



ELT Students' Writing Strategies and Grammar Challenges in Academic and Professional Contexts: Exploring Meaningful, Mindful, and Joyful Learning

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Abstract

Academic and professional writing remains a significant challenge for English Language Teaching (ELT) students, particularly in managing grammatical accuracy and organizing ideas effectively. Recent discussions in language education emphasize the importance of deeper learning approaches that support students' cognitive and emotional engagement during writing tasks. This study draws on the framework of deep learning, particularly the concepts of meaningful learning, mindful learning, and joyful learning, to examine ELT students' writing experiences in academic and professional contexts. Using a qualitative case study design, the research involved five ELT students who had experience completing academic writing assignments. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using the qualitative analysis framework proposed by Miles and Huberman. The findings revealed that students employed several writing strategies, including planning, revising drafts, and using external resources to address grammar-related challenges. These strategies were closely connected to meaningful learning through task relevance, mindful learning through awareness of writing processes, and joyful learning through positive engagement during writing activities. The study suggests that integrating meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning into writing instruction can enhance students' engagement, self-regulation, and writing development in ELT contexts.

Keywords: Academic and professional writing, Deep learning, ELT students, Grammar challenges, Writing strategies

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1. Introduction

The necessity for the English language is increasing daily, as more individuals focus on learning it primarily to find job opportunities and improve their personal success (Andayani, 2022). Students must be prepared for their future careers, which is why those who actively take control of their education often find themselves better equipped and attain higher levels of success in their lives. Receptive skills, including reading and listening, play a vital role in tasks



that demand understanding. Proficient English writing has become vital for effective cross-cultural communication in our interconnected world. Writing is an important part of higher education because it allows students to express knowledge, display critical thinking skills, and contribute to academic discourse through scholarly work. Academic writing is especially crucial for students in English Language Teaching (ELT) programs since it provides the foundation for producing research papers, assignments, and other scholarly outputs that will be expected throughout their studies (Leon, 2023).

Effective professional writing enables future educators and language practitioners to clearly express ideas, create instructional materials, write reports, and perform a variety of workplace activities. As a result, skill in both academic and professional writing has emerged as a crucial determinant of students' academic achievement and future employment prospects. Despite its importance, many ELT students still struggle with writing. Previous research has demonstrated that learners commonly face challenges with grammar, vocabulary use, sentence structure, and text organization, which might impede their ability to produce cohesive and meaningful written work (Bulqiyah et al., 2021). Furthermore, students may struggle to apply their linguistic knowledge in practical writing practices, leaving a gap between what they learn in theory and how they apply it in written communication (Delgado-Osorio, 2024). These problems underscore the need to investigate strategies and learning experiences that help students develop good academic and professional writing skills.

English Language Teaching (ELT) is important in academic contexts since English has become the primary language for worldwide communication, education, and industry. However, learners of English as a Second or Foreign Language frequently encounter a variety of difficulties in studying the language (Pongsapan, 2025). Because language and culture are inextricably linked, cultural aspects are increasingly incorporated into foreign language instruction. Previous research has demonstrated that including cultural content into ELT can improve learners' communication ability and intercultural comprehension. English writing has become increasingly important for intercultural communication in today's globalized world.



Among these skills, writing is often regarded as one of the most demanding because it requires learners to generate ideas, organize information coherently, and apply appropriate linguistic conventions simultaneously. As a result, many students experience writing anxiety, particularly when composing texts in a second or foreign language.

