

Exploring the Strategies Used by English Teachers in Teaching Writing for Junior High School Students at Kota Bengkulu

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ABSTRACT

Writing is a fundamental skill in English language learning that requires the application of effective instructional strategies. Various strategies have been implemented in writing classrooms, including writing strategies, summarization, collaborative writing, specific product goals, word processing, sentence combining, prewriting, inquiry activities, the process writing approach, the study of models, and writing for content learning. This study aimed at examining the writing strategies employed by English teachers in junior high schools. To achieve the objective, interviews were conducted with two experienced junior high school English teachers. The interview questions were developed based on the writing instruction framework proposed by Graham and Perin (2007). The data was analyzed descriptively using the content analysis technique. The findings reveal that teachers primarily utilize summarization, collaborative writing, sentence combining, inquiry activities, and the study of models in their writing instructions. Additionally, the teachers emphasized that these strategies are essential and effective in enhancing students' writing skills.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing properly is more than just an option for young people; it is a need. Like reading ability, writing ability is a predictor of academic achievement and a basic necessity for involvement in civic life and the global economy (Graham & Perin, 2007). Teaching writing to junior high school students is a multifaceted and challenging task, particularly in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Writing is not merely a basic skill but a complex process requiring mastery of vocabulary, grammar, organizational skills, and creativity. It also demands the integration of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, making it one of the most demanding areas of language instruction (Amalia et al., 2021).

Recent studies highlight the significant hurdles faced by teachers, including students' limited grammatical competence, underdeveloped vocabulary, and challenges in generating ideas for writing. Other issues such as demotivation, insufficient teaching time, and limited resources further compound these difficulties (Amalia et al., 2021; Tabernero, 2024). Effective strategies that address these challenges are essential for fostering students' writing ability and ensuring their engagement with the learning process.

Writing strategies involve various classroom practices and activities that facilitate the development of writing skills, emphasizing both the process and the product (Raimes, 1983). Raimes argued that effective strategies should address pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing stages, as these are integral parts of the writing process. According to Brown (2001) writing strategies involve balancing the focus on form (grammar and mechanics) with meaning and communication. Brown emphasizes the importance of engaging students in meaningful writing tasks that reflect real-world purposes. In addition, Graham and Perin (2007) stated that writing strategies include explicit instruction in planning, drafting, and revising text.

Teaching writing strategies is a dynamic and student-centered process. By incorporating research-backed techniques, teachers can address the diverse needs of students and foster their development into competent writers. For these strategies to be effective, they must be adjusted to the learners' proficiency levels and educational contexts.

Moreover, various teaching strategies have been developed and tested over the years to improve writing instruction. Strategies such as using collaborative writing exercises, explicit vocabulary instruction, and incorporating contextualized writing tasks have proven effective in addressing student limitations. Additionally, teachers frequently use rubrics and analytical scoring systems to ensure fair and consistent assessments of students' writing abilities (Tabernero, 2024; Pardede et al., 2022). These approaches not only promote writing skill development but also encourage critical thinking and creativity.

In EFL settings like Indonesia, contextual factors such as cultural norms, curriculum standards, and resource availability influence the effectiveness of writing instruction. Teachers must balance these factors while implementing pedagogical strategies that cater to students' diverse needs. For instance, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools into the teaching process has been recommended as a means to enhance engagement and facilitate learning autonomy (Amalia et al., 2021; Tabernero, 2024).

The previous research highlights the complexity of teaching writing to junior high school students in EFL contexts, emphasizing the need for effective instructional

strategies. Writing is a demanding skill that requires mastery of vocabulary, grammar, organization, and cognitive strategies. Teachers face challenges such as students' limited grammatical competence, underdeveloped vocabulary, lack of motivation, and resource constraints. To address these challenges, various writing strategies have been proposed, including those outlined by Graham & Perin (2007), which encompass eleven types of writing instruction. Additionally, integrating ICT tools has been suggested to enhance engagement and promote self-directed learning, though its role in writing instruction remains underexplored. Existing studies, such as Jurianto et al. (2015), indicate that teachers frequently use some of these strategies, but their application varies based on school settings, teacher preferences, and student needs.

