# Second Language Writing Strategies: A Case Study with EFL Senior Students at An International University

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## Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the English language writing strategies used by Business English major students in Academic Writing course at an international university in Thailand. There were two major areas of concern, which were hoped to be addressed in the course of the research. The study applied a mixed-method approach; it combined the quantitative analysis of the Likert scale statements in the writing strategy questionnaires and the students' writing samples with the qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions in the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews. The collected qualitative data would provide an in-depth insight into the nature of the students' writing. The implications of the research were as follows: to raise the students' awareness of the English writing compositional skills, to emphasize the communicative purpose of writing in English, and to train them to use the peer collaboration strategy to facilitate their English writing most effectively.

**Keywords**: ELT, Writing, Writing Strategy

## Introduction

The present study has been informed by the current language learning methodology (Cook, 2008; Ellis, 2012; Griffiths, 2008), which stresses the autonomy of learners who are viewed as agents of their own learning process. The research findings will be analyzed in the light of this theory in order to gain insight from the small scale study of EFL learners in an international university in Thai context.

From the researcher's experience, as an EFL teacher, the researcher finds the development of the learners' English writing competence to be a challenging task to achieve. It necessitates the strategic teaching instruction which is sensitive to the culture-specific schemata (Myles, 2002) and the learners' linguistic proficiency (Cumming, 2001). It also carries a high cognitive demand on the part of a learner (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

To fill the gap, this study applied a mixed-method approach; it combined the quantitative analysis of the Likert scale statements in the writing strategy questionnaires and the students' writing samples with the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews to find out context-specific writing strategy used by EFL learners. The objective of the quantitative approach was to test the hypothesis that good language learners used a variety of writing strategies (Cook, 2008; Ellis, 2012; Griffiths, 2008). The objective of the qualitative approach was to generate hypotheses using the grounded theory as guidance. It was hoped that the collected qualitative data would provide an in-depth insight into the nature of the L2 writing and thus, would enable the formulation of new researchers in the field.

## Rationale

The significance of this study is to explore the student participants' opinions and beliefs with regards to their English language writing strategies and the reasons of their choice to better understand them. Hence, the implications of this research could be the change in the approach to the teaching and learning of English writing in this context. The benefit of this study is of twofold; firstly towards the language instructors as well as curriculum developers, who will be able to understand and design their teaching syllabuses which would focus on the strategic teaching of English writing in the future, and secondly, towards the language learners, who will be given a fair chance to study writing in their preferred learning style. Thus would help in betterment of their quality of foreign language writing.

## Research Question:

1. What are the English writing strategies used by Thai business English major learners?

## Review of Literature

### Different Approaches of Writing in Second Language

Writing was once thought to be the written form of oral language. Nowadays, written language is recognized as more than just "talk written down" (Nunan, 1999**).** Nunan states that writing was invented due to societies' changing needs. These needs cannot be met by merely spoken language. Thus, when the need for records that could be used for multiple references arose, writing then emerged. According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996), writing is considered to be a set of skills that require constant practice. These skills are learnt through both experiences and practices (p.6). Taking this into consideration, writing pedagogy is all the more relevant.

The term writing itself refers to a sequence of words linked together in a certain way (Harmer, 2004). Writing is the process of combining thoughts and knowledge that writers want to convey into a piece of writing. Writing ability is to produce a good piece of writing to match its audiences as well as to reflect the accuracy of grammar and sentence structures (Tribble, 1996). In order to assist students to be good writers, raising their awareness of the learning process and understanding of the system of the target language is necessary (Vickers & Ene, 2006). For many years, researchers have been trying to find the most effective way to teach writing in order to develop students' writing ability. Different approaches have been proposed, such as the product approach, the process approach, and the genre approach. In the section below, these writing approaches are explored.

#### Product Approach

This approach regards writing as textual products in which meanings are considered to be encoded by the writer and are expected to be decoded by the reader. There should not be any confusion or ambiguity as according to Hyland (2002), and readers have to strictly conform to homogeneous practices.

Pincas (1982) states that the product approach to teaching writing focuses on linguistic knowledge. In other words, the emphasis is on the correct usage of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices. To elaborate, she came up with four stages to this approach of writing, namely familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. The first stage is to bring about awareness of certain features of the text. However, the controlled and guided writing stages provide more freedom to the learners in order to practice their skills until they feel ready for the last stage which is 'free writing'. This is when they use their skills to write a letter, story or even an essay (p.22). She sees this approach of writing as

being primarily about linguistic knowledge with the main focus on vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devises.

