

The Role of Metacognitive Technique for Enhancing the Writing Skills of Arab EFL Students

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Abstract

One of the most problematic areas for foreign language learning is writing. Writing is the most complicated and complex aspect of the language system. This study aimed to investigate the kind of metacognitive strategies EFL students used before and after metacognitive strategy training and the effect of the changes observed. It also aimed to examine the influence of other external factors (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety) on EFL students' performance when instructed to use metacognitive strategies. The subjects were 22 secondary school students in Irbid, Jordan. Two questionnaires were used to gather the data of this study. Questionnaire 1 contains metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring, and evaluation). Questionnaire 2 entails three variables (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety). This paper helps to understand how the level of writing skills can be increased among Arab EFL students. Hence, metacognitive techniques must be developed to have a mutual connection with self-regulation and learner's development of self-scripting approaches. The result showed a positive significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and motivation, L1 transfer, and anxiety. Metacognitive strategies played an important role in enhancing students' writing performance and planning, monitoring, and evaluation process in writing performance.

Keywords: Arab EFL, metacognitive, L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety

Introduction

Writing is a difficult and important skill among English language skills to be mastered in learning English as a foreign language. As Kobayashi and Rinnert (2008) posit, writing competence in a second language is complex, challenging and difficult for students to acquire. It will be considered as difficult and complex when writing includes discovering a proposition or an idea. With the idea,

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it will develop support for it and later organizing and revising. Finally, writing will go through the process of editing to ensure its effectiveness and error-free pieces of writing. Looking into educational perspective, literature has supported the notion that writing has a significant impact on students' academic performance (Al-Mekhlafi, 2011). Even where the role of writing is accepted as important, yet teachers often neglect the domain, particularly in secondary schools in Jordan (Rababah & Melhem, 2015).

Among Arab students, especially the Jordanians, the adoption of relevant strategies to enhance better writing skills of English language is also undervalued. According to Moore (2014), students can be groomed to understand the importance of writing skills and thus continue to employ the strategies appropriately in order to accomplish their writing tasks. Various findings have shown that learning strategies lead to increasing EFL learning motivation (Rababah & Melhem, 2015), and it can enable students to become more autonomous, lifelong learners.

Substantiating this, studies by Surat et al., (2014) and Okasha and Hamdi (2014) affirm that the lack of good strategies and techniques in teaching and learning among EFL students have been the causes of poor performance in writing skills. There are several strategies that have been propounded for effective learning and writing skills which include collaborative, cognitive, affective, and social strategies (Conley, 2014; Al-Besher, 2012; Alharthi, 2012). The metacognitive strategy is a higher-order executive skill. The strategy includes planning, monitoring and evaluating. This can be seen when learners have a good command of metacognitive strategy, they will be more independent and autonomous. The learners will be more capable of planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning process and thus will become efficient learners.

Metacognitive strategies could be said to be the significant and more viable tool for improving students' learning skills (Panahandeh & Asl, 2014; Bavand *Savadkouhi* & Zekavati, 2014). According to Hargrove and Nietfeld (2015), learners can be more efficient in terms of proper planning, monitoring, evaluation, and practical learning skills with the application of metacognitive strategies which helps students become better learners. In a nutshell, this study looks towards enhancing writing skills by using metacognitive strategies among Arab students and Jordanian secondary school students in particular.

Teaching metacognitive strategies to students is one of the contributing methods for helping students to overcome writing problem. Panahandeh and Asl (2014) proclaim that metacognition has attracted researchers' attention, Therefore, it provides a new perception of teaching EFL writing. It is expected that the proposed integrated cognitive learning module of writing performance will encourage students to be aware of their own cognitive processes, motivate them both intrinsically and extrinsically, and help them to develop the ability to monitor and to regulate their strategic approaches to learning. It is also expected that the implementation of the writing module will help students to overcome or reduce the foreign language anxiety. Moreover, the proposed intervention – applying a writing guide module - will provide a guideline to Jordanian teachers for effective teaching. Jordanian students are also expected to benefit from it, becoming self-reflective and aware of the processes of writing, which in-turn encourages students to be creative and good problem-solvers. They will be able to create diverse ways in organizing the task systematically.