Writing anxiety has been widely associated with students' writing performance. Learners who experience high levels of anxiety often perceive writing tasks as difficult and overwhelming, which may negatively affect both their confidence and the quality of their written work. Previous studies suggest that writing anxiety is influenced by various factors, including cognitive, emotional, and environmental conditions that shape students' perceptions of the writing process and its outcomes. In EFL contexts, these challenges are further intensified by concerns related to grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary use, and the ability to express ideas effectively (Jian, 2022). Consequently, writing instruction should not only emphasize linguistic accuracy but also provide meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences that support students' confidence and engagement in the writing process (Setyaningrum, 2022; Yulandari et al., 2023). Such an approach may help learners develop both writing competence and a more positive attitude toward academic writing. According to Kucuk, T. (2023), education levels and writing-related anxiety can have both positive and negative impacts on students. Notably, the adverse effects involve inducing anxiety in students, hindering the speed of writing, and obstructing the production of quality work. One surprising outcome of the study revealed that students are not troubled by critiques from their instructors and classmates.

Expanding on the various components of writing, the four major linguistic realms—grammar, reading, writing, and vocabulary—play a significant role. Each of these components, when appropriately managed, contributes significantly to students' overall academic achievement. Izatullah et al. (2022) proved this link by stressing the strong correlation between these language features and learners' later academic success. Such findings highlight the importance of improving these skills, not only for good writing, but also for overall academic success. Many ELT students have limited writing experience, even in their first language,



particularly with longer or more complex assignments. In some academic cultures, essays tend to emphasize information transfer rather than critical evaluation, whereas Western academic contexts prioritize argumentation and evaluative writing. Such cross-cultural differences in academic writing conventions have been documented in recent research, highlighting how students from non-native English contexts face challenges adapting to global academic norms (Trinh & Pho, 2024). Within English for Academic Purposes (EAP), the demands of writing become even more rigorous, requiring strategic processing and higher-order thinking. Delgado-Osorio (2024) notes that successful academic writing involves complex cognitive activities such as planning, selecting relevant information, integrating sources, and monitoring textual clarity.

Encouraged is that student performance is pliable and may be altered and shaped by broader educational approaches, whereas blended learning compensates for the time-consuming nature of the process-writing technique (Wang & Zhang, 2024) allows students to access extensive online teaching resources (Chi, 2021), combining the benefits of both and having tremendous potential to improve EFL writing skills. They may also struggle with syntax, language, sentence structure, and grouping of topics in their writing (Mudra, 2024) argues that students frequently confront negative attitudes towards writing, which can have a substantial impact on their motivation to share their work with peers. Wangge (2025) contends that contextual-based worksheets can improve linguistic problem-solving abilities by combining authentic activities with learner experience. According to Aldossary's (2021) research, pupils who collaborated on writing performed better than those who did not. He attributes this to the active participation of learners in the sessions. Arnawa and Arafah (2023) demonstrated that training self-regulated methods enhances writing accuracy while also reducing writing-related anxiety. Without strong self-efficacy, some students may fail to properly adopt these tactics.

Tian et al. (2022) emphasised the importance of self-regulated techniques, particularly those in reaction to feedback, during revision. Teachers can help students revise more



effectively by encouraging them to apply cognitive strategies with automated feedback and motivational tactics with teacher input. This strategy, when combined with meaningful criticism, can help students revise and polish their work. Hu (2022) defines learning techniques in EFL writing as cognitive, metacognitive, and self-regulating actions used by learners to complete tasks and address issues. These tactics are crucial for students' writing performance as they impact their ability to address writing tasks and get better results. Metacognitive tactics assist students identify their writing skills and flaws, enabling them to improve through iterative processes. These tactics are crucial for students' writing performance as they impact their ability to address writing tasks and get better results. Metacognitive tactics assist students identify their writing skills and flaws, enabling them to improve through iterative processes. Using learning strategies during the writing process is crucial for improving students' writing skills, alongside traditional writing education methods.

