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Ecuadorian public high school students' errors in EFL writing skill.

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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El presente trabajo de fin de titulación: Ecuadorian public high school students' errors in EFL writing skill, realizado por García Vásquez Grace Lissette, ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

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DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

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DEDICATION

This "Ecuadorian public high school students' errors in EFL writing skill" study is dedicated to my husband and little daughter, who have been supporting and encouraging me since I started this challenging major. This work is also dedicated to my mother and sister, who are unconditionally there for me and taught me to work hard for the things that I want to achieve.

Thanks God for giving me the wisdom to accomplish my goals in life and the strength for not giving up upon the difficulties.

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ABSTRACT

The present research is called "Ecuadorian public high school student's errors in EFL writing skill". The aim of the following study is to investigate and analyze the errors that students make when writing. It took place in Ibarra in a public high school with the support of sixty-three students from the second high school year, who are studying English as a foreign language. This study was carried out with the help of five English teachers. The methods used were qualitative as well as quantitative. The instruments applied were surveys, questionnaires and a deep content analysis through the students' pieces of writing.

The overall analysis revealed that the students' most common error in writing was the lack of organization of the ideas in their paragraphs. They wrote many interesting ideas but they did not take care of the importance of the organization of the writing elements.

Key words: Writing skill, Form of the Language, Content, Mechanical, Errors, Surveys, Questionnaires, Variables

RESUMEN

El presente proyecto de investigación se titula "Errores en la destreza de escritura en estudiantes de colegios públicos ecuatorianos que aprenden Inglés como lengua extranjera". El objetivo principal es investigar y analizar los errores que cometen los estudiantes al escribir. La presente investigación se realizó en un colegio público en la ciudad de Ibarra con el apoyo de sesenta y tres estudiantes de segundo año de bachillerato. Este estudio se llevó a cabo con la colaboración de cinco profesores. Los métodos utilizados fueron tanto cualitativos como cuantitativos. Los instrumentos aplicados fueron encuestas, cuestionarios y un análisis minucioso del contenido de los párrafos escritos por los estudiantes.

Los resultados del análisis revelaron que el error más frecuente de los estudiantes al escribir, es la falta de organización de sus ideas en el párrafo. Escribieron muchas ideas interesantes pero sin tomar en cuenta la importancia de la organización de los elementos al escribir.

Palabras clave: Destreza de escritura, Forma del Lenguaje, Contenido, Mecánica, Errores, Encuestas, Cuestionarios, Variables

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are an important aspect of communication at any age and for any language. Teaching good writing skills have always been a very interesting but hard task. The importance of the writing process relies on the fact that it is easy to teach students about how to write coherently by using the correct grammatical structures, punctuation and spelling. However, when students fail to write because their writings have many errors that do not let readers understand the message and when their paragraphs have lots of mistakes related to organization, unity and cohesion; it is then when we realize that something is going wrong during the teaching process.

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the Ecuadorian students' errors in EFL writing skills by answering to the following research questions: Which error has the highest percentage in each variable? Which is the most frequent error in the students' written texts? How do students and teachers perceive errors in EFL writing?

Some scientific studies were researched in different journals to give more relevance and support to the present investigation. Among the researched authors, Zabihi (2013) aimed her study to test the relations and differences between the traditional pedagogical feedback on error within the corrective feedback. She concluded that a corrective feedback definitely reduced the amount of errors and improved the students' writing performance.

Similarly, the study of Farshi (2014) was intended to compare the impact of the traditional hand written corrective feedback with the electronic corrective feedback on EFL students. Finally, his study concluded in the great advantages that feedback has but stated that the electronic feedback is more effective than the traditional one.

On the other hand, Wu and Garza (2014) focused their study on the analysis of the causes that influence the sixth grade EFL learner's errors when writing. The purpose of their study was to prove that most of their mistakes did not take place because of the teaching process but happened because of other influential factors. As a conclusion, they stated that the errors occurred because of the interlingual and intralingual transfer.

The following proposal becomes a useful tool for the teachers that work day by day with the students, the researcher who had the opportunity to analyze the problem in depth and to all the people who are interested in this topic. It contributes a lot to the educational field because all the gathered information as well as its interpretation and results will let teachers analyze the causes that lead to the students' writing errors and to take immediate action to change and

improve the teaching-learning process. Finally, it also contributes to future studies because all the information represents a valuable tool that together with more studies related to the students' learning skills can contribute to giving more attention to the effect of the teaching practices.

CHAPTER I.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains several topics and scientific studies that were investigated to provide scientific support to the following proposal. Within the researched topics, the most appropriate and important are: the writing skill, coherence, cohesion and unity, elements of writing,. errors in English as a foreign language and previous studies related to the errors in the EFL writing skill.

According to the writing skill, this study focuses on its definition, importance and writing process. Another important aspect has to do with the analysis of its characteristics like coherence, cohesion and unity.

It also describes the points of view of different authors in relation to the topic sentence, supporting sentences, transition words, punctuation, spelling, capitalization and grammar in English as a foreign language writing.

Another important aspect is the one related to the authors' descriptions of the causes and types of errors in EFL writing. All these topics are supported by the previous studies that were researched regarding to the most common errors in the EFL writing skill.

1.1 Writing Skill

1.1.1 Definition.

To start with, Wilson and Glazier (2012) state that the writing skill is a complete process that starts with very simple and small words that join to become phrases, clauses and sentences. Then, they group together to form paragraphs and finally essays. Besides, all these parts of speech must follow certain models and rules to achieve the goal of communicating. It is necessary to select all the words and phrases in such a correct and precise way so as to have a complete meaning supported with the necessary additional information that lead to logical and organized paragraphs.

On the other hand, Grigorenko, Mambrino and Preiss (2014) remark that the word "writing" is worldwide understood for any speaker and in every country. They describe this skill as a complete procedure of production of written material. They mention the writing changes that have occurred since 1965 up to the 80's. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of the researches made during the last two decades that categorize the writing skill through a cognitive perspective and a problem-solving process according to the context in which it takes place. They also talk about the simplest and about the complex ways of understanding this skill, from reproducing letters and words up to communicating and expressing a meaning.

1.1.2 Importance.

Moreover, Applebee and Langer (2012) emphasize the importance of the writing skill as a mechanism to acquire knowledge as well as to raise the social and economic development of any society. They also talk about a list of improvements that must be taken into account in the different areas such as the educational development area and the modifications in the curriculum area, all of them because of the importance of the writing skill. Additionally, they insist in the priorization of this skill and the necessity of more attention as the only way of improving the youth literacy skills for their present education and their future achievements.

In this way, Yagelsky (2017) explains that the writing skill is important as the only way to comprehend and take part of the world that surrounds us. In addition, he explains that it is the only way to learn, to appropriate of our own experiences and to transmit what we learn to others. He emphasizes the word "writing" as a significant mean of expression and a mean of social communication that can lead to a world change. He mentions that writing is important for succeeding in the different areas of life. There is not enough time to improve the skills people need to write effectively, people need all their professional careers to develop those skills. Each word is important to place the basis of this important process.

1.1.3   The writing process.

This point is also sustained by the work of Scarry and Scarry (2013). He reports the importance of the writing process as a way to brainstorm ideas and get the necessary material for writing. He points out the different stages a writer goes through when writing until he or she reaches the finished work. He mentions that there can be many other methods or steps but he agrees on the basic ones. The prewriting stage that has to do with choosing the topic and brainstorming ideas. The writing and revising stage that is related to writing, rereading and revising the first draft. He agrees on the idea of adding, cutting or moving any detail in this stage. The last one has to do with proofreading. This is the final copy and in this stage, you are able to correct spelling mistakes, omitted words or typos.

In contrast, Morton (2014) relates the whole stages of the writing process to daily life situations. He mentions that the first stage is prewriting; it is related to planning or having the idea of going to any place or preparing something to someone. This stage comes even before the drafting because it has to do with gathering ideas. He details several tools for this stage, like brainstorming, mapping or clustering or bubble mapping, sketching or visually representing ideas, freewriting, focused freewriting, ghost writing, new writing, round robin writing. In the same way, the drafting stage will be as effective as the previous one if the outlined argument, supported evidences and the introducing and concluding steps are well guided and well done.

