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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

THE APPLICATION OF CONNECTORS THROUGH A WRITING WORKSHOP SYSTEM TO IMPROVE ENGLISH WRITTEN EXPRESSION IN A2 LEVEL STUDENTS.

SOTO JIMENEZ MILENA PAULETTE
LICENCIADA EN PEDAGOGIA DEL IDIOMA INGLES

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, whose love and support have guided me every step of the way, and to the loved ones who left too soon but whose memory has been a source of strength and inspiration as I reach this goal.

-Milena Soto

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, whose constant support, encouragement, and thoughtful guidance have been essential throughout my academic journey.

I also dedicate it to my mother, whose unwavering support has accompanied me throughout my professional growth.

Their presence and encouragement have been instrumental in reaching this important milestone in my life.

-Diego Tejada

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First and foremost, I would like to thank God for granting me the strength and guidance to complete this work.

I am profoundly grateful to my parents, to my cousins, and to my uncles and aunts, who have stood by me at every stage, offering their constant support, encouragement, and love.

To my supervisors at work, thank you for believing in me and for your trust, which has motivated me to keep moving forward.

To my professors, thank you for the opportunities you provided and for making this academic journey smoother through your guidance and understanding.

This accomplishment is not only the result of personal dedication but also a reflection of the encouragement, kindness I have received from those around me. I am truly thankful to everyone who has been part of this journey.

-Milena Soto

First of all, I want to thank God for giving me the strength I needed throughout this challenging journey.

I am also grateful for the unconditional support of my wife and my parents; without them, it would not have been possible to achieve such an important milestone in my life.

I would like to thank each of the professors who were part of my learning process at this institution for their knowledge, guidance, and wisdom.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the thesis advisors for always paying close attention to every detail of this thesis work, as they have been the pillar we needed to reach this long-awaited goal.

-Diego Tejada

Abstract

Writing is a fundamental skill in language learning, yet it is often overlooked by both teachers and students during the teaching-learning process. When addressed, it tends to be taught using traditional methods without clear resources or structured practice. This study aimed to implement a writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors to improve English written expression in A2-level learners at "Escola de Idiomas." A mixed-method approach was applied with 12 A2-level students over four in-person sessions of 90 minutes each. The workshop provided an interactive, process-oriented environment focusing on using connectors, coherence, vocabulary development, grammar reinforcement, writing models, feedback, peer and self-revision, and metacognitive reflection. Data collection included pre- and post-tests with an analytical rubric assessing linguistic, pragmatic, stylistic, cognitive, and communicative dimensions. Additionally, an observation guide recorded participation, use of connectors, vocabulary, and revision practices. Results indicated significant improvement across all dimensions, showing better use of cohesive devices and enhanced text organization. Students actively engaged in the writing process, received feedback, and developed greater autonomy. The findings highlight the effectiveness of writing workshops as pedagogical tools to improve written expression in A2-level learners and promote deeper learning and effective writing habits. Future applications should consider extending workshop duration and incorporating ongoing writing opportunities to reinforce long-term writing development. Overall, this study demonstrates that structured writing workshops can provide valuable support for learners developing English writing skills, emphasizing the importance of guided practice and active student participation in language learning.

Keywords: Connectors, writing workshop, written expression, language learning, A2-level

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Introduction

Historically, the primary purpose of foreign language learners has been to communicate effectively in the target language. This objective has placed teachers in the task of integrating the four basic communicative skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that these skills do not exist in isolation, but are intrinsically connected, as Domínguez (2008) points out, "[…] el uso de la lengua suele llevar implícita la interacción con el medio y por ello es normal que se practiquen varias destrezas a la vez" (p. 9). Despite this,

It is believed that when learning a second language, much attention is given to the "input skills," that is, listening and reading, which also known as passive skills, and not enough on "output skills," that is, speaking and writing, where the EFL learner would need to produce the language to be able to communicate successfully. (Paz & Vega, 2024, p. 2371)

This is mainly because "writing skill, especially in argumentative writing, is recognised as the most difficult and challenging English skill since it requires using lexical and grammatical features strictly and takes a lot of effort" (Seyoum et al., 2022, p. 58).

Therefore, writing emerges as one of the most significant and challenging tasks for language learners worldwide. As Chicho (2022) states, "Writing skill is the ability to express opinion, and the writer delivers messages and opinions through it. For that reason, learners need to pay attention to linking and connecting ideas to write clearly" (p.30).

In this sense, punctuation marks and connectors are essential tools for organizing ideas and providing structure to texts, yet they often prove difficult for students. Recent research from Lombana & Cárdenas (2021) has established that those crucial aspects, such as the adequate use of punctuation marks and connectors, represent common problematic areas among the apprentices. According to Hengirm & Baron (both cited in Sülükçü & Kırboğa, 2020),

Punctuation marks serve as a guide when reading through a sentence. They indicate pauses and tone, clarify ideas, and separate additional information from the main point.

Regarding connectors, according to Kurtul (2012), Connectors indicate the relationship points between separate units of a sentence and make it easier for readers to understand the text.

It is precisely the type of relation expressed by the connector that conveys its semantic value, facilitating textual cohesion and coherence. However, this capacity of using connectors appropriately is not exempt from difficulties in other parts of the world. The previously mentioned issue is reflected in the Ecuadorian context, where the English teaching process as a second language in higher education levels shows a persistent gap that hinders the students' ability to express themselves in that language. (Guzmán et al., 2022).

This challenge is evident at the "Escola de Idiomas" language academy, where the authors of this research conducted their pre-professional internship. Based on the observations, the following external manifestations were noted. Firstly, a notable difficulty was observed among students in writing consistent and coherent sentences in English. Additionally, a clear vocabulary deficit was identified in the language used, further hindering the students' ability to correctly apply connectors, negatively impacting the overall composition and coherence of their writing.

Based on these arguments, the following **scientific problem** is stated:

How can written expression in English be improved in A2 level students of the Language Center "Escola de Idiomas", academic period 2024-2025?

The aforementioned problem is limited by the **research object**, which is the teaching-learning process in the A2 level of English at the "Escola de Idiomas" language Center.

The potential causes of the problem are:

- Lack of regular and continuous practice in writing texts in English by students.

- The A2-level educational material does not address the teaching and practice of connectors.

- Scarce contextual explanation of the use of connectors in writing.

- Underestimation of the importance of connectors in producing written texts in English by students.

Owing to the possible causes mentioned above, the **general objective** of this research is to implement a writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors to improve English written expression in A2 students of "Escola de Idiomas".

This leads to the following specific objectives:

- To theoretically support written expression in English.

- To diagnose the current state of written expression in English of students at the A2 level of the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center.

- To design a system of writing workshops incorporating connectors, to improve written expression in English in students at the A2 level of the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center.

- To demonstrate how the use of connectors influenced the improvement of written expression in English of students at the A2 level of the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center.

This is based on the following **scientific hypothesis**: If a writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors is implemented, then the written expression of English of the A2 level students of the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center will improve.

Considering the hypothesis, the relationship between the two variables is studied: the independent variable comprises the writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors, which is understood as the use of practical and structured educational sessions where students learn and practice writing skills, to improve the clarity, fluency, and organization of texts.

On the other hand, the dependent variable consists of the written expression in English, which is defined as the linguistic ability to express oneself in writing with certain coherence and cohesion.

In consequence of the exposed needs, this scientific research is conducted from a mixed methodological paradigm, with a quantitative predominance, using a pre-experimental design. The population consists of 12 A2-level students at the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center.

The theoretical level methods, such as historical-logical, hypothetical-deductive, synthetic-analytical, and inductive-deductive, were used. The empirical level methods are observation, diagnostic assessment, and experimentation.

This research is important because it focuses on increasing students' ability to write clear and coherent texts, and to do so, a structured system of workshops using conjunctive connectors is carried out. Here, the relevance of using interactive and practical techniques that motivate students and actively involve them in the learning process is highlighted.

The practical contribution of this research is the writing workshop system as an educational tool to improve students' written expression. These activities are designed for students to expand their mastery of the use of connectors in their writing, which will result in more fluid and structured writing.

This study is divided into four chapters: Chapter I is the theoretical foundation of the object and field of research, supported by bibliographic information. Chapter II establishes the type, methods, and techniques to be used. Chapter III presents the intervention proposal. Finally, Chapter IV contains a discussion of the results, concluding with conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography, and appendices.

Chapter 1. The Theoretical Foundation of Applying Connectors through a Writing Workshop System to Improve Written Expression in English.

This chapter systematises the historical and theoretical foundations, supported by bibliographic information, on the didactic characteristics of the teaching-learning process at the A2 English level and the application of conjunctive connectors through a writing workshop system to enhance written expression. Finally, a diagnosis is presented regarding the current contextual aspects of applying connectors through a writing workshop system to enhance written expression in Ecuador.

1.1   The Evolution of Teaching Written Expression in English: A Historical Overview

The emergence of writing has been one of the most important inventions of the humanity. "Todo empezó con los ideogramas, que fueron ni más ni menos expresión de una escritura. Luego apareció el alfabeto, gesta cultural de los fenicios, que fue a su vez expresión de un código" (Arroyal & Martín, 1993). This initial innovation established the foundation for the evolution of the writing throughout the centuries.

The conception and classification of the parts of speech, as the connectors, have a rich history as well. According to the research by Bc. Leos Hejil (2014) in his thesis "Evolution of the Conceptions of Parts of Speech, the origins of this classification date back to the Ancient Greeks and Rome, the scholastics and scholars refined and amplified this taxonomy, introducing new categories such as pronouns, adverbs, and especially conjunctions. Hejil highlights that the integration of the conjunctions as a part of speech was a significant milestone in the evolution of the grammatical conception.