Furthermore, foreign language anxiety is another predicament to students' performance in writing. Anxiety experienced in the course of learning a foreign language is specific and unique (Balta, 2018). Students will be prone to anxiety during the early phases of learning, especially learning a new language (Dewaele & Alsaraj, 2013). Most of previous studies using metacognitive strategies reviewed in this study have not explores the students' level of anxiety and its effects when implementing the metacognitive classes. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the level of students' anxiety when adopting metacognitive strategies od writing. It could be argued that writing in a foreign language is associated with three components of anxiety:

'communication apprehension', 'test anxiety', and 'fear of negative evaluation'. Students' writing anxiety cannot be ignored, because in almost every educational institution there are students who suffer from anxiety (Abbas & Abdulbaqi Al-bakri, 2018). The negative effect of anxiety on academic achievement of EFL writers is one of the major reasons for this concern (Liu & Ni, 2015).

Researchers believe that reducing writing anxiety is an important issue to study. Very few studies have focused on the strategies that students use to reduce their writing apprehension. Consequently, Huwari (2014) suggests for more studies on strategies that students can use to reduce writing anxiety through teacher's and students' perspectives. There is also a need to find the students' level of anxiety correlation with their performance while using metacognitive strategies. Liu and Ni (2015) postulated that foreign language (FL) writing anxiety has long been ignored, since writing is rarely done in the classroom and often is considered as the least important of the four skills of a SL/FL. Nevertheless, as English writing has recently become important, FL writing anxiety has captured the interest of many researchers. Therefore, the present study sets to investigate the level of EFL students' anxiety when writing English compositions and the effects of metacognitive strategies on students' level of anxiety.

Jordanian students are very deficient in writing in English. A study should be carried out to analyse the rate of creativity in scripting compositions in EFL. The difficulty faced by Arab learners is communication. This is one of the most important reasons for the lack in writing experience in English. They feel it is very difficult for them to convey the information and this may be because of teaching the language and the atmosphere which is quite inappropriate for learning another language, as the tuition language is Arabic (Bani-Khaled, 2013). When involved in various communicative situations, Arab students often lack the necessary vocabulary. Hence, they are unable to continue the interaction (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

Motivation is another factor that affects Arab learners, including Jordanian students. Motivation is the chief factor for the anticipation of second language. Arab students must be instrumentally encouraged to learn English and must be aware of knowing about the English Language. It was found that metacognitive methods would be solution to solve these problems. This helps to improve the self-efficacy among the students (Radwan, 201).

The present study has sought to address a gap in the research, as no previous experimental studies conducted in Jordan have used the moderating variables of L1 transfer, motivation, and anxiety to analyze the relationship between metacognitive strategies and EFL writing performance. In addition, this study used a writing module based on a Jordanian setting to measure the effects on writing performance. It is hoped that this writing module can be a useful tool for increasing EFL students' and teachers' confidence when dealing with writing activities in class. It also provides ways of enhancing students' writing skills, which in the long term could help to improve English communication in Jordan.

Metacognitive strategies

Basically metacognition is defined as the thinking of thinking. It enables learners to complete the task with the help of monitoring, planning, and evaluating. This means that while the process of cognition helps learning to take place, metacognition takes it to the next level by making the individual aware of his/ her process of cognition. The regulatory skills of metacognitive writing strategy have three sub-categories: planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Planning

According to Zare-Ee and Taghi Farvardin (2009), planning includes the strategies that are appropriate for the purpose and the resources allotment that affects the performance. Planning which is also known as the forethought is a procedure of thinking,

arranging the activities that are required to achieve a goal. Planning the writing process involves thinking of the goals, the structure of the written text, the topic and sub-topics, examples and arguments, and brainstorming for some key words.

Monitoring

The purpose behind this is to improve the effectiveness of writing. It gives the facility to keep up the work on a specific track, and also helps the proper management of the process – to see whether the learners are doing what they wanted to do (Slife & Weaver, 1992). Along these lines, observing alludes to individual cognizant familiarity with perception and content execution.

Evaluation

Assessment can be formative (assessing a draft) or summative (for a finished paper). It assesses whether the posed goals have been achieved and how well they were achieved. Formative assessment helps to achieve the goals, understand better the nature of the writing process and to improve the writing step by step (Baker, 1989).