Finally, the final trek or revising must take place in the writing process because it assures all the process that you have done until this point.

1.1.4 Coherence, Cohesion and Unity.

When we review the factors related to coherence, Campbell (2013) comments that it is related to the quality of oneness. He mentions that it has to do with the relation between the discourse and the context in which it happens. He states that it is also related to the sense of completeness between what is written and what occurs at the time of doing it. For him, coherence, cohesion and unity are basic when structuring well produced written works. To demonstrate this, he states that sentences need to be joined in a logical way, they can never be isolated. He reminds the necessity of having as many sentences as you can write so as to completely develop the topic sentence.

What we usually have in mind when we talk about coherence is unity, but Wolfram, Lenk and Ventola (1999) argues this when he says that coherence is not an innate property of texts as cohesion and connectivity. He states that it is based on the language of the text as in the additional information given by the linguistic, social, cultural and communicative contexts and principles. Coherence means directing the reader to new points that must be previously ordered. Finally, he mentions that coherence is not a state but a complete and complex process because it depends on both, the writer and the reader.

It is important to be clear about the importance and definition of cohesion in writing. This is why Bailey (2011) admits that cohesion means putting phrases and paragraphs together with reference and transition words so that all the writing is clear and legible. He emphasizes in the use of reference words as the only way of keeping away from repetition. He examines many cases and examples with clear illustrations that show the real functions of transition words. To be able to understand this, he says that cohesion means focusing on the "grammatical" aspect of the text because it affects the tone of your message and the tone of your writing. He also recommends to avoid the use transition or reference words when you do no need them because they will only confuse the reader.

A great deal has been written about cohesion. Brown (2007) mentions that cohesion is one of the most important aspects of any writing. It is about a puzzle game that fits perfectly. They advise that if the receiver or reader can simply follow the ideas of a written work and can clearly see that everything matches together as a single piece, it abound of cohesion. They encourage the use of repeated key content words, linking words and ordered information. To sum up, they advise about the ability of combining good information in a text so that the reader can see the connections between them.

It is important to note however, that according to Oshima and Hogue (2006), unity is an important element when writing a paragraph. It refers to writing and discussing about one main idea from its beginning up to its ending. They clearly explain that all supporting sentences, when talking about unity, must explain and justify the main or principle idea. Any paragraph must stay on the topic and discuss only one idea. They illustrate all these characteristics through explicit examples and cases. Unity means the state and property of many important parts joined as a complete whole. As an illustration, they mention that if a paragraph is talking about buying a specific thing, you must discuss only that. It is important not to forget that if you want to discuss about any other advantage related to the same topic, you must start a new paragraph.

It could also be said that Soles (2010) agrees that body paragraphs need to show unity between them. She highlights the idea that all the sentences and phrases have to strengthen, illustrate and clarify the topic sentence. If you do not do these, you will be transgressing this important principle. She mentions an interesting tool for avoiding this violation; this tool is related to carefully editing all the sentences from the written work to remove the ones that break up this unity. This process must be done at any stage of the writing process because it will help to have an excellent finished written work.

1.2. Elements of Writing.

1.2.1. Topic sentence and supporting sentences.

Warden and Chen (2014) explain that all paragraphs consist of one or more than two sentences. Actually, there is not any rule that allows or prohibits the extensiveness of a paragraph, but it is clear that they must have more than one sentence. Moreover, these authors relate these elements with a hamburger. They mention that all paragraphs need to have a topic sentence that is like the top bread of the hamburger. It must be clear enough to hold with it more sentences that are the supporting sentences. The supporting sentences act out as the tomato, lettuce and cheese of the hamburger. According to the analogy of the hamburger, these supporting sentences are like all the hamburger ingredients. Finally, the concluding sentence or the bottom bread must be clearly stated to hold all the sentences together.

1.2.2. Transition words.

Having considered the importance of the topic sentences and supporting sentences, Royal (2013) says that the use of transition words in a paragraph corresponds to one of the most important principles when writing because they show the course of the composition. He also explains that there are four types of transition words. The continuation words related to the green traffic lights that allow readers to keep moving in the same direction. The illustration

words or flashing green light that advise people to be careful and watchful while reading. The contrast words or flashing yellow light that guides readers to change the way into another path. Finally, the conclusion words or red light that tells people that they are going to arrive to a conclusion.

1.2.3. Punctuation.

At the same time, Whitesmoke Inc. (2014) argues that from all the elements of writing, punctuation is the most important of all. In addition, it guides us through all the written work. It constitutes the system of symbols and rules of any language. Their correct use helps readers to keep away from confusions and to understand the goal of the writing. As an illustration, punctuation modifies the rhythm of how people read phrases and it changes their meaning. There are many punctuation marks with their individual rules, usages and examples. Each of them are only a little detail of the huge power that lies in the use of a correct punctuation.

1.2.4. Spelling.

Referring to this topic, Pumfrey and Elliot (2013) state that spelling works as an intermediary of the influence of the phonological knowledge on the writing and reading skills. Moreover, the practice of spelling helps to the storage of connections between the spoken words and the letter-sound components in written words. Spelling helps children in many different ways. It motivates children to focus and to analyze on the first letters, to discriminate sounds and to discover word recognition. Spelling stimulates the development of phonological techniques in reading and in many other skills.

1.2.5. Capitalization.

Regarding to capitalization, we should also consider Sitter (2014) when she mentions that it lets us identify the beginning of something new. She recalls the idea that every first word must be capitalized. This must happen in every new sentence. Furthermore, she remembers readers the importance of capitalizing proper nouns. When proper nouns are made of two or more words, we need to capitalize each of the words. Sometimes in advertising, people do not capitalize words that must be capitalized. It usually happens on purpose. Besides, we must always capitalize the pronoun "I", titles and abbreviations, proper adjectives, days, months, holidays, nationalities, religions, languages, buildings, the words in a list and the main topics and subtopics in an outline.

1.2.6. Grammar in EFL writing.

On the other hand, Hunter and Wallace (1995) explore the basic questions about the relation and place of grammar issues in the writing process. They mention that grammar cannot be

separated from writing, they must go together. They recall the idea that grammar must be included in all writing programs. Moreover, they also list the views and perspectives of grammar issues from many different angles and from many different people like teachers, parents, directors, students, writers among others. They also include the fact that even in the past grammar was joined to the teaching of writing. They conclude with an evaluation of what we still need to teach about grammar in the writing skill and what do we still need to improve for the next EFL generations.

1.3. Errors in EFL Writing (Causes and Types)

It can be seen from the above analysis that James (2013) confirms that most of the errors in EFL writing are divided in five different sections. One of these sections has to do with the misused forms like wrong preposition combinations, wrong tenses or misspelled expressions. Also incorrect omissions and unnecessary words, prepositions or articles and misplaced and confused words. All these sections do not allow learners to communicate effectively and they cannot reach their goal.

Subsequently, Wilson and Glazier (2014) mention the importance of learning about the form of sentences, as a way to control and be aware of your own sentences. The more you learn about this structure, the more you understand the errors and prevent yourself from committing them. Between the most common mistakes or errors, we can find fragments, run-ons and weird phrasing. People tend to write incomplete sentence forms, when they do this, they cannot communicate a complete thought or idea.

Benjamin (2013) states that most of the errors in EFL happen because people do not know that writing needs a different code according to the type of reading. Young learners make most of the errors while they are learning. Starters usually commit mistakes that give necessary information to help them the next time they write. Sometimes teachers waste too much time emphasizing in the correction of the errors rather than in improving the communicative objectives of the course.

Mahrooqi, Thakur and Roscoe (2015), also sustain the previous theory and list some of the types related to the most common errors in EFL writing. Some of them are: the use of a mix of simple and complex sentence forms; it means heterogeneous paragraphs. The use of a limited range of grammar structures or the use of less accurate sentences that can cause some confusion to the reader or receiver. They mention that some errors rely on the altered meaning that result of the bad use of capitalization, punctuation and grammar.

Agusten (2011) shows the result of several studies based error judgement that were directed by Santos (1988). The results revealed that the errors of students of EFL in the writing skill

were mainly in the lexical area. By lexical area, we understand the single words; parts of a word and word chains. Lexical mistakes were considered as the most severe of all the errors because they confused the goal of the meaning and disrupted the message and the natural course of communication. Finally, the second common error was related to vocabulary and verbs.

