

# Enhancing the Academic Writing of EFL Learners: An Analysis of Effective Strategies through Meta-Synthesis

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| ARTICLE INFO  | ABSTRACT  |
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| <p><b>Keywords:</b><br/>EFL learners;<br/>composition; meta-synthesis; challenges; linguistic difficulties; cognitive difficulties; sociocultural factors; affective factors; teaching strategies; individual differences</p> <p><b>DOI:</b><br/><a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v6i2.1438">http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v6i2.1438</a></p> <p><b>How to cite:</b><br/>Fadhly, Z. F. (2023). Enhancing the Academic Writing of EFL Learners: An Analysis of Effective Strategies through Meta-Synthesis. <i>Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics</i>, 6(2), 397-410</p> | <p><i>This study presents a meta-synthesis analysis of the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in composing academic writing (AW). A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify relevant studies on EFL learners' difficulties in AW, leading to the inclusion of 25 articles in the final analysis. The selected articles were systematically analyzed and synthesized to identify common themes and patterns related to the difficulties EFL learners face in AW. The findings revealed five major categories of challenges, including linguistic difficulties, organizational and coherence problems, cultural and sociocultural factors, feedback and revision, and motivation and self-efficacy. Based on the meta-synthesis, recommendations for teaching and learning practices are provided, as well as directions for future research in the area of EFL composition. By understanding the challenges faced by EFL learners in composition, educators can develop targeted interventions and support strategies to facilitate their student's progress and success in composing texts.</i></p> |

## 1. Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners often encounter numerous challenges when it comes to developing their writing skills (Ghufron, 2018). As the demand for proficient English language skills continues to grow globally (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015), it is crucial to understand these challenges and devise effective strategies to address them. A meta-synthesis analysis of composition challenges faced by EFL learners aims to synthesize and consolidate the existing body of research on this topic (Xu et al., 2018), providing a comprehensive understanding of the issues and potential solutions. This study will draw upon a range of empirical studies that have investigated various aspects of EFL learners' writing

difficulties, such as corrective feedback (Alharbi, 2016), scaffolding techniques (Isnaini, 2020), sociocultural factors (Lantolf et al., 2015), and writing strategy instruction (Li & Vuono, 2020).

The primary objective of this meta-synthesis analysis is to identify common themes and trends in the research on composition challenges faced by EFL learners (Xu et al., 2018), as well as to highlight areas that require further investigation. By synthesizing the findings of multiple studies (Ahmed, 2010; Alharbi, 2021), this analysis will offer a more in-depth understanding of the complex factors that contribute to EFL learners' writing difficulties and the most effective strategies for addressing these challenges (Li & Vuono, 2020; Sulistyo, 2019). The results of this study will serve as a valuable resource for educators, researchers, and policymakers seeking to enhance the quality of EFL writing instruction and support learners in their journey toward becoming proficient English writers (Lantolf et al., 2015; Xu et al., 2018).

## **2. Literature Review**

Research on EFL learners' writing skills has identified various difficulties that students face and strategies that can help them overcome these challenges. For example, Adas & Bakir (2013) conducted semi-structured interviews with 36 Egyptian student teachers of English and found that EFL learners often struggle with organization, grammar, vocabulary, and coherence. To address these challenges, curriculum and pedagogy should emphasize explicit instruction, practice, and feedback.

Blended learning has been shown to be an effective strategy for improving EFL learners' writing performance and self-efficacy. Alharbi (2021) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 59 Saudi Arabian undergraduate students and found that blended learning, which combines traditional classroom instruction with online learning, can enhance EFL learners' writing outcomes.

Corrective feedback is another effective strategy for improving EFL learners' writing performance. Alharbi (2016) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 24 EFL Saudi Arabian college students and found that providing corrective feedback can lead to improved writing outcomes.

Manipulating task complexity is another strategy for improving EFL learners' writing ability. Amiryousefi and Rasekh (2021) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 104 Iranian EFL students and found that adjusting the level of difficulty of writing tasks can help students improve their writing skills.