According to Nunan (1999), the product approach focuses on students copying from the teachers' supplied models. It is considered to be a linear pattern of writing. This model of writing, as Bruton (2005) describes, is a single "draft-think-plan" linear process with one-off correction.

This approach is more useful when applied in a situation where the main focus is placed on the form or structure (Tribble, 1996). Even though this approach has dominated the L2 writing practices for a good amount of time, it has some limitations. First of all, this approach does not pay attention to students' strategies of learning but only focuses on the writing structure and the use of vocabulary (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Another weakness deals with the problem of writing restriction.

As stated by many scholars such as Pincas (1962), and Ferris and Hedgcock (2005), the disadvantages far surpass the advantages, as it only focuses on the end product rather than the means. According to Wallace and Hayes (1991), it is very crucial to have revision as it helps students make changes to their writing. One of the main revision methods is peer feedback. However, in certain instructional contexts, students do not trust their peers' feedback. This is often the case in Thailand where the level of English is quite low and the students prefer their teacher's feedback.

In brief, this approach is concerned with appropriate knowledge on the structure of language from which writing develops as a result of input in the form of texts provided by the teachers.

**Process Approach**

It was during the 1990's that the process approach to writing came to be known in writing pedagogy. According to Silva and Matsuda (2002), the process approach to writing is a complex, recursive and creative process, which is quite similar in its general outlines for both L1 and L2 writers when they are learning to write.

In contrast to the product approach, the process writing or the process approach places less emphasis on linguistic skills as students' writing is not seen as a product to be evaluated. This notion of writing regards writing as a process of discovering meaning and developing organization (Matsuda, 2003). Teachers in the process writing act as a facilitator, not as an evaluator. That is to say, as Matsuda (2003) put it, the process-oriented approach is a student-centered pedagogy.

Tribble (1996, p.160) explains the process approach as an approach to the teaching of writing in which more stress is given to the creativity of the writer and places more emphasis on the improvement or development of good writing practices. As for Hedge (2005), the process of text will have to go through various stages of revision, editing, and generating.

**Genre Approach**

A quite recent approach is the genre approach of writing. Despite being a recent approach, the genre approach is considered to be an extended version to the product approach. There are various definitions provided by well-known scholars about what is meant by genre. Swales (1990, p.58) defines genre as a "class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes which are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community."

Badger and White (2000) consider this to be a variation of the product approach in which multifaceted social context is also a focus in the writing. They explain that the main element in this approach is to point out the relationship between the writer and the reader. According to Flowerdew (1993), it is categorized into different kinds of text, such as articles, legal reports, and business letters.

Genres are used to teach students the types of written text they need in their target setting. (Swales, 1990). To illustrate, when learners write a letter, they should understand the difference between an informal and a complaint letter. Dudley-Evans (1997, as cited in Badger & White, 2000) presented three phases of genre approach. According to him, the students are presented with a sample model of the target model in the first phase. Then in the second phase, students, with the help of the teachers and relevant exercise, practice the language forms. In the final phase, students then can produce text on their own.

**Previous research in the L2 writing strategies**

Kasper (1997) looked into the metacognition and its impact on the writing proficiency among ESL college students of diverse national backgrounds in the U.S. He confirmed that the development of metacognition was positively correlated with the higher level of writing proficiency; he also found that the strategic knowledge was an attribute of the successful learners and those learners understood that the objective of writing was communication and not just the grammatical accuracy.

Ferris, Liu, Sinha, and Senna (2013) in a case study examined how feedback impacts on the development of the English writing skills among international students at one American university. They found that overall, feedback had a positive effect on the quality of compositions in the research sample; however, the question regarding how explicit the

feedback should be remained unanswered as both the explicit and the less explicit feedback rendered similar contributions to the improvement of the students' writing.

Davoudi, Adel, and Dadras (2015) examined a relationship between Iranian TEFL learners' writing strategies and their English proficiency, employing mixed-method research design. The survey results demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between the use of writing strategies and the students' levels of English proficiency. That is, the students with higher levels of English proficiency used more writing strategies than the ones with lower proficiency of English. The qualitative results obtained from semi-structure interview demonstrated that the participants employed a wide range of writing strategies, namely social, cognitive and compensation. However, each student has a preference of writing strategies and uses them differently. Overall, the participants preferred the strategy of social, cognitive and compensation, but paid less attention to metacognitive, memory and affective strategies.