This research seeks to explore the specific strategies employed by English teachers in teaching writing to junior high school students. The strategies used were analyzed based on eleven types of writing instructions by Graham & Perin (2007). The decision is based on Graham and Perin's identification, which was intended for teaching writing to teenage students in grades 4 to 12. As a result, the forms of writing instructions are suited for teaching writing to middle school students. The eleven types of writing instructions include writing strategies, summarization, collaborative writing, specific product goals, word processing, sentence combining, pre-writing, inquiry activities, process writing approach, study of models, and writing for content learning (Graham & Perin, 2007). By examining these strategies, this study aims to contribute to improving writing strategies and equipping educators with practical solutions for classroom challenges.

Research on how English teachers in junior high schools in EFL contexts like Indonesia implement the eleven types of writing instruction proposed by Graham & Perin (2007) is still meager. While previous studies have identified general challenges in teaching writing (e.g., grammatical difficulties, limited vocabulary, lack of motivation) and proposed broad strategies for improvement, there is limited research that systematically explores which of Graham & Perin's strategies are most commonly used, how they are adapted to the local educational context, and their effectiveness in addressing students' writing challenges. By focusing on these eleven writing strategies, this study provides empirical evidence on their implementation in real classroom settings, offering practical insights for teachers, and contributing to the improvement of writing instruction in EFL junior high school contexts.

Research questions

1. What strategies do English teachers use to implement Graham & Perin's (2007) eleven types of writing instruction in their classrooms?
2. Which strategies are perceived as most effective in improving students' writing skills?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have been conducted to analyze the strategies used by teachers in teaching writing. Jurianto, et al. (2015) conducted the study based on the eleven types of writing strategies described by Graham & Perin (2007). The study showed that teachers employed collaborative writing, sentence combining, prewriting, inquiry activities, and study models frequently in the classroom. The teachers considered the strategies useful to develop their students' English writing skills. The findings revealed that teachers have

used a variety of writing instruction techniques in their teaching profession. Next, Elmahida, et al. (2021) studied the teaching of writing to young learners. They found that the approach should focus on many aspects. First, teachers must understand the best technique to improve the quality of the young learners' writing skills. To effectively teach young learners, teachers must consider three key factors: student characteristics, entertaining learning strategies, and peer feedback. Third, teachers should understand whether their strategies are effective in assisting students in achieving the best possible learning outcomes. Understanding all of these characteristics allows teachers to easily determine the best technique for teaching writing to their students.

Another study conducted by Fernando (2022) revealed that teachers use six strategies to encourage EFL high school learners to take part in writing classes: constructing motivation and confidence in writing, applying English as a classroom language, utilizing technology in writing, requiring the use of dictionaries, combining assessment and teaching, and practicing time management skills. Additionally, Pardede, et al. (2022) identified various teacher's strategies for assessing students' writing abilities, including constructive and contextual methods, rubrics, simple text, essays, case studies, and problem-based learning. This study showed three challenges for teachers in learning related to writing assessments, specifically preparation, execution, and assessment. Moreover, the findings suggest that learning to write can enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling significantly.

Furthermore, Rahayu (2016), who studied writing strategies employed in higher education English classrooms, found that the lecturer used a variety of approaches, methods, strategies and techniques. The class emphasized practicing the five stages of writing: prewriting, writing, revising, editing, and publishing. Additionally, various approaches were employed, including student-centered, genre-based, and process-oriented, while the techniques often employed included mind mapping, brainstorming, and guided writing. Strategies employed include scaffolding, listing, free writing, and grouping. These could assist students in improving their literacy practices. Finally, Tabernero (2024) recommended designing assessment programs and training to increase contextualization, ICT integration, and learning autonomy. English language teachers understand the importance of systematic writing assessment methodologies, as well as the relevance of fresh strategies that promote not only fairness but also efficiency that is adaptable to students' improvement in English writing competencies.

Writing Strategies

Writing strategies refer to the techniques, approaches, and methods that teachers and students use to enhance the writing process in English language learning. These strategies help learners plan, organize, draft, revise, and edit their writing effectively. Teachers often implement various writing strategies to support students in overcoming challenges. Graham and Perin (2007) emphasize that writing strategy instruction is particularly effective for adolescent learners, especially those who face challenges with writing, making it a valuable approach across different student populations. Writing instruction encompasses a variety of pedagogical strategies aimed at enhancing students' writing abilities while also utilizing writing as a tool for learning. Research has demonstrated the following eleven distinct instructional approaches contribute significantly to the development of students' writing skills.

