

Metacognitive Writing Strategies and Difficulties of NUIC Freshmen in Academic English Writing

Don August G. Delgado

Naresuan University International College, Naresuan University
Thambol Thapo, Amphur Muang, Phitsanulok 65000, Thailand

*Corresponding Author: delgado_don@yahoo.com; dond@nu.ac.th

Abstract

It cannot be denied that writing is one of the essential skills that EFL students need to develop. To most of them, transforming thoughts into English is usually a daunting task. In that regard, this study explores the metacognitive strategies and difficulties of NUIC freshmen in English Academic Writing. It aims to know if they use a plan or strategy every time they write on any topic. In addition, it also aims to identify the difficulties that they encounter in writing based on content, structure, and language. There are 115 respondents of this study out of 135. All participants received a questionnaire with 44 questions overall using Likert scale. Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that NUIC EFL students have problems on metacognitive strategies and difficulty in writing due to their low English proficiency and this insufficiency led them to severe comprehension problems in all levels – reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Keywords: metacognitive, academic writing, English, writing difficulty, writing strategy, language

Introduction

Transforming ideas into words is an essential factor in learning because it embodies one's knowledge, feelings, thoughts, and belief that are anchored on experiences and academic development on the individual. Expressing one's thought in writing is one way of preserving one's culture and traditions of people living in one society because it can be passed from generations to generations. It also encourages the critical thinking skills of learners in a very meaningful and impassioned way on how they see the world. Though this thing can be expressed in one's native language, but through the advancement of technology and tourism globally, most society became multicultural due to the influx of people from different parts of the globe.

In view of the foregoing, the use of English becomes the means of communication for people coming from different countries. In this sense, transforming ideas into words are no longer exclusive to one's own language because a society also needs to adhere to the demands of the present situation to cater all the

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

people who are part of the society.

For learners coming from countries where English is a foreign language like Thailand, learners need an extensive training in English so they can be equipped with the language skills that can help them communicate better and get their messages across to the people of other nations that they communicate with.

Regarding higher education, college learners need to adhere to the demands of every subject enrolled like writing a concept paper in English and this scenario is common in Naresuan University International College (NUIC). However, most NUIC freshmen aren't equipped of communication skills in English yet, but they are expected to transform their ideas into writing as a practice on the use of the language and their critical thinking abilities which are expected in their English Foundation and Living Management classes.

In order to identify the source of their difficulty, they will also be asked about their metacognitive strategies used. This strategy highlights the process of reflection on the learning processes and learning to learn, leading to enhanced self-direction and learner autonomy in language learning.

Thus, this paper will highlight the writing difficulty faced by NUIC first year students enrolled in SY 2016-2017 as well as their metacognitive strategies used when they are tasked to write.

Objectives

1. To know if the respondents use a plan or strategy every time that they are instructed to write their ideas in any topic.
2. To identify the writing difficulty of the respondents regarding content, structure, and language. The knowledge on every aspect has an impact on the transfer of knowledge in every course.

Research Questions

This research study sought to answer the following questions and sub-questions:

1. What are the general characteristics of NUIC freshmen's use of metacognitive strategies in the process of writing in English?
2. What are the greatest writing difficulty of NUIC freshmen with regard to content, structure, and language?

Theory

This research employed the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing by Flower and Hayes. This theory expresses that writing could be best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers plan while writing and this is considered

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

as a goal-directed thinking process. It also implies three major elements: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing process. The task environment includes the rhetorical problem like writing assignment and the audience who reads it, and the text produced. The learner retrieves information from long-term memory that helps in the writing process. The writing processes involve planning, translating and reviewing.

Methodology

NUIC freshmen were chosen as the participants of this study because this research was conceptualized during the period that they were having difficulty in writing their research requirements for their English Foundation courses like Fundamental English and Developmental English. Aside from that, they have to write essays for their Living Management course. In that regard, the researcher wanted to identify if NUIC freshmen have sufficient skills to write in English and identify the difficulties that they encountered while in the process of writing. When the consent forms were distributed and received, the questionnaires were handed. During the collection of the questionnaires there were only 115 received out of 135.

The questionnaire of this study has 44 questions; metacognitive strategies with 22 questions and writing difficulty with 22 questions as well. The statistical treatment of the data on this study only revolved on frequency, means, and standard deviations of every question item.

