

Facilitating EFL Learners' Challenging Writing Learning Enterprises through Self-Regulated Writing Strategy

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ABSTRACT

The presented second language writing learning complexities oftentimes hamper globalized EFL learners from accomplishing their targeted writing tasks excellently. Resultantly, their burgeoning writing learning motivation is at high stake and they feel discouraged to proceed into various challenging writing learning dynamics prepared by teachers. One decent response for this general writing learning issue is through the activation of a self-regulated writing strategy. Previous researchers believed that with the accompaniment of a self-regulated writing strategy, EFL learners have become more adept at managing their writing learning processes by employing appropriate writing strategies. Speaking specifically, this present small-scale qualitative library study aimed to review the extent self-regulated writing strategy can facilitate worldwide EFL learners to better cope with arduous writing learning processes. Hence, the researcher conducted an in-depth thematic analysis by reviewing 20 prior self-regulated writing strategy studies in worldwide EFL learning settings to generate more apprehensible and constructive research results. Two major specific themes were stipulated through this data analysis process namely: 1) Self-regulated writing strategy helps EFL learners to become more insightful writers and (2) Self-regulated writing strategy transforms EFL learners into more thoughtful writers. It was evidenced that the employment of a self-regulated writing strategy did not solely transfigure EFL learners into more proficient but also strategic writers.

Keywords: Self-regulated writing strategy, EFL learners, library study, thematic analysis

First Receive:

23 July 2024

Revised:

11 September 2024

Accepted:

14 October 2024

Final Proof Received:

12 December 2024

Published:

30 December 2024

How to cite (in APA style):

Wijaya, K. F. (2024). Facilitating EFL Learners' Challenging Writing Learning Enterprises through Self-Regulated Writing Strategy. *ELITE Journal*, 6(2), 111-122

INTRODUCTION

To increase EFL learners' writing performances at their best level, it is necessary for second language educators to continuously promote a more psychologically sound learning atmosphere where language learners are motivated to gain more potent control over their challenging writing learning enterprises. This underlying principle is closely interlinked with Guo and Bai (2019) avowing that in the presence of positively-sound learning climates, EFL learners have a higher degree of tendency to finish their arduous writing learning assignments as they know the exact strategies working best for the current writing situations they are facing.

Second language writing learning dynamics are labeled as laborious and anxiety-inducing situations in which EFL learners are discouraged to accomplish the targeted specifically-assigned

writing learning tasks concerning the lack of grammatical, accuracy, and writing skills mastery. Karim et al. (2018) argue that during participating in the entire writing learning dynamics, EFL learners oftentimes complain about the presented writing learning assignment they have to constantly cope with resulting in the gradual diminution of robust writing endeavor. Other formidable obstructions frequently hindered globalized EFL learners from producing excellent writing quality are underdeveloped reading comprehension skills, vocabulary deficiency, and limited writing time constraints. Undeniably speaking, all these adverse writing learning conditions can impart significant contributions to the significant advancement of EFL learners' writing anxiety, which in turn make them become frustrated writers. These unpleasant writing hurdles mutually correspond with the previous finding of Flores and Lopez (2019) who discovered that a great majority of university EFL learners always feel vacillate, uncomfortable, and restless upon embarking on various high-stake writing learning activities due to the dearth of vocabulary, retarded reading competencies, and incapability of managing their personal writing time.

The good news for the previously-mentioned writing learning barriers is the insistent employment of a self-regulated writing strategy. It is believed by the prior researchers that self-regulated writing strategy can allow more positive trajectories for EFL learners to effectively overcome varied writing impediments they are confronting, infuse more robust writing learning motivation as they believe in their writing proficiency, and gain more gratifying writing learning achievements in which they have been more capable of utilizing a vast range of meaningful writing strategies to accomplish their writing tasks. The above-mentioned contentions are strongly substantiated by Shen and Bai (2022) mention the critical importance for second language educationalists to internalize self-regulated writing strategy at the commencement of complex writing processes by which EFL learners can intensively hone their writing skills through the employment of efficient writing strategies resulting in more fruitful writing learning attainment. In a similar vein, Palermo and Thomson (2018) contend that with the enlightenment of self-regulated writing strategy, EFL learners will have broader opportunities to gradually transfigure into more confident, well-organized, and competent target language writers since they possess a growth mindset that their present writing competencies can be escalated to a more advance level as long as they cultivate a higher level of writing motivation.

