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Research Paper

From Strategy to Success: How Metacognitive Writing Practices and Communication Willingness Influence ESL Writing Performance

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Abstract
English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in Pakistan encounter numerous challenges in writing performance, largely due to limited exposure to English beyond the classroom and inadequate opportunities to build strong writing skills. To address this problem, this study addressed the relationship between metacognitive writing strategies (i.e., planning and monitoring), willingness to communicate (WTC) and writing performance. Although previous studies addressed the relationship between metacognitive writing strategies and writing performance, however, the mediating role of WTC was not addressed. This was achieved by using quantitative study involving a questionnaire survey. Seven hundred (700) questionnaires were distributed among ESL leaners in various universities of Pakistan and three hundred and twenty-five (325) valid questionnaires were returned. Results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) identified the positive contribution of planning and monitoring to WTC which further led to the promotion of writing performance. These results are helpful for universities to enhance students writing performance by promoting metacognitive writing strategies.

Introduction

The writing performance of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in Pakistan faces multiple challenges, primarily due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom and insufficient practice in developing strong writing skills (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2023). Writing is an essential language skill but it is one area where many Pakistani ESL learners fail to perform better (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024a). Touching on academic life, writing is usually considered both the least learned of skills for language learners and subsequent students — because it so often requires elements of organization, coherence, and grammar accuracy. For Pakistani learners of ESL, these challenges are multiplied by several causes which include low confidence, little interactive exposure to English and limited attention on the productive skills in traditional classrooms (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024b). Thus, despite progressing through their education, many Pakistani learners of English continue to find it difficult to write in the language correctly or usefully, which has negative implications for their learning and professional futures.

This study considered theoretical problem in the literature of ESL learners. It is not just the ability to write a language, but it exploits a whole bunch of metacognitive skills such as planning, monitoring and evaluating one's own work. Planning and monitoring as metacognitive writing strategies are critical for learners to control their writing process, which enhances the quality and coherence of their written discourse (Kolavarambath et al., 2020; Li, Liu, & Tseng, 2023; Teng & Zhang, 2018). Nevertheless, as metacognitive strategies have proven benefits, literature reveals that Pakistani ESL learners may be unfamiliar with or do not use metacognitive strategies effectively. Moreover, while willingness to communicate (WTC)—the extent to which a language learner is prepared to enter into discourse in the target language—comes out as one of the cornerstones for successful acquisition of any given L2 and an important factor affecting writing (Mirsane & Khabiri, 2016; Yaqobi, 2022) but still neglected in writing context. Because writing involves expressing ideas and engaging with an imagined audience, a learner's willingness to express themselves naturally will significantly impact the reasons for learning as well as motivation levels and confidence in written text production. Figure 1 depicts Percentage of English Language in Pakistan.

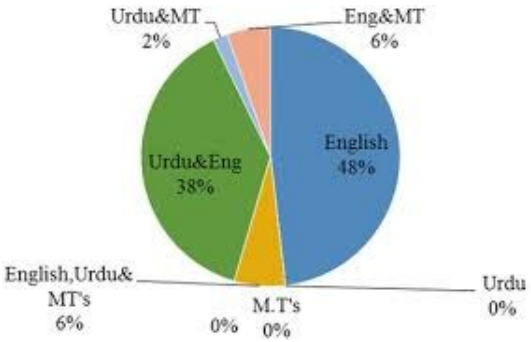


Figure 1: English Language in Pakistan

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The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between metacognitive writing strategies and Pakistani ESL learners' writing performance with special reference to students' WTC as a possible mediating variable. The study aims to investigate some of the variables associated with writing success by examining the interplay of planning and monitoring strategies through WTC. This study proposed that the learners with planning and monitoring activities are more prone to have higher WTC which positively contributes to writing performance (Kovačić, 2013). The current study ambitions to fill this practical gap along with a theoretical gap by considering the influence of metacognitive strategies on WTC, the Pakistani ESL learners context provides an opportunity to explore how these three aspects are related to each other.