The table 1 shows how are the mean scores of the computed data were analyzed and interpreted in this study.

Table 1

Scale	Mean Range	Motivational Level	Mean Score Range
5	Strong agree	Very high	4.50 – 5.00
4	Agree	High	3.50 – 4.49
3	Moderate	Average	2.50 – 3.49
2	Disagree	Low	1.50 – 2.49
1	Strongly disagree	Very low	1.00 – 1.49

Literature Review

Nunan (1999) stressed that the most challenging and difficult task to accomplish in language learning is writing because it requires coherence and fluency of the target language. The brochures on writing from Brown University and University of Missouri stated that writing mirrors the critical thinking skills of a person because it conveys one's intellect, way of thinking, and work ethics because it expresses the

total personality of the person (writer). Additionally, it makes one's thinking visible because it equips the person with the communication and thinking skills because writing is a process that can be viewed as a problem-solving activity rather than a simple act of communication (Hyland, 2008). As Grami (2010) stated, writing can be one of the skills that is hard to learn because it is a complex mental production which requires careful thought, discipline, and concentration. Hence, it can be concurred that writing is a complex cognitive activity comprising a number of processes and strategies. The use of strategies in the writing process is crucial to successful writing. As Ridhuan & Lim (2009) expressed, the key to good writing skills rely on the types and amount of strategies used. Simply put, writing skills must be mastered because the years of learning English don't guarantee that a learner can possess good writing skills and to develop good writing skills, a learner should apply the metacognitive strategies in writing because it connects new information to old, selects deliberate thinking strategies, plans, monitors, and evaluates the thinking process. This strategy highlights the process of reflection on the learning process and learning to learn, leading to enhanced self-direction and learner autonomy in language learning. Graham (1997) also believes that metacognitive strategies allow students to plan, control and evaluate their learning. For O'Malley and Chamot (2001), metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning tasks, and evaluating how one has learned.

Findings & Discussion

What are the general characteristics of NUIC freshmen's use of metacognitive strategies in the process of writing in English?

Watcharapunyawong & Usaha (2013) emphasized that writing has been found to be the most difficult skill to develop among EFL learners because it requires syntactic and semantic knowledge. The former focuses on the structure of sentence while the latter focuses on the meaning. In other words, for a learner to reach comprehension, he/she must have an adequate knowledge on both. Furthermore, Delgado (2016) points out that vocabulary knowledge is one of the obstacles in language learning among second/foreign language learners and not resolving it will be a failure in English language acquisition. In addition, Iqbal, Noor, Muhabat, and Kazemian (2015) expounded that if a learner has a well-developed reading skill, it will be easier for him to write and speak a well-structured and meaningful sentences because reading provides vocabulary, sentence structures and paragraph organization, as well as world knowledge that will help any learner to polish its written and spoken English. In line with the foregoing, the general characteristics of NUIC freshmen's use of

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

metacognitive strategies in the process of writing in English can be shown in Table 2.

Table 2

NUIC Freshmen's Writing Strategies in General

Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. I try to find out how to write good English compositions.	2.81	1.11	Moderate
2. I write English compositions at home to improve my writing.	2.08	1.01	Low
3. I study good English composition in order to write well.	2.44	0.75	Low
4. I ask for writing enhancement to improve my English writing.	1.79	0.57	Low
5. I ask others about what they think about my writing and why.	2.02	0.80	Low
Average	2.23	0.85	Low

It can be inferred that NUIC freshmen in general don't put much emphasis on writing development skills because writing development can be achieved through practice. As cited in Dueraman (2012), Glass (2008) stated that Thai students don't have the training and the knowledge to a more advanced levels of English language writing. In line with such, Dueraman posited that this might be due to the fact that most Thai students who graduated from high school don't have any writing practice in English. In addition, Glass pointed out that in case that a writing course in English will be offered to Thai students, such writing course is less creative and structure oriented. Furthermore, of all the issues presented and considering the general metacognitive writing strategies of NUIC freshmen, it is fit and proper to say that NUIC freshmen need to reach the level of English proficiency because without achieving the proficiency level they would have difficulty in reading and writing in English. As cited in Tapinta's (2006); Adunyarittigun (1998) that the equivalent of the Thai college students' reading proficiency in general on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test will range from 2.1 to 6.8 which is well below for a college level English learners. Thus, an EFL learner must be a good reader because there is a relationship between reading and writing. In connection with such, K12 Reader pointed out that there are studies that can prove that when children read extensively they become better writers because reading a variety of genres helps children learn text structures and language that they can then transfer to their own writing. In light of the foregoing, by considering the average mean of NUIC's general metacognition in writing, it could be concurred that majority of NUIC freshmen possess low English level skills.

