

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the correlation between Metacognitive Awareness and Academic Writing skills among EFL University students. The first chapter provides an overview of the research's background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, conceptual framework, research scope, and previous studies.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Academic writing differs from literary writing in that it must adhere to formal, well-structured, concise, coherent, and evidence-based standards (Maharani & Aminuddin, 2024). Students who are learning English as a foreign language (EFL) find academic writing to be a difficult component (Teng, 2019). Academic writing requires more than grammatical accuracy and engagement in higher-order thinking processes. It also allows for assessing understanding, conducting reviews, and effectively allocating attention and resources (Resnick, 1987). Hence, the idea of metacognitive awareness—the propensity to regulate and assess one's cognitive processes (Flavell, 1979; Negretti, 2012)—has gained traction in relation to students' academic writing processes.

In academic writing, metacognitive awareness enables students to identify task requirements, generate and organize ideas, assess and evaluate the quality of their work, and refine their output through revision to produce effective academic writing (Harris et al., 2010). According to Negretti (2012), Strong metacognitive skills make a significant contribution to students' writing proficiency. In addition, metacognitive awareness also promotes a deeper understanding of writing while simultaneously building confidence and encouraging autonomy in writing performance. Thus, EFL students, who may encounter additional linguistic barriers, need metacognitive awareness to adopt more effective strategies for writing success (Zhang & Goh, 2006).

However, based on preliminary observations and analysis of academic writing research in the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, many students face challenges in planning, writing, and evaluating the quality of their work. This is reinforced by research conducted by Fauziah (2023), which revealed that students frequently encounter difficulties in various elements of academic writing, particularly in using grammar accurately. These include challenges related to verb tenses, sentence construction, vocabulary selection, punctuation, and comprehension of academic conventions. Such findings underscore the persistent obstacles faced by EFL students in composing well-structured and grammatically correct academic texts, indicating the urgent need to address these issues within English education programs. Besides, these challenges are often exacerbated by the demands of academic assignments, which require students to adhere to a formal and structured writing style. As a result, they tend to prioritize the final product of their academic writing over the cognitive and reflective processes, limiting their ability to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Therefore, embedding metacognitive development into academic writing pedagogy is not merely beneficial but essential in preparing students for the intellectual demands of higher education (Flavell, 1979; Hacker, Keener, & Kircher, 2009; Negretti, 2012). The relationship between metacognitive awareness and academic writing is both conceptually meaningful and pedagogically valuable. For educators, understanding this connection is crucial in formulating instructional methods that go beyond the mastery of language mechanics and rhetorical structures, by also fostering students' capacity to think about their own thinking during the writing process. Learners who possess a high level of metacognitive awareness are able to plan their writing more effectively, monitor their progress thoughtfully, and evaluate their outcomes critically. Incorporating metacognitive strategy training into writing instruction encourages students to become more autonomous, reflective, and strategic writers. Such integration enables them to manage complex academic writing

tasks, respond appropriately to diverse academic expectations, and enhance their overall academic achievement.

This study investigates the correlation between metacognitive awareness and academic writing skills among EFL university students. By focusing on this relationship, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how metacognitive skills impact writing proficiency and provide actionable insights for improving writing instruction in EFL contexts. Through this exploration, the study is expected to highlight the value of fostering metacognitive awareness as an integral component of academic writing education.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the background above, the research was formulated into three main research questions, which are listed as follows:

1. How is the students' metacognitive awareness in academic writing?
2. How is the student's academic writing skills?
3. Is there any correlation between metacognitive awareness and academic writing performance among EFL university students?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on the provided research questions, this study aimed to achieve the following purposes:

1. To find out students' metacognitive awareness in academic writing.
2. To find out students' academic writing skills.
3. To know the correlation between metacognitive awareness and academic writing performance among EFL university students.

## **D. Research Significances**

This research aims to offer contributions to both theoretical understanding and practical applications:

1. Theoretical Contributions

This research enhances existing theories on metacognitive awareness and academic writing in EFL settings. It broadens our knowledge of how metacognitive abilities, including planning, monitoring, and evaluation, influence writing outcomes. By exploring these relationships, in addition

to providing an overview of how EFL students apply these cognitive processes when faced with academic writing, the study fills a gap in the existing literature.