Most writing teachers have striven for teaching approaches that would help their learners improve writing skills, and a number of research studies have been conducted to investigate an impact of teaching strategies on students' writing ability. Rahimi and Noroozisiam (2013), for example, explored the impact of instruction of sociocultural writing strategies on the improvement of EFL learners' quality of writing. The participants in their study were forty-three English major students in their sophomore year at Shiraz University, Iran, from which twenty-two of them were assigned to an experiment group where writing strategy instruction was given, and the rest of them (twenty-one students) were in a control group.  The data were collected in the course of one semester. None of the students had attended an essay writing course prior entering university, and all of them were measured by the use of Oxford Placement Test to place them in the same level of English proficiency. Two 300-350-word argumentative essays written by individual students within the time limit of 90 minutes at the beginning and at the end of the experiment from the two groups were examined. The researchers also analyzed the students' audio-taped oral interactions while writing and practicing group essays in order to see to what extent they used the learned strategies while going through the different stages of the writing process. The results demonstrated that participants from both groups enjoyed peer and teacher scaffolding; however, the participants in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group. This implies that receiving strategies-based instruction and mediation through cooperation seems to have more effect on the improvement of writing quality than cooperative writing without having a conscious knowledge of these strategies. The analysis of the transcripts of the recorded interactions also revealed that the experimental group used the majority of the

sociocultural strategies the teacher had taught while negotiating in different stages of three writing process, whereas a limited use of these strategies were found in the control group. An implication that can be drawn from the study is that students' consciousness about the L2 writing strategies would help them mediate their writing strategically in all the stages with diverse resources in the dynamic context of the writing and, as a result, improve the quality of their writing.

Al-Hammadi and Sidek (2015) proposed an analytical framework of analyzing the EFL secondary writing curriculum to determine the success of the curriculum in preparing students for EFL writing skills required at a university level. The framework was adapted from Richards and Rodgers' (2001) model of linguistic education. The suggested model focuses on approach level (SLA theories and instructional approaches) and design level (curriculum). With regards to the approach level, Al-Hammadi and Sidek (2015) discussed three main SLA theories and their related instructional approaches, namely; structural/behaviorism approach, cognitive information processing approach, and the socio-cognitive/socio-cultural approach. Three main approaches regarding writing theories including, product-based approach, process-based approach and genre-based approach were also discussed. At the design level, a focus was placed on the roles of learner, teacher, and writing tasks. For instance, Al-Hammadi and Sidek (2015) suggested that EFL writing teachers should consider the importance of peer and group work learning assignments in promoting students' confidence and competency. Additionally, in order to help students equip with the academic writing skills of a university level, the secondary curriculum should impart more emphasis on the role of the teacher as a facilitator rather than as director, as well as promote a learner-centered environment so as to create an opportunity for students to improve their language skills through both self-reflection and peer-reflection. Moreover, in order to prepare students for writing tasks assigned at a university level, it is essential that writing teachers at the secondary school level assign writing tasks focusing on exposition and academic arguments rather than narrative tasks.

The present study is informed by the research in the L2 writing field (e.g., Ferris et al, 2013; Kasper, 1997; Wolfersberger, 2003) which show a positive correlation between the students' strategic awareness and their writing performance. Kasper (1997) looked into the metacognition and its impact on the writing proficiency among ESL college students of diverse national backgrounds in the U.S. He confirmed that the development of metacognition was positively correlated with the higher level of writing proficiency. He also found that the strategic knowledge was an attribute of the successful learners and those

learners understood that the objective of writing was communication and not just the grammatical accuracy.

**Learners' Learning Styles**

Learning style preferences influence how much a learner can learn. Students will be more successful in their learning if teachers' teaching styles match their students' learning styles.  If there is a mismatch between learners' learning styles and teachers' teaching styles in the classroom, students may experience some difficulties in their learning, which consequently leads to poor performance.  A number of researchers examined how students' learning styles have an impact on students' motivation of learning. Tai (2013), for example, explored learning style preferences of adult EFL students and their relationship with their motivation in learning English. The data were collected from 165 students from three randomly selected universities in Taiwan. All participants were asked to answer the self-reported questionnaire which was developed from Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSP). The questionnaire added one learning style to cover seven learning style preferences: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, individual, group, and computer-assisted learning. The results from the statistical analyses demonstrated that computer-assisted style was perceived to be the most preferred while individual and visual styles were perceived as the least preferred learning styles. There were also significant relationships between auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, and computer-assisted learning styles and motivation in learning English, which had almost forty percent effect possibility on motivation in learning English.