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

Having it said, it means that writing in English would definitely be a challenge to majority of NUIC freshmen if they would not allocate time on their English development skills as well as on their writing skills development. To reiterate, before they become proficient in writing, they must acquire the semantic and the syntactic knowledge of English language. Hence, the Language Testing International identified the number of hours that an EFL learner needs to allot aside from self-study hours in order to become proficient. The agency grouped Thai as part of the Group III languages and being a part of that group, they need 2,520 hours excluding self-study or 84 weeks (6 hours a day/5 days in a week) of English proficiency training in order to attain a minimal aptitude of four skills in English. In addition, to have an average aptitude level, a learner needs 5,040 hours of English proficiency training excluding self-study; and to have a superior aptitude level, a learner needs 7,560 hours of English proficiency training excluding self-study.

Moreover, Table 3 shows the writing strategies used by NUIC freshmen before they start to write paragraphs or essays in English.

Table 3

NUIC Freshmen's Writing Strategies before They Start Writing

Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. I discuss the topic with others before writing.	4	0.42	High
2. I read about the topic before writing.	5	0	Very high
3. I write out a plan before writing.	2.83	0.89	Average
4. I think about what ideas to put down when planning.	3.03	0.44	Average
5. I think about what words, phrases, and sentences to use when planning.	3.75	0.69	High
6. I keep in mind my teacher's requirements for the composition when planning.	3.95	0.51	High
7. I think about how to organize ideas when planning.	2.37	0.67	Low
8. I keep in mind what type of composition to write when planning.	2.07	1.20	Low
9. I plan a composition in mind before writing.	2.62	1.17	Average
Average	3.29	0.67	Average

The general impression of NUIC freshmen's writing strategies before they start writing is average. But by studying all the question items, it is noticeable that NUIC freshmen are low on planning as question-items 7 and 8 are low. Through that, it can be inferred that most NUIC freshmen don't practice the process-oriented approach in

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

writing. In view of such, process-oriented approach deals with the process of how ideas are developed to create meaning in writing. Maftoon, Birjandi, and Farahian (2014) elaborated Hayes and Flower's concept of process-oriented approach, that there are three major elements in the act of writing: (a) the task environment, or everything which is outside of the writer; (b) the writer's long-term memory, which stores topic knowledge, as well as writing plans one has formulated; and (c) writing processes of planning, translating, and reviewing which take place in the short term memory. They reiterated that the moment that a writer starts writing, the task environment aspect comes into play. In view of such, it has something to do with the consideration of the topic, the audience, and the motivation cues. While the long term memory has something to do with the knowledge of the topic, knowledge of the audience, and linguistic knowledge which corresponds to the specific topic at hand. In light of the foregoing, Hayes and Flower characterized writing processes as planning, composing (or translating), and reviewing in which most of the NUIC freshmen failed to possess. Albeit, the general impression of Table 3 is average, still, by studying all the question items, it can be noticed that they are all interconnected with each other. All question items pertain to planning or brainstorming, however, it can be inferred that the process of elimination or polishing ideas to make a good composition is not a part of the respondents' practice on writing. Kakandee & Kaur (2015) explained that most Thai EFL students at the tertiary level are incapable of writing good argumentative essays because of their lack of readiness for English argumentative writing and inadequate practice writing during their past classroom instruction. As explained by Bennui (2008), most Thai EFL students have the difficulty of thinking in English when writing in English due to their Thai language structures and culture. Furthermore, typical Thai students use more Thai than English in the English language classroom and when they are tasked to write, they carry over the structure of Thai language structure into English which is also aggravated by their low English language competence.

