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INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMIC
WRITING PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE EFL LEARNERS FROM
A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN NORTHEASTERN MEXICO

PRESENTA

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Abstract

As a productive skill, writing entails specific knowledge and many competencies that students can struggle to master. Moreover, the students' intrinsic affective filters and lack of engagement in practice and feedback can negatively impact the overall quality of their written production. This study aims to identify the most common types of mistakes that fifth-semester undergraduate B2 level EFL learners show in their academic writing performance and the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. It also aims to design a didactic proposal that considers these influencing factors and resolves their most common types of writing mistakes. A short test based on TOEIC protocols revealed that students struggle with coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy to a great extent. Self-efficacy and self-regulation, which were measured using Golombek et al.'s 2018 scale, showed a direct moderate significant correlation with writing performance, and the answers to the extrinsic factors questionnaire affirmed a lack of practice and in-depth feedback. The interview with the professor confirmed the findings of the TOEIC test and the extrinsic factors questionnaire. A didactic proposal using Microsoft Teams' Wiki as a facilitating tool was designed to address the problems identified through the diagnostic instruments. This proposal aimed to provide peer feedback and additional resources, such as a handbook and a checklist, to assist self-regulating behaviors. The group's score improved by 1.4 points, moving from slightly below adequate (2.95) to slightly above good. Additionally, the students' opinions and perceptions toward the proposal were generally positive.

Keywords: writing performance; EFL undergraduates; academic writing; affective filters; metacognition; self-regulated learning

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Chapter I Introduction

The world has experienced a rise in multiculturalism and multilingualism due to the accessibility of traveling and communication in recent decades. It is only normal to discover a significant percentage of individuals fluent in more than one language in a multilingual world. Moreover, the importance of English as a second language heavily relies on its position as one of the world's most recognized lingua franca. According to a news article published on the official website of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in February 2020, English "is the most common second language in the world…. English is currently the language of the internet…. It gives you an open door to the world and helps you communicate with global citizens." Furthermore, the proximity of Mexico to the United States, especially in the northern Mexican states, accentuates its population's need and interest to learn English as a foreign language.

Academic writing is recognized as a cognitive endeavor that involves considerable careful thought, text composition, and evaluation. Researchers such as Teng et al. (2021) recommend the use of strategies that promote metacognition to help students reflect on their writing process during academic writing courses. Metacognition refers to our ability to reflect on our thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs and self-regulate our learning through critical awareness. (Flavell, 1979). Similarly, writing self-regulation consists of the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors students adopt to develop their writing abilities and improve the quality of their paragraphs (Rahimi & Fathi, 2021).

This study explores the challenges that fifth-semester undergraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners at a B2 proficiency level face in the context of academic writing. The purpose of this study is to identify the most common mistakes these learners

make in their academic writing assignments. It also aims to explore how internal factors, such as self-efficacy and self-regulation, and external factors, such as inadequate practice and insufficient feedback, impact their academic writing. Based on the findings, a didactic proposal was designed to address the issues identified in the participants' academic writing. Previous research has shown that peer feedback and online collaborative writing can effectively promote self-regulation and improve writing performance in adult EFL learners (Rahimi & Fathi, 2021; Fathi et al., 2020; Velasco & Meza, 2019; Cifti & Kocoglu, 2012).

Research Background

This section will discuss previous studies on the writing performance of adult EFL learners. The discussion is divided into two angles. The first angle will highlight the solutions proposed by various researchers to improve the writing performance of adult EFL learners. For example, Phuwichit (2016) proposed using teacher feedback on peer feedback, and Ciftci and Kocoglu (2012) suggested online peer feedback. The affective constructs of adult EFL learners were not taken into consideration by these researchers. Similarly, Rahimi and Fathi (2021), Velasco and Meza (2019), and Fathi, Arabani and Mohamadi (2021) implemented online collaborative writing through the usage of Web 2.0 tools as possible solutions to improve writing performance. These researchers considered the influence of different intrinsic constructs, such as self-regulation and self-efficacy, when designing their proposals. Exploring these affective and behavioral aspects can be beneficial, as it can provide valuable insights into effective strategies for improving the writing proficiency of adult EFL learners.

The second angle presents authors who identified weaknesses in writing performance through different methods and the influence of one or more affective or behavioral factors on the quality of students' writing. Nejad, et al. (2022) and Teng (2019) discuss how the

metacognitive aspects of language strategies, metacognitive knowledge, and self-regulation influence writing performance. Lee (2005), Faigley, Daly, and Witte (2014), Erkan and Saban (2011), Hetthong and Teo (2012), and Williams and Takaki (2011) explore the concepts of writing apprehension, writer's block, and self-efficacy, and their correlation with writing performance. Figure 1 illustrates the arrangement of this research background. It depicts the two significant angles described: on the left are researchers who implemented didactic proposals to improve writing performance, and on the right are the researchers who studied the influence of different attitudinal and behavioral factors on writing performance.

Figure 1

Research background flowchart
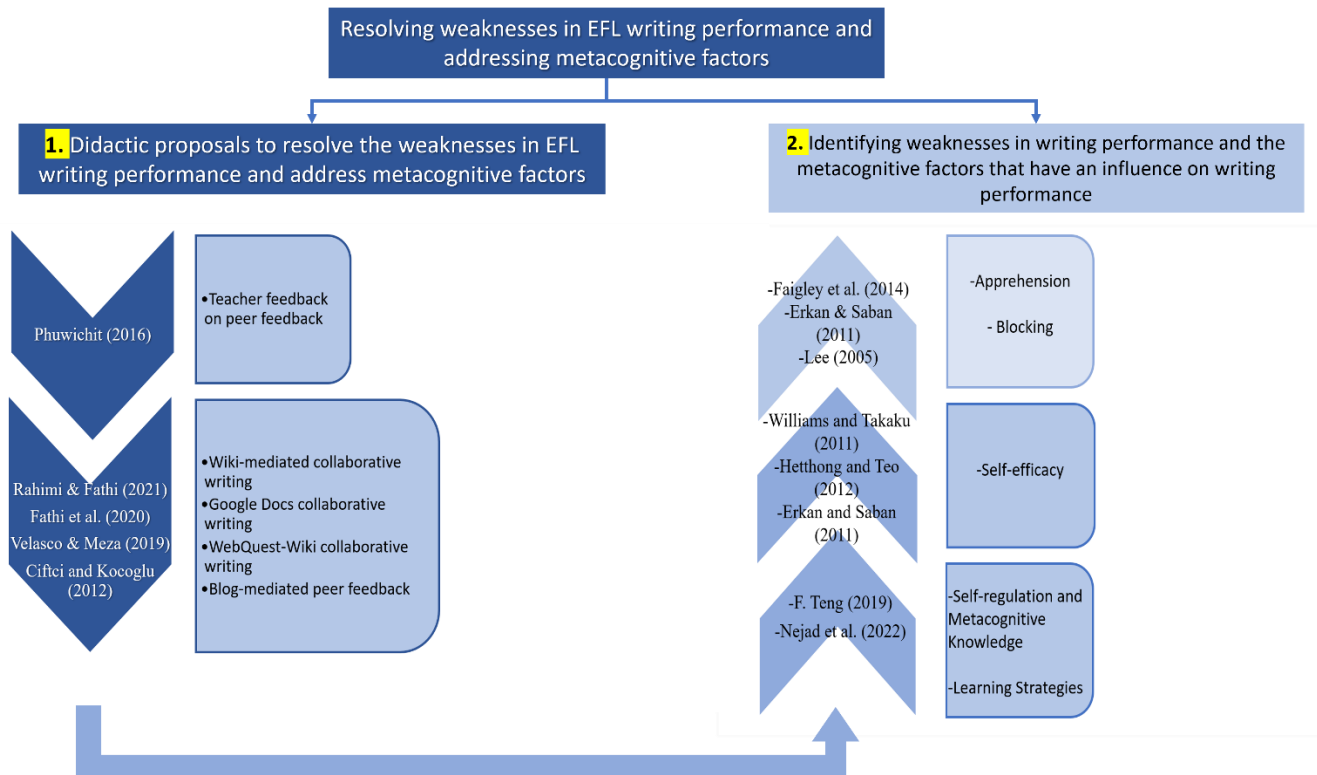
Note. Developed by the author.

The first perspective includes authors who addressed weaknesses in EFL writing performance by targeting attitudinal and behavioral factors. Their goal was to find a strategy to enhance their participants' writing proficiency more effectively than traditional methods, based on discovered correlations with various intrinsic factors, such as self-efficacy and self-regulation. To improve EFL writing proficiency, these studies employed online collaborative writing, peer feedback, and teacher feedback on peer face-to-face feedback as teaching interventions.

Ciftci and Kocoglu (2012) analyzed the effects of online peer feedback on the writing performance of adult EFL learners. The participants were 30 college EFL students from Turkey who believed they could improve their own grammar and vocabulary in their writing course. Group interviews were conducted and video recorded at the beginning and end of the course to explore the students' experiences in writing. The writing tasks to evaluate their performance consisted of first and revised drafts, which the students had to submit each week. In the experimental group, the writing classes were carried out using computer-mediated communication, and peers offered each other feedback after completing their first drafts on a blog. Meanwhile, in the control group, peer feedback was offered face-to-face. Using Tribble's (1996) rubric, two evaluators scored every essay.

The quantitative results showed that both groups improved their writing performance in their revised drafts, with the experimental group statistically outperforming the control group. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis revealed positive perceptions toward using a blog in writing courses. These results suggest that collaborative writing can be integrated into writing courses and that students can benefit from both face-to-face and online peer feedback. Additionally, asynchronous computer-mediated communication EFL writing classes can be

effective if they are carefully designed, and students are trained to provide effective peer

feedback through specific parameters and instructed on how to use Web 2.0 tools for

educational purposes. Teachers can use these strategies as practical tools for teaching writing.

Phuwichit (2016) conducted a 16-week study on the impact of teacher feedback on the

quality of peer feedback, writing self-regulation, and writing proficiency of 26 student

teachers majoring in English in Thailand. Because the evaluation of writing is crucial for

improvement, the study sought to determine whether teacher feedback on peer feedback

enhances the latter and the students' self-regulation. The study included orientation on proper

feedback and training. The students were required to keep a diary about their meetings with

peers and teachers and about their own writing strengths and weaknesses. They also completed

a pre- and post-questionnaire about their experience, providing feedback and describing their

perceptions of the course. Peer feedback was video recorded, and teacher feedback was audio

recorded. Independent raters scored the students' essays and judged their improvement.

The results suggested that teacher feedback improved peer feedback quality regarding

organization, content, and language use. This strategy allowed students to acquire self-

regulation behaviors, such as identifying problems and solutions in their own essays and those

of their peers, demonstrating a clear understanding of argumentative essays, delivering

comments effectively, asking for opinions or confirmations, accepting comments without

questioning their quality, and discussing their weaknesses. Moreover, regardless of their level

of proficiency, all students benefited from the strategy and reported having more confidence in

assessing others' writing and developing self-study skills, which is particularly important for

their future careers. This paper suggests that thorough and attentive peer feedback can be

effectively implemented in class to improve students' writing quality.

Rahimi and Fathi (2021) analyzed the influence of wiki-mediated collaborative writing on the writing performance, self-efficacy, and self-regulation of 35 adult EFL learners in Iran. The experimental group comprised 35 students, and the control group comprised 32. The study did not specify at which level the students were found to be proficient in language, but their language proficiency was measured by the Oxford Placement Test. This paper aimed to determine the effectiveness of wiki-mediated collaborative writing in improving the previously mentioned variables. The students completed two timed argumentative writing tests evaluated using Jacobs et al.'s rubric from 1981. In addition, they answered at the beginning and at the end of the intervention the Second Language Writing Self-Regulation Scale, the Second Language Writing Self-Efficacy Scale, and a semi-structured interview at the end to investigate the students' attitudes and perceptions towards the recently implemented strategy.

The quantitative analysis showed that the experimental group's EFL writing performance, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy improved significantly from the pretests to the posttests compared to the control group. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis revealed that the peer feedback addressed the content (meaning clarity of message, topic development, relevance of message, synthesis of information), organization (idea sequencing), and language use (word choice, verb form, prepositions, articles, spelling, word order, capitalization, relative clauses, etc.) of their classmates' writing. However, only some peer feedback interventions were successful or correct. Moreover, the semi-structured interview revealed positive and negative student perceptions. Finally, the authors suggested further studies incorporating the semi-structured interview before, during, and after the teaching strategy and exploring other psychological factors like motivation.

Fathi et al. (2021) addressed the effect of Google Docs collaborative writing on the writing self-regulation and performance of 38 intermediate EFL students from a private school in Iran. The participants were 20 to 24 years old college students from different majors, and their global English proficiency was homogenized using the Preliminary English Test. This study aimed to compare the influence of online collaborative writing and regular face-to-face collaborative writing on the EFL writing performance and writing self-regulation of an experimental and a control group. To evaluate writing performance, both groups took a two-timed descriptive writing test, which was evaluated using the writing scale from Jacobs et al. (1981). In addition, self-regulation was addressed using the Second Language Writing Self-Regulation Scale. Finally, the materials used for the course were the textbook "Academic Writing: From Paragraph to Essay" and Google Docs.

The analysis revealed a significant increase in the post-test from the pre-test of the dependent variables of the experimental and the control groups. In other words, face-to-face and online Google Docs collaborative writing significantly improved both EFL groups' writing self-regulation and writing performance. However, descriptive statistics revealed that online collaborative writing improved the students' writing performance and writing self-regulation of the experimental group to a greater extent than face-to-face collaborative writing. The implications of this study suggest that Google Docs (or any other online alternative) can become a tool to implement peer-reviewing in EFL writing courses and, consequently, improve students' writing skills and self-regulation. Nonetheless, the author warns about the technological equipment and knowledge limitations that some schools, teachers, or students may still have.

Velasco and Meza (2019) examined the influence of collaborative writing using WebQuest-Wiki on the academic writing and self-efficacy of 30 Mexican EFL teachers in training. These participants, aged between 19 and 26 years old, were assessed to have language proficiency levels ranging from A2 to B1 according to the Oxford Placement Test scoring system. This study aimed to determine three markers of the students' self-efficacy and their perceptions on the didactic proposal implemented. The main instruments used to collect data were a questionnaire that evaluated the students' perceptions of the usage of WebQuest-Wiki to collaboratively write a brief documentary article in English, and an academic writing in English self-efficacy perception questionnaire adapted from three different self-efficacy scales (Schmidt and Alexander, 2012; Bruning et al., 2013; and Ramírez et al., 2013), which measured self-efficacy for learning, metacognitive self-regulation and other factors related to the writing process.

The statistical analysis showed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the pre and the posttests for learning self-efficacy, metacognitive self-regulation, and for local and global knowledge of the writing process. However, time/effort writing conventions, physical response, and idea generation, did not show significant results. The study also determined that the main sources of self-efficacy for learning and high self-efficacy in the use of writing conventions were the students' previous experience in descriptive writing and from the confidence acquired from achieving satisfactory results in previous written assignments. Lastly, an attitudes and perceptions questionnaire about the use of WebQuest-Wiki showed and increased perception of "having more control over the comprehension of content from their readings, over their use of vocabulary comprehension strategies, and over the use of specific academic writing skills" (Velasco and Meza, 2019, p.289).

Most of the investigations described above have focused on the influence of one or two intrinsic factors, such as self-efficacy and self-regulation, on students' writing performance to design teaching interventions or didactic proposals. This evidence highlights the need to research literature that addresses these types of constructs and the importance of considering the participants' intrinsic attitudinal and behavioral metacognitive constructs as factors that might be influencing their academic writing. Therefore, the second stage of this background research presents authors who have identified weaknesses in writing performance, using different methods and rubrics, and the influence of one or more intrinsic factors on the quality of adult EFL learners' writing.

Teng (2019) explored two different metacognitive factors that can inhibit or facilitate the writing performance of EFL students. This author researched the influence of metacognitive knowledge and regulation on the writing performance of 882 undergraduate EFL students from different majors in China. Their level of English was not determined, but they reported studying English for about ten years. This study aimed to find the extent to which metacognitive regulation can predict EFL writing performance scores. To measure metacognitive knowledge and regulation, a 45-item metacognitive writing strategies questionnaire was designed, validated, and then answered by the sample population. Lastly, to evaluate writing performance, an IELTS-style argumentative writing test was administered. However, instead of grading using the rubric of the IELTS, the three recruited raters advised opting for the Chinese traditional writing rubric.

The statistical analyses showed that metacognitive regulation and metacognitive knowledge significantly correlate to writing performance. Every sub-set of metacognitive regulation (planning, monitoring, and evaluation) was a significant predictor of EFL writing

performance. On the other hand, only one aspect of metacognitive knowledge (procedural
knowledge) showed a significant correlation to performance, and the other two aspects
(declarative and conditional) turned out to be less significant predictors. The author claimed
that students with higher metacognitive regulation skills have better writing scores because
they can "plan appropriate resources for writing; monitor their own cognitive, behavioral, and
affective processes while writing; and evaluate possible solutions to make informed decisions"
(Teng, 2019, p.12). Therefore, self-regulatory skills and strategies should be addressed and
encouraged in the classroom.

Another complex metacognitive aspect that may impact writing proficiency is the
learning strategies adopted by the students. Nejad et al. (2022) analyzed the relationship
between learning strategies (cognitive, affective, meta-cognitive, social, compensation, and
memory-related) and the writing performance of 100 Iranian adult EFL students. They
belonged to different institutes and were selected from 235 students who took the Oxford
Placement Test and were placed as intermediate learners. The purpose of this research was to
address the mediating role of critical thinking abilities between the two variables mentioned
above due to the little attention that the authors reported that has been given to the function
that critical thinking plays in the choice of the students' learning strategies and their writing
performances. The students answered the Critical Thinking Dispositions Questionnaire, the
Strategy Inventory for Language Learning Questionnaire, and a writing exam on an
argumentative topic that was rated based on Cooper's Classification of Writing Rating Scale.

The quantitative analysis showed statistics indicating that both critical thinking abilities
and each of the six learning strategies subsets significantly correlated to writing performance.
However, the computed results did not support the hypothesis of an existing mediating role of

critical thinking between learning strategies and writing performance. The findings of this study suggest a stronger emphasis in the curriculum for developing the students' critical thinking abilities and promoting an awareness of the existence of the six subsets of learning strategies. The autonomous usage of these learning strategies should also be encouraged to help foreign language learners to become more responsible and self-sufficient in their learning and enhance their academic writing performance.

Another investigation integrates both writing apprehension and self-efficacy as predictors of writing performance. Erkan and Saban (2011) explored the effect of self-efficacy, writing apprehension, and attitudes towards writing on the writing performance of 188 18 to 22-year-old intermediate (B1) EFL learners in Turkey. In the University where the investigation took place, reading and writing are considered the most crucial curriculum requirements to fulfill, and writing, being the productive skill it is, is more challenging to learn. Therefore, this study aimed to determine whether their writing performance was related to attitudes towards writing, writing self-efficacy, and writing apprehension. To measure the independent variables, students took the writing self-efficacy and the writing apprehension scales, as well as a test on attitudes towards writing. To assess writing performance, the students produced a composition on a given topic within 45 minutes.

The statistical results suggested that students with high levels of writing apprehension did significantly worse on their test performance and experienced worse attitudes towards writing. As anticipated, a negative correlation was also found between writing apprehension and self-efficacy. The latter, on the other hand, did exhibit a statistically significant positive correlation with writing performance. The authors claimed that the affective factors of writing can significantly influence the writing process. These factors should be addressed in the

classroom so that students can understand how their affective characteristics may affect their performance. They also recommended further research on creating and implementing different strategies focused on these variables to improve the students' writing performance.

Hetthong and Teo (2012) studied the correlation of self-efficacy with writing performance in 51 third-year English undergraduates in Thailand. The participants were required to remember basic knowledge about paragraph writing they learned the previous year and were chosen according to how much information they could provide on the subject. This paper aimed to determine whether overall writing self-efficacy can predict overall writing performance or not. To measure their writing performance, the students wrote an argumentative paragraph under the parameters of the Test of English for Educational Purposes, which was evaluated based on its own rubric. In addition, writing self-efficacy was addressed through a 12-item questionnaire in Thai developed by the authors. The instruments were piloted on 33 students before being implemented on the final sample population.

The quantitative analysis using Simple Linear Regression and Pearson Correlation Coefficient revealed a significant positive correlation between writing performance and writing self-efficacy at the paragraph level and a significant to moderate positive correlation at the level of the sub-skills, except for cohesion. Moreover, overall writing self-efficacy proved to be a significant predictor of overall writing performance. Grounded in the results of this paper and of previous research as well, the author claims that the theory of self-efficacy can successfully explain foreign language writing performance. The authors suggested conducting further investigation on the topic with different variables such as cognitive style, locus of control, goal orientation, and texts with various levels of familiarity; and designing strategies

to enhance the writing self-efficacy of EFL students during the course and improve their

performances.

Williams and Takaky (2011) included help-seeking as another writing facilitative

factor. They studied the relationships between writing performance, writing self-efficacy, and

help-seeking behaviors of 331 domestic and 340 international college students in composition

classes in the US. The participants were students enrolled in an intensive writing program at a

private university in California for eight years. This investigation aimed to contrast the self-

efficacy of domestic and international students and to identify to which extent self-efficacy

influences the levels of help-seeking behavior and their writing performance (via the

mediation effect of help-seeking behavior). First, writing performance was assessed by

employing a pretest upon enrollment and a posttest at the end of their sophomore year. Writing

self-efficacy was measured using two well-established scales. Finally, help-seeking behavior

was determined by the total number of students' visits to the writing center for tutoring.

The quantitative analyses confirmed that students writing in English as their mother

tongue outperformed those writing in English as a foreign/second language and showed firmer

self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, indicating a positive correlation between writing performance

and self-efficacy. In addition, the results indicated that the lower the self-efficacy, the higher

the adaptive help-seeking behavior, reflected in the number of visits to the writing center. ESL

students visited the writing center more often than their domestic counterparts. The variables

of help-seeking, international or domestic, and self-efficacy were analyzed to predict

performance. However, only help-seeking behavior was a significant predictor of grades. The

implications of this study suggested further investigation regarding help-seeking behavior as a

possible factor that can help improve the writing performance of ESL or EFL students.

The presence of inhibiting factors (writer's block and writing apprehension) and facilitating factors (free reading, free writing, and positive attitudes towards reading and writing instruction) are also addressed in the second stage of this background research. Lee (2005) analyzed the influence of these factors on the students' writing performance and with one another. The sample population consisted of 217 undergraduates majoring in English and 53 second and third-year non-English undergraduates from Taiwan. This study aimed to determine the relationship between writing apprehension (WA) and writer's block (WB) and their impact on writing performance. Moreover, it analyzed the effect of the three addressed facilitators on WA, WB, and writing performance. The implemented instruments were a literacy questionnaire, a writing apprehension scale, a writer's block questionnaire, and a short essay task, evaluated by two experienced writing teachers using the scoring guideline of Written English for the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

The statistical analysis showed that WB and WA are connected to one another but are unrelated to writing performance. The author suggested that WB and WA may only affect writing performance when the task is challenging enough for the students' competence. Similarly, students' attitudes toward instruction failed to predict WA, WB, and writing performance significantly. On the other hand, free reading could significantly predict writing performance and inversely predict WA, WB, and free writing. However, free writing did not significantly correlate with WB and WA, and writing frequency could not significantly predict writing performance. The unexpected finding that free reading, and not free writing nor the students' attitudes towards instruction, was the variable with a stronger correlation to lower WA and WB and higher writing performance suggests that mastering writing conventions and

improving proficiency come from reading. Therefore, encouraging reading during writing composition classes is recommended.

One of the inhibiting factors addressed in the study mentioned above, writing apprehension, is further discussed in Faigley, Daly and Witte's (2014) study. They explored the role of writing apprehension in the writing competence and writing performance of 110 US-American first-year college students. The participants were divided into high and low apprehensives depending on their scores on this study's writing apprehension scale. The study aimed to find a relationship between writing apprehension and writing competence and performance. Due to a lack of research addressing these variables through texts with different internal characteristics, the researcher asked the students to produce narrative/descriptive and argumentative essays. They also answered eight standardized measures of writing competency and filled out a writing apprehension diagnostic instrument. Two judges evaluated the essays for overall quality, rated on a 1 to 4 scale. Word count and syntactic fluency/maturity were computed. A quantitative statistical approach was adopted.

Based on the results of the writing apprehension scale and the standardized measurements of writing competency, the authors revealed a lower ability to comply with written conventions in highly apprehensive students. The analysis also showed a significant correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance. Undergraduates with a higher score on the writing apprehension scale produced shorter texts with less syntactic fluency/maturity and less overall writing quality; however, this was noticed only in narrative essays. The causality of apprehension on performance and competence was not assumed by the researchers. Instead, a bidirectional relationship between them was proposed, and further experimentation on causality was suggested.

Researchers from the first perspective of the background research implemented different strategies to improve writing performance. First, Ciftci and Kocoglu (2012) proposed online peer feedback to help the EFL students' writing performance without considering any secondary variables. On the other hand, Phuwichit (2016) examined the effect of teacher feedback on the proficiency of peer feedback and writing performance, considering the variable nature of writing self-regulation as an influencing factor of the latter. Lastly, Rahimi and Fathi (2021) and Fathi et al. (2021) suggested online collaborative writing to improve writing performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy.

These investigations have suggested different approaches to evaluating writing performance and assessing affective factors that are correlated to it. They have also proposed various solutions to improve the writing performance of EFL adult learners. Therefore, these studies serve as examples for designing a didactic proposal to solve the most common types of mistakes found in the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners.