Awla (2014) and Wana and Boonyaprakob (2014) echoed Tai (2013) on emphasizing the important role of learning styles in learners' achievement. They also argued that students learn better when teachers' teaching styles match students' learning styles. For instance, "a visual learner may learn better, when information is presented to him/ her visually," stated Awla (2014, p. 242).  On the contrary, if teachers' teaching styles do not match students' learning styles, the students cannot learn. It is thus crucial that students are aware of their own learning styles so as to be able to "identify their preferred approaches to language learning for themselves and for their teachers," (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 137)

Knowledge about learning style preferences can help to improve the teaching and learning process. Wana and Boonyaprakob (2014) examined learning style preferences of EFL Liberal Arts and Education students in Thai university contexts. They employed Felder and Soloman's (1991, as cited in Wana & Boonyaprakob, 2014, p. 181) Index of Learning Styles or (ILS) to assess the learners' learning style preferences. Each dimension of the ILS

has two types of learning styles: sensory or intuitive learning style (how a student perceives information), visual or verbal learning style (type of information that a student perceives best), active or reflective learning style (how a student processes information), and sequential or global learning style (how a student progresses towards understanding). They also added some open-ended questions to the original ILS questionnaire so that participants could reflect on their learning styles. By means of purposive sampling, 177 students studying English as a core course from two universities were invited to participate in the study.  The results of this study showed that the majority of Liberal Arts and Education participants preferred sensory, visual, active, and global learning styles at a balanced level. According to Felder and Spurlin (2005, as cited in Wana & Boonyaprakob, 2014, p. 189), learners at the balanced level tend to have the ability to switch their learning styles. Thus, they might use more than one type of learning styles and might switch from using one type of learning styles to another within the same dimension.  In addition, the present study found some benefits from collecting participants' reflections. Providing the participants with an opportunity to reflect on their learning experience helped raise their awareness of their preferred learning styles and how those styles strengthen their learning.

## Research Methodology

This study is in the form of a case study, as an in-depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic especially in ELT classroom.

### Participants' Information

The participants in this study were thirty- four undergraduate students majoring in Business English in an international university in Thailand where English was used as a medium of instruction.  Twenty-six of them were native speakers of Thai, whereas eight of them were non-Thai students whose native languages were Mandarin Chinese, English, and Hindi. Since this study examined English writing strategies used by Thai business English major students, data only on the Thai students was a focal point for the study.

The twenty-six Thai students were either in their third or fourth year of study and enrolled in EN 4254: Academic Writing course.  This course was a major required course for non-Thai students, but was a major elective one for Thai students. Thus, it can be argued that these Thai students were self-motivated to take this course as they would like to improve their writing skills. The students' motivation was also evidenced in their oral self-report since

beginning of the semester when this study was being conducted. Because studying for a master's degree was in most of these students' future plans, they expected that this course would prepare them well for their study in a graduate school level.

With regards to the writing course, its learning outcomes and objectives, as well as class activities and assignments were arranged by adopting a combination of process and genre approaches. That is, the students were taught major stages of writing processes: pre-writing, planning, writing, and polishing, as well as the conventions of writing in academia. Brainstorming strategies to generate ideas for writing tasks, developing outlines for all assigned writing tasks, and self-evaluating and peer reviewing of writing drafts were emphasized in this class. Different styles of language use among different text types and genres, together with writing purposes and academic readers were also discussed. Moreover, students were asked to produce a variety of written work throughout the semester, from very basic ones; paragraphs and essays, to more advanced ones; argumentative and analytical research papers. As part of research paper writing, the students were taught how to incorporate reading texts into their papers by the means of using direct quotes, paraphrasing, summarizing, and giving proper citations in APA style (6th edition). Since the students were taught that plagiarism must be avoided at all cost, they agreed to repeat the course in the following semester if they were caught plagiarizing.

