



# STRATEGIES AND MOTIVATION AS DETERMINANTS OF WRITING PROFICIENCY AMONG STUDENTS OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN REGION XI: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the causal association of the writing proficiency of students as viewed from the context of writing strategies' utilization and writing motivation among first-year English major students of Teacher Education Institutions in Region XI. The study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The quantitative strand utilized an adopted survey questionnaire distributed to 300 respondents while the qualitative approach employed 17 informants from among the 300 respondents through purposive sampling. Ten were subjected to IDI and seven to FGD among the 17 participants. The study revealed that writing strategies' utilization of respondents indicated high level in metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social and affective strategy. Moreover, students perceived a high level of writing motivation in terms of intrinsic, extrinsic and self-regulatory. Also, students have high level of writing proficiency in terms of attitudes towards writing, generating, revising, feedback, and awareness and control of the writing process. All variables were found to have a significant influence on writing proficiency. The participants of the qualitative strand agreed with the quantitative results. Hence, the nature of data integration was revealed to be connecting-confirmation.

**KEYWORDS:** Applied linguistic, education, writing, strategies, motivation, proficiency, first-year English major students, Region XI, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

Writing proficiency involves the ability of an individual to communicate through written word and use knowledge of syntax to write a sophisticated and high-quality sentence. This denotes also the individual's proficiency in vocabulary selection and organization of writing contents to be able to come up with a well-written output (Redrico et al., 2019). Hassab and Mohammed (2019) pointed out too that the process of learning to write was said to be crucial in the development of an efficient and effective composing process. However, students' main struggled to enhance their writing proficiency even after completing their education it is because of lack of exposure to variety of writing activities. In a study by Coloquit et. al. (2020), the factors which caused the problem in the students writing proficiency are attributed by the following factors: limited vocabulary, insufficient writing practice, weak argumentation, ineffective structuring of ideas, and challenges in grammar and syntax skills among peers.

In the global context, students in the United States, spanning from elementary to high school seniors, struggle to attain proficiency in writing. In the assessment conducted, it was revealed that only

approximately 27% of students demonstrated low proficiency in writing from grades four through twelve. These individuals often exhibit numerous grammatical and spelling errors and encounter difficulties in organizing their thoughts on paper thus scuffled in maintaining attention, experiencing distractions, fatigue, or experienced difficulty initiating writing assignments (National Report Card from the National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Also, in the study of Alamri and Al-Tunisi (2019) as cited by Ahmed (2019), it was indicated that Saudi undergraduate students frequently commit errors related to unity and coherence in their writing. Their written proficiency is characterized by ineffective organization of ideas, a lack of transitional markers, and misuse of cohesive elements which attributed by several factors such as inadequate knowledge of paragraph writing techniques, lack of motivation, interference from their mother tongue, and inappropriate use of writing strategies.

In the Philippines, as indicated by findings from the Southeast Asia-wide study called "Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics" (SEA-PLM), reported by Felipe (2020), a significant proportion of Filipino students lack the necessary proficiency in reading, writing, and math to progress to secondary school.



Senator Gatchalian disclosed that merely 10 percent of Filipino learners have attained proficiency in reading, 17 percent in mathematics, and a mere one percent in writing. This signifies that only one percent of Filipino students possess the ability to compose coherent texts with detailed ideas and a broad range of appropriate vocabulary. The absence of these abilities lead was caused by the lack of strategies and low motivation of students during the writing tasks which leads into the poor writing proficiency. In addition, Tanpoco et. al. (2019) conducted a university-wide study in Naga City on the writing errors among senior high school students. The results demonstrated that students committed grammatical errors as they composed essays and other written output and these are most prevalent in terms of the verb, pronoun and preposition usage. Thus, it revealed that the written-compositions of students struggled to meet the standard on the level of writing proficiency a college student should have.

In the local context, the study by Guliman et. al. (2016) which was conducted in one of the universities in Region XI specified the problem on the writing proficiency of students in higher education institutions. Challenges related to errors in writing compositions as well as structuring correct and meaningful sentences are frequently encountered. During class, students frequently make errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation, revealing a clear lack of strategies in leading to a problem in their writing proficiency. In the same vein, Mamidted (2023) cited in his study that some faculty members of the College of Education in one of the state universities in Mindanao specifically at Maguindanao observed that the writing proficiency of the university's freshmen students are generally poor and needs to be improved through series of writing activities in terms of grammar, punctuation and sentence structure. Findings report also the importance of students to strive harder to improve their strategy and style skills in writing for them to elevate the level of their writing proficiency.

