



Writing Strategies Used by Male and Female Students in Writing Their Undergraduate Theses

Wynneke Putri Shabirah¹, Dian Safitri²

Correspondence Email : shabirahwynneke@email.com

Article History

Published: 2024-02-26

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the most used writing strategies by undergraduate students that have been finished writing their thesis, the differences in strategies used across their gender, and to ascertain the extent to which these strategies impact the persistence of these students. This study was used quantitative descriptive research method to gather data through questionnaire. The participants were 44 students who have completed their theses and already had done comprehension exam in academic year 2023-2024. The data was collected by using 42-items with 4 point Likert scale questionnaire adapted from Abdollahzadeh (2012) and Nopmanotham (2016) based on Oxford's LLS (1990) Theory. The findings revealed that each participants used six writing strategies. The three types of strategies they utilize most frequently are metacognitive strategies (82%), social strategies (82%), and affective strategies (77%) followed by compensation strategies (75%), cognitive strategies (71%) and memory strategies (71%). As can be observed, there is not much of a difference in any category's proportion. The findings also revealed frequent strategies employed by male and female student was different. 21 Male students out of 44 participants (48%) reported used social strategy as most frequently and cognitive strategy as least frequently, while 23 Female students out of 44 participants (52%) reported used metacognitive strategy as the most and memory strategy as the least. The findings also revealed that students who compiled their thesis in duration one semester, two semester, three semester used metacognitive strategy as the most frequently one.

Keywords:

Thesis writing, writing strategies, gender

©2024 The Author(s) Publish by Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris FBS UNP. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

How to Cite: Shabirah, W. P., & Safitri, D. (2024). Writing Strategies Used by Male and Female Students in Writing Their Undergraduate Theses. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 13 (1): pp. 295-302, DOI: [10.24036/jelt.v13i1.127520](https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v13i1.127520)

INTRODUCTION

Writing, according to Harmer (2001:79), is a written method of communication used to convey thought or express feelings. Writing is a person's activity of expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings into an arranged and structured written form so that the reader can understand the message, according to Hasani

(2005). There are many types of writing. One of them is Academic Writing. According to Hogue and Oshima (2007), academic writing is kinds of writing assignments are frequently given in high school classes and universities. Writing for academic purposes differs from creative writing in that it is formal. The technique of breaking down concepts while using formal language, deductive reasoning, and third person perspective is know as academic writing. In addiion, writing in academia is often dispassionate, clear, and objective. It is more complex than regular writing. Bailey (2015) in her book stated there are some types of academic writing, such as essay, report, research paper, written record, project research, and dissertation/thesis.

According to Buku Panduan Penulisan Skripsi UNP (2021), A thesis is a written assignment completed by a student that demonstrates the culmination of their scientific, cretive, and critical thinking processes. It is prepared in compliance with their acadeic field and meets program and educational level standards. A thesis is a report that a student writes as part of their requirements to earn a bachelor's degree. The purpose of writing a thesis is to give students the chance to develop their ideas, thoughts, creative processes, and thought patterns into cohesive and comprehensive material which can be communicated in a way that is frequently utilized in the scientific field.

While writing a thesis, there are several characteristics that influence students' writing, one of them is writing strategy. Writing strategy defines as action or behaviors consciously carried out by writers in order to mke their writing more effecient, according to Petric and Czarl (2003). The oder that a writer plan, composes, revises, and performs other writing related tasks is known as their writing strategy (Torrance et al, 2000). According to Ibraimi (2016), a strategy for writing is a tool or action plan that a students creates in order to accomplish their objectives in a writing class. Raoofi et al. (2017) state that students can write better or more effectively by using certain techniques and methods. Students must prepare their writing in order to write good results. Writing strategies are successfully applied to assist students in writing, produce better writing outputs, and realize the objectives of writing, which include raising writing awareness and developing better writing habits.

