CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Academic Writing

Academic writing, in particular, is a specialized form of writing that adheres to formal conventions and aims to communicate scholarly ideas effectively. This part will explore the concept of writing as a foundational skill and delve into the different types of academic writing.

2.1.1 The Concept of Academic Writing

Academic writing is a formal, evidence-based style of communication used in universities to demonstrate knowledge and critical thinking (Bailey, 2011). It includes various forms—essays, research papers, theses, and journal articles—that all emphasize clarity, objectivity, and precision (Hyland, 2006). One key purpose is to contribute to disciplinary knowledge by engaging with existing research, analyzing ideas, and presenting original insights (Swales, 1990; Paltridge & Starfield, 2013). Effective academic writing not only supports academic success but also professional development through clear, persuasive communication.

Beyond structure and citation, academic writing is central to knowledge dissemination. Researchers use it to explain findings and significance, making it essential for advancing scholarship (Flowerdew, 2015). It demands more than correct grammar—it requires reasoned argument, coherence, and intellectual integrity (Hyland, 2006).

The Academic Literacies Model by Lea and Street (1998) expands this view, framing academic writing as a socially and culturally embedded practice. Writing is shaped by disciplinary norms, institutional expectations, and power dynamics. International students must navigate not only technical skills but also unfamiliar academic cultures and discourses. This model emphasizes writing as a "situated practice," where identity and voice are negotiated, particularly for those from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Understanding these dimensions is crucial for supporting Indonesian international students writing journal articles in cross-cultural academic contexts.

Academic writing is recognized as having characteristics that ensure clarity, credibility, and effective communication. These characteristics have been discussed extensively by researchers such as Hyland (2006), Swales (1990), and Bailey (2011). Below are the key characteristics along with their sources:

a.) Formality and Objectivity

Academic writing is characterized by formal, neutral, and objective language that focuses on facts rather than personal opinions (Swales, 1990). It relies on evidence-based reasoning, requiring claims to be supported by credible sources to ensure validity (Hyland, 2006). A clear and logical structure—typically including introduction, methodology, results, and discussion—helps readers follow the argument (Bailey, 2011). Clarity and precision are essential, with straightforward language used to avoid confusion (Hyland, 2006). Lastly, proper citation and referencing uphold academic integrity and allow source verification (Bailey, 2011).

2.1.2 Types of Academic Writing

Academic writing encompasses various forms, each serving specific purposes within academia (Coffin et al., 2003). Research papers are in-depth, structured works that present original findings based on primary or secondary research, and they are commonly used in higher education (Bailey, 2011). Essays, typically assigned in undergraduate courses, are shorter writings that focus on argumentation, critical analysis, and reflection, rather than original research (Hyland, 2006). Theses and dissertations are lengthy academic documents required for completing master's or doctoral degrees, involving original research and a comprehensive study of a specific topic (Bailey, 2011). Literature reviews synthesize and critique existing research to identify trends and gaps, helping to justify new research efforts (Swales & Feak, 2012). Reports are structured documents that present factual findings, often used in scientific, technical, or business contexts, where clarity and conciseness are crucial (Hyland, 2006). Conference papers are concise summaries of research or theoretical work presented at academic conferences for peer feedback and discussion (Swales & Feak, 2012). Lastly, academic proposals outline planned research projects, detailing objectives, methods, and expected outcomes, and are typically used to seek approval or funding (Bailey, 2011). Despite their differences, all forms of academic writing adhere to formal conventions and contribute to the advancement of knowledge..

2.2 Journal Article

A journal article is an academic publication that presents original research, theoretical insights, or literature reviews on a focused topic. According to Day and Gastel (2012), it typically follows a standardized structure—including an abstract,

introduction, methodology, results, discussion, and references—which helps ensure the content is clear, logical, and replicable. As Smith (2020) explains, the main objective of a journal article is to expand knowledge within a specific field and share findings with a broader academic or professional audience. These articles undergo peer review, meaning experts in the field critically assess the work before it is published, ensuring its credibility and scholarly quality (Borg & Gall, 1989). Journal articles are essential resources for academics, educators, and professionals seeking to remain informed about current research trends (Mertens, 2019). They also foster academic exchange by enabling researchers to reference, respond to, or build on each other's work, thus supporting collaborative scholarship (Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, Swales and Feak (2012) emphasize that writing a journal article demands adherence to academic writing conventions, such as clarity, critical engagement, and proper citation practices. In essence, journal articles are fundamental to academic communication, playing a key role in knowledge development and interdisciplinary progress.