Grammar remains one of the most persistent challenges faced by ELT students in academic writing. In many language classrooms, communicative activities often receive greater emphasis than explicit grammar instruction, leaving students with limited understanding of accurate English sentence construction. Research has shown that addressing grammatical errors through students' own writing can be an effective way to improve writing quality and grammatical accuracy. In light of these difficulties, recent research has highlighted the significance of engaging, thoughtful, and enjoyable learning in enhancing students' involvement in the writing process. These methods correspond with the principles of profound learning, which motivate learners to link new insights with existing knowledge and utilize them in genuine situations instead of merely rote learning (Hussain et al. , 2021). Engaging learning allows students to connect writing assignments with their actual experiences, supporting them in building and internalizing knowledge more effectively (Nafi'ah & Faruq, 2025). In addition, engaging learning has been linked to enhancements in analytical thinking and problem-solving abilities through relevant and intentional learning encounters (Polman, 2021). Thoughtful learning aids this journey by inspiring students to remain conscious of their ideas, strengths,



and areas for improvement during the writing process. Such awareness promotes concentration, cognitive flexibility, and self-regulation, all of which are critical for tackling complex writing assignments (Feriyanto et al. , 2024). These strategies, combined with joyful learning, which promotes good emotions and reduces writing anxiety, can result in a supportive learning environment that promotes active engagement and consistent writing growth.

To address these challenges, ELT students employ various writing strategies that support the development of their academic and professional writing skills. Previous studies have shown that successful writers actively engage in planning, revising, seeking feedback, and monitoring their writing processes rather than treating writing as a one-step activity. Planning helps students organize ideas and structure their texts effectively, while revising enables them to improve clarity and correct grammatical inaccuracies. Students also seek feedback from lecturers and peers to refine their writing and identify weaknesses that may not be immediately noticeable during the writing process. In addition, the increasing availability of digital technologies has encouraged learners to utilize grammar-checking tools and online resources to support independent learning. These practices reflect the principles of self-regulated learning, in which learners actively monitor, evaluate, and adjust their learning behaviors to achieve academic goals.

Beyond cognitive and strategic aspects, recent educational research has increasingly emphasized the importance of deeper learning experiences in supporting student development. One framework that has gained attention is the concept of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. Meaningful learning occurs when students perceive learning activities as relevant to their academic needs, personal interests, and future professional goals. When writing tasks are connected to authentic contexts, students are more likely to engage actively and develop a stronger sense of purpose in their learning process.

Mindful learning complements meaningful learning by encouraging learners to become more aware of their own thinking and learning processes. Through mindful practice, students become more self-regulated writers who plan intentionally, monitor their progress, and revise



thoughtfully based on feedback. This aligns with the concept of metacognition, which is widely recognized as an important factor in academic success. By maintaining awareness throughout the writing process, learners can focus on understanding and improvement rather than becoming overly concerned with making mistakes. In addition, joyful learning highlights the importance of positive emotions and engagement in the learning process. Joyful learning promotes a supportive environment in which students feel comfortable, motivated, and confident when completing academic tasks. Nofeanasari et al. (2025) found that interactive learning activities significantly increased students' interest and participation in learning. Similarly, Mustaghfirin and Zaman (2025) define joyful learning as an approach that creates a positive, enjoyable, challenging, and motivating learning atmosphere. Such conditions may encourage students to persist when facing writing difficulties and maintain their engagement throughout the writing process.

In Indonesia, the implementation of deep learning has recently become one of the strategic directions in educational reform, emphasizing meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning to improve students' learning experiences and competencies. As institutions responsible for preparing future teachers, *Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan* (LPTKs) are expected to equip pre-service teachers with the knowledge and pedagogical skills needed to respond to this evolving policy. However, the integration of deep learning principles within teacher education programs remains uneven across institutions. Consequently, examining how ELT students experience meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning during academic and professional writing is important not only for understanding students' writing development but also for providing insights into how teacher education programs can better prepare prospective English teachers for future educational practices.

