

## METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING

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### Abstrak

Menulis merupakan keterampilan bahasa yang sulit dicapai oleh mahasiswa. Dalam konteks Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa asing, menulis lebih sulit karena mahasiswa perlu mempertimbangkan bahasa yang tepat untuk mengekspresikan ide mereka dalam bahasa asing. Oleh karena itu, mereka menggunakan strategi menulis untuk membantu mereka memecahkan kesulitan menulis tersebut. Namun, sedikit penelitian kualitatif telah dilakukan untuk mengeksplorasi strategi metakognitif yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa sarjana, terutama di Jurusan Bahasa Inggris, dalam konteks Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa asing. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini mencoba mendeskripsikan bagaimana mahasiswa menggunakan strategi metakognitif dalam menulis esai argumentatif mereka. Subjek penelitian ini adalah empat orang mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris dari salah satu perguruan tinggi negeri di Surabaya yang memiliki mata kuliah *Expository and Argumentative Essay Writing*. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara semi terstruktur sehingga mahasiswa dapat dengan sukarela menguraikan jawabannya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mereka memiliki berbagai cara dalam menggunakan strategi metakognitif. Untuk strategi *planning*, semua mahasiswa menentukan topik esai mereka dan membaca beberapa sumber materi sebelum mereka menyusun *outline* dan membuat *outline*, sedangkan salah satunya juga menggunakan *mapping*. Untuk strategi *monitoring*, semua mahasiswa berusaha mengatur waktu mereka untuk menyelesaikan esai mereka dan membaca kembali esai mereka sebelum dan sesudah mereka menyelesaikannya untuk memastikan tujuan yang mereka tetapkan tercapai dan isi esai mereka terkait dengan topik. Terakhir, untuk strategi *evaluating*, semua mahasiswa mendapat masukan dari dosennya dan beberapa dari mereka juga mencari masukan dari rekan-rekannya. Mereka juga mengevaluasi penggunaan strategi mereka dan memutuskan untuk tetap menggunakannya meskipun mereka masih mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis.

**Kata Kunci:** strategi menulis, strategi metakognitif, esai *argumentative*

### Abstract

Writing has been a complex language skill to attain by students. In the EFL context, writing is more complicated because students need to consider the appropriate language to express their ideas in a foreign language. Therefore, they use writing strategies to assist them in solving their writing difficulties. However, little qualitative research had done to explore the metacognitive strategies used by undergraduate students, especially in English Department, in the EFL context. Thus, the present study attempted to describe how the students used metacognitive strategies in their argumentative essays writing. The subjects of this study were four English Department students of one of the state universities in Surabaya, which has an Expository and Argumentative Essay Writing class. The data were collected through semi-structured interview so that the students could willingly elaborate their answers. The result showed that the students had various ways of using metacognitive strategies. For planning strategies, all of the students decided the topic for their essay and read some source materials before developing the outline and made an outline, while one of them also used mapping. For monitoring strategies, all the students tried to manage their time to complete their essays. They also re-read their pieces before and after they finished them. It was to make sure the goals they set were achieved and the contents of their essays related to the topics. Lastly, for evaluating strategies, all of the students got feedback from their lecturers, and some of them also sought input from their peers. They also assessed their strategy and decided to stick to them even though they still had writing difficulties.

**Keywords:** writing strategies, metacognitive strategies, argumentative essay

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is a difficult language skill to attain because it is about conveying the content of their works. Writing has some critical roles in transferring knowledge and carrying information, so it makes writing essential in academic writing and second language program throughout the world (Weigle, 2002). In academic writing, students often find difficulties since they are not comfortable inscribing something academically, which is different from their daily type of writing. Moreover, being in higher education, assessing students' achievements is closely associated with their writing skills. The lecturers mostly ask them to make reports, project articles, assignments, and other writing tasks that will reflect on their understanding of the materials given. In the EFL context, writing is more complicated because students need to consider the appropriate language to express their ideas in a foreign language. It is because they do not use foreign language in daily activities. Therefore, they use kind of learning strategies to assist them in solving their writing difficulties.

Learning strategies are specific ways or techniques used by students to help them in learning, comprehending, and mastering new knowledge (Barnwell et al., 2006). Learning strategies are essential in language acquisition because they can help the students to acquire the target language. Before using the learning strategies, the students need to know their problems or difficulties first to choose the suitable strategy to overcome them. O'Malley & Chamot (1985) propose three types of strategies. Those strategies are cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social/affective strategies.