In the second perspective, other researchers studied only the factors influencing writing performance, such as learning strategies (Nejad, 2022) and metacognitive knowledge and regulation (Teng, 2019). Moreover, Erkan and Saban (2011) integrated writing apprehension and self-efficacy in their study on EFL writing performance, and Hetthong and Teo (2012) studied only its correlation to self-efficacy. Williams and Takaky (2011) also analyzed self-efficacy, but they included the variable of adaptive help-seeking behaviors as well. Finally, Lee (2005) provided an insight into the facilitating and inhibiting factors that can influence writing performance, acknowledging writing apprehension as one of the analyzed inhibiting factors, which was further discussed in Faigley et al. (2014).

These researchers suggested different ways to assess their students' writing
performance. The most common evaluation instrument was an academic writing exam based
on Educational Testing Service (ETS) protocols, rated using Cooper's (1977) scale. This
approach helped to identify the most common errors in the written production of the study's
population and the areas or subskills that require the most attention. Furthermore, each
investigation found a correlation between writing performance and one or several intrinsic or
metacognitive aspects. Therefore, these studies are also valuable for identifying the attitudinal
and behavioral factors related to the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2
EFL learners.

Problem Statement

Undergraduate EFL learners in their fifth semester of a major in Applied Linguistics
with a B2 level of proficiency in English struggle with overall foreign language writing
production in their academic writing courses. The students present many issues in their
language proficiency and do not exhibit the written production skills required for a B2 learner.
The participants seem to need more practice, as a single descriptive writing assignment they
complete at home once a week after a class of grammar review is not enough to develop their
academic writing skills. Furthermore, limited feedback from their teachers due to their busy
schedules has prevented the students from receiving adequate feedback to improve their
performance. This lack of feedback also hinders these students' ability to evaluate themselves
and others, which is a critical skill for those who are pursuing a career in becoming EFL
teachers or translators.

Several factors, such as student anxiety, self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy, have been identified in previous studies as being either facilitating or inhibiting factors in adult EFL writing performance. Along with these factors, insufficient academic reading, practice, and feedback can also contribute to college students' writing weaknesses. Furthermore, it is essential for students who are majoring in becoming English teachers or translators to have a strong writing proficiency, self-regulate their writing, and assess someone else's writing. Academic writing is crucial for achieving the goal of conducting research, which is encouraged by universities. However, some intrinsic characteristics of the students may limit their potential, and other extrinsic factors may play an important role in their struggle to produce a text within B2-level proficiency. Therefore, a didactic proposal that suits their needs and considers the course's curriculum or methodology is necessary to address the issue and produce the desired effect on the participants' writing proficiency.

Justification

According to Sampieri (2006), the significance of an investigation relies on the justification of at least one of the following aspects: its convenience (what is it used for), social relevance (who will benefit from the investigation and how), practical implications (what real-life problem does it tackle and how), theoretical value (what does it contribute to the concerning theory), and methodological utility (how can the methodology used in the study accurately study the population to define a variable or a relationship between variables).

This paper is convenient because it aims to increase the academic writing performance of undergraduate EFL learners. Furthermore, it is socially relevant because it benefits such students with more writing skills, the higher education institution with better-performing students, and their writing teachers in providing the learners with a more enriching writing

experience without the need to spend extra time from their already-limited schedule on planning more assignments and providing in-depth feedback on every single essay.

The practical implication of this didactic proposal is an increase in the participants' engagement in academic writing practice and writing evaluation, which will, in turn, help them become more self-regulated and independent learners prepared for their future careers as EFL teachers or translators in an academic or professional environment. Moreover, the lack of research on academic writing performance in northeastern Mexico calls for literature to fill in the gaps. For example, Velasco and Meza's (2019) study delves into the impact of collaborative writing and self-efficacy on academic writing in Mexico. However, it fails to consider the factor that the literature suggests is related the most to academic writing performance: self-regulation. The present research aims to fill this gap by implementing an instrument that particularly measures self-efficacy for self-regulation in academic writing.

Finally, action research, a type of qualitative method, allows incorporation of classic or iconic books and articles frequently cited, such as Faigley, Daly, and Witte (1981), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Zimmerman and Schunk (2001). Action research is a useful method for identifying writing problems and their relationship with other factors like self-regulation, self-efficacy, practice engagement, and feedback. Moreover, practical action research allows the study of local practices and justifies the implementation of a didactic proposal as part of the action plan. It allows researchers to incorporate existing knowledge and develop practical interventions tailored to specific contexts, making it an effective tool for improving writing instruction.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the most common types of mistakes that fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners show in their academic writing performance.

2. To determine the factors influencing the below-adequate writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners.

3. To design and implement a didactic proposal to improve the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners.

Research Questions

This paper aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most common types of mistakes that fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners show in their foreign language writing performance?

2. What factors influence the below-adequate academic writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners?

3. What didactic proposal is appropriate to improve the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners?

Chapter II Theoretical Framework

This section describes the relevant concepts necessary to understand the background research and the subject matter of this paper: the academic writing performance of undergraduates learning English as a foreign language. Starting with the general concept of "foreign language," this theoretical framework explores the concepts of communicative competence and applied linguistics, followed by a description of the term "communicative competence" by explaining the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic sub-competencies that influence written production and writing performance. Finally, the definitions of writing competence and writing performance are contrasted, and the different writing subskills that several authors have considered when assessing students' performances, along with the general characteristics of academic writing, are presented.

The concepts of "applied linguistics" and "language learning" are described on the opposite side of the spectrum in foreign language teaching. Within the sphere of language learning, this theoretical framework presents the terms "formative assessment" as a possible intervention designed to improve adult EFL writing performance and "psycholinguistics," which includes attitudinal and behavioral factors hypothesized to influence writing performance. The term "metacognition" is defined and described as a process that operates within the writing process of foreign language students and includes psycholinguistic factors. Psycholinguistics studies the affective filters and facilitators of language learning, such as attitudes towards writing, writing self-efficacy, writing apprehension, writer's block, and self-regulation and language learning strategies. Figure 2 illustrates the concept arrangement previously described.

Figure 2

Theoretical framework flowchart
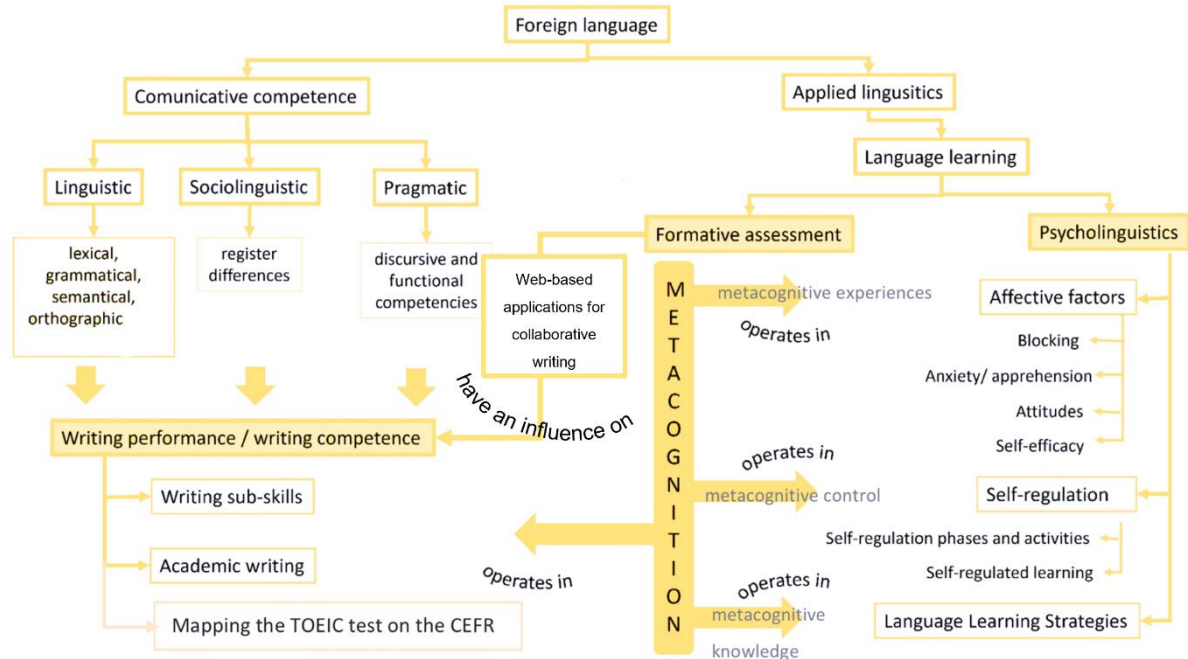
Note. Developed by the author.

Communicative Competence

The European Framework of Reference for Languages (Consejo de Europa, 2002) describes

the constituents of communicative competence strictly delimited to language through its

components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence.

Regarding written expression, linguistic competence refers to the lexical, grammatical,

semantical, and orthographic competencies; sociolinguistic competence includes register

differences, and pragmatic competence deals with discursive and functional competence.

Writing Competence, Writing Performance, and Writing Subskills

There are two interpretations of writing competence, and authors approach it differently. One interpretation, according to Faigley et al. (1981), refers to students' proficiency in writing-related skills when they take a standardized test. This test measures the extent to which students can recognize hits and misses in provided writing samples. The samples can consist of an entire text, passages, or even words and sentences taken out of context. On the other hand, most authors approach writing competence similarly to the way Ratminingsih, Santosa, and Purwanto (2018) do. They define writing competence as a skill that reflects students' knowledge about writing and "the way they think, do, and feel expressed in their writing" (p. 281). It is comprised of three elements of competence: skills (practicing writing), knowledge (knowledge about relevant theories, facts, and procedures), and attributes (the essence or quality that frequently comes across in what the student does, thinks, or feels).

The difference in meaning between the two previous definitions of writing competence relies on the elements of competence listed by Ratminingsih et al. (2018), which imply a different form of assessment, with the latter definition coinciding with the usual approach for evaluating writing tasks. Writing competence has been mostly understood as a synonym of writing performance; therefore, many studies assess it the same way as writing performance. Writing performance and writing competence are primarily measured in literature by scoring the students' writing samples or writing tests using rubrics and more than one rater.

Most researchers do not define the term writing performance but rather explain how it will be measured or assessed. For example, Faigley et al. (1981) explain that, according to Cooper and Odell (1977), "writing samples have typically been analyzed in two ways: by subjectively rating the essays for overall quality, and by describing certain internal

characteristics of the essays themselves" (p. 17). In their study, Faigley et al. (1981) use both measures to address writing performance.

The internal characteristics of the students' texts are evaluated using a rubric that identifies different subskills or aspects of their writing. Researchers implement the rubric that measures the aspects required for their study. For example, in the investigation of Nejad et al. (2022), students sat through an argumentative writing exam that was scored based on Cooper's (1977) rubric, which addressed "task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, grammatical range, and accuracy" (p. 5).

Another example is the "TEEP attribute writing scale" developed by Cyril Weir in 1990. This scale was adopted by Hetthong and Teo (2012) in their study to assess writing performance. Specifically, they employed this rubric and three raters to score the argumentative paragraph tests answered by the students. The writing sub-skills that were evaluated were relevance and adequacy, compositional organization, cohesion, adequacy of vocabulary for purpose, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

In this investigation, writing competence and writing performance will be differentiated only in the background research whenever both terms are addressed separately. Because the conceptual delimitation of these terms is beyond the scope of this study, both terms will be otherwise interpreted as the student's level of achievement in a determined writing task, which is evaluated using a rubric that reflects the academic writing subskills that B2-level EFL learners are expected to have developed.

Academic Writing

Teng (2019) based the academic writing test used for their study on the academic writing test component of IELTS, which consisted of a 150-word graph interpretation and a

250-word argumentative essay about the advantages and disadvantages of a given topic. This test aimed to assess participants' capacity to express and defend a viewpoint, synthesize the relevant information, discuss the issue at hand, highlight difficulties, determine viable solutions, and defend their perspective with arguments based on previous knowledge or experiences. Fathi et al. (2021) also opted for IELTS-based academic writing tasks. And Ciftci and Kocoglu (2012) developed their own writing instruction, which consisted of four opinion essays about different statements to which they had to agree or disagree and provide arguments for their answer.

Teng (2021), in China, took a different approach regarding the academic writing instruction of their study. The students were asked to produce a brief essay based on the connections they made between six labeled pictures that were related to one another. This test aimed to assess the student's capacity to grasp the issue at hand, offer specifics, highlight challenges, and present arguments for a particular academic discipline using their previous knowledge or experiences as a foundation. The students' academic writing performance was evaluated "in terms of linguistic competence, critical thinking, and articulation of ideas" (Teng, 2021, p.177) through a rubric with four components: coherence and cohesion, task achievement, grammatical range and accuracy, and lexical resource.

Mapping the TOEIC test on the CEFR

Because students are expected to comply with the skills of a B2 EFL learner, the rating system will be based on B2 criteria, which is one of the six levels used by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages to describe language proficiency in many countries of the world, including Mexico. However, the TOEIC test is rated using a score scale range to position the student into 1 out of 9 levels; therefore, a conversion scale to find the equivalent of a B2 in a TOEIC or IELTS exam is required. This is why the official webpage of

the ETS provides the following conversion chart (Table 1) to map the TOEIC Tests on the

CEFR and a TOEIC Writing Proficiency Level Descriptor (Table 2).

Table 1

Mapping the TOEIC Tests on the CEFR

Test Sections	Score scale	Minimum score				
	Range	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1
TOEIC Speaking and Writing Tests						
Speaking	0-200	50	90	120	160	180
Writing	0-200	30	70	120	150	180

Note. Extracted from The TOEIC® Tests Scores at ets.org.

Table 2

TOEIC Writing Proficiency Level Descriptor for Level 7 (B2)

Level	
7 Scale Score 140-160	Typically, test takers at level 7 can effectively give straightforward information, ask questions, give instructions, or make requests, but are only partially successful when using reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion. When attempting to explain an opinion, their writing presents relevant ideas and some support. Typical weaknesses at this level include: • not enough specific support and development for the main points • unclear connections between the points that are made • grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, their writing is clear, coherent, and effective.

Note. Extracted from The TOEIC® Tests Scores at ets.org.

Applied Linguistics

According to Grabe (2010), the definition of Applied Linguistics (AL) is a subject of controversy, and as a result, many scholars list its common characteristics instead. AL deals with language-related problems and issues in real-world settings. And because there are few practical language problems that can be solved with the knowledge of a single field, it integrates knowledge from multiple fields, making it an interdisciplinary field that draws upon diverse disciplines. AL encompasses many sub-fields, including forensic linguistics, corpus linguistics, translation, and interpretation. These sub-fields focus on different issues and procedures related to the work of applied linguists. As a result, it encompasses a wide range of language-related issues and topics.

Abdalgane (2020) stated that by 1980, a wide consensus had been reached regarding the concept of AL. He categorized the most typical characteristics of the field into three main categories. The first category relates to its interdisciplinarity, drawing upon many fields such as sociology, psychology, and pedagogy. The second category establishes that AL is not solely concerned with language teaching, but also with fields such as stylistics, translation, language planning, and lexicography. Finally, the third category refers to the mediating role of AL between theory and practice due to its problem-based nature, which seeks to provide solutions to practical language concerns situated within real-life contexts.

Language Learning

Learning to communicate in a second or foreign language has been a primary focus of applied linguistics (AL) study since the early 20th century. During the 1960s and 1970s, there was a widespread belief that AL was primarily concerned with language instruction. However, over the past three decades, it has become increasingly clear that individuals teaching English

as a second or foreign language possess significant linguistic knowledge (Davies, 2001, as

cited in Abdalgane, 2020). Specifically, they possess knowledge of the phonetic,

morphological, and syntactic structures of the languages they teach, as well as the cultural and

pragmatic aspects of communication in those languages. AL has played a crucial role in

developing our understanding of second language acquisition, and its insights have informed

language teaching practices.

Purba (2018) contrasts the concepts of language learning and language acquisition, as

well as naturalistic language learning and formal language learning. Language learning refers

to the conscious and intentional mastering of a language, and language acquisition consists of

the natural and unconscious development of a mother tongue. Similarly, formal language

learning "takes place in the classroom with teachers, materials, and learning aids" (Purba,

2018, p. 49), and naturalistic language learning "is learning a language naturally, consciously,

and unintentionally" (Purba, 2018, p. 49). This study focuses on language learning as a

conscious and intentional process in a formal classroom to master a foreign language.

Formative Assessment

Phuwichit (2016) provides a comprehensive definition of "formative assessment." This

concept refers to assessments that help students succeed by providing feedback on their

strengths and weaknesses rather than only assigning a grade. As opposed to a summative

assessment, which aims to reveal the extent of a student's knowledge, expertise, or ability,

formative assessments seek to detect the gaps in the student's knowledge or abilities so that

instructors can create lesson plans and strategies that may help students master all the

information they need to accomplish a particular task. Likewise, students can benefit from this

in-depth type of feedback provided by teachers in order to change the way they learn and

perform and reach their objectives.

Garrison and Ehringhaus (2011) suggest five activities that can make assessment a

more formative experience. These include (a) criteria and goal-setting (students must

understand learning goals and how to achieve them); (b) observations (teachers may assess

student performance and arrange lessons by monitoring class); (c) questioning strategies

(experienced instructors can ask good questions, which may also arise from student concerns

or open queries); (d) self- and peer-assessment (engaging in criteria and goal-setting makes

room for the student's metacognitive thinking, reflection, and ultimately, their own learning);

and (e) recording of the performance (teachers can track development better if students note

their accomplishments, which benefits students in a similar way).

Formative assessment involves several activities, and feedback is one of them. It is

crucial to implement formative assessment because it reveals how well specific learning

objectives were achieved. Teacher feedback is the most used type of feedback, but it is also

essential for students to learn how to assess their own work and provide feedback to their

peers. Self-assessment and peer feedback are good strategies for practicing this skill. Peer

assessment helps students comprehend and evaluate work against predetermined standards

(Phuwichit, 2016).

Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing, which involves multiple individuals working together to produce

texts, has been proposed as a tool to increase students' individual writing practice and develop

their ability to evaluate texts, including their own. Collaborative writing provides a supportive

and constructive environment for students to practice their writing skills while facilitating the

evaluation of others' writing and the reception of feedback. Collaborative writing allows

students to improve their writing skills by engaging in peer review, editing, and revising. In

addition, students can learn from their peers' strengths and weaknesses, which can help elevate

their own writing. Hence, collaborative writing constitutes an alternative to traditional writing

instruction.

Collaborative writing also facilitates the evaluation of others' writing. According to

Ho-Pham et al. (2021), collaborative writing allows students to assess their peers' writing

based on preestablished standards, which can, in turn, improve their own writing practice. In

addition, peer review can provide students with "multiple perspectives on a particular topic,"

which can help them develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Finally, by

evaluating their peers' writing, students can also learn to recognize and avoid common

mistakes in their own writing, ultimately enhancing the quality of their work.

Collaborative writing has been shown to increase the amount of feedback that students

receive. According to Luquin and Garcia-Mayo (2022), it offers an opportunity for students to

receive feedback from their peers, which can be less intimidating than receiving feedback

from a teacher. Peer feedback can also be more relevant to the student's writing, as peers are

more likely to understand the writer's perspective and style. Additionally, collaborative writing

allows students to engage in a dialogue about their writing, facilitating the revision process

and enhancing the quality of their work.

Web-based Applications for Online Collaborative Writing

In recent years, web-based applications have become increasingly popular for many

didactic purposes. This is especially true in light of the 2020 pandemic. Applications focused

on sharing documents and writing collaboratively, such as Google Docs, Wikis, blogs, and

Microsoft Teams, provide users with various tools and features that facilitate communication

and collaboration. These tools and features enhance the productivity and efficiency of collaborative writing.

One of the key benefits of web-based applications for online collaborative writing is that they provide a platform for real-time collaboration. For example, Google Docs enables multiple users to edit and comment on a document simultaneously (Dillenbourg, Järvelä, & Fischer, 2018). This feature allows for a more efficient and productive collaborative writing process. Users can see changes and comments in real-time, reducing the need for email correspondence or in-person meetings. Blogs can be a valuable tool for facilitating collaborative writing projects, as they provide a platform for individuals to share their ideas and perspectives (Han, 2023). Blog posts can be easily edited and updated, and comments can be used to provide feedback and suggestions. In addition, blogs can showcase individual writing styles and voices, adding a unique dimension to collaborative writing.

Microsoft Teams offers various ways to share and edit documents through different applications that can be integrated within a group channel. Within Teams, Microsoft's OneNote and Wiki applications enable real-time collaborative writing on several individual pages and provide a discussion chat where students can provide feedback to their classmates.

Web-based applications provide valuable platforms for online collaborative writing. These applications offer features that facilitate real-time collaboration, feedback, and organization, which can enhance the collaborative writing process. Therefore, incorporating web-based applications into collaborative writing projects can improve the efficiency of the writing process and ultimately lead to better writing outcomes.

Metacognition

Metacognition is a multidimensional process encompassing a broad set of aspects,

some of which are beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, this concept can be

conventionally defined within the context of language learning as the learner's ability to

regulate their cognitive processes as a learner by reflecting on their own knowledge and

thoughts to monitor and control their learning through a critical awareness of their own

thinking processes (Teng et al., 2021; Flavell, 1979). In addition, several researchers within

the context of teaching (Serra & Metcalfe, 2009; Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009; Negretti, 2012)

acknowledge the classification of two components of metacognition: metacognitive awareness

and metacognitive regulation.

According to Negretti (2012), a student's understanding of their learning techniques is

referred to as "metacognitive awareness," which includes the awareness of the strategies and

approaches necessary to perform a particular assignment, the awareness of how to apply said

strategies and perform the assignment, and the awareness of knowing the appropriate moment

to apply suitable strategies and the reasons to do so. On the other hand, metacognitive

monitoring is a student's capacity to evaluate their own performance. Moreover, Teng (2019)

identified three dimensions of metacognition: metacognitive knowledge, control, and

metacognitive experiences.

The dimension of metacognitive knowledge is remarkably similar to the component of

metacognitive awareness. Both terms encompass the concepts of declarative, procedural, and

conditional knowledge. According to Teng (2019), declarative knowledge refers to students'

skills, expertise, and capacity for processing information. In contrast, procedural knowledge

encompasses the body of information necessary to determine how to carry out a responsibility

using various strategies. Lastly, conditional knowledge involves students' ability to recognize

when and why specific strategies should be used for a given activity.

Metacognitive control and metacognitive skills refer to the ability to manage mental

operations to attain cognitive goals or to use knowledge to regulate cognitive processes and

apply metacognitive strategies that aid students in controlling and monitoring their own

learning (Teng, 2019). Metacognitive strategies, metacognitive regulation, and self-regulation

are all terms that are often discussed together. These terms are closely linked to the dimension

of metacognitive control and are even used interchangeably because they refer to the complex

collection of skills that individuals use to regulate their behavior to achieve their learning

objectives.

Lastly, the dimension of metacognitive experiences alludes to students' awareness and

feelings when they analyze information in preparation for upcoming tasks. It includes

emotions and evaluations of knowledge, amount of effort invested, solution accuracy, task

difficulty, familiarity with the task, and self-confidence (Teng et al., 2021). This dimension is

closely tied to the affective aspect of a student's language learning process and encompasses

various affective factors such as self-efficacy, apprehension, anxiety, and attitudes.

Psycholinguistics

Maftoon and Shakouri (2012) define psycholinguistics as the study of the relationship

between the human mind and human language. It is an interdisciplinary field that integrates

psychology and linguistics and explores the processes that occur in the brain during language

production and comprehension. Purba (2018) identifies three processes in the study of

psycholinguistics: language production, language comprehension, and language acquisition.

Moreover, addresses two typical questions: "What language knowledge is required for us to

use language?" and "What cognitive processes are involved in the ordinary use of language?"
(p. 48). Finally, in the context of language learning and teaching, psycholinguistic theories are
used to design language teaching courses and materials that enable foreign language learners
to develop the target language effectively (Purba, 2018).

Affective Factors

Affective factors are associated with the dimension of metacognitive experiences and
refer to the emotional aspect of metacognition, which has been demonstrated to influence
language learning. Bao (2021) states that the significance of the role played by affective
factors in second language acquisition is comparable to that of the part played by cognitive
factors. The Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen 1985) reveals that the learner's motivation,
attitude, anxiety, and self-esteem are the primary affective elements that influence second
language acquisition. According to Bao (2012), these factors can arise within the intrinsic
characteristics of the student, among the students, and between the students and the teachers.

Acting as a filter, these factors can either facilitate or hinder language learning. In other
words, the influence of the affective factors on the student's learning process can be positive
or negative. Negative affective factors are called affective filters, and they are regarded as a
psychological barrier linked to the students' emotions that stops them from receiving all the
comprehensible input accessible to them. These negative emotions inhibit the effective
processing of language input, whereas good emotions enhance it. If the second or foreign
language learner has high self-esteem, a well-defined learning objective, and moderate
anxiety, they will be open to a much more significant amount of language input, and the
impact of the "affective filter" will be limited (Ni, 2012).

Blocking

Writer's block is not only an issue with missed dead-lines and the occasional feeling of profound uneasiness that derives or leads to a blank mind. Repeated episodes of writer's block can influence academic achievement and career paths. Most delimitations of the writer's block affective filter in correlational studies are derived from Roses 1984's definition of the term. Sometimes referred to as "blocking," writer's block is "an inability to begin or continue writing for reasons other than a lack of basic skill or commitment" (Rose, 1984, p.18). Because writers tend to spend their time playing with their ideas before writing them down, writer's block is not determined by the mere passage of time but by the passage of time with little engagement in the writing process. This unproductive labor is often characterized by negative emotions such as frustration, rage, anxiety, or confusion (Rose, 1984).

