Examining Metacognitive Performance Between Skilled and Unskilled Writers in an Integrated EFL Writing Class

Han-Min Tsai

Chungyu Institute of Technology

hmntsai@yahoo.com.tw

There has been an increasing call for taking an integrated position and strengthening learners' metacognitive models in EFL writing instruction. However, little research has been conducted to try to examine EFL students' metacognitive performance in an integrated writing setting. This study attempted to examine skilled and unskilled EFL writers' metacognitive performance in such a setting. The data were collected from the students' self-monitoring annotations and reflective journal entries and analyzed qualitatively. The results show that the unskilled writers' main concern in their writing process was with low order aspects and their experiences in strategy use were less selective and less productive. In contrast, the skilled writers were able to focus most of their attention on high order concerns, more concerned about how to make their texts impressive to readers, and more flexible, self-conscious and effective in strategy use. This study further suggests that scaffolded instruction and activities be constantly provided to promote EFL writers' metacognitive awareness, especially the less proficient ones.

Keywords: metacognitive performance; skilled EFL writers; unskilled EFL writers; an integrated writing setting

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a complex and holistic enterprise, involving not only cognitive and affective but also social and metacognitive domains. This complexity becomes especially apparent in learning and teaching how to write in EFL contexts since EFL learners, as Kamimura (2000) observes, are from cultural and linguistic backgrounds where discourse conventions and audience expectations are different from those of the target language community. Adopting an integrated approach, according to Badger and White (2000), Kamimura (2000) and Xudong (2005), thus can better suit learners' needs in various aspects and be more effective in writing instruction.

Taking an integrative approach enables the teacher to play multiple roles not only as a knowledge provider but also as a consultant, facilitator and sensitive responder. The learners are not passive receptacles of knowledge but active participants, assuming certain responsibilities and autonomy to act as readers, collaborators and reflectors. Reports

by Blanton (1987) and Crandall (1999) have claimed that making learning collaborative can reduce anxiety in EFL language classrooms. Cotterall's (2000) study indicates that fostering learner autonomy helps to develop learners' language proficiency, which in turn will increase their writing confidence.

Taking an integrated approach also means that writing in EFL classes is a structured and gradual process. The teacher first provides appropriate input based on the target context and the understanding of learners. Writers like Kamimura (2000) and Raimes (1985) have emphasized the importance of instruction on both content and form in EFL writing classes because, as Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 142) state, L2 students do not have the "implicit knowledge of rhetorical plans, organizational logic, and genre form" in the target language. After this, the students engage in multiple and recursive creation of texts by getting feedback from various sources. The first draft is not the final product and writing is not about getting instant perfection. De-emphasizing perfection, in line with Leki's (1999) stand, can help reduce writing apprehension. Breaking down the writing process into manageable pieces and providing appropriate feedback at different steps can make learners aware of their own progress (Blanton, 1987) and release them from the pressure of time (Tsui, 1996). Errors in such an approach are treated hierarchically; global aspects such as idea organization, clarity and coherence are emphasized first and local errors such as those in grammar and mechanics are delayed until the editing stage. Doing this can prevent learners from premature editing, one of the factors Rose (1984) attributes writing block to.

To summarize, taking an integrated approach mostly concurs with the five criteria for effective scaffolding in writing advocated by Applebee (1986): student ownership of the learning event, appropriateness of the instructional task, a structured learning environment, shared responsibility, and transfer of control.

Emphasis on the process writing in a synthetic approach can further facilitate and promote the EFL instructor's and learners' metacognitive awareness. The instructor can better understand the composing process learners undergo and the strategies and skills they adopt and develop to deal with writing problems and can therefore help learners to perform their writing tasks effectively. Learners are given opportunities to explore their writing tasks, reflect on their cognitive enterprise, monitor and revise their written work, assess the effectiveness of the strategies used, and take regulatory strategies to deal with the problems emerging, thus making writing more natural and effective.

Metacognition is defined as an awareness of one's own cognitive processing and an ability to manage and regulate one's strategies appropriately to meet different situations (Williams & Burden, 2001). Flavell (1979) divides metacognition into metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experiences. The former consists of personal, task and strategy variables, while the latter refers to any kind of conscious experience involved in cognitive enterprise. In Baker and Brown's (1984) notion of metacognition, not only knowledge but

also regulatory activities, such as planning, monitoring, revising and evaluating, are emphasized. More recently, Schraw (2001) also defines metacognition in terms of knowledge and regulation of cognition. Anderson's (2001) model of metacognition is strategy-oriented, including the components of preparing and planning for effective learning, selecting and using particular strategies, monitoring strategy use, orchestrating various strategies, and evaluating strategy use and learning. In a nutshell, metacognition includes not only knowledge of cognition but also a procedural experience to plan, monitor, revise, evaluate and regulate one's cognitive activities, and all of these stages can be interactive and recursive.