Table 4

NUIC Freshmen's Writing Strategies While or after Writing

Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. Stick to what has been planned when writing.	2.61	1.12	Average
2. Read my composition aloud to look for mistakes.	1.23	0.49	Very Low
3. Pay attention to spelling and grammar when writing.	1.83	0.82	Low
4. Check whether my composition meets my	1.63	0.95	Low

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
teacher's requirements after writing.			
5. Compare my composition with my friends' writing on the same topic.	1.74	0.53	Low
6. Evaluate whether my composition is good or bad when reading it.	1.90	0.87	Low
7. Anticipate whether readers will like my composition or not when reading it.	2.87	0.34	Average
Average	1.97	0.73	Low

Table 4 shows the metacognitive writing strategies of NUIC freshmen while/after writing the assigned task. It can be noticed that majority of the question items in Table 4 were interpreted “low.” It is very evident in Table 4 that NUIC freshmen don’t give much emphasis on writing. According to Pawapatcharaudom (2007), writing is the most difficult English language problem that Thai students encounter. This is because writing is a productive skills that involves the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way. In addition, most Thai institutions didn’t prepare Thai students to be ready to the demands of tertiary education like taking notes, writing reports, and writing in an exam. In relation to such, EF EPI, the world’s largest ranking of country’s English skills placed Thailand in a very low proficiency level since 2011 - 2016. However, in 2017, and in 2018, Thailand improved from very low to low. In light of the foregoing, Table 4 clearly shows that NUIC needs to enhance and develop the writing skills of the freshmen students since most of them don’t have enough English comprehension skills which is very evident in all of the question items in Table 4. Overall, NUIC freshmen’s writing strategies while or after writing is low. The results also mirror that NUIC freshmen don’t have a process when they plan to write. Case in point is question item 2 which is “*Read my composition aloud to look for mistakes.*” The said question item got a “very low” interpretation that means most of the freshmen students don’t check their compositions for mistakes. This attitude towards writing can be due to the reason that most of the NUIC freshmen students lack linguistic competence of the English language. In relation to such, Jabeen, Kazemian, and Mustafai (2015) stated that knowledge of error analysis provides deep understanding about the process of language learning because when learners are knowledgeable of identifying the errors, it only means that students understand what they are doing because they can identify which is correct or incorrect. Aside from question item 2, question items 3, 4, 5, and 6 got “low” interpretations. These question items are “(3) *Pay attention to spelling and grammar when writing;* (4) *Check whether my composition meets my teacher’s*

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

requirements after writing; (5) Compare my composition with my friends' writing on the same topic; and (6) Evaluate whether my composition is good or bad when reading it." Evidently, most respondents deliberately neglect to pay attention to the spelling and grammar of their composition which is the heart and soul of every narrative. This situation is due to the respondents' little knowledge about the English language that's why they are prone to errors. The respondents also don't consider if their work meet the demands and standards of their instructors. For them, it is just a matter of submitting a requirement whether it is correct or not. The point is that they submitted what they are expected to do. Comparing their work to that of their classmates or friends is also unpracticed by many. In other words, if they don't care about their own work, it can be inferred that to most NUIC freshmen, as long as they have an assignment or written task to submit regardless of its merit. In that sense, it would always fall back to their lack of linguistic knowledge in English.

What are the greatest writing difficulty of NUIC freshmen with regard to content, structure, and language?

Table 5

Writing Difficulty of NUIC Freshmen Regarding Content

Every time I write. . .	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. I feel I have nothing to say about the topic.	4.92	0.33	Very High
2. I need a long time to ponder what to write.	5	0	Very High
3. I cannot find enough materials for writing.	3.56	0.64	High
4. My composition lacks substance and depth.	3.73	1.67	High
5. I lack original ideas, and it is difficult for me to convey something new.	4.87	0.34	Very High
6. I cannot find good examples to illustrate my point.	3.37	0.98	Average
Average	4.24	0.66	High

Table 5 shows the NUIC freshmen's writing difficulty regarding content. Content is the information that a writer provides about the topic of the composition. However, regarding NUIC freshmen, there is a "high" difficulty about it overall. Among the question items, question-item 1 got a "very high" difficulty which is "nothing to say about the topic." Regarding this matter, it can be inferred that NUIC freshmen lack critical thinking skills to organize their composition about specific topic. In this situation, it cannot be said that the lack of English competence is no