The first instructional strategy is systematic writing strategies, which involve the explicit teaching of techniques for planning, revising, and editing written compositions. Harris et al. (2008) assert that systematic instruction in strategies such as brainstorming, outlining, and iterative revision significantly improves students' ability to approach writing in an organized manner. Furthermore, writing strategies enhance metacognitive skills, enabling students to self-monitor and regulate their writing progress. The second strategy is summarization, which requires direct and structured instruction to support students in effectively condensing texts. Duke and Pearson (2002) highlight that summarization facilitates comprehension and retention by guiding students to identify key ideas while eliminating extraneous details. This skill is particularly valuable in academic contexts where the ability to distill information is crucial. The third is collaborative writing, which involves students working together in various stages of the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Students' involvement in such activities provides them more opportunities to work together and solve language problems in pairs or small groups. This enables them to exchange immediate feedback, through which they can learn more from each other (Pardede, 2024). Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory underscores the effectiveness of this approach, suggesting that peer collaboration fosters learning through interactive knowledge construction. The fourth strategy, setting specific product goals, aids students in focusing their writing efforts by establishing clear and attainable objectives. According to Locke and Latham (1990), goal-setting enhances motivation and improves task performance, thereby aligning with pedagogical frameworks that encourage students to produce coherent and purposeful texts.

The fifth strategy, word processing, leverages digital tools to support students in drafting, revising, and editing their writing. Various factors support the use of technology in writing classes, including its high potential to facilitate learning to write; today's students like using technology, technology use can be effective in overcoming the limited time that conventional writing classes have, and technology offers great potential to advance students' writing skills and writing quality (Pardede, 2024). Goldberg et al. (2003) indicated that students who compose using word processors tend to produce higher-quality texts, as these tools facilitate error correction and iterative refinements.

The sixth strategy, sentence combining, focuses on teaching students how to construct more complex and nuanced sentences, thereby strengthening their syntactic abilities. Saddler and Graham (2005) argue that sentence-combining exercises enhance writing fluency and coherence by instructing students on how to manipulate sentence structures effectively. The seventh, prewriting activities, serve as a foundational step in the writing process by enabling students to generate and organize ideas before drafting their compositions. Flower and Hayes (1981) advocate for prewriting as an essential stage that encourages creativity and provides a structured approach to writing. The eighth, inquiry activities, engage students in the process of analyzing concrete data to develop ideas and content for their writing. Hillocks (1986) posits that inquiry-based writing fosters critical thinking and provides meaningful contexts for students to construct arguments and explanations.

The ninth strategy is the process writing approach, which integrates multiple instructional activities within the classroom, emphasizing extended writing opportunities, engagement with authentic audiences, and personalized instruction. Graham and Sandmel (2011) assert that this approach enhances writing proficiency by addressing

students' individual needs through iterative writing cycles. The tenth strategy, the study of models, involves providing students with exemplary writing samples to analyze and emulate effective techniques. Bandura's (1986) social learning theory supports this method, proposing that exposure to high-quality models facilitates skill acquisition through observation and imitation. Finally, the tenth strategy, writing for content learning, utilizes writing as a mechanism for deepening students' understanding of subjects. Klein (1999) emphasizes that writing to learn enhances cognitive engagement, as students must process and articulate their knowledge in a coherent manner. This approach underscores the role of writing as not only a communicative tool, but also a means of fostering intellectual development.

Collectively, these eleven instructional strategies contribute to the development of students' writing competencies and reinforce the role of writing as an essential learning tool. Through systematic implementation, educators can support students in acquiring both fundamental and advanced writing skills, ultimately promoting academic success. Reimer (2001) stated that the writing process can be taught as a structured approach to help students develop their writing skills. It consists of six stages: prewriting, drafting, sharing and responding, revising, editing, and publishing. Each stage should be demonstrated and clearly explained to students. Once they understand these stages, they should be able to navigate the writing process independently.

