UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

ÁREA SOCIOHUMANÍSTICA

TITULO DE LICENCIADO EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN: MENCIÓN INGLÉS

Academic Writing Difficulties of EFL Students

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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LOJA - ECUADOR

2018

APROBACIÓN DE LA DIRECTORA DEL TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

Magister.

Eliana Ivanova Pinza Tapia

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACIÓN

De mi consideración,

El presente trabajo de titulación: Academic Writing Difficulties of EFL Students realizado por Iñiguez Granda Rene Mauricio ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, julio de 2018

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DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

"Yo Iñiguez Granda Rene Mauricio declaro ser autor del presente trabajo de titulación Academic Writing Difficulties of EFL students, de la Titulación de Inglés, siendo Eliana Ivanova Pinza Tapia, directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además, certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad. Adicionalmente declaro conocer y aceptar la disposición del Art. 88 del Estatuto Orgánico de la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja que en su parte pertinente textualmente dice: "Forman parte del patrimonio de la Universidad la propiedad intelectual de investigaciones, trabajos científicos o técnicos y tesis de grado o trabajos de titulación que se realicen con el apoyo financiero, académico o institucional (operativo) de la Universidad"

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DEDICATION

Life is full of challenges, and one of them is the university. I have realized that beyond being a challenge, it is a basis not only for my understanding of the field in which I am immersed, but also for what concerns life and the future.

I dedicate this work, first to God and to my parents, who have been the ones who have encouraged me to follow my dreams and fulfill my goals. And second to all those who have encouraged me during all these years.

René

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I thank God for allowing me to have such a good experience within my studies, thanks to my family for being the fundamental pillar, thanks to my university for allowing me to become a professional in what I love, thanks to every teacher who did part of this integral process of academic training, which leaves this group of graduates as a product.

Finally, I thank those who read this section and more of my thesis, for allowing my experiences, research, and knowledge, to incur within their repertoire of mental information.

René

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This study, under the topic "Academic Writing Difficulties of EFL students" has the purpose to investigate the academic writing difficulties of EFL students with the objective of identifying the main difficulties that students face and also the factors that may cause these problems. This research was done in two English institutes of the city of Loja, and it was applied to thirty advanced level students from the ages of 15 to 25 years old.

To carry out this study, using the qualitative and quantitative methods, it was necessary to collect data by using the following instruments: a survey with yes/no and open questions, a writing activity with two parts, the part of ordering and recognizing an essay, and finally, an interview. The two first instruments were applied to the students and the interview was applied to the teachers. The results show that the lack of interest and motivation, inappropriate and basic vocabulary, confusion at recognition of essay parts, and also the lack of previous research to support ideas are the main problems that students present when writing academically.

Key words: Academic writing difficulties, EFL students, English language.

RESUMEN

Esta investigación, "Academic Writing Difficulties of EFL Students", tiene como propósito principal investigar las dificultades que los estudiantes de una lengua extranjera tienen para escribir académicamente, con el objetivo de identificar las principales dificultades que los estudiantes enfrentan, y también los factores que pueden causar este tipo de problemas. Este estudio se realizó en dos institutos de inglés en la ciudad de Loja, y fue aplicado a 30 estudiantes de nivel avanzado, de edades entre 15 y 25 años.

Para realizar la investigación, bajo el uso de métodos cualitativo y cuantitativo, el proceso de recolección de datos incluyó una encuesta con preguntas con respuestas abiertas y de opción si/no. También una actividad para los estudiantes en la que debían escribir un ensayo y reconocer las principales partes del mismo. Y finalmente, una entrevista a los docentes de ambos institutos. Los resultados muestras que existen muchas dificultades en estos estudiantes, como la falta de interés y motivación, vocabulario básico e inapropiado, confusión al momento de reconocer las partes de un ensayo, y también se notó que no investigan antes de realizar un trabajo académico.

Palabras clave: Dificultades para escribir académicamente, Estudiantes de una Segunda Lengua, Lengua Inglesa.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most relevant and important skills in the educational field, but it is also one of the most complex skills. Every day, EFL students face problems when writing academically due to different aspects that are different from one language to another. Specifically, students in Ecuador have many problems to write in Spanish, so it is noticeable it will be more difficult for them to write in a foreign language. For this reason, this study has been made to investigate and analyze the factors that cause difficulties in students when writing academically. It is important to know about this problem in the educational field to find solutions for the students' improvement of the writing skills.

Based on this situation different studies have been carried out in order to identify the causes of these problems. Hassan (2015) investigated the academic writing challenges by answering two questions that included the difficulties encountered and the factors that may cause these difficulties. According to the author, learners have problems for expressing in their own voice and they cannot find a significant topic and relevant references. So, the most frequent difficulties that the author found are how learners use the language, and how they may not have coherence and cohesion when writing academically. The author concludes that the less common problem is to paraphrase, reference, and cite.

To avoid the previously mentioned problems, Abdulkareem, (cited by Ibtisam, 2015) recommends the exposure to academic writing conventions, academic words and phrases, and grammar since they play an essential role in producing a satisfying piece of writing.

On the other hand, Harmer (cited by Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017) claims that the factors that do not allow students to write academically are, fear of failure and fear of committing mistakes, which provoke uncertainty at the moment of showing their productions. Hence, he establishes as a solution the development of the "habit writing" which will improve the students' abilities for writing academically. Raimes (cited by Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017) also provides a solution which is focused on involving students in reading because it is considered that "the more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idioms, sentence patterns, organizational flow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language". (p. 83). In the same side, Kroll (cited by Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017) claims that "it is reading that gives the writer the feel for the look and texture of reader, based prose", concluding that reading is a good strategy for students to make a successful writing. The last factor, Kroll (2017) holds, is the influence of the first language on the target language, they say that the problem of EFL students is they are learning a second language but they are always thinking in their first language, so it can be a problem for them to retain new content in the second language and it can difficult for writing skills.

The present study is useful for students, teachers, and also institutes in general. It can help in future research to find solutions for all the problems and difficulties that students face when writing academically, because it is important that students realize about what they are doing wrong and, in this way, improve their skills to succeed in this area into a high level.

CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains important information related to the academic writing field. It begins with a clear definition of writing academically and continues describing the different aspects to be considered when writing any type of academic written work. Finally, this literature review presents previous studies which provide important facts about the problems that students face when writing and which do not let them succeed in this field.

Academic writing

Academic writing is defined as all writings that are done to fulfil a requirement of the university or high schools. It is also used to make personal publications or for presenting them as conferences. In academic writing, there are included different types of works such as essays, books, reports, conferences, translations, articles, and thesis; all of them are made with scientific purposes.

According to Whitaker (2009), Academic writing is whatever essay such as research, term, argumentative, analysis, informative, or position paper, but the author holds that every type has the same goals and principles.

On the other hand, Bailey (2015) claims that writing is much more difficult than other skills, in this case, the author refers to speaking skill because international students are able to use the language for communicating in a normal way. But the same students may not be understandable when writing academically. The sample, that the author provides, is that speaking is done face to face, so if there is something that is not understood, we can tell the other person to repeat.

According to the author, for writing academically it is necessary to learn special conventions, such as the use of capital letters. And if these conventions are not followed, what we want to express in or writing will not be clear or understandable. Another aspect is vocabulary, because for writing academically we need to use a formal language, so when we talk there are many things that are not so formal, for example, the use of contractions is very common when talking, but when writing it will be very informal if we use it.

Moreover, Murray and Moore (2006) claim that academic writing involves three cycles: starting, processing, and finishing a complicated combination of tasks. They mention that writing requires the activation of many skills and orientations, and sometimes it may also be in different stages or phases into the process.