This research is important because it can help consider deep teaching practices and curriculum design for ESL education in Pakistan. Understanding the influence of metacognitive strategies and WTC on writing performance will allow educators to create interventions designed specifically to promote these skills, providing students with essential tools necessary for success in academia and professional settings. For ESL learners, better writing can have a positive effect on their academic performance, give them newly found confidence in the use of English as well as more career opportunities in the global job market. Moreover, it offers an important implication into the theoretical discussion on second language acquisition through indicating the relationship between metacognitive awareness as well as communication readiness and language learning. This study aimed to explore the status of metacognitive writing strategies, WTC, and writing performance among EFL students and how they interact; in particular, how the relationships between metacognitive writing strategies and writing performance were mediated by WTC. The study is significant as it identifies the challenges confronted by Pakistani ESL learners to provide worthwhile understanding that must improve writing invisible and assist language learners in reaching improved educational and professional accomplishments.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Flavell's Theory of Metacognition provides a useful foundation for understanding how metacognitive strategies can improve writing performance among Pakistani ESL learners (Flavell, 1979). In this theory that characterizes metacognition as one who can recognize or control their own cognitive processes, they distinguish between two major areas of metacognition: metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation (Forbes, 2018; González, Fernández, & Paoloni, 2017; Kolavarambath et al., 2020). Within this framework of the current study, planning and monitoring are recognized as important components of metacognitive knowledge that help learners have control over their writing process. On the other hand, planning refers to organizing ideas and goals for writing but also structuring content while monitoring means evaluating your writing to make sure it was clear, coherent, and met the goals you set before writing (Meltzer, 2014). These metacognitive strategies provide a framework for writing that allows ESL learners to make more conscious decisions regarding language and content. Which, in turn, leads to more self-management and gives them the confidence to write.

In addition, Flavell's (1979) theory illustrates that metacognitive knowledge can increase WTC in learners and help to mediate their writing performance. The use of planning and monitoring strategies provides more information about what students can do well and where they find it hard, which appears to build self-efficacy (the confidence/thought that one can do a task) as well as the desire or tendency to express them through writing. This increase in WTC positively affects their motivation and perseverance, which results in better writing performances. This ability to self-assess and continuously revise, adapt and adjust is an example of metacognitive regulation, which – in Flavell's view – reinforces learning outcomes by demonstrating active management capability of writing process flow (Teng, Qin, & Wang, 2022; Teng & Yue, 2023; Zhang & Qin, 2018). Thus, this framework indicates that through the development of metacognitive awareness and WTC among Pakistani ESL learners, educators can assist in writing because success in written communication is crucial for academic achievement, self-confidence as a writer. Last, the theoretical model of the study is presented in Figure 2.

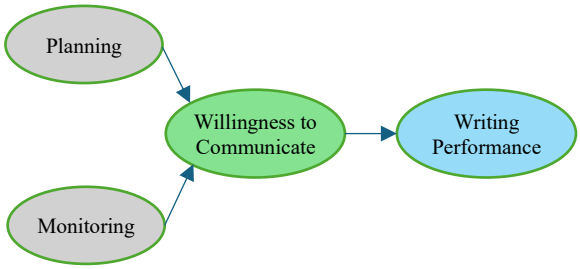


Figure 2: Theoretical Framework of the Study.

Hypotheses Development

Relationship between Planning, Monitoring and Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

The overall use of planning and monitoring to overcome WTC amongst ESL learners. Willingness-to-Communicate (WTC), the willingness of individuals to speak in a second language, is considered to be foundational for saying mode acquisition, because it determines how frequently learners practice and use language skills in realistic situations. In general, the strong interaction between planning and monitoring instills confidence and motivation in ESL learners (Aziz, Naveed, & Ahmad, 2021; Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016; Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024a), especially in difficult or unfamiliar sociocultural environments, which promotes a readiness to communicate (the converse of communication apprehensive behavior).

Planning includes the strategies of thinking about prior knowledge to organize those thoughts and set appropriate goals and the process of out lining. In the case of ESL learners (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024b), planning help them prepare themselves for the endeavor of communicating in English by deciding what they will communicate and how. This helps mitigate anxiety and uncertainty, which can inhibit WTC. On the other side, when they plan their work–they feel more confident as they know what is the message that they want to convey, with which vocabulary and how are they going to end it. For example, if a learner knows they are going to need to talk about something in class or take part in a discussion with their peers, then they can practice the vocabulary they might need and how any phrases or sentences they would like to use. By planning ahead, they can feel more sure of themselves and less afraid to make mistakes, which is a major hurdle for ESL students. Planning reduces anxiety related to language, which makes learners more confident in making interactions.

