



Effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development Instruction on EFL Students' Writing Performance and Engagement: The Case of Wollo University

Engidasew Nigussie^{1*}, Abiy Yigzaw², Dawit Amogne³

¹ Department of English Language and Literature, Wollo University, Dessie, Ethiopia

² Department of English Language and Literature, Bahir Dar University, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

³ Department of English Language and Literature, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ABSTRACT

The main concern of this study was to examine the effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development writing instruction on third year undergraduate EFL students' writing performance and engagement. For this purpose, an interrupted time-series quasi-experimental design was conducted on 10 students of Wollo University selected using comprehensive sampling technique. In order to collect quantitative data from the participants of the study, eight essay writing tests; and a questionnaire about engagement were used. Textual analysis and semi-structured interview were also used to collect qualitative data from the respondents in line with the objectives. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely mean, standard deviation and using inferential statistics of paired samples t-test and repeated measure Analysis of variance. The qualitative data were analyzed using textual analysis and Nvivo software. The findings of the descriptive statistics and textual analysis and the Nvivo thematic analysis revealed that the Self-Regulated Strategy Development writing instruction had a significant positive effect on students' writing performance and writing task engagement. The results demonstrated a significant improvement in both the writing performance ($p < 0.005$) and engagement levels ($p < 0.05$) of EFL students after the SRSD intervention. Based on the results, the study recommends that the teaching of writing in higher education could benefit if Self-Regulated Strategy Development is integrated into the existing practice of second language writing pedagogy.

Key words: Self-Regulated Strategy Development, student writing performance, student engagement

INTRODUCTION

Writing in the 21st century involves much more than putting words on paper. It encompasses cognition, problem-solving and social connection. The cognitive aspect of writing involves writers exploring, analyzing, and expressing their ideas using appropriate language (Sinclair, 2010). Kern (2000) also highlights that writing is an active process that requires writers to engage in active thinking and problem-solving. Furthermore, Camps (2017) emphasizes that writing is a social activity influenced by the context and circumstances surrounding the writer. Writing is a purposeful and communicative activity that enables individuals to effectively convey their thoughts and ideas.

Writing is crucial for developing students' ideas into effective sentences, paragraphs or essays, which is essential for their academic success. According to Wilson (2011), learning to write well is one of the most important things students will do in their education, and Walsh (2010) notes that writing is extensively used in education and the workplace. All in all, writing improves students' creativity, imagination, and thinking and communication skills.

Numerous research studies indicate that writing is quite challenging (Alsamadani, 2010; Harmer, 2004; Hickey, 2010; Westwood, 2008). Given the challenging nature of writing, teachers must pay

*Corresponding author: engidanigu10@gmail.com

Received: 16-03-2023, Accepted: 21-5-2023, Published: 31-12-2023

Copyright: © The publisher, 2023, Open access. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Journal-homepage: <https://abjol.org.et/index.php/ajbs>

close attention to students and provide them with various types of support and guidance. To help students analyze problems, organize information, and regulate their behavior, they can employ various writing strategies such as Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD). This approach is based on the idea that writing is a cognitive process, in which students engage in problem-solving to produce written work (Hyland, 2012). By practicing this regularly, students can develop the skills necessary to become proficient writers.

SRSD, an evidence-based writing instruction strategy (Graham & Hebert, 2011), has been implemented successfully with students at lower grades and those experiencing various writing disorders. It aims to teach explicit writing strategies, including planning, producing, revising, and editing while fostering a positive writing attitude and self concept (Graham & Hebert, 2011; Zimmerman, 1998). The utilization of SRSD has shown promising results in enhancing writing performance and engagement among students (Spring, 2009). However, it is important to note that despite its effectiveness, SRSD has not been universally employed with all groups of university students facing writing difficulties.

Recently, scholars in the field of language teaching have given attention to the significance of student engagement in the learning process, as desirable learning outcomes are best accomplished through active engagement (Mackenzie, 2015). Abu-Hilal (2000) suggests that students who engage in writing activities will learn much more about writing and will enjoy doing so. However, writing teachers often face challenges in engaging students fully in writing tasks. To enhance students' engagement in writing, the above authors recommends that teachers can provide opportunities for meaningful engagement with the language by designing writing tasks that are relevant to students' social and cultural context and offer opportunities for social interaction and self-expression. By teaching writing in a way that increases students' engagement, teachers can encourage students to dig deep into each writing phase and write independently (Zimmerman, 2000).