Academic Writing UTS Library (2013), arguments that academic writing comes accompanied by "Critical Reading" because many times it critiques the ideas and the arguments in any text. So, when reading any academic writing, the reader should think about a response to it, much more than an agreement or disagreement, it means to find a response

that has to be rational. To add, an academic writing needs arguments and evidences to get conclusions.

Process for writing academically

For writing academically, it is important to follow structures, rules, and a process for getting a well-done job, and the writing work needs to be understandable to make readers catch the idea of what we write about and create interest on them. Many authors propose different ways for writing academically. For example, Graham (cited by Thanh, 2015) says that this process is going to be made into four aspects.

The first aspect is the knowledge that learners have of any topic before star writing something, also their skill for producing a text and if it is enough for doing a scientific work. It is important that students have knowledge of the process on how to write academically. And finally, an important aspect is the motivation that learners need to have for writing about anything and if they feel enthusiasm.

On the other hand, Gower, Phillips, and Walters (2005) proposed an alternative writing aspect for writing academically, and it consists on: handwriting, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction, organizing a text and paraphrasing, text cohesion, and style. Authors add an idea for encouraging students and it is based on the importance of writing in students to have a positive attitude, teacher must prepare students for writing, and plan activities that may help students to structure a well-done academic writing.

Moreover, Whitaker (2009) proposed a process for writing academically, so for this, the author gives many steps to write academically. The first step is to choose a topic, after that, we need to start brainstorming about the topic, get the most important ideas we have and it will be useful for developing each one of them. Next, we may start looking for different studies, books, researches, or any academic writing that was written before and may help us to make the investigation argued. After we have looked for information, it is important to discover the thesis on what we are going to work on. Then it is important to make an outline where it includes many topics that are useful for the investigation, it may be called as a plan for what we need to do after. After we have done all the steps, we can start writing and developing everything we have investigated. Finally, the writing draft has to be revised, edited, and get the final work.

Besides, Harmer (2007) notes that the process for writing involves four aspects: planning, drafting, reviewing, and editing. But he also says that before producing the final draft, we can plan, draft, re-plan, draft, edit, re-edit, etc. For a well-done writing work the author considers that students should build a writing habit, the author mentions a main reason and it is that students do not like or want to write.

On the same side, White and Arndt (1995) claim that the process for writing academically starts on brainstorming by using questions, making notes, using visuals, and using a simulation. This process continues by discovering the main ideas and considering the purpose of the writing, the audience, and the form. In the part of the structure, the author considers that the ordering of information, experimenting, and relating the structures to focal the idea, are very important to make an academic writing with the right structure. After that, we make the drafting, where we consider the ways on how to begin, the ways of ending, and adding relevant information. Then it is important to evaluate the draft to improve it. Finally, the reviewing is important to check the context, connections, divisions, and get the final product.

Besides, Norris (2016) claims that for doing a good academic writing it is important to follow steps and rules. She considers that students have to start writing a first draft with all the ideas that are related to the chosen topic. It is important to refer immediately and clearly to all the items that are important for the writing. Then the author considers that editing is a good way to avoid mistakes. After that, writers have to cut out all the words that are repetitive or unnecessary and use the most common verbs to make your essay understandable.

Types of academic writing

Before studying the types of academic writing, it is important to know the main types of reading for a better way of writing, so, there are two main types of reading for doing academic research and they are necessary for writing academically, first we have the Broad, that refers to overview of a determined topic, and an introduction to the topic that help us to be curious of the topic and to find interest on it. And, the Narrow, that refers to the texts we need for a research that include more details that are important for starting with any investigation.

Specifically, there are many types of academic writing. But in this study, we are going to talk about the most relevant and useful ones, in this case we are going to have a review below about: Essay, Report, Journals, Conferences, and Thesis

The first type of academic writing are essays. These are the ones that are constructed in three main parts, introduction, body, and conclusions. Whitaker (2009) mentions that essays are all of the writing works that have an introduction, body, and conclusions.

The author holds that in essays there must not be irrelevant and unnecessary information. It must have logical organization, according to the author in the introduction we have to include information that catches the attention of the reader, it has a thesis statement and gives readers the opportunity to know what to expect. In the part of the body, we have to

support what we say on the thesis statement, it is going to be divided into many paragraphs and in each of them we are going to talk of the topics with evidence and reasons. Finally, we have the conclusions, that is the summary of the whole essay, where we show the most relevant ideas of the writing.

After having analysed what an essay is, there is another type of academic writing that is important into the development of a language. It is the report, so it is a written work that is made for a specific audience and has a main purpose. The information and evidence are presented, analysed, and applied to a specific problem. The information that is presented into a report is clear and does not need much extra information, and it is easy to find and follow the information needed.

Bailey (2015) considers that a report is a description of any situation that happened time ago. When talking about academic writing, author says it can describe an experiment we have conducted, a survey that has been carried out, or a comparison to deal with a situation. Reports are based on primary as well as a secondary research, it uses numbering and sections, and it is more specific and detailed. The author says that reports are similar to essays because they follow a clear and logical format, they both have objectives, citations and references are included, they use visual information, and if it is necessary they may include appendices.

Another type of academic writing is journals, so, as we know, these ones may be defined as many things such as a record of events, we also may say that a journal is a newspaper, but also, we can include many publications as academic journals. Averkamp (2017) holds that:

A journal is a record of financial transactions in order by date. A journal is

often defined as the *book of original entry*. The definition was more

appropriate when transactions were written in a journal prior to manually

posting them to the accounts in the general ledger or subsidiary ledger.

Manual systems usually had a variety of journals such as a sales journal,

purchases journal, cash receipts journal, cash disbursements journal, and a

general journal. (Accounting Coach)

Now, we have another type that is very important for our professional life and are useful for any career in any language. We refer to conferences.

These are all of those that talk about a specific topic, inside a meeting, or a discussion. We may find many kinds of conferences, as academic, business, trade, etc. but in this case, we are going to talk about academic conference.

Edwards (2013) says that for doing a good conference, it needs to be based on three important aspects: it is important to communicate the evidence, and to have arguments for what we are talking about, the second aspect is to persuade the people that our arguments are true, and the last one is that the conference we are going to talk or write about has to be interesting and entertaining for gaining the attention of everyone.

Another aspect, that the author considers, is to be very conscious at the time that the conference was written, because at the moment of reading it, it will take much more time than could be given, so the ideas may be incomplete and probably we do not mention important aspects into the topic of the conference.

The last one, and one of the most important types of academic writing, is the thesis, so it is important to know what it is. According to Chandra (2008), a thesis is the information that a researcher has found in any topic. The author says that it constructs objectives with the evidence that the researcher investigated in the specific field. She adds that a thesis is also a required written work for students from universities to get a degree and holds that the discipline induces to many academic benefits for the rest of the life.

Academic writing structure

According to what anyone wants to write about, for example an essay, thesis, conference, etc., the structure depends on that, so each type of writing has a different step and structure to do. But in this case, we need to know that the main parts of any academic writing are: introduction, body, and conclusions.

Whitaker (2009), mentions that the introduction contains one or two paragraphs and relevant information, as anecdotes, surprising statements, maybe a quotation from an author that investigated on that topic, a brief review of the topic, and the importance. In the part of the body, the author says that it is going to be developed depending on the purpose that the researcher has, so each one of the points of this part, has to support the thesis statement. The supporting ideas need to have details that show reader that the ideas are true, they also need to be clear and complete. This part can be using quotations, paraphrasing, or using our own words. Finally, the part of the conclusion is a summary, taking the most relevant events or ideas from the topic that has been written.

Moreover, Herrel and Jordan (2016) wrote a writing model denominated "Step-by-Step" that consists on choosing what we want to write, then reading the words written slowly and fluently, and reread the written sentence. After these steps, the author considers that teachers get to provide students with a writing journal, demonstrate the process, make students to draw and write, with these, teacher may base on what students drew and wrote

to make a writing model, and finally the process have to be repeated every class to improve the writing skills of students.

