

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the conclusions, implications, limitations, and recommendations of the research. It draws attention to the use of metacognitive strategies in the English for Foreign Languages (EFL) writing program in Indonesia, specifically at a private university in North Sumatra.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The aim of this study is two folds. First, it aims to figure out the aspects of metacognitive knowledge and the aspects of metacognitive regulation identified in Indonesian university students' writing. Second, it is to figure out the Indonesian university students' attitudes (in terms of cognitive, affective, and conative) toward English writing instruction and tasks. The data for the first and second research questions were obtained by adopting Schraw and Dennison's study (1994) called MAI and from the students' reflective journals and observation. The data for the last research questions were obtained by adopting Baker's study (1992), from survey, observation, and interviews.

The first research finding indicated that the high percentage of students (Item 12: 95%) demonstrated a strong understanding of organizing information and put declarative knowledge became the most dominant aspects of metacognitive knowledge identified in this study. This aligns with the concept of organizational skills being a crucial aspect of academic performance (Cejovic, 2011). This understanding is essential for students to effectively manage their time, prioritize tasks, and maintain a structured approach to learning, which are all critical components of academic success. In addition, the students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, along with their emotional engagement and interest in learning, are crucial for developing effective learning strategies and improving writing competence (Ahmed, 2019; Siahaan et al., 2021; and Rogers et al., 2024). This self-awareness and engagement help students focus on areas needing improvement and take ownership of their education. Additionally, effective teacher-student communication and collaboration are essential for students to understand assignment expectations and requirements, significantly

impacting their academic performance (Ramadhanti & Yanda, 2021). Applying declarative knowledge as the highest aspects among the others (with mean score: 0.85) during the writing process also showed that highly proficient writers demonstrating a nuanced understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. These findings aligned with previous studies that emphasize the crucial role of declarative knowledge in the metacognitive process of understanding development and its association with students' writing skills and knowledge (de Larios et al., 2002; Razi 2014; Sariçoban & Kirmizi 2020; Wicaksono et al., 2021; Yoo, 2019). However, some scholars presented contrasting views, considering declarative knowledge as the simplest and lowest category of knowledge, centered on memorizing facts and data (Abdelshiheed et al., 2023). Therefore, this declarative knowledge must be thoroughly investigated, as the relationship between performance and metacognitive awareness of writers may be reciprocal. In other words, both the performance and the metacognitive awareness of writers may be impacted by the conditions and features of the work (Ong, 2014).

Regarding to the second research question, the present study also highlighted the importance of paying attention to metacognitive regulatory skills for academic writing, as it could contribute to a better understanding of how different strategies related to metacognitive knowledge and regulation predict learner's writing performance (Teng et al., 2022). Metacognitive regulation plays a crucial role in the writing process, as it allows individuals to plan, monitor, and regulate their writing effectively (Cer, 2019; Farahian & Avarzamani, 2018; Manalu & Wirza, 2020). The study found that planning (Mean = 0.84) became the second-highest result of metacognitive regulation aspects, indicating that students were also good at setting, planning, and allocating focus before learning. This is in line with several researchers who have found that individuals with metacognitive strategies are able to write and plan effectively at the same time, allowing them to identify their writing's weak points and fix errors (see Becker 2006; Kodituwakku, 2013; Manchón & de Larios 2007; Sasaki 2002; Teng et al., 2022; Victori 1999). Skilled writers needed more time to organize their ideas before writing, demonstrating the importance of planning strategies in the writing process as found in the questionnaires and reflective journals. This finding aligns

with the assertion that metacognitive regulation contributes to the learner's writing process, as it involves aspects of self-planning and drafting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation (Cer, 2019).

Related to the final research question, the present study highlights the importance of paying attention to students' attitudes towards academic writing, as attitudes about writing can influence teachers' instruction and students' learning (Olson, 2017; Paker & Erarslan, 2015; Petric, 2002). The findings of the study revealed that most students had a positive attitude (in terms of cognitive, affective, and conative) about the writing instructions and tasks. The cognitive component analysis revealed 54.8% of participants shared their thoughts about the knowledge they had gained and how their statements corroborated it during the interview process. A percentage of 60.75% was found in the affective component analysis, indicating an optimistic attitude. In addition, the study of the conative component revealed a percentage of 58.06%. Those positive attitudes toward writing were in line with past studies that demonstrated a favorable correlation between attitude and self-esteem and writing in a foreign language setting (Brooks 1985; Kara, 2009; Rose 1980; Teng & Huang, 2023; Victori 1999). Furthermore, studies have shown that anxiety and pessimistic attitudes hinder L2 writing (Ruan, 2014; Teng et al., 2022). Ruth Beyt et al. (2005) added that the learning environment affected the type of pedagogy used and the students' preferences. Another research by Hidayah (2019) found that those who have an optimistic attitude typically learn foreign languages faster than others. Thus, students' writing abilities advance as their attitudes do.

