

---

## **The Effect of Strategy-Based Instruction on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Achievement**

**Sasan Baleghizadeh**, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

**Roya Jafari**, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

---

### **Abstract**

Strategy-based instruction (SBI) has been proven to be effective in improving language learning skills including writing. The present study investigated the effect of SBI on Iranian EFL learners' argumentative and narrative writing achievement. To this end, 72 intermediate-level EFL learners were selected and divided into 4 groups with equal numbers -two experimental and two comparison groups. The experimental groups underwent the strategic instruction of RAFT, STOP, DARE, and STAR strategies in order to enhance their argumentative or narrative writing quality through the three main stages of process writing: pre-writing, while writing, and post-writing. Meanwhile, the comparison groups were exposed to the traditional instruction. Additionally, a sub-sample of the experimental groups were interviewed about their abilities in the orchestration of their strategy use. One week after the intervention, a post-test was administered. Quantitative results of the one-way ANCOVA along with the qualitative interpretations of the interviews indicated that the experimental groups significantly outperformed the comparison groups; however, there was no significant difference in the performance of the experimental argumentative and narrative groups.

**Keywords:** Strategy, Strategy-based instruction, Modes of writing, Argumentative writing, Narrative writing

### **Introduction**

Due to pursuing academic purposes in EFL contexts and satisfying the social, communicational, and linguistic needs, writing especially FL writing is deemed as one of the most important and demanding skills to be learned and improved by EFL learners. According to Gillespie, Graham, and McKeown (2013), writing is defined as "a goal-directed and self-sustained cognitive activity requiring the

skillful management of (a) the writing environment, (b) the constraints imposed by the writing topic; (c) the intentions of the writer(s); and (d) the processes, knowledge, and skills involved in composing” (p.4). Writing is one of the active and productive skills that EFL learners face numerous challenges with while doing, hence; the call for a focus on writing in various pedagogical practices is mandatory. Writing is a complex process that requires numerous cognitive and metacognitive activities such as brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting and revising. Omaggio Hadley (1993) claimed that writing is a composing process which requires the ability to whether tell or retell information or events in the form of descriptions or narrations or to transform information into new texts, as in exposition or argumentation. Hence, it is viewed as a continuum of activities that range from more formal and mechanical aspects at one end to the more complex act of composing at the other end. EFL learners face some writing problems, most important of which is that many of them lack adequate knowledge about writing processes and mastery of the fundamental skills vital to produce fluent pieces of writing (Budig, 2006; Quibble & Griffin, 2007; Schoeff, 2007). Furthermore, these problems re rooted in their lack of knowledge about strategic writing techniques, for example; students find it really demanding to write in academic contexts since they suffer from inadequate knowledge about how to generate ideas for writing. Sturm and Rankin-Erickson (2002) stated that composing is an advanced academic task within educational settings and part of the students’ problems in writing are related to difficulties in applying various cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which relate to the lack of a rigorous and systematic methodology in teaching these strategies. Therefore, in order to tackle these issues, the current study attempted to incorporate strategy-based instruction (SBI) as a systematic approach to the teaching of writing modes with the ultimate goal of enhancing writing achievement.

## **Literature Review**

### **Strategy-Based Instruction**

Strategy-based instruction (SBI) is one of the learner-centered approaches to learning that aims to equip learners with effective skills and strategies which will consequently help them to maximize their learning opportunities. Through SBI,

teachers and learners work in collaboration to integrate strategies to the regular language curriculum (Rubin, Chamot, Harris & Anderson, 2007) so that learners can reap the benefits (Chamot, 2005). According to Gu and Nguyen (2013), these learner-focused approaches of strategy training focus on multiple aspects of improving students' metacognition and self-regulation skills, directing learners' attention towards task analysis, and involving comprehensive training packages with the aim of reinforcing both metacognitive management of learning and task analysis. SBI includes "a combination of direct instruction and modeling, as well as guided and independent practice" (Zumbrunn, 2010, p.15). According to Rubin et al. (2007, p.142), the symbolic features of an SBI model revolves around these four respective steps: (1) awareness raising, (2) presentation and modelling, (3) providing multiple practice opportunities, and (4) evaluating the effectiveness of strategies and transferring them to the new tasks.

Writing strategy instruction is a pedagogical approach that intends to familiarize the learners with strategies for all phases of the writing process while breaking down the writing tasks into manageable pieces and making subprocesses and skills much more explicit (Mousapour Negari, 2011). The main purpose of strategic writing instruction is to emphasize learning through pursuing some mental procedures to produce writing and keep the track of the production procedure (Calhoun & Hale, 2003). Strategic writers are distinguishable from non-strategic writers in such a way that they are capable of manipulating some efficient writing strategies in various writing situations. These writers strive to put the theories behind these writing strategies into practice and bring about more organized and richer-in-content pieces of writing (Abdel-Hack, 2002). Arjmand (2012) claimed that if language learners have an array of learning strategies at their disposal, their achievement in language proficiency will be much more facilitated. Therefore, it is necessary for language learners to learn writing strategies that will ultimately provide them with some sufficient support. Numerous studies have verified the success of SBI program on writing achievement of the second or foreign language learners, such as the following:

Chien (2008) explored writing strategy use in Chinese EFL student writers in relation to their achievement in L2 (English) writing. This research took a cognitive approach to the process of writing in a second language as a skilled perfor-

mance in production. A total of 40 Chinese EFL writers in Taiwan partook in this study. The strategies used by high and low achievers in writing revealed through the concurrent think-aloud protocols and immediate retrospective interviews with the students were investigated, analyzed and compared. Results showed that in comparison with low-achieving students, high-achieving students focused more on clearly formulating their position statement in planning, generating texts, and revising and editing such as making meaning changes and fixing grammatical and spelling errors during reviewing. Mousapour Negari (2011) did a study in which she investigated the effect of a single pre-writing strategy, concept mapping, on 60 Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing performance. The study adopted a pre-posttest experimental control group design. The results of the ANCOVA analysis revealed that experimental group outperformed control group on the posttest to a significant level. Mirlohi, Ketabi & Roustaei (2012) attempted to investigate the effect of teaching some concepts of writing knowledge such as developing a topic sentence, writing a central idea, maintaining a body and conclusion on writing achievement of 33 Iranian EFL learners at the upper intermediate level of English proficiency. The results of posttest revealed that the experimental group benefited the advantage of intervention to a noticeable level. Mohseni Asl (2014), examined the effect of teaching pre-writing strategies-brainstorming, concept-mapping, and free writing, on 57 intermediate EFL learners' writing performance. The study had a pre-test, post-test experimental-control group design. The results of three separate Paired Sample t-test revealed that two experimental groups outperformed the control group on the post-test. Bai (2015) did a longitudinal interventional study, examining the effect of four groups of writing strategies (planning, text-generation, feedback handling and revising) on 442 Singapore primary school students' writing competence. The study adopted a quasi-experimental design, quantitative and qualitative analysis of ANCOVA revealed that the experimental group's writing performance was better than the control group and also experimental group was more successful in strategy orchestration and use.

