

Developing Academic Writing Materials for Learners of English Education Department Based on Accelerated Learning Approach

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this developmental study is to develop a model of academic writing materials for the English Education Department learners based on the accelerated learning approach. The data of this study consisted of quantitative and qualitative data. The data sources were learners, English instructors, and experts in the academic writing materials design. Data were collected using observations, interviews, questionnaires, documents, and focus group discussion. The materials were developed in four steps: (1) analyzing the existing materials, (2) carrying out needs analysis, (3) developing materials and (4) validating them. Data were analysed using percentages for quantitative data. Miles, Huberman and Saldana technique (2014) was used for qualitative data, namely, data condensation, data display, and verification. In order to establish the trustworthiness of the data, this study implemented the triangulation method: source, method, and theory. The result of this study was a theoretical model of academic writing materials based on accelerated learning containing: (1) the components of English writing materials, (2) communicative principle, (3) learning by integrating mind, emotion, and body, (4) activating conscious and unconscious thought, and (5) relaxation, music, and suggestion.

Keywords: Academic writing materials, accelerated learning approach

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of the academic writing subject is to enable the learners of English Education Department to write academic course works. To achieve this, the academic writing materials should: (1) expose learners to rich, meaningful and comprehensible

input, (2) engage both affectively and cognitively, (3) achieve communicative competence, (4) be mental resources, (5) give benefits from noticing salient features of the inputs and discovering, and (6) give opportunities to learners to use language for communicative purposes (Tomlinson, 2010). In addition, Uechi (2016) has added five principles to design writing materials: materials should help learners to develop their confidence, expose them to language in authentic use, be culturally relevant, stretch/challenge learners, and build their intercultural awareness.

In other words, academic writing materials should be authentic, relevant, consistent, and adequate. Authentic materials consist of content which represents real life that is used by the people around the learners. In addition, relevant materials refer to the suitability of the materials to achieve the competency standard and basic competence. Materials should also be consistent; that is, they should support the learners' needs. Finally, materials should be adequate, which mean they should be sufficiently facilitating learners' achievement of basic competence.

In reality, based on the researcher's observations, the academic writing materials currently used by the learners of the English Education Department are in some ways still not as what is expected. In fact, the materials do not seem relevant to the learners' needs. The content of the materials is not contextualized in on academic settings and does not present educational situations. These learners are teacher trainees, who need these kinds of materials in their

teacher training programme. Furthermore, the materials emphasize mastery on linguistic competence rather than discourse, sociolinguistics, and textual competence. Verbal ability is dominantly present while there is no sign of stimulating non-verbal ability.

To address the problems, an accelerated learning approach was used to develop the academic writing materials for the English Education Department learners for two reasons: First, the materials were designed not only to emphasize the mastery of the language structures and verbal ability but also to concentrate on language use, non-verbal ability, and natural, social as well as moral realities. Second, the accelerated learning was used to design materials that would be able to create three kinds of learning: learning language, learning through language and learning about language (Santoso, 2014).

Accelerated learning is an approach that can encourage learners to have high motivation, effective learning techniques, and reflection on what has been learned (University of Bradford, 2018). High motivation means learners should have specific goal motivation, social and activity oriented motivation, and learning oriented motivation. Hence, effective learning techniques should be able to develop the multiple intelligences. Those intelligences are optimally stimulated when learners engaged in seeing, hearing, saying, and doing activities, integratively. To carry out a reflection means learners can review, conclude and apply their experiences.

In foreign language instruction, accelerated learning approach is defined as creative communicative language teaching with the supplement of music, relaxation, and suggestions (Pestalozzi, 2014). This teaching approach is meant to provide positive effects on the learners' psychology which in turn can improve learning. In other words, in comparison with other methods, accelerated learning is a more economical communicative language teaching method in utilizing time. In the elaboration stage, the accelerated learning is almost the same as communicative teaching. Therefore, the learning materials based on the accelerated learning approach consist of three basic principles stating that the learning materials should: (1) create productive and joyful learning in the absence of tension, (2) stimulate conscious and unconscious learning, and (3) optimize learners' potentials through suggestions (Pestalozzi, 2014).

English writing materials should contain knowledge, skills, and ability to utilize knowledge and skills of writing (Santoso, 2016). Knowledge of writing consists of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. In the vocabulary aspect, two elements should be identified: sounds and meanings of words. In writing, sound is represented as spelling. Learners need writing skills, which include planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, revising, and editing.