In addition, planning enables learners to imagine possible situations and answers in advance of the exchange; it tends to provide them some degree of preparation (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024b). The importance of this preparedness is the control it gives ESL learners over an interaction, as it reduces the uncertainty linked to language use for WTC (Makiabadi et al., 2019; Mirsane & Khabiri, 2016; Yaqobi, 2022). For instance, if learners are writing down questions that the other person may be asking or answers they can give in a conversation, they are able to have a wealth of options available to them as they move into the conversation, which makes them feel more at ease, and therefore more likely to partake. Equally important, planning allows learners to set their own purposeful goal; use of some vocabulary, or level of fluency needed and hence encourages them to put it into practice through communicating in English. These goals provide learners with purpose and direction in their language learning process, which in turn contributes to an increase in WTC as it helps induce a positive approach to language usage. In all, planning allows the learners to come to communication in a much more willing manner and do their reluctant process of engagement with the love language; the target language.

An important metacognitive strategy is monitoring — a self-assessment or ongoing evaluation of your communication right at the time you give it (Kren & Kerr, 1993; Przeslawski et al., 2018). Monitoring, too, assists learners in evaluating their communicative ability during discussions or oral practice and adjusting if necessary. This ongoing self-check can be a big confidence-booster for ESL learners as it gives them feedback on their performance. The more a learner observes himself or herself communicating well, or successfully employing new terms, the more confidence he or she will have in using that knowledge again without fear of being unable to communicate. Furthermore, if they detect an area to work on, they are able to modify their usage of the language. As an example, a learner who becomes aware that he is speaking too fast may deliberately slow down to make himself more clear. The prevailing sensation of a feeling of being capable of managing the demands and challenges posed by the communication gives an extra boost to WTC, sustained by self-regulation and adaptability to deal with different communicative contexts, which is essential for continuing in face-to-face communicative situations.

Monitoring promotes growth among ESL learners by allowing them to see communication as a process that progresses with practice (Przeslawski et al., 2018). As learners notice their own language use, they realize that errors or miscommunication are a normal part of the learning process. Instead of shying away from communication out of fear that they will say the wrong thing, each instance becomes an opportunity for growth. This perspective shift is essential for WTC: it reveals the willingness of learners to take risks, experiment with language and accept the process of learning as a whole. Continuous tracking is another feature that motivates learners to have more conversations and helps them develop a stronger appetite for challenges by displaying their progress over time. This growth mindset also allows learners to remain positive about language acquisition, which leads to a greater WTC (Esfandiari Dehmajnoni & Amjadiparvar, 2022).

The interplay of planning and monitoring is especially potent for ESL learners since it provides a framework that is both structured and adaptable to the needs of the situation (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2023). Planning prepares the learners for a more realizable direction, while monitoring gives them feedback and possible adjustments. These strategies combined create a cycle of preparation, execution, and contemplation that builds both skill and self-confidence. Particularly, a learner who constructs a set of contributions for a group discussion then observes their performance in that discussion receives formative feedback that can influence how they approach similar interactions later on (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2024b). This not only helps with communication skills, but also counteracts the anxiety that often prevents WTC from occurring in the first place. This means that they are more likely to converse, ask questions and share ideas with the hope of mastering a language quickly and fluently over time.

Finally, planning and monitoring play an important role in creating WTC for ESL learners. These metacognitive strategies help learners prepare themselves for and cope with communication, lessen anxiety and gain confidence in themselves. Planning provides them with the techniques to have focused and clear conversation, while monitoring is what makes it possible for them to evaluate their language usage and enhance it as they go. The combination of these strategies could assist learners in mitigating the most frequent obstacles to WTC, for instance fear of making mistakes or low self-confidence and enables them to take a more active part in their L2 practice. Planning and monitoring are two practices that when habitual allow learners to be more at ease with their readiness, thus, more likely encouraged to communicate – a key component in the foundation of English learning as a second language.

Hypothesis 1: *Planning has a positive influence on WTC.*
Hypothesis 2: *Monitoring has a positive influence on WTC.*

Relationship between Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and Writing Performance

The impact of WTC on ESL learners' writing performance is positive, as it relates to their preparedness to access the language and efforts they expend in writing. High WTC in ESL learners are associated with greater willingness to share ideas, more risk-taking in writing and experimentation with the language (Basöz & Erten, 2018; Fahim, Hamidi, & Sarem, 2013). This attitude also invites a deeper investigation of language, such as vocabulary, structure or stylistic features that will all help create fuller, more cohesive and nuanced the written work. The higher the WTC, the greater is not only the probability of starting a writing task but also enduring previous failures due to poor vocabulary or complicated structures which contributes to writing fluency and quality. WTC also facilitates self-efficacy and self-confidence, indispensable for overcoming the fears that writing in a foreign language may instill (Shahsavani, Shahsavari, & Sahragard, 2014; Zhang, Beckmann, & Beckmann, 2020). a great approach towards writing tasks, oriented to the learning and perfecting of their skills rather than one that fears mistakes. This mindset allows them to see mistakes as a part of learning making them more resilient to errors and feedback. WTC also promotes more efficient use of the metacognitive strategies like planning, monitoring and revising. A WTC learner may write a draft, and then take 10 minutes to revise before submitting it (such as by making an outline of their main ideas or proofreading to ensure that the document reads well). In this way, their own sense of reflection – along with their willingness to talk about it – becomes a cycle that perpetuates better writing.