Researchers have placed an increasing focus and interest on the writing proficiency of college students (Vega et al., 2019; Syafi, 2020; and Ozelik and Batur, 2023). However, these studies are delimited only to discuss the impact of strategies in the writing proficiency of bilingual students, identify only if the process approach enhances skills in writing, and highlight the outcomes of a proficient writer. On the other hand, this study involved exploring three variables, with writing strategies and writing motivation as independent variables while writing proficiency as the dependent variable. Moreover, there are no publications yet about the influence of these independent variables on the writing proficiency of first-year English major students. Thus, this paper can contribute to the body of related literature so as providing a basis for higher education institutions to further the language curriculum implementation such as on subjects with writing activities in response to the call of innovations and change of times.

From this context, findings and results of the study may be a good avenue and point of reference since the results will be shared to

different significant authorities such as the tertiary students, academic institutions, language teachers, technical panel members, research ethics committees, future researchers and other organizations especially those in the education field. Thus, the instruments to be used in the study may be utilized as well by teachers in assessing the writing proficiency of their students and provide possible solutions to answer the problem. Lastly, the study may be presented whether in a local, national or international research conferences and will be published in order that the dissemination of the results will be given into a wide scope of audience.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary purposes of this study were the following:

1. What is the level of writing strategies' utilization, writing motivation and writing proficiency among first-year English major students across various Teacher Education Institutions in Region XI?
2. Are the combined and singular influence of writing strategies' utilization and writing motivation on writing proficiency among the students significant?
3. What are the standpoints of the participants on the salient points of the qualitative results?
4. How do the qualitative results explain the quantitative results of the study?

## METHODS

### Design

This study employed the explanatory sequential mixed methods design through regression and phenomenology. As defined by Li et. al. (2015), the mixed methods approach is a methodology that integrates qualitative and quantitative methods across various stages of the research process, encompassing philosophical assumptions, data collection, and interpretation. Also, Creswell (2003) defined mixed methods explanatory sequential design as a research design consisting of two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. To be specific, the study examined the level, the significant relationship, and the influence of WS' utilization and WM on WP. The researcher also used descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation, to describe the level of WS' utilization, WM and WP among the first-year English major students of Teacher Education Institutions in Region XI. Further, the researcher used inferential statistics like Pearson-r for determining if the relationship between variables was significant, and multiple regression for predicting the value of WP based on WS' utilization and WM. For the qualitative part, thematic analysis was used to identify emerging themes that substantiated the findings in the quantitative part.

Additionally, the study was conducted in Region XI or Davao Region. Specifically, this study was conducted in the different Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the said region specifically the state universities and colleges. The study covers five (5) different provinces namely, Davao de Oro (Compostela Valley), Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Occidental, and Davao Oriental. One (1) TEI was taken as locale in each province.



In selecting the respondents, the researcher used stratified random sampling to recruit 300 students from the different TEIs in Region XI who are all first-year English major students. On the other hand, for the qualitative participants, there were 17 students for an in-depth interview and focus group discussion. These were identified through purposive sampling technique and were drawn out of the quantitative strand respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Level of Writing Strategies, Writing Motivation and Writing Proficiency

Reflected in Table 1 is the overall mean rating of writing strategies which is 4.04 with a descriptive equivalent of high

which means it is oftentimes manifested by the students. This is based on their responses in metacognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, effort regulatory strategy, affective strategy, and social strategy as indicators of the said variable. While the overall mean rating of writing motivation is 3.87 with a descriptive equivalent of high which means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. This was based on their responses to the indicators of the variable including intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-regulatory. Lastly, the overall mean rating of writing proficiency is 3.87 with a descriptive equivalent of high. This means that the level of writing proficiency among first-year English major students of TEIs in Region XI is oftentimes manifested.