Apprehension

Daly and Miller (1975) were the first to coin the term "writing apprehension" to designate a type of anxiety that had an inverse correlation to SAT scores, perceived writing competence, and motivation to attend writing courses (Pajares, 2007). Writing apprehension and writing anxiety are currently understood as the same variable. They are typically described as a general aversion to writing or to any circumstances that may represent a potential writing situation for the student that could also lead to a possible assessment of such writing by an authority figure (Daly & Miller, 1975).

Abdel Latif (2007) offered a similar description, stating that writing anxiety might relate to the sensation of discomfort that the writer encounters while performing the assignment. He also claimed that writing anxiety is a common predisposition and that it tends to influence students' writing performance (Gibriel, 2019). However, recent investigations

have found that although writing apprehension tends to correlate inversely with writing

performance, the effect of apprehension is neutralized when self-efficacy beliefs are accounted

for in a study (Pajares, 2007).

Attitudes Towards Writing

According to Ekholm et al. (2017), even though researchers typically consider the

construct of attitudes to encompass affective cognitive and motivational components, the

research community has shown an inclination to focus their attention on the affective aspects

of attitude. Crano and Prislin (2008) explain that attitudes are judgmental perceptions about an

issue that involve both affective and cognitive components. The objects of perceptual

evaluation can be people, actions, events, or even abstract constructs, and they can be judged

anywhere along a spectrum ranging from a positive to a negative attitude.

The term has been considered one of the most significant concepts within the field of

psychology; however, "there is surprisingly little consensus among researchers regarding what

attitudes are and what should be included in measurements of attitudes" (Ekholm et al., 2017,

p. 828). According to Ekholm et al. (2017), a definition that has been typically cited for a

domain-general concept of attitude is Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975), which states that an

attitude is "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable

manner with respect to a given object" (p. 6).

Nonetheless, Ekholm et al. (2017) state that "attitudes themselves are domain-specific

and should be studied as such." They further explain that in the same way as it occurs with

attitudes in general, writing attitudes have predominantly been studied as an affective

construct that mainly represents the enjoyment or lack of enjoyment of writing. Depending on

the researcher, writing attitudes can also refer to the perceived value of writing, writing self-efficacy, and writing anxiety (Ekholm et al., 2017).

This lack of theoretical consensus led to the development of the Writer within Community model. Graham's (2017) model offers a definite perspective of writing attitudes that incorporates cognitive and sociocultural components for a more exhaustive comprehension of the writing process. This model assumes that writing is inherently social and takes place within the context of a community. The components of this community consist of writers, collaborators, audiences, the purpose for engaging in writing, its typical practices, and its physical and social environments (Ekholm et al., 2017). All these components "interact reciprocally with community members' cognitive, affective, and motivational resources, including members' prior knowledge, emotions, and beliefs about writing" (Ekholm et al., 2017, p. 829).

Overall, and for the purposes of this study, a writing attitude can be considered as an appraisal of the writing process that may be positive, negative, or mixed and can be expressed with varying degrees of intensity. Attitudes are the primary factors that determine how students think about and behave in response to all elements of the EFL context. They are statements that convey either positive or negative opinions of a particular person, place, object, or writing-related event and represent a complicated arrangement of evaluative ideas, sentiments, and preferences.

Self-efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy consists of a student's beliefs about their own ability to carry out a determinate assignment (Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012). Self-efficacy beliefs can positively or negatively influence the students' perceptions of their capacity to learn a language or a

particular skill. Self-efficacy beliefs influence the amount and the type of effort students put

into an assignment or skill they pursue and decide whether to work harder or avoid the task

(Hetthong & Teo, 2012). Prat-Sala and Redford (2012) state that efficacy beliefs play a crucial

role in properly regulating students' behavior, which leads to human competence. They further

explain that this regulation is attained through the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on the

students' cognitions, motivations, and affective processes. This regulation "can, in turn,

influence future efficacy beliefs" (p.9).

　　　　According to Hetthong and Teo (2012), students with a greater degree of self-efficacy

are more prone to set high and attainable objectives and persist in their efforts to achieve these

goals. They have a lower risk of experiencing stress and are more likely to see a demanding

circumstance as challenging instead of difficult, and thus, they are prone to persevere. Self-

efficacious students are less likely to experience feelings of disappointment in the face of

failure and are more likely to feel intrinsically motivated to engage in and perform an

assignment (Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012). Prat-Sala and Redford (2012) pointed out how

research has found that a student's confidence in their abilities significantly impacts how well

they accomplish a given assignment, even if they have the same level of skill as everyone else.

　　　　On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy are more likely to set more modest

objectives for themselves and, because they perceive tasks to be more complex than they are,

to give up whenever the work gets challenging (Hetthong & Teo, 2012). Even in

circumstances of modest failure, those with poor self-efficacy beliefs are more negatively

affected by setbacks and failure, after which they take longer to restore their sense of self-

efficacy (Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012).

Prat-Sala and Redford (2012) define writing self-efficacy as the students' confidence in their writing ability and state that it is believed to be context-dependent. According to Rahimi and Fathi (2021), self-efficacy in writing might include ideation, convention, and self-regulation. Ideation is the writer's ability to brainstorm ideas at the beginning of the writing process. Convention deals with the writers' capacity to articulate these ideas through their linguistic skills. Finally, self-regulation alludes to the writers' self-monitoring and control and their own judgments about the cognitive and linguistic aspects of writing as it is being performed. Prat-Sala and Redford (2012) state that writing self-efficacy is believed to influence writing performance and that students need to "engage in self-regulation through self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction" (p. 10) to increase their writing self-efficacy.

Self-regulating Behaviors

From the sociocognitive perspective, according to Zimmerman (2011), self-regulation is a broad concept that includes monitoring our own social behavior, the way we think, and the way we feel. Likewise, writing self-regulation is comprised of self-initiated thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that students employ to develop their writing abilities and improve the quality of their paragraphs (Rahimi & Fathi, 2021). Golombek et al. (2018) state that the use of self-regulation entails motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies to accomplish an objective. This suggests that "writers need to cope with their thoughts, feelings, and actions, for example, by using selected strategies for planning, initiating, perpetuating, and evaluating the writing process" (p. 2). Therefore, when it comes to writing, a self-regulated writer is someone who can effectively manage their behaviors during the writing process.

Rahimi and Fathi (2021) distinguish several categories of self-regulation that support students in attaining successful outcomes within the context of foreign language writing. Writing self-regulation can be broken down into three categories: environmental writing self-regulation, behavioral writing self-regulation, and personal writing self-regulation. Environmental writing self-regulation refers to manipulating context to facilitate writing assignments. Behavioral writing self-regulation pertains to the writer's self-verbalizing, evaluating, and monitoring. Finally, personal writing self-regulation means using both mental (cognitive) and emotional (affective) strategies to tackle a writing task.

Self-regulation Phases and Self-regulation Activities

Authors such as Golombek et al. (2018), Phuwichit (2016), and Teng et al. (2021) identify several writing self-regulation phases that are similar to one another. Golombek et al. consider a forethought phase, a performance phase, and a self-reflection phase, Teng et al. list three metacognitive regulation skills: planning, monitoring, and evaluating, and Phuwichit identifies these phases as the forethought and planning phase, the performance monitoring phase, and the reflection on performance phase. These categorizations may use different terms, but they essentially refer to the same concepts.

During the forethought or planning phase, the writing assignment is planned and organized (Golombek et al., 2018). Planning requires choosing the right strategies and designating the right amount of effort or resources for the right tasks (Teng et al., 2021). Students typically examine their learning assignments to understand what is expected of them in terms of requirements or standards. Once they have assessed this, they can determine what they want to learn and what strategies they need to employ to achieve their learning objectives. However, it is possible that their goals and plans do not align with the expectations of their

teachers. In such cases, it is necessary to provide appropriate feedback to help the students attain their desired goals (Phuwichit, 2016).

In the performance monitoring phase, the writing assignment can be influenced by factors such as attention and motivation. (Golombek et al., 2018). "Monitoring" refers to a student's ability to perform a task while simultaneously observing and checking their own performance. (Teng et al., 2021). During this phase, students use strategies to carry out their writing assignments and keep track of the effectiveness of those strategies and how motivated they are to keep going toward the objectives of the assignment. Furthermore, whenever the implemented strategies are not effective, formative feedback can be provided by peers and teachers to improve students' performance (Phuwichit, 2016).

During the final phase, self-reflection and evaluation of one's performance on the writing assignment, students determine if the tactics they have implemented are beneficial and whether any modifications are necessary (Phuwichit, 2016). Self-reflections are directed upon the quality of students' own writing performance and may affect their further forethought or planning phases (Golombek et al., 2018). Evaluating allows students to judge their regulatory processes and writing outcomes (Teng et al., 2021). Phuwichit (2016) further adds that "it is also important that the students are able to manage emotions resulting from the learning outcomes and experience" (p.22).

Teng et al. (2021) analyze their students' self-regulation by focusing on the self-regulation activities of goal setting, powerful strategies, self-monitoring, restructuring context, time management, self-evaluation, attribution of causation to results, and adapting future methods. No further explanation of these categories is explicitly provided. On the other hand, Phuwichit (2016) makes a comprehensive list of activities that allowed them to measure self-

regulation. These activities included goal setting, task planning, self-motivation without external incentives, attention control, flexible use of learning strategies, self-monitoring, appropriate help-seeking, and self-evaluation.

Golombek et al. (2018) classify self-regulation activities within the three self-regulation phases that were previously described. The forethought or planning phase comprises task analysis, which alludes to planning and goal-setting, and self-motivation, which includes affective filters, such as self-efficacy and outcome beliefs. The monitoring or performance phase consists of self-control, which entails many activities like "self-instruction, mental imagery, task strategies, attention focusing, time management, environmental structuring, self-consequences, and help-seeking" (p.2), and self-observation, which relates to metacognitive monitoring. The final stage of self-reflection and assessment consists of self-judgment. This includes evaluating oneself and finding the reasons for the outcomes of a task. Additionally, it encompasses self-reflection, which may involve feelings of satisfaction or insights on how students can improve their self-regulatory strategies for future assignments.

Self-regulated Learning

According to Teng (2019), self-regulated learning (SRL) is an intrinsic mechanism of students to plan, monitor, and assess their learning in an autonomous, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral way. Pintrich et al. (2000) provide a similar definition in which they describe SRL as an active and constructive process in which students seek to monitor, regulate, and manage their own cognition, motivation, and behavior to accomplish their learning objectives. Therefore, it is safe to assume that SRL is a collection of metacognitive thoughts, motivations, and behaviors created by students themselves and systematically geared toward achieving their own learning objectives.

Zimmerman and Schunk (2001) point out that SRL is affected by personal processes, behavioral traits, and environmental events, and it comprises several aspects. These aspects include choosing a topic, setting goals to learn more about that topic, choosing strategies to learn more about the topic, and evaluating and changing these strategies as students learn more about the subject matter. Similarly, Zhang (2018) describes self-regulated learners as the ones who can set goals and actively monitor their learning progress by observing their current performance, comparing it to the criteria and goals they set, reacting, and responding to perceived differences between their current level of performance and desired standards, and taking further actions to improve. In turn, Teng (2019) states that self-regulated learners can "discern how to control their internal states, beliefs, social behaviors, and external environments in the learning process" (p.2).

Chapter III Research Design

A research design was adopted to study academic writing and the factors that influence the writing performance of undergraduate EFL learners. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) define research design as the plan or strategy that forms the basis for collecting data in a study. They emphasize the significance of selecting appropriate subjects, study locations, and data collection methods to answer the research questions effectively. The design of this study was built in accordance with the qualities of action research, which will be explained in more detail in the subsequent paragraphs. The research design was centered around collecting data that address the first two research questions, namely providing evidence of the research problem and identifying the influencing factors. The information collected through three different methods was subsequently qualitatively analyzed, leading to a hypothesis of action. This chapter comprises three primary sections: justification of methodology, research design, and analysis of the gathered data.

Justification of Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used in this investigation, which falls under the scope of educational research and adheres to the characteristics of action research, a qualitative approach with three modalities: technical, practical, and critical. Given the study's requirements, this paper followed the critical modality, supported by Kemmis (1989) in his educational action research model, which will be later explained in the Design section of the Research Design chapter. Moreover, according to Creswell (2012), there are two types of action research: practical and participatory. This study can be classified as practical action research due to its nature as a small-scale research project that aims to investigate a particular educational setting in an effort to improve its practice.

Educational Research

Educational research can be conducted at all levels of education and covers a wide range of topics, including teaching and learning, curriculum development, assessment and evaluation, and educational policies and practices. This research focuses on EFL learning, particularly on the development of writing skills in an academic context. Educational research aims to generate knowledge and improve teaching practices, according to Johnson and Christensen (2014). Therefore, this study falls under the scope of educational research. Johnson and Christensen (2014) explained that educational research is the rigorous investigation of educational topics through various methods to collect and analyze data, such as surveys, experiments, observations, and interviews, using a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed approach.

Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research is a methodological approach concerned with understanding complex human phenomena in natural settings (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). A qualitative approach can be used to study the most common problems that a class of 5th semester EFL students encounter when writing because it involves complex non-numerical data that comes from teachers and students, and that is specific to that group.

Johnson and Christensen (2014) pointed out that the qualitative approach is particularly valuable in educational research because it aims to develop a deep understanding of the research phenomenon from the participants' perspectives and generate new insights and theories about the phenomenon within a wide range of educational topics, including the experiences of students and teachers and the effectiveness of educational interventions. In this study, the qualitative approach facilitated the use of a variety of methods to collect data, such

as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and document analysis, and allowed the researcher

to adapt the methods in Chapter 4 based on the analysis of this information.

Action Research

   This study adhered to the principles of action research, a general type of educational

research that follows a qualitative approach often used in educational settings, where it can

help to bridge the gap between theory and practice to improve teaching practices and student

outcomes (Stringer, 2014). Action research has been shown to encourage engagement,

innovation, and continuous improvement (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011). The process of action

research was initially introduced by Lewin (1946) and further refined by Kolb (1984), Carr,

and Kemmis (1988), and other scholars (Latorre, 2013). Stringer (2014) explains that action

research aims to develop meaningful and sustainable solutions to real-world problems, while

promoting greater understanding and collaboration among participants.

   One of the key aspects of action research is its emphasis on practical applications and

relevance to the local context (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). This feature is reflected in the

objective of developing an instructional plan for a specific EFL academic writing course,

using an exploratory scientific approach that starts with the observation of the research

problem, followed by data collection and analysis to diagnose the issue, leading to a

conclusion that translates into a didactic proposal that could solve the research problem. This

bottom-up methodology is the scientific method employed in action research, as noted by

Johnson and Christensen (2014).

   Action research is a collaborative and cyclical process that involves planning, acting,

observing, and reflecting. Its goal is to identify a problem, collect data, analyze it, and

implement changes based on its findings to improve practice and achieve positive changes

(Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Latorre, 2013). By following this cyclical process, the current

study allowed participants to improve their skills and contribute to the broader body of

knowledge in educational research.

Critical Action Research Modality

According to Latorre (2013), critical action research principles stem from applying

critical theory to the field of educational science. Carr and Kemmis (1988) noted that critical

educational science aims to transform education, promoting social change and transformative

learning through critical reflection and action, rather than just efficiency or problem-solving.

In other words, this modality highlights the significance of critical dialogue and reflection,

which involves questioning assumptions, values, and beliefs. This aspect of critical action

research facilitates the reformation of teaching practices and a positive change in an

educational setting, which is the expected outcome of developing a didactic proposal that

addresses the most common mistakes identified in the writing performance of 5th-semester

students taking a course in academic writing.

Practical Action Research Type

In practical action research, teachers can implement a plan of action to improve issues

within their classrooms or study local problems. Creswell (2014) refers to these teachers as

"teacher-researchers" and emphasizes their time limitations as a result of having to represent

both roles. Nonetheless, this approach is commonly used by educators to identify an issue in

their practice, research it using various methods, implement changes based on the findings,

and then reflect on the effectiveness of those changes. The cyclical nature of practical action

research allows for ongoing improvement and adaptation within the educational setting.
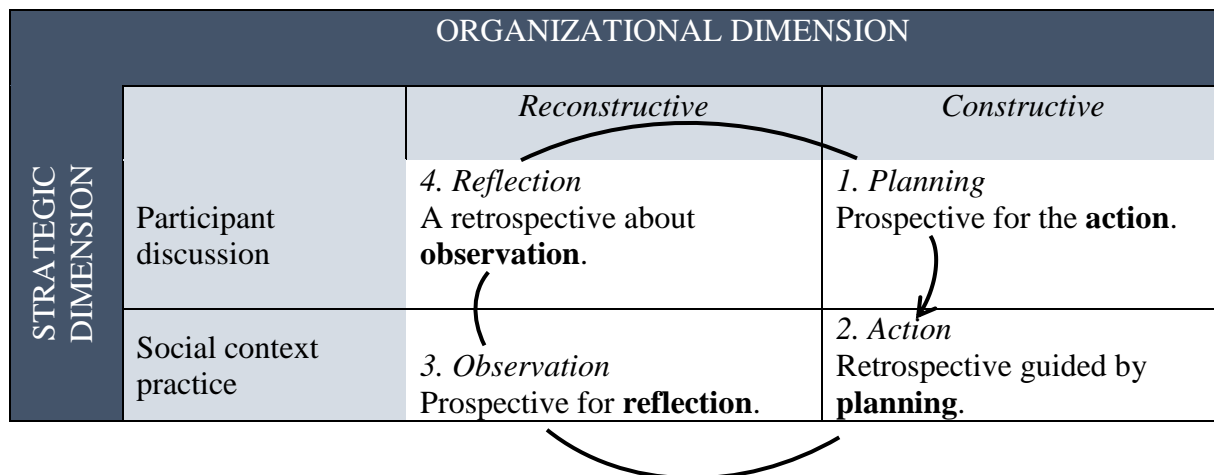
Design

   The design of this study followed Kemmis' action research model, which stems from the critical modality of action research. The research design prioritized data collection using three instruments (a test, a questionnaire, and an interview) to identify the most common mistakes that EFL undergraduate learners make in their academic writing, and the factors that influence their performance. The analysis of these results will subsequently address the third research question: what didactic proposal is appropriate to solve the most common mistakes found in the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners? As Johnson and Christensen (2014) noted, a research design consists of selecting a methodology that will be used to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions.

Kemmis Action Research Model

   According to Latorre (2013), Stephen Kemmis, a promoter of the critical action research modality, developed a model in 1989 that was intended for teaching. This model served as a foundation for the research design focused on examining the academic writing performance of undergraduate EFL learners and its influencing factors. As shown in Figure 3, the model is organized into two dimensions: the strategic dimension is subdivided into the phases of action and reflection, and the organizational dimension includes the phases of planning and observation. Latorre (2013) explains that both dimensions interact in a consistent manner and that the four phases, acting with either a retrospective or a prospective intention, constitute a self-reflective spiral of action and knowledge that contributes to problem-solving and the understanding of ordinary teaching practices.

Figure 3

The dimensions and phases around action research according to Kemmis (1989)

ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSION		
	Reconstructive	*Constructive*
STRATEGIC DIMENSION Participant discussion	*4. Reflection* A retrospective about **observation**.	*1. Planning* Prospective for the **action**.
Social context practice	*3. Observation* Prospective for **reflection**.	*2. Action* Retrospective guided by **planning**.

Note. Translated and adapted from "La investigación-acción: conocer y cambiar la práctica educativa", by Latorre, 2013, p.36.

Figure 3 illustrates the four phases that follow the spiral of cycles in Kemmis' (1989) model, as referenced in Latorre (2013). The phase of planning involves the development of a plan of critically informed action to improve existing practices. The second phase of action is concerned with putting the plan into practice. The third phase, observation, consists of identifying the effects of the action in the context in which it takes place. Finally, the fourth phase consists of reflecting on those effects to use as a foundation for future cycles of planning, acting, and observing.

This investigation followed Kemmis' cycle two times since this model's phases are repetitive. The first cycle consisted of diagnosing the problem, starting on the reconstructive sphere of the model through observing a group in an academic writing course and reflecting

on the possible issues within said group. The constructive sphere comprised planning a

methodology to demonstrate the presence of a problem and then putting it into action. The

second cycle was set in motion after observing and reflecting on the results of the diagnostic

instruments, which led to planning an appropriate didactic proposal and then implementing it.

A brief reconstructive process of observing and reflecting on the results of the proposal took

place after its implementation, but no further action was taken due to the limitations set by the

scope of this action research.

The design and implementation of the didactic proposal are the core aspects of this

action research. Therefore, it is important to frame these segments in the context of the study's

methodological design. This can be illustrated through an operational model that presents

chronologically the sequence of main steps of this study. Figure 4 shows this operational

model of the methodological design, following Kemmis' (1989) action research model as a

foundation. Identical to Kemmis' model, this operational model is divided into reconstructive

and constructive steps and represents a spiral of cycles that can potentially continue

downwards.

The first part of the study's methodological design consisted of identifying the research

problem and objectives through an observation recorded using a structured Teacher diary

instrument. Reflecting on these observations led to identifying the research problem and

delimiting research questions and objectives. Next, moving into the constructive sphere of the

model, it was necessary to plan and implement the diagnostic instruments necessary to

demonstrate the existence of the research problem. Back into the reconstructive sphere, the

results of these instruments were analyzed, and a hypothesis of action was established based

on this analysis. This hypothesis facilitated the design and consequent implementation of a

didactic proposal that was ultimately evaluated using different instruments. This evaluation led to the identification of limitations, the delivery of recommendations, and the establishment of future perspectives.

Figure 4

Operational Model of the Methodological Design of the Study
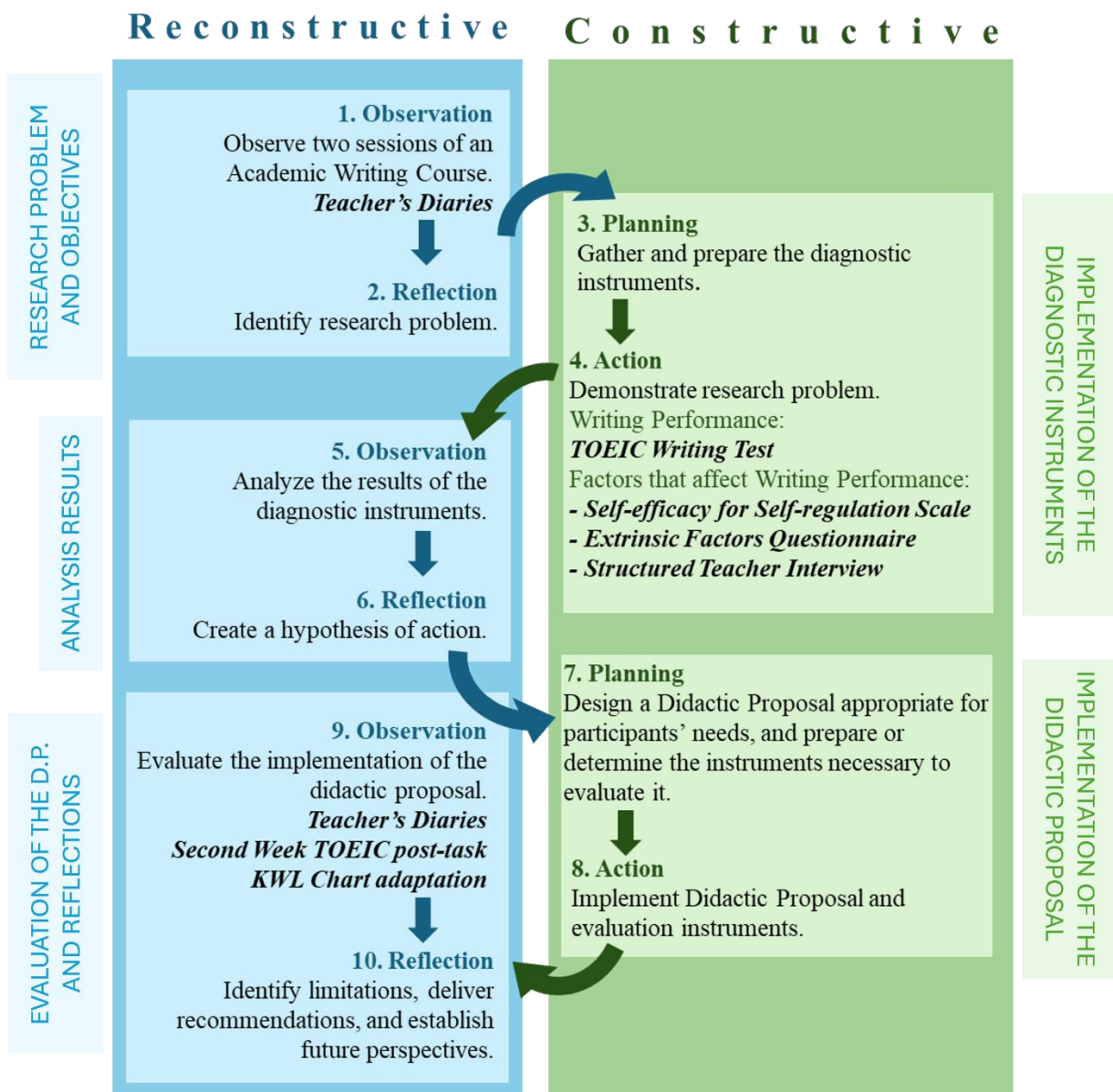
Participants

At a macro level, the population to which the participants belong consists of students

from a public institution in Nuevo León, México. According to the university's website, as of

2021, there were 214,342 students enrolled in their 335 undergraduate and graduate programs

across its various campuses, out of which 82 are bachelor's degrees. The participants were

Applied Linguistics majors. In this major, 139 students took the Academic Writing course in

the fifth semester. A class of twenty-nine students was selected out of this population. This

information was requested through a letter addressed to the head of the school management,

shown in Appendix K. All the participants were expected to demonstrate a B2 level of

proficiency as a result of successfully completing the B2 certification course during the

previous semester.