In brief, WTC is the push that enables ESL learners to put pen to paper or fingers on a keyboard—and then go beyond moving keyboard clackers-to-doers when they engage in writing. Engaging with their peers in this way challenges them to know and learn how to articulate great things, strategize then perform with poise. Thus, this attitude reinforces the Writing Performance of WTC and enables them to help produce a more well-organized, coherent, and purposeful output for their writing. This emphasis on the need to foster WTC in ESL gives the added benefit of immediate writing results, ideally leading to language proficiency and communicative competence in the long term.

Hypothesis 3: *WTC has a positive influence on writing performance.*

Mediating role of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) between Metacognitive Writing Strategies and Writing Performance

Metacognitive writing strategies (planning, monitoring) and writing performance for ESL learners is mediated by the role of the WTC which can promote learner empowerment by improving how learners systematically reflect on their approach to writing tasks. Planning, for example, is a process whereby learners set objectives and arrange ideas in order to sequence their writing; hence they know where they are going (Razzaq & Hamzah, 2023). By monitoring themselves, they can assess how they are going and what needs more work so that their strategy is suited to both. Nevertheless, the actual benefits of these approaches for writing performance are based on whether or not learners will write. WTC is a link that operationalizes the strategic planning and self-regulation of writing into task engagement (Stewart, Seifert, & Rolheiser, 2015). High WTC learners actively apply these metacognitive strategies which therefore result in a higher Writing Performance. However, if learners do not have the motivation or confidence to communicate, then even the best metacognitive strategies will not result in performance improvements because they may be less likely to put effort into finding the right words (or writing them).

In addition, WTC enhances the influence of metacognitive strategies by encouraging a positive perspective and writing confidence. When learners openly communicate they are more likely to be free and experiment with language, share their thoughts and take risks in their writing (Al-Jarrah, Mansor, & Ab Rashid, 2018; Forbes, 2018; Liu, Rahimi, & Fathi, 2022). This availability improves their use of planning and monitoring. For example, a learner high in WTC might plan their writing more extensively in their head and incorporate numerous views or complex structures, constantly examining their work to guarantee that it is both clear and coherent. By this engagement it helps students not only to improve their writing but also bounce back and accept challenges as opportunities. WTC does not just prompt learners to apply their metacognitive strategies, but fosters an attitude which embraces writing as a process and consequently diligence and better results. Thus, WTC links metacognitive writing strategies to writing performance as the latter are only potential enhancers of ESL learners' writing skills.

Hypothesis 4: *WTC mediates the relationship between planning and writing performance.*
Hypothesis 5: *WTC mediates the relationship between monitoring and writing performance.*

Methodology

This study is a quantitative survey-based investigation of the relationships between metacognitive writing strategies (planning and monitoring), WTC, and writing performance among ESL learners. The main tool for collecting data is a structured questionnaire, which aims to obtain answers on each variable through scale items carefully. The 5- point scale is used for measuring each item of this scale, varying from (1) ("strongly disagree") to (5) ("strongly agree") and asking the level of agreement with every statement. A survey questionnaire was developed in this study, and the scale items of all variables are presented in Table 1. This instrument measures the participants' perceptions of their planning,

monitoring, WTC and actual writing performance. In this way, the study attempts to explore the ways of interaction among these elements in terms of their effect on ESL learners' writing performance.

Table 1: Scale Items.

Variable	Scale Items
Planning	1. I outline my ideas before starting to write. 2. I organize the structure of my writing before I begin. 3. I set clear goals for what I want to achieve in my writing. 4. I allocate time to each part of the writing task effectively.
Monitoring	1. I check my progress while I am writing. 2. I review my work to ensure it meets the required standards. 3. I evaluate my ideas and adjust them as needed during writing. 4. I correct mistakes as I go along to improve clarity.
Willingness to Communicate	1. I feel comfortable expressing my thoughts in writing. 2. I am willing to share my written work with others. 3. I am eager to participate in writing tasks in class. 4. I feel confident in my ability to communicate effectively through writing.
Writing Performance	1. My writing effectively conveys my intended message. 2. I am satisfied with the organization and flow of my writing. 3. I can write clearly and concisely in English. 4. My writing meets the expectations of my academic assignments.