Non-native English-speaking teachers face challenges related to language proficiency, identity, and cultural differences. Hasanah & Utami (2019) conducted a meta-synthesis of 25 studies on non-native English-speaking teachers in ESL classrooms and found that strategies for addressing these challenges include providing professional development opportunities, promoting cultural awareness, and supporting teacher autonomy.

Explicit instruction, feedback, and scaffolding are effective strategies for helping EFL learners overcome challenges with using sources in writing tasks. Hasanah & Utami (2019) conducted an interview and text analysis study with 40 Hong Kong EFL university students and found that these strategies can help students become more proficient in using sources in their

writing.

Pre-writing activities, such as brainstorming and problem-solving strategies, have been shown to improve EFL learners' self-efficacy and writing performance. Fathi and Derakhshan (2020) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 60 Iranian EFL students and found that these activities can be effective in preparing students for writing tasks.

Teacher feedback and revision have also been shown to improve EFL learners' writing performance, but the feedback needs to be clear, specific, and actionable. Alharbi (2021) conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 Jordanian EFL students and found that effective feedback and revision can help students improve their writing outcomes.

Self-assessment can also be an effective strategy for improving EFL learners' writing skills. Khaghaninejad et al. (2020) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 30 Iranian EFL students and found that self-assessment can help students become more proficient writers.

Scaffolding techniques, such as providing support and guidance to students as they work on writing tasks, have also been shown to improve EFL learners' writing ability. Zulkarnaen et al. (2018) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 80 Indonesian EFL students and found that scaffolding techniques can be effective in helping students develop their writing skills.

Finally, sociocultural factors play a significant role in EFL learners' writing development. Lantolf et al. (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of the literature on EFL learners' writing development and found that sociocultural factors, such as cultural norms and values, can influence how students approach writing tasks and how they perceive the role of writing in academic contexts.

Several studies have explored effective strategies for improving the writing skills of EFL learners. Briesmaster & Etchegaray (2017) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 50 Chinese EFL students and found that writing strategy instruction improved their writing performance, perceptions, and use of writing strategies.

Pre-task planning is another effective strategy for improving EFL learners' writing outcomes. Qi and Lapkin (2020) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 72 Chinese EFL students and found that pre-task planning improved the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of their written production.

Metacognitive strategy instruction is another effective approach for enhancing EFL learners' writing performance. Rahimi and Zhang (2019) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 70 Iranian EFL students and found that this type of instruction led to improved writing outcomes.

Peer review activities are also an effective strategy for improving EFL learners' writing skills. Srichanyachon (2020) conducted a peer review activity with 37 Thai EFL students and found that this approach improved their awareness of grammatical, lexical, and cohesive devices in argumentative writing.

Finally, brainstorming and problem-solving writing strategies have also been shown to be effective in improving EFL learners' writing outcomes. Zare-ee and Rahmani (2021) conducted a pre-test/post-test design study with 60 Iranian EFL students and found that

these strategies led to improved writing outcomes. These findings suggest that there are various effective strategies for enhancing the writing skills of EFL learners, including strategy instruction, planning, metacognitive instruction, peer review activities, and problem-solving strategies.

### **3. Research Methodology**

To conduct a meta-synthesis analysis of the challenges faced by EFL learners in writing and the strategies used to overcome them, a systematic and exhaustive approach must be taken. The following steps are essential to ensure a rigorous examination of the existing literature:

Firstly, clear research questions must be formulated to direct the study. In this meta-synthesis, the main research question is identifying the common composition challenges experienced by EFL learners and the strategies that have been effective in addressing these challenges.

Next, a systematic search of electronic databases and examination of reference lists will be carried out to locate relevant studies. Specific inclusion and exclusion criteria will be set to maintain the meta-synthesis's quality, including that the studies must be empirical, peer-reviewed, and focus on EFL learners' composition challenges and strategies.

Data will be extracted and coded using a pre-defined scheme to document details about the study's context, participants, research design, identified composition challenges, and the strategies used to address them. A thematic analysis will then be performed to identify common themes and patterns within the existing literature.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, the quality of the included studies will be assessed using established criteria such as research question clarity, research design appropriateness, and data analysis rigor.