Mohammad Kassem (2017) investigated the effect of a blended strategy based on concept mapping and text structure on EFL learners' writing performance. An intact group (N = 42) of seventh level English majors at Thadiq Sciences and Humanities College, Shaqra University, KSA participated in the study in the first

semester of the academic year 2016-2017. They were assigned to an experimental group and a control group, each consisting of 21 students. A writing pretest was administered to the two groups and scored by two raters using the Weir's TEEP attribute writing scale (1990). An independent samples t-test performed on the pretest mean scores of the two groups showed that they were homogenous prior to the experiment. Concept mapping and text formatting (the proposed blended strategy) were integrated in the Advanced Writing course (Eng 413) for experimental group students. The control group received conventional instruction that did not include the proposed strategy. Independent and paired samples t-tests revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in all the subscales of Weir's TEEP attribute writing scale, hence supporting the positive effect of concept mapping and text formatting on EFL learners' writing performance.

### **Modes of Writing**

A plethora of research has been done on the concept of "genre" and the role it plays in writing. Genre studies have put the recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure of written texts into the center of attention. As Stifler (2002) asserts, modes of writing or rhetorical modes are "patterns of an organization aimed at achieving a particular effect in the reader" (p.1). Generally, modes of writing have been classified into four types; descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative (Connor, 1996; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

### **Argumentative Writing**

Argumentative writing is a genre of writing in which writers strive to take a specific stance and struggle to convince the readers to embrace the same stance or perform a particular action (Fannig, Nippold, & Ward-Lonegran, 2005). Chinn (2006) asserted that written argumentation can bring about an increase in intrinsic motivation and strengthen problem-solving skills in academic settings. From academic perspective, argumentative writing can help learners in acquiring knowledge (Driver, Newton, & Osborne, 2000; Gil, Iiya, Neuman & Schwarz, 2003; Zohar & Nemet, 2002), extending scientific thinking skills (Shanahan, 2004), and deepening understanding of history and social sciences (De La Paz, 2005). Researchers have proven that argumentative writing is one of the most demanding writing models to be learned and developed (Andrews-Weckerly, Ferretti & Lew-

is, 2009; Neff-van & Dafouz-Milne, 2008). Learners need to master this genre in order to orchestrate their own ideas in academic contexts with relying on various patterns and approaches.

### **Narrative Writing**

Narratives are twisted recounts. The nature of narrative writing is to entertain or inform the readers through attracting and holding their attention on a specific story or event. Richards and Schmidt (2002, p.337) define narrative writing as this: “narrative writing reports an event or tells the story of something that happened”. Narratives attempt to teach, inform, represent the writer’s personal experiences, and also expand the readers’ horizons of imagination (Derewianka, 1990). Narratives expose the readers to fictional and non-fictional contexts. Writers use a lot of language features to control these experiences: they lead the readers through the flow of the event and direct them to infer and get the gist of the story. Narrative writers should draw the event so masterfully that the readers can capture most of the scene in mind. Altogether, narrative writing can reinforce the writers’ creative thinking through picturing the personal events in a comprehensive chronological order.

Writing plays a significant role in academic and educational settings; it helps the learners to accomplish their assignments, promote their performance and functioning, and expand their knowledge (Graham & Perin, 2007). Hence, the ability to convey meaning in different written text types is of paramount importance in furthering academic and professional success (Dastjerdi & Hayati Samian, 2011). Although the explicit instruction of writing strategies is not usually practiced in foreign language classrooms, the empirical evidence proves it to be fruitful for language learners. It’s worth mentioning that the review of the empirical studies reveal the fact that most of the interventional studies focus merely on one or at most two writing strategies with considering either one or two stages of writing process like pre-writing or planning; e.g. Fidalgo, Garcia, & Torrance (2008); Mousapour Negari (2011); Limpo & Alves (2013), etc. In EFL pedagogical settings, writing strategies are assumed to be instrumental in helping the learners improve their writing skills. To further delve into this issue and fill the present gaps, the current study intended to examine the impact of the explicit instruction

of four clusters of writing strategies on the writing achievement of EFL learners with focusing on the three main stages of process writing-pre-writing, while-writing, post-writing- through probing the following research questions:

- Q1: Does strategic instruction have any effect on the argumentative writing of EFL learners?
- Q2: Does strategic instruction have any effect on the narrative writing of EFL learners?
- Q3: Which genre of writing (argumentative or narrative) is more sensitive to strategic instruction?
- Q4: Are EFL learners capable of articulating and/or orchestrating their strategy use in their writing process?

## **Methodology**

### **Design**

For the quantitative purpose, this study adopted a quasi-experimental non-randomized comparison group(s), pretest-posttest design. The rationale for choosing such a design was that since in scholastic or institutional contexts, schedules cannot be disrupted nor can classes be reorganized to accommodate a research study, the researcher used preexisting intact classes with nonrandomized members to conduct the study (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker, 2018). Furthermore, in order to add a qualitative dimension to the study, a sub-sample of the experimental groups were randomly selected and individually interviewed both prior to and after the intervention about (a) perceptions on writing skill in general, (b) problematic areas in writing. (c) attitudes towards the target intervention, and (d) reports on the use of strategies in order to capture the quality of the strategy use vis-à-vis the articulation of strategy use.

### **Participants**

A total number of 72 intermediate-level EFL learners, 30 male and 42 female, were selected from the “Language Center of Tehran University” in Tehran, Iran. This academic institute works in affiliation with Tehran University and accounts for educating both undergraduate and postgraduate university students with different university majors and fields of study. The target learners of this study had

been exposed to general English courses for about two years and were currently studying the *Four Corners 4* English book series. Intermediate-level students suited the purpose of the study since the participants were selected to learn and practice “paragraph writing” through applying the writing strategies that aimed to reinforce generating and organizing ideas and enhancing fluency in writing. The learners in pre-existing intact classes were assigned into 4 groups of 18, namely two experimental groups and two comparison groups. Their age ranged from 18 to 30. All of the participants were native Persian speakers and had no prior exposure to strategic writing instruction and partook in the study voluntarily.

### **Instrumentation**

This section is dedicated to elaborating on the instruments used in this study.