**Table 1**  
*Level of Writing Strategies, Writing Motivation and Writing Proficiency among First-Year English Major Students*

Variables / Indicators	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Level
<b>Writing Strategies</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>4.04</b>	<b>High</b>
Metacognitive Strategy	0.51	4.28	Very High
Effort Regulatory Strategy	0.57	4.02	High
Cognitive Strategy	0.55	4.11	High
Social Strategy	0.72	3.88	High
Affective Strategy	0.62	3.91	High
<b>Writing Motivation</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>High</b>
Intrinsic Motivation	0.45	4.22	Very High
Extrinsic Motivation	0.58	3.56	High
Self-Regulatory	0.68	3.83	High
<b>Writing Proficiency</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>High</b>
Attitudes towards Writing	0.69	3.91	High
Generating Ideas	0.62	3.70	High
Revising	0.56	4.01	High
Feedback	0.75	3.77	High
Awareness and Control of Writing Process	0.58	3.97	High

These significant results relate to the findings of the study of Aluemalai and Maniam (2020) that the use of writing strategies of the students in ESL writing classroom is high as compared to the result of the study of Maarof and Murat (2013) as cited by Dari et. al. (2022) that out of 125 first-year students, only 18 (14.4%) participants are high in the use of writing strategies. Further, the study of Aldes-Wold et. al. (2023) aligned to the results since it found that the level of writing motivation of students is high which implied that the students are highly motivated as they write. While Khatri (2022) cited that 78.1% from the total sample of 40 students in Nepal were found high in terms of their writing proficiency.

### Influence of Writing Strategies' Utilization and Writing Motivation on Writing Proficiency of First-Year English Major Students

Before determining the significant influence of the independent variables towards the dependent variable, correlation between variables was computed to determine its significance. In the case of the said three variables, the correlations are all significant. It can be depicted from the result that there is a significant relationship between WS and WP since shown in Table 2 that the *p*-value is less than 0.05 for its correlation coefficient,  $r=.802$ . Likewise, results also showed a significant relationship between WM and WP ( $r=.699, p<.05$ ).



**Table 2**  
*Relationship between Variables*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	r- value	p-value
Writing Strategies	Writing Proficiency	.802	.000*
Writing Motivation		.699	.000*

The significance of the relationships between writing strategies and writing motivation on writing proficiency warrants the use of regression analysis. Table 3 shows the regression analysis results examining how writing strategies and writing motivation influence the writing proficiency of first-year English major students of Teacher Education Institutions in Region XI. It was

revealed on the table that the writing strategies on their singular capacity can significantly influence the writing proficiency ( $p < .05$ ). On the same manner, the writing motivation on its singular capacity can significantly influence the writing proficiency ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 3**  
*The Influence of Writing Strategies and Writing Motivation on Writing Proficiency among First-Year Major in English Students*

Independent Variables	Writing Proficiency			
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig.
Constant	.050		.322	.748
Writing Strategies	.692	.622	12.900	.000
Writing Motivation	.265	.248	5.151	.000
R	.820			
R <sup>2</sup>	.672			
$\Delta R$	.670			
F	304.882			
$\rho$	.000			

Moreover, for every unit increase in writing strategies, it corresponds to a .692 increase in writing proficiency if the other predictor is held constant. Similarly, a unit increase in writing motivation forces corresponds to a .265 increase in writing proficiency if the other predictor is held constant. Between the two variables, writing strategies indicate a higher influence to writing proficiency compared to writing motivation. As a model, the  $r^2$  of .672 implies that 67% of the variation of writing proficiency can be explained by the combined influence of the writing strategies and writing motivation. Thus, 33% can be attributed to other factors apart from writing strategies and writing motivation that can influence the writing proficiency of the first-year English major students.

to a .692 increase in writing proficiency if the other predictor is reported that they employ strategies in their writing to produce a well-structure writing output. Consequently, in terms with the influence of writing motivation on writing proficiency, the result of the study by Chayono and Rahayu (2020) showed that the correlation coefficient is 0.707 which means that if the students' motivation in writing is high, the students' writing proficiency is also high.

**Standpoints of the Participants on the Qualitative Results**

Illustrated in Table 5 are the standpoints of the participants on the quantitative results regarding the level of students' writing strategies, writing motivation and writing proficiency. The table also presents the salient results of the survey which reveals the essential theme (*a priori*) and thematic reasons on confirmation. The essential themes generated are as follows: the confirmed high rating of writing strategies, writing motivation and writing

These findings on the influence of WS' utilization and WM on the writing proficiency confirm the result of the study of Nhung (2023) which found that those students who employ less strategies often receive low level of proficiency. Thus, the students with high proficiency with 3.81 mean score were



proficiency and confirmed significant influence/relationship of writing strategies and writing motivation on writing proficiency.