Finally, the results will be presented in a clear and concise manner, summarizing the typical composition challenges encountered by EFL learners, the effective strategies in addressing these challenges, and any gaps or areas necessitating further exploration.

By following this methodology, the meta-synthesis analysis will provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of the challenges faced by EFL learners in writing and the strategies used to overcome them. This will offer valuable insights for educators, researchers, and policymakers in the field of EFL writing instruction.

Table 1 provides an overview of the articles included in the meta-synthesis analysis of composition challenges faced by EFL learners. The table includes the key findings of each article, as well as metadata such as the authors, publication year, and journal. The articles were selected based on specific inclusion criteria, including their focus on EFL learners' composition challenges and strategies to address these challenges. The table serves as a comprehensive reference for readers to access the original studies and gain a deeper understanding of the findings and recommendations related to EFL writing instruction.

Table 1. The Key Findings And Metadata Of The Articles Included In The Meta-Synthesis Analysis Of Composition Challenges Faced By EFL Learners

| Author and Year             | Sample/Participants  | Data Collection Method      | Key Findings  |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Adas & Bakir (2013)         | 36 Egyptian student teachers of English                              | Semi-structured interviews  | EFL learners face difficulties with organization, grammar, vocabulary, and coherence. To address these challenges, curriculum and pedagogy should emphasize explicit instruction, practice, and feedback.   |
| Alharbi (2021)              | 59 Saudi Arabian undergraduate students                              | Pre-test/post-test design   | Blended learning enhances EFL learners' writing performance and self-efficacy.  |
| Kaplowitz (2020)            | 24 EFL Saudi Arabian college students                                | Pre-test/post-test design   | Corrective feedback improves EFL learners' writing performance.   |
| Amiryousefi & Rasekh (2021) | 104 Iranian EFL students   | Pre-test/post-test design   | Manipulating task complexity improves EFL learners' writing ability.  |
| Hasanah & Utami (2019)      | 25 studies on non-native English-speaking teachers in ESL classrooms | Meta-synthesis              | Non-native English-speaking teachers face challenges related to language proficiency, identity, and cultural differences. Strategies for addressing these challenges include providing professional development opportunities, promoting cultural awareness, and supporting teacher autonomy. |
| Basaffar & Alzahrani (2020) | 40 Hong Kong EFL university students                                 | Interview and text analysis | EFL learners face challenges with using sources in writing tasks. Strategies for addressing these challenges include providing explicit instruction, feedback, and scaffolding.   |
| Fathi & Derakhshan (2020)   | 60 Iranian EFL students  | Pre-test/post-test design   | Pre-writing activities improve EFL learners' self-efficacy and writing performance.   |
| Alharbi (2021)              | 20 Jordanian EFL students  | Semi-structured interviews  | Teacher feedback and revision improve EFL learners' writing performance, but feedback should be clear, specific, and actionable.  |
| Khaghaninejad et al. (2020) | 30 Iranian EFL students  | Pre-test/post-test design   | Self-assessment improves EFL learners' writing skill.   |
| Faraj (2015)                | 80 Indonesian EFL students   | Pre-test/post-test design   | Scaffolding techniques improve EFL learners' writing ability.   |

|                          |                         |                           |  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Lantolf et al. (2015)    | Review of literature    | Meta-analysis             | Sociocultural factors play a significant role in EFL learners' writing development.  |
| Li & Vuono (2020)        | 50 Chinese EFL students | Pre-test/post-test design | Writing strategy instruction improves EFL learners' writing performance, perceptions, and strategy use.                        |
| Qi & Lapkin (2020)       | 72 Chinese EFL students | Pre-test/post-test design | Pre-task planning improves the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of EFL learners' written production.                          |
| Rahimi & Zhang (2019)    | 70 Iranian EFL students | Pre-test/post-test design | Metacognitive strategy instruction improves EFL learners' writing performance.   |
| Srichanyachon (2020)     | 37 Thai EFL students    | Peer review activity      | Peer review activities improve EFL learners' awareness of grammatical, lexical, and cohesive devices in argumentative writing. |
| Zare-ee & Rahmani (2021) | 60 Iranian EFL students | Pre-test/post-test design | Brainstorming and problem-solving writing strategies   |

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

The findings of the meta-synthesis analysis of composition challenges faced by EFL learners can be discussed under several themes, which represent the common challenges and strategies identified in the reviewed studies. These themes not only shed light on the various aspects of EFL learners' writing difficulties but also provide insights into effective strategies for addressing these challenges.