On the other hand, Oshima & Hogue (2006) holds that the process of an essay has to follow a chronological order, because it is a better way for organizing ideas at the time they occur. This chronological order is useful for writing stories, relating historical events, and also for writing biographies or autobiographies. On the other hand, this process is also used for explaining processes and procedures. According to the authors, it is important to use signal words or phrases, such as first, then, next, finally, meanwhile. As examples of subordinators we have: after, as, as soon as, before.

Moreover, Gower, Phillips and Walters (2005), propose a similar structure or process for writing academically, starting with an introduction, working the ideas that the writer is going to develop, planning what topics may be included in the essay, doing a draft, editing and reviewing, and finally re-writing to get the final version.

Coherence

Coherence is a cognitive phenomenon, and it refers to the logical flow of topics that are related in some text and it establishes a mental textual world. (Menzel, Lapshinova, and Kunz, 2017)

Otherwise, Slawson, Whitton, and Wielmelt (2011) hold that coherence are the sentences and ideas that are connected and follow since the most general idea to the specific ones, without losing the idea. Authors add that coherence allows readers to move in an easy way from one paragraph to another, and have the main idea, from the beginning to the end of the essay.

The authors say it is important to use transitional expressions to link ideas, sentences, and also paragraphs; the use of pronouns is important to link ideas, too. The use of synonyms is important to create variety, and finally, it is necessary to use parallel structures to link ideas, sentences, and paragraphs.

Similarly, Min (2015) argues that coherence are the rhetorical aspects of the writing, and there are included the development and supporting of our thesis statement, also to synthetize and integrate readings, organize and clarify our ideas.

Moreover, Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) say that all good paragraphs have many characteristics in common when talking about the organization of it. So, the first one is the coherence, and it is made up of sentences that are ordered according to a principle. This principle changes according to what we are going to write about. Authors holds that the three types on how we can order may be chronological, spatial, and logical.

To make a chronological order of the sentences, we have to support the sentences and write each event of the story in order that they happened. In the case of spatial order means that each item has to be described throw space. For example, this could be top to the bottom, head to foot, or left to right. The logical order means that the supporting sentences follow a logical pattern in that each event is described before we mention another event.

Cohesion

Cohesion can be defined as an indicator in a text between the topics that it can contain. It refers to the internal relation linguistic elements that are linked throw lexical and grammatical devices between each sentence that the text can contain to make sense in what it says. (Menzel, Lapshinova, and Kunz, 2017)

Min (2015), sets the definition of cohesion as an important aspect for writing academically, because it affects the tone of the writing". The author holds that a cohesive writing is not just grammatically correct, but it is also the connection of our ideas "both at the sentence level and at the paragraph level.

In the same side, Bailey (2015) refers to cohesion as the joining some text with referential words such as, she, he, theirs, his, but also conjunctions as but, then. With the use of these words the text will be clear and understandable to read.

After analysing cohesion and coherence, it is important to talk about a relevant aspect that is inside into academic writing. It comes at the moment of citing the information that has been used into any academic research and it is very common in students of high school and college.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is very common in students that do not like to read and then to paraphrase what they have read for making an investigation or a school job. As we know, plagiarism is the use of information from other authors that is found in books, journals, etc., and we take them as if that information is ours, so we do not give the respective credit to the person that told that phrase or text before.

Bailey (2015) provides a definition of plagiarism as the use of ideas from whatever source (book, journal, etc.) and do not give the credit to the owner of that idea. It is considered a crime because the ideas of each person are property of the one who thought and wrote them first. Author adds the main difficulties for students to present this lack is to show they have made their work but they do not explain them in their own words and they say it is their own original ideas or conclusions.

The author proposes reasons for students to avoid plagiarism: to show they understand the rules for writing academically, copying will not help them to develop their understanding, it can be detected by teachers using a tool of a computer software, and it may lead to fail a course and sometimes to leave their school. For avoiding plagiarism, it is important to teach students that they have to read a lot and create their own meanings about what they study. Students need motivation for being interested on the topics they need to write about, so it is important that teachers give topics that students are interested on.

Importance of writing in the educational field

Writing is very important in whole languages, it is useful for the professional field in any degree. Being able to write academically may help us to get new opportunities along our life. For example, according to Huy (2015), writing plays two big roles in school, the first one is that it is a skill draws on the use of different strategies such as, planning, evaluation, and revision to accomplish any goal, for example, writing an essay or expressing opinions. And the second one, is that it may become a tool for learning subject matter. The author claims that writing is one way for transmitting ideas and thoughts to other people. In English, writing is the important skill, because it needs to be worked so hard. It is an important and essential skill because it may help students to learn other skills easily.

> Practicing writing skill will help students get acquainted with new types of
>
> writing as well as consolidate their writing skill. For example, students study
>
> writing skill from low to high, from basic to advance. At grade 10, students
>
> mainly study writing one paragraph or a small part in essay. It provides
>
> students some background knowledge before studying writing tasks at 11th
>
> grade. Similarity, writing tasks in 11th grade will prepare students essential
>
> skill to help them write well at higher level of 12th grade. Writing of 11th grade
>
> play an important role because it prepares needed things for students such
>
> as: grammar points, content, vocabulary and especially is helping them know
>
> how to write a paragraph or essay before they study carefully in 12th grade
>
> (p. 56).

Moreover, Battaglia (2017) holds that writing is important because when students arrive to university, they have to be able to write academically for their courses. The author claims that for writing academically, it is important to focus on many aspects such as critical

thinking, because after reading studies or books from different authors, students might have their own thinking in that determined field. Another aspect is that students have to demonstrate they understand the material they read. After that, they could be able to make a structure and organize their arguments. Finally, learning about the real life is important because we can learn from the audience and from our experiences.

Moreover, Shahrzad (2016) investigated the EFL learners' attitudes, so author concluded that students have positive emotional, behavioral, and cognitive attitudes when learning a language, thus, students are aware of the importance of English and of learning it as an essential subject.

Common writing problems

Nowadays, languages are very important, one of the most spoken and popular around the world is English. This language is considered the worldwide language, so it is important to develop and improve day by day our skills in English, in the four skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Levine (cited by Murray and Moore, 2006) the writing skill has been experienced as one of the most difficult skills that needs a combination of neuronal, physical, cognitive, and affective competences to get a well-done job. As we know, in this study we talk about the most common problems and difficulties that students have for writing academically. Now we have many problems and difficulties for writing and much more if it is for academic writing, there are various factors that influence in the development of this skill. Many authors have investigated the most common problems that students present when they write an essay, report, conference, etc., as foreign learners, such as, Alinsunod (2014), identified that the most common errors that students have for writing are mainly in the part of the grammar, the use of articles and determiners. The author reported a problem on the writing process where students cannot escape, and there is the existence of a learning language problem, because the problems they have are really noticed when doing this kind of samples.

Factors that cause writing difficulties

There are many factors that have a big impact in writing, especially when focusing on EFL students who, according to Ferris and Hedgcock (2014), are learners that have the motivation to learn to write in a foreign language because of the need to study master's degrees and for their own progress for a better literacy.

Cohen and Levine (2010) present many problems that students face day by day in the developing of writing academically. The author mentions, attention problems, spatial

ordering problems, sequential ordering problems, memory and language problems, as the biggest problems to improve in students' writing skills.

Moreover, Chokwe (2013), holds that the factors that may influence in the writing developing is the lack of proper teaching of reading and writing in schools, and it creates a big problem when students go to an institution of a higher level. The lack of resources is another factor that influence when writing, because it can create a poor writing in students because they do not have enough material or resources to work with, and learners may be confused and have empties.