Another significant factor is the one suggested by Bartholomae (2013), who insists that most of the common errors that happen to students when writing occur because of the lack of editing strategies. If teachers paid more attending to the process rather than to the finished work, students would be able to correct the most common errors on the way and would learn to be wise enough to avoid the same mistakes on further writings. The author claims that these errors will disappear with the daily practice and that students will become more coordinated and fluent.

Having considered all the mentioned authors and their important contributions, it is important to detail the scientific studies that were researched in different journals to give more relevance and support to the following investigation. Thus, among the authors who investigated the errors in the EFL writing skill, the most important are the following:

Another study was carried out by Zabihi (2013). She tests the relations and differences between the traditional pedagogical feedback on error with the corrective feedback. She pursues to answer if the allocations encourage EFL learners to attend to linguistic forms in writing and if they increase or decrease the number of linguistic accuracy in writing. The conclusion of the research questions led to the decision about which participant were able to be chosen in the study. The participants were twenty male and female advanced Iranian EFL learners that were part of a writing class in an institute in Shiraz. It is important to mention that they were randomly selected between six classes of the same level. The participants were aged between twenty-two up to thirty-two years old. They were not detailed about the whole study; they only knew that the study was about their writing.

The study consisted of being delegated ten different topics based on social concerns. The participants had to write a 250-word essay in forty-five minutes. The essays were analyzed and corrected. The students received the corrected writings and after two days, they received the same instruction. Both works were compared and analyzed. To conclude, the following study states that writing plays an important role in the EFL classroom. Recasts showed effectiveness when applying them correctly because they proved to reduce the amount of errors and improved the writing performance.

Shahhoseiny (2015) conducted the following study. Its purpose was to make known the amount of errors in a paragraph writing in the First Year of translation students in the Bushehr University in Iran. The three main hypothesis of this study are that there is not a significant difference in the number of errors between the topic sentence and supporting sentences, the supporting sentences and the concluding sentence and topic sentence and concluding sentences in a paragraph writing made by Bushehr EFL students.

The method applied consisted of two phases. The first one had to do with collecting and analyzing data while the second one had to do with analyzing the data gathered through a SPSS software. The participants were seventy students of the second semester of university. Their age range was nineteen to twenty eight years old. The instruments used were a proficiency test and background information. The time for the paragraph was limited to sixty minutes. This short test was taken several times and with interesting topics. In conclusion, the results showed that Iranian students had several problems when writing paragraphs. It happened because English was not a second language in that country and most students were not familiarized with writing rules, as they could not use this language in daily communications or in real English environments.

Farshi (2014) developed another interesting study that aimed to compare two types of corrective feedback on EFL learners' writing skill. The researched question had to do with the impact on language learners of the traditional hand written corrective feedback and the electronic corrective feedback. The selected participants were thirty-five advanced EFL students from a language institute in Tabriz, Iran. They were aged between twenty-one to thirty-six years old.

This study was developed with a quasi-experimental mode using two different kinds of treatment for two experimental groups. The classes held twice a week and one researcher was the teacher of the three classes. First, all the participants worked in a proficiency test. Then they received the same explanation about the different genres of a paragraph for fourteen sessions. The first group received the task of writing a paragraph based on the learnt topics by hand. The second group had the same task but they were told to submit their homework via email and finally the last group did the same activity but they had the chance to write their paragraphs traditionally or electronically. To conclude, both methods of providing students of corrective feedback were effective, but the electronic feedback resulted to be more effective than the traditional one.

Furthermore, Wu and Garza (2014) address this study by developing and testing a series of hypothesis that explored sixth grade EFL learners' major writing problems by analyzing the factors that cause these errors. The participants were similar in age and belonged to an

elementary school in Taiwan. They were learning English as a foreign language. Since they were part of this study, they received classes as if they were in first grade. Participants received the instruction to write about the given or chosen topic. All the writing samples were sent to an English native and certified teacher so that he or she could check and analyze the errors. All the errors were highlighted and labeled. Then, they were categorized. Finally, this study identified that the errors occurred because of the interlingual and intralingual transfer. With the results, teachers in that country could implement activities for the areas that needed improvement.

Likewise, Ahangari and Babapour (2015) debated on the way teachers could correct EFL students' written grammatical errors. The central questions then become: Does self-correction affect the accuracy development of low intermediate and high-intermediate EFL learners? Does peer-correction affect the accuracy development of low-intermediate and high-intermediate EFL learners? This study was possible with the participation of eighty female learners, four homogeneous classes that corresponded to low and higher intermediate students. All the participants were aged from fifteen to nineteen years old.

Within the instruments used, we found a reliable proficiency test, the writing section test of the PET exam and topics from the students' textbook. The participants were supposed to write the paragraph and immediately after they finished the composition, they were randomly assigned to peer correction and self-correction. All the learners wrote seven paragraphs during the seven weeks of this study. To conclude, the findings obtained proved that both methods work well when teachers wisely know when to apply them in an EFL classroom.

In the same way, Naghdipour and Koc (2014) present a study that describes and evaluates the teacher intervention for avoiding errors during the writing classes. The students that participated in this study were sixty-eight first-year English translation students from a major university in Iran. They worked independently with the subject Grammar and Writing I and II. They were divided into two homogeneous groups. They worked during two complete semesters. The first group or control group received the normal and original curricular content while the other group only half of it.

The complete content had to do with learning paragraph writing during the first semester and essay writing during the second semester and the third semester grammar. The experimental group or second's group curricular content was changed, and they received paragraph and essay writing instead of grammar. In conclusion, the findings or results of this study highlights the success of the teacher's intervention during the first year of the writing classes. This study also points out the difference between the two groups because even when they started at the

same point and had a significant improvement, the experimental group gained and made a better progress in their writing abilities.

CHAPTER II.

METHOD

2.1.   Settings and Participants.

This research proposal was carried out with the help and collaboration of a well-known public school in the city of Ibarra, Ecuador. There is an approximate number of four hundred forty-four students who attend the morning school schedule. There are about forty-five teachers in charge of the different subjects in the whole school while there are six English teachers who teach English as a foreign language. The participants that allowed this study to be carried out were sixty-three students from the second high school year and five English teachers.

This school is planned to help and educate students with families from middle to low socioeconomic level. It is important to mention that most of the students do not have exposure to the English language in other area apart from the English classes. This reality influences the results obtained.

2.2.   Procedures.

In order to carry out the literature review, it was necessary to consider all the variables to provide the adequate scientific support to this study. The authors mentioned, valid the most important aspects related to the form of the language, specifically grammar. What is more, this research also emphasizes in the content of writing like topic sentence, supporting sentences and transition words. In addition, they also refer to the mechanical aspects like punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

On the other hand, the approaches applied were quantitative as well as qualitative. The instruments used to gather the necessary information for the analysis were the students and teachers' questionnaires and the students' pieces of writing. The techniques applied were the survey and content analysis. The questionnaires gave a general view of the causes why students make mistakes when writing. The students' pieces of writing let us analyze which was the most common error that they made.

From a total of sixty three distributed and analyzed questionnaires and five surveys applied to teachers, it was necessary to tabulate the obtained answers in order to interpret the results. The data gathered through the students and teachers' questionnaires was analyzed. All these answers were quantified and presented in graphs in percentage forms. The use of tables or charts with each of the variables made it necessary to combine all the variables together in one single table so as to find the most common and repeated variable.

All the studied variables were necessary for the analysis of the results. The qualitative approach included in the teachers' questionnaire was aimed to achieve a clear understanding

of the problem from the teachers' perspective. The analysis received a theoretical support so that it was valid and objective.

Chapter III.

Results and Discussion

3.1. Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

In order to carry out this study, it is important to analyze the data collected to test the hypothesis and to answer the research questions. This chapter comprises the description, analysis and interpretation of the results found in this study.