Although previous studies have examined writing challenges, instructional strategies, and deep learning separately, limited attention has been given to how these aspects interact within teacher education programs. Existing research has largely focused on identifying linguistic difficulties or evaluating writing instruction, while little is known about how ELT



students employ writing strategies to overcome grammar-related challenges and simultaneously develop meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning experiences. This gap is particularly evident in Indonesian LPTKs, where the implementation of deep learning as a recent educational policy has not yet been widely explored in relation to academic and professional writing. Addressing this gap is important because LPTKs play a crucial role in preparing prospective English teachers who are expected to adapt to evolving curriculum policies and implement learner-centered learning approaches in their future classrooms.

This study addresses this gap by examining the interrelationship between ELT students' writing strategies, grammar-related challenges, and deep learning experiences through the framework of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. By bringing these dimensions together within academic and professional writing contexts, the study offers a more comprehensive understanding of how students develop writing competence and engage in deeper learning processes in English language teacher education. Accordingly, this study aims to explore the strategies employed by ELT students in academic and professional writing, the grammar-related challenges they encounter, and how meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning are reflected in their writing experiences.

2. Method

2.1 Research design

The author of this study used a qualitative case study design. A qualitative case study design allows for a thorough investigation of participants' experiences, perspectives, and tactics within a specific setting, claims John W. Creswell (2018). Using the case study method, the researcher was able to examine how ELT students employ writing and grammar strategies and how these activities reflect meaningful, deliberate, and pleasurable learning experiences.

The case study methodology also allowed for the integration of multiple data sources, such as interviews and document analysis, to produce an exhaustive and comprehensive account of students' grammatical practices, exposure to writing resources, and experiences related to meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. This approach was deemed suitable since



it allowed for a thorough and contextualised examination of students' academic and professional writing experiences by concentrating on comprehending their cognitive and reflective processes during writing assignments.

2.2 Research participants and Sampling Procedures

The research participants consisted of five ELT students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who met specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. To choose volunteers who fit requirements pertinent to the study's goals, purposeful sampling was used. Students who have taken courses linked to academic writing and had prior experience with academic and professional writing activities met these requirements. The chosen individuals were thought to be information-rich situations that may offer thoughtful insights into writing techniques, difficulties with grammar, and in-depth learning opportunities. The sample size of this study consisted of five participants. This number was considered sufficient for a qualitative case study, as the research emphasized depth of understanding rather than statistical generalization. The data collected from the participants provided rich and detailed information relevant to the research objectives and reached data saturation. The target population of this study was students of the English Education Study Program who had completed courses related to academic communication and presentation skills.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to gather data and the data were analyzed manually using Miles and Huberman's qualitative data analysis framework, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This approach guaranteed answer comparability while enabling participants to openly share their perspectives and semi-structured interviews conducted online using Google Meet and Zoom. This approach guaranteed answer comparability while enabling participants to openly share their perspectives. Both the researcher and the participants benefited from time and accessibility flexibility brought about by the usage of online platforms. Interviews were held at mutually



agreed-upon times to ensure participants' comfort. Every participant gave their consent for their interviews to be audio recorded for research reasons and consented to participate voluntarily.

2.4 Data Analysis Technique

The interview data were evaluated manually using the qualitative data the analysis was divided into three stages: data reduction through coding, data display through thematic organizing, and deriving conclusions based on repeating patterns found across the dataset. The coding approach involved regularly reading the interview transcripts to discover important units about the students' academic and professional writing experiences. These units were then classified into broader categories, yielding three major themes: writing tactics, grammar-related problems, and deep learning experiences.

To ensure analytical rigor, the themes were evaluated and adjusted to preserve uniformity throughout the dataset. Throughout the research process, numerous measures were taken to increase the validity of the qualitative data. First, member verification was performed by providing participants with summaries of their interview answers to confirm the researcher's interpretations. This procedure enabled respondents to verify, clarify, or elaborate on their replies. Second, during the coding phase, peer review was used to verify that theme identification and categorization were consistent and rationally derived from the data. Furthermore, the researcher kept extensive records of the data analysis processes in order to increase transparency and reduce the possibility of researcher bias. These approaches helped to improve the study's credibility and reliability.