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

longer an issue because any learner could organize the content of the composition in vernacular. Since writing is a skill to be developed and considering the result of the question-item 1, it could be concluded that most NUIC freshmen students were not trained in their respective schools during their high school days. In relation to question-item 1, question-item 2 got a perfect mean score of “5,” which is “*I need a long time to ponder what to write.*” Considering what was previously mentioned about the majority of the respondents’ lack of critical thinking skills is a reaffirmation that NUIC freshmen don’t have enough skills and training about paragraph development because it takes time to develop the content of any writing composition. Any learner might have some prior knowledge of the specific subject or topic to write about but without planning, it would be difficult for any learner to compose. NUIC freshmen got “very high” difficulty on question-item 5 which is “*I lack original ideas, and it is difficult for me to convey something new.*” Regarding this matter, the linguistic competence of every learner is essential because without the productive skills, any writing activity would be a grueling task to every learner with low communicative competence in English. Though most respondents of this research have average difficulty in searching for examples on how to illustrate their points but if they find great difficulty in expressing their ideas about the specific topic that they have to write about then any writing task would always be a struggle and due to that learners with low communicative competence might end up plagiarizing the content of their composition.

Without a doubt, it is evident from the results of *Writing Difficulty of NUIC Freshmen Regarding Content* that NUIC freshmen need further training to develop their writing skills. NUIC also needs to enhance the level of critical thinking skills of their students in order to produce better quality graduates in the future.

Table 6

Writing Difficulty of NUIC Freshmen Regarding Structure

Every time I write. . .	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. I don’t know how to plan the structure.	4.83	0.55	Very High
2. I don’t know how to start it.	4.19	0.47	High
3. I don’t know how to end it.	4.83	0.55	Very High
4. I am not able to make it organized.	4.33	0.90	High
5. I fail to write a clear thesis statement of the composition.	4.71	0.69	Very High
6. I can’t clearly and directly express my ideas.	4.75	0.47	Very High
7. I fail to write a clear topic sentence for the paragraph.	4.30	1.01	High

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

Every time I write. . .	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Average	4.56	0.56	Very High

Table 6 is all about structure. It is about the organization of one's writing or composition that highlights coherence, unity, and emphasis on the learner's train of thoughts. This is the writer's window to get the attention of every reader to impart knowledge about specific topic or subject. However, if the structure of the composition is disorganized, any reader-learner will not be able to clearly follow the writer's train of thought. In other words, the development of ideas in one's writing depends on its structure because it glues everything together to make it easy for readers to grasp the message of the composition. Evidently, NUIC freshmen's greatest difficulty regarding structure is the structure itself. It is evident in the result of question-item 1 which is "*I don't know how to plan the structure,*" got "very high" difficulty. Similarly, the result of question-item 1 is also the same regarding question item 3 which is "*I don't know how to end it.*" Getting "very high" difficulty regarding the structure as well as how to end it only signifies that NUIC freshmen need extra hours of training about English language and to make it happen, NUIC should plan a program that would hone its students on how to write well. Thus, based on the gathered results, it could be suggested that extra hours of English language training is really necessary because question-item 6 which is "*I can't clearly and directly express my ideas,*" got a "very high" difficulty. As regards to what was previously mentioned, Abdulkareem (2013) suggested that teaching students how to brainstorm ideas could alleviate the problems in academic writing along with the application of the writing process. Most importantly, to achieve success in academic writing Al Murshidi (2014) recommends that students need to enhance their vocabulary acquisition skills so they could have the ability to develop a good writing style.