This means that the role of the connectors in the written expression has evolved significantly over time, reflecting the changes in the pedagogical approaches in the teaching of writing.

During the Middle Ages, technology was crucial for the evolution. The invention of paper and the printer in the 15th century by Johannes Gutenberg permitted stablish norms and conventions in writing, with a more homogeneous orthography, grammar, and punctuation. "La fabricación del papel sentó las bases para la invención de la imprenta y para el desarrollo y popularización del grabado xilográfico y calcográfico" (Ramírez-Alvarado, 2005, p. 250). These advancements facilitated the dissemination of knowledge and helped standardise writing, paving the way for the scientific stage of writing.

Around the XVIII century, writing was an exclusive skill reserved for certain professionals, such as scribes, calligraphers, clerics, lawyers, officials, merchants, and teachers, who required it for their tasks. Nevertheless, due to the increasing demand from parents from different social statuses, the teaching of writing was gradually integrated into the educational setting, leading to the formalisation of the teaching-learning process of this ability (Viñao, 2002).

The teaching of English writing continued to develop in the 19th and 20th centuries. In previous eras, the educational approach focused on mastering grammar, vocabulary, and syntax, with the practice of writing introduced subsequently. However, in the last decades, this approach has been displaced, and now there is more emphasis on the writing process and the development of communicative competences. Moreover, the contemporary approach integrates the writing with other communicative competences, promoting more holistic and student-centred teaching (Kroll, 2003).

A significant advance in the modern teaching methods is "the process writing", which "involves eight consecutive stages of writing strategies that enable learners to write freely and produce texts of good quality" (Durga y Rao, 2013, p. 3). These stages include brainstorming, planning and structuring, mind mapping, writing the first draft, peer feedback, editing, final draft, evaluation, and teacher's feedback—these help students to develop their writing skills in a more structured and effective way.

Those above not only reflect the changes in teaching methods and tools, but also a deeper understanding of the nature of writing as a form of personal expression and effective communication. The history of teaching writing is, ultimately, a story of adaptation and growth, meeting the changing needs of each student and society.

1.2 Theoretical framework of the teaching-learning process of written expression in English.

Adequate English writing instructions need a robust theoretical foundation. Thus, this paper explores the key theoretical frameworks that underpin the teaching and learning of written expression in English. By examining prominent theories of language acquisition, cognitive development, and sociocultural learning, this chapter aims to give a broader and more detailed view of the scientific problem being addressed.

1.2.1. *Pedagogical Characteristics of the Teaching-Learning Process of Writing at the A2 Level.*

Understanding the mechanisms of the English language teaching and learning process is indispensable to guaranteeing an integral student development. As indicated by Ampuero (2022):

> El proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje es un elemento esencial en el desarrollo de la personalidad del estudiante y la identificación de una teoría aplicable al proceso pedagógico, lo cual constituye un aspecto relevante del enfoque asumido para la dirección

de la actividad y la comunicación entre el docente y el estudiante que se forma como futuro investigador (p. 127).

Although identifying the correct pedagogical theory is fundamental to student development, as stated by Ampuero, this process should be accompanied by a deep understanding of the brain mechanisms involved in the learning process.

En este sentido, los aportes de las neurociencias en el campo de la educación han sido iluminadores. No solo demuestran cómo el aprendizaje sucede (con movimiento, repetición, sorpresa, a partir de la propia experiencia, entre muchos otros estímulos), sino que también revelan lo fundamental del ambiente y las emociones que este transitando cada estudiante. (Escalona et al., 2023, p. 325).

These findings accentuate the importance of creating a safe and motivating learning environment for students. To this, Addine (2007) punctuates that:

Estamos muy lejos, por lo tanto, del antiguo concepto precientífico según el cual los estudiantes solo aprendían oyendo pasivamente las explicaciones del profesor, y repitiendo textualmente las lecciones de fórmulas verbales sin nexo o repetidas confusamente por los alumnos, sin provecho real alguno para la vida (p. 9).

In this day and age, in compliance with Basurto-Mendoza et al. (2021), it is acknowledged that:

Enseñar y aprender es un proceso que incluye muchas variables, las mismas que interactúan a medida que los estudiantes trabajan para alcanzar sus objetivos e incorporar nuevos conocimientos y habilidades, que se adjuntan a su gama de experiencias de instrucción educativa. La complejidad del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés es un campo muy amplio, se ha tratado de llegar al fondo del asunto y profundizar en cuáles son

los factores más comunes que presentan los estudiantes al momento de aprender el nuevo

idioma y adaptarlo a su realidad. (p. 238)

This suggests that the English teaching-learning process is not a unidimensional event in

the field of education sciences, but rather that it requires a holistic approach. The integration of

previous sciences with a deeper comprehension of the diverse variables that affect learning can

lead to effective pedagogical practices and better student adaptation of the language in real-world

contexts.

At the A2 level, the English teaching-learning process exhibits specific characteristics

that align with the communicative competences expected. The 'Can Do Statements' for the A2

level specify that students:

Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most

immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local

geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple

and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple

terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment, and matters in areas of

immediate need (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

For this reason, the usage of techniques and methodologies that promote repetition and

constant practice is essential for the A2 level instructions, allowing students to internalize

linguistic structures and vocabulary. The incorporation of interactive activities, roleplays, and

multimedia appliances are effective strategies to maintain the students' interest and motivation.

Additionally, continuous and constructive feedback by the teacher plays a vital role in the

development of the student's communicative skills.

1.2.2. *Writing workshops: Fostering English written expression using connectors*

Writing workshops have become fundamental in English teaching, especially in written

expression. These spaces offer a collaborative environment where the students can effectively

practice and enhance their writing skills. Ander-Egg (2013) comments that,

> Taller es una palabra que sirve para indicar un lugar donde se trabaja, se elabora y se
> transforma algo para ser utilizado. Aplicado a la pedagogía, el alcance es el mismo: se trata
> de una forma de enseñar y, sobre todo de aprender, mediante la realización de "algo", que
> se lleva a cabo conjuntamente. Es un aprender haciendo en grupo. (p. 10).

This practical approach is crucial in developing English writing skills. Students need

sufficient time to complete their writing activities, allowing them to be supervised by the teacher

and also work collaboratively with their peers. This process will enable students to engage in

self-review, peer assessment, and feedback, helping them identify both their strengths and areas

for improvement.

> This is supported by the author Beltré (2022) in his work, recommending that:

> Desde los niveles básicos los estudiantes trabajen en proyectos de redacción de historias
> cortas, utilizando herramientas tecnológicas que les permitan trabajar de manera
> colaborativa ya que durante la implementación de esta propuesta se notó que el uso de este
> tipo de recursos ayuda a mejorar la confianza de los estudiantes en sí mismos, para escribir
> en la segunda lengua y aprender más sobre el funcionamiento del idioma. Asimismo, es
> importante que los estudiantes reciban entrenamiento en el manejo de diccionarios
> bilingües y monolingües, y que participen de talleres sobre redacción y estilística. (p. 181)

Writing workshops provide a structured environment for practising and improving

writing skills through feedback and peer interactions. Here, emphasis is placed on the correct

didactic use of connectors to achieve textual cohesion and clear and concise expression.

Connectors are key elements in writing in English. They help establish relationships between

ideas, improve coherence, and facilitate understanding of the text. Their use allows writer to organize their thoughts logically and fluidly.

Castellón et al. (2021) expresses that

La coherencia local que solemos encontrar en todo texto construido se da a través de las relaciones que se establecen entre una oración y otra propiciando relaciones causales y condicionales entre otras. Estas se enmarcan con elementos gramaticales que sirven de nexo o de conectores permitiendo la cohesión o coherencia formal. Estos elementos que expresan relaciones lógicas entre las oraciones de un texto son: las conjunciones, preposiciones, pronombres, adverbios y frases conjuntivas (p. 237).

Viewed in this way, the usage of connectors is foundational to facilitate the reader's comprehension and the fluidity of the ideas presented.

As expressed by the authors, Martin-Macho & Faya (2022)

[...] "palabras de enlace", "organizadores textuales" o "conectores", que ayudan a marcar el tipo de relación existente entre oraciones y facilitan la comprensión. Dada su importancia, suelen ocupar posiciones relevantes en la oración y a menudo se ubican al inicio de párrafo (p. 4). Esta posición estratégica del texto resalta su papel en la orientación del lector a través del desarrollo lógico del contenido.

Also, O'rinova & Vohidova (2023) underestimate that

Conjunctions give different meanings to individual words or groups of words, they express the speaker's attitude to the situation being described, the addressee and his statement, as well as to his own statement. [...] Moreover, the meaning of the union is completely dependent on the context and can only be analyzed as part of a specific statement. That is why the translation of unions into another language is extremely difficult. (p. 1044)

This highlights the complexity and importance of context in the use of connectors, underlining that their meaning can vary considerably depending on the environment in which they are used.

In the English grammar field, Saaed (2023) exhibits that "Conjunctions are significant parts of English grammar and used to join words, phrases, and clauses. They are essential for expressing relationship between ideas in a sentence" (p. 47).

The proper use of connectors in English writing enables writers to express the relationship between their ideas with clarity and precision, facilitating better comprehension by the reader. Not only reduce the quality of the text, but it also helps the learner develop critical thinking and organisation.

1.2.3. *The development of written expression in the English language.*

The written expression in English is a fundamental skill that allows individuals to communicate ideas, arguments and emotions effectively. This skill is not only crucial in educational contexts, but also in professional and personal ones.

In accordance with González et al. (2019), "La expresión escrita constituye una actividad comunicativa que integra procesos mentales, lingüísticos, y estilísticos complejos, en cuya interrelación descansa la efectividad de la comunicación en el código escrito" (p. 25). This definition foregrounds the intrinsic complexity of writing, which involves the construction of phrases and multiple cognitive and linguistic processes.

