagnostic test result, was considered as a medium-skilled writer. The limitation of this paper is that writing from the low and high-skilled writers are not presented.

Completed the data collection, students' responses to the open-ended questionnaire were analysed by using thematic analysis. The goal of the thematic analysis is "to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies" (Thomas, 2006, p. 238). The participant's writings served as the documents to be analysed (Yin, 2003) by utilising functional grammar to describe the schematic structure and linguistic features of the participant's writings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson, 2014). At the same time, the practice of the ethics of academic writing, logical and moral reasoning were also analysed based on the description of the academic writing competencies that have been delineated in the earlier section. After each data set was analysed, a data triangulation was conducted to ensure trustworthiness of the research (Shenton, 2004). Completed the data analyses, the following section will delineate the findings and discussion of this research.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This section will delineate the findings of this research along with the discussion. The delineation will begin by providing the overview of the academic writing practice, which is based on systemic functional linguistics genre-based approach teaching stages. In the overview, the students' responses from the open-ended questionnaire are pointed out to see the students' reflections regarding the academic writing practice. The last part of this section is the texts analyses to evaluate the participant's academic writing competencies development before and after the academic writing practice.

The academic writing practice began from the diagnostic test and introductory sessions to characters in the academic writing practice. The diagnostic test helped the lecturer to identify the students' weaknesses in academic writing. The students were considered as beginners in which they had limited knowledge, skills, and characters of academic writing as confirmed in the texts analyses later on. Then, in the introductory sessions, the lecturer introduced the purpose of the academic writing practice with its expected outcome including expected characters. The students also learned referencing in their academic writing including writing a list of references (Jones, 2011) and social skills in which the students learned working with their peers in the group (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). After the introductory sessions, the students entered the teaching stages of the genre-based approach.

The first stage was the building knowledge of the field. The building knowledge of the field is a stage where the lecturer provides the students opportunities to get to know a particular topic (Feez, 2002). The lecturer provided several texts to help the students to get to know the topic. In this stage, the students in groups gathered arguments that were needed to construct their writing. In order for the students to be able to work together, the students were equipped with social skills that can build their senses of caring, respect, and cooperation. That is why, the introductory sessions were necessary as part of the academic writing practice.

The next stage was the modelling stage. The modelling stage purpose is to introduce the students to the model texts belonging to the target genre (Feez, 2002), in this case, the exposition genre with its schematic structure and linguistic features, which is very useful to help them to construct arguments as a part of the students' moral action through writing. The lecturer provided several model texts with different level of difficulties that show the aspects of academic writing such as ethics of academic writing that is important to build honesty through their writing.

In the joint construction stage, the students worked in groups to construct their first academic writing. Before the writing task, the lecturer explicitly modelled a construction of an exposition text with the help of the students where the lecturer wrote a thesis then the students participated in giving their arguments (adapted from Emilia, 2012). The lecturer also modelled referencing and writing reference list. Modelling these aspects in the joint construction stage is encouraged especially when dealing with beginners. Completed their

first drafts, the students learned to review their own writing and the other groups' writing as well. For beginners, a review form was used as a guideline to do the review (Emilia, 2012). The last stage was the independent construction stage. In the independent construction stage, the students were given another topic (Emilia, 2005). Having another topic means that the students built their knowledge on the new topic followed by writing it independently and consulted with the lecturer and their peers only as needed (Feez, 2002).

Throughout the academic writing practice, explicit teaching and group work were applied as suggested by character building and genre-based approach proponents (Emilia, 2005; Slote, 2014). The group work enabled the students to succeed in their learning in which they for the first time must work with different friends, who were not so closed to them. The reason is the lecturer grouped the low-skilled writers with the medium and high-skilled writers who were expected to assist the low-skilled writers in the academic writing practice. At first, the students felt uncomfortable but as the time passed by, they were willing to work together to reach a mutual goal. Karin (in pseudonym) commented this in her questionnaire as follows:

*“Dengan cara belajar berkelompok dengan teman yang tadinya saya tidak mengerti, karena kemauan saya ingin pintar, jadi saya mengembangkan kemampuan saya di academic writing ini.”*

“By doing group work with my friends, at first I did not understand, but because of my willingness to learn with my friends, I can develop my academic writing skills.” (translation)

The comment shows that they were willing to work as a team to reach a mutual goal. Eventually, their senses of caring, respect, and cooperation have been built from the introductory sessions and practised throughout the academic writing practice. However, few problems were also identified as some students were passive and confused during the practice. Rick depicted this in the questionnaires as follows:

*“Saya ingin bertanya tapi saya bingung apa yang ingin di tanyakan.”* (Rick).