To incessantly aid globalized EFL learners to better face taxing writing learning dynamics in the light of self-regulated writing strategy, it is of foremost crucial for second language educators to nurture their motivational, affective, cognitive, and social aspects in

order to fully obtain the stipulated writing objectives set before. This grounded premise also

hoovers in Pravita and Kuswandono (2022) who highly recommended Indonesian university EFL educationalists to intensively nourish their learners' cognitive, affective, motivational, and social aspects amidst the constant self-regulated writing strategy they are currently activating to heed their profound attention to attain writing learning goals they have determined in advance. According to Albarqi and Tavakoli (2023), three major stages are rewarding for second language educationalists to fully maximize the utmost benefits of self-regulated writing strategy in diverse wide-ranging writing classroom circumstances namely planning, monitoring, and evaluating steps. In the first step, writers are commissioned to devise their present writing ideas in well-composed writing drafts. This first step is pivotal as the writers can repeatedly discern their ongoing writing compositions to stay on the right writing tracks and maintain the flow of their writing processes in which the previously-written writing thoughts have been delineated clearly. Bai and Guo (2021) aver that it is of prime importance for second language educators to involve EFL learners in brainstorming activities before commencing the real-time writing dynamics where they can delineate their particular argumentations, opinions, and ideas accordingly in line with the prior writing drafts they have created before. After feeling convinced with their designated writing plans, writers need to monitor their whole writing product whether these compositions have met the desired writing criteria determined by their educators. Therefore, in this process, writers are strongly advised to pay a more in-depth focus on their global and local writing elements concurrently. Global writing aspects comprise language structure, dictions, expressions, transition signals, clarity of ideas, and coherence while local writing elements consist of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary. To that end, second language educationalists should arm their learners regarding how to make the best use of monitoring strategy amid the writing learning activities to gradually transform them into more strategic writers. These above-elucidated conceptions are congruent with Chen et al. (2023) proposing worldwide second language educationalists continuously equip learners with decent monitoring strategy upon incorporating self-regulated writing strategy in their regular writing classroom dynamics to progressively transform them into more independent decision-makers who are adept at harnessing a wide array of effective writing strategies currently suitable with the nature of their writing tasks. Highlighting these salient self-regulated writers' characteristics, it is found that self-regulated writers frequently apply richer writing learning strategies compared to other learning counterparts who are less self-regulated. This may happen as self-regulated writers have been more aware of the writing strategies and utilities they are going to make use of. Conversely, less self-regulated writers merely incorporate random writing strategies without conscientiously pondering on the particular benefits these

chosen strategies offer to them. Forbes (2019) has likewise noted one of the notable disparities differentiating more self-regulated and less self-regulated writers wherein the former are more skilled at deploying a wide range of meaningful writing strategies currently compatible with their writing learning situations. However, the second persons blindly select their preferred writing strategies to be applied in their writing assignments provoking extremely-challenging writing learning enterprises as a result of their surface thinking.

Moving forward to the ultimate stage of the self-regulated writing strategy, writers have to ensure the credibility, reliability, and quality of their already-composed writing texts by iteratively conducting more exhaustive critical reflections. Exhaustive critical reflections cannot be conducted personally. In other words, it stands for a more collective writing evaluation wherein writers are encouraged to inquire about a vast array of feedback, suggestions, and advice for the further advancement of their writing products. These feedback loops can be possibly obtained from other proficient learning counterparts, educators, and other erudite persons possessing ample writing experience as well as commendable writing skills. A similar thought is also obtained in the previous self-regulated writing theory adduced by Zhao et al. (2023) asserting that a collaborative reflection activity can act as one of the indispensable impetuses for EFL learners to generate more high-quality writing products after accomplishing their writing tasks by which particularly attained writing feedback imparted by other educated and seasoned academicians will be a reference point for them of how to fine-tune their writing ideation processes more suitably.