#### **Pre-test**

The researcher used pre-testing as a means of gathering baseline data on the participants’ initial argumentative and narrative writing ability in all the groups. The first writing topics in the list of argumentative and narrative topics functioned as the pre-testing topics (Appendix A). The topics were printed on an A4 paper following this instruction: “Write a narrative/ an argumentative paragraph (150 words) about the following topic”:

**Some people like to do only what they already do well. Other people prefer to try new things and take risks. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice**

**Technology is supposed to solve our problems, but sometimes it just complicates them. Write about a time when technology made your life more difficult**

#### **Post-test**

As the nature of an experimental study demands, a posttest was administered in order to gauge the impact of the intervention on the participants’ writing achievement. To this end, the last topics on the list of both argumentative and narrative topics functioned as post-testing topics. Participants in the experimental

and comparison argumentative and narrative groups were asked to write a 150-word paragraph about the intended topics:

**People learn in different ways. Some people learn by doing things; other people learn by reading about things; others learn by listening to people talk about things. Which of these methods of learning is best for you? Use specific examples to support your choice**

**With so many awesome things to learn and do in the world, nobody should ever be bored. Write about a time when you turned a boring day into an exciting one**

### **Stimulated Recall Interviews**

In order to maintain the qualitative dimension of the study, the researcher incorporated stimulated recall interviews (SRI) developed by Mackey and Gass (2000). SRIs investigated the participants' perceptions and understanding of writing skill in general, difficulties in writing, and writing strategies both prior to and after the intervention. The researcher selected four members of the experimental groups of the study randomly and interviewed this sub-sample the study individually. Refer to Appendix B to see one sample of interview. The interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed to be coded and interpreted.

### **Writing Scoring Rubric**

The Test of Written English of TOEFL (TWE) scoring rubric was applied for the purpose of scoring the pre-test and post-test writing papers by two separate scorers. Both of the scorers held an MA degree in TEFL and had more than five years of experience in teaching general English and writing skill in EFL institutes. This rubric provides holistic scoring in which the writings are assessed according to six points (representing six levels of writing proficiency) on a criterion-referenced scale, analyzing the rhetorical, syntactic, and communicative characteristics at each of the six points to provide information about the examinees' strengths and weaknesses in generating and organizing ideas on the paper, supporting those ideas with evidence or examples, and using the conventions of standard written English (Appendix C).

## Procedure

Four clusters of writing strategies represented in mnemonics (RAFT, STOP, DARE, and STAR), each of which including four elements of strategic writing, were chosen and applied in the intervention. These strategies were compatible with the three phases of process writing; namely pre-writing, while writing, and post-writing.

### RAFT strategy

The purpose of RAFT is to make learners orient themselves to the writing task. RAFT encourages students to project their own voices, select formats for presenting their ideas, and respond to writing prompts that call for their consideration of writing from various perspectives as follows (Havens, Santa, & Valdes, 2004):

- **R** stands for determining the Role of the writer; who are you as a writer? A journalist? A narrator? An arguer? An editor? Etc.
- **A** stands for specifying the Audience; who is the receiver or decoder of the written text? Yourself? A Teacher? Parents? A Senator? Etc.
- **F** stands for determining the Format of writing; Is it a Narration? A Description? An Exposition? An Argumentation? etc.
- **T** stands for selecting the Tense; which tense (present, past, future, etc.) is compatible with the given topic and the selected format.

During the pre-writing stage, the teacher tried to strike the learners' interest in thinking about their goals of writing. They were encouraged to ascribe themselves a brand new identity as a writer and choose among a pool of roles (narrator, arguer, reporter, journalist, etc.). Additionally, they became cognizant of not taking the role of their audience for granted, that is who they were writing to and in what setting. Some fundamental information about the structure of narrative and argumentative writings were delivered to the learners in order to initiate the primary steps of drafting.

### STOP and DARE strategies

These two strategies were developed by De La Paz and Graham (1997a, 1997b) in response to students' lack of attention to or familiarity with the importance of planning before composing. These strategies reinforced the sense of

reflection in students' minds; they learned to be reflective by generating ideas to develop their own writing.

### **STOP**

- **S** stands for **S**uspending judgment and **S**triving to free-write about the topic without any kind of restriction.
- **T** stands for **T**aking a stance, in which students themselves decided and chose which ideas they wanted to concentrate on.
- **O** stands for **O**rganizing ideas according to their importance in constructing the paragraph. Students were taught to number the generated ideas according to their importance.
- **P** stands for **P**lanning more. Students were reminded to keep the track of their writing processes and plan more for its further enhancement.

### **DARE**

- **D** stands for **D**eveloping a topic sentence. In this step, students focused on the first sentence to be clear and meaningful
- **A** stands for **A**dding supporting ideas, in which students wrote ideas closely related to the main idea.
- **R** stands for **R**ejecting writing too many details. In this stage, students were asked not to focus on the specific details.
- **E** stands for **E**laborating on each main idea. Students were taught not to leave any main idea without sufficient support and provide an explanation or personal experience.

These two clusters of strategies, were integral to the while-writing phase of process writing. For exercising STOP strategy, the researchers reinforced the learners' self-confidence in writing and encouraged them to have several drafts of writing and use scratch papers on which they could jot down their ideas as freely as they could, prioritize them, delete the unwanted ones and reshape the pertinent ones. As the for DARE strategy, the learners were taught to rewrite their jumbled pieces of writing and put them in the one-paragraph framework, comprising thesis statement (main idea), supporting it through examples, personal experience, expert claims, etc. and closing it one concluding sentence.

### STAR strategy

This strategy is developed by Gallagher (2006). STAR provides a framework for revising the written text in five interconnected steps:

- **S** refers to **S**ubstitution. In this step, students were taught to substitute overused words, unclear verbs, and weak adjectives in order to avoid repetition or ambiguity.
- **T** refers to **T**aking things out. In this stage; students deleted unimportant and irrelevant information in their composed paragraphs 'to deter redundancy.
- **A** refers to **A**dding new information and description to preserve the required meaning. In this step, students were reminded to reread their sentences and adjust them in terms of adding new words or phrases to maintain the intended effect.
- **R** refers to **R**earranging the sequence to produce the desired effect. If needed, the learners were recommended to relocate the sentences to maintain the acceptable coherency.

For post-writing phase, STAR strategy was employed. Learners were taught to act as ones who could self-monitor their own final draft and make some mechanical amendments like substituting poor and repeated vocabulary with rich and wide-ranging ones, checking for minute grammatical mistakes (adding or omitting articles, suffixes, s plural, etc.), and in case necessary, rearrange the sentences to provide full coherence in their writing.

Before commencing the treatment sessions, a separate one-hour session was devoted to raising the participants' awareness of the framework and the writing procedures of argumentative and narrative writing in all the four groups. Two separate handouts labeled as "how to write a narrative paragraph" and "how to write an argumentative paragraph" (appendix D) were distributed among all the groups of study. Pertinent instruction along with the required information were provided by the researcher. Subsequently, the experimental groups started undergoing strategic intervention which took six session and each session lasted for an hour. In every session, one cluster of strategies along with its corresponding phase of process writing, was introduced, instructed, and practiced. During this program, the researcher planned to introduce and teach four clusters of writing strategies (RAFT, STOP, DARE, and STAR) according to Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary,

and Robbins' (1999) model called Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), in which these steps were followed:

1. **Preparation:** Students' current writing strategies were identified for familiar tasks in order to activate their tacit knowledge on the use of strategies.
2. **Presentation:** In this step, the researcher modeled, named, and explained the new strategy.
3. **Practice:** Students practiced the new strategy; in subsequent strategy practice, the teacher faded reminders to encourage independent strategy use.
4. **Self-evaluation:** Students evaluated their own strategy use immediately after practice.
5. **Expansion:** Students were trained and encouraged to transfer the strategies to the new writing tasks with different topics, combine them into clusters and develop a repertoire of preferred strategies.
6. **Assessment:** The researcher assessed the participants' use of writing strategies and their impact on the participants' writing performance.