## 2. Practical Implications

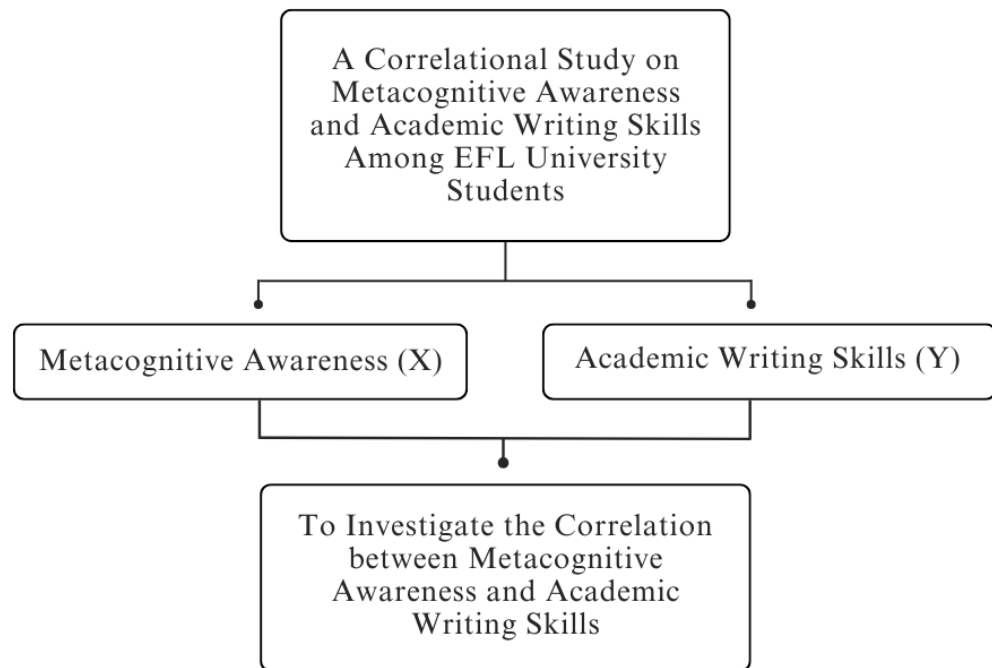
- a. For Teachers: It helps educators understand how metacognitive awareness influences EFL students' academic writing. This can guide the development of better teaching methods, focusing on skills like planning, monitoring, and reflecting during writing tasks.
- b. For Students: The findings assist students in developing greater self-awareness of their writing processes, enabling them to refine their strategies and enhance their academic writing performance.
- c. For Researchers: This research offers fresh insights into the relatively unexplored field of metacognitive awareness in EFL academic writing, providing a foundation for further study.

## E. Research Scope

This research addresses university students' challenges in academic writing, particularly the EFL students from UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. To investigate the challenges, a correlational approach will be employed to examine the relationship between metacognitive awareness and academic writing performance among EFL university students. The aim is to explore whether students' ability to regulate their thinking processes contributes to the quality of their academic writing. By identifying this relationship, the study is expected to provide deeper insights into the cognitive factors that influence students' writing success. Moreover, the findings may offer practical implications for the development of more effective academic writing instruction that integrates metacognitive strategies into the EFL classroom.

## F. Conceptual Framework

The research investigates the relationship between students' metacognitive awareness and academic writing proficiency. The research scheme can be seen as follows:



**Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework**

Academic writing is a complex skill beyond just mastering grammatical rules or vocabulary; it involves a deeper level of cognitive engagement, especially when students are required to compose coherent and well-structured texts in an academic context. Academic writing is a complex task that requires both linguistic competency and cognitive abilities (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). According to Flower and Hayes (1981), there are three primary phases in the writing process: pre-writing (planning), writing (drafting), and post-writing (editing and revision). Each stage of the process can benefit significantly from the theory of metacognition.

Flavell (1979) indicated that metacognition is the critical knowledge of one's own executive processes and thought processes that enable people to control their cognitive activities as learners and thinkers. It has two fundamental components: metacognitive regulation and metacognitive

knowledge (Flavell, 1979; Schraw & Dennison, 1994). Metacognitive knowledge refers to an individual's awareness of their cognitive abilities and strategies to achieve specific goals (Teng, 2019). On the other hand, metacognitive regulation involves active processes such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating cognitive activities during a task (Veenman & Elshout, 1999). These dimensions serve two basic functions: monitoring cognition and controlling it effectively.

Given the cognitive demands of academic writing, metacognitive strategies play a pivotal role in equipping students to tackle these challenges effectively. Metacognitive awareness provides students with tools to manage the complexity of writing tasks. It enables them to break down writing into manageable steps, plan arguments, organize ideas coherently, and revise drafts effectively (Zhang, 2010; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006). Students with high levels of metacognitive awareness are generally more effective at self-monitoring during the writing process. This ability helps them recognize challenges in their work and adapt their strategies accordingly. This can be especially important for EFL learners, who may face additional barriers in writing due to limited language proficiency (Schoenfeld, 1985; Academic Writing Task Force, 2010). By utilizing metacognitive strategies, the students can navigate these challenges more effectively, improving the quality of their academic writing.