3. Findings and Discussion

This section covers the study's findings and examines how they relate to earlier studies. The interview data highlighted three primary themes: writing tactics, grammar problems, and profound learning experiences. These themes demonstrate how ELT students manage academic and professional writing assignments while engaging in meaningful, thoughtful, and enjoyable learning experiences. The data show that ELT students use a variety of ways to



manage academic and professional writing assignments while also dealing with grammar issues. Furthermore, the findings indicate that students' writing experiences incorporate aspects of purposeful, thoughtful, and joyful learning. To better grasp the relevance of these findings, the following discussion looks at how they compare to past studies on EFL writing styles and deep learning in language instruction.

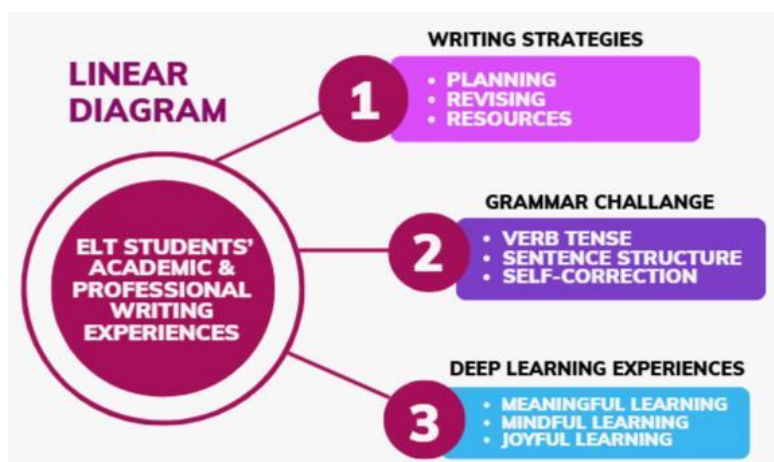


Figure 1 Diagram of ELT Students' Academic and Professional Writing Experiences

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Writing Strategies in Academic and Professional Writing

The results show that ELT students used a variety of writing techniques to help them with their professional and academic writing assignments. Planning before writing, editing drafts, and making use of educational resources like internet tools and grammar references were some of these tactics. Before draughting, planning was frequently utilized to better arrange ideas and structure text. Revising was also seen as a crucial approach to increase clarity and correctness after completing initial versions.

participant explained:

"Before writing, I usually make an outline so that my ideas are more organized and easier to develop." (P1)



This response indicates that pupils understood the value of organising ideas before writing a document. Planning allowed them to decide the framework of their writing and identify the essential themes that needed to be covered. Some participants also stated that preparing helped them save time during the drafting stage since they had a clear direction for their writing.

Another participant stated that preparing enabled them to focus on the issue and avoid writing irrelevant information. Before extending their thoughts into paragraphs, students could create a brief outline to identify the primary arguments and supporting concepts. This practice enabled them to write more swiftly and coherently in their texts. In addition to planning, participants noted that editing drafts was an essential method they utilised. Many students said they frequently reread their papers after finishing the initial draft. This technique enabled them to discover grammatical errors, ambiguous statements, and ideas that need additional clarification.

participant explained:

“I always reread my writing because I often find mistakes, especially in grammar and sentence structure.” (P3)

Students revised their texts in order to improve their quality by correcting errors and clarifying their arguments. Some participants said they altered their papers several times before submitting their assignments. This suggests that pupils saw writing as a process that required ongoing growth rather than a one-time task. The participants also indicated that rewriting drafts made them more aware of their own writing flaws. For example, students indicated that reviewing their work frequently revealed reoccurring grammar errors. This understanding prompted them to pay more attention to grammatical accuracy in subsequent revisions. Another strategy identified in the findings was the use of external resources to support the writing process.



participant stated:

“When I am unsure about grammar, I check online resources or examples to make sure my sentences are correct.” (P5)

The utilization of external materials demonstrates pupils' efforts to tackle language challenges independently when writing. Rather than depending exclusively on teacher input, pupils attempted to obtain additional assistance from available learning resources. Some participants described utilizing grammar checkers or online writing guides to verify their language choices.