To date, most studies on metacognition focus on its correlation with language proficiency in general rather than with specific language aspects. Writers like Wenden (2001), however, have claimed a need to explore the relationship between metacognition and specific language tasks. Compared with the availability and maturity of studies investigating metacognition in FL reading (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002), metacognition research into FL writing is still very limited. Nevertheless, the role of metacognition in FL writing is drawing growing attention as its advantages and importance keep standing out. For example, research by Raphael, Kirschnet, and Englert (1986) shows that enhancing students' metacognitive awareness facilitates their performance in FL writing. In recent empirical studies, writers like Kasper (1997), Victori (1999) and Angelova (2001) have verified a significant positive correlation between metacognition and ESL writing performance. Sasaki's (2000) investigation into EFL learners' writing processes indicates that differences in strategy use between EFL expert and novice student writers can partly explain their written proficiency. Metacognition is also viewed as an essential discriminator between skilled and unskilled EFL writers (Omaggio, 1986; You, 2003). Magno's (2008) research further demonstrates that knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition can be used as significant predictors of English written proficiency.

Based on the belief that an integrated approach can better suit EFL student writers' needs and that metacognition plays an important role in writing process, the present study adopted a process-product approach in a college-level EFL writing class in Taiwan and aimed to examine metacognitive differences, in terms of self-monitoring, self-assessment and self-management, between skilled and unskilled student writers in such a class.

METHOD

Subjects

33 students were involved in this study. They were all English majors at a private two-year institute of technology in Northern Taiwan and were in the second semester of the course English Composition when this study was undertaken. In the first semester the class

was mostly product-oriented because about one-third of the students did not have any experience in writing an English composition. The students ranged in age from 21 to 28, but the majority (78.8%) were in their early twenties. Their average length of previous English study was 7 years. In addition, 30.3% of the participants had short-term overseas study experience in English-speaking countries. The current study spanned 18 weeks and three modes of written discourse, *viz.* narrative, expository and argumentative, were involved.

An Instructional Model for the Present Study

Based on the beliefs of an integrative writing approach, an instructional model was devised for the current study. Four key components were included: *input, writing process, evaluation*, and *environment*. The process and interaction of these components are illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 1. The use of dashes is to indicate that based on the problems detected, it may be necessary to revert to the former stage(s).

Depending on the need of learners, different kinds of input will be provided, including knowledge of the writing task, knowledge of global and local aspects, and training and demonstration of the skills like planning, peer revision, as well as self- monitoring annotations. Such input is conducted in terms of teacher instruction, model text analysis and group discussion. In the writing process, this model adopts the three sub-components in Flower and Hayes' (1981) cognitive process theory of writing, namely, planning, translating, and reviewing. Planning entails the operations of goal setting, idea exploration, and idea organization. Translating means formulating texts according to what has been attained in planning and reviewing stages. Reviewing is aimed at improving the text produced so far from different sources of feedback, including self-monitoring annotations after the completion of the first draft, peer revision prior to writing draft 2, and written teacher comments after draft 2. These sub-components are interactive and recursive throughout composing.