Several experts have created the theories relevant to the categorization of writing strategies. According to Petric and Czarl (2003), there are three primary categorizes of writing strategies, such as pre-writing, during-writing, and post-writing strategies. While in Penuelaz's (2012) and Nopmanotham's (2016) study, the taxonomy of writing strategies was based on Oxford's language learning strategies, such as memory, cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies.

According to Arifin (2017), students genuinely have individual coping mechanisms for issues that arise during writing process. One writing strategies can not be used by all students eventhough those strategies are effective and efficient. This problem may be caused by so many factors, one of them are gender differences.

Gender and language have a connection. Understanding the differences of gender is crucial, particularly in an EFL class. There is no agreement on how gender affects the usage of strategy, however, results were generally constant and showed that there are differences. Based on Abdollahzadeh (2010) study, it found that there are gender differences in the employment of memory, cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive, and social strategies, but not affective strategies. The results also found that female outperformed males in these domains.

After reviewing some research, the researcher is interested in investigating the same research on students' use of writing strategies and differences in usage based on their gender. The researcher is attempting to determine whether there would be a difference if the theory were to be used at Department of English Language and Literature in Universitas Negeri Padang.

METHOD

The aims of this study is to investigate the most used writing strategies by undergraduate students that have been finished writing their thesis, the differences in strategies used across their gender, and to ascertain the extent to which these strategies impact the persistence of these students. Therefore, this research will use quantitative descriptive reseach. The data collected by using 41-items with 4 point Likert Scale. The questionnaire was adapted from Nopmanotham (2016) and Abdollahzadeh (2010) based on Oxford's LLS (1990) theory. The research location of the study is in English Language and Literature at Universitas Negeri Padang. The participants in this study were students who have completed their undergraduated thesis writing and who have done comprehensive examination in academic year 2023-2024.

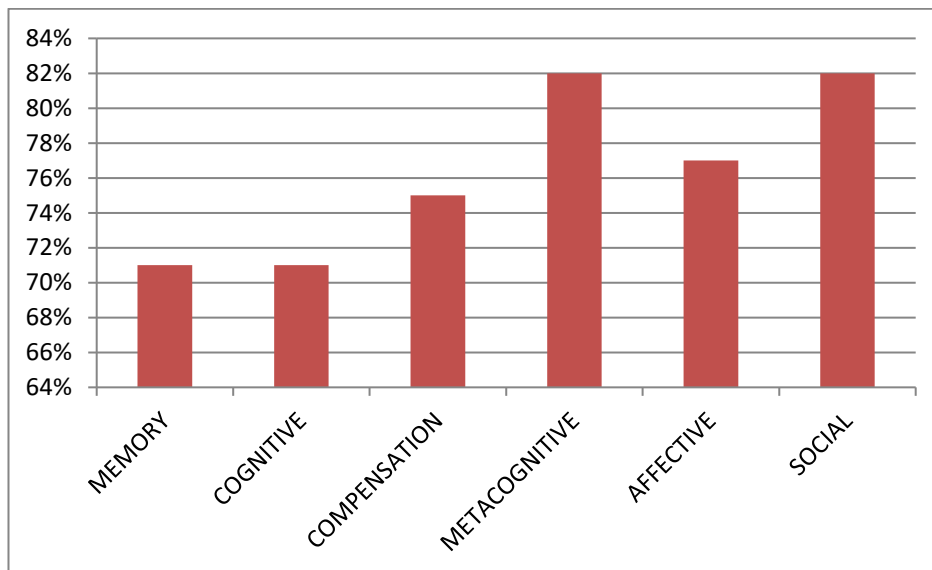
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

Forty-four students participated in this study by providing questionnaire responses. The study's sample consists of students who completed their undergraduate theses and who took the comprehensive exam in the 2023-2024 academic year. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compenssation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies were among the 42 assertions that made up the various indicators. The purpose of this study was to compare the writing strategies employed by male and female undergraduate students

when composing their theses and to ascertain the extent to which these strategies impact the persistence of these students. The information was shown based on questionnaire answers. The questionnaire were adapted from Abdollahzadeh (2010) and Nopmanotham (2016) that based on Oxford (1990) LLS theory. The participants of this study were 44 students.