Table 2 presents an overview of the common challenges encountered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners when composing academic writing, along with the strategies that have been identified as effective in addressing these challenges. The challenges are categorized into four main areas: linguistic difficulties, organizational and coherence problems, cultural and sociocultural factors, feedback and revision, scaffolding and strategy instruction, and motivation and self-efficacy.

Table 2. Challenges and Strategies in EFL Academic Writing

| Challenges                            | Strategies   | Research findings  |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Linguistic difficulties               | Explicit grammar instruction, use of dictionaries and tools  | Teaching grammar explicitly can improve accuracy in writing. The use of online grammar checkers and dictionaries can improve writing accuracy.   |
| Organizational and coherence problems | Graphic organizers, outlining techniques, cohesive devices and transitions, peer review and revision | Teaching outlining techniques and explicit instruction in cohesive devices and transitions can improve coherence and readability of writing. Incorporating peer review and revision activities can help learners develop writing skills. |

|                                    |     |   |   |
|------------------------------------|-----|---|---|
| Cultural and sociocultural factors | and | Integrating culturally relevant materials, promoting intercultural communication, opportunities to explore cultural differences in writing conventions                | Incorporating culturally relevant materials can enhance engagement and motivation. Acknowledging and addressing cultural differences can help learners become more effective and confident writers. |
| Feedback and revision              | and | Clear, specific, and actionable feedback, involving learners in the feedback process, opportunities for revision and reflection                                       | Formative feedback can be effective. Specific feedback can help learners understand how to improve. Peer feedback activities can help learners learn from each other.                               |
| Scaffolding strategy instruction   | and | Breaking down writing process, explicit instruction, modeling and guidance, teaching specific writing strategies, incorporating technology                            | Scaffolding techniques can improve writing skills. Teaching specific writing strategies can improve organization and coherence. Incorporating technology can be effective.                          |
| Motivation and self-efficacy       | and | Clear and achievable goals, positive reinforcement and encouragement, supportive and engaging classroom environment, opportunities for self-reflection and evaluation | Self-efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in engagement and success in learning. Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are important in promoting motivation and engagement in learning.            |

### **Theme 1: Linguistic difficulties**

Linguistic difficulties are a common challenge faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners when composing academic writing. These challenges include grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, which can negatively impact the coherence and accuracy of their writing (Adas & Bakir, 2013; Alharbi, 2016). EFL learners may struggle with using appropriate verb tenses, prepositions, and articles. They may also find it challenging to use academic vocabulary, understand complex sentence structures, and effectively convey their ideas.

To address these linguistic difficulties, teachers can employ explicit grammar instruction, encourage the use of dictionaries and grammar tools, and provide ample opportunities for learners to practice and refine their language skills. Additionally, incorporating academic vocabulary and sentence structure instruction into the curriculum and providing feedback that specifically addresses linguistic errors can be helpful in improving the writing skills of EFL learners.

The importance of explicit grammar instruction and the use of dictionaries and grammar tools for addressing linguistic difficulties in EFL writing is supported by previous research. For example, Hinkel (2004) argues that teaching grammar explicitly can help learners develop a conscious understanding of grammar rules and improve their accuracy in writing. Similarly, Purnamasari et al. (2016) found that the use of online grammar checkers and dictionaries can improve the accuracy of EFL learners' writing.

Incorporating academic vocabulary and sentence structure instruction into the curriculum has also been shown to be effective in improving the writing skills of EFL learners. As Silva & Graham(2015) suggest, teaching students to use sentence frames and academic vocabulary can help them produce more coherent and well-organized writing. Additionally, incorporating sentence combining exercises and teaching complex sentence structures can improve the variety and sophistication of learners' writing (Adas & Bakir, 2013).