On the other hand, Al-Khsawneh (cited by Adas and Bakir, 2013), indicates that the teaching method and environment are the main cause of the weaknesses in English. The author holds that low qualification are related with the lack of motivation in learners, or the interest in teachers. Another cause, that author mentions, is that EFL students have limited vocabulary, so students can be very repetitive in what they write or say. The third cause is that learners do use invented spelling, so when they write there is a restriction and they cannot use the words they know in their mother language and it can cause confusion and students will probably be paralyzed when writing academically.

The last problem or difficulty that is mentioned is the use of present simple only, the writing of the learners is not understandable, students do not have the enough feedback to clarify their doubts, and students may not distinguish which part of the writing is right or wrong.

All the information presented before will be useful for understanding the reason of this research study that turns around the difficulties that EFL students have for writing academically, so, next we have many studies that have been done through last years.

Previous Studies

Based on the situation of the many problems and difficulties that students have for writing academically, many and different studies have been carried out in order to identify the causes for these problems. Tillema (2015), investigated about writing proficiency in students of a second language. The author holds that writing is very important in the process of learning, but also adds that it is the most complex of the whole learning process. Flower and Hayes (cited by Tillema, 2015) put the complexity of writing on a map proposed on a metacognitive writing process. This well-known model consists of three parts or components.

The first one is "*writer's long-term memory",* that refers to the knowledge that the learner has. The second component is "*task environment",* which includes the topic, audience, and the text that was produced, and the last component is the "*writing process".*

This study was done with participants that were twenty-four and twenty-five years old, from the secondary education. The objective of the author was to investigate the difference between first and second language, and it was set up to compare both L1 and L2. The technique used for this was that each student had to write four argumentative essays in their first language, and four argumentative essays in the second language, in this case, English. The analysis of the information obtained, based on cognitive activities such as reading the assignment, planning, formulating, reading and evaluating their own text, and finally they evaluated the assignments.

On the other hand, Mohammad and Hazarika (2016), analysed problems such as capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and the use of language to provide recommendations for not committing errors in these aspects. The way in which this study was carried out was by selecting fifty students that were ending a semester, so they appeared in two midterms, after taking many quizzes and tests. The tool that the author used was a questionnaire to collect the opinion of the students, in the common writing problems in the aspects mentioned before.

After analysing the results obtained in the fifty students, the author shows that more than 50 percent does not have capitalization problems. The 23 percent opined that they rarely commit this kind of mistakes. In the part of punctuation, the 30 percent answered that they commit sometimes these mistakes, the other 30 percent said rarely, and the 23 percent answered that they never commit punctuation mistakes. In the third aspect, grammar, the 40 percent signed they never commit these mistakes, and the 27 percent checked on sometimes, and the other 27 percent answered rarely. The last part, spelling, the 43 percent of students said they do not have problems with that, it is the less common mistake in this study.

The author concluded that "Without a solid basis of the formal linguistic system, students cannot hope to develop into effective EFL learners in general and writers in particular. The approach outlined emphasizes the discursive and cognitive aspects of the development of the writing skill."

Aragón, Baires and Rodríguez (2013), decided to investigate about the difficulties of students to write academically because they base on that it is difficult for them to write in their native language, so it is going to be more difficult to write as EFL students, much more if we talk about academic writing.

Authors hold the difficulties in the English composition are noticeable when writing. The importance of this study is based on different factors, among them to improve teaching techniques and strategies, writing quality of students, stablish a knowledge for teachers and students for a better way of writing as EFL students, and finally, to show a new study plan for a better way of writing academically.

The authors used a qualitative method because they wanted to show the problems that students have when doing a writing work in English, but also for determining and analysing which techniques teachers use when requiring students to make an academic writing in English. The techniques used were three: an interview, a survey, and the content analysis. The interview was applied for teachers, and they collected important information, not only from the conversation, but also from the gestures, expressions, and also pauses. On the other hand, the survey was applied for groups of two or three students for an English composition in one semester.

The analysis was done in many phases: the first one, the students had to approve the survey done during the semester, so it could reveal important information. After that, researchers applied an interview to teachers, it was useful to look for the questions that were or not fully filled.

Moreover, Kroll (cited by Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017) claims that "it is reading that gives the writer the feel for the look and texture of reader-based prose", concluding that reading is a good strategy for students to make a successful writing. The last factor, the authors hold, is the influence of the first language on the target language, they say that the problem of EFL students is they are learning a second language but they are always thinking in their first language, so it can be a problem for them to retain new content in the second language and it can difficult for writing skills.

On the other hand, Harmer (cited by Belkhir and Benyelles, 2017) researched the factors that prevent student to write academically are, fear of failure, fear for committing mistakes, and some learners are uncertain to show their productions. Hence, he establishes the "writing habit" for students, Raimes (cited by Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017) says that "the more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational flow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language".

Furthermore, Younes and Albalawi (2015), investigated based on the most common problems in writing and translation, the reasons students have for committing these mistakes, and what the solution can be for avoiding these problems and difficulties. For carrying out this study, the author used different tools and techniques.

First, students produced their own writing, then a questionnaire was applied to students, finally, students made some written suggestions for avoid their problems when writing. After applying these activities, the author found that the most common problems that students have for writing come from grammatical, punctuation, and spelling problems.

Based on the results of this study, the author gives some recommendations where include increasing of writing assignments, define essay writing rules, the environment in class should be friendly, receive instructions and the enough guidance about how to write

academically, tasks should be based on students' abilities, and finally that teachers have to make students love reading, because it is essential for learning to write.

Moreover, Huy (2015), investigated the problems that students were facing for writing academically, this study was done with students of the 11th grade, with ages from seventeen to nineteen, they had to take each skill in every period, taking into account they had five periods every week. For collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaires with thirteen multiple choice questions to investigate the point of view of the students, the problems they have for writing, and the ways of how they learn to write.

After analysing the results of the study, the author concluded that the students are not aware of the importance of studying the writing skill. The author identified many problems, and those are; students do not have enough vocabulary because their ways of learning are not effective, students have many problems with grammar structures, students do not have interest on the topics that are provided for writing, teacher do not give them the chance to correct their mistakes, the materials that students use are not enough and they are repetitive, finally, the time that students have to practice this skills is not enough to achieve good results.

Moreover, Hassan (2015) investigated the academic writing challenges by answering two questions that included the difficulties encountered and the factors that may cause these difficulties. According to the author, learners have problems for expressing in their own voice and they cannot find a significant topic and relevant references. Instead, the most frequent difficulties that the author found are how learners use the language, they may not have coherence, and cohesion when writing academically.

The author concludes that the less problem are paraphrasing, referencing, and citing. Abdulkareem, (cited by Ibtisam, 2015) recommends that the exposure to academic writing conventions, academic words and phrases, and grammar can play an essential role in producing a satisfying piece of writing.

On the other hand, Fadda (2012) determined difficulties that students face when learning to write academically in English, and to differentiate between students' needs and objectives. The study was done because English is considered as one of the most important subjects and it is important to write academically, so, it was done with 50 postgraduate students.

Starting from asking what are the factors that stress students to have errors when writing academically, the aspects that facilitate or impede that students be successful in writing an essay or report, and what kind of circumstances students may face between their native language and the language they learn only in high schools or institutes, so the author encountered that those students have difficulties such as distinguish between spoken and

written English, making an outline before writing the draft, identifying the skills needed for a successful writing, and avoiding plague words and phrases.

CHAPTER II: METHOD

Setting and participants

This study was done in the city of Loja, in two important and prestigious English institutes. Thirty students, sixteen from one institute and fourteen from the other one was taken as the sample of this study. Eighteen students corresponded to women and twelve were men. Their ages ranged from 16 to 24 years old, but most of the students were sixteen years old. The students' proficiency level was the highest of the institution.