Students in both of the experimental groups were trained to write a narrative/ an argumentative paragraph on four different topics after learning each strategy and they were reminded to transfer every learned strategy to the new writing task. The aim was to reinforce the cyclic usage of strategies for better learning and greater automaticity. Besides, sufficient feedback was provided on the process of strategy use and the overall quality of writing with more emphasis on the rich content and the orderly process of writing, in such a way that in every draft of writing, the researcher encouraged the use of the target strategy and rewarded those who had successfully applied the strategy with a positive feedback. One week after the intervention, the posttest session was held. In order to enhance the qualitative dimension of the study, the researcher intended to embed stimulated recall interviews into the process. For this qualitative component, a sub-sample of the experimental groups (4 members) were selected randomly and were interviewed individually both prior to and after the intervention. The interviews covered four main aspects of writing related to the study including (a) perceptions about the writing skill, (b) problematic areas while writing, (c) attitudes towards the intervention, and (d) reports on the use of strategies in order to capture the quality of

their strategy use vis-à-vis their articulation of strategy use. The questions based on these four aspects of writing were derived from reviewing the pertinent literature. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed later to be interpreted in the light of the findings of the study. The Comparison groups went through the same procedure with the same duration of time and the number of sessions except for two major differences: after being pretested, the participants in the comparison groups were exposed to the traditional (non-strategic) treatment, during which the researcher emphasized on maintaining the main structure of a good paragraph containing a beginning, sufficient body, and an ending. In addition, feedback on writing papers was product-oriented with a focus on formal aspects of writing such as syntax and mechanics. Likewise, the comparison group participants underwent a post-test session one week after the intervention. For both experimental and comparison groups, the researcher was in charge of instruction.

**Table 1.** Design: Non-Randomized Experimental, Comparison Groups, Pre-test-Posttest

Group	Pre-Test	Independent Variable	Post-Test
E1	Y1	X1	Y2
C1	Y1	X2	Y2
E2	Y1	X1	Y2
C2	Y1	X2	Y2

Results and Discussion

Quantitative results

The quantitative data were analyzed by incorporating a one-way ANCOVA and the qualitative data were gathered through interpreting stimulated recall interviews (SRIs). Pre-test and post-test writing papers were scored by two separate raters and the inter-rater reliability was probed by calculating Pearson correlations. Based on the results, there were statistically significant agreements between the two raters on;

- Pretest of writing ( $r(70) = .617$  representing a large effect size,  $p = .000$ ) and

- Posttest of writing ( $r(70) = .819$  representing a large effect size,  $p = .000$ ).

In order to probe the quantitative research questions, descriptive data are represented below:

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics; Posttest of Writing by Groups with Pretest

Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Comparison Narrative	4.129a	.140	3.849	4.410
Comparison Argumentative	3.944a	.140	3.663	4.224
Experimental Narrative	4.944a	.140	4.663	5.224
Experimental Argumentative	4.927a	.141	4.646	5.209

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pre-test = 3.15.

Note. The means were adjusted for the effect of the pre-test.

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for the groups on the post-test of writing after controlling for the effect of the pre-test.

The results showed that experimental narrative group ( $M = 4.94$ ,  $SE = .140$ ) had the highest mean on the posttest of writing. This was followed by the experimental argumentative ( $M = 4.92$ ,  $SE = .141$ ), comparison narrative ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SE = .140$ ) and comparison argumentative ( $M = 3.94$ ,  $SE = .140$ ).

The main results of the one-way ANCOVA ( $f(3, 64) = 13.93$ ,  $p = .000$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = .384$  representing a large effect size) indicated that there were significant differences between the four groups' means on the post-test of writing after controlling for the effect of the pre-test. The significant F-value of 13.93 should be followed by the post-hoc comparison tests (Table 2) in order to compare the groups two by two.

**Table 3.** Pairwise Comparisons; Posttest of Writing by Groups with Pretest

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Comparison Narrative	Comparison Argumentative	.186	.199	.353	-.211	.582
Experimental Narrative	Comparison Narrative	.814*	.199	.000	.418	1.211
	Comparison Argumentative	1.000*	.198	.000	.604	1.396
	Experimental Argumentative	.016	.199	.935	-.381	.414
Experimental Argumentative	Comparison Narrative	.798*	.199	.000	.401	1.195
	Comparison Argumentative	1.984*	.199	.000	.586	1.381

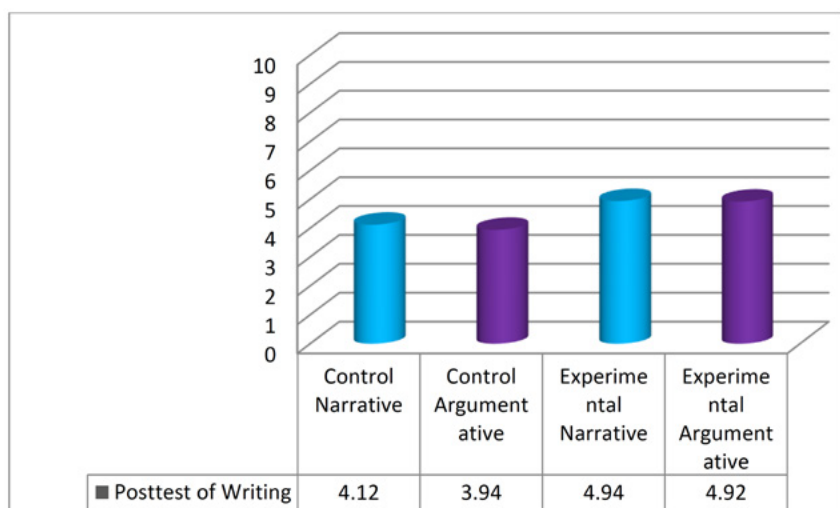
\*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Based on the results displayed in Table 3 it can be concluded that;

The experimental argumentative group (M = 4.92) significantly outperformed the comparison argumentative group (M = 3.94) on the posttest of writing (Mean Difference = .984, p = .000). Thus the first research question was answered as “strategy-based instruction has a positive effect on the argumentative writing of EFL learners”.