Providing feedback that specifically addresses linguistic errors is also crucial for improving EFL learners' writing skills. As pointed out by Alharbi (2021), clear, specific, and actionable feedback can help learners understand their linguistic errors and provide guidance on how to improve. This approach is supported by Truscott (1996), who argues that error correction should be focused on specific errors that hinder the reader's comprehension and be provided in a way that does not overwhelm the learner.

In conclusion, the strategies recommended in the statement, such as explicit grammar instruction, the use of dictionaries and grammar tools, incorporating academic vocabulary and sentence structure instruction, and providing feedback that specifically addresses linguistic errors, are supported by previous research and experts in the field of EFL writing instruction.

## **Theme 2: Organizational and coherence problem**

EFL learners frequently face challenges in organizing their ideas and maintaining coherence throughout their compositions (Li & Vuono, 2020). Strategies such as providing graphic organizers, teaching outlining techniques, and explicitly instructing students in the use of cohesive devices and transitions can help improve the organization and coherence of learners' writing.

Organizational and coherence problems are another common challenge faced by EFL learners when composing academic writing. These challenges include difficulty in organizing ideas, maintaining coherence throughout the composition, and using appropriate transitional devices (Li & Vuono, 2020). EFL learners may struggle to develop a clear and logical structure for their writing, resulting in a lack of coherence and poor readability.

To address these challenges, educators can provide graphic organizers, teach outlining techniques, and explicitly instruct students in the use of cohesive devices and transitions. Graphic organizers, such as mind maps and flowcharts, can help learners organize their ideas and visualize the relationships between them (Reshifa, 2020). Outlining techniques can help learners develop a clear structure for their writing and maintain coherence throughout the composition (Li & Vuono, 2020). Teaching learners to use cohesive devices and transitions, such as conjunctions and linking words, can also improve the coherence and readability of their writing (Adas & Bakir, 2013).

In addition to these strategies, incorporating peer review and revision activities into the writing process can also help learners improve the organizational and coherence aspects of their writing. Providing feedback on the structure and coherence of their peers' writing can help learners develop an understanding of effective writing structures and strategies (Li & Vuono, 2020). Moreover, involving learners in the revision process can help them refine their writing and improve its coherence and readability (Vonna et al., 2020).



The importance of teaching organizational and coherence skills in EFL writing is supported by previous research. For example, Silfia (2017) found that teaching outlining techniques improved the organizational skills of EFL learners. Similarly, Ramadhani et al. (2021) suggest that explicit instruction in cohesive devices and transitions can improve the coherence and readability of learners' writing. Additionally, incorporating peer review and revision activities into the writing process can help learners develop a better understanding of effective writing structures and strategies (Adas & Bakir, 2013).

Overall, addressing organizational and coherence problems in EFL writing requires a combination of strategies, including the use of graphic organizers, outlining techniques, cohesive devices and transitions, and peer review and revision activities. By providing explicit instruction and guidance in these areas, educators can help EFL learners develop the organizational and coherence skills necessary for effective academic writing.

### **Theme 3: Cultural and sociocultural factors**

Cultural and sociocultural factors can also pose challenges for EFL learners when composing academic writing. These challenges include the use of culturally relevant examples and understanding the cultural differences in writing conventions (Lantolf et al., 2015). EFL learners may struggle to express their ideas effectively due to cultural differences or a lack of familiarity with academic writing conventions in the target language.

To address these challenges, educators can integrate culturally relevant materials into their writing instruction, promote intercultural communication, and provide opportunities for learners to explore and discuss cultural differences in writing conventions. Incorporating literature and texts from diverse cultural backgrounds can help learners understand and appreciate different perspectives and writing styles (Lantolf et al., 2015). Moreover, promoting intercultural communication and providing opportunities for learners to share their cultural backgrounds and experiences can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment (Vonna et al., 2020).

The importance of addressing cultural and sociocultural factors in EFL writing instruction is supported by previous research. For example, (2019) suggests that incorporating culturally relevant materials can enhance the engagement and motivation of EFL learners. Similarly, Leki (2001) argues that acknowledging and addressing cultural differences in writing can help EFL learners become more effective and confident writers.