Table 7

Writing Difficulty of NUIC Freshmen Regarding Language

Every time I write. . .	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. I know and feel that my knowledge of English is not fit for International College level.	4.93	0.34	Very High
2. I feel my vocabulary is not large enough to fully express what I want to convey.	4.25	0.59	High
3. I fail to find proper words or phrases to accurately express my ideas.	3.64	0.76	High
4. I have to use the same words repeatedly	4.63	0.67	Very High

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

Every time I write. . .	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
for it is difficult for me to find their synonyms to express the same meanings.			
5. I have to spend much time consulting the dictionary for proper words to accurately express my ideas.	5	0	Very High
6. I have to abandon or drop some ideas that I want to express because I don't know how to write it in English.	4.65	0.93	Very High
7. I usually end up using Google translate and use the translated version as my composition in English.	4.8	0.48	Very High
Average	4.55	0.54	Very High

Table 7 highlights the difficulty of NUIC freshmen regarding language and what impedes their English skills competency. In line with this, most NUIC freshmen acknowledged their difficulty in English as revealed in question-item 1 which got a “very high” difficulty. In view of this question item, it can be inferred that most NUIC freshmen don't get enough training regarding their respective programs because they have the difficulty of understanding the language which means that majority of them lack lexical resources leading them to reach a level of “high difficulty” regarding question items “(4) *I have to use the same words repeatedly for it is difficult for me to find their synonyms to express the same meanings*; (5) *I have to spend much time consulting the dictionary for proper words to accurately express my ideas*; (6) *I have to abandon or drop some ideas that I want to express because I don't know how to write it in English*; and (7) *I usually end up using Google translate and use the translated version as my composition in English*. Overall, regarding language difficulty, majority of the NUIC freshmen got a “high difficulty” on this area which is to be considered the most important area because as a students of an international college where all courses are taught in English, it is expected that all of its students have enough English competency to understand all the courses in their chosen fields of study.

Limitations

The result of this research is solely based on the gathered data from the respondents.

Recommendations

Based on the presented conclusion, the following recommendations are presented:

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

1. To develop NUIC freshmen's English proficiency, reading and conversation classes should be offered to students as a part of NUIC's intervention program plan in helping its students with low level of English competence.
2. Once the students have developed enough vocabulary to understand simple academic texts, then it is time for the College to open the writing training courses as a part of its intervention program.
3. If it is possible, all the intervention program courses must be offered before taking the regular courses for one semester. However, if it isn't possible, then all additional courses must be placed from 16:00-18:00pm twice a week for two semesters. And in case that some students didn't improve in the duration of the courses then it is recommended that the College needs to add more time to those who slowly improved or no improvement at all.
4. It is also recommended to students especially with insufficient English knowledge to read more so they can learn a lot of academic words that they can use in their writing. Aside from such, it is also recommended for them to read English grammar books with workbooks, so they can polish their grammar skills in all aspects.

Conclusion

Table 8

NUIC Freshmen Overall Writing Strategies

Strategy	Mean	Interpretation
General	2.23	Low
Before writing	3.29	Average
While/After writing	1.97	Low
Average	2.49	Low

It can be concluded that the overall writing strategies of NUIC freshmen is low due to their lack of interest to improve their writing. It is said because they believed that whatever they had written would suffice the requirements that were asked of them to submit and the least that they would do was asked for someone's help on how to improve their writing. In addition, though most of the respondents read and discussed the topic before they write, but most often than not, they didn't have a plan on how to organize what they wanted to write about that usually led to disorganize sentences and ideas. Hence, it is clearly evident that NUIC freshmen were incapable of writing essays because without careful planning and organizing on what to write they won't be able to come up with an essay. Additionally, the level of respondents'

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

writing strategies while and after writing was low because polishing one's work for grammar correction and unifying its train of thought for smooth understanding and comprehension were not important among the respondents. To them, once they finished writing their last sentence it was ready to be submitted and didn't need to be polished because they believed that their writing output was already enough to be considered good because the respondents don't have the ability to polish their writing outputs.

Overall, writing strategies among NUIC Freshmen is low and needs to be enhanced and developed to reach the proficiency level in writing (English).

Table 9

NUIC Freshmen Overall Writing Difficulty

Difficulty	Mean	Interpretation
Content	4.24	High
Structure	4.56	Very High
Language	4.65	Very High
Average	4.48	High

There is high difficulty regarding content. It means that most of the respondents had no idea on what to write about the topic because writing one's idea was too difficult especially if the learner-writer has no idea at all due to lack of knowledge about it. Regarding structure difficulty, the respondents got a very high interpretation on this which means that writing in English is indeed a very big task to most of the respondents. In addition, one of their greatest difficulty was to express their ideas on something which usually gave them a hard time because they didn't know how to plan/organize their own writing because they couldn't transform their thoughts in English. Structure wise, there is a high difficulty on that overall due to their English language incompetence. Regarding language difficulty, the respondents got a very high interpretation as well. Most respondents said that they were aware that they had insufficient English language knowledge so they use Google translate to translate ideas in English. Whatever the result of the translation of Google translate they deem it as the correct manuscript of what they want to say in English.