Academic writing necessitates not only language understanding but also strategic skill, allowing students to tackle difficult writing projects efficiently. This study's findings imply that ELT students eventually develop strategic awareness as they complete academic writing projects. Planning, revising, and contacting external resources all serve as interconnected tactics that help with the overall writing process.

3.1.2 Grammar-Related Challenges

Despite using a variety of writing styles, the findings demonstrated that grammar-related issues remained a substantial obstacle for many ELT students while completing academic and professional writing assignments. Participants commonly expressed issues with verb tense usage, sentence construction, subject-verb agreement, and the use of proper grammatical structures. These difficulties frequently harmed students' confidence and occasionally hindered the writing process. Previous research on academic writing development has extensively documented similar issues among EFL learners (Al-Khasawneh, 2022). One of the most frequently stated concerns was with verb tense usage. Several participants stated that they were frequently unsure about choosing the appropriate tense, especially when writing academic articles that required consistency and clarity in time references.



participant explained:

“I still struggle with verb tenses, especially when writing academic papers because I am afraid of using the wrong form.” (P2)

This response illustrates that grammatical correctness is a major concern for students when producing academic texts. Students frequently worry that incorrect tense usage would reduce the clarity and credibility of their writing. As a result, some students spend more time checking their grammar to ensure that their words adhere to the correct grammatical norms. Previous research also indicates that verb tense consistency is one of the most common grammatical difficulties faced by EFL students in academic writing contexts (Suleimanova & Lykova, 2023). In addition to verb tense difficulties, students also reported challenges in constructing clear and grammatically correct sentences. Some participants stated that although they understood the ideas they wanted to express, they sometimes found it difficult to arrange those ideas into proper English sentence structures.

participant explained:

“Sometimes I know what I want to say, but I am confused about how to arrange the sentence correctly.” (P4)

Similar findings were reported by Rosmiaty et al. (2023), who argue that many EFL learners experience difficulties in translating ideas into grammatically accurate sentences due to limited mastery of syntactic structures. This conclusion implies that students' challenges were not simply due to grammar rules, but also to their ability to convert concepts into logical written sentences. The gap between understanding ideas and effectively expressing them in English frequently posed issues for pupils during the writing process. Another issue raised by participants was subject-verb agreement. Students admitted that they occasionally made mistakes when linking subjects to the correct verb forms, particularly when writing longer or more complex sentences.



participant explained:

“After writing, I realize there are many grammar mistakes, but correcting them takes a lot of time.” (P1)

This comment emphasises that grammatical correction is frequently part of the editing process rather than the drafting stage. According to Hyland (2022), revision is essential in academic writing since it allows students to spot grammatical errors and improve their texts before final submission. This emphasises that grammatical correction is frequently part of the editing process rather than the drafting stage. Students typically focus on creating their thoughts first, then reviewing their texts for grammatical faults. Despite these challenges, the data revealed that students actively sought to solve grammar-related difficulties using a variety of tactics. Many participants said they reread their drafts several times, used grammar-checking tools, and consulted online resources to ensure the accuracy of their phrases. These tactics indicate students' self-directed efforts to enhance their writing.