Figure 1. The Mean Percentage of Writing Strategies Used



The findings revealed that all of participants used six writing strategies while writing their theses. The figure showed that three types of strategies they utilize most frequently are metacognitive strategies (82%), social strategies (82%), and affective strategies (77%) followed by compensation strategies (75%), cognitive strategies (71%) and memory strategies (71%). As can be observed, there is not much of a difference in any category's proportion.

Metacognitive strategies and social strategies became the most frequently used by undergraduate students that participated in this study. Metacognitive strategies helps students in organizing, planning, and assesing their writing in a efficient way, while Social strategy aids in helping students collaborate with others. In other side, cognitive strategies and memory strategies became the least. It might not helps students much so they tend to not choose that strategy.

A. The differences of writing strategies used by male and female students in writing their undergraduate thesis.

The participants of this study were 44 students. They are divided into two categories, which are male and female students. From the data of participants who

already filled the questionnaire, there are 21 male students or equivalent to 48% of total sample and 23 female students or equivalent to 52% of total sample.

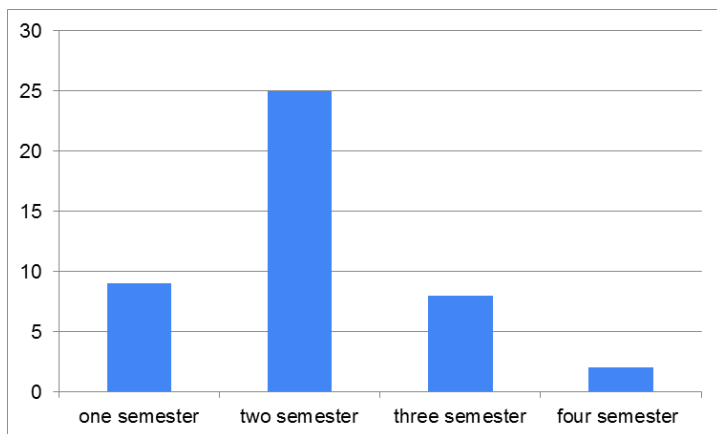
Table 1. The differences of Writing Strategies used across their gender.

INDICATORS	GENDER	
	MALE	FEMALE
Memory Strategies	70%	71%
Cognitive Strategies	68%	74%
Compensation Strategies	75%	75%
Metacognitive Strategies	78%	85%
Affective Strategies	72%	82%
Social Strategies	80%	84%

Based on Table 1, the order of frequent strategies employed by male and female student showed the differences. Male student used social strategies (80%) followed by metacognitive strategies (78%), compensation strategies (75%), affective strategies (72%), memory strategies (70%), and cognitive strategies (68%). Meanwhile, female students used metacognitive strategies (85%) followed by social strategies (84%), affective strategies (82%), compensation strategies (75%), cognitive strategies (74%), and memory strategies (71%).

B. The extent duration of the strategies used by the students that contribute their completion.

Figure 2. The thesis completion duration of participants.



Based on figure 2, there are 9 participants which completed their theses in one semester duration, there are 25 participants which completed their theses in two semester, 8 participants which completed their theses in three semester and 2 participants which completed their theses in four semester.

Table 2. The percentage of writing strategies used based on the duration of thesis completion

Duration	Indicators					
	Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
one semester	71%	69%	76%	83%	75%	82%
two semester	72%	72%	76%	82%	77%	82%
three semester	69%	70%	74%	82%	80%	81%
four semester	63%	73%	73%	75%	73%	80%

Based on table 2. The findings revealed that students who compiled their thesis in duration one semester, two semester, three semester used metacognitive strategy as the most frequently one, while four semester used social strategies as the most. Besides, students who compiled their thesis in duration one semester and two semester choose cognitive strategies as the least, and three semester and four semester chooses memory as the least frequently.