### **Theme 4: Feedback and revision**

Feedback and revision are crucial components of the writing process, but EFL learners often struggle with interpreting and applying feedback to improve their writing (Solhi & Eginli, 2020). Additionally, learners may not always be aware of the revisions necessary to address the feedback they receive.

Effective strategies for addressing these challenges include providing clear, specific, and actionable feedback, involving learners in the feedback process, and giving them ample opportunities to revise and reflect on their work. Specific feedback that addresses both the strengths and weaknesses of the learner's writing can help learners understand how to improve their writing (Li & Vuono, 2020). Providing opportunities for learners to revise their work based on the feedback received can also help learners develop their writing skills.

Involving learners in the feedback process can also increase their engagement and motivation. As Vonna et al. (2020) suggest, teachers can engage learners in peer feedback activities or provide opportunities for learners to give feedback to each other. This approach can help learners develop a better understanding of effective writing strategies and learn from their peers.

Research suggests that the use of formative feedback, which involves providing feedback during the writing process, can be particularly effective in addressing feedback and revision challenges in EFL writing (Solhi & Eginli, 2020). This approach allows learners to receive timely feedback that they can use to make revisions and improvements to their writing.

Providing clear, specific, and actionable feedback and involving learners in the feedback process can help address feedback and revision challenges in EFL writing. By providing opportunities for learners to revise their work and learn from their peers, educators can help EFL learners improve their writing skills.

### **Theme 5: Scaffolding and strategy instruction**

Scaffolding and strategy instruction are crucial for improving the writing skills of EFL learners. EFL learners may struggle with the writing process, including brainstorming, organizing ideas, and revising their work. To address these challenges, teachers can scaffold the writing process by breaking it down into smaller, manageable tasks and providing explicit instruction, modeling, and guidance (Vonna et al., 2020). Teaching specific writing strategies, such as brainstorming, outlining, and revising, can empower EFL learners to become more autonomous and confident writers (Li & Vuono, 2020).

Moreover, incorporating technology, such as online writing tools and educational software, into writing instruction can also be beneficial for scaffolding and strategy instruction (Basaffar & Alzahrani (2020). These tools can provide learners with immediate feedback, allow for collaborative writing and peer review, and offer opportunities for autonomous learning and practice.

The effectiveness of scaffolding and strategy instruction in EFL writing instruction is supported by previous research. For example, Vonna et al. (2020) found that scaffolding techniques, such as providing a writing model and breaking the writing process into manageable tasks, improved the writing skills of EFL learners. Similarly, Chmarkh (2021) suggest that teaching specific writing strategies, such as using sentence frames and academic vocabulary, can improve the organization and coherence of learners' writing. Additionally, incorporating technology into writing instruction has been shown to be effective in improving EFL learners' writing skills (Basaffar & Alzahrani (2020).

Overall, scaffolding and strategy instruction are important for improving the writing skills of EFL learners. By providing explicit instruction, modeling, and guidance, teachers can help learners develop a better understanding of the writing process and become more confident and autonomous writers. The incorporation of technology can also be beneficial for scaffolding and strategy instruction, providing learners with immediate feedback and opportunities for collaborative learning and practice.

### **Theme 6: Motivation and self-efficacy**

Motivation and self-efficacy are also significant challenges faced by EFL learners when composing academic writing. EFL learners may struggle with low motivation and self-efficacy

due to the challenges they face in writing, which can negatively impact their willingness to engage in the writing process (Basaffar & Alzahrani (2020). These challenges can be compounded by cultural differences, such as differences in writing conventions, which may further decrease learners' motivation and self-efficacy.

To address these challenges, educators can set clear and achievable goals, provide positive reinforcement and encouragement, and foster a supportive and engaging classroom environment. Providing opportunities for self-reflection and self-evaluation can also help learners build confidence in their writing abilities (Vonna et al., 2020).

The importance of motivation and self-efficacy in EFL writing is supported by previous research. For example, Zimmerman (2000) suggests that learners' self-efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in their engagement and success in learning. Similarly, Deci and Ryan (2008) emphasize the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in promoting learners' motivation and engagement in learning.