3.1.1. Form of the language: Grammar
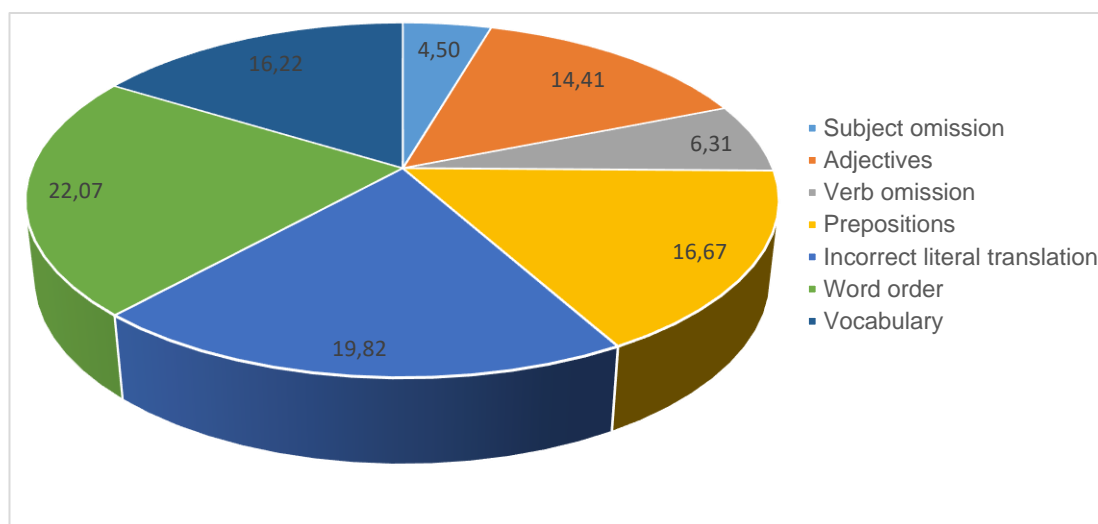
Graph 1. Form of the language: Grammar

Author: Grace García

Source: Students' questionnaires

This variable has a great impact on the writing skill because it is a complex and challenging activity that includes many grammatical aspects. All these aspects are necessary for a clear and an effective written communication. Grammar tends to be such a wide-ranging skill in EFL learning, and it is for this reason that students demonstrate a greater incidence of errors in their writing skill. It is important to mention that we were not able to communicate in any possible way if we do not manage the basic and essential principles of grammar. Grammar is the path that guides the other language elements. It must be acquired in any language, from the mother language up to any foreign language learnt. The correct use and application of grammar or as it is also known, syntax, guarantees comprehensible but what is more important, meaningful messages. For this reason, this variable is taken into consideration for the present study.

3.1.1.1. Word order constitutes one of the most frequent error in the students' questionnaires. It occupies the 22.07% of the graph. This error can be noticed as an example in the following sentence: "He sang last month in a concert." It is grammatically incorrect

because expressions of time go at the end of a statement. It is not correct to put the place or time between the verb and the object. Even though, this mistake does not interfere with the general message, it can confuse the reader because of the risk of transference form the native language to English. The correct sentence is the following: "He sang in a concert last month". Students mention that they do not like to write because it is difficult for them to write their ideas correctly. They think that they cannot express the message they want to coherently. Most teachers agree on the idea that some students do not like to think and analyze what they will write, they do not think about coherent sentences and they do not even remember or apply the learnt rules when writing. It is clear that the reason the teachers found matches the results and their point of view.

3.1.1.2. *Incorrect literal translation* is closely related to the previous error because it has to do with writing in English the same as in the source or native language, in this case, Spanish. It fills the 19.82% of the graph. One of the mistakes found in this type of error is the following: "I am agree with his songs because teenagers need free time and space". It is a grammatical mistake because sometimes students try to translate their thoughts too literally from Spanish. The correct sentence would be "I agree with his songs because teenagers need free time and space". The verb "agree" goes immediately after the subject, when you agree with someone, it means that you have the same opinion as him or her. According to teachers, grammar is not considered by their students as an important element to write accurately, this is why they do not use or even remember the grammar contents explained during the writing activities. They seem not to understand the grammar explanations. Teachers also mention that students come from different English knowledge levels, and that this factor does not help the class fluency. On the other hand, students seem not to be interested in learning English because they think that it is difficult to apply all the learnt things in one piece of writing.

3.1.1.3. *Prepositions* often appear as a mistake. Not only for omissions but also because students misuse them when writing sentences. The 16.67% of the graph corresponds to this mistake. It has a great incidence in writing. Mistakes or omissions with prepositions can confuse readers because of the lack of reliable information. An example found of this mistake is "I would like visit her in the United States". It is incorrect because if we use infinitives in a sentence, we must use a helping verb that is "to" followed by the simple present form of the verb. An infinitive is not a verb tense, so there is no need to add "-s", "-es", "-ed" or "-ing". The correct sentence is "I would like to visit her in the United States". Teachers mention that sometimes they do not highlight the students' grammar errors in their pieces of writing and because of this; they forget to include feedback in most of the writing activities. On the other hand, students mention that they do not receive feedback, there is the lack of interest from

students towards considering grammar as an important element to write paragraphs accurately.

3.1.1.4. *Vocabulary* is another of the highly committed mistake in writing. It occupies the 16.22% of the graph. Sometimes they have to do with invented words or false cognates. In most of the questionnaires, students wrote false cognates that are all the words with different meanings but that are written similarly or the same way. The following is an example, "Justin Bieber sales many CDs". In this case, the words "sale-sell" have the same pronunciation but different meanings. Sell is a verb that means to transfer goods for money while sale is a noun meaning the selling of something. The correct sentence would be "Justin Bieber sells many CDs" because in this sentence we need a verb immediately after the subject. Teachers believe that students forget the new vocabulary words because they are not important for them neither in Spanish nor in English. Because of this, both teachers and students believe that learning grammar is difficult for them.

3.1.1.5. *Adjectives* occupy another important percentage in the most common errors in the writing skill. With the 14.41%, the questionnaires evidenced that students used plurals incorrectly, but also wrong adjective position. It is clearly demonstrated in the following example: "Maluma has short hair black". In Spanish, all the adjectives come after the nouns but in English, the adjectives come before the nouns. The correct sentence is "Maluma has short black hair". It is usual to have two or three adjectives in a sentence. Adjectives come in this order: general opinion, specific opinion, size, shape, age, color, nationality and material. Students mention that teachers do not explain the grammatical mistakes made in their pieces of writing. On the other hand, teachers claim that students do not understand the grammar explanations given by the teachers because they are worried of other things rather than processing and organizing the new information. These perspectives match with the high percentage obtained in the variable related to the lack of approach when highlighting the students' grammar errors in their pieces of writing. The absence of some enriching correction at the right moment and in the right way causes these results in EFL learners.

3.1.1.6. *Verb omission* is another error with an incidence of 6.31% in the graph. It is not considered as important as the previous ones because it has not been repetitive and does not create a concern in the writing skill. This error was found in the following sentence: "They my favorite band because they sing beautiful songs". This sentence is incorrect because the student omitted the verb "to-be" which is necessary for a real comprehension of the meaning. In this case, the verb "to-be" refers to a present or general state that could be temporary or permanent. The proper sentence is "They are my favorite band because they sing beautiful songs". Most teachers agree on the idea that students fail in writing some sentences because

they do not check their work after finishing them. They have a lack of revision and self-correction. Students think that teachers do not include feedback in their writing activities. For this reason, they fail and do not take into account these corrections for avoiding them in future writing projects.

3.1.1.7. *Subject omission* is the last of the errors that has been taken into consideration because with the 4.50% percent of the graph, it does not show a mistake of strong relevance. This aspect indicates that most of the students are clear about the use and importance of the subject when writing sentences. I found few mistakes of this type; one is the following "Appeared on a big show last week". Again, we confirm the influence of L1 in EFL learners. Sometimes in Spanish the use of the subject is not necessary, because of this fact, students forget that in English the subject is always essential because it leads all the sentences. The subject of a sentence is the person, place, thing or idea that is doing something or being something in a sentence. Some teachers mention that students find learning grammar difficult for them because of all this interferences. Students and teachers agree on the idea that grammar is not considered as an important element to write paragraphs accurately, students believe that the two skills are independent skills while both are interrelated in many aspects.