University undergraduate EFL students have been criticized for their subpar writing skills during classroom tests and assignments. Bekele (2011) & Italo (1999) have shown that university students struggle with writing, receiving low scores on writing tests and struggling to communicate effectively in writing. Despite taking advanced writing courses, students consistently scored poorly on essay writing, with instructors and employing organizations frequently expressing dissatisfaction with students' writing abilities. According to

Bekele (2011), recent graduates are notably deficient in their written English communication abilities. Various factors contribute to these challenges including inadequate writing instruction and insufficient opportunities for writing practice (Sarwat et al. 2021). The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of SRSD instruction on the writing skills and engagement of undergraduate EFL students. By checking the effectiveness of SRSD instruction, this study aims to contribute to the development of effective instructional strategies for improving students' writing skills and engagement.

Studies have shown that many students worldwide cannot write at the basic level required for their grade (Graham & Perin, 2007). In Ethiopia, several studies have demonstrated that not only primary school students but also many secondary and tertiary level students lack the ability to use English effectively for academic activities, and their writing ability is unsatisfactory (Amlaku, 2010; Bekele, 2011; Esayas, 2021; Italo, 1999).

The issue of students' poor writing skills and their inability to meet expected writing standards is a subject of debate. Effective teaching strategies are crucial to the success of students' writing abilities, and recent studies emphasize the need for English language teachers to possess advanced language proficiency in order to teach writing effectively (Hyland, 2012). Unfortunately, a significant number of writing teachers lack the necessary preparation to do so, leading to a decline in the quality of writing instruction (Graham, 2019). One argument focuses on selecting the most appropriate writing strategy to teach effectively, as different students have different needs and characteristics. The literature in second language writing research suggests several instructional practices including the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model may help learners attain the required competencies (Graham, 2006). Writing is a challenging task that requires a considerable amount of instructional time to master, and teachers should provide students with sufficient time to practice writing daily (Coker et al., 2016).

The use of strategy instruction in writing classes has become prevalent in the 21st century, with a focus on promoting independent and life-long writers. Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is a powerful strategy instruction that enhances students' cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-regulating abilities. Several studies support the use of SRSD writing strategies as they found that teaching writing using SRSD resulted in improved students' writing skills and active engagement. Further investigation is warranted to address the

limitations observed in previous studies conducted in Ethiopia by Bekele (2011) and Isayas (2021). Despite the crucial role of academic writing skills in university education, most undergraduate students in Ethiopia lack the necessary writing skills and sub-skills required for academic success (Tamiru, 2020). Surprisingly, the use of SRSD-based instruction in teaching writing has been widely neglected in Ethiopia (Bekele, 2011). While various studies have examined the effectiveness of SRSD instruction in improving writing skills, motivation, and engagement on EFL students in different contexts, limited research has been conducted in Ethiopia, particularly on third-year undergraduate students. Notably, engagement has not been comprehensively studied in previous research. Previous studies by Bekele (2011) and Fentie and Mulugeta (2018) have not adequately addressed the research gap in the Ethiopian context, nor have they provided evidence of the successful use of SRSD in teaching academic writing. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by investigating the effects of SRSD writing instruction on third-year University undergraduate EFL students' writing skills, engagement, and motivation, with a particular focus on the previously unexplored aspect of engagement.

This study was aimed at answering the following research questions.

1. Does SRSD instruction improve the writing performance of university undergraduate EFL students, as measured by a comparison of their pre- and post-test scores?
2. How does SRSD instruction impact the levels of behavioral, cognitive and emotional engagement of university undergraduate EFL students during writing tasks?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD)