These findings correlate to the studies of Chen (2022) and Sicat (2022) which both mentioned that the variations in the utilization of writing strategies will influence students' writing proficiency. In which, Sicat (2022) also cited in his study that the regular

utilization of writing strategies had a great influence on the level of students' writing proficiency. Meanwhile, Sugumlu et. al. (2019) and Pupita and Iriani (2022) which emphasized that students' writing motivation influence writing proficiency since motivation served as the factor for them to organize and generate ideas in writing.

**Table 5**  
**Standpoints of the Participants on the Quantitative Results**

Areas of Concern	Essential Theme (a priori)	Core Ideas
High Rating of Writing Strategies (WS)	<b>Confirmed High Rating of WS</b>	Being exposed to various writing activities and strategies.
		Utilizing different WS to be organized in expressing ideas.
		Assessing what writing strategy does the task requires.
		Preferring writing among other macro-skills.
High Rating of Writing Motivation (WM)	<b>Confirmed High Rating of WM</b>	Using varied techniques in writing.
		Being given topics they can relate.
		Motivating themselves.
		Having time pressure motivates students to finish writing.
		Receiving support given by the teachers and classmates motivates writing.
		Being motivated from the rewards given by the teacher.
High Rating of Writing Proficiency (WP)	<b>Confirmed High Rating of WP</b>	When motivated, students become comfortable and confident in writing.
		Being afraid to fail so they are motivated to write.
		Having positive feedback motivates students to write.
		Having practice develops writing proficiency.
		Having prior knowledge provides the ability to write well.
		Has the ability to organize and rewrite ideas.
Significant Relationship and Influence of WS and WM on WP	<b>Confirmed Relationship and Influence of WS and WM &amp; its Dimensions on WP</b>	Accepting feedbacks from individuals.
		Conveying ideas clearly.
		Using appropriate words, observe proper punctuations, and avoids grammatical errors.
		Producing coherent and cohesive written outputs.
		WS and WM are strong factors of Writing Proficiency, enhancing great performance and good relationship.
		WM generates creative ideas.
		Students who are inspired and motivated produce quality written outputs.
		WS and WM produce valuable ideas in writing.
		WS and WM promote effective communication and positive WP.
		WS and WP allow the students to be aware of their written skills.
WS and WM affect WP because it fuels passion and interests.		
WS and WM influence students to become proficient writers.		
Dimensions of WS like Metacognitive Strategy (MS), Effort Regulatory Strategy (ERS), Cognitive Strategy (CS), Social Strategy (SS) and Affective Strategy (AS) are all important contributors to WP as declared by the participants.		

Hence, for Dari et. al. (2022), the utilization of writing strategies into writing can yield positive outcomes, enhancing students'

strategic knowledge and increase the students' overall writing proficiency. Hence, students' utilization of strategies during



writing tasks serves as a demonstration of their proficiency as writers.

**Data Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results**  
 Illustrated in Table 6 is the joint display of data and information gathered for both quantitative and qualitative results or mixed methods design, specifically the explanatory sequential approach.