Motivation

Motivation plays a prominent role in the development of writing competence (Pajares & Valiante, 2006). Writing tasks often are inherently difficult for the writer because they embrace numerous lower- and higher-order psycholinguistic processes that are situated within a dynamic motivational state. This is why writing is a relatively high-cost activity in terms of effort, as a positive motivational stance may be difficult to attain. How writers motivate themselves differs widely, but motivation is presumably a necessary ingredient for attaining writing success (Hidi & Boscolo, 2006). Motivation is not a unitary construct, but rather is comprised of several related components, including self-efficacy beliefs, interest, perceived task value, attitudes, goal orientations, and attributions for success and failure. Also, there are potentially important mediators and moderators of the relationship between these motivation components and writing, as well as measurement issues that can obfuscate relevant and important findings.

Not only motivation impacts the quality of writing, but also being involved in a foreign language writing influences students' motivational beliefs and goal orientations. Specifically, students who reported writing more often for a variety of purposes exhibited stronger motivational beliefs and a greater endorsement of mastery approach goals, while less endorsing task avoidance goals.

Poor student achievement is often attributed to a lack of motivation and rewards given in an attempt to increase student motivation. Students with writing difficulties are very often unmotivated because schooling involves one failure after another. The statement, "if they only tried harder, then they would do better on tests, take more risks, or earn better grades" is often heard regarding these students. In reality, when rewards are given, they often have the opposite effect of what was intended. High student achievement comes from students who are intrinsically motivated. Therefore, instead of giving rewards, teachers need to consistently teach students to become intrinsically motivated. Here metacognition can help.

L1 transfer

Second/foreign language students unconsciously apply their first language structures and patterns when they write in a foreign language. Consequently, the similar structures of the languages link together and learning to achieve effectively. However, regarding the differences in rhetorical structures between languages, a transfer from the first language is not positive and effective all the time.

English has been taught in Jordan since its independence. However, there are still a lot of challenges and problems to face both by teachers and learners of English. One of the challenges faced by both teachers and learners is negative language transfer or interference. L1 interference refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language (L2), which causes certain errors. Language interference is considered as an 'intruder' in second / foreign language learning. The term 'intruder' is used, since L1 differs from L2, which often triggers wrong or unnatural utterances (Yandres, 2017). Richards and Rodgers (2014) say that errors are the result of interference in learning a second language from the habits of the first language. Due to the difference in language system, especially grammar, the students will transfer their first language into the second language by using their mother tongue system. So, errors are the result of the negative transfer of first language.

Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as a subconscious fearful emotional state, such as feeling of tension, apprehension, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system whose effects are believed to be affecting students' performance in major subjects like learning a foreign language. Kenny (2010) defined it as a feeling of uneasiness and apprehension, usually in regards to a situation entailing uncertain outcomes. It is profoundly regarded as one of the major challenges in learning foreign languages (Shang, 2013). Tsiriatakis et al. (2017) assert that a grave language anxiety may adversely affect students' self-esteem, self-confidence, and ultimately hamper their proficiency in language acquisition. Kakamad et al. (2015) conclude that "anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process" (p. 8). Language anxiety is one of the reasons why some people avoid communicating in the EFL context and even avoid learning English.

Moreover, many of the researchers agree that foreign language classroom anxiety affects students' attitudes and their achievement in language learning. The researchers like Azher, Anwar, and Naz (2010) have emphasized the importance of teacher-student relationship in the increase and decrease of learners' anxiety levels. Although anxiety may sometimes be facilitating, in most cases, it negatively affects learners' achievement and leaves its debilitating effects on students' learning. Azher, Anwar and Naz (2010) assert that language learning experience could become a traumatic experience and may deeply disturb one's self-esteem or self-confidence as a learner. Second language researchers and theorists (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014) have long been aware that anxiety is often associated with low achievement in second language learning. Teachers and learners generally feel that anxiety is a major obstacle to overcome in second language learning. Therefore, writing anxiety may seriously block students' thinking and significantly affect their writing performance. Accordingly, it may have significant negative effects on students' writing skills development. Students with higher levels of anxiety tend to produce written texts that are lower in accuracy, organization, quality, and quantity

Methodology

This study aimed to answer two questions:

- 1- What metacognitive strategies do students use in planning, monitoring and evaluating their compositions before and after metacognitive strategy training?
- 2- How do other external factors (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety) influence EFL students' performance when instructed to use metacognitive strategies?