In his book Guerrero (2013) emphasizes that

Saber redactar es saber construir las frases con exactitud, originalidad, concisión y claridad, según el criterio de los estilistas. Sin embargo, ninguno de estos elementos podría lograrse si es que en primera instancia no dominamos el tema sobre el que deseamos escribir. Jamás

habrá claridad en las ideas si en nuestra mente aún no concebimos qué mismo es lo que queremos expresar (p. 193).

This comment emphasises the importance of mastering the subject and maintaining mental clarity before effective redaction, underscoring that writing is both a creative and analytical process. Barahona (2020) adds that.

La expresión escrita es una habilidad lingüística que plasma la lengua de forma escrita con un sistema de signos. Esta se vale de la oral y las dos son equivalentes dentro de la comunicación, por lo que un método de escritura debe ser capaz de representar todos los términos asociados con los pensamientos e ideas de un individuo (p. 29).

The interrelation between oral and written skills is essential for complete and effective communication. This modality encompasses a range of genres and styles, from academic essays to technical reports, each with its specific requirements. These include the logical organisation of ideas, appropriate use of vocabulary, correct application of grammatical and formatting conventions, and the ability to critically analyse, synthesise, and evaluate information. Acosta (2024) supports this idea by stating that:

Cuando se escribe, emergen las ideas que provienen del pensamiento, entrelazadas con las vivencias y la confrontación de lo que se conoce con lo que hay que conocer, permitiendo el análisis y el procesamiento de la información en la memoria de quién escribe. La escritura además de ser un mecanismo que facilita el almacenamiento físico de información; ayuda que el cerebro evalúe, organice y procese mejor los datos que recibe (p. 3049).

In today's globalised world, proficiency in written English is a vital skill. For this reason, Lima (2022) conveys that this skill

Releases a series of grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, semantics, morphosyntactic, among others, that integrate the linguistics competence needed for writing messages with coherence and cohesion, based on the identification of a type of text, its structure, following a model text from its basic levels that guides towards the construction of a new one (p. 13).

Therefore, it is necessary to acquire a comprehensive command of the elements of written expression, following the established writing guidelines. This involves understanding grammar and spelling rules, organising ideas, using appropriate vocabulary, and creating coherent text structures. In line with Masruroh y Miladiyah (2023), it is highlighted that.

Writing is not just about putting words into sentences, connecting sentences into paragraphs, but it also requires grammatical and lexical knowledge. As one of the four language skills, writing is very important for students to learn at school. This skill aims to make students able to convey their ideas, feelings, and opinions on paper in written form through a good structure (p. 40).

Considering the authors cited above, the authors of this research characterize written expression as a skill that is developed through practice, in which various linguistic, cognitive, communicative, pragmatic, and stylistic aspects are integrated that guarantee the quality of the written text. These are the following:

1. Linguistic Dimension: focuses on the correct use of language in terms of grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. The indicators:

    - Correct application of grammatical rules (e.g., subject-verb agreement, verb tenses).

    - Accurate spelling and punctuation.

    - Variety and richness of vocabulary used.

- Clarity and coherence in sentence construction.

2. Communicative dimension: Assesses the ability to convey a clear, organized message tailored to the audience and purpose. Indicators:

    - Clarity of the communicative purpose (inform, argue, narrate).

    - Adaptation of tone and register to context and audience.

    - Coherent and logical organization of ideas.

    - Inclusion of introduction, body, and conclusion

3. Cognitive dimension: Involves the thought process in planning, drafting, and revising text. Indicators:

    - Ability to outline ideas before writing (use of outlines, drafts).

    - Development of well-supported arguments.

    - Use of revision strategies to enhance text quality.

    - Creativity in presenting ideas.

4. Pragmatic dimension: Focuses on the functional use of the text in social and academic contexts. Indicators:

    - Appropriateness of the text to the specific genre (letter, essay, report).

    - Consideration of cultural and contextual norms.

    - Effective use of genre-specific conventions.

5. Stylistic dimension: Centres on the aesthetic and creative use of language to enhance the text. Indicators:

    - Variation in sentence structure to avoid monotony

    - Appropriate use of literary devices (metaphors, similes)

    - Consistency in maintaining a personal writing style.

These elements work together to create a clear, coherent, and effective text. Coherence and cohesion are in charge of the global sense, while organization, vocabulary, grammar, style, orthography, and punctuation are responsible for the details that make a text well written.

Conjunctions fit in the coherence and cohesion of a text. They serve as a bridge for ideas to relate and logically join together, creating a network that gives meaning and fluidity to what we express. Hence, in this research, it has been decided to implement and focus on the essential tools so that written expression can be improved.

1.3 Contextual aspects of application of connectors through a writing workshop system to improve written expression in English

This epigraph serves as an initial reflection, framing the central theme of the research within a broader context. It will allow us to understand not only the importance of the topic but also the implications that its analysis may have in both academic and social spheres.

1.3.1. *Application of connectors through a writing workshop system to improve written expression in English in Ecuador.*

Teaching English as a foreign language in the global context has increased significantly across various domains, including business, science, and technology. However, serious difficulties persist in the student's written expression, either it is the combination of a poor teacher training or competencies, somewhat monotonous teaching methodologies, and the reduced educational opportunities among institutions, which hinders the attainment of the aspired results in the English language teaching, and that has triggered the research and development of specific strategies to improve the activity, leading to significant advances.

At the international level, various researchers have highlighted the importance of writing workshops. In the context closely aligned with the present investigation, there have been

observations of works, such as those by Rincon (2020), which have shown that creative writing workshops foster reflection and self-assessment in writing in English.

Author Reto (2021) also notes that in Peru, writing workshops have proven effective in improving English proficiency among advanced students. These studies highlight the positive impact of writing workshops on learning to write in the English language.

In Ecuador, recent research, such as that of Jiménez (2024), evaluated the effect of technology-enhanced grammar activities, not only improving writing accuracy but also students' positive perception towards the use of technology in the classroom.

When analysing the works regarding enhancing written expression, the importance of coherence and cohesion in them is identified, although not much emphasis is placed on improving them. Therefore, this thesis will focus on implementing writing workshops that teach and practice the usage of connectors to boost coherence and cohesion in texts written by students. This approach will strengthen their writing and provide them with essential tools for their academic and professional development in a globalised environment.

1.3.2. *Characterizing the Development Level of Students' Writing Skills*

To identify the students' initial strengths and weaknesses in their written production, an observation guide was used during the diagnostic test enhancement. Subsequently, the results and dimension analysis of the observation guide will be presented.

Figure1

Use of Connectors
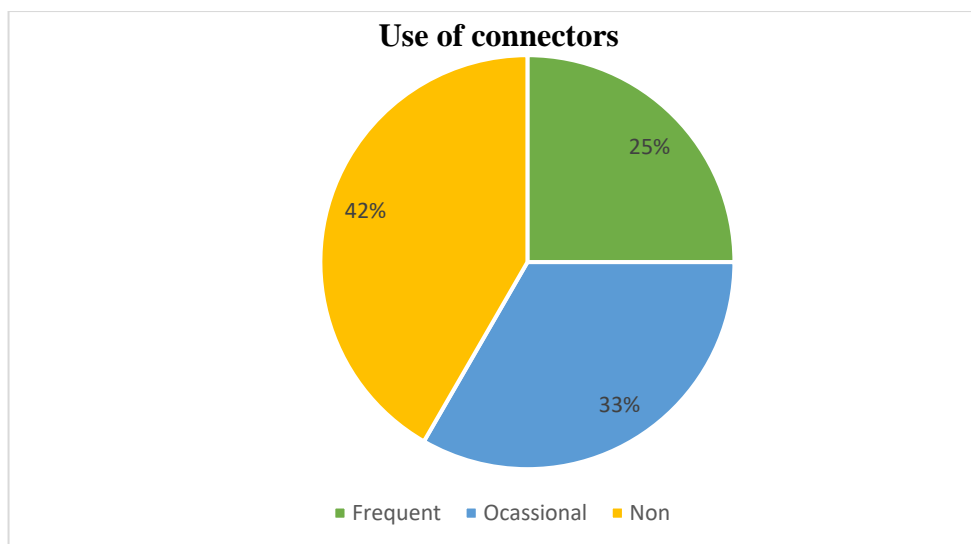
Use of connectors

It was observed that 42% of the students did not use conjunctive connectors in the written productions, whereas 33% applied them occasionally, limiting themselves to the use of 'and' and 'but'. Only 25% applied the connectors systematically. This indicates a lack of awareness about the connectors' function in connecting ideas, which affects the fluidity and clarity of the texts.

Figure 2

*Coherence and idea Organisation*
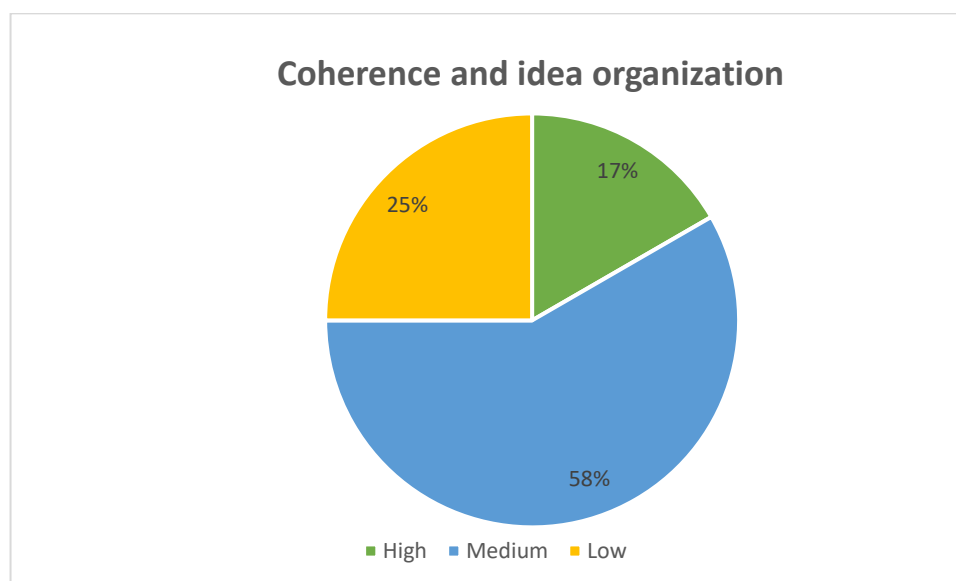
Regarding the organization of the text, 25% of the students displayed low coherence, with disorganized ideas or an illogical sequence. 58% reached an average coherence, while only 17%

achieved a clear introduction, development, and conclusion structure. Indicating that the majority

of the students require support in their written production.