Another component in this model is evaluation. In order to reduce the students' writing anxiety, assessment is formative rather than summative. Different dimensions in the writing process, including writing performance, activity participation and metacognitive tasks, such as outlining, peer revision, self-monitoring annotations and journal writing, are counted for evaluation. In addition to these components, the environment in which writing takes place also plays an important part in this model. This includes the redefined role of the teacher as facilitator and knowledge provider and students as active, responsible and reflective participants; dynamic syllabi, *viz.* keeping refining the designed syllabi in responding to the students' reflection and writing performance; and the interactive and collaborative climate. Such an environment encourages the teacher and students to reflect on
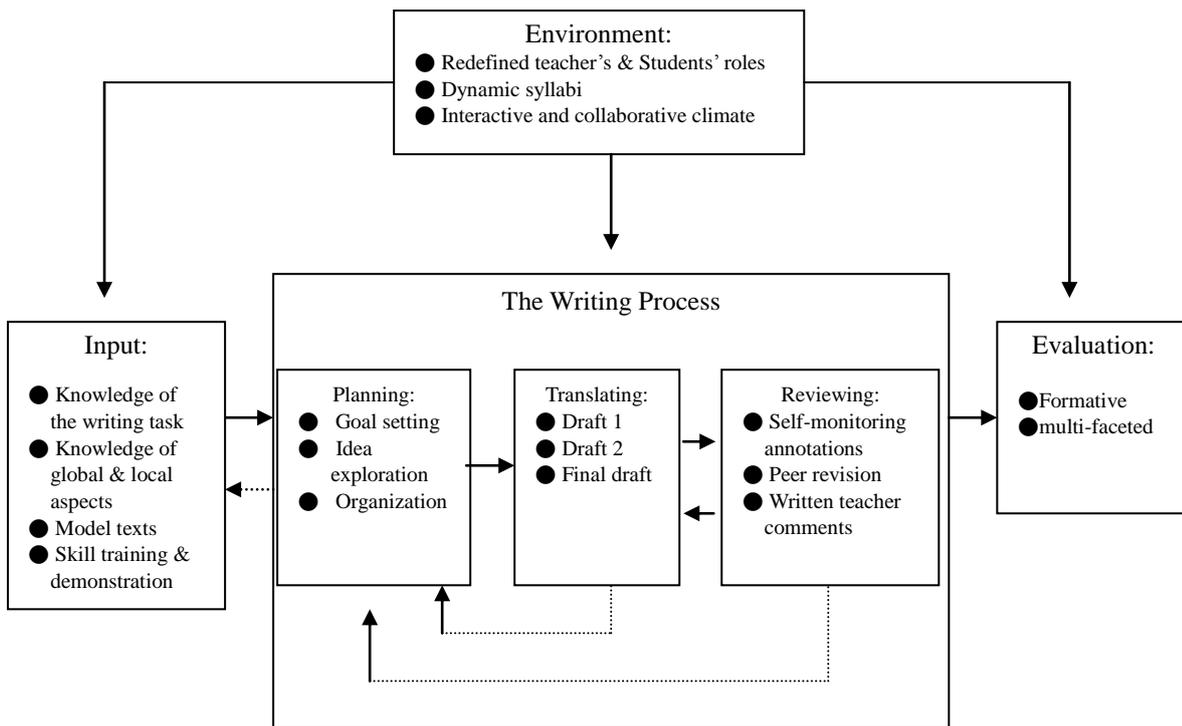
```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │            Environment:                  │
                    │  ● Redefined teacher's & Students' roles │
                    │  ● Dynamic syllabi                       │
                    │  ● Interactive and collaborative climate │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
```


Figure 1   An Instructional Model for the Present Study

the created environment and regulate themselves, thus making a writing class more effective and less threatening.

Data Collection and Analysis

The means of data collection included the students' self- monitoring annotations and reflective journal entries. The students' self-monitoring annotations were based on Charles' (1990) procedure of self-monitoring; the students note down any queries or difficulties of their first draft that they want their teacher to help with, and then the teacher replies to the questions raised. The students kept a journal once a week to reflect on and evaluate the teaching and learning. The students' final journal entries served to elicit data to examine their progress made in the semester, problems still hanging on, and strategy use in dealing with a writing problem. For data analysis, the students were classified into skilled and unskilled groups. The former refer to the students ranking in the top one-third of the final course grades, and the latter to those ranking in the bottom one-third.

The data from the students' final journal entries and self-monitoring annotations were analyzed qualitatively, following the procedures from description to analysis and then to interpretation. Statistics on frequency were used where appropriate. The data collected were read and re-read four times. The first reading attempted to look at the overall character of the corpus of data. In the second reading, themes in each data source were sorted out. The third

reading was aimed at rechecking the character of each theme and labeling the theme. In the fourth reading, convincing quotations to substantiate the themes attained were selected and coded. The data collected from the students' self-monitoring annotations were further categorized in terms of high order and low order concerns (HOCs and LOCs). The former refer to global aspects, such as content, organization and coherence, and the latter to features like grammar, word usage, and spelling.

RESULTS

The Students' Self-Monitoring Performance. The students performed self-monitoring annotations twice, one for the first draft of expository writing, the other for persuasive writing. There was one-month lapse and to improve the students' performance, more instruction and samples, focusing on high order concerns, were provided for the second annotation. The results of these two annotations show that in the first annotation the students' primary focus was on LOCs (93%); only 7% pertained to HOCs. However, after appropriate training, their focus on LOCs was reduced to 57.8%, whereas 42.2% of the focus was devoted to high order concerns such as global content, organization, coherence and unity.

To investigate differences between the skilled and unskilled groups in this aspect, data from the students' second self-monitoring annotations were analyzed in terms of sub-categories belonging to HOCs and LOCs. The results (see Table 1) indicate that after appropriate instruction and demonstration on global aspects, the skilled subjects attended to HOCs (77.3%) more than to LOCs (22.7%). Their main foci were on global content, unity and organization. Some representative examples from the students' annotations are:

"In my conclusion (paragraph 5), I did not summary the main idea very clearly. Can you give me some suggestions?"