Hunter and Wallace (1995) recall the importance of grammar issues in the whole writing process. They explore one by one each of the grammar relations even in the smallest pieces of writing. They include the fact that grammar should be taught with the same importance as writing. However, they recommend that EFL learners need to learn how to transfer their knowledge from oral language to written language. Everything starts from what students know about grammar and then connecting it to the new elements that later will be applied in writing.

They conclude that we need a deeper evaluation of the curriculum in all the learning areas to improve the next EFL learners' generations. They advise that teachers should pay more attention to the grammatical elements that are necessary for a clear and effective communication of the message and then to challenge students to improve in their writing techniques. With these changes, students will show a great and significant change in their performance.

3.1.2 Content: Topic sentence, supporting sentences, transition words.
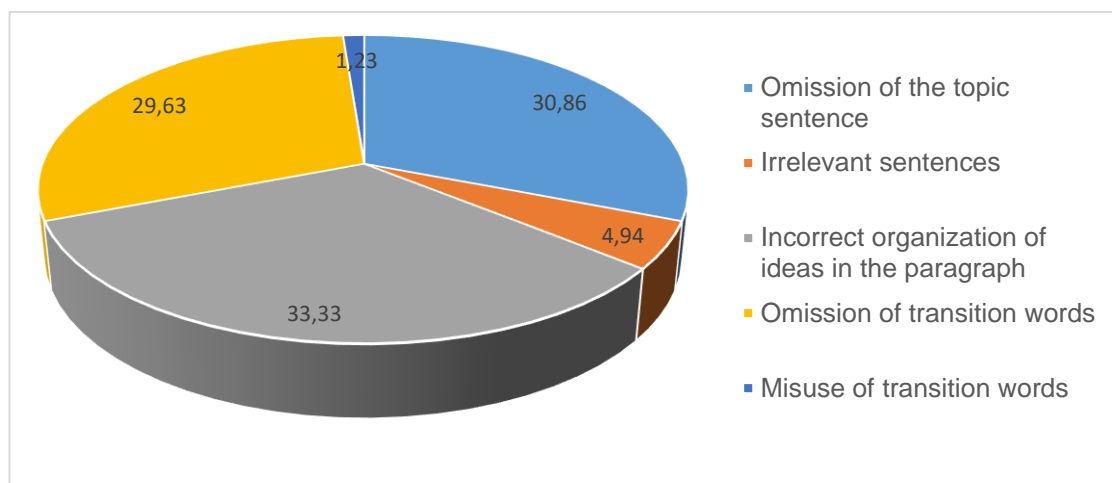
Graph 2. Content: Topic sentence, supporting sentences, transition words

Author: Grace García

Source: Students' questionnaires

This variable is very important when writing because structure is a key element when writing paragraphs. Planning well before writing lets students write paragraphs quickly, clearly and effectively. The term content is related to writing because it refers to logical paragraphs. Each paragraph must focus only in one idea with its correct and related supporting sentences. Well-organized paragraphs are important because if the information is structured, it will be easy to read and to comprehend the message. All the elements in a paragraph fulfill an objective. The topic sentence is the starting sentence of a paragraph because it contains the main idea and provides the reader with a clear and general point of view. Moreover, the supporting sentences are used to explain and give details of the main idea; it also gives evidences or examples. Nevertheless, transition words are also essential because they connect all the ideas of the paragraph. They create a cohesive paragraph. Everything is a process, so it is necessary to follow a path or an outline with clear aims and objectives. The present study found many mistakes related to this area. For this reason, this variable is considered necessary to analyze in depth. Students tend to write disorganized paragraphs with a lack of coherence and purpose.

3.1.2.1. Incorrect organization of ideas in a paragraph appears to be the most common error in the students' pieces of writing. Its occurrence is of 3.33% percent in the graph. We can distinguish the lack of organization while reading the sentences because some paragraphs seem not to have a logical order. They mix several topics in one big idea and they do not support any of them. They did not follow an outline because the reading does not flow in many of the writings. Some of them start writing about the life of their favorite singers and then, they only write about their songs. An example is the following: "Daddy Yankee was born in Puerto

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Rico. He has 3 children. I love listening to "Gasolina, Impacto and La nueva y la Ex". I love his songs." They forgot to write the topic sentence and then, to start describing and exemplifying it in the next lines. The correct organization of ideas with a clear and stated topic sentence is: "Daddy Yankee is an amazing singer because he has fulfilled most of his dreams. He was born in Puerto Rico and has three children. He has won many music awards. Some of his greatest hits are "Gasolina, Impacto and La nueva y la Ex". I love his life and his songs." According to teachers, students do not revise their writings, because of this reason, they are not aware of the organizational problems of their paragraphs. Students believe that sometimes teachers only present the topic of the class but they do not explain the role of each of the elements in writing and they do not explain the rubric that students must follow to cover all the details needed.

3.1.2.2. *Omission of the topic sentence* is closely related to the previous type of error because it occupies the 30.86% of the graph. Most of the writings show a lack of meaning because they do not start by stating what the paragraph is going to be about. A clear and stated topic sentence will give paragraphs a purpose and a direction. The students pieces of writing seem not to follow an outline or a plan, they just write the ideas that come up to their minds. Some of them also locate the topic sentence in the middle of the piece of writing; this indicates that they do not even distinguish the objective and importance of this main idea. A clear example is the following: "I love Maluma's last song. He has many songs. He was born in Colombia." In some of the questionnaires, students showed an omission of the topic sentence so the result was that students presented a brainstorm of ideas rather than a cohesive paragraph. The correct paragraph is "There are many reasons that contribute to my admiration to Maluma's career. He was born in Colombia. He has written many interesting songs. I love "Chantaje" which is his last song." Teachers mention that students do not like to think and analyze what they will write; they do not like to organize or plan their ideas beforehand or to consider the type of audience for whom they are writing. According to the students' questionnaires, they do not like writing because they cannot handle all the necessary elements and skills that sometimes they do not either have in their mother language, Spanish.

3.1.2.3. *Omission of transition words* is the next type of error that will be taken into consideration because it has an incidence of 29.63% in the graph. This study shows that students do not use transition signals to link ideas or to introduce examples. They do not connect ideas; all the sentences seem to be isolated one with another. The transition words that were found more are: first, but, also, for example, finally and in conclusion. All these words constitute the basic ones. They do not use or they seem not to know the different transition words that will make of their paragraph more organized and logically connected. An example that reveals this mistake is "CNCO is a fantastic group, they are a band. An Ecuadorian is a

singer in the group. They have many songs." The writings showed that do not use the different transition words that are of sequence, addition, cause, effect, emphasis, comparison, contrast and example. The correct paragraph could be the following: "To start, CNCO is a fantastic group, they are a band. An Ecuadorian is a singer in the group. In addition to this, they have written many songs." According to teachers, students forget to include these elements when they write because they do not find them important. Teachers also mention that most of the times they do not highlight or correct these mistakes because of the lack of interest that students show and because of the lack of time. On the other hand, students mention that when teachers correct their mistakes, they do not read them again, they only take care of the grade but they do not check their errors and feedback.

3.1.2.4. *Irrelevant sentences* constitute a type of error that does not worry a lot because it does not occupy a high percentage in the graph. It only takes up the 4.94% of it. Most of the students understood the aim of the piece of writing that was requested to write. They remained at the point. They did not go beyond the requirements and they did not include irrelevant sentences. Only few of them wrote different things, and some of them did not write anything. The following is an example of a student who did not understand the purpose of writing and who did not write anything related to what was required, "I like Chino y Nacho, Nicky Jam, Dj Android and Daddy Yankee." The correct paragraph should not include the mentioned sentence because it had nothing to do with the requested topic. The student could have written, "I love many singers and bands but my favorite is Nicky Jam." These results show us that most of the students were able to communicate their ideas according to what was required but others were not able to express in English their ideas and opinions. It is important to mention that irrelevant sentences are also those sentences that have no meaning or that are written without purpose or significance. This did not occur with the study group. Teachers claim that it is difficult to have the same level of students in a class. Their perception is related to the idea that some of them do not even understand the different classes' explanations, for this reason they cannot write accurately in English. Teachers claim that students are not aware of the things they can learn in English because they are trying to translate every single word. Whereas, students claim that it is difficult for them to apply in paragraphs all the elements that they learn day by day. They also mention that they forget how to apply them when they have a writing project.