Moreover, O'Malley continues to elaborate on the meaning of each strategy. First, cognitive strategies are strategies involved in the analysis, synthesis, or transformation of learning materials. Secondly, metacognitive strategies are strategies used by students to plan their learning, monitor their comprehension, and evaluate their learning after it is done. Lastly, social/affective strategies are involved students' social interaction to aim their goals in learning. Likewise, Ellis (1997) states different kinds of learning strategies. First, cognitive strategies are involved in the analysis, synthesis, or transformation of learning materials. Secondly, metacognitive strategies are the kinds of strategies involved in the planning of learning, monitoring of comprehension, and evaluating the learning after it is done. Third, social/affective strategies are strategies involved in peer interaction to attain a similar aim in education. Moreover, by applying strategies in their language learning, it is easier for them to learn and acquire the target language. Therefore,

learning strategies are used for all language skills, including writing.

Some studies show that learning strategies can help students learn the target language, especially in writing. Nasihah and Cahyono's research (2017) indicates that learning strategies are correlated with the students' writing achievement. The students can choose appropriate strategies for specific skills. For example, the students use metacognitive strategies to get ideas to write by doing brainstorming. Therefore, writing strategies have a significant role in helping the students getting achievement in writing.

In line with Nasihah and Cahyono, Chien (2012) states that the high proficient students are well-planned on the text they write and do more editing and revising during the review process. In contrast, the less-proficient students do not clearly state their position during the planning and make less effort to change and edit their writing during the review process. Hence, the high proficient students in writing use different types of strategies in finishing their works. In the Indonesian context, according to Setiyadi et al., (2016), the students' writing skill is significantly correlated with the use of metacognitive strategies. It is in line with the result of the study conducted by Chien (2012), which is students use several strategies. Those strategies are planning, editing, and revising, which are included in metacognitive strategies.

Moreover, Mu (2005) proposes several strategies to use by students in writing. Those strategies are classified as rhetorical strategies, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, social/affective strategies. First, rhetorical strategies are strategies involved in using L1, formatting/modeling, and comparing. Second, cognitive strategies are involved in generating ideas, revising, elaborating, clarification, retrieval, rehearsing, and summarizing. Third, metacognitive strategies are involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Last, social/affective strategies are strategies involved in resourcing, getting feedback, assigning goals, and rest/deferral.

Besides, in writing, a significant correlation in the frequency of using metacognitive strategies was not followed by a significant correlation in the frequency of using cognitive strategies (Setiyadi et al., 2016). Therefore, the use of metacognitive strategies in writing is emphasized. Metacognitive strategies are processes for managing or regulating cognitive activity and ensuring the mental goals are achieved (Sun, 2013). Metacognitive strategies include three essential skills those are planning, monitoring, and evaluating. First, planning relates to choosing the right learning strategies. It also relates to selecting the practical resources that can have an impact

when performing the learning task. Planning involves goal setting, questioning and task analysis, and material reading. Taking planning strategies, students consider their goals and how they can achieve them efficiently and effectively. Second, monitoring refers to monitoring ongoing activity to ensure that everything is under control and achieved. This strategy helps learners to notice the problems in understanding and focusing on their pieces, so they can figure out the issues and correct them. Last, evaluating strategies relates to assessing the task's result, how well the job was completed, and the strategy used during the learning process. The learning behavior of the students can be corrected by evaluation so that they can have better comprehension.

Likewise, the students can also choose the appropriate strategies when facing some problems or difficulties in writing, such as argumentative essay writing. According to Oshima and Hogue (2006), an argumentative essay is a type of essay in which the writer agrees or disagrees regarding an issue by using reasons to support the idea and convince the reader that their opinion is correct. The writer is required to attach convincing and reasonable reasons why he or she agrees or disagrees with the issue being discussed by giving some credible news articles, statistics, or results of research. According to Kirsznner and Mandell (1984), an argumentative essay has the same outline as the other essays. Those are an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The writer states the introductory paragraph and takes a writing position by providing a thesis statement. The thesis statement is supported by the arguments elaborated in the body of the essay. It is used to convince the reader about the writer's point of view.

The body of an essay consists of arguments and proof to support the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. It also contains refuting opposing views by using evidence. The argumentative essay pattern depends on the thesis, the materials, the purpose, the audience, the type of argument, and the limitation of the assignment, which will determine the use of strategy in composing it (Kirsznner and Mandell, 1984).

