

**A STUDY ON LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY SECOND- SEMESTER
ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAMS IN INTERMEDIATE READING AND WRITING
FKIP UNRI**

Geladis Afira¹, Mahdum², Muhammad Syarfi³

¹Universitas Riau,

²Universitas Riau,

³Universitas Riau,

¹geladis.afira6136@student.unri.ac.id,

²mahdum.adanan@lecturer.unri.ac.id

³m.syarfi@lecturer.unri.ac.id,

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the learning strategies used by second-semester students in the English Education Study Program during reading and writing activities in the Intermediate Reading and Writing course. Employing a quantitative descriptive design, the study involved 117 students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire covering metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective strategies based on O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) classification. The findings reveal that all three strategy categories were used at a high level, with socioaffective strategies being the most dominant, followed by metacognitive and cognitive strategies. Students showed strong help-seeking behavior and active monitoring of comprehension, yet demonstrated weaknesses in planning, peer feedback, and applying new grammar structures in their writing. These results suggest that students rely more on social support and vocabulary-based strategies rather than planning and grammar-oriented approaches, indicating the need for instructional practices that promote more balanced and autonomous learning.

Keywords: learning strategies, metacognitive, cognitive, socioaffective, reading, writing, EFL students

A. Introduction

Reading and writing skills are two fundamental abilities that significantly determine students' success in understanding academic material and expressing their ideas effectively. In the context of learning English, these skills function not only as tools for communication but also as interrelated components that support

the development of comprehensive language competence. Oxford (1990) states that learning strategies are conscious steps taken by learners to enhance the effectiveness of their learning. These strategies play an important role in fostering active participation, learner autonomy, and the development of communicative competence.

In second language learning, reading and writing require students to process information, construct meaning, and express their understanding in a structured manner. Readers must be able to use strategies such as skimming, scanning, predicting, and drawing conclusions from texts (Schunk 2010). Meanwhile, writing requires students to plan ideas, organize thoughts, develop paragraphs, and revise their work to ensure clarity and coherence (Yusuf 2019). However, in reality, many students still struggle to comprehend academic texts and to express their ideas coherently in writing. This phenomenon is observed among second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Riau, who show varying abilities in understanding reading materials and producing well-written texts.

These differences are influenced not only by cognitive factors but also by the learning strategies used by the students. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) categorize learning strategies into three groups: metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. These strategies play crucial roles in planning, processing, and evaluating learning activities. Although learning strategy theories have been widely applied in studies on speaking and listening skills, their application in reading and writing skills has been less explored, especially among early-semester university students in Indonesia. Previous

studies have tended to focus on learning strategies related to speaking skills (Macaro, 2001), while research specifically investigating reading and writing strategies remains limited.

Furthermore, preliminary interviews with several students revealed that although they reported using various strategies—such as seeking additional information online, taking notes, or rereading texts—they still experienced difficulties in understanding the structure of academic texts and producing well-organized writing. Students also acknowledged that instructors' guidance helped them understand essential aspects of reading and writing, yet not all students were able to apply these strategies independently (Wahyuni 2016). This indicates a gap between theoretical learning strategies and the actual practices employed by students in real learning situations.

Based on these conditions, it is important to identify what learning strategies are used by second-semester students in the *Intermediate Reading and Writing* course. Research on learning strategies is expected to provide a clear picture of how students approach reading and writing tasks. The focus of this study is to describe the use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies in students' reading and writing activities. By identifying the strategies most frequently used, this study aims to help lecturers adjust their instructional methods and support students in improving their learning effectiveness.

This study offers several benefits. Theoretically, it contributes to the body of knowledge on language learning strategies, particularly in the context of reading and writing skills. Practically, the findings may serve as a basis for lecturers in designing instructional activities aligned with students' dominant learning strategies. For students, the research provides insights into effective strategies that can enhance their reading and writing performance, enabling them to optimize their independent learning. Therefore, this study is expected to make a meaningful contribution to improving the quality of English language teaching, especially in developing reading and writing skills at the university level.

B. Methodology Research

This study employed a quantitative descriptive method to describe the learning strategies used by second-semester students in the *Intermediate Reading and Writing* course of the English Education Study Program at the University of Riau. The research was conducted from March to December 2025 within the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. The population consisted of 117 students, and the sample was selected using a simple random sampling technique to ensure equal chances of participation. The research instrument was a Likert-scale questionnaire comprising 30 statements representing the three learning strategy categories proposed

by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). The questionnaire included both positive and negative statements to measure metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies comprehensively. The instrument was validated using Pearson Product Moment correlation, with items considered valid if the correlation coefficient exceeded the table value of 0.361, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha with a minimum accepted value of 0.90. After meeting validity and reliability standards, the questionnaire was distributed to students to obtain data on the frequency of learning strategy use. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics through SPSS to calculate the mean score of each indicator, allowing the researcher to identify students' tendencies in applying the three categories of learning strategies in reading and writing.