3.1.2.5. *Misuse of transition words* is the least type of error committed by the students in this study. It constitutes the 1.23% of the graph. The result obtained through the analysis of the students' questionnaires revealed that they do not commit this error because they do not even use transition words. They know how to use the basic ones but the other necessary transition words seem to be unknown for them. This variable talks about the importance of

using words that can carry readers from one idea to another. Transition words allow readers to match connections properly when using them in the correct place and taking advantage of their real meaning and use in sentences and paragraphs. If writers do not use them correctly, they alter the meaning and its comprehension. The lack of transition words lead to reading empty and meaningless paragraphs while the abundance of them will make of the paragraph heavy and difficult to read and to understand. With the misuse of transition words, readers run the risk of getting lost in confused and disorganized sentences. It happened in most of the pieces of writing.

Even the most organized paragraphs showed a lack of transition words. The teachers' perspective rely on the fact that students do not care about the feedback that sometimes they receive from their teachers. Some other teachers also recognize that they have not emphasized the use of some important elements like the use of transition words because they do not have time in the curriculum and because their use is not important for most of the students in the EFL classroom. Although, students mention that they are not interested in learning how to write correctly. They do not find it important and interesting.

Warden and Chen (2014) state that even though paragraphs do not have rules according to the number of sentences; it is obvious that there should be more than one sentence. They emphasize the importance of the elements that constitute the writing process. They relate the types of sentences with a hamburger because all the parts are essential for having one single and coherent idea. They also mention that each of the elements need to be clear, coherent and well planned so that they can create one single body with interrelated sentences that match and support one with another.

In addition, Soles (2010) strengthens this affirmation when she mentions that all the sentences of the paragraph must clarify the topic sentence and that we can use the editing tool at any time of the writing process to have as a result an excellent finished work. Both agree on the idea that writing is a complete learning process that needs to be taught from the elementary up to the complex topics.

3.1.3. Mechanical: punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.
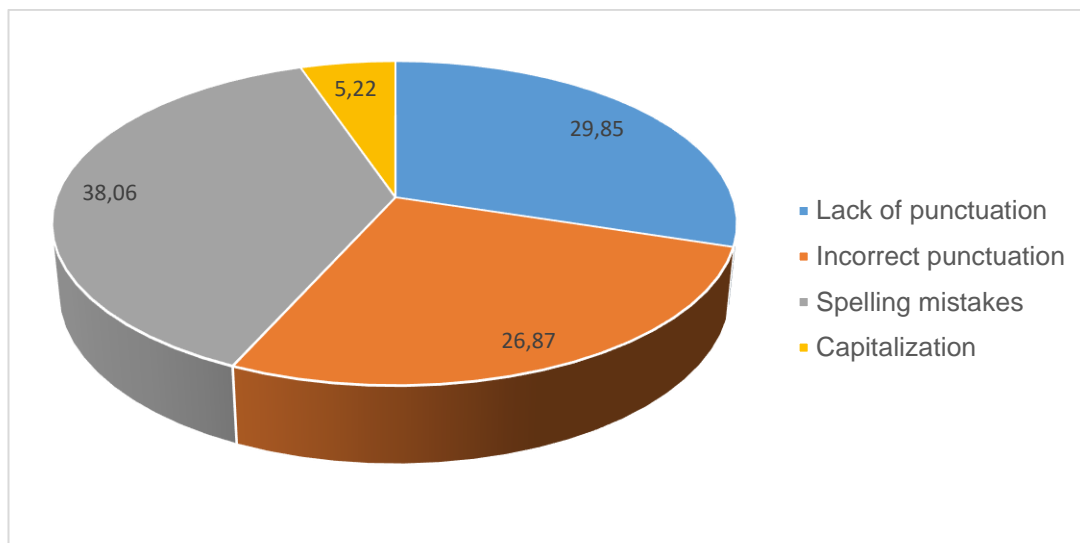
Graph 3. Mechanical: punctuation, spelling, and capitalization

Author: Grace García

Source: Students' questionnaires

This variable is considered as one of the most important variables when we talk about writing. When we refer to mechanics, we are referring to the detailed elements that are combined to write words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs. Mechanics can be compared to the general rules of the English language. Good mechanics guarantee easy to read paragraphs and an attractive set of ideas for readers. They are an aid in communication because thanks to mechanics we can build up in a written work all our ideas and our creative points of view. They also demonstrate how much effort we have put into our writing because the readers show the amount of interest that we put in polishing a properly written work. This variable is of great interest because as students improve through the English learning process, they also progress in the amount and complexity of words in structured and well-written paragraphs. This study showed that as writing has a lot of important mechanical rules, some students find it difficult to remember and to apply all of them especially when they are writing.

3.1.3.1. *Spelling mistakes* constitute the highest error in the mechanical variable. It has a frequency of 38.06% percent of the graph. In most of the students' questionnaires, many of the spelling mistakes were the result of the inability to recognize the sounds and to match them with their correct letters. Another important fact is that most of the errors were caused by homophone words that are words that sound like other words but are spelled differently. Some others were caused from confusion about the use of some of them and because the students do not take time to edit their paragraphs or to determine if the words they wrote look correct or incorrect, this is called the visual approximation. One of the errors was related with numbers,

one student wrote, "He is fourty two yers old." In this case, there are two spelling mistakes. Instead of "fourty" and of "yers", the students must have written "forty" and "years". These are common spelling errors and they occur because English is not completely phonetic and because there many exceptions to the rules. Most teachers agree in the order of the causes related to mechanical errors presented in the teachers' questionnaire. Their answers were opposite because even when the highest scored answer was that the use of several writing elements such as spelling was not important for the students, the second most scored cause was that the importance of the three elements proposed were not explained in class. This reveals that students are not receiving the necessary skills to improve in their writing process. Each of the elements are necessary to achieve the goal of writing. Furthermore, students confirm this lack when the most common answer in their questionnaire was that teachers do not explain the importance of avoiding spelling mistakes when writing.

3.1.3.2. Lack of punctuation is the second most repeated type of error found in this study. It constitutes the 29.85% of the graph. It is important to mention that some of the errors relied on the fact that there was sometimes an overuse of punctuation, especially commas and in other writings, there was a lack of the use of them. The error that most caught the attention was the following: "Maluma loves to eat the family and pets." By analyzing this error, we can conclude that as teachers mentioned in their questionnaires, students most of the times forget to include the writing elements when they write. Moreover, students find it difficult to include these elements in a paragraph. The correct sentence is the following: "Maluma loves his family, pets, and eating." The risk of avoiding the correct use of punctuation marks is to misinterpret or to change the meaning in sentences and in a whole paragraph. Another of the mistakes made by the students is the absence of commas, colons and semi-colons and periods. Teachers claimed that some of the explanations of the most important elements was missing in many of their classes.

3.1.3.3. Incorrect punctuation is a type of error that is closely related to the previous variable. It is for this reason that the percentage within the graph is 26.87%, being also one of the most recurrent in the present study. Most of the errors were related to the wrong use of apostrophes at the end of pronouns, nouns and a wrong placement of commas. All these mistakes can also lead to give a different meaning to the paragraph. One of the errors found is the following: "He does'nt have brothers or sisters." In this case, students do not remember that in contractions, apostrophes need to be placed where the letter has been removed. The correct sentence is the following: "He doesn't have brothers or sisters". Some teachers agreed on the fact that students do not even know about their use neither in Spanish nor in English. Teachers also mentioned that there is not a well-guided writing plan related to the use and application of punctuation in class. At the same time, the most scored cause found in the

students' survey was related to the idea that they do not practice the punctuation rules corrected by teachers in writing activities.

3.1.3.4. Capitalization errors have not been found as fundamental or of a great incidence in the present study. It only fills the 5.22% of the graph. These results are related to some of the teachers' perspectives. They mentioned that once the students receive feedback most of them were more aware of the basic mistakes and were able to correct them in the future. This is clearly seen in the students' questionnaires because they do not present a real problem in this area. There were few mistakes related to capitalization. One of the most noticed error but in very few written works is the following: "i love her songs." The correct sentence is "I love her songs."