**Table 6**

*Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Results*

Research Area	Quantitative Results	Qualitative Results	Nature of Integration
<b>1. Status of Writing Strategies, Writing Motivation and Writing Proficiency</b>  1.1. Status of WS	Means of five indicators of WS ranged from 3.88 to 4.28 with an overall mean of 4.04 or high level indicating that the respondents evaluate WS as oftentimes manifested.	Informants/Participants showed positive experiences on the three indicators considered as a priori themes: <i>Metacognitive Strategy (MS)</i> , <i>Effort Regulatory Strategy (ERS)</i> , <i>Cognitive Strategy (CS)</i> , <i>Social Strategy (SS)</i> and <i>Affective Strategy (AS)</i> . Reasons for their confirmation are reflected in their qualitative standpoints.	Connecting-Confirmation
	1.2. Status of WM Means of three indicators of WM ranged from 3.56 to 4.22 with an overall mean of 3.87 or high level which indicates that the respondents evaluate MS as oftentimes manifested.	Informants/Participants confirmed the high rating on the three indicators of WM: <i>Intrinsic Motivation (IM)</i> , <i>Extrinsic Motivation (EM)</i> , and <i>Self-Regulatory (SSR)</i> . Reasons for their confirmation are reflected in their qualitative standpoints.	Connecting-Confirmation
	1.3. Status of WP <i>Revising</i> got the highest mean (4.01) and the lowest is the <i>Generating Ideas</i> (3.70) with an overall mean of 3.87 or high level which indicates that the respondents evaluate WP as oftentimes manifested.	Informants/Participants showed positive experiences on the five indicators considered as a priori themes: <i>Attitudes towards Writing (AW)</i> , <i>Generating Ideas (GI)</i> , <i>Revising (R)</i> , <i>Feedback (F)</i> and <i>Awareness and Controls of Writing Process (ACWP)</i> with the rating of High in the quantitative results. Reasons for confirmation are reflected in their qualitative standpoints.	Connecting-Confirmation
2. Relationship and Influence of WS and WM on WP.	Both WS and WM have significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) and	The participants/informants were affirmative on the influence of WS and WM on their WP. They verbalized	



	influences of WS ( $B=.692$ ) and WM ( $B=.265$ ) on WP basing on the combined influence of all its domains ( $R\text{ square}=.672$ ; $p<.05$ )	the importance of the variable in the development of their WP as can be gleaned from their qualitative standpoints on the topic bearing out the theme confirmed significant relationship and influence of WS and WM on WP.	Connecting-Confirmation
3. Writing Strategies as best predictor of Writing Proficiency	Between WS and WP, Writing Strategies ( $B=0.207$ ; $p<0.05$ ) Indicated significant influence on WP. Its indicators contribute to the significant influence of WS on WP as demonstrated by the significant R square (.672) of their combined influence on WP.	Participants acknowledged that the five dimensions of WS significantly influence WP. They verbalized the crucial role of MS, ERS, CS, SS and AS in the WP and confirm that they <i>are Influencers of WP</i> as reflected in their qualitative standpoints on the topic.	Connecting-Confirmation

These results are confirmed in the study of Arifin (2020) and Hendrayani (2022) that the diverse range of writing strategies or techniques used by students are high since students are equipped with critical abilities as they engage in a series of sub-tasks before producing an acceptable and with quality text. In addition, the studies of Bradshaw (2023), Fabie (2020) and Sarikaya and Yilar (2021) which underscored the roles of internal motivation like needs, interests, curiosity and enjoyment as well as external motivation such as educators, incentives, and instructional approaches towards the students' writing. Also, Adrias (2022), alongside with Kincaid (2009) cited that through stating that the individual's writing proficiency should be in high level as it referred to how skillful a writer is in writing.

Moreover, the relationships among variables and influences of WS' utilization and WM on WP demonstrate a connecting and confirming nature in integrating quantitative and qualitative results. In the study of Dari et. al. (2022) and Mastan et. al. (2017), it was pointed out that there is a relationship between the students' utilization of various writing strategies like metacognition on the enhancement of students' writing proficiency. Also, Vacalares et. al. (2023) confirmed the result through their study that when the students' motivation to write is in the high level, it allows them to express their feelings in which their writing proficiency will also increase.

## CONCLUSIONS

After a thorough analysis of the data gathered in this study, conclusions were drawn in answer to the set research questions and objectives of the study.

1. The level of writing strategies' utilization, writing motivation and writing proficiency are high which means that these are oftentimes manifested among first-year English major students.
2. In the study, it is concluded that the variables of writing strategies, writing motivation, and writing proficiency are statistically correlated significantly. It is also concluded that both independent variables – writing strategies and writing motivation – significantly influence writing proficiency both independently and taken as one among first year English major students. Furthermore, writing strategies showed a relatively stronger influence.
3. Also, the quantitative phase results were further substantiated through the essential themes emerged during the thematic analysis of the qualitative phase data. Generally, the results confirmed the quantitative aspect of the study based on the responses provided by the participants and informants during the interview.
4. It is also concluded that the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings had demonstrated a connecting and confirmation nature in all elements, including writing strategies, writing motivation, and writing proficiency.

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