The participants are chosen from a population of ESL learners at different universities in Pakistan. So that they are capable of which criteria to process in order to understand the constructs. As it is based on simple random sampling method, the findings can be generalized. It calculates the sample size based on statistical power and suggested portion of sample size for SEM. The survey is conducted in face-to-face and online format to ensure higher response rates and easy access for participants. Seven hundred (700) questionnaires were distributed among ESL leaners in various universities of Pakistan and three hundred and twenty-five (325) valid questionnaires were returned.

All respondents are informed of ethical considerations before data collection, such as obtaining informed consent, respect for confidentiality and right to voluntary participation. Questionnaires were analyzed for missing responses and response patterns to monitor data quality, and incomplete questionnaires were excluded. Data are analyzed through PLS-SEM to test the hypothesized relationships among variables. This approach allows for investigating models with latent constructs and is appropriate when the goal of the research is prediction. Confirmatory factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE) was considered in this study along with hypotheses testing.

Findings

This study employed PLS-SEM and to conduct an analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is calculated in order to measure reliability as well as validity of measurement model (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020; Hair Jr et al., 2022). Factor loadings for all items are above the acceptable level of 0.70 (see Table 2), suggesting that each item reliably measures the construct it is supposed to represent in this analysis. The Cronbach's alpha values vary from 0.85 to 0.88, which are higher than the commonly accepted value of 0.70 and demonstrate a good internal consistency between the assets of each variable (see Table 2). The CR values of all constructs also shown above 0.90 indicating overall reliability of the constructs.

Table 2: Factor Loadings, CR and AVE.

Variable	Scale Items	Loading	Alpha	CR	AVE
Planning	I outline my ideas before starting to write.	0.82	0.85	0.90	0.70
	I organize the structure of my writing before I begin.	0.87			
	I set clear goals for what I want to achieve in my writing.	0.78			
	I allocate time to each part of the writing task effectively.	0.80			
Monitoring	I check my progress while I am writing.	0.85	0.86	0.91	0.72
	I review my work to ensure it meets the required standards.	0.88			
	I evaluate my ideas and adjust them as needed during writing.	0.84			
	I correct mistakes as I go along to improve clarity.	0.75			
Willingness to Communicate	I feel comfortable expressing my thoughts in writing.	0.83	0.87	0.92	0.74
	I am willing to share my written work with others.	0.89			
	I am eager to participate in writing tasks in class.	0.82			
	I feel confident in my ability to communicate effectively through writing.	0.87			
Writing Performance	My writing effectively conveys my intended message.	0.86	0.88	0.92	0.75
	I am satisfied with the organization and flow of my writing.	0.84			
	I can write clearly and concisely in English.	0.88			
	My writing meets the expectations of my academic assignments.	0.77			

Each of the constructs have met the AVE threshold of 0.50 due to all AVE values being above 0.70, suggesting that these constructs are capturing a good amount of variance in the items that make it up (Table 2). This also indicates convergent validity since the AVE values demonstrate that constructs explain more variance from their items than respective measurement error. These results confirm that the measurement model is not only valid, but also reliable and allows us to continue the structural part of PLS-SEM. Table 2 and Figure 3 highlighted the factor loadings, CR and AVE