The conclusion of an argumentative essay contains the summing up of the arguments, a restatement of the thesis, and a strong closing statement. A conclusion should be written briefly and revealed the content of the essay. Therefore, based on Kirsznner and Mandell (1984), the organization of argumentative essay will be:

- Introduction : Introducing an issue  
Stating a thesis
- Body : Providing evidence deductively  
or inductively  
Stating the arguments against the  
thesis and refute them
- Conclusion : Summing up the arguments

- Restating the thesis
- Making a robust concluding  
statement

Students are expected to write an argumentative essay critically and to develop ideas in argumentative essay writing. Therefore, their essays must have rich content and acceptable language features to deliver their ideas in written form. Besides, they must provide reasons to support their views and expose the problem from the opposite side as proof of the erroneous one.

To achieve those things above—rich content and acceptable language features—the students usually have some writing strategies since writing is more complicated than speaking. Raoofi, Chan, Mukundan, & Rashid (2014) show EFL university students use various writing strategies in their argumentative essay writing. Their success in writing depends on the suitable strategy they used. The students mainly use different types of metacognitive strategies in writing, such as planning and revising, while others use cognitive and affective strategies. The result also shows that the strategies used by students, especially metacognitive strategies, depend on their writing proficiency. The high-proficient students use various types of metacognitive strategies than those who are less proficient.

Also, several studies have been done to investigate how writing strategies are correlated to writing proficiency and writing performance. However, little qualitative research had done to explore the metacognitive strategies used by undergraduate students, especially in English Department, in the EFL context. Therefore, this study aims to investigate "How do English Department students as EFL learners in Indonesia use metacognitive strategies in writing an argumentative essay?"

1. How do the students use planning strategies to write essays in argumentative essay writing?
2. How do the students use monitoring strategies to write essays in argumentative essay writing?
3. How do the students use evaluating strategies to write essays in argumentative essay writing?

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted as qualitative research. According to Creswell (2014), a qualitative research design focuses on collecting, analyzing, and creating data; they come from a stream of scientific disciplines and the entire research process (e.g., importance's ethical issues, types of problems). This research investigated how the students use metacognitive strategies, including planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategy in writing an argumentative essay. Therefore, the results of this

study were described in the form of descriptions or words.

The researcher chose English department students as the subject. The reason why the researcher chose English department students is that the students had Expository and Argumentative Essay Writing classes in one of their courses. Moreover, the participants were selected since the participants were experiencing problems being studied.

The data to answer research questions number one, two, and three were attained from the students' verbal answers during the interview, which was conducted by the researcher. Therefore, the students were the source of the data.

To collect the data needed to answer the first, the second, and the third research question, the researcher conducted an interview. The researcher asked the students how to use planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies to write their essays. Besides, the interview was semi-structured so that the students could willingly elaborate on their answers. Since the researcher interviewed the students individually, the researcher could clarify the students' responses immediately.

After the data were obtained, the researcher analyzed the data by using several steps, which are familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing, and interpreting and representing. According to Ary et al. (2010), those steps are used to analyze qualitative data and were applied in this research. First, the researcher should be familiar with the data by listening to audio recordings. For audio recordings, the researcher made transcriptions because analyzing without making transcriptions is not recommended, even though it is possible. The researcher classified the students' answers during the interview to answer the research question. While playing the recording, the researcher wrote a note or memo to capture her thoughts. Then, the researcher organized the data. The researcher created a complete list of data sources. After the researcher familiar with the data, the researcher coded the items of the data to recognize the differences and similarities in the data. Besides, the researcher compared the collected data to the theoretical concept. Also, in this step, the redundant data were reduced to avoid excessive data. Lastly, the researcher interpreted all the collected data into brief explanations and wrote them into paragraphs. While interpreting the data, the researcher could attach her opinion. However, the researcher might not rely on her personal feeling. The interpretation was based on all the data that the researcher had obtained. After interpreting the data, the researcher represented the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### How the students use planning strategies to write essays in argumentative essay writing

To answer the first research question, the researcher had interviewed the students about how they use planning strategies in writing argumentative essay. Some of the students had the same answers regarding the researcher's question, and they also had their own experiences.