There were five previous studies conducted in this nation regarding the indispensability of self-regulated writing strategy as one of the driving forces for EFL learners to better grapple with varied challenging writing learning dynamics. The first study was conducted by Diasti and Mbato (2020) discovering that when Indonesian university EFL learners internalize five particular strategies of motivation-regulation namely self-consequating, environmental-structuring, goal-oriented, self-talk, and interest enhancement, they have become more encouraged to finish their thesis writing talk as they continually restored their drained energy and motivation. Mahmud and German (2021) unearthed that a predominant number of Indonesian university EFL learners learned intensively on regulating their personalized writing learning activities in the presence of online learning mode. As a result, they have gradually transformed into more self-regulated writers. Mbato and Cendra (2019) highly recommended second language educationalists to ceaselessly address various external supports for EFL learners to become more committed to accomplishing their thesis writing assignment and transfigure into more proficient writers. Wijaya (2021) unveiled that the vast majority of graduate university EFL learners possessing robust self-regulation have perceived formidable writing obstacles as the beneficial

trajectories for them to become better writers as they continued improving their targeted writing competencies and displayed a higher level of resilience toward the writing tasks assigned to them. In the last study, Wijaya and Setiawan (2021) revealed that an overwhelming number of graduate university EFL learners have successfully tackled a vast variety of arduous academic writing tasks prepared by their lecturers by intensively activating their self-regulation in which interest enhancement, performance self-talk, mastery self-talk, self-consequating, and environmental strategies resided within their robust self-regulation growth. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of these prior studies have specifically investigated the significance of self-regulated writing strategy in facilitating EFL learners' challenging writing learning enterprises. For this reason, the researcher made a further attempt in this present small-scale qualitative library study to profoundly review the importance of employing a self-regulated writing approach to better prepare our learners' readiness while grappling with varied adverse writing learning circumstances. To fulfill this major study objective, two research problems are put forward: (1) What are the potential beneficial impacts of self-regulated writing strategy employment that can be experienced by EFL learners? (2) To what extent does self-regulated writing strategy assist EFL learners to better face various challenging writing learning enterprises?

METHOD

The researcher initiated this current small-scale qualitative investigation with the help of a library analysis approach. A library analysis approach was utilized to produce more reliable and apprehensible research results from the specifically-targeted research topic. As this qualitative library study aimed to discover the extent self-regulated writing strategy can assist globalized EFL learners to better deal with various adverse writing learning dynamics, the researcher selected 20 previously-conducted journal articles on this topic ranging from 2018 until the 2023 year. The researcher chose these 20 prior journal articles in worldwide contexts since Indonesian researchers sparsely investigated the significance of self-regulated writing strategy in supporting EFL learners' taxing writing learning activities. Another impetus for the researcher to choose this topical investigation is due to the lack of awareness occurring among Indonesian EFL educators regarding the criticality of nurturing their learners' writing motivation in support of a self-regulated writing strategy. Thus, it is expectantly hoped that the particularly-obtained research results forming in this study can strongly motivate our educationalists to start integrating this psychological learning approach to fully promote better-facilitated and emotionally-supportive writing learning vicinities wherein all learners transform into more proficient, strategic, self-reliant, and resilient writers. In the data analysis

processes, the researcher first subcategorized the most-often appeared research results derived from 20 self-regulated writing strategy studies into some major-specific themes. These specific sub-categorizations would assist the researcher to delineate the targeted subject-specific matters intelligibly and comprehensibly for globalized educational stakeholders willing to reform their existing writing learning exposure through the internalization of self-regulated writing strategy. To successfully embody this research analysis aim, a thematic analysis approach was also incorporated. Under the guidance of a thematic analysis approach, the researcher could critically make a clear discernment in case that there were some particular discrepancies among the concordance of reviewed research results. Hence, the trustworthiness of each scientific explanation depicted in the following sections was assuredly ascertained. After accomplishing this in-depth data analysis stage, the researcher expounded the already-subsumed research themes argumentatively with the endorsement of relevant theories and previous research results. This ultimate data delineation step was of considerable importance by which the eligibility of research results would determine the rationalities and objectives forming in this current library investigation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part aimed to delineate two major research themes attained through a profound thematic analysis namely: (1) Self-regulated writing strategy helps EFL learners to become more insightful writers and (2) self-regulated writing strategy transforms EFL learners into more thoughtful writers. The overarching data depictions can be observed in the following sections.

Theme 1: Self-Regulated Writing Strategy Helps EFL Learners to Become More Insightful Writers

Theme 1	Authors
Self-regulated writing strategy helps EFL learners to become more insightful writers	Alanazi (2020); Bai and Guo (2021); Guo and Bai (2019); Haerazi and Kazemian (2021); Pionera et al. (2020); Teng and Zhang (2020); Umamah and Cahyono (2020); Wilby (2022).