The experimental narrative group (M = 4.94) significantly outperformed the comparison narrative group (M = 4.12) on the posttest of writing (Mean Difference = .814, p = .000). Thus the second research question was answered as “strategy-based instruction has a positive effect on the narrative writing of EFL learners”.

There was not any significant difference between experimental narrative (M = 4.94) and experimental argumentative (M = 4.92) groups’ means on the posttest of writing (Mean Difference = .016, p = .935). Thus the third research question was answered as “none of the pre-determined genres of writing is more sensitive to strategy-based instruction”.



**Figure 1.** Means on posttest of writing by groups with pretest

### Qualitative Results

The interviews were held to grasp a more in-depth understanding of the participants' views towards the writing skill and the strategic instruction. A sub-sample of the experimental groups were interviewed about four interrelated aspects of writing including (a) Their perceptions of writing in English, (b) The problematic areas that they faced with while writing, (c) Their attitudes towards writing after the intervention, and (d) Their capability in orchestrating and/or articulating their strategy use during the writing process. For instance, regarding the perceptions and difficulties in writing, one said: ...*"Not very easy, and not too difficult. I mean sometimes writing is challenging for me",...* "Um... the problem is that it is sometimes difficult for me to start my writing. I mean I have some ideas in my mind but I do not know how to start writing and put my ideas on the paper". Considering the attitudes toward the intervention and articulation of strategy use, one claimed: ... *"this program gave me a sense of satisfaction in organizing my writing",...* "RAFT strategy helped me to get prepared before writing and consider my role and STOP strategy helped me to use freewriting technique to generate more ideas and organize them. I tried to write whatever idea came to my mind even if it was not well-structured", ... Based on the obtained responses

about perceptions on writing and difficulties while writing, it was interpreted that most EFL learners view writing as a challenging skill and generally do not have welcoming attitudes towards it, at the same time they suffer from incompetence in some areas of writing including difficulty with initiating writing, inability to generate sufficient ideas, lack of organization in writing, frustration with finding proper words and using the correct grammar, etc. After the intervention, in order to gauge the efficiency of the strategic instruction and evaluate the participants' awareness of the use of strategies, the same interviewees were interviewed again. Based on the received answers on this qualitative part of the study, the researcher concluded that in comparison to the pre-intervention interview, in a post-intervention interview, the interviewees were much more confident while writing and were better aware of the writing processes they were going through (pre-writing, while-writing, post-writing). Additionally, they held positive attitudes towards the intervention and could orchestrate their strategy use more effectively. Hence, the fourth research question was answered as "EFL learners are capable of articulating and/ or orchestrating their strategy use to varying degrees". The results of this fraction of study are in line with studies done by Sengupta (2000), Hu (2005), Min (2006), and Bai (2015).

## Discussion

The findings of this study further corroborate the fact that strategy-based instruction plays a significantly positive role in improving EFL learners' writing achievement while applying different modes of writing. These findings are in line with the study done by Meghyasi and Hashamdar (2015) on the effect of explicit instruction of concept mapping strategies on Iranian EFL learners' descriptive and persuasive writing achievement, Mahnam and Nejad Ansari (2012) on the effect of explicit instruction of three pre-writing strategies namely concept mapping, reading relevant texts and negotiation on the argumentative writing of the advanced-level Iranian EFL learners and Wong and Hew (2010) who investigated the effect of teaching two strategies namely blogging and scaffolding on the narrative writing of primary students in Singapore. The results of the analysis the latter study indicated that learners had a significant improvement on the post-test. Nonetheless, in contrary to this study, this study lacked a control group, so re-

search validation was not confirmed. Clearly stated, there was no strong evidence to conclude whether the positive effect of SBI was the result of the intervention or some other extraneous factors. It is worth mentioning that the findings of the current study were an additional support to Chen's claim (2007) that explicit instruction is of paramount importance in engaging the learners more and more in the dynamic internal changes in the learning process since the learners become more sensitive towards the learning process and are willing to delve into other stages of writing process by the end of the intervention and countered the claim that allotting some class time to strategic instruction may be of a trivial use (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007).

There are numerous reasons that can be attributed to the outperformance of the experimental groups after the strategic intervention in this study.

First, the better performance of the experimental groups may be related to the success of the strategic instruction program that had adopted Chamot et al.'s CALLA model. Since CALLA manifested strategy instruction as task-specific in nature and was designed in a cyclic fashion to suit the learners' writing needs by employing both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, this study as well employed this cyclic fashion to equip the learners with the target strategies in a step-wise fashion. CALLA verifies the underlying theories of Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) proposed by Vygotsky (1978). All of the groups, experimental and comparison, had the potential to gain better results on the posttest and it did happen, but the experimental groups were the exclusive beneficiaries of the strategic instruction through awareness raising and scaffolding and therefore gained a higher achievement. The strategies were introduced and taught explicitly and the participants in the experimental groups mediated their writings in all the three phases of the writing process. This type of teaching assumed a teacher-student interaction and negotiation paradigm with a salient focus on the active role of the learner as a strategy user that is a requisite factor in being a self-regulated learner (Vygotsky, 1978). During this process, in the beginning, the researcher assumed most of the responsibility by leading the learners into the path of learning with the ultimate intention of releasing most of the responsibility to the learners.

Second, the effectiveness of the interventional program may lie in the bodies of studies indicating that explicit strategy instruction, which makes learners aware of the value and purpose of learning strategies and equips them with adequate opportunities for practice and self-evaluation, can result in enhanced strategy use and higher gains in writing achievement respectively (Cohen, Li, & Weaver, 1998; Ikeda & Takeuchi, 2003; Gavriilidou & Papanis, 2009). Integration of explicit strategy instruction into EFL contexts is consistent with O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) assumption that contextualized learning is more efficacious since learners become aware of how language can be applied in different situations.

Third, a plausible interpretation to the success of the intervention is that by adopting the strategy-based instruction model, the researcher strived to create a safe and learner-centered language learning environment wherein the participants' mistakes or errors in writing were considered as a sign of progress in their learning process. The researcher established rapport with the participants, based on mutual respect and encouraged them to further expand their writing skills.

Finally, the findings of this study add up to further confirmation of Bloom's assertion (2008), who believes that if second or foreign language learners are equipped with the appropriate writing strategies, they can optimize their own understanding, assessment, and as a result enhance their independent learning in general and writing skills in particular.