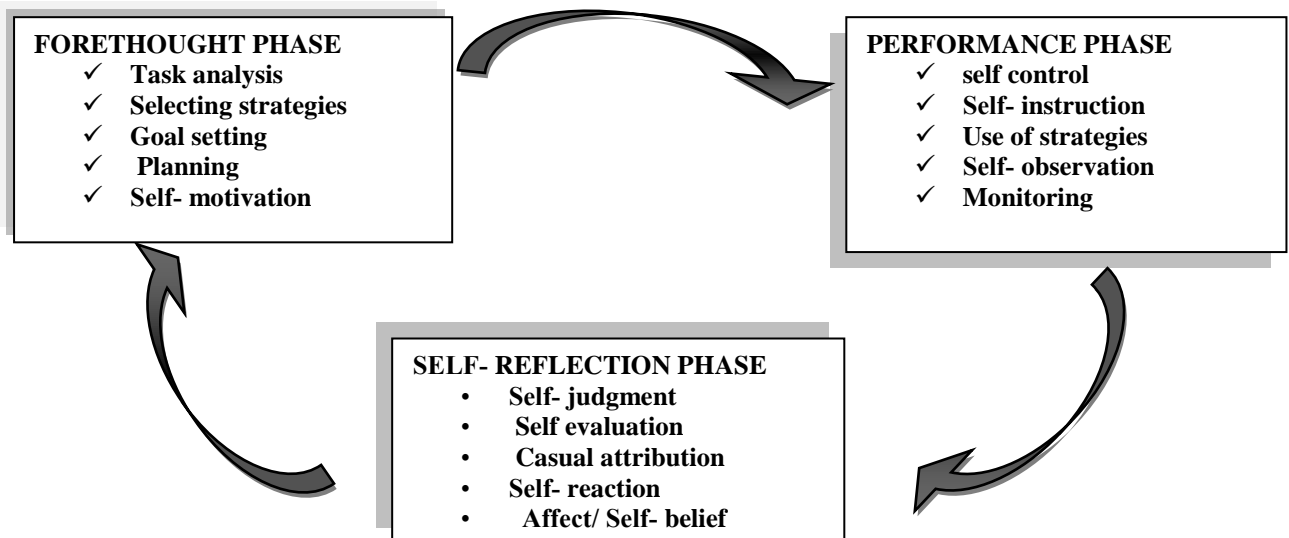


Figure 1: Phases and sub-processes of self- regulation: Taken from (Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (2004)

Writing is a fundamental skill for students in higher education, particularly in English as foreign language EFL students. In recent years, the use of SRSD instruction has gained attention as an effective approach to improve students' writing skills and engagement (Graham & Harris, 2016). According to the authors, SRSD aims to improve students' writing skills and engagement through a series of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. These strategies include goal-setting, planning, drafting revising, and editing. SRSD instruction involves explicit instruction in these strategies, modeling, guided practice, and feedback. According to Harris and Graham (2019), SRSD instruction has been shown to be effective for improving the quality of students' writing, their writing knowledge, and their motivation to write.

SRSD and Writing Skills

Several studies have shown that SRSD instruction is effective for improving writing skills among EFL students. For instance, a study by Fletcher (2019) examined the effects of SRSD instruction on the writing skills of Texas middle school students. The results showed that the students who received SRSD instruction significantly improved their writing skills compared to the control group who did not receive the instruction. Similarly, in a study by Kim and Lee (2018) on the effects of SRSD instruction on the writing skills of Korean EFL students, the authors found that the students who received SRSD instruction showed significant improvement in their writing skills, including fluency, accuracy, and complexity. SRSD-based on Bandura's triadic model consists of three cyclical phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (2004) expanded on this model, explaining that self-regulatory processes occur through these three sub-processes. Figure 1 summarizes the phases and sub-phases of SRSD.

In addition to the three phases mentioned above, SRSD instruction involves six recursive stages. These include developing background knowledge, introducing the strategy or mnemonic, modeling how to use the strategy, memorizing the strategy, support it, and independent performance.

SRSD and Engagement

Engagement is recently defined as a condition of emotional, social and intellectual readiness to learn characterized by curiosity, participation, and the drive to learn more (Fletcher, 2019). More specifically, students' engagement in the context of teaching writing is closely related to students' meaningful involvement in classroom writing tasks to enhance their learning.

In their study, Fredricks and his colleagues (2004) categorized student engagement into three distinct dimensions: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. Fredricks et al. shed light on the multifaceted nature of student engagement and provided a useful framework for understanding and promoting engagement in academic contexts.

SRSD instruction has also been shown to improve students' engagement in writing. In a study by Graham and Perin (2007), SRSD instruction was found to increase the motivation of middle school students to write. Similarly, a study by Graham, Harris and Santangelo (2015) showed that SRSD instruction improved the engagement and self-efficacy of high school students with writing disabilities.