The above-depicted theme revealed that with the support of a self-regulated writing strategy, EFL learners can become more insightful writers. Before possessing this laudable writing character, well-rounded writers infusing a higher level of self-regulation commonly feel

confident, optimistic, and encouraged to accomplish a vast variety of challenging writing learning assignments. These commendable writing behaviors occur as they have cast more positive perceptions toward the ongoing writing learning dynamics. This conception lends support to the

previous major finding unearthed by Bai and Guo (2021) unraveled that a vast majority of Hong Kong university EFL learners began to enjoy their existing writing learning dynamics as they were more capable of regulating their cognitive, affective, and environmental aspects pertinent to their writing tasks resulting in the remarkable escalation of their writing motivation. Knowledgeable writers insistently activating self-regulated writing strategy also have broader opportunities to obtain more satisfying writing learning achievements in which the constant deployment of planning, monitoring, and evaluating steps resided within their writing tasks engagement. This belief is strongly substantiated by the prior finding of Guo and Bai (2019) who uncovered that Hong Kong university EFL learners have fully attained more gratifying writing learning outcomes after incessantly internalizing planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies upon the completion of their specifically-assigned writing tasks.

In harmony with the above-explicated research results, worldwide second language educationalists need to arm their learners with a self-regulated writing strategy before embarking on the apparent writing learning dynamics in their regular classroom circumstances. This reformative action needs to be taken into account in that globalized EFL learners can amazingly elevate their writing proficiency and writing text quality to the fullest potential. This contention is in accord with the finding of Pionera et al. (2020) who highly prompted Indonesian EFL lecturers to expose their language learners to self-regulated writing strategy before targeting more complex writing learning enterprises for them to develop their writing skills to greater growth to enable them to become more competent writers. Two rewarding writing learning outcomes related to EFL learners' affective development are simultaneously achieved with the enlightenment of a self-regulated writing strategy. It is strongly believed that proficient writers inculcating robust self-regulation are braver in applying a wide variety of writing learning strategies and more confident with their writing capabilities. Resultantly, these learners constantly attempt to make a more proactive writing engagement irrespective of adverse writing learning situations they are currently facing. Teng and Zhang (2020) theorize that with the continual presence of a self-regulated writing strategy, worldwide EFL learners can fine-tune various effective writing strategies fitting with their writing learning demands and showcase active participation in the present writing learning activities as they believe in their writing competencies. The last and foremost element of proficient writers possessing self-regulated learning capacity is their authentic adeptness to organize their particular ideas, thoughts, and perspectives into high-quality writing compositions. Simply speaking, highly self-

regulated writers can excellently produce their intended arguments through their writing learning tasks by which they continuously reflect on their writing content and whether they are connected

logically to the previously-explained conceptions. All these indispensable writing learning attitudes are closely intertwined with the finding of Umamah and Cahyono (2020) characterizing highly skilled and self-regulated writers as academicians who master their entire writing contents with the accompaniment of well-managed text structure, precise grammatical usage, acceptable writing conventions, and comprehensible writing ideas.

Theme 2: Self-Regulated Writing Strategy Transforms EFL Learners into More Thoughtful Writers

Theme 2	Authors
Self-regulated writing strategy transforms EFL learners into more thoughtful writers	Arnawa and Arafah (2023); Bai and Wang (2021); Bai and Guo (2021); Chen et al. (2023); Eslami and Sahragard (2021); Mallahi (2020); Miatin and Wiedarti (2019); Milković et al. (2022); My et al. (2022); Shen and Bai (2022); Teng and Zhang (2018); Teng (2021).

It is interesting to be highlighted that a self-regulated writing strategy can concurrently act as one of the crucial impetuses for EFL learners to transfigure into more thoughtful writers. One notable characteristic of thoughtful writers is they can manage negative emotions, iterative perturbation feelings, and external pressure during participating in arduous writing learning activities. In this case, self-regulated writing strategy plays such a prominent role by which EFL learners exert a more potent control on their current writing learning vicinities with the scarcity of those unintended writing feelings. Arnawa and Arafah (2023) articulate that a predominant number of Indonesian university EFL learners can experience a higher degree of enjoyment in varied laborious writing learning enterprises after being equipped with a self-regulated writing strategy where they can take greater control over the negative feelings and emotions repeatedly occurring in their minds. Moreover, a more thoughtful writing behavior is more likely to be ingrained by EFL learners when these learners fully believe that their present writing capabilities are not fixed, yet they are malleable. It can also be stated that thoughtful writers implementing a self-regulated writing strategy have successfully implanted more positive perceptions toward the complex writing learning dynamics since they hold a strong conviction that their current writing competencies can be fostered to the utmost development as long as they strive more. This underlying principle is corroborated by the growth mindset