Figure 3

Active participation in activities
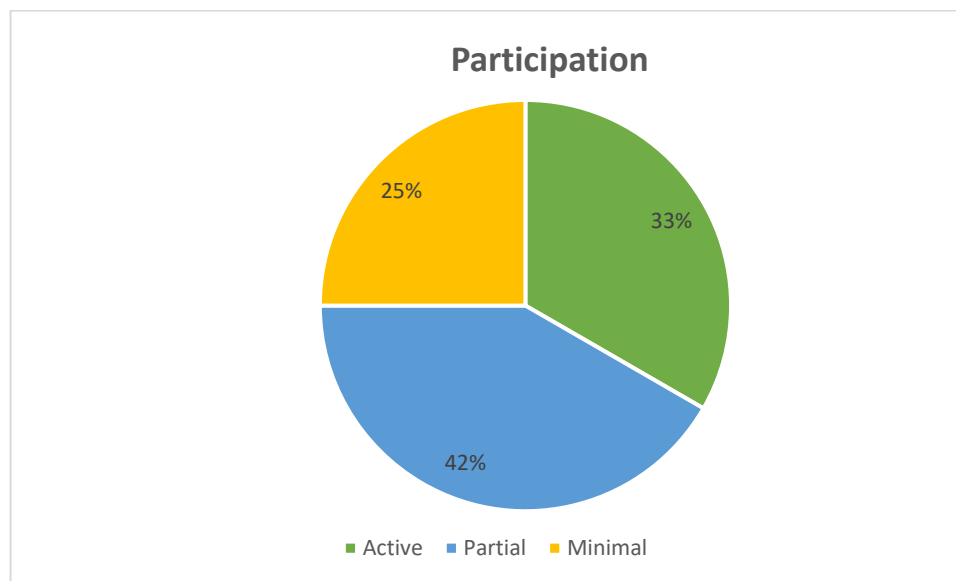
As shown in the graphic, 33% of the students displayed active participation during the

task, which shows a positive aspect. 42% participated partially. This result demonstrates a

favorable disposition towards their learning process, serving as an adequate foundation for the

workshop development.

Figure 4.

Vocabulary
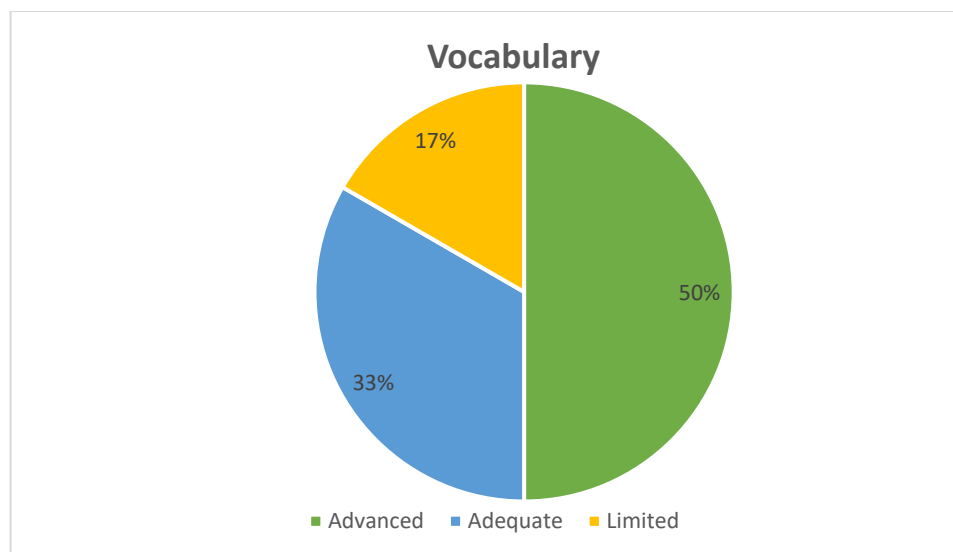
Vocabulary

The vocabulary analysis indicated that 33% of the students partially used an average lexis, with repetitions and limited usage of context terminology. 17% used inadequate or incorrect vocabulary. And the 50% applied an adequate vocabulary. This reveals that the students have adequate knowledge of adequate vocabulary for an A2 level, although the necessity of reinforcing the lexical repertoire remains.

Autonomous review and correction
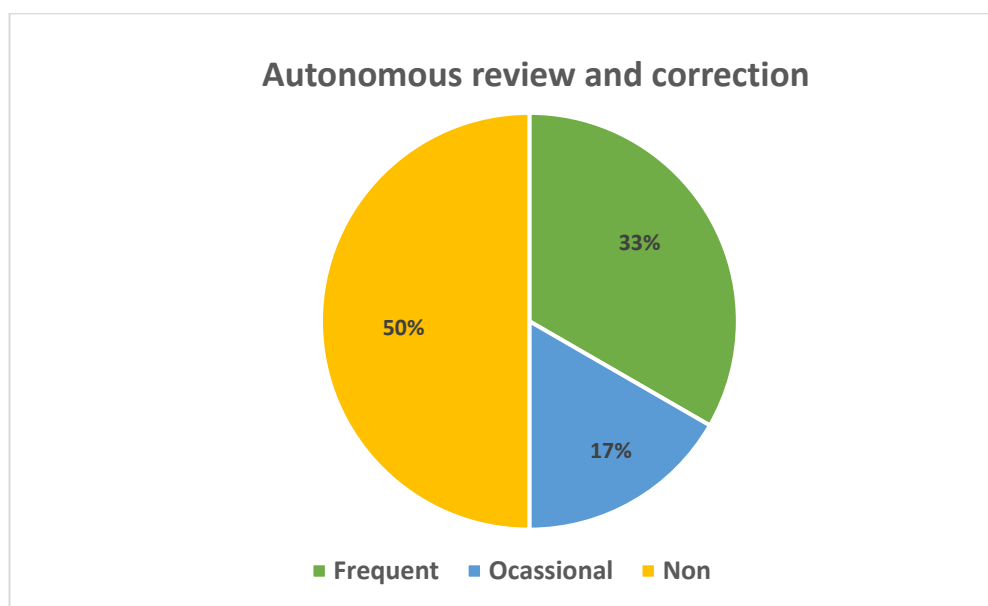
The text revision was scarce. 50% of the students did not check their text productions, 17% occasionally did it, and only 33% showed a constant habit. This suggests that it is necessary to foment autoregulation and metacognitive awareness in the written production process.

Peer Assessment
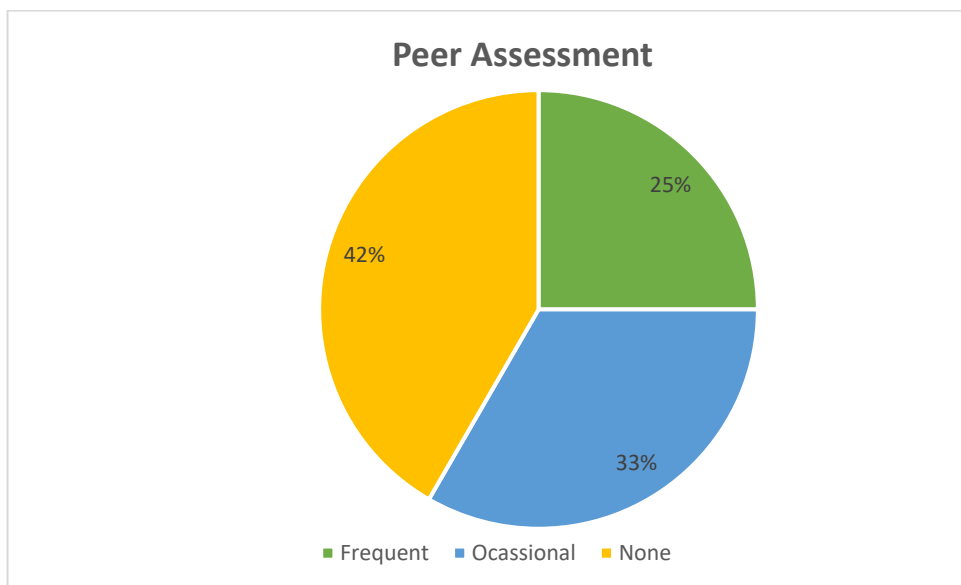
Peer revision was limited among students. 42% manifested their unwillingness to share their texts to be reviewed by their classmates. The 33% did it occasionally just to consult punctual aspects of their task. Only 25% frequently shared their writing, mainly with those who they were close to.

These findings indicated that peer collaboration was not a habitual practice and was influenced to a large extent by the degree among the students.

In general terms, it was evidenced that the use of conjunctive connectors was limited and systematically poor. The greater part of the students employed exclusively basic connectors, such as 'and' and 'but', whereas the remaining part completely omitted them in their writings.