Discussion

The investigation on students’ writing strategies based on this research findings showed several factors underlying the choice of writing strategy. The selection of tactics by both male and female students was mostly determined by comparable factors. Male students employed these kinds of strategies due to their

writing goals, motivation, awareness level, learning style, and belief, while female students did the same due to their writing goals, motivation, awareness level, learning style, belief, and learning environment. Oxford (1990) stated that a wide range of factors, including motivation, learning objectives, age, sex, nationality or ethnicity, learning style, personality features, degree of awareness, learning stage, task requirements, and teacher expectations, can influence the choice of techniques.

In certain aspects, this result is different from the findings from Maharani et al. (2018), whose study indicated that female students mostly employed metacognitive methods, whereas male students primarily used memory strategies. In fact, their research revealed that male students employed compensation strategies the least frequently. In contrast, the current study supports their findings when it comes to the fact that female students employ metacognitive methods more frequently. But in this study, cognitive strategies as the least frequently. This findings also differs from Ardilla (2020), the results of those study showed compensation strategies was the most frequently used followed by affective strategies as the least frequently used.

Also the findings revealed to duration of compiled their thesis. It can be conclude metacognitive strategy is an effective strategies to used if students want to finish their study earlier. It can not be said that other strategies is not effective. It depends on the students itself. Because every writers have a different way to finish their writing. This study just showed the average strategies that used by participants.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Writing strategies, such as memory, cognitive, compensatory, affective, metacognitive, and social strategies, are crucial to the writing process. These could affect the students' writing output. For a variety of reasons, the students choose the specific writing techniques. The selection of writing strategies is contingent upon the individual student's circumstance. The research indicates that the elements influencing students' writing methods about gender differences are nearly identical, meaning that the students' choice of strategy will determine the outcome.

This study presents that undergraduate students used six of writing strategies differently depending on their gender. The findings in this study found differently in some views of previous studies across their gender. They may occur due to the existence of gender itself is not a stable factor and there are several other factors influence the differences of writing strategies like students' proficiency, motivation, ethnic and so on.

REFERENCES

Abdollahzadeh, E. (2010). Undergraduate Iranian EFL learners' use of writing strategies. *Writing and Pedagogy*, 2 (1), 65–90.

- Ardila, I. (2020). Writing strategies used by Indonesian EFL undergraduate students across their proficiency and gender. *Journal of Language Intelligence and Culture*, 2(1), 16-27.
- Bailey, D. R. (2019). Conceptualization of second language writing strategies and their relation to student characteristics. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 16(1), 135.
- Maharani, S., Fauziati, E., & Supriyadi, S. (2018). An investigation of writing strategies used by the students on the perspective language proficiency and gender. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 5(5), 185-190.
- Nopmanotham, N. (2016). A study of writing strategies used by Thai EFL high school students. *Thammasat University*.
- Offredy, M., & Vickers, P. (2010). *Developing a Healthcare Research Proposal: An Interactive*. United Kingdom.
- Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing* (p. 3). Pearson/Longman.
- Oxford, Rebecca. (1993). Research on Second Language Learning Strategies, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistic*, 13: 175-187.
- Oxford, Rebecca. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Penuelaz, A. B. C. (2012). The Writing Strategies of American University Students: Focusing an Memory, Compensation, Social, and Affective Strategies. *Estudios de linguística ingelisa aplicada*, 77-113.
- Sugiyono. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Administrasi, dilengkapi dengan Metode R & D*. Jakarta: Alfabeta. Sugiyono. (2012). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Cetakan ke-17. Bandung: Alfabeta. Sugiyono. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan (Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D)*. Penerbit CV. Alfabeta: Bandung.