2.2.1 Structure of Journal Article

A journal article typically adheres to a structured format that ensures the research is presented in a clear, logical, and organized manner. This format usually begins with the **title**, which briefly and clearly conveys the core topic or variables of the study, aiming to be both informative and engaging (Swales & Feak, 2012). Following the title is the **abstract**, a concise summary—usually between 150 to 250 words—that outlines the research problem, aims, methods, key findings, and

conclusions, providing readers with a snapshot of the article's content and importance (Day & Gastel, 2012).

The **introduction** establishes the background of the research, identifies gaps in existing knowledge, and outlines the purpose or research questions, explaining the rationale behind the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Often included is a **literature review**, which synthesizes previous research on the topic and positions the current study within the wider academic discussion by highlighting what is already known and what remains to be explored (Mertens, 2019).

The **methodology** section outlines how the research was conducted, detailing the design, participants, tools, procedures, and methods of analysis. This section ensures the research process is transparent and can be replicated (Smith, 2020). Next, the **results** present the data collected, often using charts, tables, or graphs, and are delivered without interpretation or personal bias (Day & Gastel, 2012).

In the **discussion**, the findings are interpreted in relation to the research questions and prior studies. This section also explores the broader implications of the results, acknowledges any limitations, and may offer suggestions for future research (Swales & Feak, 2012). The **conclusion** summarizes the main outcomes and underlines their significance, emphasizing the study's contribution to the field (Smith, 2020). Finally, the **references** section lists all cited works, formatted according to the journal's required citation style, which reinforces the article's academic integrity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

2.2.2 Article Publication

Publishing academic articles is a key part of scholarly communication, enabling researchers to share their work with the academic community. It involves submitting research to peer-reviewed journals or similar academic platforms, where findings can contribute to existing knowledge, fuel scholarly discussions, and support further investigation. More than just distributing information, publishing is a means of validating the research, strengthening the development of a discipline, and building a researcher's academic credibility (Day & Gastel, 2012).

The process typically begins with crafting a manuscript that aligns with the submission guidelines of the chosen journal. This includes clearly stating the research problem, outlining a sound methodology, and presenting analyzed data in a structured format (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). After submission, the article is reviewed by subject-matter experts who assess its quality, originality, and relevance. This peer-review step is vital to maintaining the standards of academic publishing and ensuring that only credible, impactful work enters the literature (Smith, 2020; Swales & Feak, 2012).

Publishing serves various purposes. It encourages the exchange of knowledge across disciplines and borders, supports collaboration, and fosters innovation (Mertens, 2019). It also plays a significant role in a researcher's professional growth by enhancing their reputation, increasing the likelihood of funding, and opening doors to academic opportunities and leadership roles (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Nonetheless, the road to publication can be difficult, especially for early-career academics. Common obstacles include meeting the high editorial standards, responding effectively to peer review, and navigating feedback. International scholars may also face additional challenges related to language proficiency and differing academic expectations (Schuemann, 2014).

Despite these hurdles, mastering the publication process is essential for those aiming to make meaningful contributions to their field. Overall, academic publishing is a cornerstone of scholarly progress—it ensures quality, encourages collaboration, and promotes the ongoing development of research across disciplines.

2.3 International Students

An international student is generally defined as someone who travels to another country to pursue education. Richers and Teichler (2006) describe them as individuals who cross national boundaries to engage in study or study-related activities for a specific period, regardless of the academic level. Andrade (2006) offers a more specific view, referring to international students as non-native English speakers attending higher education institutions on temporary student visas—highlighting the context of English-speaking universities. However, Killick (2018) questions the centrality of physical mobility in this definition, pointing to the growing presence of transnational education that allows students to study internationally without leaving their home country. For the purpose of this study,

international students are defined as those who physically relocate to another country for educational purposes or academic engagement.

Altbach and Knight (2007) highlight that international students contribute significantly to academic diversity by bringing unique experiences and global perspectives. Nonetheless, they often face various challenges in their academic adaptation. One prominent difficulty is adjusting to a new academic culture, which includes mastering expectations related to academic writing, critical thinking, and conducting independent research—skills often embedded within the educational norms of the host country (Andrade, 2006). These issues become more pronounced when international students are not only expected to understand the content of their discipline but also contribute original insights through academic research and publication (Killick, 2018).