"Does my first sentence of the first paragraph relate to the topic? Do I need to add more to my 3rd paragraph?"

"Lines 33-36, I tried to solve the problem of smoking? Do you think these sentences support my main ideas appropriately? Is there any unnecessary sentence or word?

"Should I combine the second and third paragraph into one paragraph because my less details in the third paragraph."

"On line 28, I am not quite sure if the transition 'therefore' is appropriate."

However, what concerned the unskilled subjects remained in LOCs, in which a significant proportion centered on asking for direct translations from Chinese to English (42.9%) and word use (23.8%). They did not manifest any awareness in organization, coherence or unity. The following representative annotations illustrate this:

Table 1   Percentage/Number of the Skilled and Unskilled Groups in the Second Self-Monitoring Annotations

Category	Skilled (AN =22)	Unskilled (AN = 21)
HOCs		
1. Global content	6 (27.3%)	1 (4.8%)
2. Organization	4 (18.2%)	0 (0%)
3. Topic sentences	0 (0%)	3 (14.3%)
4. Coherence	2 (9.1%)	0 (0%)
5. Unity	5 (22.7%)	0 (0%)
Total	17 (77.3%)	4 (19%)
LOCs		
1. Grammar	1 (4.5%)	3 (14.3%)
2. Word Use	2 (9.1%)	5 (23.8%)
3. Translation	2 (9.1%)	9 (42.9%)
Total	5 (22.7%)	17 (81%)

Note. AN refers to the number of annotations each group presented.

"How to say '不孕症' in English?"

"Can you translate '不抽煙者' in English?"

"Is it OK to use 'skin aging' in line 17?"

"ash of cigarettes 的 ash 可以加 es 嗎?"

The Students' Self-Assessment Performance. Data for measuring self-assessment were collected from the students' final reflective journal entries. To observe detailed differences between the skilled and unskilled writers, the journal entries of these two groups were read many times and categorized. In relation to the progress after this study, Table 2 indicates that more than half of the skilled (72.7%) and unskilled (54.5%) subjects felt less anxious about English writing. Around half of the skilled and unskilled groups (63.6% vs. 45.5%) felt clearer about how to organize an essay. In addition, 72.7% of the skilled writers expressed that they could write more content and were able to adopt strategies and skills in their composing process, whereas only 36.4% and 27.3% of the unskilled ones felt so, respectively. Also, 54.5% of the skilled group felt that they could perform critical thinking through journals and write different modes of written discourse; however, only 18.2% of the unskilled ones were able to perform the former, and 27.3% the latter. Finally, a considerably higher percentage of the skilled writers (45.5%) reported their ability in self-monitoring writing problems than their counterparts (9.1%).

Table 2 Percentage/Number of the Skilled and Unskilled Groups in Self-Assessment

			Skilled (N = 11)	Unskilled (N = 11)
Progress	1.	Less anxious about English writing	8 (72.7%)	6 (54.5%)
	2.	Able to write more content independently	8 (72.7%)	4 (36.4%)
	3.	More able to take strategies and skills to deal with a writing topic	8 (72.7%)	3 (27.3%)
	4.	Clearer about how to organize an essay	7 (63.6%)	5 (45.5%)
	5.	Able to perform critical thinking through journals	6 (54.5%)	2 (18.2%)
	6.	Able to write different modes	6 (54.5%)	3 (27.3%)
	7.	More able to self-monitor writing problems	5 (45.5%)	1 (9.1%)
Existing Problems	1.	Unable to revise one's or peers' work	1 (9.1%)	6 (54.5%)
	2.	Still having difficulty in grammar and word usage	5 (45.5%)	7 (63.6%)
	3.	Hard to express ideas in English	0 (0%)	4 (36.4%)
	4.	Unable to present impressive ideas and details	2 (18.2%)	0 (0%)

With respect to the existing problems after the study, some of the unskilled writers still had trouble revising their own and peers' written work (45.5%) and expressing their ideas in English (36.4%). 18.2% of the skilled group reported that they were unable to present impressive ideas and details in writing. A considerably high percentage of the skilled (45.5%) and unskilled (63.6%) subjects expressed their difficulty in grammar and word usage; however, what mattered to the skilled writers was how to use effective words or sentence patterns to make their writing impressive to the readers. The following observation indicates such a desire:

"I still have some problem on writing. Even though I improve my writing skills, sometimes I can't find right pattern to describe my opinion. Also, word choice is another difficult part for me. I don't know whether my patterns and words can make my composition interesting."