The six stages can be summed up as follows. First, prewriting, involves brainstorming and organizing ideas before drafting. Prewriting techniques assist students in identifying topics that interest them the most, enabling them to take greater ownership of their writing (Reimer, 2001). Techniques such as clustering, freewriting, and answering key questions (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?) help students generate topics. Teachers should model these strategies, encouraging students to develop their own methods for planning their writing. The second is drafting, in which students begin translating their ideas into a written form without focusing on perfection. Teachers should model the drafting process by demonstrating how to start, develop, and structure their writing. Encouraging students to write freely and refine their work later helps them gain confidence in expressing their thoughts. The third stage is sharing and responding, in which students share their drafts with peers or teachers for feedback. This stage fosters a sense of audience and allows students to see how others perceive their writing. Constructive feedback, focusing on clarity, structure, and engagement, helps writers identify areas for improvement. Teachers should guide students in providing meaningful and respectful responses.

The fourth stage is revising. It involves making substantial changes to improve content, organization, and coherence. Students learn to add details, remove unnecessary information, and enhance their writing's overall impact. Teachers should encourage students to view writing as a process and not a one-time effort, emphasizing that good writing evolves through multiple drafts. The fifth is editing. At this stage, students focus on correcting grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Proofreading strategies, such as reading aloud or using peer editors, help students identify mistakes. Teachers should emphasize that editing is a necessary step to ensure clarity and professionalism in writing. The last is publishing. This final stage gives students an opportunity to present their work in a polished format. Whether creating a book, submitting their work to a publication, or sharing it in a class display, publishing reinforces the value of their writing. Calkins (1983) highlights that publishing helps students take pride in their work,

providing motivation to write effectively. Each stage contributes to a comprehensive writing process that supports students in developing their skills while fostering confidence and engagement in writing.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research approach to investigate the strategies used by English teachers. It employs a case study approach, which allows for a thorough analysis of teaching approaches within a real-world educational context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The qualitative technique is appropriate for collecting teacher experiences, viewpoints, and thoughts, which are critical to understanding their strategies.

Data Source

The participants of the study were two English teachers from junior high school in Bengkulu City. The teachers are experienced for more than twenty years in teaching English for different levels of education. The first teacher has twenty-two years of teaching experience and has taught students at all levels of school education and courses. To enhance the professional development and instructional practices, the teacher actively participates in seminars related to English language learning. This engagement provides the teacher with the latest pedagogical and methodological insights that support teaching activities. Similarly, the second teacher has accumulated twenty years of teaching experience, mainly in junior high schools, courses, and as a lecturer for training institutions. To further support teaching effectiveness, the teacher frequently attends seminars on English language learning. Such professional development opportunities allow the teacher to refine instructional strategies and stay informed about advances in English language learning.

Instruments

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews that are defined by Creswell (2014) as an interview that blends structured and unstructured elements, using predefined open-ended questions while allowing flexibility to explore participants' responses further. In this study, the participants were interviewed separately in a face-to-face mode to gauge a deep understanding of the participant's experiences, thoughts, or viewpoints. The interviews were conducted using the interview guide, designed on the basis of the 11 elements of writing instructions identified by Graham and Perin (2007).

Data Analysis Technique

The collected data was analyzed using the content analysis technique proposed by Miles et al. (2014). It was conducted in three concurrent activity flows: (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing. In this study, data condensation was carried out to collect, simplify and extract the data obtained from the interview transcriptions. The data display phase was conducted to present the information obtained in the previous step systematically. Drawing conclusions based on the identified problems and the result of the discussions was conducted in the third step.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As shown in Table 1, Teacher 1 implemented five out of the eleven writing strategies: summarization, collaborative writing, sentence combining, inquiry activities, and the study of models. The teacher reported that all five strategies were effective for students. The perceived effectiveness of these strategies was attributed to the specific needs of the students. Given the proficiency level of junior high school students, these strategies were considered appropriate and easily applicable in the classroom context. In addition, teacher 1 stated she is familiar with the implementation of these strategies in the classroom and, as a result, did not find it challenging.