2.4 A Review of Indonesian International Students' Challenges in Writing a Journal Article

The researcher collects and finds some of these challenges based on the articles that have been reviewed using the table below:

Table 1. Categories of Indonesian international students' challenges

No.	Key Points		Sources
1.	**Internal Factors**	Language barriers	Azizah & Budiman (2017), Cennetkusu (2017)
		Lack of knowledge	Pasaribu et al (2020)
		Vocabulary	Azizah & Budiman (2017), Cennetkusu

			(2017), Ravichandran et. al, (2017)
		Grammar	Luang & Nguyen (2018), Azizah & Budiman (2017), Cennetkusu (2017), Ravichandran et. al, (2017)
		Outlining chapter	Cennetkusu (2017)
		Presenting ideas	Azizah & Budiman (2017), Cennetkusu (2017)
		Organizing paragraphs	Fajrina et al (2021), Cennetkusu (2017)
		Plagiarism	Tohamba (2020), Ravichandran et. al, (2017), Pasaribu et al (2020), Cennetkusu (2017)
2.	**External Factors**	Speaking environment	Subandowo & Sardi (2023)
		Cultural adjustment	Smith (2021), Baklashova & Kazakov (2016)

2.4.1 Internal Factors
2.4.1.1 Language Barriers

Language barriers are a significant challenge for international students in academic writing. Azizah and Budiman (2017) highlighted that non-native speakers

often struggle with expressing complex ideas clearly due to limited proficiency in academic English. This issue is compounded by the need to follow strict conventions of grammar, vocabulary, and formal tone, making it difficult to convey research effectively. Cennetkusu (2017) further notes that language barriers can hinder students' understanding of academic texts, leading to difficulties in integrating existing literature into their work. For international students, particularly in non-English country like Taiwan, language barriers can be a serious problem in writing a journal article.

2.4.1.2 Lack of Knowledge

This can be a significant barrier to academic writing, particularly for international students and early-career researchers. According to Pasaribu et al. (2020), this issue often arises from insufficient understanding of the requirements for academic writing, such as structuring a manuscript, adhering to citation standards, or meeting the expectations of peer-reviewed journals. Many struggles with identifying appropriate research problems, analyzing data effectively, or framing arguments in a scholarly manner. This gap in knowledge not only affects the quality of the writing but also reduces confidence, leading to delays and challenges in completing manuscripts.

2.4.1.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary poses a significant challenge in academic journal writing, particularly for non-native English speakers. Azizah and Budiman (2017) highlighted that limited academic vocabulary makes it difficult for students to

express complex ideas effectively and adhere to the formal tone required in scholarly writing. Cennetkusu (2017) adds that mastering discipline-specific terminology is essential for clear communication but can be overwhelming for students unfamiliar with the technical language of their field. Ravichandran et al. (2017) further explain that inadequate vocabulary often leads to repetition or vague expressions, reducing the quality of academic writing.

2.4.1.4 Grammar

Grammar is a common challenge in academic journal writing, especially for non-native English speakers. Luang and Nguyen (2018) pointed out that mastering complex grammar rules is essential for producing clear, professional academic texts, but many students struggle with this due to limited exposure to advanced English structures. Azizah and Budiman (2017) explained that even minor grammatical errors can affect the readability and credibility of a manuscript, leading to misunderstandings or rejection by journals. Similarly, Cennetkusu (2017) emphasized that adhering to grammatical accuracy while maintaining a formal academic tone can be overwhelming, especially for those unfamiliar with English writing conventions. These challenges highlight the need for targeted grammar instruction and writing practice to improve academic writing skills.

2.4.1.5 Outlining Chapter

Outlining chapters can be a significant challenge in academic journal writing. Cennetkusu (2017) stated that many students struggle to structure their work logically, especially when transitioning from general ideas to specific

arguments. This difficulty often arises from a lack of experience in organizing complex information into cohesive sections, such as the introduction, literature review, methodology, and discussion. Without a clear outline, students may produce disorganized manuscripts that fail to meet the expectations of academic journals, emphasizing the need for guidance and practice in planning and structuring academic papers effectively.

2.4.1.6 Presenting Ideas

Presenting ideas is a common challenge in academic journal writing. Azizah and Budiman (2017) highlighted that many students struggle to articulate their thoughts clearly and logically, often due to limited experience with academic conventions. This can result in poorly structured arguments, lack of coherence, or ideas that are unclear to readers. The challenge is further compounded by the need to balance critical analysis with concise writing, which requires both linguistic proficiency and a strong grasp of the subject matter.

2.4.1.7 Organizing Paragraphs

Fajrina et al. (2021) explained that many students struggle to create logical connections between ideas, resulting in disjointed paragraphs that lack coherence. This issue often arises from insufficient understanding of paragraph structure, such as starting with a clear topic sentence and supporting it with evidence and analysis. Poor paragraph organization can confuse readers and weaken the overall argument, making the manuscript less effective. This can be leading into failure in journal

article publication. Addressing this challenge requires guidance in structuring ideas and practice in crafting well-organized paragraphs that flow logically.