Procedure

This study, which is based on a qualitative and quantitative approach, was carried by using different techniques and instruments. Among them there were a survey, a writing activity, and an interview.

The survey contained open and yes/no questions which were focused on making students provide their reasons and opinions about what they think and consider of the different aspects regarding the academic writing field.

After that, a worksheet that contained two different activities was given to each student, the first part of this activity consisted in doing a research at home and then, they had to write an essay about what they researched, considering the three main parts of the essay, and the second part of the activity was to read an essay and point each paragraph by writing next to each one if it corresponds to an introduction, body, or conclusion part.

The last part of the data collection was done with the technique of interviews, and they were done with the teachers of the institutions. And they were asked about the activities, techniques, and tools that they use to improve students' writing skills. Another question turned around what they think of the system that is being applied in Ecuador for learning a second language.

After having collected all the information through the field research, the next step done was the tabulation of the results taking into account the opinion of each one of the students in the aspects they were asked in the survey, and then activities carried out by the students.

The analysis consisted in looking what each student has answered in each question and aspect of the survey. Then each one of the statements was compared with the activity, to make sure if what they think about their writing difficulties is what they reflect on what they did in each of the activities applied. After that, the results were contrasted with the information provided by the interviewed teachers. Finally, the results were supported with the information from the literature review for probing if the problems encountered are the same,

and if what students consider as a problem they are conscious on what they need to improve for a better way of writing.

CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This section includes a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results obtained from the instruments applied during the field research. These results which are presented in graphs are supported with the information from the literature review which provides a scientific point of view.

The following graphs have been analysed carefully to present the students' opinion on every single difficulty they have when writing academically:
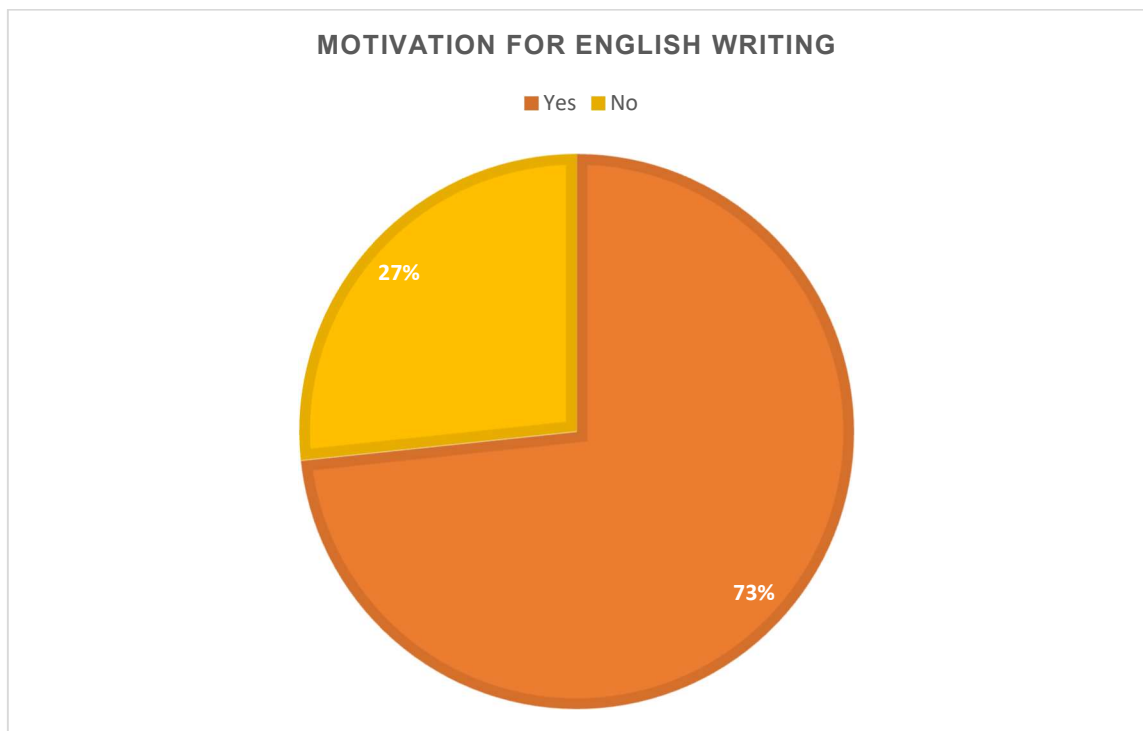
Graph 1: Motivation for English Writing
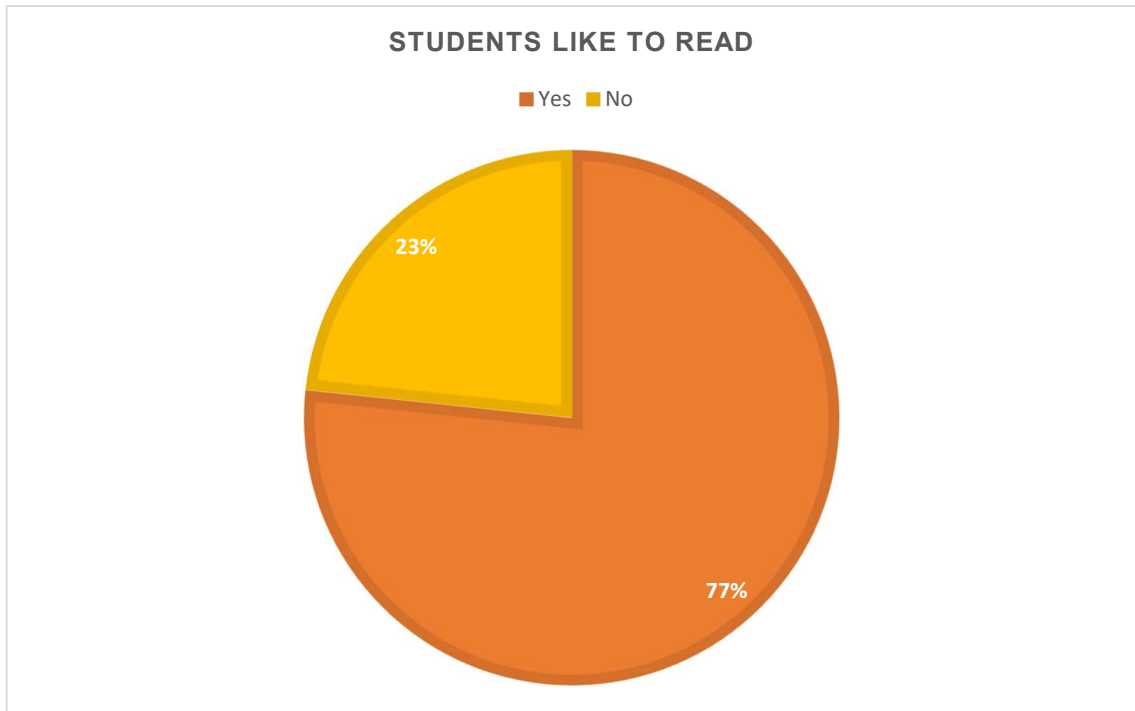**Source: Students' survey**
Author: René Íñiguez.

As shown in graph 1, surveyed students were asked if they feel motivated for writing any English academic writing. This graph shows that the 73 percent of the students, corresponding to twenty-two people, answered that they feel motivated for writing in English. They gave some reasons of their answers, and they said that they like to learn new languages and write about anything to improve their English skills, they want people to read their academic creations, they consider it is a good way to express their feelings in another language, also they said that writing helps to increase their vocabulary, and finally, they mentioned that it helps them to practice the language and, in this way, to avoid committing the same mistakes. The 27 percent, that corresponds to eight people, answered that they do not feel any motivation to write in English because they consider this activity can be boring,

and their lack of vocabulary for writing in another language can cause problems into the learning process. They provided some reasons for their dislike for writing in English, and some of them are the lack of vocabulary for writing, they do not feel prepared for writing academically, it is boring and they are not interested in writing, it takes too much time, they feel shy for what they write in another language, and finally, they feel it is more interesting to speak than to write.