Table 1. *What do you do in the planning step while writing an argumentative essay, and how do you use the strategies?*

Researcher's Question	Students' Answers About How They Use Planning Strategies In Argumentative Essay
What do you do in the planning step while writing an argumentative essay, and how do you use the strategies?	Student 1 "First, I chose the topic ... After that, I made the thesis statement related to the topic I've chosen. Regarding the thesis statement, I read many resources to know what I would write in my essay. Besides outlining, I also made mind mapping... I made the outline based on the guideline given by the lecturer, so I only followed it while in mind-mapping I made some kind of tree branches. I wrote some supporting sentences related to the topic sentence. I also wrote some important points related to the topic."
	Student 2 "First, I decided on the topic I wanted to discuss based on the theme given by the lecturer. Then, I set the goal of writing. After that, I decided how I would write my essay. Before I write the essay, I read some resources on the Internet. I also outlined. In my opinion, outlining can make me write the essay easier. The outlining started by writing the title

	of the essay, then making the introduction until the conclusion.”
	<p>Student 3                  “First, I outlined... I chose the topic and tried to understand it. I also analyzed the position of the pros and cons. In writing the outline, I started by making the thesis statement. After the lecturer approved the thesis statement, I started to develop it into an essay.”</p>
	<p>Student 4                  "First, I decided on the theme or the topic for my essay. After that, I decided on the title. Then, I started to develop the outline. The outlining started from making a thesis statement, developing body paragraphs, and making a conclusion. While developing the outline, I also read some sources to support my arguments."</p>

Based on the interview results, all of the students decided on the topic for their essay and read some source materials before developing the outline. It is in line with Zemach, D. E., & Rumisek, L. (2016) statement that pre-writing starts from choosing a topic, gathering ideas, and organizing them by determining which of the ideas they wanted to use.

Besides, Student 1 used mind mapping before they started to write the essay. They elaborated that they made a kind of tree branches and wrote some supporting sentences and some essential points related to the topic sentence. According to Kirszner and Mandell (2011), mapping is also called clustering. It can help the writer to find ideas to write. Kirszner and Mandell (2011) also stated that clustering or mapping begins by noting the topic in the center of a paper, branch it out like tree branches, and writing the related ideas around the issue.

Furthermore, all of the students also outlined their essays, starting with writing the thesis statement, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion. According to Oshima and Hogue (2006), the outlining stage can be called planning. This stage is very crucial so that it becomes the foundation of writing. Then, a writer writes their ideas based on the outline they have made. It had

been said by Student 2 that outlining could make her write the essay easier, *“In my opinion, outlining can make me write the essay easier.”*

When the students tried to choose the topic for their writing, they found difficulty, and others did not. Based on the result of the interview, the researcher collected two problems. Student 2 mentioned that they had difficulty in choosing the topic for their writing. Therefore, to overcome this problem, they asked their peers and lecturer for a suggestion. On the other hand, Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 did not find any difficulties in choosing the topic for their writing since the lecturer had chosen the issues for them. They mentioned that they could write their essay quickly since they did not need to select the topic. However, they found difficulties in finding appropriate resources for the issue chosen by the lecturer. To overcome this problem, they had to read many articles to find relevant resources for their issues.

**How the students use monitoring strategy to write essays in argumentative essay writing**

To answer the second research question, the researcher had interviewed the students about how they use monitoring strategies in writing argumentative essay. Some of the students had the same answers regarding the researcher's question, and they also had their own experiences.

Table 2. How do you use monitoring strategies in writing an argumentative essay?

Researcher's Question	Students' Answers About How They Use Monitoring Strategy In Argumentative Essay
How do you use monitoring strategies in writing an argumentative essay?	<p>Student 1                      “I tried to re-read each paragraph in my essay. If the contents were not related to the topic or goals I’ve made, I changed them by reading other sources to find the suitable one. I also tried to manage the time to finish the essay, but my lecturer had a lot of time to give us feedback, so my time management did not end well.”</p>
	<p>Student 2                      “I re-read my essay every day before the due date. I needed to understand the essay I was writing. I wrote</p>