The unskilled writers, however, simply worried about whether the grammar or words used were correct or not. An example of such is, "The problems I still have in English writing is I often use wrong words and grammar."

Furthermore, the ways how these two groups described their self-assessment in the journal entries were examined and analyzed. This brought about more intriguing differences between the two groups. For example, in describing progress in making a writing plan, the

unskilled writers simply pointed out the advantages obtained from such a task. A representative student response is, "Now I would write outlining before writing. Writing outlining can help me have more ideas." In contrast, the skilled writers were able to make assessments more convincing by providing psychological variation before and after the study. This is evidenced in the following response:

"At the beginning of the writing class, teacher asked us to do lots of practice which we have never done before. I could not accept and get used to the change at first, and I did not think it will make any improvement. In fact, I was wrong. After doing practice, I gradually know how to make a writing plan and clearly write down a composition. I think I made an improvement on drawing a writing plan."

Another point worth mentioning is that after the study some skilled writers, in contrast to the unskilled ones, expressed their progress in a way that reflects the awareness of themselves as writers. For example, one skilled subject wrote this, "I think in these four months I often reflected myself and observed more carefully about things happened in the writing class. Now I feel that I know what I am doing when I [am] making an essay."

The Students' Self-Management Performance. Self-management is thought of as one type of metacognition. It refers to the ability, based on experiences, to manage one's further cognitive development (Brown & Palinscar, 1982, discussed in Rivers, 2001). The present study examined the students' self-management by asking the students in the final journal how they dealt with a writing problem when it occurred to them. The data were analyzed in terms of the skilled and unskilled writers by employing Oxford's (1989) taxonomy of language learning strategies. Five categories were identified: social, metacognitive, affective, cognitive and compensation strategies. An additional category encompassing more than two types of strategy was recognized and labeled as *multiple strategies*. As presented in Figure 2, social strategies, mainly referring to discussing with peers and asking for correction from the teacher, were frequently used by the skilled and unskilled subjects (81.8% vs. 63.6%). However, a considerably higher percentage of the skilled writers (81.8%) claimed to employ metacognitive strategies than their counterparts (18.2%). Some of the unskilled writers would set objectives to reduce their errors, but the objectives were vague, for example, "I would study more vocabularies and grammar to solve my problems." The skilled writers, however, would engage in more varied strategies on this level, including revising the essay, paying more attention to the task, or seeking practice opportunities. They were also more likely to take immediate actions to tackle the problem. An example is, "After keeping calm and paying more attention to the problem, I often can understand why I couldn't write this well. Then I would try my best to improve the problem."
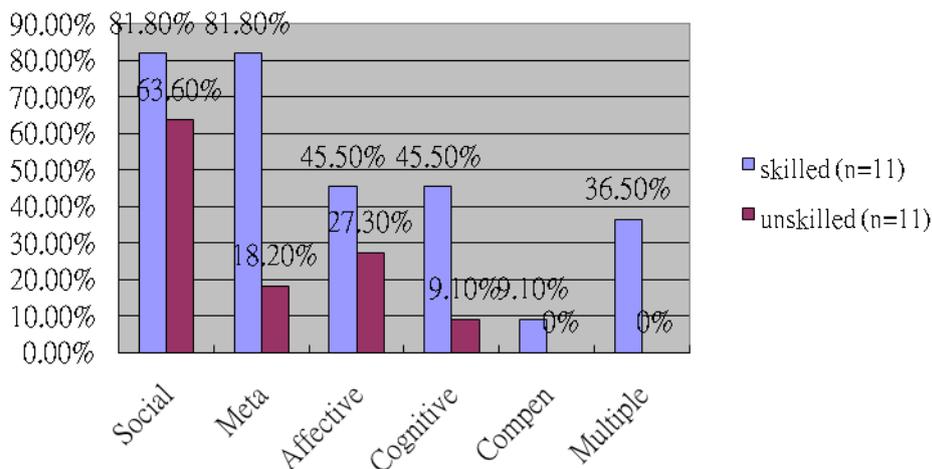
Figure 2   Results of the Strategies Taken to Writing Problems

With respect to the affective level, some of the skilled and unskilled students used relaxation and left their work for a while (45.5% vs. 27.3%). The skilled subjects stated that during their relaxation some wonderful ideas often occurred to them. As one wrote:

"Before writing, I often experienced a period of anxiety, so I left my work and watched TV, listened to radio or did exercise. But strangely enough, this was also the time a lot of ideas kept coming out. So when I sat down again to write, I usually had some ideas in my mind."

The unskilled writers, nevertheless, seldom experienced such a productive journey. Their mind blankness and worries remained even after relaxation.