Teachers' perspective was that some students came to school with a beginner level so they cannot succeed as well as the other classmates. The results matched with the perceptions of the teachers because the students that committed these type of errors were not able to communicate effectively through their pieces of writing. Similarly, students believe that some mechanical aspects are similar to Spanish so they do not commit them when writing in English.

Sitter (2014) considers capitalization, punctuation and spelling as the most powerful tools for communicating effectively. She recalls the importance of capitalization; she reminds through examples the most important rules for capitalizing and writing correctly. She mentions that sometimes in advertising people do not capitalize but on purpose because they need to catch people's attention.

Nevertheless, according to Whitesmoke (2014), we must not forget that punctuation is the most important of all the writing elements because it guides readers through all the written work. We can achieve the goal of our writing by writing properly. If we misuse or inadequately use the mechanic aspect of writing, we could alter and change the meaning of a whole message.

3.1.3. The most frequent error in EFL writing
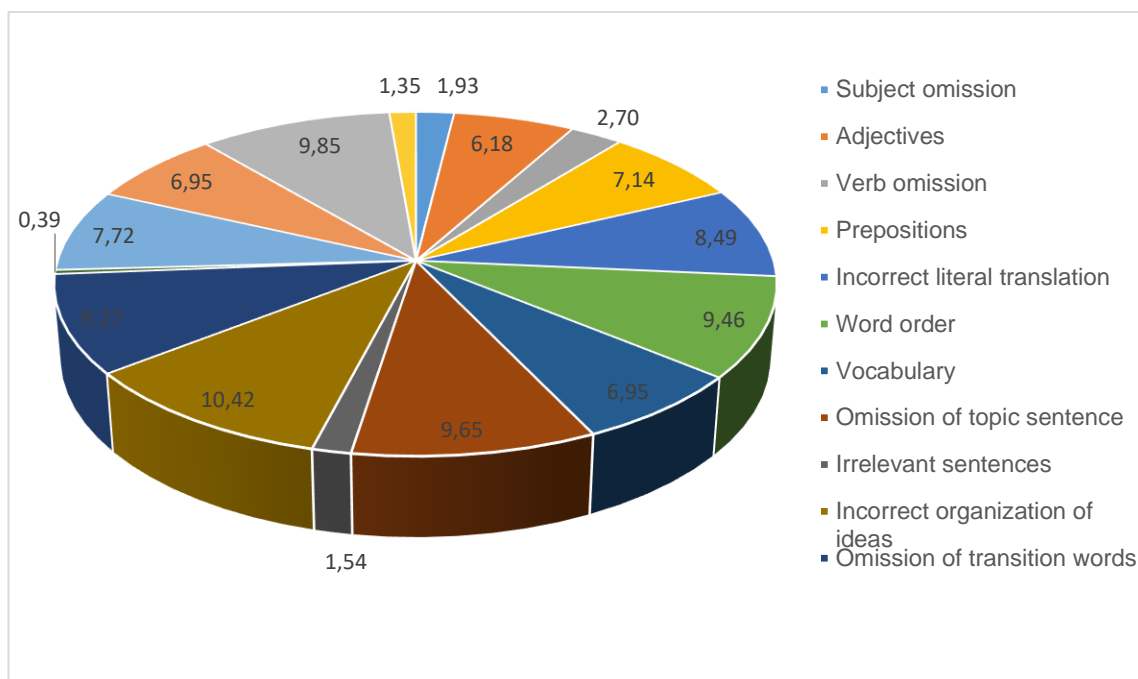
Graph 4. The most frequent error in EFL writing

Author: Grace García

Source: Students' questionnaires

It is important to mention that writing is the visual presentation of all the ideas and thoughts related to any topic presented or required. The aim of a paragraph is to deal with a particular theme and to support it with several ideas connected coherently. According to the graph, the most common error is related to the content variable, the one associated with the incorrect organization of ideas in the paragraph. This study showed that students were not able to plan before writing their paragraphs. They did not have a clear idea of the topic sentence. They just wrote ideas as they came up to their minds. The teachers' perspectives also match the student's results. Some of the causes found are that students do not have enough practice in the classrooms to develop all the necessary writing skills. There is a lot of missing information from teachers to students and a lack of interest from them. All the results rely on the fact that a weak paragraph organization is the effect of the influence of all the other variables studied.

Moreover, Bartholomae (2013) claims that all these errors occur because students do not edit their pieces of writing. Most of the time, teachers pay more attention to the finished work rather than to training and teaching the process of writing. It is only during the process that teachers can check students' progress and it is the only opportunity to provide the necessary feedback according to the elements that students should pay more attention. He ensures that these errors will disappear with the daily practice and with the support of teachers as well as with the persistence of students.

CONCLUSIONS

Word order constitutes one of the most common errors related to the form of the language variable. Students tend to fail when writing sentences because they usually state their ideas in their L1 rather than using the basic elements and rules learnt in L2.

The most common mistake was the lack of knowledge in relation to the organization of the ideas in a paragraph. This study revealed that students tend to write their ideas and thoughts without the correct use of an outline. Students mixed and confused topic sentences and supporting sentences.

The spelling mistakes are considered as the most repeated errors in relation to the mechanical variable. The paragraphs showed that students were not capable enough to write words correctly. They were not able to recognize and correct these mistakes.

Most of the students demonstrated an omission of transition words in their paragraphs. They only wrote the ideas that came up to their minds instead of previously organizing and linking them. This mistake leaded to share empty messages and not to reach the goal of writing interrelated ideas.

Some students demonstrated a lack of interest and responsibility towards what was required from them in the piece of writing because they believe they cannot write in English. Students did not care about their mistakes because they believe they are connatural to the way they learn English as a foreign language.

Teachers mentioned that corrective feedback is almost null in writing activities because of the lack of interest that students show in relation to this skill. Teachers have not improved their feedback methods because students do not read and pay attention to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers must encourage the use of English in EFL classes. They must let students feel comfortable when writing without mattering mistakes and the students' current English level in order to influence on their willingness to think and write in English appropriately and avoiding word order mistakes.

English department coordinators should make sure that each teacher at school works deeply on all the activities related to the writing skill in each of the units. They should monitor and evaluate how teachers explain students the importance and differences between topic and supporting sentences.

Teachers must include many writing activities in daily English classes. They must encourage students to write about different types of topics in order to avoid future spelling mistakes. Students will learn from their errors and they will expand their written vocabulary.

Teachers must encourage students to discover the importance and relevance of paragraphs written with transition words and ones without them. They must also motivate students to write from simple up to complex paragraphs with connectors. Whenever they achieve the goal of using transitions words correctly, teachers should praise them.

Teachers must motivate students in their classrooms. They should praise their progress and their contributions to the class. With all these incentives, demotivation will decrease and motivation through learning English and writing in the foreign language will increase. These techniques will also reduce the amounts of mistakes they commit while writing.

If teachers perceive a common mistake in the writing classes, they should encourage students to work in teams to promote peer correction even though their capabilities are not the same. Appropriate feedback constitutes one of the most valuable aspects in the learning process.

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ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLES

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teacher,

The aim of this brief questionnaire is to obtain information concerning your opinion about your students' errors in EFL writing skill.
The following information will only be used for academic/research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible based on the following questions:

Gender: Male   ( )   Female ( )

1. In your opinion, do your students like to write in English?

    Yes ( )   No ( )

Why?
_____
_____
_____

2. According to your opinion, is it important for your students to write in English accurately?

    Yes ( )   No ( )

Why?

_____
_____
_____

3. How often do you ask your students to do writing activities in class?

        Always   ( )   Often ( )   Sometimes   ( )   Rarely ( )
        Never   ( )

4. Which is your students' writing level?

Advanced   ( )   Intermediate   ( )   Beginner   ( )

Why?

_____
_____
_____

5. Do your students write a piece of writing based on the feedback that you have included in their previous writing tasks?

Yes ( )   No ( )

Why?

_____
_____
_____

6. Do you give feedback to your students when they make writing errors?

Yes ( )   No ( )

Why?

_____
_____
_____

7. How often do you find grammar errors in your students' piece of writing?

TYPE OF ERROR	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
GRAMMAR ERRORS (subject omission, adjectives: pluralization/ wrong position, verb omission, prepositions: misuse/ omission, incorrect literal translation, word order, vocabulary: invented words / false cognates, etc.)					