“I wanted to ask but I confused what to ask.” (translation)

The lecturer was aware of the students' passiveness in asking a question as they probably have difficulties but they were unable to communicate it. So, the lecturer came to them and provided explicit guidance. Another example of the explicit guidance was in the building knowledge of the field stage in which the students in groups were invited to write arguments about a good teacher. This activity was used to develop their logical and moral reasoning. Elias pointed out his argument as follows:

*“A good teacher teaches from the heart.”*

The lecturer instructed the students to review the statement. The students at first were silent. So, the lecturer gave an explicit feedback that this statement was unclear as it has no supporting details. Still, the statement can be a good point that needs further

elaboration. A feedback related to the supporting details was used to introduce them to the ethics of academic writing where they learned referencing. At the end of the meeting, the students were informed that even though the stage was over, they still have to build their knowledge related to the topic in order to provide a better argument (Emilia, 2012). At some points, the lecturer seemed dominated the activities. The domination here is in terms of providing scaffolding until the students' are ready to perform independently (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). Mari commented the lecturer's performance in the questionnaires as follows:

*“He is excellent in conveying the materials; he is a patient man in the face of our.”*

(Mari)

*“He is excellent in delivering the materials; and he is patient in giving an explanation (when we have a problem).”*

The comment shows that the lecturer was able to deliver the teaching materials. The lecturer was also being patient in the process of delivering the teaching material. The scaffolding or explicit teaching in the practice was not easy, especially when teaching students at the beginner level. Still, by being patient, the lecturer can make the students performed their best by giving clear explanation, providing constructive feedback, and pointing the students explicitly what should be done. Explicit teaching is one of the main principles of the genre-based approach and character building (Emilia, 2005; Slote, 2014).

The open-ended questionnaire reveals that the explicit teaching and group work in the academic writing practice can facilitate the character building to the students. Introductory sessions on ethics of academic writing and group work should be conducted earlier to equip the students with social skills in which the students learned to communicate with their peers or friends by building their senses of caring, respect, and cooperation. Learning the ethics of academic writing also helped the students to be discipline and to prepare themselves to construct their academic writing diligently with the guidance of the lecturer and the support of their peers. In order to see the development of the students' academic writing, the following section will delineate the analyses of the texts.

### ***Student's Texts Analyses***

This section will delineate the analyses of the student's writing or texts. The texts analysed were writings constructed from the diagnostic test and the independent construction stage. Both texts were constructed by Heri, a medium-skilled writer. The texts were analysed by using functional grammar to describe the schematic structure and linguistic features of the texts. At the same time, the practice of the ethics of academic writing; and logical and moral reasoning were also analysed to see the writer's character development. To begin with, the diagnostic text is presented in Table 1. The text is arranged into numbered clauses.

**Table 1 Heri's Diagnostic Text**

|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| <b>Heri's Diagnostic Text</b> |
|-------------------------------|

1. I think the national exam (UN) must **be** exist in Indonesia, because it can be a system to know **about** the potential of students in all of Indonesia region.
2. I think it is important because the region **government** [government] can use the result[s] of national exam **for** [to] increase the quality of [the[ school[s] in their region, so, with that result[s], the **government** [government] and the school[s] can learn about the weakness[es] of the school[s] among other schools in **national** [the nation].
3. But, as we know before, the answer key **usually stolen by the people who unresponsibility**. [was stolen by irresponsible people]
4. I think to prevent **of steal answer key** [that], the **government** [government] must give or make new **adjustment about keep, stole, or give the answer key to the students with hard sanction**. [rules for those who stole the answer key]
5. So, the people who stole it can be processed **in law**. [by law]
6. For the best quality of the student, the **government** [government] must make a decision about **the pass in national exam**. [requirements to pass the National Exam]
7. I think the example can be like this “**the national exam doesn't establish the pass in school, but the mark of the teacher in school required for the mark result to pass the school**.” [National Exam scores alone cannot determine the graduations of the students]
8. The decision above is required **just for** [to] know the quality of the school's ranking **in national** [in the nation], it can be a tool[,] too, to know who the students are cheating in exam.
9. We can know because we can compare the result[s] in exam school and national exam.
10. The students maybe cheating in exam **with knew about** [as they have] the answer key, but the answer key is not always right and give a better result.
11. In this case[,] the school must have a good supervisor or CCTV to prevent the student[s] [from doing] cheating.