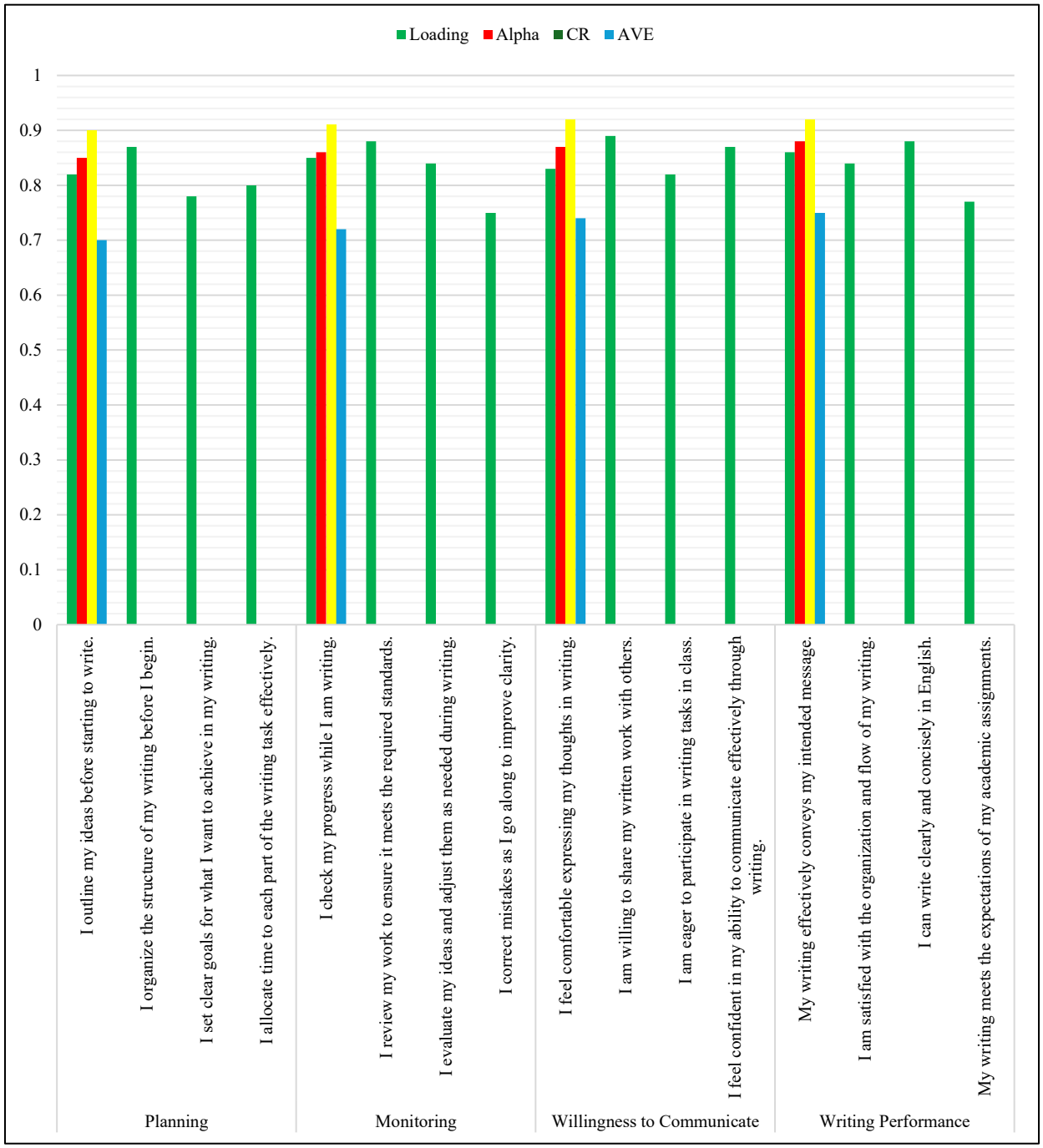


Figure 3: Factor Loadings, CR and AVE.

Table 3 highlighted the HTMT. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is a PLS-SEM construct measure which assesses the degree to which constructs are discriminant from one another (i.e. discriminant validity) (Alarcón, Sánchez, & De Olavide, 2015; Hafkesbrink, 2021). HTMT common threshold is 0.85; lower than the value suggests good discriminant validity, meaning each construct is distinct and measures a construct that different from other constructs. As shown in

Table 3, all HTMT values reports well below the 0.85 threshold thus implying decent discriminant validity based on this study.

Table 3: HTMT.

Constructs	Planning	Monitoring	WTC	Writing Performance
Planning				
Monitoring	0.79			
Willingness to Communicate	0.68	0.73		
Writing Performance	0.64	0.69	0.77	

PLS structural model was employed to examine the relationship between variables which is recommended by previous studies (Hair et al., 2010; Hair Jr et al., 2020; Shair et al., 2021). Results are reported in Table 4 and Figure 4. The results indicate firm evidence of support for each hypothesis. Evidence of Hypothesis 1 indicates that Planning exerts a significant positive effect on WTC (β=0.30, t=5.20, p<0.001), which means the better planning strategies ESL learners have received will lead to greater willingness for them to communicate with others in English. Monitoring also has a strong positive effect on WTC (β=0.45, t=8.10, p<0.001) Hypothesis 2: which means that the use of monitoring strategies promotes students' WTC. It can be seen in Hypothesis 3, WTC positively predicts Writing Performance (β=0.55, t=9.50, p<0.001) meaning that having WTC is crucial for the writing performance itself. Hypothesis 4 (β=0.17, t=4.25, p<0.001) and Hypothesis5 (β=0.25, t=5.8, p<0.001). In short, the fact that planning and monitoring affected writing performance indirectly via their effects on communication willingness indicates the importance of WTC as a mediator in improving ESL learners writing performances.