On the other hand, while observing students, it was noticeable that most students of both English institutes did not feel motivated and they did not show enough interest in academic writing, they showed lack of interest because they did not feel comfortable when doing the activity and they did not pay much attention on what they were doing. Some of them expressed that they do not like to write because they do not have the appropriate and enough vocabulary for writing academically. While doing the activity, it was noticed that most of students were waiting for the time to finish the class, most of them take English classes because their parents have them to learn, it was noticeable that just few students want to learn a second language.

This graph shows a high interest on learning things that are important to improve their English level, especially when referring to the writing skill, but it is according on what they think of their motivation, but when doing an activity do not show motivation or interest on doing it well, just a low percent of them put all of their effort. For example, Belkhir (2017) holds that the EFL learners writing difficulties are the lack of motivation, lack of reading and the impact of students' first language into the target language writing.

STUDENTS LIKE TO READ

■ Yes ■ No

23%

77%

Graph 2: Students like to read
Source: Students' survey
Author: René Íñiguez

Reading is important to improve writing skills because it helps students to increase their vocabulary and support their ideas with scientific information. For this reason, it is necessary to know if students have the reading habit, so, in graph 2, under the question if students like to read English books or passages, the 77 percent of students, corresponding to twenty-three people, answered that they are interested in reading because they consider that it is important for increasing their vocabulary and improving skills such as writing and speaking. They also mentioned that reading is interesting and relax them; it makes them learn many things about what they want. Also, it helps to transport to another world to explore and discover new things for creating their own stories. And finally, some of them mentioned that they would like to write a book and reading lots of books will help them to do it well.

The 23 percent, corresponding to seven people, answered that they do not like to read, some of the reasons they provided are that they prefer the improvement of speaking and listening skills. Also, they mentioned that reading takes too much of their time for an activity that they consider that is boring and not interesting.

Comparing the previously mentioned results provided by the students, it was noticed that despite of the fact that there is a strong tendency on students affirming they like to read in a second language due to different reasons, it was not true because the observation demonstrated the opposite. When observing the students during the class, it seemed that they do not like to read too much because of the expression of their faces at the moment of

reading the material that their teachers selected for them to read. Also, it seemed the were not motivated to carry out this activity.

The results of the observation were supported by the opinion provided by their teachers who mentioned that students do not like to read the material that she selects for them with the purpose of having evidence to support their ideas in their academic written works. They also mentioned that sometimes it is better to ask students to select the topic that they prefer in order to make them read.

Regarding the results obtained through the analysis of the activity carried out by the students which involved them in writing an essay, it was noticed that they did not include any scientific evidence that supported their ideas. Then contrasting the information provided by the students, the teachers and the activity that they carried out, it was noticed that they do not use information from different sources that supports their ideas which is the result of their lack of the reading habit. Students need to be trained in developing the reading habit since as it is mentioned by Kroll (2017) reading is a good strategy for students to make a successful writing.

ANY PROBLEM OR DIFFICULTY FOR WRITING ACADEMICALLY

■ Yes ■ No

7%

93%
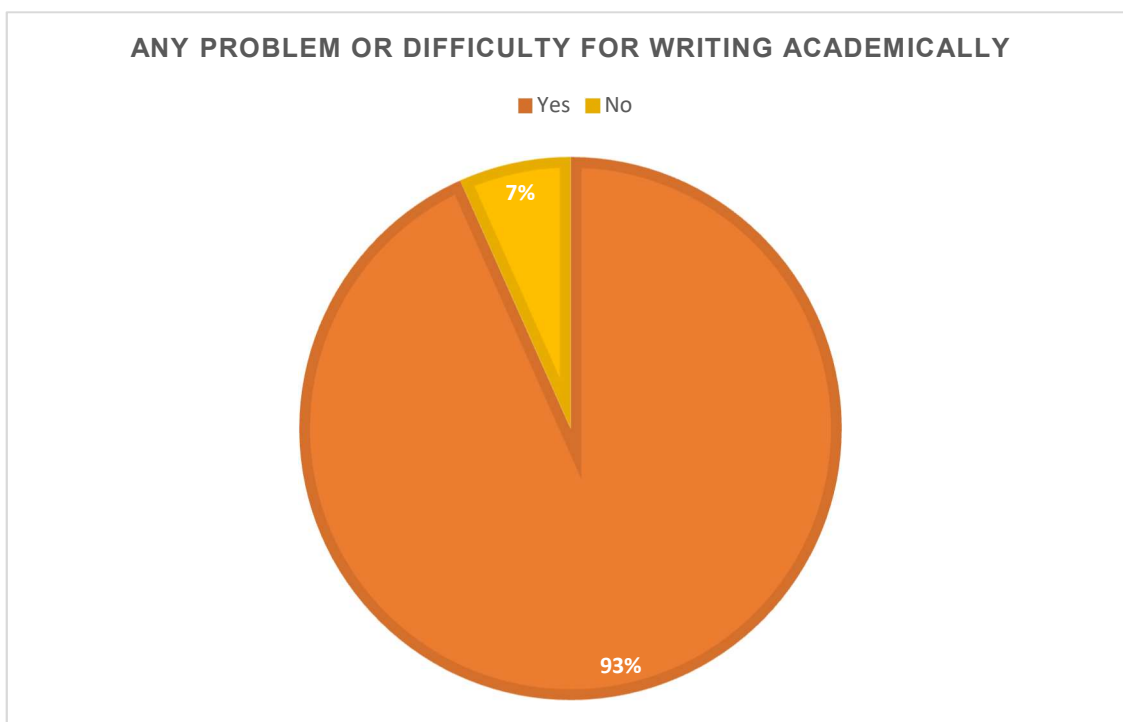
Graph 3: Any problem or difficulty for writing academically
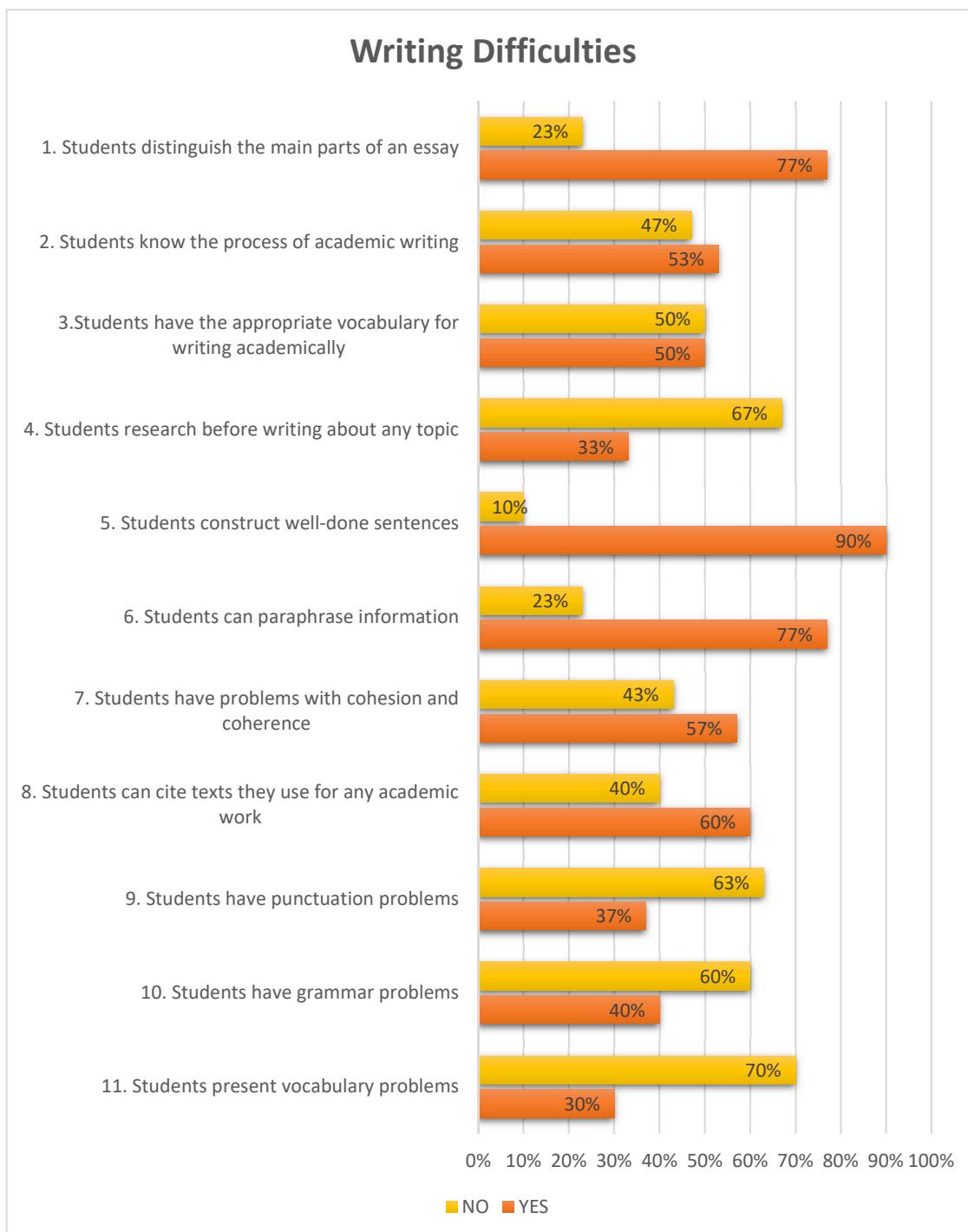**Source: Students' survey**
Author: René Íñiguez.