In utilizing the knowledge and skills of writing, there are two types of activities involved namely, cognitive and metacognitive activities. Cognitive activities

deal with attention, memory, producing and understanding language, learning, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making. The cognitive process could be natural, artificial, or conscious and unconscious. Cognition is used to process information, apply knowledge, and change preferences.

Metacognitive activities deal with the notion that one knows metacognitive knowledge and also knows how to use the metacognitive experience. Metacognition involves the process of observing, reflecting on, or experiencing one's own cognitive process.

Based on the background of the study, the following research questions are formulated:

1. How are the existing writing materials used today by the learners of the English Education Department?
2. What academic writing materials are needed by the learners of the English Education Department?
3. How are the academic writing materials for the English Education Department learners developed based on the accelerated learning approach?

METHODS

The objective of this study is to develop a model of the academic writing materials for the English Education Department learners based on the accelerated learning approach. In this developmental study both quantitative

and qualitative data were collected and analysed. The data sources were the learners of the English Education Department, English instructors, and experts in the area of academic writing materials design. The techniques of collecting the data were observations, interviews, questionnaires (closed and open-ended questions scores in percentages), documents, and focus group discussion. This study also followed the four steps of developing materials: (1) analyzing the existing materials, (2) carrying out the needs analysis, (3) developing, and (4) validating the materials. The data were analysed using percentages for quantitative and for qualitative data, and the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana technique (2014) was implemented namely, data condensation, data display, and data verification. In order to establish the trustworthiness of the data, this study utilized the triangulation method consisting of the source, method, and theory.

RESULTS

The Existing Writing Materials Used by the Learners of the English Education Department

The existing materials used by the learners of the English Education Department were analyzed in four aspects: authenticity, relevance, consistency, and adequacy. The authenticity aspect refers to the content to be learned in the materials, which should be based on the learners' real life experiences. However, the results of analysis showed that the materials did not represent real-life use of language such as from newspapers, magazines, and similar

sources of meaningful communication. In fact, some materials were without any example at all. For instance, in one of the writing topics, 'revising' (Dewi, 2013), the writer only described the meaning and the process of revising the article, but there was no text at all to be revised. In these materials, after describing the role of revising and what is usually revised, no texts were provided to be revised, nor was the learner instructed how to revise sentences, overall structure, paragraphs, coherence, and words. This means that the material did not prompt the learner to do some actual revision exercises. Another example for lack of authenticity occurred on page 30 of the textbook. After describing and elaborating the meaning of a paragraph, the textbook presented a model of paragraph structure. Unfortunately, the model was not commented in detail on why it was called a paragraph or the characteristics of a paragraph, which consists of the topic, the topic sentence and the concluding sentence.

Similar observation was made in another part of the textbook where the writer presented the characteristics of a good paragraph. She mentioned that there were two characteristics of a good paragraph: unity and coherence (Dewi, 2013). There were no examples of unity and coherence. Only the meaning of unity and coherence were mentioned and the competency standard of learning writing which only cover knowledge of writing rather than writing skills. The existing materials showed that most topics tend to elaborate the knowledge while the skills of

writing were not sufficiently emphasized with little focus on social and spiritual competence.

Consistency means that the content of the materials should support the learners' needs. Practically, the English Education Department learners of *Tarbiya* and Teachers Training should certainly have learned subjects related to the language elements (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar), the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and linguistics (introduction to general linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics). They also learn basic education, basic social and natural sciences, and Islamic studies. The content of the writing materials dealt with the general theory of academic writing. Examples were very minimally presented and when they were, the examples did not actually represent the subjects being learned.

Adequacy deals with the sufficiency of the materials to assist the learners to achieve their basic competence. As mentioned

above, the existing materials emphasized the knowledge of writing rather than the writing skills. Each chapter was dominated by the description of theory. The materials showed mostly on learning about language rather than learning the language and learning through the language.

Finally, some lexical and grammatical errors also occurred. The word *below* was misspelled *bellow**; the phrase, *Becoming a Good Leader* was written as *Become a Good Leader* (Dewi, 2013). Such errors, of course, would have a negative effect on learner's writing habit.

Needs Analysis of the Learners' Academic Writing Materials

The results of need analysis via questionnaires indicated two kinds of needs: the learning needs and the target needs. The learning needs are described in Table 1.