C. Research Findings and Discussions

This section presents the findings of the study based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to second-semester students of the English Education Study Program. The questionnaire consisted of three major categories of learning strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective, following the classification by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically the mean score of each item. The results are presented in the following tables along with explanations for each category.

1. Metacognitive Strategies

This section describes the students' use of metacognitive strategies, which include planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning during reading and writing activities. The following table displays the distribution of responses and the mean score of each statement.

Table 1 Responses On Metacognitive Stratis

No	Statement (Questions Positive)	Never	Seld	Som etim	Offe	Alwa	Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	I set specific goals before I read or write in English	5,5%	26,4%	30,8%	19,8%	17,6%	3,18 (Medium)
2	I schedule regular time for reading and writing practice.	1,1%	2,2%	31,9%	29,7%	35,2%	3,96 (High)
3	I monitor my understanding as I read English texts	1,1%	2,2%	20,9%	39,6%	36,3%	4,08 (High)

4	I proofread my writing to correct mistakes	4,4%	14,3%	38,5%	28,6%	14,3%	3,34 (Medium)
5	I keep track of my progress in reading and writing	5,5%	20,9%	24,2%	14,3%	35,2%	3,53 (High)
	Statement (Questions Negative)	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	
		5	4	3	2	1	
6	I rarely plan my learning activities	37,4%	35,2%	18,7%	4,4%	4,4%	3,97 (High)
7	I write without organizing my ideas first.	40,7%	39,6%	19,8%	0%	0%	4,21 (High)
8	I don't check whether I understand what I read.	35,2%	34,6%	25,3%	0%	0%	4,10 (High)

9	I don't see the importance of revising my writing.	40,7%	30,8%	28,6%	0%	0%	4,12 (High)
10	I never evaluate the outcomes of my learning.	35,2%	37,4%	25,3%	2,2%	0%	4,05 (High)
The Overall Mean Score							3,85 (High)

Table 1 summarizes the overall use of metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective learning strategies among the students. The table shows that all three categories fall into the *High* level of use, indicating that students frequently employ a variety of strategies while learning reading and writing. The socioaffective category has the highest overall mean (3.94), suggesting that students strongly rely on help-seeking behaviors when facing difficulties. In the cognitive category, the highest score appears in the use of vocabulary recording (4.40), while the lowest score is found in the application of new grammar structures (3.34). Meanwhile, in the metacognitive category, students most often write without organizing their ideas (4.21), whereas setting specific goals (3.18) is the least practiced strategy. Overall, the table illustrates that students tend to use

social and vocabulary-based strategies more frequently than planning- or grammar-focused strategies.

2. Cognitive Strategies

Table 2 Responses on Cognitive Strategies

No	Statement	Never	Seldo	Some	Often	Alway	Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	I guess the meaning of unknown words from context	3,3%	16,5%	28,6%	30,8%	20,9%	3,49 (Medium)
2	I write down new vocabulary when reading	0%	0%	14,3%	31,9%	53,8%	4,40 (High)
3	I reread difficult sentences to understand them better.	1,1%	7,7%	26,4%	37,4%	27,5%	3,82 (High)
4	I use synonyms or paraphrases to	3,3%	9,9%	37,4%	29,7%	19,8%	3,53

No	Statement	Never	Seldo	Somet	Often	Alway	Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
	clarify my writing						(High)
5	I apply new grammar structures in my writing	2,2%	19,8%	38,5%	20,9%	18,7%	3,34 (Medium)
6	I write summaries after reading a passage	3,3%	3,2%	31,9%	34,1%	17,6%	3,49 (Medium)
7	I make an outline before writing	0%	0%	27,5%	33,0%	39,6%	4,12 (High)
8	I usually submit my writing without reviewing it.	33,0%	42,9%	24,2%	0%	0%	4,09 (High)
9	I avoid using a dictionary when I face difficult words.	37,4%	41,8%	20,9%	0%	0%	4,16 (High)

10	I'm not interested in applying grammar rules in writing	33,0%	34,1%	25,3%	7,7%	0%	3,92 (High)
The Overall Mean Score							3,84 (High)

Table 2 presents the summary of students' use of cognitive learning strategies in reading and writing. The results indicate that the overall mean score for cognitive strategies is categorized as *High* (3.84), showing that students frequently apply various cognitive processes in their learning. The highest mean is found in the item related to writing down new vocabulary (4.40), which suggests that students prioritize vocabulary development as a key component of understanding texts and supporting their writing. In contrast, the lowest mean is recorded for applying new grammar structures in writing (3.34), indicating that students are less consistent in integrating newly learned grammatical forms into their written work. Overall, the table shows that while students actively engage in vocabulary-related strategies, their use of grammar application strategies is comparatively weaker.