## **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, this research study was an additional contribution to confirm the fact that if EFL learners are offered with a plethora of practical writing strategies during their process of writing in an EFL language learning context, they will be prone to enhance their opportunities for producing written texts that are well-organized, more planned and higher in quality. The results of this study have some worth-mentioning implications for ELT practitioners as follows:

Coursebook developers are recommended to embed writing strategies into the existing writing lessons. In that case, teachers may increase students' confidence in writing by introducing multiple writing strategies since one of the crucial considerations in impeding or overcoming writing barriers is to help EFL writers

master the cognitive and metacognitive aspects of composing. Syllabus designers are advised to provide a full cycle of strategic writing instruction suitable for the local context. Besides, teacher trainers should take the priority in familiarizing the prospective teachers with the concept of strategic instruction during the teacher training courses. EFL instructors are advised to put an end to teaching writing with a mere focus on the writing product rather than the writing process. Instead, an integrated approach should be embedded in the curriculum since competence of writing process is believed to play a more significant role than the writers' linguistic competence (Krapels, 1990). Finally, EFL learners are recommended to discard their old and unproductive writing habits and as the result of immersing themselves in strategic writing programs, develop a repertoire of their preferred strategies and expand them to the new writing tasks in order to enhance their writing quality.

Some suggestions for future research are recommended in this area of practice:

First, this research project was conducted for adult learners. Replications of this study can be done to include participants with a variety of language learners, especially young learners. Since Graham, McKeown, Kiuahara, and Harris (2012) assert that writing strategies are of paramount importance in young learners' learning to write, hence demanding the need for implementing evidence-based writing instruction into the classrooms. In that case, EFL learners can be trained to be effective writers from young.

Second, the nature of experimental and quasi-experimental studies demand post-testing to establish the effect of the intended instruction. However; incorporating a delayed test can further strengthen the efficiency of the intervention and let the researcher measure if the obtained interventional effects can sustain beyond the intervention period. Therefore, administering a delayed test followed by a posttest is recommended in future studies.

Third, this study considered the intermediate proficiency level of proficiency. However, other proficiency levels such as advanced can be mediated in such studies as well. Therefore, proficiency level as another determining variable can be incorporated and its effect can be scrutinized in the future research studies.

Last but not least, for the sake of novelty and bringing about further insights into various aspects of strategy-based instruction, future researchers are recommended to try online strategy instruction and design online courses to gauge the SBI impact on the learners' performance.

### References

- Abdel-Hack, I. M. (2002). The effectiveness of a task-based learning approach on EFL students' writing production. *Occasional Papers in the Language Education Center for Developing of English Language Teaching "CDELTA"*, 34, 193-231.
- Andrews-Weckerly, S., Ferretti, R. P., & Lewis, W. (2009). Do goals affect the structure of students' argumentative writing strategies? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(3), 577-589. doi: 10.1037/a0014702.
- Arjmand, G. (2012). *The relationship of self-regulated learning and motivational learning strategies with intermediate EFL learners' achievement* (Unpublished master's thesis). Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran.
- Ary, D., Cheser Jacobs, L., Sorensen Irvine, C. K. & Walker, A. (2018). *Introduction to research in education (10<sup>th</sup> edition)*. The United States: Cengage Learning.
- Bai, B. (2015). The effects of strategy-based writing instruction in Singapore primary schools. *System*, 53, 96-106.
- Bloom, M. (2008). Second language composition in independent settings: Supporting the writing process with cognitive strategies. In S. Hurd & T. Lewis (Eds.), *Language strategies in independent settings* (pp. 103-118). Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Budig, G. A. (2006). Writing: A necessary tool. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 87(9), 663.
- Calhoun, S. & Hale, J. (2003). *Improving students writing through different writing styles* (M.A. Action Research Project). Saint Xavier University and Sky-

- light Professional Development Field-Based Master's Program. Retrieved from IRI\Skylight Field-Based Master's Program.
- Chamot, A.U. (2005). The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA): An update. In P.A. Richard-Amato & M.A. Snow (Eds.), *Academic success for English language learners: Strategies for K-12 mainstream teachers* (pp.87-101). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Chamot, A. U., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P.B., & Robbins, J. (1999). *The learning strategies handbook*. London and New York: Longman.
- Chen, Y. (2007). Learning to learn: The impact of strategy training. *ELT Journal*, 61(1). doi:10.1093/elt/ccl041. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl041>.
- Chinn, C. A. (2006). Learning to argue. In A.M. O'Donnell, C.E. Hmelo-Silver & G. Erkens, (Eds.), *Collaborative learning, reasoning, and technology* (pp. 355-383). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Chien, S. C. (2008). A cognitive analysis of the relationships between Chinese EFL writers' strategy use and writing achievement performance. *Cambridge Occasional Papers in Linguistics*, 3(4), 44-61.
- Cohen, A. D., Li, T. Y., & Weaver, S. J. (1998). The impact of strategies-based instruction on speaking a foreign language. In A. D. Cohen (Ed.), *Strategies in learning and using a second language* (pp. 107–156). London: Longman.
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second-Language Writing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dastjerdi, H. & Hayati Samian, S. (2011). Quality of Iranian EFL learners' argumentative essays: Cohesive devices in focus. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(2), 65-76.
- De La Paz, S. (2005). Effects of historical reasoning instruction and writing strategy mastery in culturally and academically diverse middle school classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 97(2), 139-156. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.97.2.139.

- De La Paz, S. & Graham, S. (1997a). Strategy instruction in planning: Effects on the writing performance and behavior of students with learning difficulties. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 167-181.
- De La Paz, S. & Graham, S. (1997b). Effects of dictation and advanced planning instruction on the composing of students with writing and learning problems. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 203-222.
- Derewianka, B. (1990). *Exploring how texts work*. Rozelle, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.
- Driver, R., Newton, P. & Osborne, J. (2000). Establishing the norms of scientific argumentation in classrooms. *Science Education*, 84, 287-313.
- Fanning J. L., Nippold, M. A., & Ward-Lonergan J. M. (2005). Persuasive writing in children, adolescents, and adults: A study of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic development. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. 36, 125-38.
- Fidalgo, R., Garcia, J. N., & Torrance, M. (2008). The long-term effects of strategy-focused writing instruction for grade six students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. 33, 672-693.
- Gallagher, K. (2006). *Teaching adolescent writers*. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Gavriilidou, Z. & Papanis, A. (2009). The effect of strategy instruction on strategy use by Muslim students learning English as a foreign language. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 47-63.
- Gil, J., Iiya, M., Neuman, Y., & Schwarz, B. B. (2003). Construction of collective and individual knowledge in argumentative activity. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 12, 219-256.
- Gillespie, A., Graham, S. & McKeown, D. (2013). Writing: importance, development, and instruction. *Reading and Writing*, 26(1), 1-15. doi: 10.1007/s11145-012-9395-2.