Furthermore, the presence of subordinate connectors, like 'because 'or `although`, was practically nonexistent, which affected the poor cohesion and fluidity of the analyzed texts.

In relation to the coherence in organizing ideas, various students managed to stablish a minimal sequence of events, but without a defined structure. Illogical jumps were identified in the sentence, which impeded the general comprehension of the message.

It was revealed that, in terms of participation, the attitude toward the task was positive. The students were willing to write and complete their tasks in the assigned time, following the instructions given. Nevertheless, the task execution was not always accompanied by prior planning or review.

The analysis of the vocabulary applied revealed a strong dependence on basic and repetitive structures. Most of the student used memorized or frequent words, without integrating the contextual lexis related to the pedagogical text (holidays and events narration), which restricted their written production's expressive richness.

Also, the peer-assessment illustrated that the implementation of an adequate guide and motivation were key in promoting peer evaluation. The majority of the students were reluctant to show their text to have them evaluated by their peers, and the ones who did it limited their interaction to specific queries.

Finally, related to the autonomous revision, it was observed that just a small number of students re-read their text before handing them. Most did not identify obvious spelling or grammatical errors, which reflected a low metalinguistic awareness in the initial stage.

In conclusion, the data gathered from the observation guide revealed notable deficiencies in the students' pragmatic and linguistic performance; however, a high level of engagement and willingness to participate was consistently observed.

With the aim to identify de level of development in the students' written expression a pedagogical test was designed and applied aligned to the linguistic, cognitive, communicative,

pragmatic and stylistic dimensions for a more objective diagnose. Next, the results of the first

intervention are exposed below.

Linguistic dimension
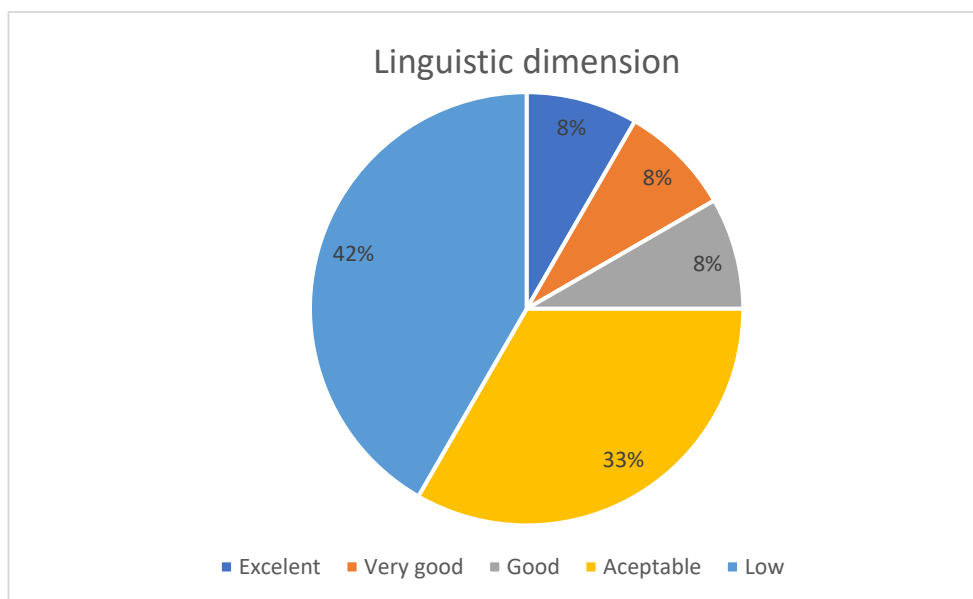
The pre-test results revealed poor command of the language code among most students.

Seventy-five percent of the group scored between the Acceptable (4 students) and Poor (5

students) levels, while only one reached the Excellent level. This initial picture reflects

difficulties in the correct use of grammatical structures, spelling, and punctuation, which directly

affected the clarity of their written work.

Cognitive dimension

Cognitive dimension
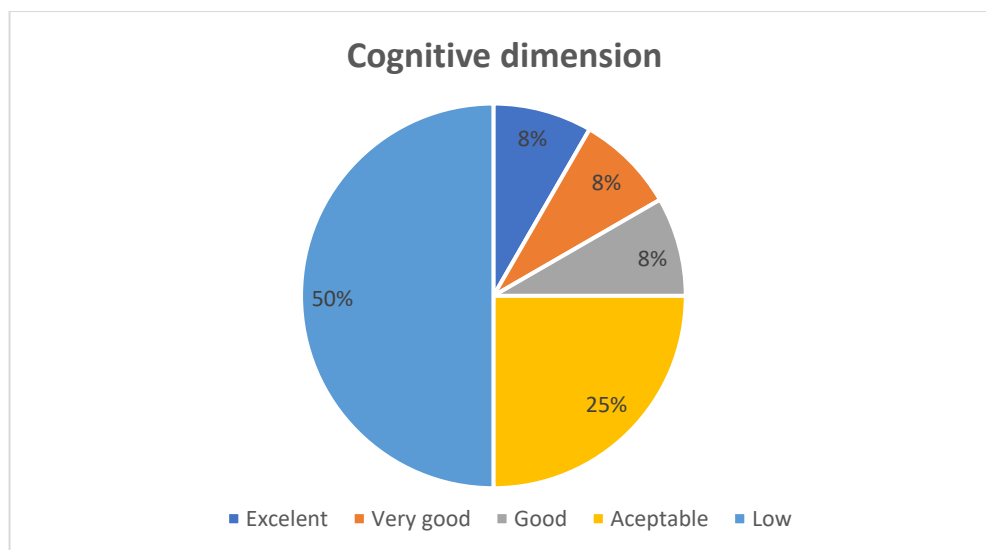
Poor performance also predominated in this dimension. Six students received a low rating and three received an Acceptable rating. This indicates that three-quarters of the group showed limitations in the logical organization of ideas, understanding of instructions, and overall planning of the text. Only one student scored at the Excellent level, demonstrating that this aspect was one of the group's most notable weaknesses.

Communicative dimension
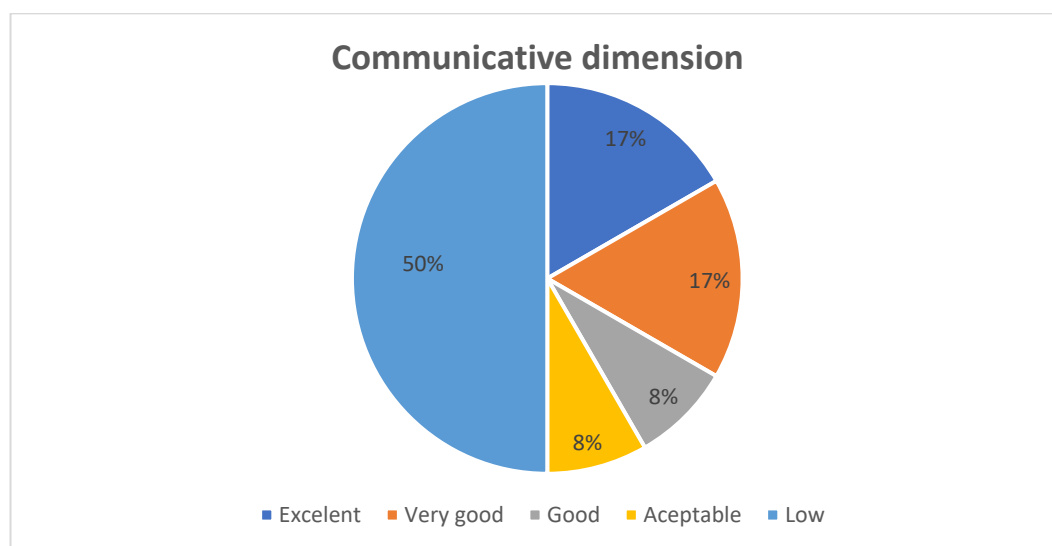
The results showed a dispersed distribution, although with a clear predominance of low levels. Fifty percent of the students were at the Low level, while only 16.7% reached the

Excellent level. This initial overview reveals a widespread difficulty expressing ideas coherently and appropriately for the reader, as well as making texts understandable from a communicative perspective.

Pragmatic dimension
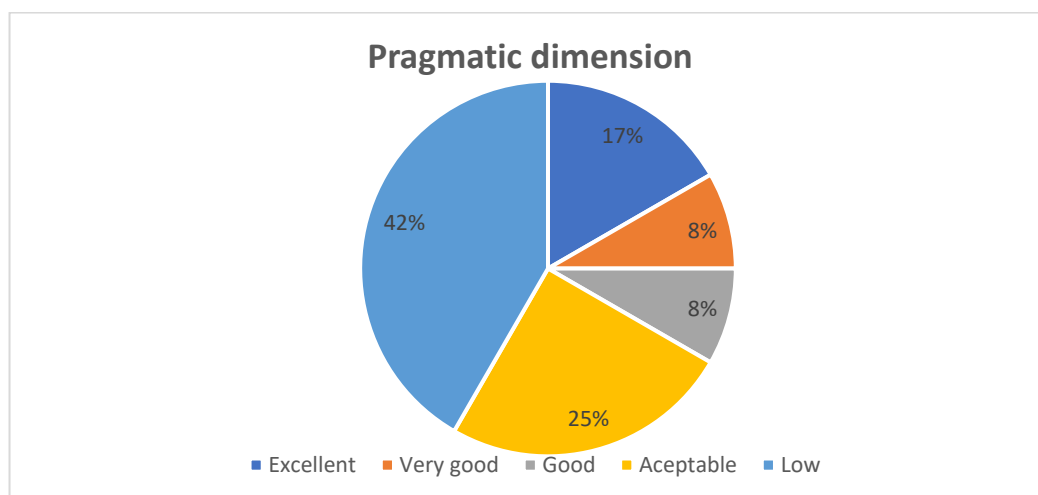
Performance in this dimension was also largely low. Five students were at the Low level and three at the Acceptable level, representing two-thirds of the group with difficulty adapting their writing to different communicative purposes or contexts of use. Only two students reached the highest level, suggesting that functional language use was still incipient for most.