2.4.1.8 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a significant challenge in academic journal writing. According to Tohamba (2020), many students struggled with properly paraphrasing and citing sources, often due to a lack of understanding of academic integrity standards. This can lead to unintentional plagiarism, which risks manuscript rejection and damages credibility. Ravichandran et al. (2017) emphasized that students, especially those new to academic writing, may rely heavily on existing literature without adding original insights, increasing the likelihood of plagiarism

2.4.2 External Factors

In addition to internal challenges, various external factors have also been identified as significant obstacles in the academic writing process. A number of scholarly articles reviewed by the researcher highlight how these external factor challenges, such as speaking environment and cultural adjustment, can substantially hinder the productivity and quality of international students' academic writing.

2.4.2.1   Speaking Environment

For Indonesian students study overseas, the speaking environment can pose challenges to academic journal writing. Subandowo and Sardi (2023) explained that limited opportunities to practice academic English in daily interactions hinder students' ability to develop advanced language skills. In a non-English-speaking environment like Taiwan, students may predominantly use

Mandarin or their native language, leaving little room to improve their academic writing through verbal communication or peer discussions in English. This lack of practice can lead to difficulties in articulating ideas clearly and adhering to the formal conventions of academic writing. Consequently, students may struggle with drafting, revising, and effectively presenting their research in journals, highlighting the need for language-focused academic support.

2.4.2.2 Cultural Adjustment

Cultural adjustment is a significant challenge for Indonesian international students when writing academic journals. Smith (2021) highlighted that cultural difference in academic norms, such as writing styles, critical thinking, and argumentation, can create confusion for international students. Baklashova and Kazakov (2016) further stated that adapting to unfamiliar academic expectations requires time and effort, which can increase stress for students already managing language barriers. Indonesian students in Taiwan may also experience difficulty understanding feedback or engaging with professors and peers in academic discussions due to cultural differences. These challenges can hinder their ability to meet the expectations of academic journals, emphasizing the need for cultural orientation programs and academic mentorship to support their adjustment.

2.5 A Review of Indonesian International Students' Strategies in Writing a Journal Article

In this section, the researcher will discuss the strategies used by Indonesian international students to deal with the challenges when writing a journal article. The researcher searches the related literature from some platforms, the keywords used

are *academic writing strategy, writing strategy used by international students, and strategy in writing a journal article*. These strategies are used by many international students from various circles, even international students who are still bachelor degrees. Moreover, the writing strategy mostly used to overcome challenges in academic writing process, beside a journal article. Those strategies have been summarized by the researcher as follows.

Table 2. Categories of Indonesian international students' strategies

No.	Key Points		Sources
1.	**Internal Strategies**	Reading extensively	Subandowo & Sardi (2023), Cennetkusu (2017)
		Improving language proficiency	Rezeki (2016), Cennetkusu (2017)
2.	**External Strategies**	Discussing with classmates	Subandowo & Sardi (2023)
		Discussing with mentor	Cennetkusu (2017)
		Academic writing training	Tohamba (2020)
		Writing Centers (WCs) & English Language Intitutions (ELIs)	Cennetkusu (2017)
		Using technology	Subandowo & Sardi (2023), Fajrina (2020)

2.5.1 Internal Strategies

There are some strategies that can be used to overcome internal factors challenges of academic writing. Especially, when writing a journal article. The researcher has reviewed several articles that have discussed some internal strategies of writing process. Two of them are as follows:

2.5.1.1 Reading Extensively

Read extensively is an effective strategy for improving academic journal writing. Subandowo and Sardi (2023) highlighted that reading a variety of journal articles helps students familiarize themselves with academic language, structure, and discipline-specific terminology. This exposure enhances their ability to write in a formal, scholarly style. Cennetkusu (2017) also stated that reading widely enables students to understand how arguments are developed and supported with evidence, which can improve their critical thinking and writing skills. By analyzing well-written articles, students can adopt effective techniques and avoid common pitfalls, ultimately enhancing the quality of their own writing.

2.5.1.2 Improving Language Proficiency

Improving language proficiency is a key strategy for enhancing academic journal writing. According to Rezeki (2016), students with stronger language skills can express their ideas more clearly and effectively, which is crucial in academic writing. Improved language proficiency allows students to use precise vocabulary, construct well-formed sentences, and adhere to the formal tone required in academic journals. With better language skills, students can also reduce grammar

and spelling errors, making their work more professional and easier to understand. Ultimately, strengthening language proficiency helps students produce high-quality, well-structured academic manuscripts that meet the standards of academic journal article publishing.