Writing performance gains have been found to be closely associated with metacognitive techniques like goal-setting, self-monitoring, and reflection (Graham & Perin, 2007; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Students who engage actively in these processes are more likely to produce higher-quality written work, as they may reach more objective decisions on structure, content, and style. In addition, some studies discovered that students with a high sense of metacognitive awareness are better equipped to deal with the demands of academic writing, as they can regulate their writing strategies in response to varying task complexity (Zimmerman, 2002).

Thus, the relationship between metacognitive awareness and academic writing performance is a valuable area of study. Understanding how students' awareness of their cognitive processes influences their writing could provide valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance writing instruction. By fostering students' metacognitive skills, teachers can not only improve their writing outcomes but also encourage a more autonomous and reflective approach to learning. This could lead to students becoming more self-sufficient writers, capable of independently assessing and improving their work over time.

This study aims to investigate the correlation between metacognitive awareness and academic writing in EFL students. The goal is to investigate how metacognitive skills impact the writing process and how educators can better support students in developing these skills to improve their academic writing.

#### **G. Previous Studies**

The relationship between metacognitive awareness and academic writing skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners has attracted significant scholarly attention, as researchers aim to understand how students' awareness and regulation of their own cognitive processes influence their ability to produce coherent, structured, and effective academic texts in English.

"The Relationship between Writing Proficiency in English and Metacognitive Awareness of Writing Strategies among EFL University Students," a study by Hidayah & Iqbal (2023), employed a quantitative approach and discovered that metacognitive awareness can predict 62% of the variation in writing proficiency among EFL university students. This emphasizes how crucial metacognitive techniques are for enhancing writing abilities.

Aglina, Rohmatillah, and Syamsiah (2020) carried out a study utilizing a correlational design to explore the connection between students' metacognitive awareness and their writing-related anxiety in an EFL context. Their investigation found a meaningful inverse relationship, suggesting that students

who demonstrate higher levels of metacognitive awareness tend to experience less anxiety during the writing process. These findings emphasize the relevance of integrating metacognitive skill development into writing instruction to enhance both students' confidence and their academic writing outcomes.

A quantitative approach was also used by Negretti & Kuteeva (2021) in their paper "Validation of Metacognitive Academic Writing Strategies and the Development of a Measurement Instrument," which created a tool to assess metacognitive techniques. The results showed that academic writing abilities and metacognitive awareness were significantly correlated, highlighting the need to assess these strategies.

Another study by Negretti & Kuteeva (2021), "The Role of Metacognitive Strategies in Academic Writing Skills in EFL Contexts," used a qualitative approach to conclude that Metacognitive awareness and self-reflection can help improve academic writing skills. The authors suggested that fostering metacognitive strategies in EFL contexts can help improve writing in areas such as structure, coherence, and argumentation.

The study by Teng & Chenghai (2024), "Assessing Metacognitive Writing Strategies and the Predictive Effects on Writing Performance in a Multimedia Environment," employed a quantitative method to examine Metacognitive methods on writing performance in a multimedia setting. The study found that metacognitive strategies significantly influenced writing performance, especially in digital environments.

Finally, a study titled "Metacognitive Awareness on EFL Students' Writing Anxiety: An Indonesian Higher Education Context" was conducted by Roslaini et al. (2023). The association between EFL students' writing anxiety and metacognitive awareness was investigated using a qualitative approach. Fostering metacognitive methods may assist in lowering anxiety and improving writing ability, as the results showed that students with higher degrees of metacognitive awareness also had lower levels of writing anxiety.

However, although numerous studies have explored the relationship between metacognitive awareness and writing performance, most of them

primarily emphasize general writing proficiency, writing anxiety, or the use of digital tools in writing instruction. There is still limited scholarly attention given to academic writing as a specific and structured skill that demands higher-order thinking and metacognitive regulation. Moreover, many of these investigations employ qualitative methods or are focused on the development and validation of metacognitive instruments, rather than directly analyzing the statistical correlation between metacognitive awareness and academic writing outcomes. In EFL university settings, such studies remain particularly scarce. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by applying an explanatory sequential approach to examine how metacognitive awareness influences academic writing skills among EFL students. The findings are expected to contribute not only to the theoretical understanding of metacognitive involvement in writing but also to pedagogical practices that enhance academic writing instruction in EFL contexts.