The participants were selected through convenience sampling, which, according to

Johnson and Christensen (2014), is a nonrandom sampling technique commonly used in action

research when the researcher includes individuals who are easily available, volunteer or can be

easily recruited and are willing to participate in the study. In other words, researchers select

individuals who can be "conveniently selected", often due to time and practical constraints

(Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 362).

Even though convenience samples are not an optimal way to generalize findings to a

population based on a single study, in the context of action research, convenience sampling

serves as a useful technique that allows the researcher to focus on improving educational

practices within a particular context or setting, since it represents a practical and effective

method to select participants from that desired context. For example, if an action researcher is

interested in improving teaching practices in a particular class, they may select participants,

from that group of students, who are willing to cooperate. The current study is another

instance of this type of situation.

Data Collection

Johnson and Christensen (2014) explain that, generally, after identifying the research

problem and the research questions, an appropriate research method, design, and strategy will

be selected, and then, the methods of data collection will be decided upon to obtain the

necessary information. In the cycle of action research, according to Latorre (1989), data

collection is a crucial process during the phase of observation to gather information about the

effects of the researcher's educational practice. This, in turn, provides answers to their

research questions.

First, two class observations were requested. An official request signed by the

coordinator of Applied Linguistics to carry out these observations is shown in Appendix B.

Annotations about the class were gathered in the form of a teacher's diary. According to Mc

Donough (1994), "diary-keeping by teachers … is by no means unusual as an instrument for

methodological reflection and professional development" (p. 57). He explains that keeping a

learner's diary serves "as a research tool to uncover language learning styles and strategies.

Several of these diaries have been kept by researchers about their own language-learning

experiences" (p.59).

Mc Donough (1994) analyzed four weeks of four different teachers' diaries and found

several themes that served as a writing guideline: Individual behavior and class dynamics,

teachers' feelings and student behaviors, the time factor (variations in emphasis throughout

time, as well as in the mindsets of educators and learners), learning styles and strategies

(including behavioral concerns, observations and questions regarding perceived strategies for

language acquisition, and on adjustments and rates of progress during the course), and methodological reflection. The diary entries were written by hand on a tablet using the Goodnotes app, and are shown in Appendix B.

To demonstrate the research problem, several diagnostic instruments were designed or adapted from similar investigations and were implemented in a group of fifth semester EFL undergraduates attending a classroom-based Academic Writing course. The main purpose of using multiple methods is to cross-check the information by collecting it from different points of view (the teacher's and the students') and to balance the weaknesses and strengths of each method of data collection. As Johnson and Christensen (2014) point out, "the weaknesses of one method will tend to be different from those of a different method, which means that when you combine two or more methods, you will have better evidence" (p.418).

A writing test was implemented to objectively evaluate the students' writing performance and diagnose the main problem. To identify the influencing factors, such as limited practice, in-depth feedback, and lack of self-efficacy and self-regulated behaviors, the students answered a questionnaire, and an interview was conducted with the class professor. The formats of the writing test, the students' questionnaire handed to the students, and the teacher's interview are shown in Appendix A.

TOEIC Writing Task

According to LaTorre (2013), the analysis of documents, such as homework, pictures, written records, and exams, is a data collection technique used in the analysis approach of teaching-learning processes. These documents represent a student's response to a prompt from a teacher-researcher. In this study, to provide evidence of the research problem and to answer the first research question, a diagnostic instrument is to be adapted from similar investigations

and implemented in a group of fifth semester EFL undergraduates attending an Academic

Writing course.

Literature provides several instruments to evaluate writing performance. For example,

Hethong and Teo (2012) implemented a 150-word argumentative paragraph test based on the

"Test of English for Educational Purposes" (TEEP), in which the students had to argue

whether the Internet is helpful or detrimental, and was rated using Cyril Weir's TEEP attribute

writing scale from 1990. Rahimi and Fathi (2021) used a two-timed argumentative writing test

as part of their methodology to improve writing performance. The pretest can be seen in the

context of action research as a diagnostic instrument to identify the problems in the students'

writing. This pretest asked for an objective viewpoint on the statement "only people who earn

a lot of money are successful," and the posttest about if "teachers should be paid according to

how much their students learn." Both exams were scored using Jacobs et al.'s 1981 rubric.

On the other hand, similarly to Ciftci and Kocoglu (2012), who evaluated first and

revised drafts during the whole course using Tribble's 1996 rubric, Phuwichit (2016) did

not implement any test but instead asked independent raters to assess the essays the students

were handing in throughout the course using Mei's 2010 scale. These two alternatives for

assessing writing performance are not suited for this investigation because the author of

this paper is not the teacher imparting the course, which leads to time constraints.

A rubric that was found to be repeatedly implemented by researchers was Cooper's

(1977) classification of writing rating scale, which the International English Language Testing

System (IELTS) uses to score writing tasks. However, several researchers were found to

apply this rubric to evaluate writing tests based on the Educational Testing Service (ETS)

protocols (Faigley et al, 2014; Nejad et al, 2022). For example, Faigley et al. (2014) asked half

of the students to complete an argumentative writing test about their position towards

mandatory writing classes in high schools, and the other half wrote about their position

towards "the use of competency-based basic skills tests to certify high school students for

graduation" (p.17). These essays were rated using Cooper's scale from 1977.

Williams and Takaku (2011) implemented an argumentative writing exam that

followed the Educational Testing Service (ETS) protocols, in which every exam addressed a

different topic but were all supposed to have the same level of difficulty. However, the scoring

rubric was established by four independent teachers. Finally, Nejad et al. (2022) implemented

an argumentative writing exam about the statement "using a computer every day can have

more negative than positive effects on your children," which was evaluated using Cooper's

1977 scale, which covered the criteria of "task achievement," "coherence and cohesion,"

"lexical resource," and "grammatical range and accuracy."

As shown in Appendix A, the diagnostic instrument used to demonstrate the existence

of the research problem was an academic writing exam based on ETS TOEIC protocols due to

its practicality, repeated use on similar investigations, and relevance to the objectives of the

students who will eventually need to get certified in the English language and use it in their

workplaces. According to ets.org, this test "is the global leader in assessing English-

communication skills for the workplace and everyday life" (ETS, 2014)

After mapping the TOEIC Test on the CEFR (see Theoretical Framework), the

evaluation of the essays was possible using Cooper's Classification of Writing Rating Scale,

which is based on a Likert scale from 0 to 6, and the descriptors of band 7 of IELTS's rubric,

as shown in Table 4. The scoring was based on a numerical scale where a more exact meaning

for every item is specified to avoid the problem of open-ended scoring where "it's hard to tell

whether one participant's 7 is more like another one's 9" (Burns, 2009, p. 84).

Table 3

Cooper's Classification of Writing Rating Scale

Aspects	Descriptions of performance	Scores 0-6
Task Achievement	• covers the requirements of the task • (A) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences, or stages • (GT) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate • clearly presents and highlights key features/bullet points but could be more fully extended	
Coherence and Cohesion	• logically organizes information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout • uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use	
Lexical Resource	• uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision • uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation • may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation	
Grammatical Range and Accuracy	• uses a variety of complex structures • produces frequent error-free sentences • has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors	

Note. This table was adapted from *The mediating role of critical thinking abilities in the

relationship between English as a foreign language learner's writing performance and their

language learning strategies* (p.5), by Nejad et al., 2022. The descriptions of performance

were added based on the public version of IELTS's Writing Task Band Descriptors extracted

from ielts.org. The corresponding scoring is as follows: 6, outstanding; 5, very good; 4, good; 3, adequate; 2, less than adequate; 1, poor; 0, no substantive response.

Student Questionnaires

Burns (2009) points out that questionnaires are convenient for getting behavioral and attitudinal information from several people when there is a time limitation to interview them all. Latorre (2013) lists the advantages and disadvantages of using a questionnaire. Similarly to Burns, Latorre mentions that this technique is time-saving and easy to fill out. Moreover, it provides direct answers, and the information is quantifiable. On the other hand, some disadvantages are that it takes time to create and analyze the items of a questionnaire, and answers may not be "sincere" because participants could try to produce what they might believe is the "right answer" (p.67). Furthermore, it depends on the participant's skill to read and write. Questionnaires can be closed or open-ended, and their advantages and disadvantages may also depend on the type of question.

The first questionnaire used close-ended items such as two yes/no questions and a rating scale. As well as open-ended items, such as an entirely open question and two structured open items. According to Burns (2009), yes/no questions "reduce the risk that too many shades of judgement may be required" (p.82), and rating scales are normally used to determine individuals' level of agreement with a given statement. A 4-point scale was used in this question to avoid a neutral response in the middle. The structured open questions were designed to get numerical data, as opposed to the open question, which aimed to get as much nominal information as possible.

Based on the information collected from the two observations made less than a month

before the instruments were implemented, this questionnaire was designed to identify the

extrinsic factors that may influence participants' writing performance. These observations

revealed that students practiced their writing once a week and that, during the two classes that

were observed, only one student received feedback on their paragraph. The classes consisted

mainly of reviewing basic topics such as irregular verbs, countable and uncountable nouns and

prepositions. Table 2 shows the final version of the questions designed to identify some

extrinsic factors influencing the participants' academic writing performance. The format used

to implement the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Table 4

Extrinsic Factors Questionnaire for the Students

Instructions	Question	Answer
Fill in the blanks with your response.	How many short essay tasks a month are you, on average, assigned to do in the course of "Redacción de Textos Académicos"?	#_____
Fill in the blanks with your response.	How much time, on average, do you spend on every assignment?	_____*hrs,* _____*mins*
Write your response in the blank space.	Please, briefly describe some assignments you have done for the course of "Redacción de textos académicos".	
	How much feedback from the teacher of the course "Redacción de textos académicos" do you receive on average on every assignment?	*None:* _____ *A little:* _____ *Some:* _____ *A lot:* _____
Mark with an *x* your response.	Do you think receiving more feedback on your writing assignments could be beneficial for you?	_____*Yes* _____*No*
	Have you ever co-evaluated your classmates' writing in this course?	_____*Yes* _____*No*

Note: Developed by the author.

Questions were designed by the author of this study, passed through the premium

version of Grammarly, a typing assistant that reviews English texts, and were ultimately

revised by two experienced English teachers from the Language Center. Their commentaries

and signatures can be found in Appendix C. According to Buns (2009), "there is a lot of trial

and error involved in getting a good final version" (p.89). Piloting a questionnaire raises

design issues. The first version of the questionnaire was piloted with a sample of the target

population, and an issue of ambiguity arose. Questions were rewritten to clarify that the

objective was to seek answers about the class they were taking the questionnaire in (*Redacción

de Textos Académicos*) and not about every class they took during the semester.

To identify the intrinsic factors that may influence the writing performance of B2 EFL

learners, a questionnaire validated in German and translated by its authors to English was

implemented to measure self-efficacy and self-regulation, which were found to be the only

two factors identified in literature that were strongly related to writing performance. For

example, in Faigley et al's 2014 study, writing apprehension inversely correlated with writing

performance in narrative essays, but not in academic writing, and Erkan and Saban (2011)

found a weak inverse correlation of -0.23 between apprehension and writing performance.

Similarly, Lee (2005) found out that writer's block and writing apprehension were not

linked to writing performance. On the other hand, overall writing self-efficacy strongly

correlated with overall writing performance (.71) in Hetthong and Teo's 2012 study and

showed a positive correlation of .38 with writing performance in Erkan and Saban's 2011

investigation. Finally, metacognitive knowledge and regulation showed statistically significant

correlations (0.70, 0.72) in relation to writing performance in Teng's paper from 2019.

Table 5

Self-efficacy for Self-regulation of Academic Writing Scale

#	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Forethought				
1	I can set myself specific writing goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I can organize my ideas even when I work on a complex topic.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I can motivate myself to start writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I can solve problems that occur during writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table 5 Continued

#	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	I can develop an interest in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I can easily find ways to increase my interest in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Performance				
7	I can monitor myself while writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I can concentrate on writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I can use my time for writing effectively.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I can organize my time to concentrate while working on my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	I can organize my workplace so that I am not disturbed while writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	I can change my writing strategy. if I recognize that I am not successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	I can monitor my progress in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table 5 Continued

#	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
14	I can work persistently on my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	I can overcome a writer's block and continue writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Self-reflection				
16	I can realistically assess the quality of my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	I can meet the criteria for text quality I set myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	I can achieve the sub-goals I set for myself when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	I can realistically assess my progress when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	I can avoid repeating an error.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	I can use my experience to improve my writing strategies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	I can judge what I have to do differently next time.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Note. Extracted from *Assessing self-efficacy for self-regulation of academic writing* (p.5), by

Golombek et al., 2018.

The weaknesses of this method of data collection are expected to be balanced out by

carrying out an interview with the teacher, which aims to corroborate and provide even more

information on the factors that influence the participants' academic writing performance.

Teacher Interview

Burns (2009) describes interviews as a conversation that allows researchers to explore

their subject of study and lists 3 types of interviews that concern action research. The type of

interview that was conducted in this study was a structured interview, which is highly

controlled and provides specific and consistent information from all involved parties. The

questions of this interview fall under the scope of Patton's 1990 classifications of

"knowledge" and "experience and behaviors". The first one refers to the knowledge of

individuals about specific situations, and the latter is about individuals' past, present, or

possible future behaviors. There are several criteria to follow to formulate appropriate

interview questions, such as using clear, unambiguous, and neutral open questions. (Patton,

1990, as cited in Latorre, 2013)

      The main purpose of conducting a short interview with the class professor was to

confirm and expand the information collected by the writing task and the information provided

by the participants in the questionnaire that was created based on the preliminary observations.

The following questions were asked during the interview:

1. What are the most common mistakes found in your students' academic writing?

2. What kind of writing tasks have been assigned to your students?

3. How many essay tasks have been assigned to your students during this class?

4. How is feedback provided to your students?

5. What obstacles have prevented you from providing in-depth student feedback?

Implementation of the instruments

      Two preliminary observations were conducted informally about a month before the

instruments were implemented to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem. These

observations were requested to the Coordination of Applied Linguistics (See Appendix B) and

then to the corresponding professor of the course with a letter signed by the coordinator. A

similar procedure was followed to request permission to apply the diagnostic instruments. This

letter of approval can be found in Appendix D.

The participants' consent was requested at the beginning of the questionnaires, where students could choose between consenting or not consenting to participate in the study by checking the corresponding box, as shown in Appendix A. This permission agreement stated that their answers would be confidential and anonymous. No personal data was requested. During the application process, the purpose of the study was explained, and the instructions were read along with the students.

Chapter IV Analysis Results

The analysis results are organized in relation to the first two research questions: (a) What are the most common mistakes exhibited by undergraduate B2 EFL learners in their foreign language writing performance? and (b) What factors influence the writing performance of undergraduate B2 EFL learners in their fifth semester? A hypothesis of action follows the interpretation of these results.

Most Common Problems in B2 Level EFL Learners' Academic Writing Performance

The primary tool used to identify the learner's challenges in academic writing was a 30-minute exam, specifically a TOEIC writing task. This task was evaluated using the descriptors of band 7 of the public version of the IELTS rubric and Cooper's Classification of Writing Rating Scale, which is based on a Likert scale from 0 to 6. To augment the findings of this tool with the class professor's observations, the first question of the teacher interview asked about the common issues in his students' writing, as detailed in Appendix E.

To ensure the reliability of the scores, two evaluators from the ninth semester of Applied Linguistics, who had prior teaching experience, scored the twenty-four essays of students. The essays were evaluated in terms of task achievement, coherence, cohesion, lexical resource, and grammar, using a scale of 0-6. The scores provided by both evaluators in each writing aspect were averaged, and the final scores were determined. Table 6 provides a detailed breakdown of the merged scores for the twenty-four essays, the different aspects that were evaluated, and the final averages.

Table 6

Scores of the TOEIC writing Task for a B2 level of proficiency EFL learner

#	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Final Score (Mean)
1	2.5	2	1.5	1	1.75
2	4.5	3	3	2	3.125
3	0	1	2.5	2	1.375
4	3	3.5	2.5	3	3
5	3.5	3	2.5	2	2.75
6	3.5	1.5	2	2	2.25
7	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.75
8	2.5	2	2	2	2.125
9	3.5	3	3	2.5	3
10	3.5	2	1.5	1	2
11	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.5	2
12	2.5	3	3	2	2.625
13	2.5	2	1	1	1.625
14	1	1	0.5	1	0.875
15	2	2	1	1.5	1.625
16	1.5	1.5	1	1	1.25
17	3	1.5	1	1.5	1.75
18	3.5	3	2	2	2.625
19	2	2	1.5	2	1.875
20	1.5	2	2	1.5	1.75
21	1	2	2	2	1.75
22	3.5	3	3	2.5	3
23	2.5	3	2.5	2	2.5
24	2	2	2.5	2	2.125
Mean	2.479	2.229	1.938	1.771	2.104

Note. **T**his table shows the participants' scores at the beginning of the study. The scoring

system is as follows: 6, outstanding; 5, very good; 4, good; 3, adequate; 2, less than adequate;

1, poor; 0, no substantive response. The highest score was 3.5, and the lowest was 1.25.

The test scores reveal a clear issue in students' effort to write a short academic task

based on arguments and opinions to support a point of view. As a group, their final score stood

as less than adequate, where the highest score stranded between good and adequate, and the

lowest score showed poor performance. Furthermore, the group's skills were the most

developed in task achievement, showing a slightly less than adequate performance, and

showed higher room for improvement in grammatical range and accuracy, followed by lexical

resource, and coherence and cohesion, in that order. Thus, B2 level EFL learners show

problems in every aspect of their academic writing, especially regarding the aspect of

grammatical range and accuracy, where their performance hung below less than adequate for

their expected level of proficiency.

To offer "a neat and tidy way of summarizing quantitative data", Burns (2009, p. 121),

this author points out that descriptive statistics are appropriate to analyze the results of a

particular class of students, which is one of the objectives of action research. She further

explains that measures of dispersion, like range and standard deviation, are useful to identify

the extent to which the values are dispersed. The lowest score in Table 6 was 0.875, and the

highest was 3.125, which results in a range of the final score averages of 2.25, a little bit more

than 2 whole points out of 6.

However, Burns (2009) notices that a range "can give a false impression if you have

one score that is an outlier, an extreme score (p.126). Therefore, a standard deviation should

be calculated to determine a more accurate representation of the data variability. The

population standard deviation measured 0.596, which suggests that most students' scores did

not stray away too far from the mean (2.104). The scores of the participants of this study are

very different from Nejad et al's. These authors recruited 100 participants who scored a higher

writing performance mean of 4.22, with a higher standard deviation of 3.27, which indicated a

lot of variability. Figure 4 better illustrates the dispersion of the scores in Table 6 with the help

of a bell curve that resulted from calculating the normal distribution in Excel.

Figure 4

Normal Distribution of the TOEIC Writing Task Scores
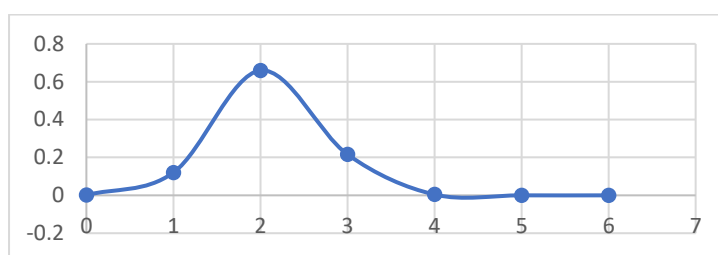
To gain more insight into the information collected from the students regarding their

academic writing performance, the teacher interview began with a question aimed at

understanding the writing challenges faced by the class. As shown in Appendix E, the teacher

answered that they found considerable room for improvement in the cohesion among tenses,

irregular verbs in past tense, countable and uncountable nouns, grammar, and coherence. This

answer not only corresponds to the writing task scores but also provides more specific

examples of the issues within the problematic aspects.

Factors That Influence B2 Level EFL Learners' Academic Writing Performance

Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulation of Academic Writing

Calculations to analyze the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of this

questionnaire in the context of undergraduate Mexican students were made in Excel using this

formula: $\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1}(1 - \frac{\Sigma\sigma^2}{\sigma T^2})$. In which $\sigma^2 = \frac{\Sigma(x_i-\bar{x})^2}{n-1}$, k is the number of items, $\Sigma\sigma^2$ is the sum

of variance, and σT^2 is the variance of the sum of the items. Appendix L shows a screenshot of

the calculations made in Excel. The results were then compared with a reliability analysis in

IBM SPSS. The subscale of Forethought showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.840 in SPSS, the

subscale of perceived performance, 0.777, and the last subscale of self-reflection, 0.792. These

numbers are all above 0.7, which suggests an acceptable internal consistency of the answers

gathered in the context of adult Mexican EFL learners.

The answers were also subjected to a descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS

and Excel. The self-efficacy for self-regulation in the academic writing questionnaire was run

through SPSS to find each subscale's means and standard deviations. Excel was then used to

find the adjusted means and percentages. Percentages were calculated in Excel using simple

cross-multiplication, adding a deviation to the maximum adjusted means and subtracting a

deviation from the minimum adjusted means. Table 7 shows the most relevant information

from the descriptive analysis.

Table 7

Descriptive Analysis of the Self-efficacy for Self-regulation in Academic Writing Subscales

Variable	Mean	Sd Deviation	Max Adjusted Mean Percentage	Min Adjusted Mean Percentage	Interpretation	
Forethought	17.83	3.002	82.42	49.06	Very High	Mid
Performance	26.54	3.901	79.42	53.85	High	Mid
Self-reflection	21.33	3.171	82.55	53.15	Very high	Mid

Note: **0-20=Very Low, 21-40=Low, 41-60= Mid, 61-80=High, 81-100= Very High.**

The interpretation of the maximum and minimum adjusted mean percentages and

standard deviations suggests considerable variability among the students' forethought process,

perceived performance, and self-reflection. Even though the scores showed little dispersion in

comparison to their answers to this questionnaire, a lineal regression analysis will determine if

there is a relation between these variables and writing performance.

Literature showed that self-efficacy and metacognitive regulation were the strongest

predictors of writing performance. Therefore, to determine the influence of self-efficacy for

self-reflection on the academic writing of B2 EFL learners, Golombek et al.'s 2018 scale was

adapted to the context of the participants and the results were compared with overall writing

performance through a bivariate correlation analysis in IBM's SPSS. A breakdown of their

answers can be found in Appendix F. Table 7 presents the correlational analysis of self-

efficacy for self-regulation with overall writing performance.

Table 8.

Pearson Correlational Analysis of Self-Efficacy for Self-Reflection and Writing Performance

Correlational Analysis			
		Self-efficacy for self-regulation	Writing performance
Self-efficacy for self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.530**
	Sig. (bivariate)		.008
	N	24	24
Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	.530**	1
	Sig. (bivariate)	.008	
	N	24	24

Note. Extracted from SPSS

The relationships between self-efficacy, self-regulation, and writing performance are

not as strong as the relationships in the findings of authors like Hetthong and Teo (2012) and

Teng (2019), which ranged between 0.70 and 0.72. The value of Pearson's correlation between self-efficacy for self-reflection and overall writing performance in this investigation was .530, which suggests a moderate strength. However, the P-value of the significance level stands below .05 (.008), which suggests a confidence level of above 95%. Thus, there is a direct moderate significant relationship between self-efficacy for self-reflection and writing performance. A more detailed correlational analysis of the components of self-efficacy for self-regulation is shown in Tables 8, 9, and 10.

Table 9

Pearson Correlational Analysis of Forethought and Writing Performance

Correlational Analysis		Forethought	Writing performance
Forethought	Pearson Correlation	1	.479*
	Sig. (bivariate)		.018
	N	24	24
Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	.479*	1
	Sig. (bivariate)	.018	
	N	24	24

Note. Extracted from SPSS

Table 10.

Pearson Correlational Analysis of Performance and Writing Performance

Correlational Analysis		Performance	Writing performance
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.428*
	Sig. (bivariate)		.037
	N	24	24

Table 11 Continued

Correlational Analysis			
Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	.428*	1
	Sig. (bivariate)	.037	
	N	24	24

Note. Extracted from SPSS

Table 12.

Pearson Correlational Analysis of Self-Reflection and Writing Performance

Correlational Analysis		Self-reflection	Writing performance
Self-reflection	Pearson Correlation	1	.591**
	Sig. (bivariate)		.002
	N	24	24
Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	.591**	1
	Sig. (bivariate)	.002	
	N	24	24

Note. Extracted from SPSS

The three tables above show direct moderate but significant correlations with writing performance, but to varying extents. The results of the subscale of self-reflection exhibited the greatest level of strength and statistical significance (.591, .002). On the other hand, the performance exhibited the weakest level of strength and significance, with values of .428 and .037 respectively. Nevertheless, even if the later subscale exhibits the weakest relation, the value of .037 suggests a likelihood of 3.7% that the observed correlation is a result of random chance. Put simply, there is a high probability that the relationship between the variables is genuine. Moreover, the correlation between the variables implies that when the monitoring ability improves, there is a corresponding increase in writing performance. Ultimately, the

moderate correlation strength indicates that the connection between the variables is neither

particularly strong nor weak.