Table 1. Writing Strategies Used by Teachers in Classroom

No	Strategies	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1	Writing strategies	-	-
2	Summarization	✓	✓
3	Collaborative writing	✓	✓
4	Specific product goals	-	-
5	Word processing	-	-
6	Sentence combining	✓	✓
7	Prewriting	-	-
8	Inquiry activities	✓	✓
9	Process writing approach	-	-
10	Study of models	✓	-
11	Writing for content learning	-	-

Teacher 2 employed four out of the eleven recognized writing strategies: summarization, collaborative writing, sentence combining, and inquiry activities. Consistent with the perspective of Teacher 1, Teacher 2 affirmed that all four strategies were both effective and essential in the teaching of writing. Among these, Teacher 2 identified sentence-combining as the most effective strategy in enhancing students' writing skills. Furthermore, Teacher 2 reported encountering no significant challenges in implementing these strategies, attributing this ease to their extensive teaching experience. This suggests that familiarity with instructional methodologies and classroom dynamics plays a crucial role in the successful application of writing strategies.

DISCUSSION

Based on the eleven types of writing instruction according to Graham and Perin (2007), the teachers said that these strategies are great and interesting in writing activities. According to the teachers, these strategies are important for teaching writing. However, the interviewed teachers did not use all the strategies in teaching writing. According to the teachers, the strategies can be applied with some supporting factors and the level of writing skills in junior high school students. From the eleven types, five strategies are used. The following is an explanation of what strategies are used and how to implement them according to these two English teachers.

The first strategy is summarization, which involves clearly and systematically teaching students how to summarize texts. During the interview, both teachers said that

summarization technique is important in teaching English writing. Although both teachers use this strategy, they have different methods of teaching it. The first teacher said that she applies this strategy at the end of every lesson. Students are encouraged to review what they have learned that day; usually this technique is used when teaching reading. According to this teacher, summarizing the material after learning is important to increase understanding of the material. In applying this strategy, the second teacher said students read the text to be summarized first. To save time, the teacher suggested students skim and then make a summary based on the main idea. These teachers do not teach summarization systematically. She taught how to summarize texts in general. Benzer et al. (2016) stated that structured and organized text summary writing instruction can help students develop their written expression skills. In addition, Ozdemir (2018) found that the summary strategies in which the most positive impact is observed are determining the main idea, starting the first sentence with an introduction sentence that expresses the subject of the main text, summarizing in accordance with subject or event order and time consistency, expressing the main idea of text in the final sentence of summary, and paying attention to the distinction between the author and the summarizer in the style of the summary text. Summarization success develops with frequency. Although the teachers have not taught summarization strategies systematically, introducing summarization strategies to students is important in teaching writing.

The next strategy is collaborative writing, in which students work together on writing tasks. All teachers agreed that this strategy is important in teaching writing. Teachers apply group assignments, where in one group there must be students who have more understanding than their peers do. Teachers said that this strategy facilitates teamwork, so it requires students who understand more in each group. However, the teacher's role in organizing the class is very important to implement this activity. As stated in Yarrow & Topping (2001) collaborative writing involves students working in pairs, with a higher-achieving student (Helper) assisting a lower-achieving student (Writer) in various aspects of writing, such as idea generation, organization, drafting, and editing. The teacher oversees the process by monitoring, guiding, and supporting students as they work together on the writing task. In addition, Coffin (2020) stated that students expressed concerns about the fairness of teamwork contributions and assessment. The study also found that the quality of teaching, classroom management, and equal standards of assessment between the classes were still major issues of concern. In addition, addressing these challenges requires preparation for teachers, students, and course management systems in order to develop and implement effective collaborative writing strategies.

Sentence combining is the third strategy that teachers apply in teaching writing. All teachers agree that sentence combining is an important strategy in teaching English writing. Teachers apply this technique by repetitively giving real-life content examples. In this strategy, teachers teach students progressively from the basics and how to add vocabulary to make effective and comprehensible sentences. In line with Saddler (2006), sentence combining required time and effort. Sentence combining exercises were also proposed as a strategy to encourage students to use grammatical possibilities in their writing by practicing conscious control and manipulation of syntax. Sentence combining improves clarity of ideas and discourse by using different grammatical forms rather than larger sentences. To introduce this strategy, teachers give examples of two sentences

and teach students to combine them by using a conjunction. Sentence-combining strategies are recognized as an effective way to improve students' writing abilities. This helps students comprehend grammar, sentence diversity, and more advanced writing patterns.