Stylistic dimension
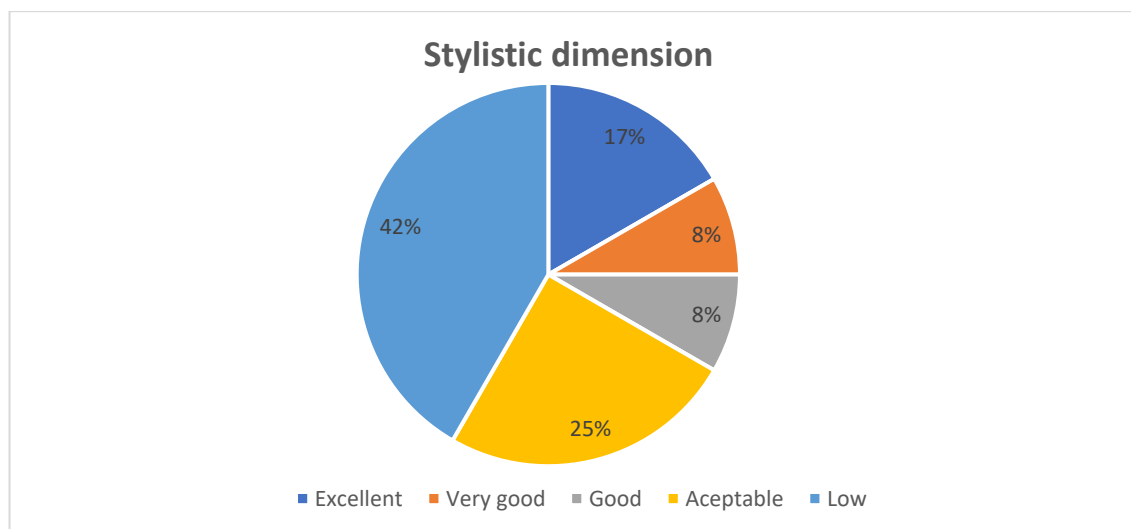
Similar to the pragmatic dimension, students presented a limited level of style in their productions. Five students received a Low rating and three received an Acceptable rating, showing limited vocabulary variety, poor fluency, and a lack of stylistic cohesion. Only two students reached the Excellent level, indicating that the development of a personal style had not yet been consolidated.

The pre-test data analysis proved that a big part of the student displayed a limited level of performance in their different dimensions that comprise written expression. In general, low and acceptable levels concentrated the highest percentages of students in all areas evaluated. While excellent and very Good were poorly represented.
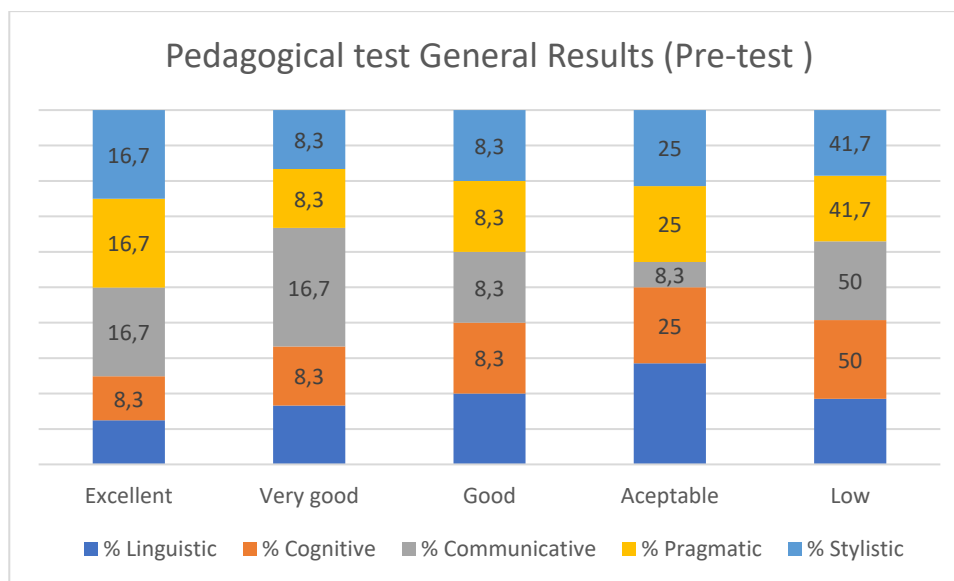
For example, in the linguistic dimension, 75% of the students were placed between low and acceptable level, as was the cognitive dimension, which showed difficulties related to the idea organization and text planning. Similarly, in the pragmatic and stylistic dimensions, approximately 66.7% of the group obtained low results, which indicated poor adaptation of language to distinct contexts and scarce stylistic elaboration in their writings.

As for the communicative dimension, 50% of the group was placed in a low level, while just 16.7% achieved an excellent level, which reveals a generalized difficulty in transmitting ideas clearly, coherently, and oriented to the reader.

In general, these results present an initial picture of intermittent and poor performance in key aspects of writing. This diagnosis justifies the need to implement a targeted pedagogical intervention that allows students' writing skills to be progressively monitored and strengthened based on each dimension.

Based on the theory and empirical data, it is evident that a necessity to create a writing workshop system to reinforce the written production in A2 level students, emphasizing the correct usage of conjunctive connectors and coherent organization of ideas. This proposal seeks to address the main difficulties in all the dimensions, as well as clear communication, logical development in content, and personal style in texts.

2 Chapter II. Methodology

2.1 Paradigm

The mixed approach was adopted in this research. As stated by Hernández Sampieri et al (2018), this method implies integrating as well as qualitative and quantitative methods in research. This is considered optimal for the proposal of writing workshops, since it permits exploring quantitative data and the students' subjective experiences.

Given that in the writing workshop system is necessary to assess the initial and final effects of its application, the pre-experimental type of research is suitable. As noted by Campbell and Stanley (1963), the pre-experimental research consists of employing a treatment and its latter result observation.

2.2 Population

The population is composed of 12 students at the A2 level from the Language Center "Escola de Idiomas". This group was selected since difficulties in their written expression were observed.

2.3 Methods

This research follows a mixed-method approach, combining theoretical and empirical methods to obtain a wide and comprehensive understanding of the object of study.

At the theoretical level, diverse methods were applied, which permitted building the conceptual framework of the study. One of those was the historical-logical due to

"Mediante el método histórico lógico se estudia la evolución del objeto de investigación en una esfera determinada de la realidad social, condicionada por los cambios económicos, políticos y sociales emanados durante el período objeto de estudio y los adelantos de la ciencia; lo que posibilita apreciar, en el plano epistemológico, la

emergencia del fundamento ontológico de la investigación que posiciona el objeto y campo, desde la naturaleza del problema científico, y revelar sus características praxiológicas y causales" (Ortiz, Alejandre & Izaguirre, 2023).

This facilitates the analysis and identification of the main tendencies and historical transformations of the teaching-learning process in English and the written expression.

In turn, the analytical-synthetic method, which "analiza los hechos del objeto de estudio por separado en cada una de sus partes (analítico) y luego repite el mismo proceso, pero de forma conjunta (sintético). Así se integran dichas partes para estudiarlas de manera holística e integral" (Reyes et al, 2022, p. 4), It made it possible to break down the teaching-learning process of A2 level English into its essential components for detailed analysis, and subsequently integrate them into a global and coherent vision.

On the other hand, the hypothetico-deductive method was used for the hypothesis formulation of our research, which was later contrasted with the obtained data from the empirical phase, since, as Arbulu (2023) states, it consists of starting from previous observations to formulate a hypothesis, which later will be verified empirically (Arbulu, 2023)

Furthermore, the inductive-deductive method allowed the extraction of generalizations from the particular observations and applied theoretical principles to specific situations.

Finally, the systemic method enabled us to approach the research as an interrelated system, considering both its internal components and its integration in a broad context.

These theoretical methods were fundamental to guide the research design. Estos métodos teóricos fueron fundamentales para guiar el diseño de la investigación, orientar la recolección de datos y respaldar la interpretación de los resultados.

At the empirical level, techniques were resorted to, which allowed the collection of information in a direct and systematic way. To assure an objective data recollection, the observation was used to register behaviors, attitudes, and phenomena presented in the students' natural environment.

In this research, a pedagogical test was implemented as a measurement tool, which was designed and applied with the purpose of evaluating knowledge, skills, and competencies linked to the objective of the study, proportionating quantifiable evidence to the analysis.

The experimentation was applied since it focuses on controlling the phenomenon studied and also assessing its impact on students. The combination of these empirical methods allowed us to contrast the formulated hypothesis and enrich the theoretical comprehension of the phenomenon based on concrete and contextualized data.

2.4   Instruments

For the data recollection, specific instruments that could answer the selected methods and ensure the validity and reliability of the information obtained were designed and applied. The instruments that were implemented are detailed in a consistency matrix based on the variables.