3.1.3 Deep Learning Experiences in Writing

Another significant finding from this study is students' deep learning experiences during the writing process. The study found that ELT students engaged in meaningful learning, attentive learning, and joyful learning while performing academic and professional writing activities. These three learning orientations influenced how students approached writing assignments and interpreted the writing process. Students perceived writing projects to be relevant to their academic growth and future professional roles, indicating meaningful learning. Several participants stated that once they grasped the aim of a writing assignment, they felt more motivated to complete it.

participant shared:

“When I understand why I have to write something, I feel more motivated and can enjoy the process.” (P4)



This response indicates that students were more involved in writing tasks when they thought the task was important. When writing assignments were linked to real-world academic or professional situations, students believed that the activity helped them learn more. Some participants also stated that writing exercises improved their capacity to articulate ideas in English. Students increasingly gained confidence in organising and presenting their thoughts in writing as they practiced more.

participant shared:

“I become more careful and aware of my grammar mistakes after getting feedback on my writing.” (P2)

This phrase suggests that students become more aware of their writing abilities after obtaining criticism and analysing their work. Such knowledge encouraged students to focus more on grammatical precision, sentence structure, and clarity in their writing. Mindful learning was also demonstrated when students described how they tracked their own writing progress over time. Some participants reported that they compared prior writing assignments to their present work to see whether there were any improvements in grammar, vocabulary, or organization. Joyful learning was another element observed in the findings. Although writing was often described as challenging, several students reported experiencing satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment after completing their writing tasks.

participant explained:

“Even though writing is challenging, I feel satisfied when I finish a text and see my improvement.” (P5)

This reaction suggests that good emotions can play a key role in keeping kids motivated in writing tasks. When students enjoy or are satisfied with the learning process, they are more likely to stay engaged. Some participants also reported that supportive learning environments helped them have positive writing experiences. Encouragement from lecturers, constructive



feedback, and opportunity to modify their work boosted students' confidence in their writing abilities.

Overall, the data indicate that ELT students' writing progress is driven not just by linguistic ability, but also by cognitive and emotional aspects of learning. The presence of meaningful, mindful, and pleasant learning experiences appears to help students maintain motivation, improve awareness of their writing skills, and overcome the problems they face when writing.

3.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that ELT students actively employed various writing strategies, including planning, revising drafts, and utilizing external resources, to complete academic and professional writing tasks. These strategies reflect students' understanding of writing as a recursive and process-oriented activity rather than a one-time product. Consistent with previous studies, EFL learners increasingly rely on planning and revision strategies to improve the coherence and clarity of their academic writing (Hu, 2022; Lekamge & Rajavarathan, 2024). Beyond confirming earlier findings, the present study suggests that these strategies not only supported students' cognitive processes but also strengthened their confidence in managing complex writing tasks. This indicates that strategic writing practices contribute to both writing quality and students' readiness to deal with the demands of academic and professional communication. Another important finding is that students did not rely solely on teacher feedback but actively engaged in self-correction by rereading drafts and consulting digital resources. This demonstrates the development of learner autonomy, as students independently monitored and improved their own writing. Such autonomy is particularly important for prospective English teachers, who are expected to become lifelong learners capable of continuously developing their professional competence. The findings therefore extend previous research by highlighting students' active role in regulating their own learning rather than functioning as passive recipients of corrective feedback.

The findings also reveal the important role of meaningful learning in students' writing experiences. Participants showed greater engagement when writing tasks were perceived as



relevant to their academic studies, real-life experiences, and future professional roles. This finding supports previous studies emphasizing that contextual relevance promotes motivation and deeper engagement in learning (Polman et al., 2021; Nafi'ah & Faruq, 2025). More importantly, the present study suggests that meaningful learning encourages students to perceive writing not merely as a classroom requirement but as a purposeful activity that contributes to their academic development and future careers as English teachers. This stronger sense of purpose appears to sustain students' motivation throughout the writing process.