All in all, it can be concluded that problems on metacognitive strategies and difficulty in writing were due to the respondents' low English proficiency and this insufficiency led the respondents to severe comprehension problems in all levels – reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

References

- Abdulkareem, M. (2013). Investigation study of academic writing problems faced by Arab postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(9), 1552-1557.
- Adunyarittigun, D. (1998). *The effects of the reciprocal teaching procedure on Thai EFL students' reading performance and self-perception as readers*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Maryland.
- Al Murshidi, G. (2014). UAE university male students' interests impact on reading and writing performance and improvement. *English Language Teaching*, 7(9), 57-63.
- Bennui, P. (2008). A study of L1 interference in the writing of Thai EFL students. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 4, 72-102.
- Delgado, D. A. (2016). Survey study of integrative and instrumental motivation in english language learning of first year students at Naresuan University International College (NUIC), Thailand. *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Language, Education, Innovation 2016*, 6-16. Retrieved from <https://proceedings.icsai.org/6iclei/6iclei-003.html>.
- Dueraman, B. (2012). Teaching EFL Writing: Understanding and re-thinking the Thai experience. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in Social Sciences*, 4(1), 255-275.
- Glass, T. E. (2008). *The nature of English writing done by graduates of a university in Thailand*. (Unpublished PhD thesis). Indiana: Purdue University.
- Graham, S., (1997). Effective language learning: Positive strategies for advanced level language learning. Multilingual matters. Clevedon, England.
- Grami, G. M. A. (2010). *the effects of integrating peer feedback into university-level esl writing curriculum: A comparative study in a Saudi context* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Newcastle University. Retrieved from http://www.kau.edu.sa/Files/0005407/Researches/57369_27610.pdf
- Hyland, K. (2008a). Academic clusters: Text patterning in published and postgraduate writing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 18(1), 41–62.
- Iqbal, M., Noor, M., Muhabat, F., & Kazemian, B. (2015). Factors responsible for poor english reading comprehension at secondary level. *Communication and Linguistics Studies*, 1(1), 2015th ser., 1-6. doi:10.11648/j.cls.20150101.11
- Jabeen, A., Kazemian, B., & Mustafai, M.S. (2015). The role of error analysis in teaching and learning of second and foreign language. *Education and Linguistics Research*, 1(2), 2015th ser., 52-62.

METACOGNITIVE WRITING STRATEGIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF

- Kakandee, M. & Kaur, S. (2015). Teaching strategies used by Thai EFL lecturers to teach argumentative writing. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 208. 143-156. 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.191.
- Maftoon, P., Birjandi, P., & Farahian, M. (2014). Investigating Iranian EFL learners' writing metacognitive awareness. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 3(5), 2014th ser., 37-51. doi:10.5861/ijrse.2014.896
- Nunan, D. (1999). Second language teaching and learning. USA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- O'Malley, J.M., Chamot, A.U. (2001). Learning strategies in second language acquisition. Cambridge University Press, NY.
- Pawapatcharandom, R. (2007). *An investigation of thai students' english language problems and their learning strategies in the international program at Mahidol University*. Masters' thesis. King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Ridhuan, M., & Abdullah, T. L. (2009). The writing strategies used by Engineering ESL Malay learners. *Conference of the International Journal of Arts & Sciences*. Retrieved from <http://eprints.utp.edu.my/2035/>
- Tapinta, Pataraporn (2006). *Exploring Thai EFL students' awareness of their knowledge, use, and control of strategies in reading and writing*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of North Texas, Denton. Retrieved from http://digital.library.unt.edu/data/etd/2006_3/open/meta-dc-5429.tkl
- Watcharapunyawong, S. & Usaha S. (2013). Thai EFL students' writing errors in different text types: The interference of the first language. *English Language Teaching*, 6(6), 2013th ser., 67-78. doi:10.5539/elt.v6n1p67