Research design

The study was descriptive in nature. It attempted to make an analysis of the role of metacognition in teaching writing at secondary school level in Irbid, Jordan. The population consisted of all students who were learning English at secondary level at Almazar School. The sample of the study in hand comprised 22 students who were learning English. The researcher used questionnaire as a research instrument for the collection of data, and then the collected data were statistically analyzed in order to find out the reliability of results.

Participants

Participants in the study, were 22 secondary school students in Irbid-Almazar, Jordan. All the participating students were male and completed 17 years of schooling prior to their registration at university. They were nearly at the same language proficiency level, which was determined by the ministry of higher education test.

Questionnaire

The same MSQ questionnaires was held three times, being the basic research instrument to assess the metacognitive strategies used by the learners in this study.

Results and discussion

Question one

Analytical Approach to Metacognitive Strategies Questionnaire (MSQ)

The quantitative analytical approach was employed in the analysis of responses collected based on the MSQ from the students respondents. In this phase of analysis descriptive statistical method was used to determine the mean values and standard deviations of the overall items of the MSQ. This quantitative analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science Software (SPSS) version 23.

The role of MSQ in this study was to help the researchers to gauge the information concerning students' perceptions and behaviour in using different forms of metacognitive strategies in the written compositions and to examine the views reported (before the training, during training, and after the training of writing activities as mentioned above).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics: Metacognitive Strategy Questionnaire

Group	MSQ Scale	No of Items	First Administered	Second Administered	Third Administered
			M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
+MST (N=22)	Planning	10	41.14 (5.480)	43.45 (2.907)	43.82 (2.889)
	Monitoring	10	41.00 (3.237)	41.32 (5.498)	43.55 (4.228)
	Evaluating	10	40.86 (4.764)	41.64 (4.933)	42.32 (3.510)

Table 1 showed the mean values and standard deviations obtained from the MSQ administered to experimental group (+MST group) based on the three constructs of the questionnaire, planning (10 items), monitoring (10 items), and evaluating (10 items). Moreover, giving descriptive statistics of these variables here is important as it present the general information about the respondents' perceptions and behaviours concerning the use of metacognitive strategies before the training, during the training and after training.

The results above indicated that an increase in students' awareness of metacognitive strategies was most apparent in planning strategies based on the difference between the first MSQ (M = 41.14, 5.480) and the second (M = 43.45, 2.907) and third MSQs (M = 43.82, 2.889). The second biggest difference was in monitoring strategies comparing the first (M = 41.00, 3.237), second (M = 41.32, 5.498), and third MSQs (M = 43.55, 4.228). Awareness of evaluation strategies showed the least improvement between the first (M = 40.86, 4.764), second (M = 41.64, 4.933), and third MSQs (M = 42.32, 3.510).

Question two

This sub-section reports and discusses the findings dealing with other external factors' (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety) influence on EFL students' performance who were instructed to use metacognitive strategies.

Hypothesis: Metacognitive strategies will significantly influence EFL students' attitudes and L1 positive transfer towards English writing.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire on L1 Transfer

s/no	Variable: L1 Transfer	Means	Std. Deviations
31	Usually, metacognitive training does not allow me to think in my native language when I am asked to write in English.	3.68	0.780
32	Metacognitive training has helped me avoid using my native language when writing in English.	3.50	0.859
33	Metacognitive strategies reduce the influence of my native language on my ability to revise my English writing.	3.73	0.703
34	Metacognitive strategies help me improve my English writing instead of using my native language.	3.36	0.658
35	Students who use their native language in English class write poorly in English.	3.59	0.666
36	Students who use metacognitive training when learning English write better in English.	4.14	0.710
37	Using metacognitive training reduces native language influence on English writing ability.	3.91	0.811
38	Teachers' use of students' native language in English class affects students' English writing ability.	3.68	0.780