At the cognitive level, 45.4% of the skilled writers would consult the dictionary, refer to the model expressions and structures presented in class, or make use of outside class resources. When one skilled subject described how she dealt with her difficulty in persuasive writing, her comments read, "Writing persuasive work is kind of difficult to me. So I had to spend a lot of time collecting information from reading newspapers or articles." However, only one unskilled writer was involved in this level, and the strategy pointed out was resorting to the dictionary. The compensation strategies were least employed; only one skilled writer mentioned that she would switch to another word or pattern with a similar meaning when faced with a writing problem.

As for the multiple strategies, the data show that the unskilled writers did not have any awareness on this level, but 36.4% of the skilled writers would resort to this level. Their approaches might go from metacognitive to social levels, for instance, "I will review my essay first, then trying to find out the correct answer. If I can't find out the answer by myself, I will discuss with classmate. My last choice is discussing with teacher." Also, one skilled

subject reported that based on the problems emerging, she would take different strategies. Her response is, "If my words do not support my main ideas, I will read my writing repeatedly. If my English is non-English, I will ask my classmates or teacher. If I have grammar problems, I will check grammar books."

DISCUSSION

In the present study, incorporating elements of a process writing approach into the traditional product approach provided the students with the opportunities to engage in metacognitive activities, such as planning a writing task, monitoring different drafts, taking strategies to cope with problems and keeping journals to assess one's learning as well as the class progress. Being able to think about one's thinking and learning process, according to Anderson (2001), can lead to more effective learning. De- emphasizing perfection and breaking down the writing process into manageable pieces, as Leki's (1999) and Tsui (1996) note, respectively, can help reduce writing apprehension. The learners' self-assessed improvement in writing anxiety, to a certain degree, was attributed to the implementation of the process approach.

The qualitative analyses of the students' self-monitoring annotations and reflective journal entries came up with some intriguing distinctions between the skilled and unskilled writers. First, despite the significant improvement made in the second self-monitoring annotation, the skilled writers obviously focused most of their attention on HOCs, whereas what concerned the unskilled writers remained mainly in LOCs. Such results conform with the perspective of Flower and Hayes (1981) and Zamel (1983) that writing effectiveness can be distinguished by whether or not writers' revision focus is on global aspects. Second, in relation to performing the self-assessment task, these two groups were different in several respects. The skilled writers apparently made more progress in metacognition, such as taking strategies to tackle a writing topic, performing critical thinking in journals, and self-monitoring writing problems. In addition, they were more able to make their assessment convincing by presenting detailed depiction of their change in writing before and after the study. Also, what concerned some of the skilled writers was how to use right language and details to make their work interesting and impressive to readers and while writing a composition, they were more aware of themselves as a writer. Having such reader and self awareness, according to Kasper's (1997) study on assessing ESL writers' metacognitive growth, is a key to becoming successful writers.

Even though using appropriate strategies and performing self-monitoring, peer reviewing as well as critical thinking were difficult to most unskilled writers, it is believed that consistent instruction, demonstration and practice might improve this, as one unskilled writer wrote in her journal entry, "After some practice, I now can examine my English writing, and

find some problems." Writers like Usuki (2002) and Vanjdee (2003) have confirmed that learning environment and teaching materials are the crucial factors in promoting learner autonomy. The current study therefore favors Xiao's (2007) idea that EFL writing instructors should teach *with* metacognition (equipped with metacognitive knowledge and keeping reflecting upon his/her own teaching) and *for* metacognition (helping learners to build up metacognitive knowledge and experiences). Writing proficiency involves not only linguistic competence but also the buildup of cognitive processing skills (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Metacognitive awareness helps add to learners' cognitive knowledge and skills, and this, as Wenden (1999) points out, enhances language learning.

With respect to the self-management level, qualitative analyses of the students' journal entries reveal that the skilled writers were more flexible in using strategies to cope with their writing problems. The strategies they employed were more varied and sometimes not confined to a solitary level. Such results are consistent with those of Bransford, Brown & Cocking (1999, cited in Rivers, 2001), Gardner & MacIntyre (1992) and Lan & Oxford (2003) who demonstrate that advanced learners tend to use a wider selection of strategies in new situations. Keeping flexible in adopting strategies also implies that the skilled writers are more willing to take risks and can be more precise in dealing with writing problems. Even though affective strategies were employed by some of the skilled and unskilled students, the former were more able to find solutions to their problems after relaxation. This indicates that affective strategies might lead to a more positive effect on the skilled writers than on the unskilled ones. Another noticeable difference observed is that the skilled writers tended to solve problems first by themselves and then resorted to other agents if needed. Going through such a conscious effort, as noted by Khaldieh's (2000) study, helps to enhance the process of language acquisition. The unskilled writers, in contrast, seldom experienced such a self problem-solving process. They often asked for help simply from their classmates or teacher.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The main objective of this study was to examine metacognitive performance between skilled and unskilled student writers, in terms of self-monitoring, self-assessment and self-management, in a process-product EFL writing class. The results show that after the study, the majority of the skilled and unskilled subjects felt that they were less anxious about English writing and were clearer about how to organize an English essay. However, the skilled writers were distinguished from their counterparts in that after appropriate instruction, they were able to focus most of their attention on HOCs in self-monitoring annotations. In addition, the students' self- assessment shows that the skilled writers apparently made more progress in metacognition and in the composing process some of them tended to have reader and self awareness. Although both skilled and unskilled subjects expressed their difficulty in