Theoretical Framework

This study investigates the effectiveness of the SRSD writing instruction on improving the writing skills and engagement of EFL students. The study is based on Bandura's (1986) social-cognitive theory (SCT), which highlights the importance of personal agency, observation, and feedback in the learning process. SRSD is a teaching approach that emphasizes how learners can take control of their learning process and become more self-directed. Harris and Graham (2019) suggest that explicit instruction in SRSD strategies can enhance students' planning, monitoring, and evaluating of their writing, which may lead to improved writing performance. The study draws on SCT to argue that learning is a social and cognitive process that is influenced by individual and environmental factors, including self-efficacy, goal-setting, feedback and social support. The use of collaborative learning strategies, such as peer feedback and group discussion, alongside explicit instruction in self-regulated writing strategies, is expected to create a supportive learning environment that promotes self-regulation and engagement in the writing process among EFL students of Wollo University.

Conceptual Framework

The study's conceptual framework identifies the SRSD instructional approach as the independent variable, consisting of six stages and three phases. The dependent variables are the writing skills and engagement of third-year undergraduate EFL students at Wollo University. Writing skills were measured through pre- and post-tests and dimensions of engagement were measured through surveys and interviews. These variables are crucial in understanding how SRSD instruction affects writing skills and engagement.

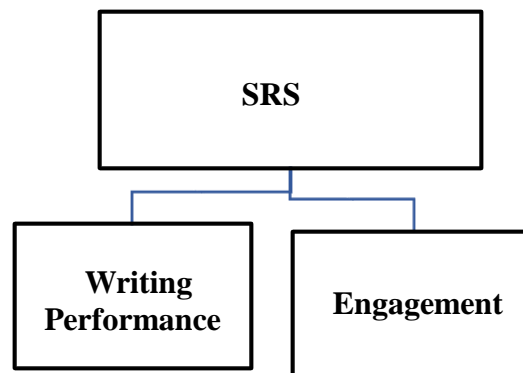


Figure 2: The conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To comprehensively investigate the effects of SRSD writing strategy instruction on university undergraduate EFL classes, this study used a mixed method approach. Creswell (2007) asserts that complex research problems require answers beyond simple numbers or words. Thus, combining quantitative and qualitative methods provides a more appropriate analysis of the issue under study. To investigate the ongoing writing process within this group, a quasi-experimental interrupted time-series design was employed. It is worth noting that in the majority of universities in Ethiopia, there are typically only one section of students studying English, and the number of EFL student sections is limited to one, resulting in a small group size. White and Sabarwal (2014) support that quasi-experimental research designs test causal hypotheses to identify a comparison that is as similar as possible to the treatment group in terms of baseline characteristics. The other reason for employing time-series interrupted quasi experimental in this study was its freedom to use a single group that the university has assigned students in a particular department and section. A series of 12 writing tests and tasks modified from IELTS writing task 1 were used to assess the overall progresses the students showed.

The Research Participants

Ten third-year regular undergraduate male EFL students (there was no female student in the group)

who had taken writing courses were selected using comprehensive sampling for this study. Comprehensive sampling was chosen as it is simple, easy, and convenient (Gray, 2004). Moreover, Flick, (2009) suggests that comprehensive sampling is basically used when the population size is somewhat small (10-30) as was the case in this study. Two raters were actively engaged in the study to evaluate the writing performance of the students. The experimenter responsible for administering the intervention and collecting data from participants was chosen purposely from the TEFL department due to his expertise in teaching writing and conducting research studies underwent a rigorous two-week training program, facilitated by myself. The training encompassed the implementation of the stages SRSD, focusing on the three phases and six recursive stages of the approach. Three evaluators (Two TEFL instructors and a psychologist) were involved in the study to assess the validity and reliability of the writing assessment tools used in the study. Overall, the sampling technique used in the study involved selecting participants using comprehensive sampling while the raters, the experimenter, and evaluators were selected using purposive sampling based on their expertise and experience. All students took the training and essay writing tests for the study.

Instruments of Data Collection

The study used a mixed method approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through various instruments including four pre-tests, four post-tests, an engagement questionnaire, textual analysis, and interviews. Textual analysis on students' essays is a valuable data gathering tool for evaluating writing skills and measuring progress over time (Hacker, 2019). A face-to-face interview was conducted to gather comprehensive insight about their training experience. This combination of instruments was used for triangulation, to capture different aspects of the writing development and supplement the quantitative data with qualitative data, and add depth to the study (Greene et al., 1989).