39	The teacher should employ students' native language to explain metacognitive strategies.	3.50	0.859
40	I do not find any difficulty evaluating my writing because metacognitive strategies have helped reduce the influence of my native language on my English writing.	3.73	0.703
Grand total		3.58	0.823

Level of indicator: Low =0.-1.99; moderate= 2.0-.3.49; high=3.5-5.0

The results in table 2 above revealed a high mean (3.58, SD = 0.823) from the grand total of the response means. The results showed the students' overall perceptions concerning the influence of L1 transfer in writing performance and the role of metacognitive strategies. Items 31-40 of the survey questionnaire required students to give their perceptions and opinions with regard to L1 transfer in their writing composition and issues related to metacognitive strategies. Item 31 showed a high positive mean (3.68, SD= 0.780) which indicated that the majority of the respondents believed that their thinking and mental cognition when they are asked to write a composition is usually based on their mother tongue. And item 32 revealed a different mean (3.50, SD= 0.859) indicating that majority of the respondents believed that thinking in their mother affects their writing, while item 33 of revealed a mean (3.73, SD = 0.703) which showed that students acknowledged that L1 affects their revision ability when they are not familiar with the words in the second language.

In addition, item 34 showed a moderate mean of 3.36, SD= 0.658 which indicated that the majority of the students perceived that using of metacognitive strategies helped them to deduce mother tongue interference and to improve performance in English. Meanwhile, item 35 revealed a mean (3.59, SD= 0.666) which showed that the students believed that students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English. Item 36 with a mean (4.14, SD= 0.710) revealed that students perceived that practice English performed better. Items 37 and 38 of the questionnaire revealed a positive high mean of 3.91, SD= 0.811 and 3.68, SD= 0.780 respectively, which indicated that students believed the use of mother tongue does not influence performance in English and that the teachers' use of mother tongue affects students' performance in English.

Furthermore, item 39 asked for the students' opinion concerning the teacher use of mother tongue to explain metacognitive strategies to students. In the result majority of the students' favoured the use of mother tongue to explain the metacognitive strategies with a mean of 3.50, SD= 0.859 which was unfortunately against their believed in items 37 and 38. The possible cause of this difference of perception may be because students who participated in this study are not familiar with metacognitive strategies before this study. Meanwhile, item 40 showed a positive high mean (3.73, SD= 0.703) indicating that students found difficult to evaluate their writing due to L1 barriers.

Table 3. The Results of Spearman's Correlation coefficient between Metacognitive Strategies and L1 Transfer

Variables	L1 Transfer	Metacognitive Strategies
L1 Transfer	1.000	0.818* (0.000)
Metacognitive Strategies	0.818*	1.000

(0.000)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To elaborate on the issues involved in inferring the relationship between metacognitive strategies and L1 transfer a Spearman's correlation coefficient was calculated. As illustrated in table 3 there is a positive and significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and L1 transfer $P = (0.000)$.

In summary, the results obtained from table 3 revealed that majority of the students perceived that L1 transfer is one of the external factors that cause defects in their performance in English. In addition, the students' believed that their writing was affected by the use of their mother tongue in the classes. Hence, in their opinion English language should be taught in an immersion classroom whereas all the activities should be in English. Notwithstanding, concerning the use of metacognitive strategies in the class as indicated by item 39 if the questionnaire, the majority of the students want to be briefed on how to use such strategies in their mother tongue. Meanwhile, the results in table 3 showed there is significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and L1 transfer.

Research findings in relation to research question 2

This sub-section reports and discusses the findings obtained from the analysis of data based on research question 2 of the study: How do other external factors (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety) influence EFL students' performance when instructed to use metacognitive strategies?