Furthermore, Inquiry activities involve students in analyzing immediate, real-life information to help them develop ideas and material for a specific writing objective. Only one teacher implemented this strategy. In the interview, the teacher argued that inquiry activities are very interesting and important in the process of learning English writing. In this technique, the teacher explained that students find out or analyze themselves to develop their ideas in writing. The teacher invites students to explore the surrounding environment in order to develop ideas for writing. As stated by Kasmainsi & Zahrida (2022) this technique allows students the opportunity and suitable surroundings to overcome writing challenges such as idea formation and development in their works. The inquiry-based learning strategy can help students develop their writing skills in a variety of ways, including the ability to employ acceptable sentence structures (grammar), contextual vocabulary, and cohesive writing.

The last strategy is the study of models, which allows students to study, analyze, and follow models of good writing. This strategy was applied by one teacher interviewed. The teacher believes that this strategy is beneficial for students in learning to write. The teacher models themselves, giving examples of good writing to emulate. In this activity, the teacher provides opportunities for students to analyze and ask questions. The use of good and quality texts is also applied by the teacher in this strategy. According to Myhill et al. (2018) the use of texts as models has a long history in classical rhetorical traditions, but it is also generally supported as a pedagogical method for writing instruction by both researchers and practitioners. Believers of its benefits tend to focus on the following: the learning to be obtained from emulating great authors; the significance of clear education about decisions writers have made; and the model text acting as a scaffold for subsequent writing independence.

Regarding the strategies used by the teachers, the first teacher stated that all the strategies that were applied are effective for students in terms of teaching writing. In the interview, the teacher said that the effectiveness of the strategies used depends on the situation needed at the time of teaching. As recommended by Karim & Clarita (2023), teachers must be able to adapt to the various learning styles and situations based on their students. The teacher added that there is no difficulty in applying the strategies that have been applied. As stated by Lee (2008) in a writing classroom, a teacher's teaching strategy is influenced by their beliefs, knowledge, learners' abilities, curriculum, and objectives for the lesson (cited in Ngubane et al., 2020). The teacher further added that to apply these strategies, good supporting factors are needed so that the strategies can be applied effectively. Based on the interview, the level of students' proficiency in learning English affects the learning activities in the classroom.

The second teacher said that sentence combining is the most effective writing strategy. According to the teacher, sentence combining is important to be taught in teaching writing. It helps students develop better and more varied sentence structures in their writing. As stated by Saddler and Graham (2005), sentence-combining activities promote writing fluency and coherence by teaching students how to modify sentence forms effectively. The teacher added that the writing strategy she applied, especially in the seventh grade, by using real objects and pictures to create simple compositions in

description texts. Teachers employ strategies in teaching writing to help students improve their writing skills. These strategies are intended to effectively address the learning needs of the student while also encouraging the development of writing abilities.

The teachers did not find any challenges in implementing these strategies. The teachers have consistently used these strategies in their writing instruction, showing familiarity and proficiency in their application. However, they acknowledge that their fluency in applying these strategies is influenced by various factors. In particular, students' level of comprehension plays an important role in determining the effectiveness of these instructional methods. In addition, the availability and quality of learning tools that support the writing process also affect teachers' ability to use these strategies successfully. Therefore, the successful implementation of writing strategies depends not only on the expertise of the teacher, but also on the external elements that create the learning environment.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that using strategies in writing is very important for English teachers in junior high school. Based on the interview, the teacher indicated that the strategies used in teaching English writing are summarization, collaborative writing, sentence combining, inquiry activities and study of models. They employed these strategies to effectively address the learning needs of students while also encouraging the development of writing abilities. Such use of multiple strategies was also intended to ensure that the learning process is not monotonous but rather interesting and lively.

This study involved only two English teachers from the same school level and region. Future studies are recommended to involve more teachers from different regions and levels of education to obtain findings that are more comprehensive. Employing an experimental research design to test certain writing strategies effectiveness is also recommended.

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