Treatment Procedures

Orientation sessions were conducted prior to data collection and involving the participants at Wollo University. Ten third-year university EFL students participated in the study. 4 pre-tests were administered to establish baseline performance and measure aspects such as task achievement, lexical resources, coherence and cohesion, and grammatical range and accuracy. Throughout the

intervention, the experimenter provided participants with guidance, frequent feedback, and meaningful scaffolding until they successfully produced a 150-word essay. Following the intervention, 4 post-tests were conducted to assess improvements in writing performance. Additionally, a survey measured students' engagement before and after the intervention and a semi-structured interview was conducted with six randomly selected students.

Procedures of Data Collection

Orientation sessions were held with research participants and department head to explain the study's purpose and benefits. Two teacher-educators from the university administered the engagement questionnaire and written tests. Pre-tests had been administered before the experimenter conducted training. Four post-tests were given over two weeks followed by the distribution and collection of the engagement questionnaire. Interviews were conducted with six participants who volunteered to take part and their essays were scanned for textual analysis. Finally, data analysis was conducted.

Methods of Data Analysis

In this mixed-method study, the data analysis procedures involved analyzing pre-tests, post-tests, questionnaires, interview data and written essays. Four pre-tests and four post-tests were given and scored by two raters using a standard rubric. A paired-samples T-test was applied to compare the mean scores and determine significant differences between the two tests and to determine any changes in writing skills after the intervention. The questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS version 20 to determine mean scores for engagement. And repeated measure ANOVA was computed to see the effect of time on pre- and post-test scores. Qualitative interview data was transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically using NVivo version 7. Finally, written essays were analyzed based on IELTS band descriptor elements and presented in paragraph form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Effects of SRSD on EFL Students' Writing Skills

4 pre- and 4 post-tests were conducted for this study. The pre-test results were presented first, followed by the post-test results, and finally a combined result of both pre- and post-tests was provided.

Table 1: Pre- and post-tests' statistics to compare writing performance of third-year EFL students

Test ID	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
---------	-------	------	----------------	----------

Pre Tests	1	6.0	5.90	2.2086	4.878
	2	5.0	4.70	1.6865	2.844
	3	5.5	5.20	1.6364	2.678
	4	5.5	5.50	1.8105	3.278
Post Tests	5	7.5	8.45	2.2540	5.081
	6	5.5	9.8	2.1864	4.781
	7	8.0	9.8	2.6055	6.789
	8	8.0	10.7	2.5626	6.567

The results in table 1 show that the mean scores for the post-tests range from 8.45 to 10.7 which were higher than the pre-tests, indicating that the SRSD intervention had a positive impact on the students' writing skills. The standard deviation and variance

for the post-tests are generally higher than those for the pre-tests, suggesting that the students' scores were more varied in the post-tests than the pre-tests. Overall, the study suggests that SRSD is an effective intervention for improving EFL students' writing skills.

Table 2: Paired Samples Tests of pre and post-tests

Paired Samples Test				
	Paired Differences	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1 Mean of the Pre Tests - Mean of the Post Tests	-3.63642	-13.400	9	.000

$P < 0.05$

In this study, a paired samples test was conducted on pre- and post-test scores. The results in the table shows the mean difference between the pre- and post-test scores was -3.63642, and the t-statistic was statistically significant at $t(9) = -13.400$, $p < 0.005$. This indicates a big difference between

the two sets of scores. The SRSD intervention had a significant effect on the writing performance of the EFL students, as shown by the improvement in scores from pre-tests to post-tests. Individual student differences in scores were consistent between pre- and post-tests.

Table 3: Repeated measure ANOVA to show the effect of time on pre-test scores
Tests of Within-Subjects Effects

Measure: Pre-Test Scores							
Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	7.675	3	2.558	5.439	0.005	0.377
	Greenhouse-Geisser	7.675	2.373	3.235	5.439	0.009	0.377
	Huynh-Feldt	7.675	3.000	2.558	5.439	0.005	0.377
	Lower-bound	7.675	1.000	7.675	5.439	0.045	0.377
Error(Time)	Sphericity Assumed	12.700	27	.470			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	12.700	21.354	.595			
	Huynh-Feldt	12.700	27.000	.470			
	Lower-bound	12.700	9.000	1.411			

The table presents the results of a repeated measure ANOVA analysis examining the effect of time on pre-test scores. The repeated measure ANOVA analysis showed a significant effect of time on pre-test scores at $F(3, 27) = 5.439$, $p < .05$, with a large effect size (partial eta squared=0.377). The

error term had a mean square of 0.470 and did not affect the interpretation of the main effect of time. The results suggest that pre-test scores varied depending on the time point at which they were administered.