**Data Collection**

As mentioned above, the present research was conducted by using the mixed-method approach. It used questionnaires, writing samples and interviews as data collection tools. The quantitative method of the research was implemented as follows: participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires about their L2 writing strategies, and later they were asked to write short paragraphs on the topics specified by the researcher. The questionnaires were divided into two parts: the quantitative part with the Likert Scale questions and the qualitative part with open-ended questions. The Likert Scale part provided the data on the type of strategies used by individual students and the popularity of these strategies in the sample.

Finally, for the research findings to be recognized as a source of the new knowledge, research reliability has to be proved. Reliability refers to the outcomes of the research and their consistency in the same sample in various circumstances. In this study, the researcher used what Dörnyei calls "respondent feedback" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 60) to ensure reliability of the researcher's findings and in the interviews, the researcher included questions for participants to comment on some of the data collected from the questionnaires. Despite the three-week time span between the administration of the questionnaires and the interviews; the responses

of the participants were found to be consistent in both of the data collection tools, which confirmed the honesty of students' responses and contributed to the overall reliability of the research.

Interviews are more time consuming than questionnaires in both their implementation and analysis, and they also require good communication skills on the part of a researcher (Berg & Lune, 2014). At the same time, they are an immense source of qualitative data if conducted in a semi-structured or unstructured format. They provide an insight into past experiences, perceptions and feelings of interviewees and since this research requires the data to be obtained directly from the participants, they are highly suited for this purpose.

## Result and Discussion

The interview data demonstrated that the language use and vocabulary were the most difficult aspects for the students. This collected data corresponded to the analysis of the students' writing by the use of the ESL Composition Profile suggested by Jacobs, et al. (1981, as cited in Haswell, 2005). In analytic scoring of the Profile, students' written texts are rated on several aspects of writing or criteria rather than given a single score. They are rated on five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The process of triangulating with student writing evaluation showed some evidence that supports the interview data. The writing evaluation result indicated students' major problems in language use aspect e.g. the organization of ideas, tense, word order, sentence fragments, and meaning confused or obscured. In vocabulary aspect, the students' composition showed that the students had a limited vocabulary range and made frequent errors in word choices and their meanings. In content aspect, most of the students have criteria ranging from Good to Average. It could be inferred that most students did not have problems or difficulties in the content aspect. Organization and Mechanic aspects were not troublesome for the students. The students have Good to Average criteria in these aspects, even though several students have Fair to Poor criteria. The data pointed out that students' compositions were loosely organized with clear main ideas, limited support, and logical but incomplete sequencing.

The difficulties of writing consist of three categories according to Bryne (1988). There are difficulties in Physiology (content aspect), Linguistics (language use and vocabulary), and Cognitive difficulty (organization and mechanics). The students' difficulties varied as indicated by scores or criteria of writing test. From the result, it can be said that the

most difficult aspects that were found in the students' writing were the language use and vocabulary aspects, and conversely there were no difficulties in organization, mechanic, and content. It makes sense if the students' main difficulties are in the language use. Bryne (1988) said that such linguistic aspects as grammar, vocabulary, language use, and choice of sentences in writing must have full monitoring because English is a foreign language to students who are from non-native English-speaking countries.

It was identified that those students who struggled with the grammar-related aspects of EFL writing tended to use the grammar-related execution and revision strategies but did not use the planning strategies which could help to alleviate the grammatical difficulty of the tasks. Therefore, the interview questions probed the planning stage in great detail. Students were asked to report the steps they took when planning their writing tasks and their preference for the source of help at this stage (written materials, the teacher and peer students). They were also asked to choose one aspect of English learning ability which they considered to be the most crucial for achieving the competency in EFL writing. They could choose from three options: good grammar, good vocabulary and ideas and their presentation. The aim was to establish how students regulated their planning stage and whether they utilized in practicing the strategies, which they reported to be using in the questionnaire.

Besides, grammar seemed to be a very important aspect of the EFL teaching and learning and this could have impacted the students' attitudes towards writing in English; those 18 % of the respondents who identified their weakness in their English writing to be grammar related most probably associated the compositional skills with the ability to produce error-free sentence level constructions. The implication for the future would be to include more of the functional approach in the classroom instruction (Thornbury, 1997) in order to explain to the students the functions of the written texts and to make them aware of the communicative purpose of their writing. As for the grammar oriented strategies in the L2 writing, revising the rules of grammar prior to writing as well as studying the guidelines on the target language writing conventions, seem to be highly recommended activities. In this way, students should become well-prepared for the writing task, being provided with a useful source of reference and consequently, they should have more confidence in their writing ability.