Scientific Problem	General Objective	Scientific Hypothesis	Variables	Dimensions	Indicators	Instruments
How can written expression in English be improved in A2 level students of the Language Center "Escola de Idiomas", academic period 2024-2025?	**to implement a writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors to improve English written expression in A2 students of "Escola de Idiomas".**	**If a writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors is implemented, then the written expression of English of the A2 level students of the "Escola de Idiomas" Language Center will improve.**	**IV: The writing workshop system incorporating conjunctive connectors: the use of practical and structured educational sessions in which students learn and practice writing skills, to improve the clarity, fluency, and organisation of texts.** **DV: the written expression in English: the linguistic ability to express oneself in writing with certain coherence and cohesion.**	Linguistic Dimension Communicative dimension. Cognitive dimension Pragmatic dimension Stylistic dimension	**Linguistic Dimension:** - Correct application of grammatical rules (e.g., subject-verb agreement, verb tenses). - Accurate spelling and punctuation. - Variety and richness of vocabulary used. - Clarity and coherence in sentence construction. **Communicative dimension:** - Clarity of the communicative purpose (inform, argue, narrate). - Adaptation of tone and register to context and audience. - Coherent and logical organisation of ideas. - Inclusion of introduction, body, and conclusion **Cognitive dimension:** - Ability to outline ideas before writing (use of outlines, drafts). - Development of well-supported arguments. - Use of revision strategies to enhance text quality. - Creativity in presenting ideas. **Pragmatic dimension:** - Appropriateness of the text to the specific genre (letter, essay, report). - Consideration of cultural and contextual norms. - Effective use of genre-specific conventions. **Stylistic dimension:** - Variation in sentence structure to avoid monotony - Appropriate use of literary devices (metaphors, similes) - Consistency in maintaining a personal writing style.	**Evaluation Rubric Observation rubric Pedagogical test**

2.5   Instrument description

The observation guide was designed as a complementary instrument to qualitatively register the student's behavior during the test application. This allowed us to observe the pivotal dimensions of the written production process, such as active participation in the task, spontaneous use of connectors, text organization during the process, selection of adequate vocabulary, and autonomous and peer revision.

This guide includes evaluation scales (never, sometimes, always) or equivalent qualitative scales, and it was applied by the teacher-researcher in the classroom under natural conditions. The information collected enabled us to triangulate qualitative data of the rubric with direct observations, complementing the initial student's performance and contributing to a complete vision of their formative needs.

Observation criteria	Indicators	Evaluation scales	Observations
Use of conjunctive connectors	Uses a variety of appropriate connectors to link ideas	Always / Sometimes / Never	
Coherence in the organization of ideas	Ideas are organized and connected	High / Medium / Low	
Participation in written activities	Actively participates in written activities and discussions	Active / Partial / Limited	
Application of the vocabulary studied.	Uses topic-related vocabulary	Correct / Partial / Incorrect	
Autonomous review and correction	Independently identifies and corrects grammatical and content errors	Frequent / Occasional / None	
Peer review	Provides constructive and specific feedback to peers	Frequent / Occasional / None	

For the pedagogical test, an assessment rubric was designed to respond to the dimensions and identified indicators to measure the students' written expression in English, which captured their level of knowledge and the capacity of the students to apply what they had learned into a

text elaboration. These were fundamental to ensure the quality of the data recollected and

contribute to the veracity of the research results.

Criteria	EXCELLENT (5P)	VERY GOOD (4P)	GOOD (3P)	ACEPTABLE(2P)	LOW (1P)
Linguistic	Correct application of grammatical rules. Spelling and punctuation without errors. Varied and precise vocabulary. Clear and coherent sentences.	Good use of grammatical rules. Minimal spelling errors. Adequate vocabulary. Sentences are mostly clear.	Some grammatical rules were applied correctly. Noticeable spelling errors. Limited vocabulary. Sentences are occasionally unclear.	Frequent errors in grammar and spelling. Repetitive use of vocabulary. Sentences unclear.	Serious grammatical and spelling errors. Inadequate vocabulary. Incoherent sentences.
Communicative	Clear and effective communicative purpose Tone and register are adequate for the public. Organized and logical ideas. Includes introduction, development, and conclusion	Clear purpose Adequate tone Organized ideas with slight adjustments. Clear purpose. Adequate tone Introduction and conclusion	Basic structure of ideas. Arguments presented, but poorly substantiated. Limited revision that slightly improves the text	Unclear and difficult to identify the purpose. Inadequate tone Weak organization Lack of fundamental structure in the text	Unclear purpose Inappropriate tone Total disorganization Absent introduction, development, and conclusion.
Cognitive	Well-structured ideas before writing, use of schemes and drafts. Solid arguments. Effective revision and edition strategies. Evident innovation	Good idea structuring process. Clear arguments, although in need of further elaboration. Partial revision with good impact on the text.	Adequate texts but lacking fundamentals. Limited revision that slightly enhances the text.	Poor structure: appears improvised Weak and nuclear arguments. Scarce revision	Visible lack of a planning process. Inexistent argument or poorly formulated. No obvious review
Pragmatic	Completely adequate text for the genre. Well-considered contextual norms. Conventions of the genre are effectively used.	Predominantly appropriate to the genre. Some contextual norms are considered. Good use of conventions	Adequate text, but inconsistent with the genre. Poor cultural norms recognition	Text not appropriate for the genre: many rules ignored. Poorly applied genre conventions.	Completely inappropriate text. Does not consider genre or contextual norms
Stylistic	Consistent use of language Own and consistent style. Variety in the sentence construction. Effective use of stylistic resources.	Good use of language and personal style. Some variations in the sentences. Basic use of stylistic resources.	Limited use of stylistic resources Some sentences are repetitive. Poor style development.	Poor variety in sentence construction. Inconsistent style. Scarce use of literary resources.	Does not present its own style. Very repetitive sentences without literary resources.

3 Chapter III. Intervention of the Application of Connectors through a Writing Workshop System to Improve English Written Expressions.

This chapter displays the theoretical foundation of the writing workshop system in this research. It addresses its importance, followed by the pedagogical, sociological, and psychological bases that support it. Moreover, a description of the workshop system applied by the researchers in this work is presented.

3.1 Theoretical Foundation of the Application of Connectors through a Writing Workshop System to improve English written expressions.

With the world evolving, the current teaching-learning process of a second language has had to adjust itself to fulfil the needs of globalisation. Nowadays, this process is not only focused on acquiring knowledge or grammar, but also on developing communicative competencies. This refers to the ability to use language effectively in real-life contexts, organising and connecting ideas coherently and cohesively in spoken and written texts.

The development of written expression in the A2 level requires students to be able to write short and simple texts about everyday topics. For this, various teaching strategies are pivotal, such as workshop systems.

In the first place, a system is considered a set of elements concatenated together to obtain a product. If adjusted to the educational context, the teaching-learning process is necessary to follow a systematic order to carry out activities that help to integrate contents and skills (especially writing)

Se podría definir al taller de escritura como un conjunto de actividades tanto como secuenciadas como estructuradas, basada en la teoría general de los sistemas, la misma que promueve una práctica de índole colaborativa en relación a la producción escrita con un enfoque

hacia el desarrollo de competencias comunicativas, las mismas que no solo se evidencian en la vida cotidiana sino también en la académica (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2022).

The said system maintains its focus on participative and active learning, which means that the students under the teacher's guidance can reflect, interact, generate, and review texts in the target language. This occurs to integrate the learning of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and communicative strategies. Alarcón & González (2021) emphasize the importance of interaction and feedback in the process of written production in digital environments. These arguments are transferable and valid to any collaborative context, whether digital or in-person.

It is important to mention that the pedagogical foundation of this workshop is supported by the foundation of significant learning and social constructivism. According to Vigotsky (1978); Johnson & Johnson (1999), social constructivism mentions that learning is produced in a collaborative way and thanks to the active participation of the individuals. On the other hand, Ausbel (1968) comments that significant learning happens when previous knowledge is linked to new information to facilitate learning retention.

This implies that it is important to create activities for students that are based on experiences and students' needs, so as to apply English in daily and relevant situations. Under the Common Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR), it is stipulated that level A2 involves the ability a student should have to be able to communicate in different situations, applying a language that, even if it is basic, is functional. For this reason, the workshop systems were based on these two approaches, which are appropriate for this level, since they will boost communicative competencies, fostering confidence and independent use of the English language.

When referring to the didactic foundation, we can indicate that it centers in the correct

selection of strategies and activities with the purpose of promoting the development of important skills. La relación existente entre el enfoque proceso-producto y la enseñanza con base en tareas se enfocan en producir, planificar, editar, y revisar textos, así mismo como la reflexión metacognitiva en cuanto al proceso de escritura (Hernández, 2018; Cifuentes et al., 2022)

Likewise, the didactic foundation of the workshop system incorporates the teaching of conjunctive connectors in English (e.g., and, so, but, because), to enable students to organize their ideas and achieve cohesion and coherence in their writing. For this reason, specific activities designed to practice the use of connectors in various types of texts, along with collaborative text creation exercises, are considered essential.

The activities proposed include a clear and progressive sequence, adapted to the student's level and necessities, implementing text models, immediate feedback, and integration of digital tools to facilitate the collaboration, revision, and continuous improvement of the texts (Mora, 2023).

From a sociological point of view, writing is understood as a social and cultural act, which development significantly depends on social interaction (Arias, 2024). The workshop is an action that warrants participation and collaboration among the participants, fomenting ideas and style interchange in written expression. Social interaction and teacher mediation during a writing workshop facilitate the creation of a positive classroom climate, providing students with the security to share their writing and receive constructive feedback.

 In addition to the former point, the fundamental concept of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the well-known Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), emphasizes that during the acquisition of a second language, social interaction and teacher support are key in the learning process. The application of this theory in a workshop will provide a safe environment, open to

the trial-and-error process, reducing anxiety levels and increasing autoregulation, motivation, and cognitive reflection in order to help students obtain an independent and fluid written expression.

3.2   Description of the Writing Workshop System to improve English Written Expressions in A2 level students of "Escola de Idiomas"

The application of workshops as a teaching strategy is focused on strengthening students' writing, which is done through the correct use of conjunctive connectors. This workshop system takes a structural, functional, and systematic approach, where each component of the teaching-learning process is articulated to achieve a goal: to foster the development of logical organization of ideas, thematic progression in written texts, and textual coherence.