Overall, this study confirmed that metacognitive strategies played a crucial role in improving analytical exposition writing and students' attitudes towards writing. Metacognition strategies are essential for effective writing, as they help students regulate their learning and writing processes, monitor their progress, and evaluate their work (Farahian & Avarzamani, 2018; Kazemian et al., 2021; Teng et al., 2022). These strategies could enhance writing skills, particularly in analytical exposition, where students needed to organize their ideas, create a clear structure, and support their arguments with evidence (Sarıçoban & Kirmizi 2020).

Concerning the attitudes, particularly in cognitive component, metacognitive strategies was believed to help students understand the writing process better, including the structure of exposition texts and the importance of drafting, editing, and revising. Meanwhile, in the affective component, positive attitudes towards writing and using metacognitive strategies could boost students' confidence and motivation, which could lead to better writing performance. Finally, in the conative component, metacognitive strategies could help students regulate their learning and writing processes, allowing them to make better decisions about what to do and how to write effectively (Kazemian et al., 2021).

## **5.2 Research Implications**

The study identified a significant relationship between the writing process and students' metacognitive awareness when employing metacognition strategies. This suggests that these strategies play a crucial role in determining students' success in writing. The findings have implications for how instructors and students address challenges related to teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

The findings of the study imply that EFL university students are more conscious of learning strategies when engaging with academic or school-related writing materials. They should delve deeper into metacognitive knowledge to apply various strategies appropriately. In the process, they should also be mindful of their cognitive processes. This further implies that, before utilizing these strategies, students need to analyze their characteristics. By understanding the features of such strategies, students can evolve into highly motivated, productive, and focused writers. As Anderson (2002, pp.3) noted, "Using metacognitive strategies stimulates thought processes and can result in deeper learning and better performance, particularly for struggling learners."

Furthermore, learners are expected to heighten their awareness of their metacognitive experiences. It is evident that some students, especially less-skilled writers, may appear inattentive when monitoring and evaluating their progress. They may lack monitoring techniques such as "Checking the understanding before coming across the new topic," which suggests a frequent failure to monitor their progress. This issue is concerning as it could lead to a loss of control in their

continuous writing development due to decreased self-monitoring awareness. Understanding self-monitoring strategies is critical for distinguishing between good and poor writers (Baker & Brown, 1980).

Attention should also be directed to the learners' utilization of self-evaluation strategies. The findings indicate inadequate use of self-evaluation strategies, with students ranking "critically analyzing and evaluating the text" and "asking oneself questions to better understand" as their least preferred strategies. This suggests that students may be unsure about evaluating their written assignments, emphasizing the need to strengthen metacognitive awareness and self-evaluation strategies.

Finally, as highlighted in this study, educators should actively promote and enhance students' metacognitive understanding of language acquisition processes, particularly writing-related ones. Recognizing that students may not inherently grasp these metacognitive features upon entering language classes, it is essential to provide explicit guidance and opportunities for practical metacognition skill development (Tavakoli, 2014).

### **5.3 Research Limitations and Recommendations**

While the study sheds light on metacognitive processes in Indonesian learners' writing, certain limitations need consideration. The findings may lack generalizability due to the study's focus on a specific cultural and educational context. To address this, future research should incorporate participants from diverse backgrounds to enhance the applicability of the results.

The study's current approach at a specific time limit gives insights into the development and stability of metacognitive skills. A longitudinal perspective is recommended to track the trajectory of metacognitive growth over time, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how these skills evolve.

While the study considered different skill levels, nuances within each proficiency level might be overlooked. Fine-grained analyses are recommended to explore specific challenges and strategies employed by learners at various skill levels, informing targeted interventions for improvement.

The inherent complexity of metacognition, focusing on particular aspects like declarative knowledge and specific writing strategies, may not fully capture

the breadth of metacognitive processes involved in writing. Therefore, future research should adopt a more comprehensive approach, considering the multifaceted nature of metacognition.

Targeted interventions are recommended to address the challenges identified in the study. These interventions should enhance organizational skills, foster accurate self-assessment, and improve information organization techniques. Incorporating these strategies into writing instruction programs can contribute to students' metacognitive development.

Moreover, considering the role of educators in fostering metacognitive development, providing professional development opportunities for teachers is crucial. Educators with a deep understanding of metacognitive strategy and its role in writing instruction can positively impact student outcomes.

In summary, by addressing these limitations and implementing the recommended strategies, future research and educational practices can contribute to a more universally applicable and nuanced understanding of metacognitive strategies in writing, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of writing instruction.