The results in the above table show a significant effect of *Time* on the dependent variable at $F(3, 27) = 13.902, p < 0.05$. The sphericity assumption was violated, and corrections were applied using different methods. The error term of the ANOVA also showed a significant effect, suggesting that there were significant differences between the *Time* levels even after controlling for the variance due to

Textual Analysis

As we have seen, ^{Clarity} among 50 persons who are selected as a sample from Amhara Region, around 46 persons ^{clearly} agreed to use the modern method. On the other hand, in Oromia Region, half of the persons from the total sample agreed to use the modern method. In Afar region, a few persons from the whole sample decided to use the modern method. Generally, as the data shows, ^{Wider} most of the people in Amhara region use the modern method. 47% of the use of modern method is used in the region of Amhara. In contrast, ^{Wider missing piece} 26% and 12% of the use of modern method is used in Oromia and Afar regions respectively. ^{Wider} When we come to the perceptions of those sample persons towards wanted fertility, very few persons ^{clearly} are agreed in both regions. But comparatively, 6% of the method is used in Afar region and 4% of wanted fertility is also used both in Amhara and Oromia region. ^{Wider} For the use of contraceptive decision-making, from both regions, there is least percentage of use of contraceptive method, but comparatively this method is used in Oromia region with 10% than Amhara and Afar with 1% and 2% respectively. Generally, ^{Clarity} among the three methods, use of modern method is the most available in both of the three regions than the other two methods.

of words = about 225 → w Reg.
→ Unacceptable
Cohesion?
Cohesive...? ✓

with a clear topic sentence, resulting in difficulty for the reader to comprehend the items compared in the bar chart. Furthermore, the statistical data comparison was ineffective and vague, with poor use of mechanics and punctuation marks. The essay

lacked proper organization and linking of ideas, which led to poor cohesion.

In contrast, the post-test shows a significant improvement in the same writer's writing performance. The essay opens with a clear and concise general statement, coupled with the appropriate use of vocabulary and grammatically sound sentences. The writer has also demonstrated proficiency in the correct use of punctuation marks and spelling. Although there is room for improvement, the essay shows a better ability to organize ideas and link them coherently, resulting in meeting more of the requirements.

Overall, the analysis showed that the intervention training on IELTS Task 1 writing helped the students to improve their writing skills. However, some lapses still need to be addressed, such as the use of cohesive devices and a range of lexical resources.

Interview Data Analysis

The results of three interview questions about the effects of SRSD on writing performance were analyzed and the data were categorized in to two themes.

Theme 1: Students' Previous Writing Experiences

The majority of the interviewees stated that they had limited experience in describing illustrations such as graphs, charts or tables. For example, student 07 stated ".....my writing practice was limited to paragraph level."

Theme 2: Impact of SRSD Instruction on Students' Writing Skills

Most of the participants stated that their writing skills and performance have been improved because of the help they received during the SRSD training. Some students expressed progress in comparison to their previous experiences. Student 01 mentioned that ".....after the training, my writing skill improved."

The result is consistent with previous studies (Bekele 2011, Flippakos, 2013; Fahim & Rajabi, 2015) that found SRSD improved students' writing performance. The review of related literature suggests that implementing SRSD in writing instruction can be a valuable tool for enhancing EFL students' writing skills in Ethiopian universities.

The Effects of SRSD on EFL Students' Engagement in Writing Tasks

Results of Engagement Questionnaire

The second research inquiry was whether the engagement (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional) of university undergraduate EFL students in writing tasks significantly increased after the SRSD intervention. To determine this, paired sample statistics were calculated.

Table 4: Paired Samples Test of Dimensions of Engagement

Paired Samples Test		Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-cognitive engagement Post-cognitive engagement	-1.5100	0.2998	0.0948	-1.7245	-1.2955	-15.927	9	0.000
Pair 2	Pre-emotional engagement Post-emotional engagement	-1.4900	0.2885	0.0912	-1.6964	-1.2836	-16.333	9	0.000
Pair	Pre-	-2.1240	0.3876	0.1226	-2.4013	-10.8467	-17.328	9	0.000

3	behavioral engagement								
	Post-behavioral engagement								

*P<0.05

The dimension of engagement was measured using three different scales. Table 4 presents that cognitive engagement significantly increased at $t(9) = -15.927$, $p < .05$, emotional engagement at $t(9) = -16.333$, $p < .05$, and behavioral engagement at $t(9) = -17.328$, $p < .05$.

