

ACADEMIC WRITING COMPETENCIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

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Abstrak

Artikel tinjauan konseptual ini membahas bagaimana kompetensi menulis akademik mempengaruhi kualitas komunikasi ilmiah pada pendidikan tinggi. Tinjauan ini mensintesis kajian mutakhir tentang kompetensi inti menulis akademik, meliputi kemampuan argumentatif, kesadaran genre, literasi sumber dan sitasi, regulasi diri, literasi digital, serta integritas akademik. Literatur menunjukkan bahwa penulisan akademik tidak hanya berkaitan dengan ketepatan bahasa, tetapi juga dengan kemampuan membangun klaim yang dapat diverifikasi, menyusun logika yang koheren, menyesuaikan teks dengan komunitas disiplin, dan mendiseminasikan pengetahuan secara etis. Kompetensi tersebut berpengaruh langsung terhadap keterbacaan naskah, kualitas respons terhadap umpan balik, peluang publikasi, visibilitas karya, dan kepercayaan dalam ekosistem komunikasi ilmiah. Artikel ini menegaskan perlunya dukungan institusional yang terpadu agar pengembangan kompetensi menulis akademik menjadi bagian dari pembinaan komunikasi ilmiah.

Kata kunci: kompetensi menulis akademik, komunikasi ilmiah, literasi sitasi, genre akademik, integritas akademik

Abstract

This conceptual review examines how academic writing competencies shape the quality of scholarly communication in higher education. The review synthesizes recent literature on core academic writing competencies, including argumentation, genre awareness, source and citation literacy, self-regulation, digital literacy, and academic integrity. The literature shows that academic writing is not limited to linguistic accuracy; it also involves the ability to construct verifiable claims, organize coherent reasoning, align texts with disciplinary communities, and disseminate knowledge ethically. These competencies directly influence manuscript readability, responsiveness to feedback, publication readiness, visibility of research, and trust within scholarly ecosystems. The article argues that institutions should treat academic writing development as a strategic component of scholarly communication rather than as a remedial language issue.

Keywords: academic writing competencies, scholarly communication, citation literacy, academic genre, academic integrity

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic writing occupies a foundational role in higher education as the primary medium through which knowledge is constructed, legitimized, evaluated, and disseminated. It functions not merely as a technical skill, but as a core academic practice that enables students, lecturers, and researchers to articulate ideas, engage in disciplinary discourse, and contribute to the production of knowledge. In this regard, writing serves as an essential mechanism that makes academic work visible, credible, and accessible. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that academic reading and writing are inseparable from broader research competencies, as they equip learners with the ability to critically interpret information and communicate it effectively to support inquiry and innovation (Castillo-Martínez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2021; Ida Royani & Sihombing, 2024; Lin, 2025).

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The centrality of academic writing becomes even more evident when examined within the framework of scholarly communication, which encompasses the processes of creating, evaluating, disseminating, and preserving academic knowledge. Writing is embedded in every stage of this process, including manuscript preparation, peer review, citation practices, and decisions related to open access and research visibility (Feretti & Graham, 2019; Militansina, 2020; Pramila et al., 2024). As such, the effectiveness of scholarly communication is strongly influenced by the level of writing competence possessed by academics. Beyond producing publishable texts, scholars are also required to understand the broader communication ecosystem, including publishing systems, copyright, and dissemination channels (Kingsley et al., 2022). Without adequate academic writing competencies, even high-quality research may fail to reach or persuade its intended audience.

However, a growing body of research indicates that many students and early-career academics are insufficiently prepared to meet the demands of academic writing. Writing for publication is often assumed rather than systematically taught, creating a gap between expectations and actual competencies. Academic writing challenges are not limited to linguistic issues but involve complex transitions from knowledge consumption to knowledge production and argumentation (du Plooy et al., 2024; Sujiyati, 2023; Soughati et al., 2025). Similarly, academic and grant-writing skills are widely required for career advancement in academia, yet they are often underdeveloped within formal training structures (Baker et al., 2025; Ningrum et al., 2023; Hermida, 2024). This discrepancy highlights a structural issue that affects both individual academic success and the overall effectiveness of scholarly communication.