grammar and word usage, the skilled ones were concerned about how to make word choices and sentence patterns more effective and impressive to readers. In self- management, the skilled writers were more flexible, self-conscious and effective than the unskilled ones in using strategies to cope with their writing problems.

The current study seems to demonstrate metacognition as a significant predictor of English written proficiency and supports Rubin and Thompson's (1994) implication that metacognition might help set up optimal learning conditions and thus lower learners' 'affective filter'. However, since implementing metacognitive tasks means transferring some responsibilities to learners, which in turn might increase their pressure, particularly on the less proficient ones, it is therefore suggested that explicit and direct instruction and modeling, and guided practice be consistently provided. Also, when teaching EFL writing metacognitively, the instructor should be supportive and encouraging to learners, and attend to their voices from different venues to monitor, evaluate and regulate the teaching strategies employed. In addition, the situation of taking metacognition into practice might be affected by cultural factors and need more research in this aspect. Studies by Littlewood (1999) and Palfrey (2004) report that collectivism and de facto acceptance of power and authority in Asian contexts can lead to hindrances in promoting learner autonomy, while those by Usuki (2002) and Vanijdee (2003) support otherwise. The effects of cultural factors on the execution of metacognitive tasks in an Asian writing setting hence need to be explored fully. Research in this area using qualitative methodologies will bring about new insights into the existing body of metacognition research in EFL writing.

Learning writing in an integrative approach makes learners aware that writing is not a one-step product of getting instant perfection but a recursive and social process of meaning exploration and reformulation. Promoting students' metacognitive awareness in an integrative EFL writing class implies that the process and the product approaches are not opposite but complementary (Devine, 1993). It also helps teachers and students to reflect on and regulate their efforts, thus making an EFL writing class more effective. However, it is suggested that as students' knowledge of and familiarity with process-product approaches accrue, genre approaches can also be incorporated as, in the words of Badger & White (2000: 155), "an extension of product approaches" to link writing with different social contexts.

REFERENCES

Anderson, N. J. (2001). Developing Metacognitive Skills in Foreign Language Learners. *Selected Papers from the Tenth International Symposium on English Teaching* (pp. 1-7). Taipei: Crane.

Angelova, M. (2001). Metacognitive knowledge in EFL writing. *Academic Exchange Quarterly, 5 (3)*, 78-83.

Applebee, A. N. (1986). Problems in process approaches: Towards a reconceptualization of process instruction. In A.R. Petrosky & D. Bartholomae (Eds.), *The teaching of writing: Eighty-fifth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (pp. 95-113). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Badger, R. & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, *54*, 153-160.

Baker, L., & Brown, A. (1984). Cognitive monitoring in reading. In J. Flood (Ed.), *Understanding reading comprehension* (pp. 21-44). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Blanton, L. L. (1987). Reshaping ESL students' perceptions of writing. *ELT Journal*, *41*, 112-118.

Charles, M. (1990). Responding to problems in written English using a student self-monitoring technique. *ELT Journal*, *44*, 286-293.

Cotterall, S. (2000). Promoting learner autonomy through the curriculum: Principles for designing language courses. *ELT Journal*, *54*, 109-117.

Crandall, J. A. (1999). Cooperative language learning and affective factors. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 226-245). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Devine, J. (1993). The role of metacognition in second language reading and writing. In J. G. Carson & I. Leki (Eds.), *Reading in the composition classroom: Second language perspectives* (pp. 105-127). Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Flavell, J.H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new era of cognitive-development inquiry. *American Psychologist*, *34*, 906-911.

Flower, L. and Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, *32*, 365-387.

Gardner, R. C. & MacIntyre, P. D. (1992). A student's contributions to second language learning: Part I: Cognitive variables. *Language Teaching, 25* (4), 211-220.

Grabe, W. & Kaplan, R. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London: Longman.