- Graham, S., McKeown, D., Kiuahara, S. & Harris, K. (2012). A meta-analysis of writing instruction for students in the elementary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104, 879-896.
- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing Next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- Gu, Y. & Nguyen, L. T. C. (2013). Strategy-based instruction: A learner-focused approach to developing learner autonomy. *Language Teaching Research*, 17 (1), 9-30.
- Havens, L., Santa, C., & Valdes, B. (2004). *Project CRISS: Creating independence through Student-owned strategies*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
- Hu, G. (2005). Using peer review with Chinese ESL student writers. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(3), 321-342.
- Ikeda, M. & Takeuchi, O. (2003). Can strategy instruction help EFL learners to improve their reading ability? An empirical study. *JACET Bulletin*, 37, 49–60.
- Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2000). *Stimulated recall methodology in second language research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Mahnam, L. & Nejadansari, D. (2012). The effects of different pre-writing strategies on Iranian EFL writing achievement. *International Educational Studies*, 5(1), 154-160 <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n1p154>.
- Meghyasi, M. & Hashamdar, M. (2015). The Effect of Concept Mapping Strategies on Iranian EFL Learners' Descriptive and Persuasive Writing. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 2(7), 57-68.
- Min, H. T. (2006). The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15, 118-141.
- Mirlohi, M., Ketabi, S., & Roustaei, M. (2012). The effect of instruction on writing performance of intermediate EFL Persian students. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(4), doi:10.5296/ijl.v4i4.2448.

- Mohammad Kassem, H. (2017). The effectiveness of a blended strategy based on concept mapping and text structure in enhancing EFL learners' writing performance. *EFL JOURNAL*, 2(2). doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21462/eflj.v2i2.30>.
- Mohseny Asl, F. (2014). A study on multiple strategies instruction and learners' writing achievements. *Linguistic and Literary Broad Research and Innovation*, 3(1 &2).
- Mousapour Negari, G. (2011). A study on strategy instruction and EFL learners writing skill. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 1(2), 299-307.
- Neff-van A. J. & Dafouz-Milne E. (2008). Argumentation Patterns in Different Languages: An Analysis of Metadiscourse Markers in English and Spanish Texts. In M. Pütz & J.A. Neff-van Aertselaer (Eds.), *Developing contrastive pragmatics: Interlanguage and cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 87-102). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Limpo, T. & Alves, R. A. (2013). Teaching planning or sentence combining strategies: Effective SRSD interventions at different levels of written composition. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 38, 328-341.
- Krapels, A. R. (1990). An overview of second language writing process research. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second Language writing* (pp. 37-56). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Omaggio Hadley, A. (1993). *Teaching language in context*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- O'Malley, J. M. & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quible, Z. K. & Griffin, F. (2007). Are writing deficiencies creating a lost generation of business writers? *Journal of Education for Business*, 82(6), 32-36. doi:10.3200/JOEB.83.1.32-36.
- Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.), Pearson Education Limited.

- Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Great Britain: Longman.
- Schoeff, M. (2007). Skill levels of U.S. grads leave employers cold. *Workforce Management*, 86(7), 14.
- Sengupta, S. (2000). An Investigation into the Effects of Revision Strategy Instruction on L2 Secondary School Learners. *System*, 28, 97-113.
- Shanahan, C. (2004). Teaching science through literacy. In T.L. Jetton & J.A. Dole (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy research and practice* (pp. 75-93). New York: Guilford.
- Stifler, B. (2002). Rhetorical modes. Retrieved January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, from <http://users.cd.net/stifler/en110/modes.html>.
- Sturm, J. M. & Rankin-Erickson, J. (2002). Effects of hand-drawn and computer-generated concept mapping on the expository writing of middle school students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*. 17(2), 124-139.
- Rubin, J., Chamot, A. U., Harris, V. & Anderson, N. J. (2007). Intervening in the use of strategies. In A. D. Cohen & E. Macaro (Eds.), *Learning strategies in foreign and second language classrooms* (pp. 117-139). London: Continuum.
- Wong, R. M. F., & Hew, K. F. (2010). The impact of blogging and scaffolding on primary school pupils' narrative writing: a case study. *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies*, 5, 1-17.
- Zohar, A. & Nemet, F. (2002). Fostering students' knowledge and argumentation skills through dilemmas in human genetics. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 39, 35–62.
- Zumbrunn, S. (2010). *Nurturing young students' writing knowledge, self-regulation, attitudes, and self-efficacy: The effects of self-regulated strategy development*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Nebraska, US.

### About the Authors

*Sasan Baleghizadeh is Associate Professor of TEFL at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, Iran, where he teaches courses in Applied Linguistics and Materials Development. He is interested in investigating the role of interaction in English language teaching and issues related to materials development. His published articles appear in both national and international journals including TESL Reporter, MEXTESOL Journal, ELT Journal, Language Learning Journal, and Issues in Language Teaching.*

*Roya Jafari is currently a Ph.D. student of TEFL at the University of Tehran, in Iran. She obtained her MA degree in TEFL from Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, Iran. Her research interests include language learning strategies and teaching writing to EFL students.*

## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Argumentative topics

##### *Pre-test topic*

1. **Some people like to do only what they already do well. Other people prefer to try new things and take risks. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.**

##### *Session topics*

2. Some people think that they can learn better by themselves than with a teacher. Others think that it is always better to have a teacher. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons to support your answer.
3. Some people believe that university students should be required to attend classes. Others believe that going to classes should be optional for students. Which point of view do you agree with? Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.
4. Some people prefer to live in a small town. Others prefer to live in a big city. Which place would you prefer to live in? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.
5. Some people spend their entire lives in one place. Others move a number of times throughout their lives, looking for a better job, house, community, or even climate. Which do you prefer: staying in one place or moving in search of another place? Use reasons and specific examples to support your opinion.
6. Some people prefer to spend their free time outdoors. Other people prefer to spend their leisure time indoors. Would you prefer to be outside or would you prefer to be inside for your leisure activities? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your choice.
7. Some people believe that students should be given one long vacation each year. Others believe that students should have several short vacations throughout the year. Which viewpoint do you agree with? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

##### *Post-test topic*

8. **People learn in different ways. Some people learn by doing things; other people learn by reading about things; others learn by listening to people**

**talk about things. Which of these methods of learning is best for you? Use specific examples to support your choice.**

### **Narrative Topics**

#### ***Pre-test topic***

1. Technology is supposed to solve our problems, but sometimes it just complicates them. **Write about a time when technology made your life more difficult.**
2. Boys and girls are treated differently at times. It's not fair, but it happens. **Write about a time when you were treated differently because of your gender.** It can be in a way that benefited you or worked against you.
3. Everybody has a special talent. **Write about the time when you discovered one of your talents.**
4. The world can be a cold place, but a little bit of kindness can make it a lot warmer. **Write about a time when you made the world a better place for someone by being kind.**
5. Practice makes perfect. **Write about a time when you got better at doing something by practicing.**
6. So much in life is about the choices that you make. **Write about a time when you had to choose between two things that were important to you.**
7. It is good to play it safe, but sometimes you have to take chances. **Write about a time when you took a risk.** Did it work out for you?

#### ***Post-test topic***

7. With so many awesome things to learn and do in the world, nobody should ever be bored. **Write about a time when you turned a boring day into an exciting one.**

## **Appendix B**

### **Stimulated Recall Interview Questions**

#### **Pre-intervention questions**

- Q1: Do you find writing in English as an easy or difficult task in general?
- Q2: What is/ are the problems that you face while writing?
- Q3: Q: Do you know any ways to solve this problem?