As it can be observed in graph 3, students answered about their difficulties for writing academically in English, so the 93 percent of them, corresponding to twenty-eight people, consider they have problems when writing academically, and only two students, it means the 7 percent, say they do not have any academic writing difficulty.

As it is shown, most of students consider they have problems for writing academically, it can be interpreted as a big problem for students that are about to finish their advanced level in an English institute.

The following table shows all the problems that students mention to have at the moment of writing academically:

Writing Difficulties

Question	NO	YES
1. Students distinguish the main parts of an essay	23%	77%
2. Students know the process of academic writing	47%	53%
3. Students have the appropriate vocabulary for writing academically	50%	50%
4. Students research before writing about any topic	67%	33%
5. Students construct well-done sentences	10%	90%
6. Students can paraphrase information	23%	77%
7. Students have problems with cohesion and coherence	43%	57%
8. Students can cite texts they use for any academic work	40%	60%
9. Students have punctuation problems	63%	37%
10. Students have grammar problems	60%	40%
11. Students present vocabulary problems	70%	30%

Graph 4: Writing difficulties
Source: Students' survey
Author: R. Íñiguez.

As it can be observed, there are lots of problems considered by the students to be present at the moment of writing academically which are going to be analysed separately considering the results obtained through the activity that was carried out by the students.

According to statement 1 which focuses on distinguishing the main parts of an essay, the 77 percent, corresponding to twenty-three people, answered they know the parts of an essay. So, the 23 percent, or seven surveyed people, answered they have problems when distinguishing the main parts of any academic written work.

This problem was confirmed when students were asked to recognize the three basic parts of an essay. Around 90 percent of the students did not do this activity well. This is a big problem because if students cannot identify those parts in other written works, it means they will not be able to write an essay that contains those three main parts. So, their written work will not transmit the message to the readers in an appropriate way. In the activity where they had to write an essay this problem was noticed as some students did not organize their ideas considering these three main important parts.

Regarding statement 2 that refers to the process of writing a well-written essay, it is shown that the 53 percent of the surveyed students, corresponding to sixteen people, consider that they know the academic writing process. The 47 percent, or fourteen people, asseverate they do not know the process for writing academically. It may be a big problem because almost the middle of the sample does not know the academic writing process. These results were contrasted with the activity that students carried out and it was probed that some students did a good job because their ideas turned around the topic that they selected. Also, it was noticed that they brainstormed their ideas before writing them. But the rest of students got confused and they mixed ideas and some of them were repetitive and not so clear which means that they did not brainstorm their ideas neither they edit their work before presenting it.

Regarding statement 3 that corresponds to the enough and appropriate vocabulary for writing academically,50 percent of surveyed students, or fifteen people, consider they have an appropriate vocabulary for writing academically, and the other 50 percent considers that their vocabulary is not the most appropriate for writing essays, reports, etc. When they did the writing activity in which they wrote an essay about any topic, the use of basic and poor vocabulary was noticed, and it is a problem because a lot of students have this problem. This situation corroborates what was said by the students.

Considering statement 4 which is focused on researching information to support students' ideas, only the 33 percent of students, corresponding to ten people, answered that they research on different books, journals, or websites, before start writing academically. And the 67 percent, corresponding to twenty people, do not research about any type of

information to support their ideas. These results show that most students are not interested in research. These results were corroborated with the activity that students had to carry out. Only a few people looked for information in books and on the internet, the rest of students wrote according to what they think and know about the topic they have chosen. Most of the students made a simple writing, they did not use information that may be valid for writing academically, so it may be considered as a low-level writing.

According to the statement 5 which focuses on writing sentences, the 90 percent of them can construct well-done sentences, corresponding to twenty-seven students. On the other hand, just 10 percent of the surveyed students, corresponding to three people, indicated they are not able to do that in a correct way. Contrasting these results with the ones obtained from the writing activity, it was noticed that students do not have problems at the moment of writing sentences specially with simple sentences because some students avoid using complex ones.

Statement 6 refers to paraphrasing the information that they have taken from different authors. As it can be observed in graph 4, the 77 percent showed that they are able to organize and paraphrase the information they have researched, and just the 23 percent have problems when organizing and paraphrasing information. But when analysing the essays of the students that used information from different sources, the problem was evident because the majority of them did not paraphrase the information in an appropriate way which then can result in plagiarism which according to Bailey (2015) is considered a crime because the ideas of each person are property of the one who thought and wrote them first.

In statement 7 that talks about cohesion and coherence problems in students, 57 percent of students, corresponding to sixteen surveyed people, consider that they have problems regarding this issue. The 43 percent, corresponding to fourteen people, say that they do not have these kinds of problems when writing academically.

The problem here, that students face is that when they write a short essay about any topic they want, they start talking about an aspect and it starts to lose spinning and there are ideas that do not correspond to the topic. In the part of the survey most of the students said they have cohesion and coherence problems, but they all were not completely sincere, almost the middle part of the surveyed students said they do not have these kind of problems, but at the moment they were tested, it shows that almost everyone loses cohesion and coherence in each one of the academic writings.

According to statement 8, about citing scientific texts, it shows that the 60 percent of students can cite the text they use, corresponding to eighteen surveyed people. The rest of students, or twelve people, consider they are not able to cite the texts they use for any investigation or any written work.

Statement 9 also shows the percentage regarding the use of punctuation, we can see that most of students do not have problems of punctuation, the 63 percent, or nineteen people of thirty consider they do not have these kinds of problems. But the 37 percent, corresponding to eleven people, consider they have punctuation problems.

These results were compared with the activities carried out by the students which confirm what the majority of students mentioned. A lot of punctuation marks were used by students along their essays, but some of them were not used appropriately and as a result a lot of too long sentences were found which are not common in English and which may represent a problem for readers at the moment of understanding the ideas. One of the reasons may be the interference of the first language which make them apply the same punctuation rules when writing in English.