Lack of practice

In the extrinsic factors questionnaire (Appendix H) and during the teacher interview, it

was revealed that there is little emphasis on writing practice. However, because the teacher

noticed that the students were lacking a lot of basic knowledge, they implemented a lot of

grammar exercises from the book "Great Writing 1: Great Sentences for Great Paragraphs" by

K. S. Folse, A. Muchmore-Vokoun and E. V. Solomon (which serves as an introduction to

general but not academic writing) during the first three months of the course. In March

students started writing "journals" from this book, which represented their more significant

writing practice. By the time of the implementation of the instruments, they had only written

two. On a similar note, Ciftci. and Kocoglu (2012) conducted a study in which participants

were questioned regarding their English writing experiences. The participants reported

encountering difficulties in improving their writing skills and expressed the need for additional

practice.

Students reported observing and identifying nouns, adjectives, and punctuation

mistakes, identifying grammatical mistakes, learning the time tenses, answering activities of

the book units, answering a correct or incorrect quiz online about short sentences, and writing

journals. Some topics that were mentioned by the students were writing about their father,

their favorite pet, what they do in their free time, and their favorite time of year. The class

professor mentioned fewer activities, but they do correspond. They listed grammar reviewing,

instructing students to write journal entries from the book, and giving feedback on such

journals in front of the whole class.

The time that they spent on their assignments varied a lot, which is expected because every student is different. It ranged from 4 hours and 20 minutes to 30 minutes. However, most answers reported investing about an hour and a half on their assignments, with a mean of an hour and 54 minutes. Given that their level of writing proficiency at the start of the course was lower than expected, more time should be spent practicing their writing alongside their classes with the teacher reviewing grammar and other aspects of the written language.

Lack of feedback

Regardless of the specific teaching approach employed in writing classrooms, the value of feedback is consistently emphasized. Feedback holds a significant position within educational settings, acknowledged as a crucial element by scholars such as Hyland and Hyland (2006). Consequently, the necessity of providing meaningful and impactful feedback becomes apparent, as highlighted by Phuwichit (2016). The lack of meaningful feedback can limit the development of the language skills of students and, in the case of these participants, their writing performance.

The teacher interview suggested that there were obstacles preventing them from providing in-depth feedback, such as imparting many classes to many students and needing more time. Therefore, to tackle these limitations, the professor and some social service students made sure that students uploaded their tasks to teams. More detailed feedback was made in class on a single writing task projected on the whiteboard. Every week, they had a "journal" assignment, which occurred twice by the time of the instrument implementation. The student questionnaire suggested that they perceived, on average, little feedback and believed that receiving more feedback could be beneficial for them. Lastly, the consensus of the students was that they hadn't co-evaluated their classmates' writing in their current academic

writing course. However, several of them answered yes because of the teacher's practice of

providing feedback from one journal in the front of the classroom with the help of the

students.

Hypothesis of Action

One idea to improve the effectiveness of writing is to provide more specific feedback

to students based on the evaluation criteria, enabling them to understand the areas they need to

focus on for improvement. Providing additional resources, such as grammar guides or writing

handbooks, may be helpful to support students in their writing efforts outside of the classroom.

Another idea is to encourage students to practice writing regularly through in-class writing

assignments or homework. Regular writing practice can assist students in improving their

forethought and self-reflection skills. Finally, incorporating more peer review and feedback

opportunities can be a valuable learning experience. It exposes students to different writing

approaches and offers feedback from multiple perspectives, enabling them to identify areas for

improvement and gain new insights into their own writing style.

Chapter V Didactic Proposal

The current chapter describes the didactic proposal designed to address the most
common problems found in the academic writing of the participants and the intrinsic and
extrinsic influencing factors. Therefore, the aim of this proposal was to increase the amount of
practice of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 level EFL learners, provide them with more
personalized feedback on every aspect of writing, support the classes of the teacher with more
content that the students need to learn or reinforce, and through the practice of co-evaluating,
develop the self-regulating skills of the participants.

In Chapter I, the Research Background section reviewed various proposals aimed at
enhancing academic writing performance. Among the proposals, the use of online
collaborative writing platforms and peer feedback mechanisms were found to be the most
prevalent (Rahimi & Fathi, 2021; Fathi et al., 2020; Velasco & Mesa, 2019; Cifti & Kocoglu,
2012). Therefore, this research project decided to base its didactic proposal on the use of these
tools. Nonetheless, it is important to note that all the activities presented in this study were
solely devised by its author. Moreover, the specific online platform used for this project was
chosen for its convenience, as explained in detail later in this chapter.

Description

General self-efficacy for self-regulation of academic writing showed a significant
moderate correlation with writing performance, especially for the subscale of self-reflection.
Peer assessment in EFL writing classes offers several benefits, including increased
opportunities for writing practice and the development of self-regulating behaviors. Phuwichit
(2016) found that peer assessment led to a natural inclination toward self-assessment among
half of their participants. This phenomenon indicates that the encouragement to thoroughly

analyze, clarify, and effectively apply the assessment criteria contributes to the cultivation of

self-regulation skills. Therefore, peer feedback not only offers a greater quantity of writing

practice and personalized feedback but also encourages learners to become self-regulated

individuals, capable of critically evaluating their own work and engaging in meaningful

communication about their writing performance. Moreover, according to Khiat (2017), "the

practice of self-directed learning is important to adult students as it allows them to learn

effectively while juggling work, family and other commitments" (p.1).

The following didactic proposal consists of implementing the use of the Wiki

application of Microsoft Teams to facilitate peer-feedback on academic writing tasks. For the

participants of this study, this tool is particularly convenient because students are already

familiar with the interface of Microsoft Teams. The institution set up Microsoft Teams during

the pandemic for remote classes, and it is still used for communication between teachers and

students and for submitting assignments. To carry out this proposal, a new channel within the

class group was created and the Wiki tab was divided into two sections, which corresponded

to the two weeks of the implementation of this practice. Both sections have 29 pages with the

names of all the students enrolled in the course. The students can see everyone's pages and

comment on them by clicking the speech balloon icon. Appendix N shows the previously

described components.

Moreover, because of the less than adequate writing proficiency of the students in

every aspect of the rubric, language reviewing classes of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation,

etc. should not be left out to focus solely on practicing academic writing. On the contrary, the

proposal includes some materials to support the class professor with more content. The use of

the Wiki application will also increase writing practice and feedback. The students will submit

a first draft that they will then paste in the Wiki, where they will evaluate at least two classmates using specific criteria and edit their essay based on the comments they receive. The rubric they use to co-evaluate themselves and the practice of analyzing other essays will also serve the participants as a self-assessment tool to promote self-regulating behaviors.

Didactic Proposal

This section contains detailed information regarding the Didactic Proposal. It includes general information, which consists of the specific objectives of the teaching practice, the contents, the expected competencies to develop, the synchronous and asynchronous activities carried out through the proposal, the webography, and the instruments implemented to evaluate the participants' writing performance and development during the activity. The general objective of this didactic proposal is to improve academic writing performance by considering the most common problems students showed in their writing, and the influencing factors of lack of practice and feedback and their self-regulating behaviors. Figure 5 shows a summarized model of the didactic proposal presented below.

Title:	**"Online Peer-feedback on Academic Writing Using the Wiki Application of Microsoft Teams"**
Introduction	This proposal incorporates the use of the Wiki application of Microsoft Teams to facilitate peer feedback and collaboration among undergraduate EFL learners studying academic writing to improve their writing performance and their self-regulation by increasing the amount of writing practice and feedback they both give and receive without ignoring their need to learn or review more basic aspects of the written language.
Objectives	• To promote self-regulating behaviors that facilitate self- and peer-assessment as crucial abilities for students majoring in becoming EFL teachers of translators.

	• To increase the time that participants dedicate to academic writing practice. • To increase the quantity and quality of feedback participants receive on their writing practice. • To reinforce the language through the review of basic topics in English, such as grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and vocabulary, as well as to identify the basic structure of an academic essay. At the end of the course, students (participants) will be able to: ✓ Reinforce basic topics in English such as grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and vocabulary. ✓ Identify the basic structure of an academic essay. ✓ Use the principles explained in this course to write academic essays. ✓ Comprehend the main features of the course as well as the use of the Wiki application.
Activities	Students will: do the language reinforcement assignments. review the basic essay structure by themselves using the provided resources. write the essay drafts requested on Microsoft Teams. upload their drafts to the corresponding Microsoft Teams task and paste them into the Wiki. evaluate the drafts of two classmates using the checklist. will receive feedback through the Wiki and rewrite their draft to create a final version. upload the final versions of their short essays to the corresponding task in Microsoft Teams.
Content	**DESCRIPTION:** Enhancing language learning and writing performance among students can be achieved through formative assessment techniques. Formative assessment encompasses various activities, with feedback being a crucial component. According to Phuwichit (2016), students

can greatly benefit from receiving comprehensive feedback, which aids them in improving their learning methods and performance.

Additionally, peer assessment assists students in comprehending and evaluating their work against predetermined criteria. Incorporating collaborative writing into the learning process has demonstrated an increase in the amount of feedback students receive. It also enables students to engage in constructive dialogues about their writing, facilitating the revision process and ultimately improving the overall quality of their work. Using web-based applications further provides students with a range of tools and features that facilitate communication, collaboration, and ultimately enhance the efficiency of collaborative writing.

PROJECT CONTENTS

The following contents and objectives are going to be addressed using ICTs:

TOPICS	OBJECTIVES	ICTs	
Bassic Essay Structure	Students will identify the basic structure of an academic essay	PDF TikTok Video files	Autonomous work through a laptop, PC, or smartphone.
Academic Essay Writing (topic of the essay x2)	Students will practice the content seen in class or reviewed on their own.	Word/PDF Microsoft Teams	
Collaborative Writing Essay Discussions	Students will increase practice, amount of feedback, and self-regulating behaviors through a natural inclination toward self-assessment after	Microsoft Teams Wiki	

		reviewing their classmates' texts.			

Area/Standard	**AREA**	**STANDARD**
		• covers the requirements of the task
		• (A) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences, or stages
		• (GT) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate
	ENGLISH ACADEMIC WRITING	• clearly presents and highlights key features/bullet points, but could be more fully extended
		• logically organizes information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout
		• uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use
		• uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision
		• uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation
		• may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation
		• uses a variety of complex structures
		• produces frequent error-free sentences
		• has good control of grammar and punctuation, but may make a few errors

Sessions	**Basic Essay Structure Class (40 mins) and Quick tutorial on how to use the Wiki Tab (10 mins)** This activity starts with a face-to-face class about basic essay structure, which the teacher explains with original content from the

proposal. In Class Materials (Microsoft Teams), a handbook and two videos explaining basic essay structure are uploaded to reinforce the class explained by the teacher. The handbook includes a checklist to revise the essays and reference material about transition words. At the end of this session, the teacher will explain how to use the Wiki and the tasks students must submit.

Theory Session (Transition Words, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Verb Tenses)

A list of transition words categorized by function (e.g., cause-effect, contrast, addition, etc.) is presented on the board. Students are given an excerpt of a story generated with Gemini AI with blanks they must fill in with transition words in teams. Each group shares their section of the revised story with the class, highlighting the chosen transition words and explaining their reasoning. Next, they answer two short multiple-choice exercises individually (8). Students are given a transition word list inside the handbook that they can review outside of the class.

Several sentences with deliberate punctuation errors generated by Gemini AI are presented on the board. In teams, they discuss the possible correct punctuation marks. After the discussion, each team walks to the front of the classroom to write their answer for one sentence. After each sentence, the teacher discusses possible interpretations with different punctuation choices and reveals the intended meaning and correct punctuation usage. Students are given a pdf (5) with a lecture about the topic and a short quiz from https://www.merriam-webster.com/games/test-your-punctuation-skills .

Students are given a class on capitalization rules in English. After that, several examples with a blank at the beginning are displayed. In teams, they discuss the possible correct capitalization for each word. After the discussion, each team walks to the front to write their answer. Students are also given a pdf (3) they can review independently with a lecture about the topic and exercises from https://www.grammarbook.com/grammar_quiz/capitalization_1.asp.
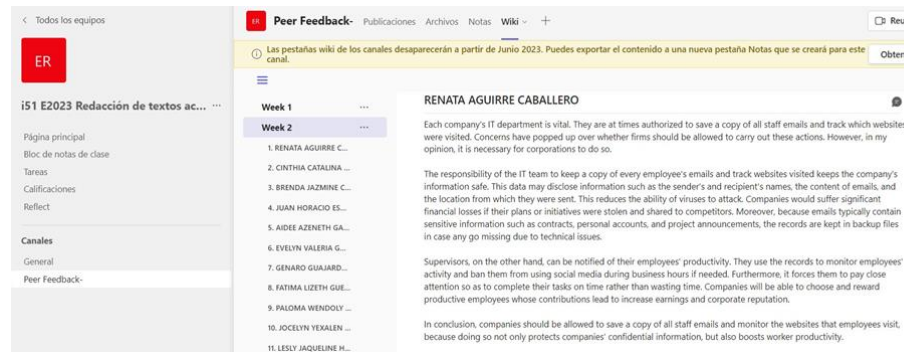
To tackle the problems with the verb tenses, which the class professor pointed out students had trouble with, at home, the participants should log into https://test-english.com/grammar-

points/b1-b2/review-verb-tenses-b1-b2/. This resource has the explanations for all the B1 and B2 verb conjugations and many exercises to practice. The participants should upload their results to a personal folder in Microsoft Teams after completing all the exercises.

Two Short Draft and Revised Essay Assignments on Teams using the Wiki Tab (Asynchronous throughout Two Weeks)

The activity is implemented twice on Microsoft Teams, starting right after the face-to-face class takes place. An assignment is created on a Monday to deliver on Thursday. This assignment consists of a first draft based on the writing task of a couple of IELTS practice tests. Students should upload their first draft before Thursday, paste in on the Wiki application, where they can see their classmates' essays, and give and receive feedback twice. Based on the feedback they receive; students revise their essay and upload it to another assignment which requests a final version for next week's Monday. This gives students 3 days (Friday to Monday) to deliver a final version.

Essays should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, be at least 300 words long, state and support a point of view on an issue, and reach B2 level standards of task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy. The essay of the first week asked about the students' opinion of the practice of some companies to block their employees from using social media networks, and the essay of the second week asked students whether they agreed or disagreed that companies should be permitted to save a copy of all staff worker's e-mails and monitor visited websites.

	If the students had any doubts, they could contact the teacher and the researcher through direct messages in Teams. The supporting materials were available 24/7 in the class folder of Class Materials.
Evaluation	Essays from the second week are evaluated using the same rubric from the pre-test. The students will receive these evaluations in terms of grammatical range and accuracy, task achievement, lexical resource, and coherence and cohesion. Evaluation during the practice is carried out by the students using the checklist. At the end of the activity, students answer a Google forms open-ended questionnaire to gather their experiences and opinions regarding the didactic proposal.
Webography/References and Materials	1)https://bcsmn.libguides.com/c.php?g=889348&p=6393249 2)https://youtu.be/WcGifxX5lUo 3)Straus, J. (2012). Capitalization Rules. The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation. http://www.grammarbook.com/punctuation/capital.asp 4)https://gemini.google.com/app 5)https://ssu.elearning.unipd.it/pluginfile.php/57216/mod_book/chapter/2015/Punctuation-in-English_Gesuato.pdf 6)https://www.grammarbook.com/grammar_quiz/capitalization_1.asp. https://www.mdc.edu/kendall/collegeprep/documents2/transitional%20words%20and%20phrasesrevised815.pdf 7)Great Writing 1: Great Sentences for Great Paragraphs" by K. S. Folse, A. Muchmore-Vokoun and E. V. Solomon 8)https://www.mdc.edu/kendall/collegeprep/documents2/transitional%20words%20and%20phrasesrevised815.pdf

Figure 5

Model of the Didactic Proposal
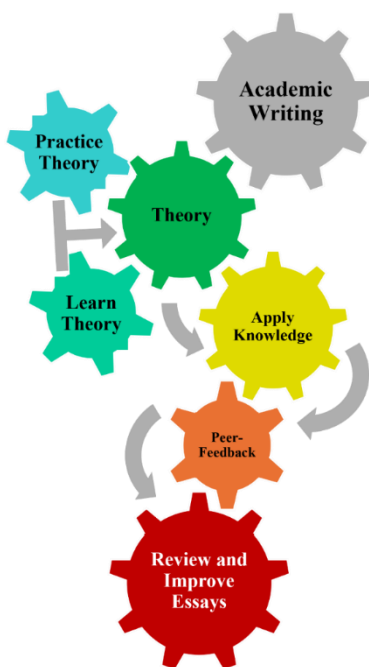
The theory includes the class and homework activities about basic essay structure, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and transition words. The yellow gear comprises the asynchronous self-directed activities through Microsoft Team, and the orange gear consists of the feedback given and received through the Wiki, which should improve their academic essays.

Evaluation of the Didactic Proposal

The didactic proposal implementation can be broken down into two main stages. The first stage was conducted face-to-face and consisted of theoretical learning and practical application. During the first session, the students were taught about the basic essay structure and introduced to Microsoft Teams' Wiki. However, it was observed that some students arrived late, causing a delay starting the class until 8:30 am. Despite this setback, the class professor quickly got things back on track and successfully delivered the session. As an

introduction, the teacher presented the basic essay structure from the Handbook on PDF, which was prepared beforehand. However, there were some disruptions caused by two groups that were engaged in off-topic conversations. The professor intervened and successfully re-directed their attention towards the lesson, which lasted for about 60 minutes of the four-hour class.

Next, the researcher teacher drew three large boxes on the board, labeling them as the introduction, body, and conclusion, respectively. The students were then paired in groups of four or five and given sticky notes of different colors. On these notes, they wrote down an essential element for each essay section based on the slide projected on the board. Two team representatives then placed their sticky notes in the corresponding box on the board. While this activity could have been smoother, with some students chatting at the back of the classroom, everyone eventually paid attention and completed the task.

Finally, the class professor reviewed the completed structure on the board, identifying the critical components of each essay section. Some sticky notes were in the wrong place, and some were missing, but the teacher explained the correct order and proceeded to project some examples of introductory, body, and conclusion paragraphs using the handbook. At the end of the session, the students were informed that they could review the topic independently by reading the handbook and watching the videos that were also prepared beforehand. They were also taught how to use the Wiki and advised to arrive early for the next class.

The second class was supposed to last longer, with about 50 minutes set aside for each topic. Since the class was four hours long, there was plenty of time to learn more about the topic. Given that the class period was four hours, there was ample time to delve deeper into the subject matter. Activities commenced at 8:00 am and concluded around 10:30. Despite

being classified as B2, the participants' English proficiency was found to be significantly

below expectations. As anticipated, based on prior observations, it soon became apparent that

the fundamental concepts needed to be revisited before tackling academic writing. The session

began with a categorized transition word list. The class was divided into teams and presented

with a story excerpt riddled with blanks. Their mission was to fill in the blanks with the right

transition words.

The participants lost some of their initial excitement, and some had trouble

understanding what was going on. Two groups in the back of the classroom became chatty,

momentarily disrupting the flow. Despite the facilitator's gentle redirection, it took an

additional ten minutes time to complete the activity. Each team then presented their revised

story segment, highlighting their choices and reasoning. Although some explanations were

more lucid than others, there was a sense of participation, even if a few faces still held a look

of confusion. We then moved on to individual multiple-choice exercises to solidify the

concept, which took longer than anticipated. The correct answers were displayed on the board

after everyone had finished.

The next step on the agenda was punctuation. The participants were presented with

deliberately mangled sentences on the board, and each team was tasked with discussing and

deciding on the correct punctuation. This activity sparked more debate and participation. Each

team sent a representative to the front of the classroom to write their answer on the board.

After each sentence, we discussed the potential meanings conveyed by different punctuation

choices. Revealing the intended punctuation and its impact on meaning seemed to click for

several participants. However, limited internet access prevented us from uploading resources

such as the planned lecture PDF.

Capitalization followed the same format. Despite pre-made examples and explanations of the topic by the class professor, some teams still struggled with basic capitalization rules like names of places and proper nouns. Again, the facilitator's calm intervention helped maintain order. The participants' participation was followed by revealing and discussing all the possible correct answers and how the sentences can change in meaning depending on the punctuation marks. Finally, the four online activities to do as homework were posted on the class's general channel on Microsoft Teams, including the topic of verb tenses, which the participants were supposed to review asynchronously. We instructed the participants to check the channel and upload screenshots of their results to their corresponding folders with their names by the time of the following session. Some participants completed only two or three quizzes, but most of them uploaded them all.

The second stage was asynchronous, and the students were in full control of their work and performance. Students had to hand in a draft and a revised essay about a different topic each week. The instruction for the essay of the first week was: *Some companies block their employees from using social media networks and websites such as Facebook. Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. Do you think managers should trust employees to use the internet wisely, or do you think it is smart of companies to block access to some sites? Provide reasons and examples to support your opinion.* And the second instruction was: *At some companies, the IT department saves a copy of all staff workers' e-mails, and monitors web sites visited on the internet. Do you agree or disagree that companies should be permitted to do this? Provide reasons or examples to support your opinion.* To improve their drafts, they had to paste their essay into the Wiki so other classmates would comment based on a checklist of requirements in the handbook.

To evaluate the progress of the students' writing performance, the final products of the

second week's activity were scored and compared with the pretest, using the same rating scale,

shown in Table 3. Moreover, the students' perceptions and opinions toward the

implementation of checklists and online peer feedback using Wiki for writing short academic

essays were gathered through an adaptation of the Know, Wonder, Learned (KWL) chart in

Google Forms, as shown in Appendix I. Raines (2018) claims that the KWL chart offers an

organized method for integrating one's existing knowledge, defining learning objectives, and

reflecting on fresh knowledge against prior knowledge. The KWL chart works as a method to

address the gap between theory and practice, which becomes particularly relevant in the

context of action research. Furthermore, Raines (2018) states that it promotes student

autonomy and a sense of responsibility for their own knowledge, which in turn directly relates

to the cultivation of self-regulation behaviors. The items used in this questionnaire are shown

in Table 12.

Table 13

Students' perceptions and opinions toward the implementation of checklists and online peer
feedback using Wiki for writing short academic essays

K	W	L	Further comments
What I already knew about academic writing in English before the course:	What I want to know about academic writing in English:	What I learned about academic writing in English in the course:	What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, a checklist, and the Wiki as a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?

Note. Adaptation of the KWL chart.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Second Week's Essay Scores

   The final drafts of the second week's activity were scored using the same rubric from

the writing task implemented as a diagnostic instrument by a single experienced professor

with a PhD in Applied Linguistics Analysis. Unlike the pretest evaluation process, finding a

second teacher willing to evaluate 27 short essays that resulted from the second activity was

impossible because it was such a time-consuming task. Nonetheless, because of this

professor's long teaching and research trajectory, the evaluation is highly likely to be very

accurate. Table 9 shows the scores of each essay and various means. Calculations were made

using Excel, including the formula DESVEST.M for the standard deviation of the final scores.

Table 14

Second week's essay scores

#	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Final Score (Mean)
1	5	5	6	6	5.5
2	6	5	5	5	5.25
3	4	4	4	5	4.25
4	4	3	4	5	4
5	5	3	4	4	4
6	3	3	3	3	3
7	5	5	5	5	5
8	2	2	3	3	**2.5**
9	3	3	3	3	3
10	5	4	4	4	4.25
11	5	5	5	5	5
12	5	4	3	4	4
13	5	5	3	4	4.25
14	5	5	5	5	5

Table 13 Continued

#	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Final Score (Mean)
15	4	3	4	3	3.5
16	4	4	4	3	3.75
17	3	4	3	4	3.5
18	3	5	4	5	4.25
19	3	4	3	4	3.5
20	6	5	5	6	5.5
21	6	6	6	6	6
22	5	5	5	4	4.75
23	5	4	4	3	4
24	5	5	5	5	5
25	6	4	5	5	5
26	6	6	6	6	**6**
27	4	4	3	4	3.75
Mean	4.52	4.26	4.22	4.41	4.35

Note. This table shows the participants' scores at the end of the proposal. The scoring system is as follows: 6, outstanding; 5, very good; 4, good; 3, adequate; 2, less than adequate; 1, poor; 0, no substantive response. The highest score was 6, and the lowest was 2.5.

The mean score of 4.35 indicates the average score of all the essays, which is closer to the higher end of the scoring range, suggesting that, on average, the students performed well on their essays. The computed standard deviation, which measures the spread or dispersion of the scores, was 0.9126. This suggests that the majority of the students' scores were relatively close to the average score of 4.35, and there was not a large amount of variability among the scores. The standard deviation of this activity is only slightly larger than the one from the pretest, which allows for a comparison between the mean scores of both tasks. The scores of this activity suggest an improvement from slightly below adequate (2.95) to slightly above good, showing a difference of 1.4 points. This improvement supports the use of the materials

and the tools implemented, which consisted of different presentations of a basic essay structure class, a basic academic essay checklist and wiki peer feedback.

Students' Perceptions and Opinions Toward the Implementation of the Didactic Proposal

The students' perceptions and opinions were gathered through an adaptation of a KWL chart in Google Forms, as shown in Appendix I. Despite daily reminders for a week, only 14 out of 28 participants completed the questionnaire. The answers are presented as a chart in Appendix J. To understand these responses more deeply, they were subjected to a coding and frequency analysis, which was then integrated with a narrative and thematic analysis. By integrating the quantitative and qualitative analyses, we can create a more nuanced picture that provides valuable insights into the students' perspectives, and informs the researcher about successful efforts and areas of improvement.