The t-value for each pair is large and significant, indicating that the differences between pre-test and post-test scores are statistically significant. The p-value for each pair is very small (less than 0.005), which suggests that the differences are unlikely to be due to chance. In general, the paired samples test results show a significant increase in all dimensions of engagement after the SRSD intervention ($p < 0.05$). Studies by Li and Li (2016) and Sa'd and Alkhasawneh (2019) have similarly reported that the use of SRSD instruction can significantly improve EFL students' engagement in writing tasks.

Interview Data of Engagement

The theme of the fourth interview question is the impact of SRSD-based training on the behavioral, cognitive and emotional engagement of respondents.

Theme 1: Improved Relaxation

Most of the respondents mentioned it was easier for them to start writing during the SRSD training. In this respect student 05 stated "..... I felt more relaxed during the training."

Theme 2: Increased Busyness

All respondents noted that the planning, drafting, rewriting, editing, and evaluating processes kept them engaged and busy on the given writing tasks. The study concludes that the SRSD intervention had a significant effect on third-year undergraduate EFL students' behavioral, cognitive and emotional engagement and similar studies, such as Li and Li (2016) and Sa'd and Alkhasawneh (2019) have shown that the use of SRSD instruction can improve EFL students' engagement and writing performance. Incorporating SRSD instruction in teaching writing in Ethiopian universities could bring about positive changes in student engagement and writing outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the study found that SRSD improved the writing skills of third-year undergraduate EFL students. Statistical analysis showed significant improvement between pre-test and post-test scores.

The treatment had a significant effect on the outcome variable. The results of textual analysis further supported the positive impact of the SRSD. Qualitative results from the interviews also showed improved writing process and new experiences.

The paired samples test indicated a significant increment of engagement in all three dimensions, including behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. The interviews with the students confirmed that SRSD-based training increased their involvement in writing tasks. The students reported being busy, work-oriented, curious, active, obsessed and interactive during discussions and were able to write longer.

The study provides evidence that the SRSD intervention is an effective approach to improving third-year undergraduate EFL students' writing skills and engagement. The statistically significant improvement in writing skills and the positive impact on students' engagement in writing tasks suggest that SRSD approach can be used to enhance the quality of EFL writing instruction in higher education context. However, the study also highlights areas for improvement, such as using a range of lexical resources and employing linking devices effectively. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of the SRSD approach and its effectiveness in other context and with different populations.

Based on these findings, we recommend that instructors in Ethiopian universities should consider incorporating SRSD instruction in their teaching of writing. This can be a valuable tool for bringing about positive changes in students' engagement and writing outcomes. Additionally, future research can investigate the long-term effects of SRSD on students' writing skills and engagement. Finally, it is important to note that the sample size in this study was relatively small, so larger studies are needed to confirm these findings.

REFERENCES

- Abu-Hilal, M. M. (2000). A structural Model of Attitudes towards School Subjects: Academic Aspiration and Achievement. *Educational Psychology*, 20(1), 75–84.
- Alemayehu, Z. (2014). The Effects of Training in the Learning Strategies of Writing in Improving Students' Use of the Strategies: A Study on Hawassa University Students. *International*

Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 2(3), 113–127.

Alsamadani, A. M. (2010). The effectiveness of using process writing approach on Saudi EFL students' writing performance. *Journal of King Saud University-Languages and Translation*, 22(1), 1–15.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall.

Camps, D. (2017). A Discussion of the Social Nature of the Writing Process. *Revista de ClaseInternacional*, 4(8), 15–19.

Coker, D., Rezanezhad, P., & Knutson, K. (2016). A Comparison of Self-Regulated Strategy Development and Traditional Writing Instruction for Elementary Students with Writing and Attention Problems. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, 14(1), 69–82.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage.

Fahim, M., & Rajabi, P. (2015). Investigating the effect of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) on writing performance and self-efficacy beliefs of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 5(1), 47–58.