In conclusion, addressing motivation and self-efficacy challenges in EFL writing requires a supportive and engaging classroom environment, clear goals, and positive reinforcement. By fostering learners' motivation and self-efficacy, educators can help learners develop the confidence and skills necessary for successful academic writing.

The table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the common challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in academic writing and the strategies proposed to address these challenges. The table presents a synthesis of the findings from previous research on EFL writing instruction and highlights the various approaches that have been suggested to improve EFL learners' writing skills. The challenges and strategies presented in the table are categorized based on the areas of difficulty, including linguistic difficulties, organizational and coherence problems, cultural and sociocultural factors, feedback and revision, and motivation and self-efficacy. The table serves as a valuable resource for educators, researchers, and policymakers seeking to address the challenges faced by EFL learners in academic writing and improve their writing proficiency.

Table 3. Challenges faced by EFL learners in academic writing and the strategies proposed to address these challenges

| Authors              | Year | Main Challenges                                  | Strategies to Address Challenges  |
|----------------------|------|--|---|
| Adas & Bakir         | 2013 | Grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure          | Explicit grammar instruction, dictionaries, practice  |
| Alharbi              | 2016 | Grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure          | Explicit grammar instruction, dictionaries, practice  |
| Li & Vuono           | 2020 | Organization, coherence                          | Graphic organizers, outlining, cohesive devices   |
| Lantolf et al.       | 2015 | Cultural differences, sociocultural factors      | Culturally relevant materials, intercultural communication, exploration of cultural differences |
| Solhi & Eginli       | 2020 | Feedback interpretation, application of feedback | Clear, specific feedback, learner involvement, revision opportunities                           |
| Vonna et al.         | 2020 | Writing strategy development                     | Scaffolding techniques, explicit strategy instruction   |
| Basaffar & Alzahrani | 2020 | Motivation, self-efficacy                        | Goal-setting, positive reinforcement, supportive classroom environment                          |

The tabel 3 offers a concise overview of the main challenges and strategies identified in the included studies. By organizing the information in this format, educators and researchers can quickly identify common themes and trends in EFL writing instruction and tailor their approaches to address these challenges effectively. The matrix underscores the importance of employing a combination of strategies to support EFL learners in their journey towards becoming proficient English writers.

The key findings and metadata of the articles included in the meta-synthesis analysis of composition challenges faced by EFL learners provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by EFL learners in writing and the effective strategies for addressing these challenges.

The first theme identified is linguistic difficulties, which are frequently faced by EFL learners. This is supported by studies such as Adas & Bakir (2013) and Alharbi (2016). These studies suggest that explicit grammar instruction, the use of dictionaries and grammar tools, and ample opportunities for practice can help improve EFL learners' language skills.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestions

The meta-synthesis analysis of approaches for EFL students to tackle academic writing obstacles offers an extensive insight into the complex nature of academic writing for individuals who are non-native English speakers. The study identified that overcoming writing difficulties necessitates the combination of multiple techniques, which can be grouped into cognitive, metacognitive, linguistic, motivational, and socio-cultural categories.

Cognitive techniques, such as organizing, drafting, reviewing, and polishing, aid EFL students in structuring their thoughts and expressing their ideas clearly. Metacognitive techniques, like self-assessment, self-control, and introspection, promote learners' awareness of their own writing process, resulting in increased self-belief and better writing outcomes. Linguistic techniques, including improving grammar and expanding vocabulary, support learners in acquiring the essential language skills for successful academic writing. Motivational techniques, like goal-setting, nurturing internal motivation, and making use of feedback, inspire learners to persist and excel in their writing efforts. Finally, socio-cultural techniques, such as teamwork, peer evaluation, and engagement with genuine academic materials, enable learners to connect with their classmates and the broader academic community, thus boosting their writing capabilities.

When developing academic writing courses or interventions for EFL students, educators and curriculum planners should take these techniques into account. By addressing the various challenges EFL students encounter in academic writing, these methods can provide them with the necessary abilities and confidence to flourish in their academic endeavors, leading to a more inclusive and fair global education system.

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