According to Riessman (2008), there are four approaches to narrative analysis, and the most common one is the narrative thematic analysis, which focuses on the content within the text. The narrative thematic analysis process was carried out in this part of the study through the six stages explained by Creswell (2014) in the section of data analysis and interpretation, which are as follows: (a) organize and prepare the data for analysis, (b) read through all the data to obtain a general sense of the information, (c) begin the coding process, (d) use the coding process to find categories or themes, (e) use a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis, and (f) make an interpretation or meaning of the data (p.172-176).

Student's responses to the first inquiry (What I already knew about academic writing in English before the course) revealed a spectrum of prior knowledge regarding academic writing in English. Some students claimed a basic understanding of structure and format, others recognized different writing styles and their purposes, and others admitted not having any

prior knowledge of the topics. A few responses highlighted the importance of grammar and

mechanics. The coding and frequency analysis yielded the results shown in Table 14.

Table 15

Coding and Frequency Analysis of students' answers to "What I already knew about

academic writing in English before the course"

Code	Description	Frequency
S	Basic Essay Structure (Introduction, Body, Conclusion)	5
T	Types of Writing	3
G	Grammar and Mechanics	2
F	Formal Language	1
C	Connectors	1
L	Limited Knowledge	2
B	Basics (unspecified)	2
O	No prior knowledge	1

The narrative analysis showed a range of prior knowledge regarding academic writing

in English and was organized by codes. (S) Five students demonstrated awareness of the basic

essay structure (introduction, body, conclusion). This suggests some prior exposure to essay

writing formats. (T) Three students mentioned knowing about different writing styles

(descriptive, analytical, persuasive, critical). This indicates some understanding of the variety

of academic writing. (G) Two students highlighted the importance of grammar and mechanics,

which implies a focus on the technical aspects of writing. (F) One student specifically

mentioned formal language, showing awareness of the appropriate tone for academic writing.

(C) One student focused on the importance of connectors for smooth reading flow. (L) Two

responses indicated minimal existing knowledge of academic writing in English. (B) Two

students vaguely mentioned knowing the "basics" but did not elaborate. And finally, (O) one

response stated having almost no prior knowledge of academic writing.

Based on the thematic analysis, two key themes emerged. The first is Structural

Awareness, which was exhibited by five out of the 14 students. These students demonstrated

some understanding of the basic structure of an essay. The second theme is Varied Levels of

Knowledge, which was shown in the remaining responses. The spectrum of prior knowledge

among the students was quite diverse. Some mentioned specific aspects like writing styles,

grammar, or formal language, while others acknowledged limited knowledge or a lack thereof.

Finally, through the integration of the coding, narrative and thematic analyses, a deeper

understanding can be constructed. While a majority (5) displayed basic structural awareness

(code S), the narrative analysis reveals that their understanding might be limited to

introductory concepts. The existence of responses mentioning specific aspects like types of

writing (T), grammar (G), or formal language (F) suggests some students started with a more

developed foundation. The limited knowledge responses (B, L, O) highlight the need for the

course to cater to students with varying levels of prior experience.

In the second question (What I want to know in the future about academic writing in

English), the student responses reveal a diverse range of learning needs. Some students seek

practical research and writing strategies, while others want to deepen their understanding of

specific writing styles. Grammar improvement remains a key concern. Interestingly, a few

students expressed a desire to explore writing beyond essays (descriptive/narrative text) or

translation skills. The latter due to their career as future English teachers or translators. Table

15 shows the coding and the frequency analysis of this inquiry.

Table 16

Coding and Frequency Analysis of students' answers to "What I want to know in the future

about academic writing in English"

Code	Description	Frequency
R	Research Skills & Source Evaluation	2
F	Formal Academic Writing	1
P	Persuasive Writing	2
G	Grammar Improvement	1
S	Text Structure & Vocabulary	1
E	Easy Essay Writing	1
L	Lengthy Writing	1
TY	Types of Essays (other than persuasive)	1
D	Developing Essays	1
X	Everything	2
C	Coherence & Structure	
W	Writing Improvement (general)	1
T	Translation Skills	1

The student responses revealed a diverse range of learning needs regarding academic

writing, such as research skills and source evaluation (R), in which two students expressed a

desire to learn how to find information faster and identify reliable sources, which suggests a

need for guidance on research strategies and critical evaluation skills. Likewise, one student

specifically requested learning about formal writing (F), indicating a desire for a deeper

understanding of appropriate style and conventions. Two students showed interest in

improving their persuasive writing skills (P). This suggests a focus on argumentation and

developing strong persuasive techniques. One student highlighted the need for grammar

improvement (G). And similarly, another student expressed a desire to learn about the

structure and vocabulary, specific to different text types (S).

Additionally, one student requested an easier approach to essay writing, potentially

reflecting challenges with the language or the writing process (E), and that the guidelines

(checklist) and support materials (handbook, videos, and pdfs) may have been still too

complex or unclear for some students. Another student wanted to learn how to write longer

and more substantial pieces (L). One response indicated a desire to learn more about essay

types beyond persuasive writing (TY). One student sought general tips to improve their essays

(D). One response focused on developing writing coherence and structure (C). Another one

mentioned wanting to improve translation skills alongside writing skills (T). Finally, one

student desired overall writing improvement (W), and another two broadly expressed a desire

to learn about everything they could about academic writing (X).

During the thematic analysis of the feedback provided by students, two key themes

were identified, specific skill development and overall improvement. Firstly, many students

expressed a desire to develop specific academic writing skills such as research (R), persuasive

writing (P), grammar (G), understanding text structures (S), and writing longer pieces (L).

Secondly, several students sought broader knowledge and improvement in various aspects of

academic writing (X, W, D).

By merging the prior analyses, it can be concluded that while some students have

specific areas of improvement, such as research or persuasive writing, the overall desire for

"everything" or general improvement suggests a need for a comprehensive approach to

academic writing instruction. The focus on developing essays and writing skills can be

addressed through targeted instruction on structure, argumentation, and effective use of

language.

Answers from the third inquiry (What I learned about academic writing in English in

the course) suggest that most students gained a deeper understanding of different essay types

and their structures. Several highlight the importance of organization, proper citation usage

and grammar skills (Student J). One student recognized the broader applicability of academic

writing beyond school. It is also interesting to see a student value peer feedback and word

connectors (Student L). Table 16 shows the coding and the frequency of these responses.

Table 17

Coding and Frequency Analysis of students' answers to "What I learned about academic

writing in English in the course"

Code	Description	Frequency
O	Organization & Completion	1
S	Structure & Variation	3
T	Types of Writing	5
G	Basic Grammar	1
C	Comparative Contrast	1
X	Applicability Beyond School (Spanish)	1
Ci	Citation Usage (Spanish)	1
P	Paragraph Writing	1
WC	Word Connectors	1
F	Feedback (Peer)	1

The students' answers reveal a range of learning outcomes from the academic writing

course, which includes organization and completion of essays (O), types of texts (T, C),

paragraph writing (P), basic grammar (G), and word connectors (WC). Furthermore, three

students mentioned learning the proper structure of academic writing and its variations (S),

one response highlighted learning about proper citation usage (Ci), another one mentioned

learning through peer feedback (F), and one student focused on the broader applicability of

academic writing (X).

Two main themes can derive from the thematic analysis: a) Structure and Organization:

Many students (O, S, T, P) gained a foundational understanding of academic writing structure,

essay types, and organization. Several Spanish responses (T, Ci, P) highlight a focus on

specific aspects like citations and paragraph writing. B) Beyond the Basics: A few students

went beyond basic knowledge by learning about comparison and contrast writing (C) and

appreciating the broader applications of academic writing (X). and the value of peer feedback

(F).

To conclude, while a majority learned about structure, organization, and essay types

(O, S, T), the mention of "basic rules" (G) suggests some students might need further

reinforcement on grammar. The Spanish responses (Ci, P) highlight potential areas for focused

instruction on citations and paragraph writing and learning specific skills like comparative

contrast writing (C) or recognizing the broader applicability of academic writing (X) indicates

a well-rounded learning experience for some students that derived from the regular lessons of

the class professor as well.

Finally, for the question, "What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, a

checklist and the Wiki as a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?",

possibly because of the reduced number of answers, there were no negative opinions towards

the use of wiki and the materials provided. Overall, students highlighted the utility of this tool

to increase practice and some of them liked the idea of receiving comments from their

classmates. Table 17 shows the coding frequencies of the responses to this question.

Table 18

Coding and Frequency Analysis of "What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, a

checklist and the Wiki as a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?"

Code	Description	Frequency
R	Reinforcement of Knowledge	2
I	Improvement of Skills	3
C	Complementation of Information	1
S	Security in Writing	1
F	Feedback and Collaboration	2
P	Practicality and Didactics	2
M	Modernity	1
E	Ease of Use	1
U	Usefulness	1
A	Enriching Weekly Use	1
N	Order and Feedback	1
O	Neutral answer	1
G	Good and Necessary	1
B	Support for Writing	1

The student responses reveal positive opinions towards the use of a handbook,

checklist, and Wiki as teaching strategies for strengthening academic writing skills. While a

student expressed a neutral opinion, two students highlighted how these tools reinforce

existing knowledge (R) and another two, the value of feedback and collaboration through

these tools (F). Three students emphasized they could improve their writing skills through

these strategies (I), and two responses emphasized their practical and didactic nature (P). One

student mentioned that these resources complement information from their regular classes (C).

On a similar note, one response noted that they provide a sense of security and

confidence in writing (S). One student stated that these tools provide valuable support for

writing (B), another one, that they were good and necessary (G), and another student simply

stated that they found these tools useful (U). Likewise, one response appreciated the

organization and feedback these tools provide (N), One student described these tools as a

modern approach to teaching (M), another one mentioned the ease of using these tools (E),

and finally, one response liked using these tools weekly and highlighted the importance of

continuing to update the courses (A).

The thematic analysis yielded two main themes: a) Perceived Benefits: Students

overwhelmingly expressed positive views on the benefits of these teaching strategies,

including reinforcing knowledge (R), improving skills (I), providing security (S), and

facilitating feedback and collaboration (F). b) Practicality and Modernity: Several students (P,

M, E) highlighted the practical and easy-to-use nature of these tools, while others (A, N)

appreciated their modern approach to teaching and the opportunity for regular updates.

To conclude, after analyzing the participants' replies to the third question regarding the

use of a handbook, a checklist, and a Wiki as pedagogical approaches to augment academic

writing proficiency, there seems to be a clear consensus on the perceived benefits of these

strategies (R, I, S, F). Student A, for example conveys a positive attitude, seeing these

instruments as ideal for reinforcing pre-existing information. Student B underscores the

efficacy of using the Wiki as a very effective pedagogical approach, particularly emphasizing

its capacity to facilitate self-directed learning, enhance skill development, and provide

valuable feedback. Furthermore, the commendation extends to using checklists and handbooks

in conjunction with the Wiki. Another comment highlights the significance of using these

tools to supplement and reinforce studied material.

Several participants saw the tactics as advantageous in developing a more robust

understanding of their writing, providing feedback, and improving the overall quality of their

work. The inclusion of forums, practicality, didacticism, and modernism reinforces these

instructional resources' favorable image. Certain participants express their positive perception

of the user-friendliness aspect, but others place more emphasis on the need of structure and

receiving feedback. One answer highlights the usefulness of these tools for shorter projects,

since they effectively alleviate the tedium associated with writing. In general, the analysis of

the students' opinions towards the didactic proposal demonstrates a prevailing inclination

towards using a handbook, a checklist, and a Wiki, placing significant importance on their

practicality, efficiency, and potential for ongoing enhancement of academic writing abilities.

Chapter VI Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive summary of the main points established throughout the study, highlighting the objectives, the approach taken to achieve them, and the extent to which they were successfully met. The research problem of this study highlighted the struggle of undergraduate EFL learners in their fifth semester in producing foreign language writing in their academic writing courses. The first objective aimed to identify the most common types of mistakes in the participants' academic EFL writing, and the second objective pretended to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that could influence their performance. Finally, this research also aimed to implement a didactic proposal to improve the participants' writing performance. Additionally, the conclusion will offer suggestions for further investigation, emphasizing the importance of building upon existing knowledge and exploring new directions in the field.

Overall, the extent to which the objectives were met was successful. The pre-test found that the students showed problems in every aspect of their academic writing. The instruments also supported the observations, which revealed a need for writing practice and thorough feedback on their texts, as well as a need for more opportunities to develop their evaluation and self-evaluation skills. Moreover, the intrinsic factor of self-efficacy for self-reflection showed a moderate but significant correlation to writing performance. This didactic proposal addressed the factors that influenced the overall writing proficiency of fifth-semester undergraduate EFL learners. Finally, after the implementation of the didactic proposal to improve writing performance, the students' scores improved by 1.4 points, and their overall

opinions and perceptions were positive. With this improvement, the students achieved the
acceptable threshold of the rubric.

The diagnostic instruments helped to answer the first and the second research
objectives. They comprised a pre-test, two student questionnaires, and a teacher interview. To
answer the first research question and identify the most common mistakes that fifth-semester
undergraduate B2 EFL learners show in their academic writing performance, a writing test
based on TOEIC protocols was administered and evaluated using Cooper's Classification of
Writing Rating Scale, which addressed the subskills of task achievement, coherence and
cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy. The essays of the twenty-four
students who were present during the implementation of the instruments were scored by two
evaluators. Both evaluations were merged using the median value to get a single, more reliable
score for every student and the group as a whole.

The results of this study shed light on the significant challenges faced by
undergraduate EFL learners in their fifth semester in producing foreign language writing in
their academic writing course. These challenges were evident in all aspects of their academic
writing, particularly in terms of grammatical range and accuracy, which fell significantly
below the expected level of proficiency. The study's findings suggest that these students
required more opportunities to develop their evaluation and self-evaluation skills, as well as
more practice and thorough feedback on their texts. The study also identified intrinsic and
extrinsic factors that could influence the participants' performance, with self-efficacy for self-
reflection showing a moderate but significant correlation to writing performance. This finding
suggests that developing students' self-regulating behaviors could be a crucial factor in

improving their writing performance. Thus, these factors were considered to design the

didactic proposal.

To further improve the depth of understanding and gather more information regarding

the academic writing performance of the participants, the first question of the teacher

interview (What are the most common mistakes found in the students' academic writing?) was

concerned with understanding the class professor's point of view pertaining to the challenges

his students confronted in writing. The teacher commented that they identified significant

opportunities for growth in the areas of cohesion among tenses, irregular verbs in the past

tense, countable and uncountable nouns, grammar, and coherence. This response aligned with

the writing task scores and offered more precise representations of the problematic aspects as

well.

Therefore, in summary, the answer to the first research question (What are the most

common types of mistakes that fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners show in their

foreign language writing performance?) indicates that the participants had substantial issues

regarding their academic writing in the areas of task achievement, coherence and cohesion,

lexical resource, and especially grammatical range and accuracy, which included several

topics that required special attention.

The second research question was answered using three different instruments. The

factors that were considered to be identified were self-efficacy, self-regulation, lack of writing

practice, and lack of thorough feedback. Two questionnaires were administered to answer the

second research question and determine the factors that influence the writing performance of

fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL learners. The first questionnaire addressed the need for

more practice and the lack of feedback received. A teacher interview confirmed the findings of

this questionnaire. The second one consisted of a self-efficacy for self-regulation scale, which

showed a direct and moderate significant relationship. The factors that were found to be

related to the participants' writing performance were lack of practice, lack of feedback, and

self-regulation.

The results of these instruments had significant implications for the participants, as

they shed light on the factors that influence their writing performance. The findings suggested

that lack of practice and feedback were the key factors contributing to poor writing

performance among the participants. This highlighted the need for instruction to provide more

opportunities for writing practice and to offer thorough feedback on student writing.

Moreover, because the importance of self-efficacy and self-regulation in academic writing

became apparent in the background research, the present study also decided to address these

constructs. While the relationships between these factors and writing performance were less

strong than in previous studies, a direct moderate significant relationship with a confidence

level above 95% was still found between self-efficacy for self-reflection and writing

performance. Therefore, developing students' self-regulating behaviors was crucial to improve

their writing performance.

In conclusion, the second objective of this study was to identify the factors that

influence the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate students in B2 EFL, and the

diagnostic instruments found that the factors of lack of practice, feedback, and self-regulation

were, in fact, related to writing performance. Overall, these results provide valuable insights

into the factors that influence the writing performance of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 EFL

learners. By addressing the identified factors of lack of practice, lack of feedback, and self-

regulation, it was hypothesized that a formative assessment in the form of peer feedback or

collaborative writing instruction, self-efficacy, and self-regulation could help students

understand the feedback they receive from their teachers and peers, set goals for improvement,

and monitor their progress over time, thus enhancing their writing performance.

Given that this research was carried out within the framework of action research, the

first two objectives were focused on identifying the problem, and the last objective was

directed towards the design and implementation of a didactic proposal to solve the issue. This

proposal was roughly based on the strategies implemented by Phuwichit (2016), Rahimi and

Fathi (2021), Fathi et al. (2020), Velasco and Meza (2019), and Cifti and Kocoglu (2012), and

followed the active learning method of peer review, as it incorporates the use of the Wiki

application of Microsoft Teams to facilitate peer feedback and collaboration among

undergraduate EFL learners studying academic writing to improve their writing performance

and self-regulation. The platform differed from the authors' implementations for simplicity and

practicality since the participants were already familiar with it. This strategy increases the

amount of writing practice and feedback they give and receive.

The didactic proposal also pretended to meet their need to learn and review more

fundamental aspects of the written language by incorporating topics like punctuation,

capitalization, and basic essay structure, which were taught in class with materials they could

review on their own. Moreover, students had to practice the topics seen in class with the

corresponding links to online quizzes. After two sessions to strengthen the language level with

theory, an assignment was created on a Monday to deliver on Thursday. This assignment

consisted of a first draft based on the writing task of an IELTS practice test. Students uploaded

their first draft before Thursday, pasted it on the Wiki application, where they could see their

classmates' essays, and give and receive feedback twice. Based on the feedback they received,

students revised their essay and uploaded it to another assignment which requested a final

version for next week's Monday. This gave the student three days (Friday to Monday) to

deliver a final version. This activity was conducted twice.

The didactic proposal was supported by the results of the diagnostic instruments, which

suggested increasing the amount of practice of fifth-semester undergraduate B2 level EFL

learners, providing them with more personalized feedback, supporting the classes of the

teacher with more content that the students need to learn or reinforce, and develop self-

regulating skills through the practice of co-evaluating. An experienced professor evaluated the

essay scores for the second week of the Wiki activity to assess the participants' writing

performance improvement. The mean score of 4.35 indicates an improvement from slightly

below adequate (2.104) to slightly above good. The students received their scores on the four

different aspects that they were evaluated. Finally, the participants' perceptions and opinions

were generally positive towards the use of a handbook, checklist, and wiki as a teaching

strategy to strengthen their academic writing skills. However, students did not thoroughly

follow the checklist when giving feedback to their classmates.

To conclude, limitations of the study included time constraints to implement and

evaluate a post-test or pre-task with the same or similar conditions as the last activity and the

possibility that the improvement in writing proficiency came more from the students

regulating their own performance with the materials provided or with internet resources than

from peer feedback. Furthermore, to fix the issues with succinct peer feedback, teacher

feedback could represent an appropriate addition to the dynamic, as studied by Phuwichit

(2016). Additionally, it would be valuable to investigate the impact of utilizing recent AI-

powered writing assistants to enhance the effectiveness of teaching strategies and improve

students' writing skills. Building upon the findings of this study, further investigation could be done to explore the effectiveness of introducing more complex academic writing structures and styles to students using similar teaching strategies.

Limitations and Recommendations

Academic writing is an essential skill for students to succeed in their academic and professional endeavors. With the advent of AI-powered writing assistants and software, teachers can incorporate these tools and resources to enhance the effectiveness of academic writing instruction. However, new challenges arise, and using such tools also raises concerns about academic integrity and the potential for students to rely on AI to write their essays. This section discusses the limitations of the study's didactic proposal for teaching academic writing to adult EFL learners and explores ways in which AI-powered tools and resources can be integrated into the classroom to improve students' writing skills while maintaining academic integrity. Furthermore, the article proposes a new model for a didactic proposal that incorporates elements that consider AI's advantages and disadvantages.

A more accurate comparison could have resulted from a post-test or from a pre-task with the same or similar conditions as the activity, such as a homework assignment. Unfortunately, neither option was viable because of time constraints to implement a post-test and a possible low response in the case of requesting a pre-essay homework assignment. Another limitation was that the teachers who evaluated the pre-test could not score the assignments, so a different teacher was requested. Moreover, regardless of the average improvement in the classroom's writing proficiency, most students did not follow the checklist carefully or thoroughly when giving feedback to their classmates. This anomaly could suggest

that the improvement derived to a greater extent from the students regulating their own

performance with the materials provided or with internet resources than from peer feedback.

However, because this didactic proposal was implemented right before AI tools of

public access, such as ChatGPT and Bard, became popular, students taking Academic Writing

classes today would face very different circumstances, along with advantages and

disadvantages for the teacher. There is a wide variety of AI-powered tools and resources that

can be used to teach academic writing to students effectively. Teachers can incorporate AI-

powered writing assistants and software that can help students with grammar, spelling, and

syntax errors, as well as provide suggestions for stronger word choice and sentence structure.

Additionally, teachers can use AI-powered tools to evaluate students' essays and provide

detailed feedback on areas they need to improve. This can help students to better understand

the strengths and weaknesses of their writing and to identify specific areas where they need to

focus their efforts. Overall, the use of AI-powered tools and resources can help enhance the

effectiveness of academic writing instruction and provide students with the skills and

knowledge they need to succeed in their academic and professional endeavors.

On the other hand, without the necessary precautions, students could also rely on AI to

write their essays. Teachers might need to use plagiarism-detection tools to identify any

instances of academic dishonesty, including using AI-generated content. Or rely on in-class

assignments without the Internet, which could seem like turning back in time a few decades.

Ultimately, the key to preventing students from relying on AI to write their essays is to foster a

culture of academic integrity and emphasize the importance of original thought and critical

thinking in academic writing. First, teachers can emphasize the importance of critical thinking

and the value of original thought. Another approach is to assign topics that require students to

apply their own unique perspectives. This can help discourage students from relying on AI-generated content. Nonetheless, the real impact of AI on academic writing classes is beyond the scope of this study.

Based on these limitations derived from the results of the implemented didactic proposal, a second cycle of the action research process could benefit from incorporating other activities as well. The succinct comments from students in their classmates' essays were rather underwhelming and mostly uninspired. Therefore Phuwichit's (2016) proposal of teacher feedback on student feedback is appropriate and advisable. Figure 6 shows the new model for a didactic proposal which incorporates elements that consider AI's advantages and disadvantages mentioned above. Teacher feedback on peer feedback enriches the input that the participants receive to improve their writing. AI provides extra tools to revise writing drafts and identify mistakes. However, it also poses the possible disadvantage of students using it to write their essays fully. This is why a writing practice and a posttest inside the classroom with a time limit is necessary to override that possibility.

Another recommendation for peer-feedback is in-class proofreading. After in-class writing practice, students can exchange papers. Moreover, a valuable addition to this activity would be to incorporate more bullet points to the checklist to include more specific lexical resource and grammar aspects, such as the use of transition words and a formal register, correct punctuation, capitalization, verb conjugation, etc. Furthermore, as far as the evaluation of the didactic proposal is concerned, it is worth pointing out that the answers to the last question were short and some of them did not address all the components of the proposal. Hence, it would seem appropriate to modify the assessment tool by incorporating a distinct question for each component of the proposal. A revised proposal for an evaluation instrument

that can be used as a point of reference for a potential future assessment tool is shown in

Appendix M. Finally, a revised 3-phase lesson plan for potential future implementation is

shown in Appendix O.

Figure 6

Revised Model of the Didactic Proposal
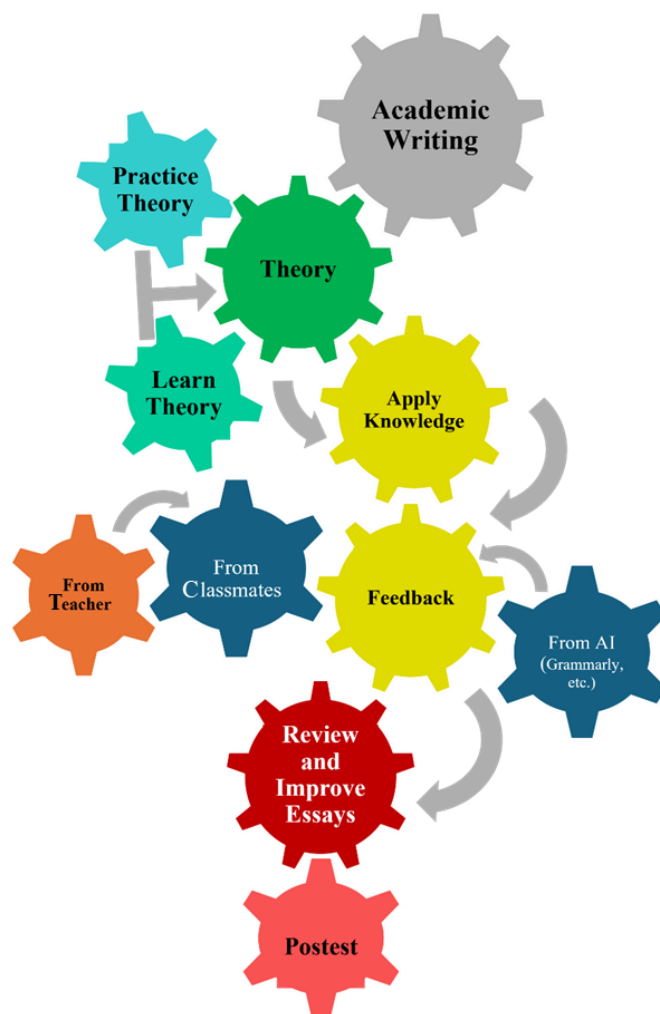
Perspectives

Improving the academic writing skills of EFL learners is an important topic in the field

of foreign language acquisition. Sharing the results of this study with the institution and

various language teaching schools could be valuable. These schools may utilize the diagnostic

instrument's results and the suggested activities to update their syllabuses and lesson plans,

and make adjustments if necessary. Moreover, it provides a foundation for future research

focused on developing pedagogical approaches to address the specific needs of this

population. In this section, some possible new approaches and directions for this research will

be explored, as well as some key considerations that should be considered in future studies.