The other finding in the data obtained from the questionnaires was that students tended to struggle with organizing their ideas into coherent texts despite their usage of the strategies which are related to the compositional skills. The implication is the need to train students how to choose and apply the strategies effectively. It is not enough to rely on the fact that the questionnaire results indicated the students' usage of the strategies. It is advisable to

gain a deeper insight into how students actually employ those strategies in practice and whether they are successful in these actions.

In the course of the research, it was also established that out of three writing stages: planning, execution and revision, students seem to be the least strategically equipped for the planning stage. Consequently, this finding of the research seemed to confirm Silva's (1993) hypothesis that L2 writers struggle at the planning stage of composing. The possible explanation could be the fact that if written tasks were usually given as homework, not enough classroom instruction was directed at teaching students how to plan for their compositions. As for the execution stage, students had to find the strategies to be able to complete their written tasks and for the revision, they had to devise their own strategies as well in order to ensure the correct form and content of the final product. Planning could have been reduced to just finding the ideas and commencing writing or even writing without any prior planning stage and relying on finding the ideas while writing. In addition, if writing was conducted under exam conditions, the time pressure could have led students to skip or reduce the planning stage in order to allocate more time for the execution and revision.

Lastly, the statistical analysis of the questionnaire data and the students' marks from the writing samples seemed to serve as a confirmation of the existence of a positive correlation between the language proficiency and the usage of a variety of learning strategies, which was emphasized in the studies of language learning strategies which triggered interest in good language learners (Griffiths, 2008; Oxford, 1990, 1997, 2011; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The Pearson's correlation coefficient established in the sample; however, was not statistically significant since it only showed a weak positive correlation between the students' strategy totals and their marks. The possible explanation for this could be the fact that it may not be enough to know or use a variety of strategies. What would be vital is to have the understanding and self-awareness of the effectiveness of the strategies as measured against the goal achievement (Zimmerman, 1990). This implies that students need to become aware which strategies work for them and how to use them most effectively. Such self-reflection could be conducted, for example, in the form of logs, which would facilitate the dialogic relationships between the students and the teacher. Deciding on the learning preferences and learning strategies are frequent activities in reflective logs (Pickering, 2003), and as Schunk (2009) points out, reflective learning is one of the elements in Zimmerman's three-phase self-regulated learning model. What helps in the self-reflection according to this model, is an analysis of the past performance in relation to the achievement of the goals which were set by learners themselves.

# Conclusion

This research seems to confirm the above finding as students in the present study generally reported that they conducted the writing tasks independently and without much mediation or scaffolding offered in the classroom practice. Hence they simply considered writing skill as an extension of grammar or vocabulary competence. The majority of student participants appeared to be unaware of the compositional aspect of EFL writing. Only a few students seemed to be more reflective with regard to their English writing strategy and these students achieved high marks for their writing samples.

**Pedagogical Implication**

After discussing the results and making the conclusion, there were some suggestions for the students, the lecturers, and also future researchers, as follows:

Firstly, for the students: 1. It is found that the students' difficulties in writing English are in language use aspect. It meant that they need to improve their ability in choosing the language use that is related to their writing topics. 2. The students have the difficulties in vocabulary aspect, so they should increase their vocabulary by practicing both reading and writing English. Reading in English is a great way to get an idea of the different styles of writing and see how to use words appropriately. The students should also pay attention to the tenses, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Secondly, for the lecturers: 1.The lecturers may have to give an explanation about the language use itself and how to use the language related to the topic of writing. Furthermore, to give more English writing exercises would help enhance students' ability in writing. These exercises would also help students increase their vocabulary knowledge and use. Teachers should also develop an awareness of their own teaching styles and the potential for mismatch between their own teaching styles and students' learning styles. To learn more about students' learning style preferences, teachers may get students to take a learning style questionnaire and then discuss the results. The survey results would help teachers adjust their teaching styles to accommodate students' different learning styles, as well as to help students to have more positive and motivating learning experiences. Moreover, explicit teaching of writing strategies or at least helping students become aware of their learning preferences and strategies would help enhance students' writing skills. To encourage peer collaboration strategy would also facilitate their English writing more effectively.

Lastly, for future researchers: it would be better if other researchers investigate more on an explicit teaching of writing strategy and its relationship with motivation of learning, as

well as its impact on the quality of student writing. The researchers could also examine students' difficulties in writing with different writing samples, or correlate them to other variables.

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