Mindful learning was reflected in students' increased awareness of their writing processes, strengths, and areas for improvement. Through planning, reflection, and revision, students demonstrated metacognitive awareness by monitoring their progress and making deliberate decisions to improve grammatical accuracy and text organization. This finding is consistent with previous research linking metacognitive awareness to improved academic writing performance (Hu, 2022; Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). Rather than simply correcting errors, students became more reflective writers who consciously evaluated their writing decisions, indicating that mindful learning supports the development of self-regulated writing practices. Joyful learning also emerged as an important dimension of students' writing experiences. Although writing remained challenging, students reported feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment after completing their work and recognizing their own improvement. These positive emotions appeared to reduce writing anxiety and encouraged students to persist despite grammatical difficulties. This finding is in line with previous studies suggesting that positive emotional engagement enhances learners' motivation, perseverance, and writing performance (Mudra, 2024; Nofeanasari et al., 2025). Therefore, joyful learning should be viewed not only as creating enjoyable classroom activities but also as fostering confidence and resilience throughout the writing process.

Rather than functioning as separate dimensions, writing strategies, grammar-related challenges, and deep learning experiences interacted throughout students' writing processes. Planning and revision enabled students to identify grammatical weaknesses, while reflection



and feedback promoted mindful learning through increased metacognitive awareness. As students became more confident in addressing grammar-related challenges, they also experienced greater engagement and satisfaction during writing activities. These findings suggest that strategic writing practices contribute not only to linguistic improvement but also to deeper cognitive and affective learning experiences, providing a more comprehensive understanding of writing development among ELT students.

These findings are particularly relevant to the current educational reforms in Indonesia that promote deep learning through meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. As teacher education institutions (*Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan* or LPTKs) are expected to prepare prospective teachers who can respond to evolving educational policies, the present study offers insights into how deep learning principles can be fostered through academic and professional writing instruction. Although the implementation of deep learning has not yet been fully institutionalized across all LPTKs, the findings indicate that writing instruction provides an appropriate context for developing learner autonomy, metacognitive awareness, and meaningful engagement among future English teachers. Accordingly, this study contributes not only to the literature on ELT writing but also to the ongoing discussion of how teacher education programs can better prepare graduates for future educational practices.

4. Conclusion

This qualitative case study investigated ELT students' writing methods, grammar issues, and extensive learning experiences in academic and professional writing in an Indonesian teacher education setting. The data demonstrated that students used preparation, revision, and external learning resources as major techniques for overcoming grammar issues. Although grammatical issues remained a key concern, students displayed greater learner autonomy through self-correction, reflection, and strategic use of online resources. These experiences also exemplified the characteristics of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning,



which helped students engage, develop metacognitive awareness, self-regulation, and motivation throughout the writing process.

This study adds to the existing literature by combining writing styles, grammar issues, and deep learning experiences into a unified analytical framework. Furthermore, the findings give empirical evidence applicable to the current deployment of deep learning in Indonesian teacher education. As Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan (LPTKs) are expected to prepare prospective teachers to respond to changing educational policies, this study sheds light on how deep learning principles can be fostered through academic and professional writing instruction to support the development of future English teachers. The findings have significant pedagogical implications for ELT writing education. Writing classes should not only teach grammatical precision, but also encourage strategic writing techniques such as preparation, rewriting, reflective learning, constructive criticism, and authentic writing assignments. Such learning settings can increase students' learner autonomy, metacognitive awareness, and engagement while also promoting academic and professional writing development.

This study has several limitations. First, it involved only five participants, limiting the diversity of perspectives represented. Second, the study was conducted within a single institutional context, which restricts the transferability of the findings to other teacher education settings. Third, the findings relied primarily on self-reported interview data without incorporating additional sources, such as classroom observations or students' writing artifacts, which could have provided stronger methodological triangulation. Future study should include larger and more varied participant groups from other institutions to improve the findings' transferability. Researchers are also encouraged to use mixed-method or longitudinal designs and a variety of data sources, such as classroom observations, writing samples, and teacher feedback, to gain a better understanding of how writing strategies, grammar development, and deep learning experiences interact to prepare prospective English teachers for future educational contexts.



DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used AI-assisted tools, including ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot, to support language editing and improve grammatical accuracy. The authors carefully reviewed and edited the output generated by these tools and take full responsibility for the content of the manuscript.

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