3. Socioaffective Strategies

Tabel 3 Responses on Socioaffective Strategies

No	Statement	Never	Seldo	Some	Often	Alway	Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	I discuss English reading materials with my peers	4,4%	15,4%	22,0%	30,8%	27,5%	3,62 (High)
2	. I ask my friends for feedback on my writing.	12,1%	22,0%	29,7%	19,8%	16,5%	3,07 (Medium)
3	I join study groups to improve my reading and writing.	4,4%	22,0%	29,7%	19,8%	16,5%	4,20 (High)
4	I use relaxation strategies to reduce anxiety while writing.	0%	3,3%	17,6%	35,2%	44,0%	4,20 (High)
5	I ask for help when I don't understand a reading text	0%	0%	0%	65,9%	34,1%	4,34 (High)

No	Statement	Never	Seldom	Someti	Often	Always	Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
6	I feel embarrassed to ask for help when I don't understand something.	28,6%	42,9%	28,6%	0%	0%	4,00 (High)
7	I prefer to study alone and avoid group activities	24,2%	35,2%	40,7%	0%	0%	3,84 (High)
8	I rarely seek feedback from others on my writing	5,6%	29,7%	18,7%	0%	0%	4,33 (High)
9	I feel uncomfortable discussing English texts with classmates.	29,7%	47,3%	23,1%	0%	0%	4,07 (High)
10	I avoid interacting with others during reading	28,6%	31,9%	24,2%	11,0%	4,4%	3,69 (High)

and writing class								tegi es		English (3,18)	
The Overall Mean Score							3,94 (High)	Cog nitiv e Stra tegi es	I write down new vocabulary when reading (4,40)	I apply new grammar structures in my writing (3,34)	3,84
								Soci oaff ectiv e Stra tegi es	I ask for help when I don't understand a reading text (4,34)	I ask my friends for feedback on my writing (3,07)	3,94

Table 3 shows the students' use of socioaffective learning strategies, which include seeking help, managing anxiety, collaborating with peers, and asking for feedback. The overall mean score for this category is *High* (3.94), making it the most frequently used strategy type among the three categories. The highest mean is found in the item related to asking for help when students do not understand a reading text (4.34), indicating that students heavily rely on assistance from others when facing comprehension difficulties. Meanwhile, the lowest mean appears in the item about asking friends for feedback on their writing (3.07), suggesting that students are less likely to engage in peer feedback activities. Overall, the table highlights that students are more inclined toward help-seeking behaviors rather than collaborative evaluation or emotional regulation strategies.

4. Students Highest and Lowest Mean Scores Statements Across Indicators

Indi cat or	Highest Mean Statement (Mean)	Lowest Mean Statement (Mean)	Over all Mean
Met aco gniti ve Stra	I write without organizing my ideas first (4,21)	I set specific goals before I read or write in	3,85

Table 4 provides a summary of the highest and lowest mean scores across the three categories of learning strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective. The socioaffective category shows the highest overall mean (3.94), indicating that students rely heavily on help-seeking behaviors during reading and writing tasks. In the metacognitive category, the highest mean is found in writing without organizing ideas (4.21), while the lowest mean appears in setting specific goals (3.18), suggesting limited planning behavior among students. For cognitive strategies, writing down new vocabulary yields the highest score (4.40), whereas applying new grammar structures has the lowest score (3.34), highlighting weaknesses in grammar application. Overall, the table demonstrates that students use socioaffective strategies most frequently, followed by metacognitive and cognitive strategies, with the least-used individual strategies being those related to planning and peer-feedback.

E. Discussion

The results indicate that students employed all three types of learning strategies—metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective—in their Intermediate Reading and Writing course. Socioaffective strategies were used most frequently, showing that students rely strongly on interaction, support from peers, and anxiety-reduction techniques when encountering reading or writing challenges. However, they seldom seek peer feedback, suggesting limited confidence in collaborative evaluation. Metacognitive strategies were moderately applied, especially in monitoring comprehension, but students rarely set goals or plan their learning activities, indicating a need for stronger self-regulation training. Cognitive strategies were used least frequently, although vocabulary-recording was highly practiced. Conversely, applying grammar structures and summarizing texts were less common.

Overall, students tend to prioritize social support and vocabulary building over structured planning and grammar-focused strategies, highlighting areas that require pedagogical reinforcement.

F. Conclusion

This study shows that second-semester students in the English Study Program at Universitas Riau apply all three types of learning strategies—socioaffective, metacognitive, and cognitive—in their Intermediate Reading and Writing course. Socioaffective strategies emerged as the most frequently used, reflecting students' reliance on

seeking help, collaborating with peers, and managing anxiety during reading and writing tasks. Metacognitive strategies were used at a moderate level, with students monitoring their comprehension but less consistently engaging in planning and goal-setting. Cognitive strategies were the least frequently applied, although vocabulary recording was strongly practiced. Students showed limited use of grammar application and summarizing, suggesting a need for stronger development of direct language-processing skills. Overall, the findings indicate that students prioritize social interaction and vocabulary building over structured planning and grammar-focused learning. These results highlight the importance of integrating explicit strategy training to help students strengthen their metacognitive regulation and cognitive skills in reading and writing.

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