Fletcher, J. (2019). *The effects of self-regulated strategy development on the writing of middle school students with disabilities*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation).

Flippakos, E., & Coulouma, J. (2013). The impact of self-regulated strategy development on struggling writers. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(7), 1–18.

Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074001059>

Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2016). Making writing instruction a priority in America's middle and high schools. *American Educator*, 40(2), 28–37.

Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2021). Writing instruction for students with and without writing difficulties: An introduction. In S. R. Graham K (Ed.), *Handbook of evidence-based writing practices*. Guilford Press.

Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools*.

Graham, Steve. (2019). Changing how writing is taught. *Review of Research in Education*, 43(1), 277–303.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732x18821125>

Graham, Steve, Gillespie, A., & McKeown, D. (2013). Writing: importance, development, and instruction. *Reading and Writing*, 26(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-012-9395-2>

Graham, Steve, & Hebert, M. (2011). Writing to read: A meta-analysis of the impact of writing and writing instruction on reading. *Harvard Educational Review*, 81(4), 710–744. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.81.4.t2k0m13756113566>

Greene, J., Maccoby, E. E., & Tiedemann, J. (1989). Socialization practices of American mothers: Descriptions and explanations. *Child Development*, 60(6), 1424–1434.

Hickey, M. (2010). Writing essays: Does self-efficacy matter? *Procedia. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 4031–4036.

Hyland, K. (2012). *Disciplinary identities: Individuality and community in academic discourse*. Cambridge University Press.

Esayas Melese. (2021). Effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development Instruction with Peer Support Arrangement on the Writing Performance, Writing Self-Efficacy, and Task Behaviors of Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Addis Ababa. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Addis Ababa University

Kim, H., & Lee, J. (2018). Effects of self-regulated strategy development on the writing skills of Korean middle school students with disabilities. *Journal of Special Education*, 33(1), 1–10.

Li, Y., & Li, X. (2016). Effects of self-regulated strategy development on the writing performance of college students with dyslexia. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 5(2), 103–111.

Mackenzie, N. (2015). Researching with integrity: The ethics of academic enquiry. Promoting self regulated learning in writing classes: Effects on self beliefs and performances. (n.d.). Docplayer.net. Retrieved May 24, 2023, from <https://docplayer.net/63842565-Promoting-self-regulated-learning-in-writing-classes-effects-on-self-beliefs-and-performances.html>

Sad, M., & Alkhasawneh, I. (2019). The impact of Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) on students' writing skills and engagement: A meta-analysis. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 6(3), 223–235.

Santangelo, T., & Olinghouse, N. G. (2015). The effect of self-regulated strategy development on the writing performance of Hispanic students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 14(2), 163–175.

Sarwat, S., Ullah, N., Anjum, H. S., & Bhuttah, T. M. (2021). Problems and factors affecting students' English writing skills at elementary level. *Xllkogretim Online-eLElementary Education Online*, 20(5), 3079–3086. [doi:10.17051/ilkonline2021.05.332](https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline2021.05.332)

Schunk, D. (Ed.). (n.d.). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Silva, D., & Graham, H. N. (2015). Self-Regulation and Academic Writing: Self-Efficacy Enhancing Intervention for Postgraduate Research Students. *Studies in Higher Education*, 40 (11), 2047–2062.
- Sinclair, J. (2010). Corpus linguistics, applied linguistics, and educational linguistics. In A. O’keeffe & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of corpus linguistics*, 603–616
- Spring, J. (2009). *The cultural contradictions of democracy: Political thought since*.
- Teng, L. S., & Zhang, L. J. (2020). Empowering learners in the second/foreign language classroom: Can self-regulated learning strategies-based writing instruction make a difference? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 48(100701), 100701. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2019.100701>
- Wilson, J. L. (2011). The impact of self-regulated strategy development on the writing performance of high school students with disabilities. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering*, 72(6).
- Zimmerman, B. (2000). *Attaining Self-Regulation: a Social Cognitive Perspective* (P. R. Pintrich & M. Zeidner, Eds.). Academic Press.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (1989). A social cognitive view of self-regulated academic learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81(3), 329–339. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.81.3.329>
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), 64–70. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_2
- Zimmerman, B. J., & Pons, M. M. (1986). Development of a structured interview for assessing student use of self-regulated learning strategies. *American Educational Research Journal*, 23(4), 614–628. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312023004614> 614-628.