H: The use of metacognitive strategies will significantly motivate EFL students to enhance their writing performance.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire on Motivation

No	Variable: Motivation	Means	Std. Deviations
41	Metacognitive and brainstorming techniques motivate me to write in English.	3.36	0.658
42	I feel more motivated to write when I am using metacognitive strategies.	3.59	0.666
43	I feel more motivated to use metacognitive strategies when the writing task is related to what I already know.	4.14	0.710
44	Metacognitive strategies make me feel more motivated when the writing task is well-organized.	3.91	0.811
45	I feel more motivated to write when the teacher provides me with metacognitive guidelines.	3.68	0.780
46	I feel more motivated to use metacognitive strategies when provided with opportunities to practice them in a writing activity.	3.50	0.859

47	Metacognitive strategies give me more courage to write in English because they provide me with opportunities to revise my first draft.	3.73	0.703
48	Metacognitive strategies make me feel more motivated to write when I work in a group.	3.36	0.658
49	Metacognitive strategies make me feel more motivated when I get opportunities to evaluate my draft before I submit it.	3.59	0.666
50	I would like to be taught all my subjects using metacognitive strategies.	4.14	0.710
Grand Total		3.70	0.722

Level of indicator: Low =0.-1.99; moderate= 2.0-.3.49; high=3.5-5.0

Table 4 revealed a high total grand mean (3.70, SD= 0.722) on the overall respondents' perceptions and opinion on motivation concerning writing composition. It is generally agreed by linguists and psychologists that motivation is one of the major concepts related to language learning especially in ESL/EFL contexts. Hence, Item 41 on the table indicated a moderate mean (3.36, SD= 0.658) which revealed the students' perception on the motivational level of the brainstorming techniques in writing in English. The result is evidence that students were motivated to write in English as a result of motivation techniques

Meanwhile, item 42 revealed a high mean (3.59, SD= 0.666) which indicated that students believed that they more motivated to write when they are not stress. Item 43 showed a high mean (4.14, SD= 0.710) which indicated that students hold a view that they more motivated when the subject matter is related to what they know. Item 44 of the survey questionnaire revealed a mean of 3.91, SD= 0.811 that showed students believed that they are more motivated when the lesson is well-organized. In addition, item 45 with a high mean (3.68, SD= 0.780) which indicated that students are more motivated when the teacher provides them with guidelines and samples.

On the other hand, item 46 revealed a high mean (3.50, SD= 0.859) in which students hold that providing them with time for revision and practice has a significant influence for them to write. In the same vein, item 47 revealed a high mean (3.73, SD= 0.703) which indicated that students construed that metacognitive strategy gave them more courage to write in English because it provide me with opportunities to revise my first draft. Meanwhile, item 48 revealed a high mean of 3.36, SD= 0.658 metacognitive strategy made them feel more confident to write especially collaboratively a group. Item 49 showed a high mean (3.59, SD= 0.666) which indicated the students strongest believe that providing them with opportunity to revise their writing drafts before submitting. Item 50 revealed a high mean (4.14, SD= 0.710) which indicated their interest to be taught other subjects using metacognitive strategy.

Table 5. The Result of Spearman's Correlation coefficient between Metacognitive Strategies and Motivation

Variables	Motivation	Metacognitive Strategies
Motivation	1.000	0.630*
		0.003

Metacognitive Strategies	0.630*	1.000
	0.000	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To elaborate on the issues involved in inferring the relationship between metacognitive strategies and motivation a Spearman's correlation coefficient was calculated. As illustrated in table 5 there is a positive and significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and motivation, $P = (0.000)$.

In summary, the results obtained from table 5 above revealed that majority of the students acknowledged the roles of motivation in their writing tasks. As the results illustrated other issues such as brainstorming, stress, and practice attracted students and motivated them positively as in the case of practice and brainstorming and negatively in the case of stress which was also related to the next variable on the survey questionnaire (anxiety). Lastly, students hold a view that metacognitive strategy has positive motivation to students as they showed their interest to be taught all other subjects using it. Meanwhile, the results in table 5 showed that there is a positive and significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and motivation.

Research findings in relation to research question 3

This sub-section reports and discusses the findings obtained from the analysis of data based on research question 3 of the study: How do other external factors (L1 transfer, motivation, anxiety) influence EFL students' performance when instructed to use metacognitive strategies?