Table 1 indicates that from the objective of learning writing, 21.21% of the learners need writing a *skripsi* (project paper) for

Table 1
Learning needs

Types	Learning Needs	Number of Respondents
Objective of Learning Writing	Writing a <i>skripsi</i>	21.21 %
	Teaching English	9.09 %
	Producing academic works	3.03 %
	Being a successful writer	3.03 %
Strategy of Learning Writing	Practice	47.06 %
	Instructor's guidance	44.12 %
	Taking courses	8.82 %
	Improving vocabulary	8.82 %
	Understanding theory	5.88 %
	Reading	5.88 %
	Adequate structure	5.88 %
Participating in discussions	2.94 %	

their academic writing materials and then, followed by 9.09%, which is a need for the sake of their English teaching profession. While from the strategy of learning writing, 47.06% of the learners needed practice, 44.12% of them needed guidance from the instructors. This means that the learners' learning needs were writing a project paper as one of the requirements to graduate from the university. They also expected their instructors to facilitate more practice. Besides the learning needs, the target needs of the learners were as in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that 41.67% of the learners' need writing materials suitable and related to their subjects. As learners of the English Education Department, they also

have to take English language, education, religion, Arabic, and the basic natural and social science courses.

With reference to Table 2, 36% of the learners mainly needed skills in writing the project paper, and 21% need skills in writing formal letters. This is probably because the project paper is compulsory for the learners to complete at the end of their undergraduate programme. Skills in writing formal letters are also needed by them for their daily life on campus.

The learners' needs were also mostly related to the education course (15%). This is quite true because being teacher trainees, they have to have an adequate number of educational terms for this course.

Table 2
Target needs

Types	Target Needs	Number of Respondents
Writing Materials	Suitability of the Major Subjects	41.67 %
	Dealing with English Education	37.76 %
	Daily Writing	27.24 %
	Literature and Culture	8.39 %
	Writing Technique	0.22 %
	Writing Project	0.16 %
	Private Experience	0.04 %
	Life Styles	0.03 %
	Free Writing	0.03 %
	Health	0.02 %
Writing Skills	Writing a <i>Skripsi</i>	36 %
	Formal Letters	21 %
	Other Academic Works	19 %
	Personal Letters	14 %
	Literary Works	7 %
	Free Writing	2 %
	Textbook Writing	2 %

Table 2 (continue)

Types	Target Needs	Number of Respondents
Writing Topics	Education	15 %
	Pronunciation	11 %
	Vocabulary	11 %
	Speaking	8 %
	Health	8 %
	Modern Life Style	6 %
	Writing Skills	5 %
	Literary Works	5 %
	Social Matters	5 %
	Learning English	5 %
	Grammar	3 %
	Daily Life	3 %
	Technology	3 %
	English Education	2 %
	Sports	2 %
	Religion	2 %
	Cleanliness	2 %
	Confidence in Speaking English	2 %
	Interest in Learning English	2 %
Writing Articles	2%	
Grammar Focus	Simple Past Tense	27 %
	Simple Present Tense	26 %
	Simple Present Continuous Tense	24 %
	Simple Perfect Tense	3 %
	Pronouns	2 %
	Nouns	2 %
	Gerund	1 %
	Punctuation	1 %
	All Kinds of Grammar	1 %
Vocabulary	Scientific Words	36 %
	General Words	36 %
	Words about Education	0.14 %
	Vocabulary Unknown before	9 %
	Literary Words	2 %
	Culture	2 %
Task	Writing a <i>Skripsi</i>	23 %
	Producing Scientific Works	19 %
	Writing Formal Letters	9 %
	Daily Activities	9 %
	English Education	6 %

Table 2 (continue)

Types	Target Needs	Number of Respondents
Task	Writing Paragraph	6 %
	Personal Writing	3. %
	Structure	3. %
	Attractive Writing	3. %
	How to Write Fluently and Adequately	3 %
	Free Composition	3 %
	Direct Practice	3 %

Furthermore, they also needed tenses in their writing (27%), which are not found in *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language), which is their national language. Any lack of knowledge of tenses will cause problems when they are writing in English. In addition, in English, the learners have to differentiate the past, present, and future events and tenses. For Indonesian learners, grammar is the most difficult to learn and this skill is needed in their writing assignments.

Table 2 also indicates that most learners needed scientific vocabulary (36%). As university learners, these words are always found in writing their project paper and other academic writing assignments or activities. These words existing in language education, English language, and research are some examples of the scientific vocabulary that they have to know. General words were also still needed (36%) because most learners lack this kind of words.

Theoretical Model of Writing Materials Based on Accelerated Learning

On the basis of the analysis of the existing materials, needs analysis and the learning

theory of the accelerated learning, the model of the English writing materials should contain: (1) the components of English writing materials, (2) the communicative principle, (3) learning by integrating the mind, emotion, and body, (4) activating conscious and unconscious thoughts, and (5) relaxation, music, and suggestions.