theory propounded by Bai and Wang (2021) affirming that highly self-regulated writers commonly instill a higher degree of growth mindset within their perspective wherein they thoroughly believe that they can progressively transfigure into more skillful writers in a particular situation that they persistently keep trying to forge their writing skills. On a similar note, more thoughtful and self-regulated writers are concurrently identical with strong adherence to their stipulated writing learning objectives. As these writers have determined the pre-determined

writing learning goals to be achieved in the prospective writing learning events, they sustainably perceive formidable writing hindrances as beneficial trajectories for them to transform into more skilled writers. The aforementioned explication is consistent with the prior major finding of Chen et al. (2023) unfolding that a great majority of Chinese university EFL learners are continuously working harder to achieve the coveted writing learning objectives determined before since they regard the present writing obstructions as the useful stepping stones of becoming more proficient writers.

Of great interest is with the ceaseless incorporation of a self-regulated writing strategy, EFL learners can become more responsible and self-reliant writers who are committed to accomplishing the targeted writing learning assignments with the diminution of intensive teachers' writing assistance. These positive writing behaviors are the tangible results of the profound reflective thinking activated by highly self-regulated writers in their beginning, main, and eventual writing learning activities. These notable self-regulated writers' characteristics concur with the prior self-regulated writing strategy finding discovered by Eslami and Sahragard (2021) highly advocating globalized EFL teachers to immerse their learners into self-regulated writing approach before commencing the main writing learning dynamics where they have become more responsible and autonomous writers who can resolve their existing writing learning impediments with the scarce support of their writing learning instructors. Concerning this point, it is vitally essential for EFL teachers to exhaustively introduce the main three consecutive steps forming in a self-regulated writing strategy for their learners comprising of selecting the most suitable writing learning strategies, knowing the exact procedures of implementing those chosen writing learning strategies and becoming more aware of the proper time and place to activate those selected writing learning strategies. These major triadic self-regulated writing strategies sit well with the self-regulated writing strategy postulated by Mallahi (2020) justifying that EFL learners are more likely to transfigure into more responsible and autonomous writers as long as they are continually equipped with three major self-regulated writing stages namely choosing the most compatible writing strategies working best in the current writing learning contexts, knowing how to internalize these specifically-chosen writing strategies, and becoming more cognizant of the particular places and settings in which these particularly-selected writing strategies work optimally. It is worthy of note that a self-regulated writing strategy allowed a more positive trajectory for EFL learners to transform into more life-long writers who are willing to deal with a wide variety of taxing writing learning tasks. Precisely speaking, these highly self-regulated writers mostly allocate their leisure time outside of the daily writing classroom settings to conduct more profound investigations toward their writing topics. This initiative is necessarily important as writers can compose their designated writing texts more comfortably resulting in the creation

of better-quality writing products. The above-explained conception is contingent on My et al. (2022) who strongly prompted worldwide second language educators to channel their energy to inculcate a more robust self-regulated writing strategy implementation within their regular writing classroom vicinities wherein EFL learners feel more enthusiastic to initiate a more in-depth exploration of their specifically-assigned writing topics, which eventually entrench life-long writing learning behaviors within them.

CONCLUSION

It can be safely deduced that a self-regulated writing strategy is worthwhile to be implemented at the onset of challenging writing learning dynamics presented in this modern age by which EFL learners can be more efficient in garnering their commitment, endeavor, and effortful actions to accomplish the specifically-addressed writing learning assignments. Outstandingly, a self-regulated writing strategy synchronously elevates EFL learners' readiness to deploy a vast variety of particularly-chosen writing strategies compatible with particular writing learning situations they are currently confronting. The progressive escalation of this conscientious writing plan takes place since EFL learners have gained a more exhaustive awareness of what, how, and when procedures upon activating their personalized writing learning strategies in diverse wide-ranging writing learning tasks resulting in a significant degree of writing learning outcomes attainment. For the betterment of this present small-scale qualitative library study, future researchers are welcome to advance this line of study by critically examining specific classroom writing learning hurdles that can potentially hinder the meaningful employment of self-regulated writing strategy. By doing so, educational stakeholders are more ready with their anticipative planning while being bombarded with these unpleasant writing learning obstacles. The reviewed research results proved a great contribution for ELT stakeholders who are strongly committed to establishing, nurturing, and reinforcing EFL learners' positive psychological states with the effective means of self-regulated writing strategy.

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