2.5.2 External Strategies

There are also some strategies that can help the students to overcome the external factor strategies of academic writing. The researcher has reviewed several articles that have discussed some external strategies of writing process:

2.5.2.1 Discussing with Classmates

Discussing with classmates is a valuable strategy for improving academic journal writing. Subandowo and Sardi (2023) stated that peer discussions allow students to exchange ideas, clarify concepts, and receive constructive feedback on their work. This collaborative process helps identify strengths and weaknesses in their writing, fostering a deeper understanding of academic expectations. By sharing perspectives and learning from peers, students can refine their arguments, improve coherence, and enhance the overall quality of their manuscripts. Such discussions also build confidence and provide motivation, making the writing process more engaging and effective.

2.5.2.2 Discussing with Mentor

Having a mentor is a valuable strategy for improving academic journal writing. Cennetkusu (2017) explained that mentors can provide personalized guidance, helping students refine their ideas, structure their arguments, and navigate

the complexities of academic conventions. In her study, she also mentioned that mentor can be differentiated into two types: lecturer mentor and text mentor.

Lecturer mentor is experienced academics who guide students through the writing process, offering feedback and advice based on their expertise. Text mentor, on the other hand, refers to high-quality academic texts or published articles that serve as models for students to emulate in terms of style, structure, and language use. Both types of mentors play a crucial role in helping students develop their academic writing skills and produce high-standard journal articles.

2.5.2.3 Academic Writing Training

Tohamba (2020) highlighted that structured training programs provide students with essential skills, such as organizing ideas, mastering grammar, and adhering to academic conventions. These programs also offer guidance on avoiding plagiarism and understanding journal submission processes. By participating in such training, students can gain practical knowledge and confidence, enabling them to produce well-structured and high-quality manuscripts that meet academic standards.

2.5.2.4 Writing Centers (WCs) & English Language Institutions (ELIs)

Cennetkusu (2017) in her study explained that Writing Centers (WCs) and English Language Institutions (ELIs) can be effective strategies for improving academic journal writing. WCs provide personalized support to students, helping them with drafting, organizing, and revising their manuscripts. These centers offer one-on-one consultations where students receive feedback on their writing,

improving their clarity and coherence. Similarly, ELIs focus on enhancing students' English proficiency, particularly in academic contexts. By attending these institutions, students can improve their language skills, learn academic writing conventions, and gain confidence in writing journal articles. Both WCs and ELIs offer valuable resources that contribute to the development of high-quality academic writing.

2.5.2.5 Using Technology

Using technology is a highly effective strategy in overcoming challenges of academic journal writing. Subandowo and Sardi (2023) highlighted that technology provides tools to enhance the writing process, particularly for non-native English speakers. In their study, they mentioned Quillbot as one of technology that helps students paraphrase effectively, reducing the risk of plagiarism while maintaining the clarity of ideas. Besides that, Fajrina (2020) also mentioned that tools like Grammarly assist in correcting grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors, ensuring polished and professional writing. These technologies not only save time but also improve the overall quality of manuscripts, making them valuable aids in academic writing.

2.6 A Review of Previous Studies

Several prior studies have addressed challenges and strategies in academic writing among international students. Tohamba (2020) examined Indonesian postgraduate students at Queen's University Belfast, identifying difficulties in critical thinking, avoiding plagiarism, sentence structure, and limited exposure to academic English. Azizah & Budiman (2017) explored Indonesian graduate

students' struggles in writing for international journals, highlighting lack of knowledge as a key barrier and emphasizing the need for institutional support.

Cennetkuşu (2017) investigated academic writing challenges at a U.S. university, revealing discrepancies between students' and professors' perceptions of writing ability, with issues such as vocabulary, grammar, and organization commonly reported. Similarly, Samanhudi & Linse (2019) focused on Indonesian students in the UK, finding challenges related to critical thinking, including unclear ideas and lack of evaluation, often caused by limited understanding of academic expectations. Meanwhile, Ravichandran et al. (2017) explored strategies used by international graduate students in the U.S. to overcome grammar, vocabulary, and plagiarism issues, suggesting support from faculty and peers.

While sharing similar themes, the current research differs by focusing specifically on journal article writing. It also targets active Indonesian master's students enrolled at a university in Taiwan, offering a unique context and contribution to existing literature.