English Writing Materials

In this current model which is based on the accelerated learning approach, English writing materials contain learning objectives, language focus, skills, contents, and tasks. As regards the learning objective of writing, the course is expected to enable the learners to write academic texts. One of the common academic tasks is writing a project paper. Besides the learning objective, writing materials should also have language focus. The focus may be on vocabulary, grammar, and/or functions. The vocabulary mastered by the learners may deal with general words and scientific words. The grammar needed by them is specifically on tenses and supported by other elements of grammar such as articles, gerunds, and punctuations, to name a few.

The skills in writing needed by the learners are the skills of writing a project paper, writing formal letters, writing other academic works, writing private letters, writing literary works, free writing, and writing textbooks. The contents that are needed by the learners are about education, pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, health, modern life styles, writing skills, literary works, social matters, learning English, grammar, daily life, technology, English education, sports, religion, cleanliness, confidence in speaking English, interest in learning English, and writing articles. The tasks of the writing materials are how to write paragraphs, project papers, scientific works, formal letters, personal letters, daily activities, and free compositions in an engaging, fluent, and adequate way.

Communicative Principles in Writing

Academic writing materials should follow communicative principles. Based on these principles, learners have to: attain the forms of the English writing, obtain communicative functions, develop skills and strategies of using the language to communicate meaning in the written form, and become aware of the social meaning of the language (Nunan, 1989). On the other hand, learners should have adequate knowledge of the language such as mechanics of letter formation, spelling, punctuations, vocabulary, and grammar.

Writing materials should also emphasize communicative functions to enable the learners to use suitable functions to

communicate ideas and feelings such as introducing people in writing, greeting people, stating agreements or disagreements, expressing likes or dislikes, and so forth. The learner should also be able to state a topic, to formulate a thesis, to create a paragraph, to elaborate by using supporting points, providing details and concluding paragraphs. The strategies of using the English language include ways on how to write the title, to develop paragraphs, and to conclude essays.

Becoming aware of the social meaning means that the learners should not only realize the literal meaning, but also the meaning that is socially given by the people around them. In short, these are all related to the contextual meaning.

Learning Writing by Integrating the Mind, Emotion, and Body

When learning writing, the learner should be encouraged to integrate functions of the mind, emotions and body because writing activities involve these three elements. The brain monitors the body. The center of emotion is linked to the mind, so the information that is processed in the mind is transferred to the limbic system as the center of the long-term memory. In this location, the information is stored. Therefore, the mind, emotion, and body could not be isolated from one another when learners learn to write or perform writing tasks.

Activating Conscious and Unconscious thoughts in Learning Writing

While writing, learners are involved in three activities; they follow: (1) general directions of writing, (2) automatized steps involved in creating the numerous letter forms as in the hand gliding across the page, and (3) the overall pattern and the placement of such matters as diacritics (Seifer, 2014). Thus, the general direction of writing goes consciously, creating the numerous letter forms that continues preconsciously and the overall pattern and the placement are processed unconsciously.

Therefore, to accelerate the learning of writing, we need to activate the conscious and the unconscious thoughts. To activate the conscious thought, direct and indirect verbal interventions should be optimized, while the unconscious thought could be activated through direct and indirect non-verbal intervention.

Relaxation, Music, and Suggestions

In order to accelerate learning in writing, relaxation, music, and suggestions should be provided to the learners. Relaxation is used to motivate the learners to learn easily with the absence of tension. Music is used to create positive learning situations and joyful learning. When the learning environment is positive and the learners are learning joyfully, the area of limbic system will be open. If this area is open, the learners find it easy to remember what they learn and the information given to them is stored in

the long-term memory. A suggestion is an intervention given to the learners when learning writing. The intervention could be a direct verbal, indirect verbal, direct non-verbal, and indirect non-verbal. The direct verbal is a kind of intervention in writing in which the learners express their feelings and thoughts through writing. The letters are consciously expressed by the learners, and this mostly involves the left brain.

In indirect verbal intervention the ideas are developed by organizing what the learners are writing about. This also occurs consciously before moving the hand to write. Before writing, the learners usually plan what they are going to express in writing. This is always done by using an outline.

In direct non-verbal intervention learners use pictures, diagrams, or other kinds of media which may assist them in expressing letters into the page. This intervention allows learners to organize their ideas of writing through media before executing through the letters.