Table 4: Hypotheses Results.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	t-value	p-value	Result
H1: Planning → WTC	Positive	0.30	5.20	< 0.001	Supported
H2: Monitoring → WTC	Positive	0.45	8.10	< 0.001	Supported
H3: WTC → Writing Performance	Positive	0.55	9.50	< 0.001	Supported
H4: Planning → WTC → Writing Performance	Mediated	0.17	4.25	< 0.001	Supported
H5: Monitoring → WTC → Writing Performance	Mediated	0.25	5.80	< 0.001	Supported

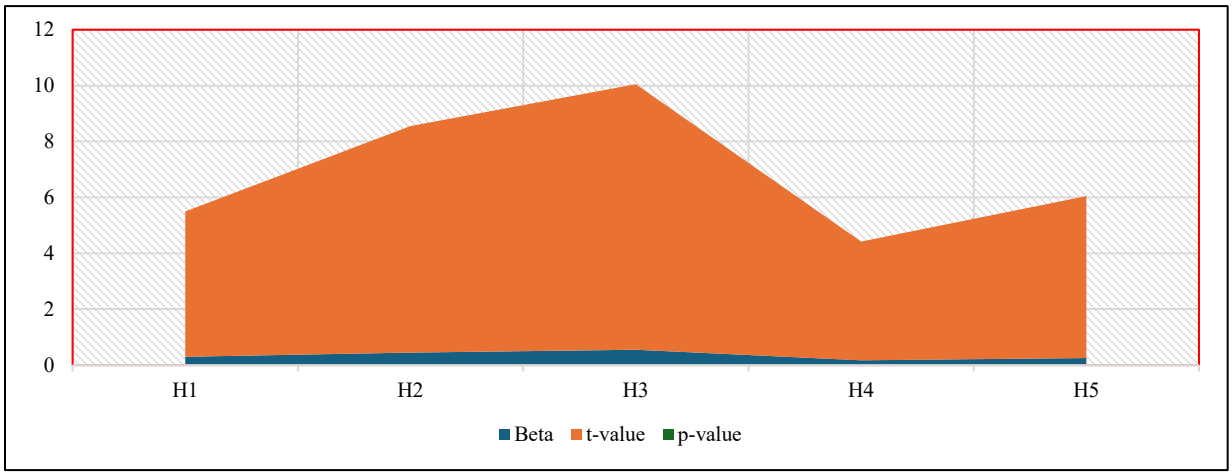


Figure 4: Hypotheses Results (beta, t-value and p-value).

Discussion and Conclusion

Results of this study illustrate the validation of the stimulating effect of Planning and Monitoring on ESL learners' WTC, which then affects Writing Performance. The large effects measured in Hypotheses 1 and 2 indicate that both Planning and Monitoring are integral to preparing students for communicative readiness. It seems that the clues are that Planning (setting a goal, thinking organized things before talking, coming up with strategies) helps learners develop confidence and clarity to be more willing to communicate which is consistent with Esfandiari Dehmajnoni and Amjadiparvar (2022). Likewise, Monitoring (monitoring progress, evaluating understanding and using this information to adjust strategies) can have the same result by supporting students with self-regulation by evaluating their writing process so that they can revise it themselves which is consistent with Fahim et al. (2013). Each metacognitive strategy gives the students a sense of readiness and decreases communication related anxiety, thus creating an atmosphere suitable for expression of thoughts.

WTC has proven to be one of the most important factors that lead to superior writing performance for ESL learners, however, and this is reflected in Hypothesis 3 whereby WTC is positively related with Writing Performance. If students take a

greater disposition towards communication, they are probably going to convey the ideas better and with confidence which would result in a better write-up which is reported by Gholami and Barzegar (2018); Kovačić (2013). Think of WTC as a bridge between what one has internally and the expression that emerges externally; thus, it is an essential component of successful language task performance. This, however, supports earlier findings, that the WTC is known to be associated higher level of language achievement and academic success. For ESL students, especially ones unlikely to be fluent in L2, a high level of WTC in writing helps them overcome reluctance and hesitancy and create a mind space conducive for getting involved in the use of language that will ultimately make their writing skill better.