In addition, academic writing is increasingly shaped by rapid technological developments. Digital platforms, collaborative tools, open repositories, and artificial intelligence (AI) have transformed how knowledge is produced and shared. While these innovations can enhance productivity and accessibility, they also introduce new challenges related to authorship, ethical use, and intellectual responsibility. The use of generative AI, for instance, has raised concerns about originality, critical thinking, and transparency in academic writing (van Niekerk et al., 2025; Mei et al., 2025; Al Hosni, 2025). Ethical integration of AI in writing requires human oversight, accountability, and clear disclosure practices (Cheng et al., 2025; Ozfidan et al., 2024; Rosdiana et al., 2024). At the same time, AI-assisted tools have shown potential in improving writing skills and motivation when used appropriately (Song & Song, 2023; Pokrivcakova, 2019; Paludo & Montresor, 2024). Therefore, contemporary academic writing competence must extend beyond rhetorical skills to include digital literacy and ethical awareness.

Issues of equity and participation further underscore the importance of academic writing competencies in scholarly communication. Writers who are familiar with disciplinary conventions, rhetorical expectations, and publishing practices are more likely to succeed in disseminating their work and engaging with academic communities. Conversely, those lacking such competencies may encounter barriers such as rejection, limited visibility, or vulnerability to deceptive publishing practices. Pedagogical interventions that focus on scholarly communication literacy can help mitigate these challenges by equipping writers with the knowledge needed to navigate publication systems responsibly (Buitrago-Ciro & Hernández Pérez, 2024). This is particularly relevant for multilingual scholars, whose success often depends on their ability to meet dominant rhetorical standards in global academic publishing (Zhang & Curry, 2022).

Furthermore, academic writing competence is increasingly understood as a multidimensional and socially constructed ability. It develops through interaction, feedback,

collaboration, and sustained engagement within academic communities. Writing expertise is not acquired in isolation but through participation in disciplinary practices and dialogue around texts (Kaufhold, 2025). Effective writing development programs also rely on structured support systems, including peer review, mentoring, and accountability mechanisms (Wong et al., 2025). In addition, recent research highlights that writing practices in higher education are influenced by multiple contextual factors, including institutional expectations, individual habits, and access to support systems (Escorcía et al., 2025).

Moreover, challenges related to scholarly communication are not limited to writing itself but extend to broader issues such as access and dissemination. For example, barriers to open access publishing including financial constraints, lack of awareness, and institutional limitations can hinder the visibility and impact of academic work (Kaliuzhna et al., 2025). These challenges further reinforce the need for integrated competencies that combine writing proficiency with an understanding of the scholarly communication landscape.

Given these developments, it is essential to conceptualize academic writing competence not as an isolated pedagogical concern but as a critical component of scholarly communication. The two are deeply interconnected: weaknesses in writing can undermine clarity, credibility, and dissemination, while strong writing competencies enhance the accessibility, impact, and integrity of research. Therefore, this article aims to synthesize key academic writing competencies and examine their influence on scholarly communication. It argues that academic writing competence should be understood as an enabling infrastructure that supports the effective production, evaluation, and circulation of knowledge. In this sense, academic writing is not merely a supporting skill but a strategic academic capability that determines how knowledge is constructed, communicated, and ultimately used within the scholarly community.

2. METHOD

This article adopts a conceptual review approach aimed at synthesizing recent scholarship to clarify the relationship between academic writing competencies and scholarly communication. Rather than attempting to calculate aggregated effect sizes or conduct a strict bibliometric analysis, the review seeks to develop a coherent conceptual understanding of how writing competencies function within academic ecosystems. The analysis primarily draws on studies published between 2021 and 2025, with selective inclusion of earlier works particularly from 2022 when they offer significant conceptual contributions to discussions on scholarly publishing practices and communication pedagogies (Zhang & Curry, 2022; Kingsley et al., 2022).

The selection of literature was guided by thematic relevance. Sources were included if they addressed at least one of the following areas: academic writing competence, research writing development, disciplinary discourse, peer review and feedback practices, digital and AI-assisted writing, scholarly communication literacy, publication systems including open access, and ethical considerations in academic writing. Priority was given to studies that explicitly connect writing practices to broader communicative outcomes such as publication readiness, knowledge dissemination, credibility, and scholarly participation. To reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, the review integrates insights from education, applied linguistics, higher education studies, and scholarly communication research (Castillo-Martínez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2021; Buitrago-Ciro & Hernández Pérez, 2024).

Following the identification of relevant literature, the selected works were examined through a comparative reading process and organized using thematic synthesis. The analysis focused on identifying recurring domains of competence, understanding how these

competencies operate within academic and publication contexts, and examining their influence on scholarly communication processes. This synthesis led to the development of six interrelated clusters that structure the discussion in this article: (1) rhetorical and linguistic competence; (2) genre and audience awareness; (3) source use and citation literacy; (4) self-regulation and responsiveness to feedback; (5) digital and AI-related competence; and (6) ethical and publication literacy. These clusters are not treated as discrete categories but as overlapping and interconnected dimensions of academic writing practice, reflecting its complex and socially situated nature (Kaufhold, 2025; Wong et al., 2025).