Indirect non-verbal intervention provides a positive situation to support the learner while writing. All kinds of peripherals belong to this part. One example of the peripherals found here is the place where the learners are writing is clean, with the appropriate temperature which is neither hot nor cold. In addition, motivation to write is another example that also belongs to this. The model of the academic writing materials can be seen in Figure 1.

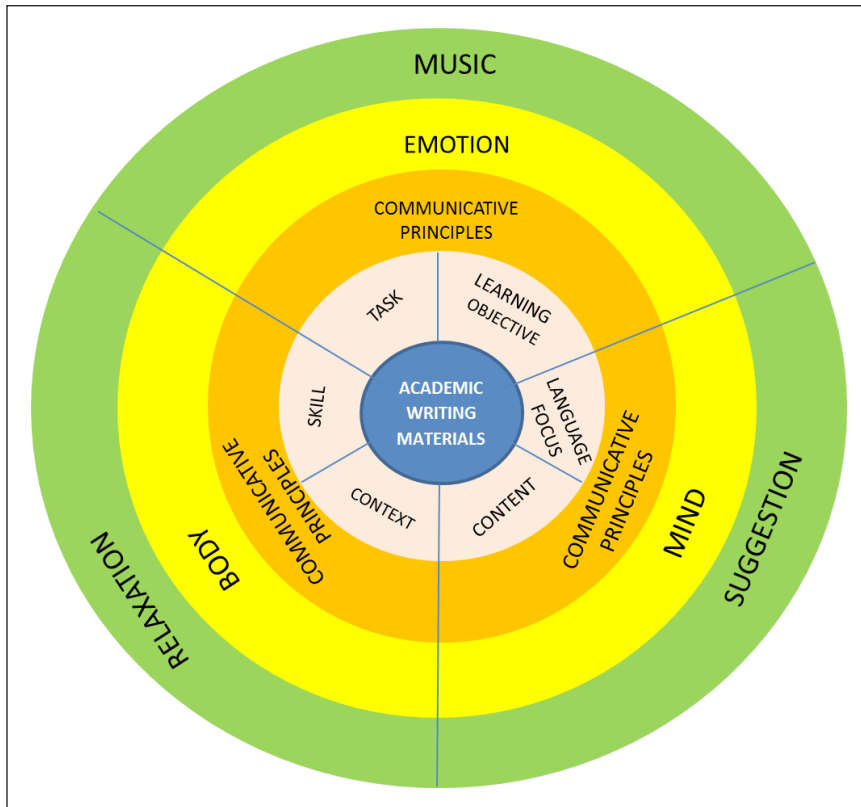


Figure 1. A model of academic writing materials (Modified from: Santoso, 2014)

DISCUSSION

On the basis of the research findings, there are five components of English writing materials model based on accelerated learning approach: (1) the components of English writing materials, (2) communicative principle, (3) learning by integrating the mind, emotion, and body, (4) activating conscious and unconscious thought, and (5) relaxation, music, and suggestion.

The model shows that English writing materials should contain inputs, language focus, contents, and task. These components should be presented through

the communicative principles, which are delivered by integrating mind, emotion, and body.

When integrating the mind, emotion, and body, conscious and unconscious thoughts would be activated because the center of language in the left brain is present consciously when the body moves and the learners' emotion is involved when learning takes place. The right brain, however, is unconsciously stimulated if the instructor uses peripherals or pictures.

The learners' English writing materials also contain relaxation, music, and suggestions. Relaxation opens up the limbic

system as the center of emotion and long term memory. In a relaxed condition, they easily remember all the information to be learned and they do not feel the burden to learn because of the absence of tension when using the materials.

Music is also used to help the learners to write at ease. It contains rhythms that will optimize the mid-brain where the long-term memory is located. When the long-term memory is opened widely, the learner finds it easier to write.

Suggestion is used to stimulate the learners consciously or unconsciously in order to produce the letters optimally. Through suggestions, learners easily express their ideas in writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that: (1) The existing materials do not show authenticity, relevance, consistency, and adequacy. (2) The results of the learners' needs analysis are categorized into: the objective of learning writing, the strategy of learning writing, the writing materials needed, the writing skills, the grammar focus, the writing topics, the vocabulary, and the tasks. (3) The theoretical model of writing materials based on accelerated learning contains: (a) the components of English writing materials, (b) the communicative principles, (c) approaches integrating the mind, emotion, and body, (d) approaches activating conscious and unconscious thought, and (e) inclusion of relaxation techniques, music and suggestion.

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