**Note:**

- Bold words or expressions show grammatical mistakes and improper word choices followed by suggestions in square brackets [].

In the diagnostic test, the students were instructed to write a response toward an online news article entitled “Teachers and Principals Stole and Leaked National Exam Paper” written by Stev (2014). The students should construct an expository text by paying attention to five important aspects in a limited time. The aspects are: (1) the issue that will be developed; (2) arguments with supporting evidence; (3) proper word choices; and (4) proper conventions.

In brief, the text in Table 1 has many limitations in the aspects aforementioned. At the text level, the text has an unclear pattern of Thematic progression in which each sentence in the text seems isolated as the text has no proper logical connector (Thompson, 2014). The pattern of Thematic progression has the same purpose with the pattern of essay organisation that can reflect the student’s information organising skills that are required to



elaborate logical and moral reasoning (Ennis, 1993; Lipman, 2003; Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

At the clause level, the word choices including cohesive devices, conventions, and sentence structures are also far from good where the text is quite unreadable even for general readers. Yet, the writer attempts to express his personal voice by using a mental process: *I think* (see clause number 1 and 2 in Table 1) indicates a subjective opinion (see Knapp & Watkins, 2005). This is surely reasonable as the test was limited by time, which made the writer unable to build sufficient knowledge related to the topic. Then, a pronoun: *As we know* (see clause number 3 in Table 1) is a form of academic language, which attempts to engage the readers into the text (Hyland, 2002). However, these attempts are not succeeded as the text indeed is very limited in many aspects of academic writing.

Up to this point, the writer's attempts to communicate his logical and moral reasoning are not succeeded due to the limitations aforementioned. The reason to this problem is limited time to construct the writing; and limited knowledge, skills, and characters of academic writing that are required to communicate the logical and moral reasoning. This means that knowledge, skills, and characters are really inseparable domains that should be developed in the academic writing practice. As a result, explicit teaching at these domains was conducted throughout the academic writing practice as explained in the overview of the academic writing practice.

The last text was a writing constructed in the independent construction stage in which the students learned to construct the texts independently. The topic in the independent construction stage is “the importance of character education.” The students constructed their writing through reading several texts provided for them. They also looked for other references to support their writing. Unlike the diagnostic text, the independently-constructed text was constructed through a recursive process of writing in which they had opportunities to improve their writing as they received constructive feedback from their peers and the lecturer (Emilia, 2012; Wingate, 2012). The independently-constructed text, also written by Heri, is in Table 2. The text is arranged into numbered clauses and divided into three elements of an expository text.

**Table 2 Heri's Independently-constructed Text**

| <b>The Important of Character Education</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Thesis element:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Character education is very important for students to be better in study and behavior.</li> <li>2. To do that, character education <b>most</b> [must] focus on quality teacher.</li> <li>3. There are three reasons why character education is needed.</li> </ol> <p>Argument element:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. First, character education can develop [the] students' responsibility in study.</li> <li>5. To do that, [the] students should <b>be</b> learn about character education.</li> <li>6. In this case, teachers can do their best to make sure [the] students have more</li> </ol> |

- responsibility [responsibilities] with their work[s] or study [studies] (Wisnu, 2009).
7. Second, character education can train students to be a successful people in life.
  8. With a good character, [the] students can be better and easily accepted as good people in a society, **to do that students should be have and apply good character.**
  9. Character education “is so overlooked as a vital part of students’ success” (Lahey, 2013[,para. 13]).
  10. Third, character education can teach children how to act in a society (Lahey, 2013).
  11. To do that[,] [the] teacher should be give[n] lesson about character education.
  12. In this case, character education is needed to control the students’ behavior because it can be a rule for students to act in a society.

Reiteration of Thesis element:

13. In conclusion, character education can develop **responsibility** [the students’ responsibilities] in work and study.
14. Then, it can be a tool to train students to be a successful human
15. and it refers to self control that can be a rule for students to live in a society.

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**Note:**

- Bold words or expressions show grammatical mistakes and improper lexical choices followed by suggestions in square brackets [].

The independently-constructed text written by Heri is an instance of an exposition text. Despite several grammatical mistakes identified in the text, the text shows a clear pattern of Thematic progression, that is, the multiple Themes pattern that is commonly used in an argumentative writing (see Emilia, 2014; Thompson, 2014). The following table provides a closer look of the multiple Themes pattern of the text.