- Q4: Most of the English students think that writing is a difficult skill, do you agree or disagree with this?
- Q5: why do you think that writing is demanding?
- Q6: Do you know how to deal with this problem?
- Q7: Do you consider yourself as a proficient writer or a struggling writer?
- Q8: Can you explain more about your deficiencies in writing?
- Q9: In your opinion, how can you solve this problem?
- Q10: What do you think about the writing skill? Is it easy for you to develop a good piece of writing?
- Q11: Why don't you tend to write more?
- Q12: Do you follow some strategies to tackle this issue?

### **Post-intervention questions**

- Q: How did the writing process go on? How did you feel during the writing writing?
- Q: Did you get any help from any strategies that you learned to use?
- Q: Which strategy was the most useful one for you?
- Q: What did you do to improve your writing?
- Q: Which strategies did you find the most convenient to use?
- Q: Why that strategy? What do you know about its use?
- Q: Did you use DARE strategy in your writing?
- Q: How did this strategy help you?
- Q: Did you use any strategy to solve your problem with finding good words while writing?
- Q: Which strategy did you refer to a lot in your writing?
- Q: What was your preferred strategy in the writing process and why?
- Q: Did you use any other strategies to help you with the grammar problem?
- Q: Among these four strategies, which one was easiest to use for you?

## **Appendix C**

### **Test of Written English (TWE) Scoring Rubric Scores**

- 6. Demonstrates clear competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it may have occasional errors.**

A paper in this category

- Effectively addresses the writing task
- Is well-organized and well-developed
- Uses clearly appropriate details to support a thesis or illustrate ideas
- Displays consistent facility in the use of language
- Demonstrates syntactic variety and appropriate word choice

**5. Demonstrates competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it will probably have occasional errors.**

A paper in this category

- May address some parts of the task more effectively than the others
- Is generally well-organized and developed
- Uses details to support an idea
- Displays facility in the use of language
- Demonstrates some syntactic variety and range of vocabulary

**4. Demonstrates minimal competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels.**

A paper in this category

- Addresses the writing topic adequately but may slight parts of the task
- Is adequately organized and developed
- Uses some details to support a thesis or illustrate an idea
- Demonstrates adequate but possibly inconsistent facility with syntax and usage
- May contain some errors that occasionally obscure meaning

**3. Demonstrates some developing competence in writing, but it remains flawed on either the rhetorical or syntactic level, or both.**

A paper in this category may reveal one or more of the following weaknesses:

- Inadequate organization or development
- Inappropriate or insufficient details to support or illustrate generalizations
- A noticeably inappropriate choice of words or word forms
- An accumulation of errors in sentence structure and/or usage

## 2. Suggests incompetence in writing.

A paper in this category is seriously flawed by one or more of the following Weaknesses:

- Serious disorganization or underdevelopment
- Little or no detail, or irrelevant specifics
- Serious and frequent errors in sentence structure or usage
- Serious problems with focus

## 1. Demonstrates incompetence in writing

A paper in this category

- may be incoherent
- may be undeveloped
- may contain severe and persistent writing errors

## Appendix D

### How to Write an Argumentative Paragraph?

#### The meaning of some key words in the argumentative writing context

**Argue (v.):** To state, give clear reasons that something is true.

**Arguer (n.):** One who argues in writing to convince the readers.

**Argumentative (adj.):** Prone to argue or take side/position/stance.

#### What Is an Argument in the writing context?

An argument is an opinion supported by facts. Writers refer to opinions as claims and facts as evidence. The claim clearly states a stance on a topic or issue. Evidence to prove this claim can include reasons, personal experience, statistics, confirmed facts, and expert research.

#### In an argumentative paragraph,

- We decide if we are for or against the idea, so we begin by taking a stance (a **position** or way of looking at the topic).
- The purpose is to persuade or convince the audience of the soundness of your position
- Build **reasoning** by using evidence to **convince**.

## Sample argumentative paragraph

### Topic

Some people believe that music classes should be central to the high school English curriculum in urban public schools, others believe that it's unnecessary and should be banned. What's your idea? Support your answer.

**STANCE:** Music classes should be central to the high school English curriculum in urban public schools.

**EVIDENCE:** In a recent media survey of students attending the two urban high schools, music classes were rated as the favourite class choice. Education researcher, Dierdre Paul, promotes music as a valid literary instrument alongside traditional poetry as a means of linking the culture of students to educational content. This will make them more engaged and successful.

**EXPLANATION:** If students in urban high schools love music classes so much, then those who typically would not engage in studying older works, like Shakespeare, might find song lyrics a powerful source of statements about life. If a major reason we ask them to read older literature is to consider the life themes that seem ageless and universal across cultures and social groups, why not consider the same themes in music? There are many songs that present social tensions raise issues about the role of women, love, money, and life and death. These are all themes that we could find in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Within culturally diverse urban schools, using music alongside traditional literature can aid in the analysis of complex academic texts in ways that students find meaningful.

## How to write a narrative paragraph?

**Narrate (v.):** To tell a story or describe an event in order.

**Narrator (n.):** Tperson who tells a story, explains or describes what is happening or has happened.

**Narrative (adj.):** A description of events in a story. It's derived from the verb narrate.

- In a narrative paragraph, we try to tell a story by describing all the events in a chronological order.
- A chronological order means that the story begins at the beginning and ends at the end in order to maintain an interesting content.

- It introduces the 4 Ws: Who, What, Where, When (within the context of the action)
- The aim of narrative writing is to put the readers in the scene and make it happen for them

## Framework

### 1. Opening

#### *A central idea*

- Topic sentence
- What the event is about
- 4 Ws

### 2. Body

Provide a summary of the story/event in a climax order	↗	The beginning of the story
	→	The middle of the story
	↘	The end of the story

### 3. Conclusion

- Restate the topic sentence
- Give a concluding remark
- Make a prediction about the story
- Make a suggestion

Sample narrative paragraph

Topic: everyone has experienced frightening experiences in life like nightmares. Write about one of your nightmares in your life.

#### *My Shopping Norte's Nightmare*

(1) I will never forget the first time I got lost in La Paz City. (2) I was traveling with my parents during summer vacation. (3) We were in a department store, and I was so excited to see such a huge place. (4) Suddenly, I turned around to ask my mom something, but she was gone! (5) I began crying and screaming at the top of my lungs. (6) A salesclerk came up to me and dad came running toward me and ask if I was okay. (7)

She got on the public address (P.A.) system and notified the customers that a little boy with blue jeans and a red cap was lost. **(8)** Two minutes later my mom and dad came running toward me. **(9)** We all cried and hugged each other. **(10)** I will never forget that day as long as I live.