Kamimura, T. (2000). Integration of process and product orientations in EFL writing instruction. *RELC Journal*, *31* (2), 1-28.

Kasper, L. F. (1997). Assessing the metacognitive growth of ESL student writers. *TESL-EJ*, *3* (1).

Khaldieh, S. A. (2000). Learning strategies and writing processes of proficient vs. less-proficient learners of Arabic. *Foreign Language Annals*, *33*, 522-534.

Lan R., & Oxford, R. L. (2003). Language learning strategy profiles of elementary school students in Taiwan. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *41*, 339-379.

Leki, I. (1999). Techniques for reducing second language writing anxiety. In D.J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating*

a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere (pp. 64-88). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics*, *20*, 71-94.

Magno, C. (2008). Reading strategy, amount of writing, metacognition, metamemory, and apprehension as predictors of English written proficiency. *Asian EFL Journal, 29*, 15-48.

Mokhtari, K., & Reichard, C.A. (2002). Assessing students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*(2), 249-259.

Omaggio, A. C. (1986). *Teaching language in context*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Oxford, R. (1989). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House.

Palfreyman, D. (2004). Introduction. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures*. Great Britain: Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham and Eastbourne.

Raphael, T.E., Kirschner, B.W., & Englert, C.S. (1986). *Students' metacognitive knowledge about writing*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching.

Raimes, A. (1985). What unskilled ESL students do as they write: A classroom study of composing. *TESOL Quarterly*, *19*, 229-358.

Rivers, W. P. (2001). Autonomy at all costs: An ethnography of metacognitive self-assessment and self-management among experienced language learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85 (ii), 279-290.

Rose, M. (1984). *Writer's block: The cognitive dimension*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rubin, J. & Thompson, I. (1994). *How to be a more successful language learner*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Sasaki, M. (2000). Toward an empirical model of EFL writing processes: An exploratory study. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 9 (3)*, 259-291.

Schraw, G. (2001). Promoting general metacognitive awareness. In H.J. Hartman (Ed.), *Metacognition in learning and instruction* (pp. 3-16). Boston: Kluwer Academic.

Tsui, A. B. M. (1996). Learning how to teach ESL writing. In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 97-119). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Usuki, M. (2002). *Learner autonomy: Learning from the student's voice.* Dublin: Center for Language and Communication Studies. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 478 012).

Vanijdee, A. (2003). Thai distance English learners and learner autonomy. *Open Learning, 18*(1), 75-84.

Victori, M. (1999). An analysis of writing knowledge in EFL composing: A case study of two effective and two less effective writers. *System*, *27*, 537-555.

Wenden, A. (1999). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *19*, 515-537.

Wenden, A. L. (2001). Metacognitive knowledge in SLA: The neglected variable. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions of language learning* (pp. 12-24). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Williams, M. & Burden, R. L. (2001). *Psychology for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Xiao, Y. (2007). Applying metacognition in EFL writing instruction in China. *Reflections on English Language Teaching, 6(1), 19-33.*

Xudong, D. (2005). Teaching ESL/EFL writing: Approaches and pedagogical practices. *Selected Papers from the Fourteenth International Symposium on English Teaching.* Taipei: Crane.

You, Y. L. (2003). The differences between L2 mature and immature writers: A metacognitive approach. *Proceedings of 2003 International Conference on English Teaching and Learning in ROC* (pp. 597-612). Taichung: Providence University.

Zamel, V. (1983). The composing processes of advanced ESL students: Six case studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, *17*, 165-187.

How a writer presents information in a document can affect a reader's understanding of the relative weight or seriousness of that information. For example, hiding some crucial bit of information in the middle of a long paragraph deep in a long document seriously de-emphasizes the information. On the other hand, putting a minor point in a prominent spot (say the first item in a bulleted list in a report's executive summary) tells your reader that it is crucial. Having good writing skills in English is not something which is easy to achieve. English Writing. English writing is thought to be an essential skill for success in the modern global economy. The good news is that while English reading and English speaking are best learnt in either an online forum or an in-class course, English writing can be taught at a pace consistent with your current writing ability. One method of learning English writing is to study subjects that you enjoy learning about and writing in the style of your favourite authors of those subjects. By writing and rewriting particular passages, words and sentences that make up the work, you will gradually notice and understand particular themes that are often used in English writing. CAE Writing. CAE Listening. Practice Tests. A praising changes that the manager has made B suggesting that rumours about the manager are unfounded C describing a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the manager's performance. 4 In the female presenter's opinion A the manager's strategy is the correct one B the real problem is a lack of talented players C the pressure on the manager is likely to increase. Extract Three. You hear two friends discussing an exhibition of modern sculpture.