One potential direction for future research is to investigate the effectiveness of the

didactic proposal on a larger sample size or with students at different proficiency levels.

Though the present study showed promising results, it was limited to a small sample size of

fifth-semester undergraduate EFL learners. To expand the generalizability of the findings,

future research could include a larger and more diverse sample population, such as learners at

different proficiency levels or from different ages or schools. This could help identify the

factors that influence the effectiveness of the didactic proposal and provide insights into how it

could be adapted to better meet the specific needs of different learner populations.

Another possible area of study could be to explore the impact of technology on EFL

writing performance. The didactic proposal could be adapted to incorporate technology-based

tools and resources, such as online writing platforms, automated feedback systems, and AI

tools. This could potentially enhance the students' motivation and engagement with the writing

process and provide them with more opportunities for meaningful practice and feedback.

Future research could explore the specific benefits and challenges of using AI technology in

EFL writing instruction and provide insights into how it could be integrated effectively into

the classroom.

To conduct further research in this area, it is important to consider the limitations of the

present study. For example, while the didactic proposal showed promising results, it was

developed based on the specific needs and challenges of fifth semester students majoring in

Applied Linguistics at a public university. To adapt it for use with other populations in

professional or academic settings, modifications must be made to account for the target

population's communicative purposes. Nonetheless, the didactic proposal could serve as a

model for developing similar interventions in other language-learning contexts.

Future research could explore how the didactic proposal could be modified to meet the

needs of different learner populations and provide insights into how it could be adapted to

address different language learning contexts. In addition to addressing the specific needs of

EFL learners, the present study could also be useful to other populations, such as teachers and

language program administrators. The findings of the study could provide insights into the

factors that influence EFL writing performance and offer guidance on how to develop

effective pedagogical approaches to address these factors.

In conclusion, the present study provides a contribution to the field of EFL writing

instruction and offers a starting point for further exploration and refinement of pedagogical

approaches to improve learners' writing performance. Future research could build on the

findings of the present study and explore new directions and approaches to address the specific

needs of different learner populations and language learning contexts. By continuing to

develop effective pedagogical approaches, we can help EFL learners achieve greater success

in their academic and professional endeavors.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Formats of the diagnostic instruments (final versions).

Writing Test

Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

DIVISIÓN DE POSGRADO

MAESTRÍA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACADEMIC WRITING PERFORMANCE

ACADEMIC WRITING TEST

Researcher: Andrea López Martínez

The purpose of this test is to determine the academic writing performance of the students as a group. It will not have any repercussions on the student's grades in the course.

Directions: In this part of the test, you will write an essay in response to a question that asks you to state, explain, and support your opinion on an issue. Your response will be scored on whether your opinion is supported with reasons and/or examples, grammar, vocabulary, and organization.

Read the question below. Typically, an effective response will contain a minimum of 300 words.

Question: There are many ways to find a job: newspaper advertisements, Internet job search websites, and personal recommendations. *What do you think is the best way to find a job?* Give reasons or examples to support your opinion.

Estimated time: 30 mins.

Thank you for your time.

Student Self-efficacy for Self-regulation questionnaire

Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFIA Y LETRAS

DIVISIÓN DE POSGRADO

MAESTRIA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACADEMIC WRITING PERFORMANCE

STUDENT SURVEY

Researcher: Andrea López Martínez

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out more about the factors that may be influencing the students' writing in this semester's Academic Writing course.

Permission agreement:

Dear student:

This instrument is part of an action research study that aims to prepare a didactic proposal that will enhance the experience of the Academic Writing course for undergraduate Applied Linguistics students, considering the current writing proficiency of the students and the factors that may be influencing it. I would like to request your assistance in answering a few questions that will not consume a great deal of your time. Your responses will be kept strictly private and Anonymous. For further questions, please contact the researcher through e-mail: *a.lopez0797@gmail.com.*

☐ I consent to take part in this research.

☐ I don't consent to take part in this research.

Instructions: Use a pencil or a black or blue ink pen to fill out the following questionnaire. Mark (x) the answer with which you identify best. The questions are regarding your academic writing course in the current semester. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember, you cannot mark two options. If you cannot answer a question or it is confusing to you, please ask the person who handed you the questionnaire.

Estimated time: 20 mins.

#	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Forethought					
1	I can set myself specific writing goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I can organize my ideas even when I work on a complex topic.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I can motivate myself to start writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I can solve problems that occur during writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I can develop an interest in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I can easily find ways to increase my interest in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performance					
7	I can monitor myself while writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I can concentrate on writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I can use my time for writing effectively.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I can organize my time so that I can concentrate while working on my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	I can organize my workplace so that I am not disturbed while writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	I can change my writing strategy if I recognize that I am not successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	I can monitor my progress in writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I can work persistently on my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	I can overcome a writer's block and continue writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-reflection					
16	I can realistically assess the quality of my text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	I can meet the criteria for text quality I set myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	I can achieve the sub-goals I set myself when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐

19	I can realistically assess my progress when writing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	I can avoid repeating an error.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	I can use my experience to improve my writing strategies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	I can judge what I have to do differently next time.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for sharing your experiences with us.

Student's extrinsic factors questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR ACADEMIC WRITING CLASS (Redacción de Textos Académicos) ONLY

Instructions: Mark (x) the answer with which you identify best.

How much feedback from the teacher of the course "Redacción de Textos Académicos" do you receive on average on every assignment?	None: _____ A little: _____ Some: _____ A lot: _____
Do you think receiving more feedback on your writing assignments could be beneficial for you?	Yes: _____ No: _____
Have you ever co-evaluated your classmates' writing in this course?	Yes: _____ No: _____

Instructions: Fill in the blanks with your response. Use a pencil or a black or blue ink pen to fill out the following questions.

How many essay tasks a month are you, on average, assigned to do in the course of Redacción de Textos Académicos?	#_____
How much time, on average, do you spend on every assignment of the course "Redacción de Textos Académicos"?	_____ hrs; _____ mins

Instructions: Write your response in the blank space. Use a pencil or a black or blue ink pen to fill out the following questions.

Please briefly mention some writing tasks you have done for the course of "Redacción de Textos Académicos".	

Thank you for sharing your experiences with us

Teacher interview

Teacher Interview

The main purpose of conducting a short interview with the class teacher is to triangulate some of the information provided by the students in the questionnaire that they answered. The following questions are to be used during the interview:

1. What are the most common mistakes found in the students' academic writing?

2. What kind of writing tasks have been assigned to the students?

3. How is feedback provided to the students?

4. What obstacles have prevented you from providing in-depth feedback to the students?

5. How many essay tasks a month are assigned on average to the students?

Appendix B - Class observation

Request to the Coordination of Applied Linguistics

San Nicolás De Los Garza, N.L. México. Al 30 de enero del 2023

ASUNTO: SOLICITUD DE AUTORIZACIÓN PARA UNA OBSERVACIÓN DE CLASE

COORDINACIÓN DE CIENCIAS DE LENGUAJE
DR. DAN ISAI SERRATO SALAZAR PRESENTE

Tengo el gusto de presentarme ante usted como alumna de primer semestre en la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la UANL. Durante este periodo me encuentro en la identificación y definición del problema de estudio para el Producto Integrador de Aprendizaje (PIA) de esta maestría, el cual lleva por título *Instructional Strategies to Improve the Writing Performance of Undergraduate EFL Learners,* bajo el asesoramiento del Dr. Luis Antonio Balderas Ruiz.

Por medio de la presente solicito autorización para llevar a cabo tres observaciones de clase a nivel licenciatura a grupos de quinto semestre tomando el curso de Redacción de Textos Académicos con los siguientes profesores durante los siguientes horarios:
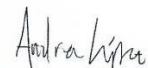
Turno matutino: Mtro. Mario Alberto Sepúlveda Rodríguez   -   Lunes M3 M4 M5 M6
Turno matutino: Dr. Francisco Javier Treviño Rodríguez   -   Viernes M2 M3 M4 M5

Esto con el fin de precisar la redacción de la problemática y recabar información previa al desarrollo del PIA. Realizar esta observación con los alumnos de la Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza y Traducción del Inglés es de vital importancia para esta primera fase de mi investigación- acción, ya que esta será la población con la cual se pretende efectuar la propuesta didáctica de la misma.

Sin más por el momento y en espera de una respuesta positiva, me despido.

Autorizado 13/10/22

Dr. Dan Isai Serrato Salazar

Lic. Andrea López Martínez
Tel. 81 12 55 94 75

COORDINACION DE
LINGÜISTICA APLICADA
A LA ENSEÑANZA Y TRADUCCION
DEL INGLÉS

Class Observation Teacher (Researchers)'s Diaries (2)

Feb 6th, 2023

Schedule: 7:40am -12 pm (Teacher arrived after 8:30am, class ended at 11:30 am)
Students: Supposed B2 proficiency, but language skills appeared weaker.

Observations:
Today is my 1st observation of a B2 AW class. Today's session was, to put it mildly, frustrating. I was confused at the beginning of the class. Instead of launching into writing strategies, he began a review of irregular verb conjugations and countable/uncountable nouns. As the class progressed, the students' struggles became apparent. Simple past tense questions were met with hesitant shrugs, and the distinction between "some" and "many" seemed a mystery. Moreover, the unreliable internet connection further hampered efforts to use online resources.
The advertised B2 level of the students seemed wildly inaccurate. The entire class was spent on a review of basic grammar: irregular verb conjugations and count/uncount nouns. The teacher, who will stay anonymous, arrived late. However my initial frustration of a late start and student disengagement did give way to some positive moments. The teacher, despite the unexpected need for basic grammar review, displayed a few effective strategies for the topics at hand.
The teacher seemed to have noticed some students having problems with conjugations in previous classes,

and I imagine that's why he decided to make a review out of it. To learn the past tense of irregular verbs, they didn't just rely on rote memorization. The teacher rejected several sentences in which the ss identified with his help the irregular verbs. Then they answered as a group some fill-in-the-blanks exercises with multiple options, and after that, without multiple options. Nobody had to stand up from their desk, the teacher selected or wrote everything himself on the computer. Similarly, for count/uncount nouns, the tt used online exercises displayed on the projector. Although it took about 5 mins to load, the ss participated as a group, filling the spaces with "a" or "some" for count and "much"/"many" for uncount. However, some ss, especially a group in the back, didn't seem to engage much in the activities.
While the overall session wasn't ideal, these flashes of teach strateg. for young adults offered me a glimpse of hope. Hopefully, with more time and a more accurate assessment of ss proficiency, the tt can build upon these strenghts and create a more engaging learning environment for AW. I'll continue next week my observations in this class, hoping to witness a shift - even a spark of inspiration that can salvage the writing focus. The ss and the tt deserve better. Perhaps with some adjustments and creativity, the AW practice can still be a reality.

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Individual behavior and Class dynamic:
- The ss were initially restless, checking phones and chatting among themselves
- A few ss, particularly those at the front, actively participated, while others seemed less, and ss at the back were chatty n disengaged

Teacher's Feelings:
- The tt did not appear frustrated by the ss lack of basic skills nor bothered by incorrect answers and resorted to repetitive explanations, slower but patient.

Time Factor:
- The late start and early finish meant the planned lesson probably didn't fully materialized.
- As the session progressed, the ss seemed to loose focus
- Precious class time could've been spent on writing strategies and practice was whittled away by basic reviews. By 11:30, fatigue set in, and the teacher excused the ss, assigning homework: exercises of count/uncount nouns from the textbook and a journal (paragraph) about one of ten topics listed in the book. Some of em were: "Write about what you did last weekend, a person you used to know, an important event of your life, a vacation you took, a pet you had, etc."

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Learning Styles and Strategies
- The tt's method relied on auditory learning with visual aids on the board. This may not cater to diverse learning styles, but it's what is normally done in this school of busy busy teachers.
- There was virtually no writing practice. It raises concerns about the long-term development of their AW
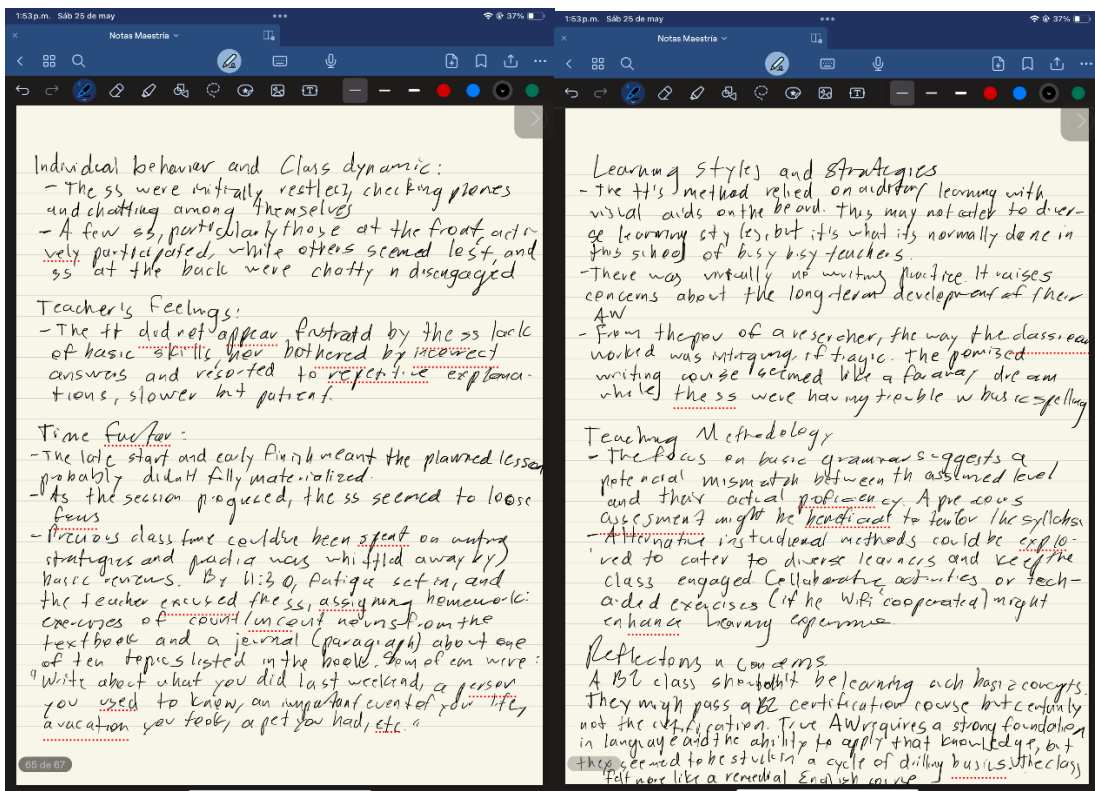- From the pov of a researcher, the way the class was worked was intriguing if tragic. The promised writing course seemed like a faraway dream while the ss were having trouble w basic spelling

Teaching Methodology
- The focus on basic grammar suggests a potential mismatch between the assumed level and their actual proficiency. A previous assessment might be beneficial to tailor the syllabus.
- Alternative instructional methods could be explored to cater to diverse learners and keep the class engaged. Collaborative activities or tech-aided exercises (if the Wifi cooperated) might enhance learning experience.

Reflections n concerns
A B2 class shouldn't be learning such basic concepts. They might pass a B2 certification course but certainly not the certification. True AW requires a strong foundation in language and the ability to apply that knowledge, but they seemed to be stuck in a cycle of drilling basics. The class felt more like a remedial English course.

Feb 13th, 2023

Schedule 7:40am - 12:00pm (Actual 9:00 am - 11:30am)

Observations:
The class was scheduled to start at 9am bc ss tend to get very tired in 4-hour classes. The tt began by choosing from the teams' assignment a journal at random from last week's hw. Ass turned off the lights and the teacher projected a ss essay, titled "My Unforgettable Vacation", onto the whiteboard. He inquired if anyone could identify the first mistake present in the essay. After 30s or so, a student at the front suggested "spend" instead of "spended." The tt then read a specific sentence and asked about it. This time two hands went up. One ss suggested an alternative and the other ss, another one. The teacher facilitated the debate, guiding ss toward more formal options.
Throughout the fb session, ss' attitudes shifted a bit. The initial nervousness gave way to a sense of engaged participation in some shy ss at the front. However, a group at the back seemed distracted, talkative, and indifferent to the class, so the tt asked qs directly to a couple of them. This activity lasted about 30 mins.
After that, the tt proceeded to explain the prepositions "in", "on", "at" and how to use them, using a ppt. prepositional phrases were tackled through a sentence completion exercise. The tt projected incomplete sentences with blanks for prepositional phrases. Ss had to choose the appropriate prep based on the context, prompting discussion

about the differences between them. Finally, the tt decided to review definite and indefinite articles. He started with the def. article and projected a slide with a clear explanation like "The def. art definite is used to refer to specific or unique nouns". Then projected true/false exercises and fill in the blanks. Then proceeded to the slide of indef. articles and projected images of various objects an asked ss to describe them using sentences w 'a' or 'an'.
The overall atmosphere in the class was slightly more positive compared to the previous session. While there were still some ss struggling w basic concepts, the overall level of participation improved. The hw was to complete exercises from the book about the reviewed topics and another general writing journal.

Individual Behavior and Class Dynamics:
-The disruptive group in the back continued to be a concern. This behavior initially created a ripple effect of distraction, impacting other ss at the back. While this intervention restored focus temporarily, a more long term strategy for managing disruptive behavior could come in handy.

Teacher's feelings
Again, the tt did not show any signs of frustration or impatience.

Time factor:
While the class time was significantly reduce, I assume the core topics for the day were covered.

Learning Styles and Strategies
The mix of activities catered to various learning styles. The fb discussion appealed to auditory learners and the visual aids, visual learners. However, individual differences in learning pace were evident.

Reflections on Teaching Methodology
The tt's ability to adapt to the limited wifi and ss' needs is commendable. However, the extensive grammar review underscores a mismatch between the B2 expectation and ss proficiency.

Conclusion:
Today's session exposed the challenges of teaching AW to students with a proficiency lower than expected. While there were positive moments of ss engagement, the limited time and distractions highlight the need for adjustments. Moving toward a revised curriculum that emphasizes language reinforcement AW practice seems crucial.

Appendix C – Proofreading format of the extrinsic factor's questionnaire with comments

Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

DIVISIÓN DE POSGRADO

MAESTRÍA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACADEMIC WRITING PERFORMANCE

ACADEMIC WRITING TEST

Researcher: Andrea López Martínez

This instrument is part of an action research that aims to prepare a didactic proposal that improves the EFL academic writing of the undergraduate Applied Linguistics students currently coursing the class of "Redacción de Textos Académicos", by considering the writing proficiency of the students and the factors that may be influencing it. These items are part of a questionnaire that pretends to identify the lack of writing practice and feedback as some of the factors that may be negatively influencing the writing performance of a group of EFL students. The questionnaire was piloted with a sample of the target population, and an issue of ambiguity arose. Questions were rewritten to clarify that the objective was to seek answers about the class they were taking the questionnaire in (Redacción de Textos Académicos) and not about every class they were taking during this semester.

To comply with the requirements of the task, it is still necessary for me to validate the writing of the questions with the opinion of two experienced EFL teachers. Therefore, I would like to request your assistance in evaluating the writing of the questions below.

Instructions: Fill in the blanks with your response.

How many short essay tasks a month are you, on average, assigned to do in your class of "Redacción de Textos Académicos"?	#_____
How much time, on average, do you spend on every assignment?	hrs:_____ mins

Instructions: Write your response in the blank space.

Please, briefly describe some assignments you have done for the class of "Redacción de textos académicos".	
Instructions: Mark with an *x* your response.	
How much feedback from the teacher of the class "Redacción de textos académicos" do you receive, on average, on every assignment?	None_____ A little_____ Some_____ A lot
Do you think receiving more feedback on your writing assignments could be beneficial for you?	_____Yes _____No
Have you ever evaluated your classmates' writing in this class?	_____Yes _____No

Comments:

Cambiar "class" por "course"
Añadir "co-evaluated" en la última pregunta

Luisa M. Muñoz Cantú
Examiner's name

Examiner's signature

Please, briefly describe some assignments you have done for the class of "Redacción de textos académicos".	
Instructions: Mark with an *x* your response.	
How much feedback from the teacher of the class "Redacción de textos académicos" do you receive, on average, on every assignment?	None_____ A little_____ Some_____ A lot
Do you think receiving more feedback on your writing assignments could be beneficial for you?	_____Yes _____No
Have you ever evaluated your classmates' writing in this class?	_____Yes _____No

Comments:

The questions are clear and concise.

Ricardo A. Abushi Salas
Examiner's name

Examiner's signature

Appendix D – Instrument implementation request to the Coordination of Applied Linguistics

San Nicolás De Los Garza, N.L. México. Al 06 de octubre del 2022

ASUNTO: SOLICITUD DE AUTORIZACIÓN PARA LA APLICACIÓN DEL INSTRUMENTO DIAGNÓSTICO

COORDINACIÓN DE CIENCIAS DE LENGUAJE
DR. DAN ISAI SERRATO SALAZAR PRESENTE

Tengo el gusto de presentarme ante usted como alumna de segundo semestre de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la UANL. Durante este periodo me encuentro en el proceso de la construcción del plan de acción requerido para el Producto Integrador de Aprendizaje (PIA) de esta maestría. Mi proyecto lleva por título *Instructional Strategies to Improve the Writing Performance of Undergraduate EFL Learners*, y se encuentra bajo el asesoramiento del Dr. Luis Antonio Balderas Ruiz.

Por medio de la presente solicito autorización para llevar a cabo una observación de clase y realizar la aplicación del instrumento diagnóstico a nivel licenciatura a grupos de quinto semestre tomando el curso de Redacción de Textos Académicos durante los siguientes horarios:

Turno matutino: Mtro. Mario Alberto Sepúlveda Rodríguez   -   Lunes M3 M4 M5 M6

Esto con el fin de precisar las evidencias de la problemática y recabar la información necesaria para el desarrollo del PIA. Realizar este diagnóstico con los alumnos de la Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza y Traducción del Inglés es de vital importancia para la segunda fase de mi investigación-acción, puesto que tras haber identificado la problemática dentro de esta población se pretende diseñar e implementar la propuesta didáctica.

Sin más por el momento y en espera de una respuesta positiva, me despido.

Lic. Andrea López Martínez
Tel. 81 12 55 94 75

COORDINACIÓN DE
LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA
A LA ENSEÑANZA Y TRADUCCIÓN
DEL INGLÉS

Appendix E – Implementation of the Teacher Interview

11:43 Dom 7 de may   58%

Notas Maestría

Libreta Segundo   Notas Maestría

Teacher Interview

The main purpose of conducting a short interview with the class teacher is to triangulate
some of the information provided by the students in the questionnaire that they answered.