At the same time, it stresses the importance of WTC as a mediator (H4&5) which relates Metacognitive Writing Strategies (Planning and Monitoring) with Writing Performance. Results of the mediation analysis showed that Planning and Monitoring had a significant indirect effect on Writing Performance through WTC. That is, although planning and monitoring strategies are undoubtedly important in predicting writing performance, they only show their positive effects when students' WTC while writing is also high. In other words, they encourage the kind of thinking that leads to being ready for doing what you need to do (the task) but also — important at this time maybe more than ever — a desire to say something, which is also vital because readiness alone does not result in performance. This knowledge highlights that teachers do not just need to focus on teaching metacognitive strategies, but also how open students are to sharing their thoughts — it dramatically increases the effectiveness of such strategies.

In conclusion, metacognitive strategies and communication readiness were both correlated with writing performance. Teachers who introduce planning and monitoring exercises when teaching a language can help students learn the important skills of organizing and self-regulating their learning processes. In addition, an environment of free communication in the classroom helps to promote WTC which can help students in transferring metacognitive and their strategies to writing tasks more effectively. In addition, if tasks like group discussions, presentations and peer feedback which enhance WTC are conducted in practice it can reinforce students confidence and motivation to make them ready for expression. The implications are that an interaction of metacognitive strategy training while providing a communicative environment seems to boost the writing performance of ESL learners. The integrated and Gestalt approach of this form of language education that works on cognitive and affective levels presents a potential solution to challenges faced by ESL learners in writing tasks.

Implications of the Study

This study is significant because it provides chefs and curriculum designers and policy makers with good insight of how to improve the performance of writing among EFL/ESL learners in Pakistan. This study highlights two key implications from the study. This study provides positive evidence on the potential of integrating metacognitive strategies such as Planning and Monitoring into language education. Students become aware of their learning processes through goal-setting and self-regulation strategies, which can lead to enhanced performance when teachers encourage them to set clear writing goals, organize their ideas, and monitor their progress. By integrating such strategies into writing curricula, students may develop greater independence and confidence, which in turn will help them become more comfortable communicating through English. Second, this study indicated the importance of WTC in language learning and how it is probably a mediator between metacognitive strategies and writing. As such, educational programs should hone students not only their cognitive skills but also their readiness and motivation to participate in communication. Encouraging open lines of communication through creating an interactive and supportive classroom can give students the chance to get their hands dirty with writing craft. Peer reviews, group discussions and presentations can be beneficial to students WTC and in turn their writing performance.

The implications for policymakers highlight the need to establish language plans centered on cognitive-affective aspects of learning a new language. Investing in teacher education around how best to teach metacognitive strategies, along with basic techniques that help reduce communication barriers, might allow schools to create richer language learning environments. In conclusion, the findings of this study encourage us to see a more holistic approach that combines all aspects of cognitive, of emotion and communicative nature in supporting ESL learners towards better writing achievements, which are vital in academic success and professional preparedness in a globalizing world.

Limitations and Future Directions

There are limitations of this study that offer opportunities for future work. This is firstly constrained by its scope as it studies only the Pakistani ESL learners which may affect replicability across culture or languages. Further studies may also consider replicating this research in different geographic and educational settings to determine the external validity of these findings. In addition, the data collection was cross-sectional, so participants only answered at one moment of time. Thus, this strategy restricts the knowledge about longitudinal conditions of metacognitive strategies, WTC and writing performance. A longitudinal approach could help disentangle these factors that can change and influence one another during the process of learning. In addition, the use of self-report measures may create social desirability or response bias which could compromise validity. Future studies may also include observational or performance-based measures to confirm self-reported data. One other limitation is the allocation of research to two metacognitive strategies only (planning and monitoring). Future studies should also investigate other metacognitive components (e.g., evaluation, or self-

regulation) and their potential contribution to writing performance. Finally, further mediation or moderation analyses exploring other variables like language anxiety and self-efficacy may help explain not only how but also when the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies will lead to better writing performance, thus informing more effectively ESL education.

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CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

Shazma Razzaq: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

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The author declares no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest related to this work.

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Ethical Statement

This study followed ethical standards, and no ethical approval was required as no human tissue or biological samples were used.

Data Availability Statement

The data produced and utilized in this study can be obtained from the corresponding author upon a reasonable request.

Artificial Intelligence/ Language Module Statement

The author assumes full responsibility for this work, completed without AI or LLM assistance.

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