As a conceptual study, this review does not claim to provide exhaustive coverage of all existing research on academic writing. Instead, its purpose is to offer an analytically grounded framework that can inform both future research and institutional practices. The strength of this approach lies in its ability to bridge multiple strands of literature that are often treated in isolation, including writing pedagogy, research competence development, and scholarly communication systems. By integrating these perspectives, the article positions academic writing not only as a pedagogical concern but also as a critical communication infrastructure that underpins the production, evaluation, and dissemination of knowledge in contemporary academia (Baker et al., 2025; Kaliuzhna et al., 2025).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The reviewed literature indicates that academic writing competence is a multidimensional construct that extends far beyond linguistic ability. It integrates cognitive, rhetorical, procedural, technological, and ethical dimensions that collectively determine the effectiveness of scholarly communication. Through thematic consolidation, these competencies can be synthesized into five major domains:

1. *Rhetorical–Linguistic and Argumentative Competence*

This domain combines linguistic control with the ability to construct clear, logical, and persuasive arguments. Academic writing is not evaluated solely on grammatical correctness but on how effectively ideas are structured, developed, and communicated. Empirical trends in higher education show that students and early-career researchers who demonstrate strong coherence, argument development, and clarity are significantly more likely to produce publishable work compared to those who rely primarily on surface-level language accuracy. Writing practices are also shaped by contextual factors such as disciplinary expectations, writing habits, and communicative goals. This indicates that writing competence is closely tied to thinking quality, not just language proficiency.

2. *Genre Awareness, Audience Orientation, and Communicative Adaptability*

This domain integrates genre knowledge, audience awareness, and the ability to adapt communication across contexts. Academic writing varies significantly across disciplines and publication formats, each requiring specific rhetorical strategies, levels of explicitness, and positioning of knowledge claims. Data from higher education contexts suggest that writers who understand genre conventions and audience expectations experience higher acceptance rates in publication and more effective engagement in scholarly discourse. Additionally, communicative adaptability such as writing for interdisciplinary audiences, practitioners, or the public has become increasingly important, especially as academic impact is now measured beyond journal publications.

4. Source Integration, Citation Literacy, and Knowledge Positioning

This domain reflects the ability to engage with existing scholarship critically and ethically. It includes locating relevant literature, evaluating credibility, synthesizing arguments, and positioning one's work within ongoing academic conversations. Studies consistently show that weak source integration such as patchwriting or superficial citation correlates with lower manuscript quality and higher rejection rates. In contrast, strong citation literacy enhances argument strength, traceability, and scholarly credibility. In digital academic environments, accurate citation practices also support indexing systems, metadata linking, and research discoverability, further amplifying the impact of scholarly work.

5. Writing Process Competence: Self-Regulation, Feedback, and Collaboration

This domain encompasses the procedural and social aspects of writing, including drafting, revising, responding to feedback, and collaborating with others. Academic writing is inherently iterative, and data from doctoral and research training contexts indicate that structured writing support such as peer review groups, mentoring systems, and accountability mechanisms can significantly improve writing productivity and completion rates. Writers who effectively engage with feedback are more likely to revise at a conceptual level rather than making superficial changes. In collaborative settings, writing competence also involves coordinating multiple contributors, aligning perspectives, and maintaining coherence across sections, which is increasingly important in interdisciplinary research.

6. Digital, Ethical, and Scholarly Communication Literacy

This domain integrates technological competence with ethical awareness and understanding of publication systems. The rise of digital tools, artificial intelligence, and open-access platforms has transformed how academic writing is produced and disseminated. Data indicate that the use of AI-assisted writing tools can improve efficiency and motivation, but only when accompanied by critical evaluation and responsible use. Writers must also understand issues such as authorship, transparency, copyright, and publication ethics to avoid risks such as misinformation, plagiarism, or engagement with deceptive publishing practices. Furthermore, competence in writing paratextual elements such as titles, abstracts, and keywords has been shown to significantly influence research visibility, indexing, and citation rates in digital scholarly ecosystems.

Overall, these five domains demonstrate that academic writing competence operates as an integrated system rather than a set of isolated skills. It directly influences how knowledge is constructed, evaluated, disseminated, and accessed within scholarly communication. Data across higher education contexts consistently show that stronger writing competence is associated with higher publication success, greater research visibility, and more effective participation in academic communities. Conversely, limitations in any of these domains can reduce the clarity, credibility, and impact of otherwise valuable research.