The following questions are to be used during the interview:

1. What are the most common mistakes *that you have* found in the students' academic writing?

   cohesion among tenses
   irregular verbs) in past tense
   count noncount
   gramar coherence

2. What kind of writing tasks have been assigned to the students?

   grammar reviewing
   give feedback to journals in the front
   journal based on a book

3. How is feedback provided to the students?

   chques de servicio social reusan todos los
   journals
   → teacher aid

4. What obstacles have *evue* prevented you from providing in-depth feedback to the
   students? *muchos almnos no sfinité tiempo*
   diversos
   grupos y clases

5. How many essay tasks a month are assigned on average to the students? *not academic*
   none on Jan, 2 on feb, 4 on March, once a week

Appendix F – Results of the Self-efficacy for Self-reflection of Academic Writing Scale

| | Forethought | | | | | | | Percieved Performance | | | | | | | | | |
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	FAverage	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	PAverage
S1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2.833	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.889
S2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3.778
S3	2	3	1	3	3	2	2.333	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2.111
S4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3.222
S5	3	4	3	3	3	3	3.167	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	2	2	3.111
S6	3	4	2	2	3	2	2.667	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	3	3
S7	3	3	3	2	3	3	2.833	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
S8	3	2	3	3	3	2	2.667	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2.333
S9	4	3	4	4	3	4	3.667	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3.556
S10	3	2	2	2	3	2	2.333	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2.778
S11	3	2	3	2	3	3	2.667	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	2	2.778
S12	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	2	4	3	1	2	4	2	2	3	2.556
S13	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.167	3	3	2	4	3	3	4	3	2	3
S14	3	3	3	2	3	2	2.667	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2.667
S15	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3.667
S16	3	3	2	3	2	3	2.667	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2.556
S17	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	3	1	3
S18	3	3	3	2	3	2	2.667	1	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	2	2.778
S19	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.167	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3.333
S20	3	2	3	2	2	3	2.5	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2.667
S21	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.167	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.333
S22	3	2	3	3	3	2	2.667	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2.667
S23	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	3.556
S24	3	3	2	2	2	3	2.5	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2.444
							2.9722222										2.949

| Self-reflection | | | | | | | | |
Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Saverage	Average
2	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	2.9088889
4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3.714	3.8196825
3	3	2	3	2	2	3	2.571	2.3206349
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.6888889
4	2	2	4	4	3	4	3.286	3.1825397
3	3	3	3	2	3	4	3	2.9066667
4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2.9533333
2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2.429	2.4571429
4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3.857	3.6831746
3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2.429	2.5415873
3	3	2	3	4	4	3	3.143	2.8634921
4	4	2	3	4	3	3	3.286	2.9136508
3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2.714	2.9552381
2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2.714	2.6819048
4	3	3	3	4	4	4	3.571	3.7295238
3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2.429	2.5460317
3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3.286	3.0914286
3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2.429	2.6349206
4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.286	3.2714286
2	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	2.7266667
3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.143	3.2257143
3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2.857	2.727619
4	3	3	3	2	4	4	3.286	3.3136508
3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2.714	2.5463492
							3.048	2.9870899

Appendix G – Results of the TOEIC Writing Task

Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Final Score
2	2	2	1	1.75
5	3	3	2	3.25
0	1	2	2	1.25
3	4	2	3	3
4	3	2	2	2.75
3	2	2	2	2.25
2	2	2	2	2
3	2	2	2	2.25
4	3	3	2	3
3	2	1	1	1.75
3	3	2	2	2.5
3	3	3	2	2.75
2	2	1	1	1.5
1	1	0	1	0.75
2	2	1	1	1.5
1	2	1	1	1.25
3	1	1	2	1.75
4	3	2	2	2.75
2	2	1	2	1.75
2	2	2	1	1.75
1	2	2	2	1.75
4	3	3	2	3
3	3	2	2	2.5
2	2	3	2	2.25

Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Final Score
3	2	1	1	1.75
4	3	3	2	3
0	1	3	2	1.5
3	3	3	3	3
3	3	3	2	2.75
4	1	2	2	2.25
2	2	1	1	1.5
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	2	2	1	2.25
2	2	1	1	1.5
2	3	3	2	2.5
3	2	1	1	1.75
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	1	2	1.75
2	1	1	1	1.25
3	2	1	1	1.75
3	3	2	2	2.5
2	2	2	2	2
1	2	2	2	1.75
1	2	2	2	1.75
3	3	3	3	3
2	3	3	2	2.5
2	2	2	2	2

Appendix H – Report of the Extrinsic Factors Questionnaire

#	A (1-4)	B (1-2)	C (1-2)	D (time)	F
1	3	1	2	1hr	
2	3	1	2	4hr	
3	2	1	2	50mins	
4	2	1	2	40mins	
5	3	1	1	30mins	
6	1	1	1	4hrs	
7	3	1	2	2hrs 30 mins	
8	2	1	2	4hrs 30 mins	
9	2	1	2	1hrs	
10	2	1	1	1hrs 30 mins	
11	1	1	2	1hr 25 mins	
12	1	1	1	4hrs	
13	1	1	2	1hrs 30 mins	
14	2	1	2	2hrs	
15	2	1	1	1hrs 30mins	
16	2	1	2	1hrs 20 mins	
17	3	1	2	1hr	
18	1	1	1	25mins	
19	2	1	2	4hrs 20 mins	
20	3	1	2	4hrs 10mins	
21	3	1	1	1hr	
22	1	1	1	30 mins	
23	2	1	1	1hr	
24	1	1	2	1hr 30 mins	

H

F (nominal)

Observe and identify noun, adjective, mistake punctuation, etc. -Identify mistakes grammatically and the structure and learned the time tenses, for example, present, past, etc.

units (book activities) and journal (book activity)

answer pages of the book, write about topics of the book ask. Give a presentation of the topic of the book

answering the book, answering (correct incorrect writng of a sentence) test from webpages, same paragraphs

capitalization, correct punctuation

journal writing, gramamr and punctuation correction

writing about my favorite time of the year, of what i do in my free time and other about how big is my house

journal essays

feedback to the exercises the teacher put on the homework assignment

whe already do 2 journals. The journals are take 2 questions and write about it

report, essay, homework assignment, unit for answer during the class

Journal entries, activities of the book

I think we-ve on;y do the activities of the units

Talk about your father, talk about your favorite pet, talk about what you do in your free time

I have done some short essays about myself, my family, another topics.

Capital letter, tenses in a sentence, connectors, punctuation marks

We do exercises about writing

Journal entries, mini essays about our preference topics

To talk about the grammar and vocabulary and lesson.

Sometimes in this class in understanding sentences basics

Journaling, correcting texts, re/writing, workbook activities

We write journals about assigned topics every week, favorite city, describe your pet

Journal *illegible* such as about my family or my pets.

Unit activities, sentence correction, journals

Appendix I. Google Forms Questionnaire

vceeBEzFzxQ/viewform

Hello everyone, the course is finally over, and would like to know more about your experiences using the class materials and the Wiki. This is VERY VERY important, PLEASE answer every question very carefully. **Las respuestas pueden ser en español si así lo prefieren.**

Thank you very much for participating!

a.lopez0797@gmail.com Switch accounts

Not shared

* Indicates required question

Matrícula *

Your answer

What I already knew about academic writing in English before the course: *

Your answer

What I want to know in the future about academic writing in English: *

Your answer

What I learned about academic writing in English in the course: *

Your answer

What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, a checklist and the Wiki as *
a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?
_____
¿Cuáles son sus opiniones sobre el uso del handbook, una checklist y la Wiki como estrategia de enseñanza para fortalecer tus habilidades de escritura académica?

Your answer

Submit   Clear form

Appendix J. Google Forms Responses

Timestamp	What I already knew about academic writing in English before the course:	What I want to know in the future about academic writing in English:	What I learned about academic writing in English in the course:	What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, a checklist, and the Wiki as a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?
STUDENT A 5/29/2023 11:03:04	What an essay should include (introduction, body, conclusion, references, etc.)	How I can better my work, like, where can I find certain information faster and what are trusted sites one can go to; how to make my essays more appealing and sound more fluent.	A way to keep my work organized and my essays complete.	I think it is a perfect way to reinforce what we already know.
STUDENT B 5/29/2023 11:42:15	I already knew that if you want to write a academic writing it is necessary to have a relevant topic, and then put in the paper an introduction, body (with points of views and personal opinions) and finally a conclusion.	How to write formal academic writing?	In this course I learn the correct structure of a academic writing and the different ways to do it.	Wiki is a incredible teaching strategy, because if you want to focus in your own skills and make a feedback, you can improve yours habilites and be better writing. Also, it is the same with Checklist and a Handbook, because there are tools to improve knowledge and it can be useful to tests and express yourself. Basically, it is my opinion. Thank you!
STUDENT C 5/29/2023 21:03:57	the four main types of academic, descriptive, analytical, persuasive and critical, each of these types of writing has specific language features and purposes. In many academic texts you will need to use more than one type.	I want to know more about the persuasive writting	The importance of learning the types of writting, and using properly	Pienso que es importante usarlas, pero solamente para complementar y respaldar la informacion sobre la que estemos investigando y que vayamos a usar
STUDENT D 5/30/2023 10:16:11	I only have the idea to write a essay but very simple	I want to improve my gramtics	The different kinds of essays	Considero que es una buena estrategia ya que asi se puede tener una idea mas segura de lo que se esta escribiendo
STUDENT E 5/30/2023 16:06:50	The types of wrtiting like persuasive and comparative contrast	Structure of different types of text and typical word of each text	How to start to write a comparative contrast text	La wiki es un gran implemento si se quieren realizar como foros de retroalimentación entre los mismos alumnos y para

				actividades sencillas esta genial
STUDENT F 5/30/2023 16:07:40	I don't know the really important for use a formal language, for example the use of don't for remplace "do not" is like when in Spanish use differents methods for writing some a message for our friends, I think the connectors words are very important because when we Red the text don't see the problem but if a native see it I think is notorious it is not.	A easy form for writting essay's, I think when is your first time writting in english is very complicated	A really basic rules	I think is good for students because Teacher don't give us a really large text for write so is not tedious and my friends can give some comments
STUDENT G 5/31/2023 14:13:56	the grammatical rules and structure of an essay	I would like to learn more about good and lengthy writing.	I learned that there are more types of essays and their structure.	Me parece muy bien ya que es mas practico y didactico
STUDENT H 5/31/2023 17:32:46	En realidad antes de este semestre no sabía casi nada sobre academic writing	Más sobre escribir ensayos persuasivos y de las demás formas de ensayo	Pues la verdad me quedo más sobre las formas de ensayo	Me parece muy bien porque es una forma más modera para poder enseñar a los alumnos
STUDENT I 5/31/2023 18:38:45	That there were different types of writing	Tips to develop my essays better	The types of essays and tips to accomplish them	It was easy to use
STUDENT J 5/31/2023 20:32:20	The basic essay structure	Everything	I learned that academic does not only help you in school but also in other aspects in life	Me parecieron útiles
STUDENT K 6/1/2023 0:28:01	En si, creo que todo lo que vienen siendo ensayos, las estructuras de uno, pero no estaba familiarizada con los tipos que había.	Sinceramente todo, me gustaría poder adentrarme más y fortalecer los conocimientos que llevamos a cabo en el curso.	Los tipos de ensayos, el uso correcto de marcaciones	Me parece muy interesante y enriquecedora para el uso semanal, creo es importante seguir actualizándonos siempre.
STUDENT L 6/1/2023 15:03:00	Estructura básica de un ensayo.	Quiero saber más sobre textos	Más profundidad sobre la	La verdad me gustó mucho usarlo porque soy una persona que necesita llevar

		descriptivos y narrativos.	estructura de los ensayos, como escribir correctamente un párrafo, algunos puntos a tomar en cuenta sobre la gramática y los diversos tipos de ensayos.	un orden de las cosas y recibir retroalimentaciones, así que estas herramientas me ayudaron a mejorar la calidad de mis trabajos y ser más eficiente.
STUDENT M 6/5/2023 16:13:26	I think that I knew the basics	how to write better	that I need to follow the structure	it's okay
STUDENT N 6/5/2023 20:29:59	La verdad conocia muy poco acerca del academic writing, unicamente hacia revision y corregia si word me lo pedia o me avisaba que habia error	Como escribir con coherencia y mejorar la escritura mediante su estructura para en un futuro poder escribir y traducir textos	Aprendi a escribir buenos ensayos mediante los consejos que me dieron mis compañeros y a usar los word conectors	Son buenas y necesarias, tambien son de gran apoyo al momento de escribir un ensayo

Appendix K. Request letter for participant's information

San Nicolás De Los Garza, N.L. México. Al 30 de marzo del 2022
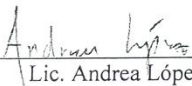
ASUNTO: SOLICITUD DE UN REPORTE ESTADÍSTICO SOBRE LA CANTIDAD DE ALUMNOS EN LA FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
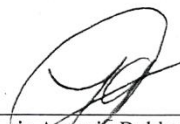
COORDINADORA EN FUNCIONES DE DIRECTORA
M.C. LUDIVINA CANTÚ ORTIZ
PRESENTE.-

Tengo el gusto de presentarme ante usted como alumna de segundo semestre de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la UANL. Durante este periodo me encuentro en el proceso de la construcción del plan de acción requerido para el Producto Integrador de Aprendizaje (PIA) de esta maestría. Mi proyecto lleva por título *Instructional Strategies to Improve the Writing Performance of Undergraduate EFL Learners*, y se encuentra bajo el asesoramiento del Dr. Luis Antonio Balderas Ruiz.

Por medio de la presente solicito un reporte informativo sobre la cantidad de alumnos dentro de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, la cantidad de alumnos cursando la carrera de Lingüística Aplicada, la cantidad de alumnos de dicha carrera que se encuentran en quinto semestre y la cantidad de alumnos de dicho semestre tomando la clase de Redacción de Textos Académicos. Todo esto con el fin de obtener la información necesaria para redactar la delimitación de los participantes partiendo desde el nivel macro de la población.

Sin más por el momento y en espera de una respuesta positiva, me despido.

_____
Lic. Andrea López Martínez
Alumna de maestría

_____
Dr. Luis Antonio Balderas Ruiz
Asesor de tesis
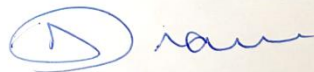
c.c.p. Dr. José Luis Cisneros Arellano, Subdirector de Posgrado

U.A.N.L.
DIRECCIÓN DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

27 ABR. 2023   2:14 pm

RECIBIDO

Appendix L. Cronbach's alpha calculations in Excel

Appendix M

Revised adaptation of the KWL chart

K	W	L	
What I already knew about academic writing in English before the course:	What I want to know about academic writing in English:	What I learned about academic writing in English in the course:	
Further comments	Further comments	Further comments	Further comments
What are your opinions toward the use of online quizzes to practice the theory seen in class?	What are your opinions toward the use of a checklist to strengthen your academic writing skills?	What are your opinions toward the use of a handbook, the videos and the pdfs as reference materials to strengthen your academic writing skills?	What are your opinions toward the use of the Wiki as a teaching strategy to strengthen your academic writing skills?

Appendix N

The Wiki Tab in Microsoft Teams
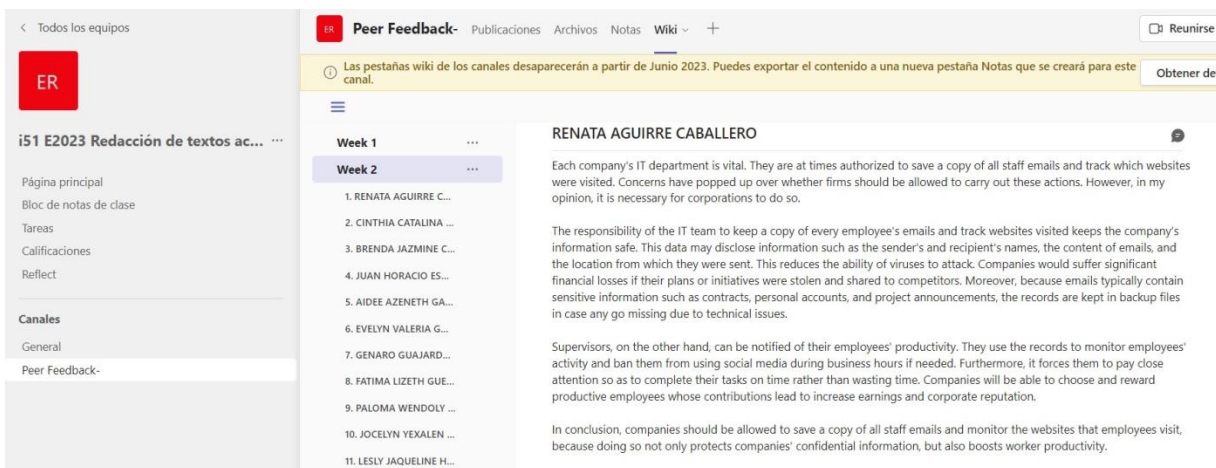
Note. Screenshot of the Wiki tab set up by the author in Microsoft Teams.

Appendix O

"Online Peer-feedback on Academic Writing Using the Wiki Application of Microsoft Teams"			
Introduction	This proposal derives from the educational research approach of action reseach and its based on the theory of self-directed and collaborative active learning through the use of the Wiki application of Microsoft Teams to facilitate peer feedback and collaboration among undergraduate EFL learners studying academic writing to improve their writing performance and their self-regulation by increasing the amount of writing practice and feedback they both give and receive without ignoring their need to learn or review more basic aspects of the written language.		
Theory		Apply Knowledge	Feedback
Sesion 1	Sesion 2	Sesion 3 (x2 self-directed)	Sesion 4
Learn the basic structure of a short academic essay and get to know the Wiki interface.	Learn about transition words, their types, and their use in academic writing. Review English punctuation and capitalization rules.	Students will demonstrate their understanding of the structure of a short academic essay by utilizing the handbook and checklist provided. They will evaluate their peers' writing based on specific criteria, which will help them improve their practice, receive feedback, and develop self-regulatory behaviors.	Teacher feedback on student feedback is included through the Wiki comments along with the students' comments. The participants receive and review their scores on the 4 different aspects that were evaluated. A post-test based on TOEIC protocols is administered.
Learner's Background	Learner's Background	Learner's Background	Learner's Background
Expected knowledge of English language: level B2	Expected knowledge of English language: level B3	Expected knowledge of English language: level B4	Expected knowledge of English language: level B5
Required Material	Required Material	Required Material	Required Material
Computer equipment and projector, and notebook or paper sheets	Computer equipment and projector, and sticky notes	Computer equipment (PC or laptop)	Computer equipment and projector, and notebook or paper sheets
Activities and Timing	Activities and Timing	Activities and Timing	Activities and Timing
Initial activity "Presentation of the Didactic Proposal": the presenter will briefly present the activities and the topics to be addressed during the following sessions and the specific objectives to the participants. Duration: 5 minutes	Initial activity "Presentation of the Basic Essay Structure": The presenter explains the basic essay structure using the Academic Writing Mini Handbook on PDF. Duration: 10 minutes	Essay practice "Essay Draft": The teacher creates an assignment on a Monday for students to deliver on Thursday. This assignment consists of a first draft based on the writing task of a couple of IELTS practice tests. Students should upload their first draft before Thursday. The teacher includes a word document with the instructions and, as reference material, the academic writing checklist and the basic essay structure pages from the handbook. The essay of the first week asks about the student's opinion of the practice of some companies to block their employees from using social media networks, and the essay of the second week asked students whether they agreed or disagreed that companies should be permitted to save a copy of all staff worker's e-mails and monitor visited websites.	AI feedback (asynchronous): The students should upload their final essays from the second week to the free version of Grammarly to get further corrections. The teacher enables a new assignment in which students deliver a final revised version of their second week's essay.
Transition words "Initial discussion": The presenter projects a list of transition words categorized by function (e.g., cause-effect, contrast, addition, etc.) on the board and explains the different categories. The students provide some examples using different transition words of different categories. The teacher corrects as necessary and provides some examples as well. Duration: 10 minutes	Basic Essay Structure "Choose the correct box": The presenter draws three large boxes on the board, labeling them as the introduction, body, and conclusion, respectively. The students, paired in groups of four or five, receive sticky notes of different colors. On these notes, the students write down an element of each essay section based on the slide projected on the board. Two team representatives then place their sticky notes in the corresponding box on the board. Duration: 20 minutes	Essay practice "Wiki peer and self-evaluation": The students paste their drafts on the Wiki application, where they can see their classmates' essays, and give and receive feedback twice. If a classmate already has two comments, the students should comment on a different student's essay. Based on the feedback they receive; students revise their essay. Students should use the checklist provided in the Handbook to check their own and their classmates' essays.	Teacher feedback on peer feedback: The teacher will project the Wiki on the board, discuss with the students their comments on the Wiki, and correct student feedback when necessary. (30 minutes)

Transition words "Complete the story": The presenter projects a story generated with Gemini AI with blanks. Students must fill in with transition words in teams on a piece of paper a section of the story. Each group shares their section of the revised story with the class, highlighting the chosen transition words and explaining their reasoning. The presenter guides the discussion and corrects when necessary by explaining the possible different meanings that derive from using different transition words. Duration: 20 minutes	Basic Essay Structure "Discussion of examples": Finally, the class teacher reviews the completed structure on the board, identifying the critical components of each essay section. The teacher explains the correct order and proceeds to project some examples of introductory, body, and conclusion paragraphs located in the Handbook. At the end of the session, the teacher explains that ther students can review the topic independently by reading the handbook and watching the videos uploaded to Class Materials in Microsoft Teams. The teacher uploads to the General channel a link to a worksheet the students should answer as homework and upload to their folders. Duration: 20 minutes	Essay practice "Final Draft": The teacher opens a new assignment. The students should upload their revised essay to another assignment which requests a final version for next week's Monday. This gives the student 3 days (Friday to Monday) to deliver a final version. The teacher includes as reference material the academic writing checklist and the basic essay structure pages from the handbook. Essays should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, be at least 300 words long, state and support a point of view on an issue, and reach B2 level standards of task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy. This process is carried out twice.	Postest: A postest with similar instructions to the practice essays and based on TOEIC protocols will be implemented. Duration: 30 minutes
Transition words "Multiple-choice practice": Students individually answer two short multiple-choice exercises. Students are given a list of the words inside the handbook that they can review outside of the class. Duration: 15 minutes	Wiki Collaborative Writing "Explanation of the asynchronous activities": The teacher states that the next activities will be self-directed and explains how it will work. The teacher projects the class Team in Microsoft Teams, opens a new channel labeled "Wiki" and enters the application of Wiki, which was enables and prepared beforehand, divided in two (Week 1 and Week 2). Each of these sections is further divided in the number of class students, each number with a name of a student. In these sub-sections each student uploads their essays to the corresponding Week. Each of these subsections has a dialogue icon, in which they can receive comments from their classamtes. The teacher explains how to navigate through these components and explains the activities that will take place. Duration: 10 minutes		Proof-reading: Students will exchange essays twice and provide feedback with the help of a checklist. Duration: 30 minutes
Punctuation "Fill in the blanks": Several sentences with deliberate punctuation errors generated by Gemini AI are presented on the board. In teams, they discuss the possible correct punctuation marks. After the discussion, each team walks to the front to write their answer for one sentence on the projection on the board. After each sentence, the teacher discusses possible interpretations with different punctuation choices and reveals the intended meaning and correct punctuation usage. The presenter uplaods to the General channel a pdf with a lecture about the topic and a short quiz as homework. Duration 30 minutes			
Capitalization "Rule explanation": The presenter explains several capitalization rules in English with the help of a ppt with the information from Straus (2012) and providing examples. Duration 15 minutes			
Capitalization "Rule explanation": The presenter projects a worksheet with two capitalization exercises. In teams, students discuss the possible correct capitalization for each word. After the discussion, each team walked to the front to write their answer. The presenter uploads to Teams a pdf students could review independently with a lecture about the topic and a quiz they have to do as homework. Duration 20 minutes			

Verb tenses "Asynchornous self-directed learning": The presenter explains that at home, the students should log into https://test-english.com/grammar-points/b1-b2/review-verb-tenses-b1-b2/. This resource has the explanations for all the B1 and B2 verb conjugations and many exercises to practice. The presenter uploads the link to the General channel. The participants should upload their results to a personal folder in Microsoft Teams after completing all the exercises. Duration: 5 minutes			
Didactic Material	**Didactic Material**	**Didactic Material**	**Didactic Material**
List of transition words by function: https://www.gingersoftware.com/content/transition-words	Academic Writing Mini Handbook: https://drive.google.com/file/d/15lbTLKHYbzjqAGdDIz4KMmN6RNOhQgR8/view?usp=sharing	Academic Writing Mini Handbook: https://drive.google.com/file/d/15lbTLKHYbzjqAGdDIz4KMmN6RNOhQgR8/view?usp=sharing	Random student essay
Story with blanks: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lEXAIlUNXGRj76-rwYJrdf_y19II4jPVKa2-TZ8Rbys/edit?usp=sharing	Basic Essay Structure Video for PC: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KVUm5WiqE8oFcCCRQl2eZdSmpU27V5Ae/view?usp=sharing	Week 1 Instruction: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O14J1041v5d6TE_fKjFbB46UGOpPWx6D/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=106851706277278845086&rtpof=true&sd=true	TOEIC sample test: https://www.ets.org/content/dam/ets-org/pdfs/toeic/toeic-speaking-writing-sample-tests.pdf
Multiple-choice transition words exercise: https://www.mdc.edu/kendall/collegeprep/documents2/transitional%20words%20and%20phrasesrevised815.pdf	Basic Essay Structure Video for Smartphones: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1frB19E4opwEXY8cj2qY7h0hTzaYk8eWU/view?usp=sharing	Week 2 Instruction: https://docs.google.com/document/d/16Z_XqKZJq0a3y5RR7371gp42DVWOrlnP/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=106851706277278845086&rtpof=true&sd=true	
Punctuation exercise: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl_exercises/punctuation_exercises/basic_punctuation/punctuation_exercise.html	Essay Structure exercises: https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/a_for_and_against_essay_about_the_internet_-_exercises_0.pdf		
Punctuation lecture: https://ssu.elearning.unipd.it/pluginfile.php/57216/mod_book/chapter/2015/Punctuation-in-English_Gesuato.pdf			
Punctuation quiz: from https://www.merriam-webster.com/games/test-your-punctuation-skills			
Capitalization lecture: Straus, J. (2012). Capitalization Rules. The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation.			
Capitalization homework: https://www.grammarbook.com/grammar_quiz/capitalization_1.asp.			
Capitalization worksheet: https://assets.ltkcontent.com/files/beginning-capitalization-practice-worksheet.pdf			
Lesson Assesment	**Lesson Assesment**	**Lesson Assesment**	**Lesson Assesment**
Transition words: Multiple-choice exercises Punctuation: Punctuation exercise Capitalization: Capitalization quiz Verb tenses: test-english exercises	Short Essay Instruction: Essay Writing exercises from the British Council	Final drafts	Postest based on TOEIC protocols
Lesson Time	**Lesson Time**	**Lesson Time**	**Lesson Time**
120 minutres	60 minutes	120 minutes per week aprox, depends on the student	90 minutes