**Table 3 The Pattern of Thematic Progression of the Text**

| <b>The Pattern of Thematic Progression of the Text</b>                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MacroTheme:<br>1. There are three reasons why character education is needed.                                                   |
| HyperThemes that support the macroTheme:<br>2. First, character education can develop [the] students’ responsibility in study. |

3. Second, character education can train students to be a successful people in life.
4. Third, character education can teach children how to act in a society (Lahey, 2013).

MacroNew:

5. In conclusion, character education can develop **responsibility** [the students' responsibilities] in work and study.

The text thematic progression pattern begins from a hyperTheme that is considered as the macroTheme. The macroTheme: *There are three reasons why character education is needed* serves as the main idea of the text. The main idea then is developed into three HyperThemes that serve as the points of information that are elaborated to support the main idea. The hyperThemes are preceded by enumerations: *First*, *Second*, and *Third* that serve as textual strategy at the text level (Emilia & Hamied, 2015). The latter part of the text is macroNew: *In conclusion, character education can develop **responsibility** [the students' responsibilities] in work and study* that serves as the conclusion or the summary of the text, which is preceded by a conjunctive adjunct that has a summative function (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The arguments presented in the text are relevant to the main idea and the conclusion of the text. This makes the writer's moral and logical reasoning is accommodated even though several grammatical mistakes are identified at the clause level. As an instance, the clause number 4 in Table 2: *First, character education can develop [the] students' responsibility in study* is the first argument that is followed by an elaboration as follows:

To do that, [the] students should **be** learn about character education.

In this case, teachers can do their best to make sure [the] students have more responsibility [responsibilities] with their work[s] or study [studies] (Wisnu, 2009).

The argument is clear and the elaboration supports the argument that character education can develop the students' responsibilities in their studies, which needs a teacher to make it comes true. Accordingly, the reasoning sounds logical (Ennis, 1993) and the way the writer emphasises the teacher's role indicates a moral consideration that the students cannot learn character education by themselves. This statement is strengthened by an in-text citation that supports the argument (Irvin, 2010; Oshima & Hogue, 1999).

The in-text citations in the text are valid information as the text has a list of references. Having citations and the list of reference are parts of ethics of academic writing that show an appreciation of the writer to the references that contribute to the text. Still, the citations and list of references require improvement by the writer as it has missing information (see the list of reference in Table 2) and improper way of citing information (see clause number 9 in Table 2). Eventually, without the proper citation format and reference list, the text will lose its credibility, which may indicate an act of plagiarism (Jones, 2011).

Up to this point, the independently-constructed text surely is far much better than the diagnostic text. The text reflects a good development of the writer's academic writing knowledge, skills, and characters in which the writer managed to communicate his logical and moral reasoning through his academic writing with a proper schematic structure, linguistic features, and ethics of academic writing even though several limitations are identified. The findings show that the academic writing practice can facilitate the character building in terms of developing the students' logical and moral reasoning through the reading and writing activities.

Surely, this can occur through the application of explicit teaching and group work throughout the genre-based approach teaching stages in the academic writing practice that enabled the lecturer to build the performance characters such as diligence and discipline; and moral characters such as honesty, caring, respect, and cooperation that guided them in their academic writing practice. Moreover, the findings confirm that character building can and should be conducted at the tertiary level of education (Colby, 2002) and teaching writing through the genre-based approach teaching stages can develop the students' character values (Hardini, 2013). Yet, this research has two limitations. First, this qualitative research is limited to a single case, which means that the result of this research cannot be generalised. Second, this research was conducted in one semester, which is sufficient to see how the students develop their characters, but it is not sufficient to see how the characters are internalised and practised by the students across the curriculum.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this research is to find out how an academic writing practice can facilitate character building to the student teachers of English education department of a private university in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Explicit teaching and group work throughout the genre-based approach teaching stages enabled the researcher as the lecturer to develop the students' academic writing as a medium to communicate their logical and moral reasoning as suggested by the character education and genre-based approach proponents.

The researchers designed the academic writing practice that facilitates the development of the students' academic writing knowledge, skills, and characters as these aspects are inseparable in character building. The key is a teacher or a lecturer should be the role model of good academic writing by providing an explicit guidance to the students. The students were also equipped with social skills that enabled them to work as a team to reach a mutual goal. Still, this research is not without limitations such as the students' passiveness in learning and grammatical mistakes in the student's texts. These limitations require attention for the betterment of the academic writing practice. Moreover, future research can involve more cases in order to provide more complex and rich data. Then, a longer study is required to see how the good characters learned from the academic writing practice are internalised and practised by the students across the curriculum.

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