Discussion

The findings indicate that academic writing competence operates as a foundational infrastructure within scholarly communication, shaping not only the quality of written texts but also the pathways through which knowledge is evaluated, disseminated, and recognized. One of its most critical roles is as a gatekeeping mechanism: manuscripts that are poorly structured, unclear, or weak in argumentation are frequently rejected during editorial screening or peer review, regardless of the strength of the underlying research. This demonstrates that writing competence determines whether research can even enter scholarly communication systems. At the same time, writing competence directly influences clarity and

credibility. Clear rhetorical organization and accurate citation practices enable readers and reviewers to understand, evaluate, and trust the claims being made. Conversely, ambiguous language, weak argumentation, or improper source use can undermine the perceived validity of otherwise rigorous research (Escorcia et al., 2025; Castillo-Martínez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2021).

Beyond evaluation, academic writing competence also shapes participation and inclusion within academic communities. Scholars who possess strong writing skills are better positioned to publish, respond to reviewers, and engage in disciplinary conversations. In contrast, those with limited competence particularly multilingual writers often face structural barriers that limit their participation and visibility. Research on publishing pedagogies highlights that targeted instructional support can reduce these inequalities by making implicit rhetorical expectations more explicit (Zhang & Curry, 2022). In the context of increasingly digital scholarly ecosystems, writing competence further determines visibility and discoverability. The effectiveness of titles, abstracts, and keywords plays a crucial role in how research is indexed, retrieved, and cited. As a result, writing competence extends beyond full-text production to include the ability to communicate research effectively within metadata systems and digital platforms.

The integration of emerging technologies introduces another important dimension: ethical integrity in AI-assisted writing. As digital tools and generative AI become embedded in academic writing processes, writers must exercise critical judgment in how these tools are used. Competence now includes the ability to ensure transparency, maintain originality, and uphold intellectual accountability when incorporating technological assistance (van Niekerk et al., 2025; Cheng et al., 2025). Moreover, academic writing competence should be understood as a lifelong scholarly capability rather than a fixed skill acquired at a single stage of education. From undergraduate learning to advanced research, grant writing, and public scholarship, writing demands evolve continuously, requiring sustained development across academic careers (Baker et al., 2025).

Importantly, writing competence is not solely an individual attribute but is shaped by social and institutional dimensions. Writing development is supported through communities of practice, peer feedback, mentoring relationships, and institutional infrastructures such as writing centers and research support services. Studies show that structured support systems significantly enhance writing productivity, confidence, and quality, indicating that writing challenges should be addressed collectively rather than individualized (Wong et al., 2025; Kaufhold, 2025). Furthermore, writing competence is deeply integrated with broader scholarly communication systems, including publishing platforms, repositories, and evaluation mechanisms. Effective writing enables authors to navigate these systems, make informed decisions about dissemination, and increase the reach and impact of their work (Kingsley et al., 2022).

Finally, academic writing competence has a clear temporal impact on knowledge dissemination. High-quality writing facilitates smoother peer review processes, reduces revision cycles, and accelerates publication timelines. In contrast, weak writing often results in delays due to repeated revisions, misunderstandings, or early rejection. This temporal dimension is particularly significant in fast-moving research fields, where delays in communication can reduce the relevance and impact of findings. Overall, the literature consistently demonstrates that academic writing competence is not merely a supporting skill but a central determinant of how efficiently, ethically, and effectively knowledge circulates within the scholarly communication ecosystem.

7. CONCLUSION

This review argues that academic writing competencies underpin scholarly communication. The literature constantly suggests that academic writing requires more than grammatical precision. Rhetorical clarity, disciplinary genre awareness, critical source use, citation literacy, revision, digital judgment, and ethical-publication literacy are included. These factors affect academic knowledge communication, fair evaluation, and responsible dissemination.

Impact on scholarly communication is direct and multifaceted. Effective writing improves intelligibility, believability, feedback engagement, and manuscript preparedness. By refining titles, abstracts, keywords, citation practices, and dissemination decisions, they boost study visibility and accessibility. In a world where AI tools and various publication models are changing academic labor, writing competency must include openness, accountability, and the ability to make ethical decisions about tool use and publication pathways. This review suggests that academic writing development should be an institutional and intellectual goal, not a peripheral or remedial service. Writing support should be integrated with library services, supervision, peer evaluation, research ethics training, repository support, and publication mentorship at universities. This integrated strategy would help novice and professional academics handle the increasingly complicated research communication demands.

This conceptual study may be expanded by testing models that link writing competencies to academic communication outcomes like review quality, publishing success, repository uptake, citation performance, or research accessibility. The present summary shows that academic writing competences improve clarity, ethics, inclusivity, and effectiveness.

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