8. Number from 1 to 6 the causes why your students make grammar errors when they write in English. (1= the least important, 6= the most important).

Grammar contents are not explained in writing activities   ( )
You do not highlight your students' grammar errors in their piece of writing   ( )
You do not include feedback in your students' writing activities   ( )
Grammar is not considered by your students as an important element to write accurately   ( )
Learning grammar is difficult for your students   ( )
Your students do not understand your grammar explanation   ( )
Others (Which one?): _____

9. How often do you find content errors in your students' piece of writing?

TYPE OF ERROR	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
CONTENT ERRORS: Omission of topic sentence, irrelevant sentences, incorrect organization of ideas in the paragraph, omission of transitions words, misuse of transitions words					

10. Number from 1 to 7 the causes why your students make content errors when they write in English. (1= the least important, 7= the most important).

The concept and role of **elements** in writing such as **topic sentence, supporting sentences, organization of ideas, and use of transition words** are not explained in class.   ( )
There is not any writing activity, related to the practice of the **aforementioned elements**, to do in class.   ( )
It is difficult for your students to identify and include **these elements** in a paragraph.   ( )
Your students forget to include these elements when they write.   ( )
These **elements** are not important for your students neither in Spanish nor in English.   ( )
The correct use of these elements do not have any impact on the development of their writing skill.   ( )
You do not highlight or correct these type of errors in your students' piece of writing.   ( )
Others (Which one?):
_____

11. How often do you find mechanical errors in your students' piece of writing?

TYPE OF ERROR	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
MECHANICAL ERRORS: Lack of punctuation, Incorrect punctuation, Spelling mistakes, Capitalization					

12. Number from 1 to 7 the causes why your students make mechanical errors when they write in English. (1= the least important, 7= the most important).

The importance of **elements** in writing such as **punctuation, capital letters, and spelling** is not explained in class.   ( )
There is not any writing activity related to the practice of the aforementioned elements in class. ( )
The use of these elements is not important for your students when they write.   ( )
These elements are not important for your students neither in Spanish nor in English   ( )
It is difficult for your students to include these elements in a paragraph.   ( )
Your students forget to include these elements when they write.   ( )
You do not highlight or correct these type of error in your students' piece of writing.   ( )
Others (Which one?):
_____
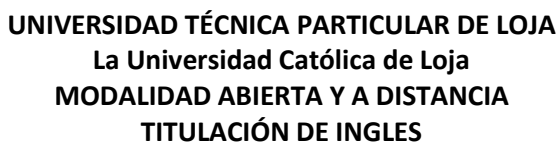
STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Género: Masculino   ( )   Femenino   ( )

1. ¿Le gusta escribir en Inglés?

   Si ( )   No ( )

¿Por qué?
_____
_____
_____

2. ¿Considera importante aprender a escribir correctamente en Inglés?

   Si ( )   No ( )

¿Por qué?

_____
_____
_____

3. ¿Con qué frecuencia desarrolla Ud. actividades de escritura en Inglés en el aula?

   Siempre ( )   Frecuentemente ( )   A veces ( )   Rara vez ( )   Nunca   ( )

4. ¿Considera usted que su nivel de escribir en Inglés es …..?

   Muy bueno   ( )   Bueno ( )   Regular ( )   Malo ( )

¿Por qué?
_____
_____
_____

5. ¿Cree que los errores que se cometen al escribir inciden para que los demás comprendan el mensaje de su texto escrito?

Si ( )   No ( )

¿Por qué?

_____
_____
_____

6. Cuándo Ud. escribe sobre un tema nuevo ¿Aplica las correcciones que hizo su profesor en sus escritos anteriores?

Si ( )   No ( )

¿Por qué?

_____
_____
_____

7. Marque con una X la frecuencia con que Ud. comete errores gramaticales cuando escribe en Inglés:

TIPO DE ERROR	SIEMPRE	FRECUENTEMENTE	A VECES	RARA VEZ	NUNCA
GRAMATICALES (omission de sujeto, pluralización de adjetivos, incorrecto uso u omisión de preposiciones, traducción incorrecta, palabras inventadas, etc.)					

8. Enumere del 1 al 6 las razones por las que Ud. comete errores de gramática cuando escribe en Inglés:

No se presentan actividades de escritura para aplicar los temas gramaticales del inglés aprendidos en clase. ( )

Su profesor no señala los errores gramaticales que Ud. ha comete cuando escribe en inglés. ( )

Su profesor no explica los errores gramaticales cometidos en su escrito. ( )

Considera que la gramática no es importante para escribir correctamente en inglés ( )

Le resulta difícil aplicar la gramática inglesa cuando escribe sobre un tema. ( )

Las explicaciones gramaticales de su profesor no son fáciles de comprender. ( )

Otra (especifique): _____

9. Marque con una X la frecuencia con la que Ud. comete errores de contenido cuando escribe en Inglés:?

TIPO DE ERROR	SIEMPRE	FRECUENTEMENTE	A VECES	RARA VEZ	NUNCA
ERRORES DE CONTENIDO (Relacionados con: omisión de la oración principal, oración principal mal planteada, oraciones secundarias que no se relacionan con la oración principal, oraciones mal ordenadas, oraciones mal conectadas, oraciones sin conexión entre sí.)					

10. Enumere del 1 al 7 las razones por las que Ud. comete errores de contenido cuando escribe en Inglés? Siendo la menos importante y 7 la más importante.

Su profesor de inglés no explica sobre la función de la oración principal, oraciones secundarias, organización de ideas, conexión y secuencia de ideas en el proceso de escritura ( )

No hay práctica sobre el uso de los elementos mencionados durante las actividades de escritura en la clase de inglés. ( )

Son difíciles de aplicar los elementos de contenido al momento de escribir. ( )

Olvida aplicarlos cuando escribe sobre un tema. ( )

Son elementos que tampoco los aplica cuando escribe en español ( )

Usted considera que los errores de contenido (pregunta anterior) NO influyen para que su escrito esté correctamente redactado. ( )

Su profesor no corrige este tipo de errores en su escrito. ( )

Otra (especifique):

_____

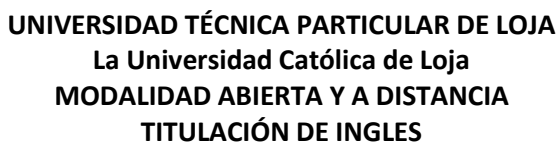**11. Marque con una X la frecuencia con la que Ud. comete errores mecánicos cuando escribe en inglés:**

TIPO DE ERROR	SIEMPRE	FRECUENTEMENTE	A VECES	RARA VEZ	NUNCA
ERRORES MECÁNICOS (relacionados con: el incorrecto uso u omisión de signos de puntuación, uso incorrecto de mayúsculas, palabras mal escritas)					

12. Enumere del 1 al 7 las razones por las que Ud. comete errores mecánicos cuando escribe en inglés? Siendo 1 la menos importante y 7 la más importante.

Su profesor no explica la importancia del uso de signos de puntuación, mayúsculas, palabras bien escritas, etc. en la redacción de un texto en inglés. ( )

No hay práctica sobre el uso de los elementos antes mencionados en la escritura de un texto en inglés. ( )

Le resulta indiferente el uso o no de los elementos mencionados anteriormente. ( )

Son elementos que Ud. tampoco los aplica cuando escribe en español ( )

Son difíciles de aplicar estos elementos al momento de escribir en inglés. ( )

Olvida aplicarlos cuando escribe sobre un tema en inglés. ( )

Su profesor no corrige este tipo de errores en su escrito. ( )

Otra (especifique):

_____

¡Gracias por su colaboración!

TRABAJO ESCRITO

Género: Masculino   ( )   Femenino   ( )

OBJETIVO: Obtener información sobre el tipo de errores que se cometen en la escritura en inglés de un párrafo.

INSTRUCCIÓN: Escriba un párrafo sobre el tema: "My favorite singer"

ESTRATEGIA: El párrafo debe contener un mínimo de 100 a 150 palabras en un tiempo de 20 a 25 minutos. Incluya la información necesaria para dar a conocer cuál es su cantante favorito, las razones, y las características de este/esta.

My favorite singer

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

¡Gracias por su colaboración!