In the next aspect, regarding the statement 10 talking about common grammar problems, it is noticeable that 60 percent of students do not have grammar problems for writing an academic work, corresponding to eighteen surveyed people. The 40 percent of these students, say they have grammar problems at the moment of writing any academic work.

In the part of grammar, spelling, and syntax, students show that they do not have many difficulties with grammar rules, only the twenty or thirty percent, have problems on the structure of a sentence or paragraph. Some students have spelling errors in simple words, or they have the typical problem of confusion between two similar words.

Finally, in graph 4, the statement 11, talking about vocabulary problems and as it shows us the vocabulary problems that students may have for not being able to write academically, so the 70 percent, or twenty-one surveyed people, attribute they do not have problems for writing academically, but, the 30 percent say they have not enough and appropriated vocabulary for doing an academic work.

As students could express in the survey, that they had problems with vocabulary, almost the same percentage had vocabulary problems because they cannot use advanced and appropriated vocabulary for writing. In the part of the writing activity there was noticed that students have a simple vocabulary with repetitive words and it is not advanced for writing academically.

The difficulties that students considered in the survey they answered to, have almost the same results when applying the writing activity. They demonstrated they had difficulties with cohesion and coherence, grammar, punctuation, and, in some cases, vocabulary. One of the most relevant aspect is the lack of interest that students have for doing academic writing activities.

Teachers, that were interviewed, hold that students have big problems for writing academically and these problems may be caused for their lack of interest and motivation. Also, they mentioned that students do not like to read about topics that have vocabulary that is more technical and difficult. Some of them consider that it is difficult for students to improve their skills because some students are studying English, not because they like languages, but they feel obligated to do it for their parents. On the other hand, they consider that one of the biggest problems for writing as foreign learner is that students relate their first language with the one they are learning, so when they write they commit many punctuation, grammar, and vocabulary mistakes.

As some results of this study turnaround of when students are asked about what kind of problems, they asseverate that in most cases they do not have problems for writing academically, but when they are put to write a short essay, they show the opposite to what they answered in a survey.

Another one is that most students cannot distinguish between an introduction, body parts, and conclusions of an essay. It is caused because they do not pay attention to what they read and just complete the activity as fast as possible. It shows the lack of interest on improve their reading skills, and it affects their way of writing academically.

Students affirm they feel motivated for writing as EFL students, but when they are asked to write short academic essays, they do not show any interest on do the task well. They just write their ideas about any topic, and their works do not have coherence and cohesion, thus, their ideas are unfinished and do not make sense on what they should transmit in the essay for being interesting

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show that regarding the writing academic field, there are many problems and difficulties that students face in spite of their advanced proficiency level in English. Those problems and difficulties are related to punctuation, coherence, cohesion, and the lack of scientific information that supports their ideas.

The lack of interest that students demonstrate at the moment of reading information to be used in their academic written production results in a low-quality written work which does not have scientific evidence that supports their ideas.

Distinguishing the main parts of an essay is considered as one of the main problems faced by students. This problem then makes students write poor-quality essays that do not contain well-organized ideas that are necessary in order for the readers to understand the message.

The interference of the first language causes punctuation and grammatical problems in the second language learners. This situation makes students get confused at the moment of using punctuation when writing in a second language. Students apply some of the rules regarding punctuation and grammar that are used in Spanish to write in English.

Relating ideas among sentences and paragraphs is a very important aspect in academic writing and this sometimes is not considered by students; therefore, we have written products that contain ideas that do not flow which make it difficult to be understood by the readers.

Punctuation is another problem that is present when writing academically. Although the problem does not lie mainly on the lack of the use of them, sometimes this use is not the appropriate one according to the English punctuation rules which are necessary in order to transmit correctly the message to our selected audience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For a well-done writing job, it is important to read, so it is necessary to encourage students to read as much as possible to increase their interest on writing, and it can help students to improve their writing skills, and also to increase their vocabulary.

Teachers should increase the writing tasks that include a previous research. It can help students to have a better vocabulary and to increase their motivation and interest on writing about any topic. It will create a criterion about many topics.

As it is known, English Institutes in Ecuador have just one hour daily, so this short time do not admit students to do activities that include all the skills and aspects that a learning process involves. So, teachers should take into account that writing is one of the most complex skills and it needs to be developed as much as possible, and much more if students are into an advanced level.

It is important to create an effective system with bases for a formal linguistic program, for students to develop as effective EFL learners and writers particularly. Students are not able to write for academic purposes in another language apart from their native language. For this reason, practicing day by day is very important.

Teachers should assess students' written works periodically because that can be a good way to monitor the writing development. Providing appropriate feedback in each one of the parts of the writing process, will help students to improve their writing skills.

Students should be involved in many activities that may help them to improve their English skills, such as games, listening to English music, talking to foreign people, and express their thoughts by writing but arguing what they write.

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Tabuk University. *Asian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 3(2), 10-20.

ANNEXES

Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja

Ciencias de la Educación: Mención Inglés

Dear student,

Read the following text and identify the different parts of an essay, and then write the name of each one next to each paragraph.

A Weak Economy: Prime time for a truck driving job?

Truck drivers are needed in virtually all parts of the country to transport and deliver the goods needs for everyday life. In fact, essentially everything that is used and consumed in the United States is at one time transported by commercial truck before it is eventually sold. Given the dependence of many companies on transportation services, the American economy would essentially come screeching to a halt without commercial truck drivers.

If you are considering becoming a professional truck driver, you could be behind the wheel on the open road in less than two months. Most truck driving schools take between 3 and 6 weeks to complete training. Many also offer financial assistance programs to help students with tuition costs and associated fees. Obtaining a rewarding job in the transportation industry can provide you with job security and great pay despite a weak economy.

Thus, truck drivers are still heavily depended upon despite a slow economy, some would argue they are needed even more so during uncertain economic times. As a result, truck drivers are enjoying better than ever job perks and advantages. To retain current drivers and attract new ones, many truck driving companies are offering monetary bonuses and signing incentives. Wages are increasing and benefits, such as medical insurance and 401(k) plans, are extremely competitive. Furthermore, many driver jobs have flexible schedules, allowing drivers to choose when they are out on the road and when they are home.

A weak economy is typically replete with layoffs, crumbling companies, and a fragile stock market. Many companies within a myriad of industries struggle to stay afloat amidst financial uncertainties, with employees often bearing the brunt of such a burden. Yet there are a few careers and industries that remain untouched during such tentative times, perhaps even benefit from it. One such job is found within the transportation industry.

Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja

Ciencias de la Educación: Mención Inglés

1. **Write a short essay about any topic that you like.**

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STUDENTS' SURVEY

AGE: _____   GENDER: M( )   F( )

1. **Do you feel motivated to write in English?**

Yes ( ) No ( )

Why?

_____

_____

_____

2. **Do you like to read?**

Yes ( ) No ( )

   Why?

_____

_____

_____

3. **Do you have any difficulty or problem when you write essays or any academic work?**

Yes ( ) No ( )

If your answer was Yes:

   3.1 Which of the following problem do you consider you have?

   Check yes or no

DIFFICULTIES	YES	NO
I distinguish the main parts of an essay		
I know the process of an academic writing		
I feel motivated for writing academically		
I have knowledge in the appropriated vocabulary for writing academically		
I make a research before writing about something		
I know how to construct a sentence		
I can organize the information and paraphrase		
I have problems with cohesion and coherence		
I can cite the texts I use for writing		
I have problems of punctuation		
I have problems with grammar		
I have problems with vocabulary		

3.2 Other problem or difficulty? What kind of?

_____

_____

4. Comments:

_____

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