H: There is a positive (i.e., decreasing) influence of metacognitive strategies on the level EFL students' foreign writing anxiety.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire on Anxiety

S/no	Variable: Anxiety	Means	Std. Deviations
51	Metacognitive strategies help me not to feel afraid of writing.	3.91	0.811
52	Metacognitive strategies help me write my ideas down in English without feeling anxiety before I start writing.	3.68	0.780
53	Creating a plan for writing my essay makes me confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in written English.	3.50	0.859
54	Metacognitive strategies encourage me to avoid problems when organizing my ideas in English composition.	3.73	0.703
55	Metacognitive strategies reduce my fear of having my English writing evaluated.	3.36	0.658
56	Metacognitive strategies help me write in English under time constraints without feeling nervous.	3.59	0.666
57	I enjoy writing in English when I can plan, monitor, and evaluate my writing.	3.91	0.811

58	Metacognitive strategies help me not to be afraid when friends read what I have written in English.	3.68	0.780
59	I expect to do poorly in English composition classes even after learning to use metacognitive strategies.	3.50	0.859
60	Metacognitive strategies help me enjoy writing in English without apprehension.	3.73	0.703
	Grand Total	3.65	0.763

Level of indicator: Low =0.-1.99; moderate= 2.0-.3.49; high=3.5-5.0

Table 6 above illustrated a high mean (3.65, SD=0.763) of grand total of the mean of respondents' perceptions and opinions on writing anxiety. Meanwhile, item 51 revealed a high mean (3.91, SD= 0.811) which showed that majority of the students were afraid of writing in English when the content is not clear to them and when they know that their writing is going to be evaluated. Item 52 illustrated a high mean (3.68, SD= 0.780) whereas the students indicated that they are afraid to write when they do not have ideas to write in English before they start writing.

In addition, item 53 revealed a high mean (3.50, SD= 0.859) which indicated that respondents reported that they confusing in setting the goal for their writing task make them unconfident in their ability to clearly express their ideas in English writing. Meanwhile, item 54 depicted that majority mean (3.73, SD= 0.703) of the respondents experienced a terrible time in organizing their ideas in an English composition course.

Furthermore, concerning the use of metacognitive strategy majority of the respondents showed that it reduced their fears to write in English as illustrated in item 55 with moderate mean (3.36, SD= 0.658). Meanwhile, item 56 showed a high mean (3.59, SD= 0.666) which illustrated that the respondents reported that writing English under time constraints make them feel nervous about writing in English. Item 57 revealed a high mean (3.91, SD= 0.811) which indicated that lack of enough time to revise their writing tasks. Item 58 revealed a high mean (3.68, SD= 0.780) which illustrated that respondents depicted their dislike to have their writing task to be evaluated by their peers. Furthermore, item 59 revealed a high mean (3.50, SD= 0.859) which indicated that the respondents have very week expectation concerning their performance in English writing. And lastly, item 60 revealed a high mean (3.73, SD= 0.703) which depicted respondents opinions concerning the use of metacognitive strategies in English writing class, whereas the majority reported that they enjoyed the writing activities during the class.

Table 7. The Result of Spearman's Correlation coefficient between Metacognitive Strategies and Anxiety

Variables	Anxiety	Metacognitive Strategies
Anxiety	1.000	0.899*
		0.000
Metacognitive Strategies	0.899*	1.000
	0.000	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To elaborate on the issues involved in inferring the relationship between metacognitive strategies and anxiety a Spearman's correlation coefficient was calculated. As illustrated in table there is a positive and significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and anxiety $P= (0.000)$.

In summary the findings illustrated in table 7 above showed that the respondents have a high belief on the effects of anxiety to their writing in English as the grand total revealed a high mean (3.65, $SD=0.763$). Results on the different items under this variable evidently showed that the respondents hold a view that employing metacognitive strategy in teaching writing has a great positive influence to the way students approach writing in English language. Furthermore, the results in the table 7 showed that there is a positive and significant correlation between metacognitive strategies and anxiety.

Conclusion

Metacognition plays a significant role in the learning process. In EFL, it is teachers' duty to build metacognitive strategies in students by designing unique activities. As writing skills are especially difficult to develop, metacognitive strategies play a special role for their development. Further, teachers should guide language learners how to adopt those strategies: prepare, monitor and evaluate their writing.

Metacognitive skills develop through classroom activities because they allow to cultivate the reflective thinking and processes. Keeping a reflective journal is one of such effective activities. Students need to talk out loud to share their ideas during the learning process. Self-questioning is also vital.

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