	<p>the thesis statement based on the position I took and then wrote the introductory paragraph. I needed to make sure that the body paragraphs contained evidence in form of statistics, experts' opinion, and credible news articles to support my thesis statement. In writing the conclusion, usually, I restated the thesis statement and paraphrased the topic sentences of each body paragraph. I also avoided discussing new arguments in the conclusion. If some sentences were not related to the topic or there were some errors, I changed them with another reference which was more suitable and related to the topic."</p>
Student 3	<p>"Since the topic and the content of the essay should be coherent, I re-read my essay to make sure of it. The supporting sentences and the topic sentence also had to be coherent, as well as the topic sentences per body paragraph and the thesis statement. I also scheduled the time to write and the writing target for a day. For example, today, I have to finish two of four body paragraphs."</p>
Student 4	<p>"I re-read my essay and tried to prove that the data written in my essay were valid by reading some more sources. I also set the time to finish my essay. For example, I had to finish writing body paragraphs number one and two on</p>

	<p>that day. On the next day, I should continue writing the rest of the essay until the conclusion. In conclusion, I set the deadline for myself and also re-read the essay I've written."</p>
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To monitor the writing process, experienced writers keep in mind what they want to say and consider what they have already written (Wischgoll, 2016). Based on the result above, all of the students re-read their essays before and after they finished them. It was to make sure the goals they set were achieved and the contents of their essays were related to the topics.

Besides, some students (Students 1, Students 3, and Students 4) stated that they set a schedule to write and finish their essays. Student 3 and Student 4 set their writing target for a day, *"I also scheduled the time to write and the writing target for a day. For example, today, I have to finish two of four body paragraphs"* *"I also set the time to finish my essay. For example, I had to finish writing body paragraphs number one and two on that day. On the next day, I should continue writing the rest of the essay until the conclusion."* On the other hand, Student 1 had difficulty following her schedule.

Furthermore, monitoring refers to monitoring ongoing activity to ensure everything is under control so that the goals are achieved. In an argumentative essay, a writer states the introductory paragraph and takes a writing position by providing a thesis statement. The result shows that Student 2 wrote the thesis statement after she decided her position in the essay and proceeded to write the whole introductory paragraph, *"I wrote the thesis statement based on the position I took and then wrote the introductory paragraph."* She also elaborated that she included statistics, experts' opinion, and credible news articles in the body paragraphs of her essay to support her thesis statements, *"I needed to make sure that the body paragraphs contained evidence in form of statistics, experts' opinion, and credible news articles to support my thesis statement."* It is in line with Kirszner and Mandell (1984) statement that a writer is required to attach convincing and reasonable reasons why he or she agrees or disagrees with the issue being discussed by giving some credible news articles, statistics, or results of research. Also, a conclusion in an argumentative essay should be written briefly and revealed the content of the essay. Based on the result, Student 2 wrote the conclusion by restating the thesis statement and wrote the topic sentences of each body paragraph using different words. She made sure that she did not write new arguments in the conclusion, *"In writing the conclusion, usually, I restated the thesis statement and paraphrased the topic*

*sentences of each body paragraph. I also avoided discussing new arguments in the conclusion.”*

Moreover, during re-read their essays, the students often found incoherency between the topic and the content of their essays. To overcome this problem, they searched and read more relevant sources for their issues. They also found some difficulties in understanding the sources from journal articles. Student 1, Student 2, and Student 3 said that they found some difficult words in their references, and they found it hard to comprehend the sentences written in them. Furthermore, Student 4 said that since the sources are written academically, there were some unfamiliar words. To overcome this problem, they did paraphrasing. According to Bailey (2003), paraphrasing is practical in various areas of academic work. Student 2 and Student 3 said that the essay readers might understand their arguments written in the essay better since they used simpler and more familiar words. It means they took into account the reader's point of view. In other words, they maintain a balance between anticipating the readers' comprehension and reflecting on the written text from the readers' point of view and their perspective (Hayes, 2012). Students 1 added that they could minimize the chance of plagiarism in their essay writing by doing paraphrasing. In academic writing, paraphrasing is essential to avoid the risk of plagiarism (Bailey, 2003).

**How the students use evaluating strategy to write essays in argumentative essay writing**

To answer the third research question, the researcher had interviewed the students about how they use evaluating strategies in writing argumentative essay. Some of the students had the same answers regarding the researcher's question, and they also had their own experiences.

Table 3. *How do you use evaluating strategies in writing an argumentative essay?*

Researcher's Question	Students' Answers About How They Use Evaluating Strategies In Argumentative Essay
How do you use evaluating strategies in writing an argumentative essay?	<p style="text-align: center;">Student 1</p> <p>“I waited for my lecturer to give me feedback. I also asked my friend to get peer feedback when I found some difficulties in developing my essay. After I finished writing the essay and submitted it, I pondered whether to use the same strategies in the next essay writing. I</p>

	thought that my strategies in writing the argumentative essay were quite similar to the other essays.”
	<p style="text-align: center;">Student 2</p> <p>“After I finished submitting my pieces, my lecturer gave me some feedback. After that, I tried to understand the feedback and re-read my essay. By getting the feedback, I could learn from the mistakes I have made and revise the essay. The strategies I used while writing the argumentative essay were similar to the other types of essays because they were effective.”</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Student 3</p> <p>“I got feedback from the lecturer so that I know my mistakes and errors. The errors were misspelling words and grammar errors. The strategies I used during writing the argumentative essay were not different from the strategies I used during writing other types of essay.”</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Student 4</p> <p>“My lecturer gave me feedback so that I could revise the errors and the mistakes in my essay. My lecturer also gave me the percentage of plagiarism found in my essay to revise it. I used the same strategies in writing my argumentative essay as the other types of essay.”</p>

Evaluating strategy used during the last stage of the writing process. Therefore, in this stage, a writer needs assistance from other people, such as readers. It is intended to make the writer aware and realize the errors and mistakes they make in their writing. Based on the interview result, all the students submitted their essays to their lecturers and got feedback. Feedback is instruction

or message given by peers, teachers, parents, books, experiences, and self towards aspects of someone's understanding or performance (Timperley, 2007). In this case, a teacher has a significant role in improving their writing accuracy by giving them feedback. Student 3 said that the lecturer gave her feedback by pointing out the misspellings and grammar errors in her essay. She also said that by getting feedback, she could learn from the mistakes she made and revise the essay. According to Ruegg (2015), a teacher's written feedback may help improving student's writing accuracy if it is done consecutively within a certain period. Besides getting teacher feedback, Student 1 also sought peer feedback, "I also asked my friend to get peer-feedback when I found some difficulties in developing my essay."

Furthermore, students need to evaluate or reconsider the strategies they have used during the writing process. The result above showed that the students elaborated they would use the same strategy as they used before and did not intend to change the strategy even though they still found some writing difficulties. Student 3 said that she used the same strategy as other types of an essay because she thought that they are sufficient in achieving the set goals.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the result and discussion above, the researcher found three findings. First, related to planning strategies, the researcher found that the students used various planning strategies in their argumentative essay writing. Most of the students implemented the same strategy, while some others implemented different ones. For example, Student 1 used mind mapping while the others did not, but all of them made outlines before writing the essay. The researcher also found that a student faced difficulty choosing a topic to write about while the others did not. However, Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 found trouble finding the references for their essays since their topics were selected by the lecturer. Therefore, it is better for the lecturers to provide some alternative topics so that those students who have difficulties in choosing a topic for their essay are helped. Also, it is better for the lecturers to provide or suggest some accessible website journal links to the students so that they can find the source materials easier. The students also need to learn how to use the right keywords in searching the journal articles for their writing references so that they can find the right sources for their topics.

Furthermore, for the second finding related to monitoring strategies, the researcher found that the students also used various monitoring strategies. All the students re-read their essays before and after completing them to ensure the goals they set were achieved and that

the content of their essays was related to the topics. A student (Student 2) elaborated that she wrote the introductory paragraph of the essay after she took a position in her essay and wrote the thesis statement. She also provided some evidence in form of experts' opinion, statistics, and credible news article to support the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. In the conclusion paragraph, she restated the thesis statement, paraphrased the topic sentences of each body paragraphs, and avoided discussing new arguments. Also, Student 2 did not specify the schedule to write and finish her essay, while the others did. The researcher also found that the students faced some challenges in comprehending the sources for their essays. It was because they were academically written and used some sophisticated words.

Last, for the third finding, related to evaluating strategies, the researcher found that all of the students got feedback from the lecturer to revise their essays. A student also sought input from her peer. The researcher also found that the students would use the same strategies as before and had no intention of changing the strategy, even though they still had writing difficulties.

## Suggestion

Based on the key findings, the researcher provides some suggestions for future researchers who will research on the same topic and the students. First, for the students, the students should use various metacognitive strategies in writing essays to minimize the difficulties they faced while writing the essays. Furthermore, for future researchers who will research on the same topic, it is suggested to research with more participants from different classes and lecturers. It will also vary the use of metacognitive strategies in argumentative essay writing.

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