The chosen approach for this workshop is communicative, collaborative, and structural, based on evidence suggesting that second language acquisition improves when students interact with one another and receive feedback from both their peers and the teacher. It emphasizes that when all key elements of the teaching–learning process work together, students can communicate more effectively.

The structure of each workshop includes development activities focused on written production, with a fixed sequence that allows students to progress gradually and systematically, consolidating each new skill before tackling more complex tasks.

The system's content covers the use of connectives, the structuring of short texts, and the development of strategies for planning, producing, verifying, and editing texts. The workshops are designed to achieve meaningful and active learning. It is essential to mention that each session focuses on a specific type of connective, including causal, adversative, consecutive, additive, and other forms of connectives. Practical activities are integrated, allowing each student

to apply these resources in functional writing contexts and real-life situations. Additionally, metacognitive reflection has been promoted, allowing students to recognize the importance of connectors and writing processes in maintaining textual cohesion and coherence. Formative assessment and continuous assessment are key aspects of the workshop system.

By using adapted rubrics and offering timely feedback, the goal is not only to assess the final product but also to support the writing process, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and foster metacognition. This approach is supported by research that underscores the importance of constructive feedback and self-assessment in developing writing skills.

Finally, the workshop system tackles are characterized by being flexible, which allows activities to be adapted to the needs and learning rhythms of each student. Description of the Application of Connectors through a Writing Workshop System to improve English Written Expressions in A2 level students of "Escola de Idiomas".

This section explains in detail the application of connectors through a writing workshop system designed to improve English written expression in A2 level students of "Escola de Idiomas".

While doing their internship in the previous language centre, researchers recognised the need for targeted support in this group of students, since it was observed that they struggled to express themselves clearly in writing.

To move forward, the proposal was presented to the language school administration for approval. The process involved submitting a detailed plan outlining the workshop objectives, schedule, resources, requirements, and expected outcomes. The manager of this establishment reviewed the proposal and granted permission after ensuring that the workshop system would not disrupt regular classes and that adequate space and materials were available.

At first instance, the level of written competency is assessed to adapt the activities to the group's needs. After that, clear and specific learning objectives were then formulated, considering key elements such as the audience (who?), the action (what will they do?), the context (under what conditions?), and, in some cases, the criteria (how well?). These objectives guided the entire workshop design.

The **general objective** of the workshop system is to improve students' English written expression through the conscious and correct use of discourse connectors.

Specific Objectives

- Develop well-composed, simple short texts related to everyday topics.

- Enhance the application of standard conjunctive connectors in simple sentences

- Stimulate students' illustrative skills

- Promote collaborative and peer learning

- Encourage autonomy in using written English

To reach these objectives, pedagogical strategies and linguistic content are added for a contextualized application. The content, activities, and methodology were planned to ensure they aligned with the established objectives and were appropriate for the students' level. Logistical aspects such as the location, materials, duration, and necessary resources were considered.

The workshop content is selected meticulously, taking into account the curriculum, pedagogical orientation, and students' interests. Also, aspects such as connectors, idea organization, and the production of different types of short texts like notes, messages, letters, and simple stories. Moreover, reflection on the student's own written process and peer-revision is fomented, allowing students to identify their advances and areas of improvement.

It begins with familiarization activities and progresses to more complex tasks that require autonomy and creativity.

System of contents to develop English written expression

Sistema de contenidos para desarrollar la competencia escrita en inglés:

- Lexical-semantic component: Frequently used vocabulary and basic expressions.

- Morpho-syntactic component: Grammatical structures and the use of connectors.

- Discursive component: Types of texts (notes, messages, letters, descriptions, narratives) and strategies for organizing information.

The workshop system was carried out through a series of four in-person sessions, each lasting 90 minutes. Each session integrates vocabulary building, grammar reinforcement, writing models, constructive feedback, peer collaboration, and metacognitive reflection.

The activities are sequential and scaffolded, beginning with recognition and controlled practice of connectors and gradually moving toward free writing production.

Workshop Types and Sequence

- Workshop 1: Familiarization (activities for recognizing and using basic connectors and structures, under the teacher's guidance).

- Workshop 2: Controlled Practice (controlled production of short texts, with greater autonomy and complexity, under teacher supervision).

- Workshop 3: Guided Application (independent production of texts, integrating all the content and skills developed).

- Workshop 4: Evaluation and Consolidation (simulation of a written test, reflection, and self-assessment of the process).

Workshop System
Duration: 4 sessions, each lasting 90 minutes
Connectors • Coordinates: and, but, or, for, so • Subordinates: because, since, although, even though • Sequence: first, then, after that, finally

Workshop 1

Objective: Recognize and classify conjunctions according to their function (addition, contrast, cause, sequence) using contextualized examples and multiple-choice exercises.

Duration: 90 minutes

Content:

- Types of connectors (and, but, because)

- Explanation and use in simple sentences

- Association with images and everyday situations.

Activities

- Presentation with visual examples and guided explanation

    - Teacher introduced connectors with examples and images

- "Correct Connector" game

    - Students match sentences with the appropriate connector.

- Classification activity

    - Students sort connectors by function (addition, contrast, cause, sequence).

- Collaborative activity

    - In pairs, students write short sentences using at least one connector from each category.

- Peer review

  - Students exchange paragraphs and identify the connectors used, giving feedback.

- Mini-quiz

  - Students complete sentences with the correct connector.

- Reflection

  - Group or individual reflection: 'What did I learn about connectors? How will this help me in future writing?'

- Assessment: Observation guide

Workshop 2:

Objective: Apply conjunctives in full sentences through structured exercises, guided writing, and peer collaboration.

Content:

- Construct simple, coordinated, and subordinated sentences

- Sequence, cause, and contrast expressions

- Connectors: and, but, so, because, first, then

Activities:

- Sentence completion exercises

  - Students complete sentences using the correct connector

- Transform simple sentences into compound sentences

  - Individual or in pairs work to produce compound sentences using connectors

- Organise paragraphs

  - In small groups, students reorganised paragraphs using connectors to improve coherence

- Writing sentences with prompted connectors

    - Each student writes sentences about their daily life and shares them with a partner.

- Peer revision

    - Switching sentences and mutual corrections, identifying the correct use of connectors

- Group reflection

    - Brief discussion on how connectors help join ideas and enhance text clarity.

Assessment: Observation guide

Workshop 3: Guided written production (narration and personal letter)

Objective: Develop brief texts using conjunctive connectors to grant coherence in personal descriptions, promoting planification, revision, and reflection on the written process.

Content:

- Simple narrative structure

- Informal letter structure

- Vocabulary about actions, places, weather, and emotions.

Activities:

- Analyzing model texts

    - In pairs, students identify connectors in model texts.

- Organizing ideas (mind mapping, event sequence)

    - Individual or small group task to organize ideas before writing.

- Written production of a narrative text using pictures

    - Drafting a short story based on pictures, using connectors

- Writing a letter about real or fake vacations

- Individual production of an informal letter

- Revision and peer feedback

    - Each student writes and shares verbally what they learned about organizing ideas and connectors usage.

Assessment: Observation guide

Workshop 4: Mock test

Objective: Apply the knowledge acquired in a written mock test, developing cohesive texts with conjunctive connectors.

Content:

- Integrated application of connectors

- Written production in test conditions

Activities:

- Brief revision of key connectors

    - Interactive activity to review connectors

- Writing of two texts under real exam conditions: a Story with pictures and a personal letter.

    - Students write with limited time

- Assessment through official rubric

    - The teacher assesses the text using a rubric

- Written reflection on the teaching learning process

    - Each student answered guided questions about their experiences, goals, and challenges in the use of connectors

- Shared experiences

    - Students share their reflections in small groups

Assessment: Official rubric adapted to writing texts.

4   Chapter IV. Workshop System Implementing Connectors

The purpose of this section is to analyze the results obtained after implementing a writing workshop system to improve students' written expression in English at the A2 level at 'Escola de Idiomas'. For this analysis, data were recollected through direct observation.

4.1   Results of the workshop system implementing connectors

During the implementation of the writing workshop in the classroom, direct observation was carried out in the classroom to record, in a complementary manner, relevant behaviors associated with the development of written expression in English.

In general, a good rapport was observed in the classroom, characterized by constant participation compared to the first session. The students implemented connectors more frequently. Additionally, after the practice, the students demonstrated improved control in organizing their ideas and increased autonomy in verifying their writing.

Below are the results of the observation guide used by the researchers to gather their perceptions of the changes observed in students' writing after the implementation of the writing workshops. Positive feedback was given on each criterion: connectives, coherence of ideas, participation, vocabulary, and independent revision.

The results obtained from the application of the observation guide in the post-test reflect a significant improvement in students' behavior and performance during the writing process. First, a more frequent use of conjunctive and sequential connectives was observed: 67% of students used them consistently, while the remaining 33% did so occasionally. This indicator demonstrates a positive internalization of the content covered in the workshops.

92% of the students remained active throughout the activity, highlighting the high level of engagement and motivation generated by the implemented pedagogical strategy. Significant

progress was also observed in vocabulary use: no students made serious vocabulary errors, and 67% used terms appropriate to the context.

Finally, independent revision of texts also showed positive progress: half of the students engaged in this practice frequently, while the other half did so occasionally. This indicates that students began to adopt metacognitive strategies related to self-monitoring and continuous improvement of their productions. En conjunto, estos hallazgos confirman que la guía de observación permitió identificar de manera clara los cambios cualitativos en el proceso de escritura, aportando evidencia sólida del impacto pedagógico alcanzado a través del sistema de talleres.
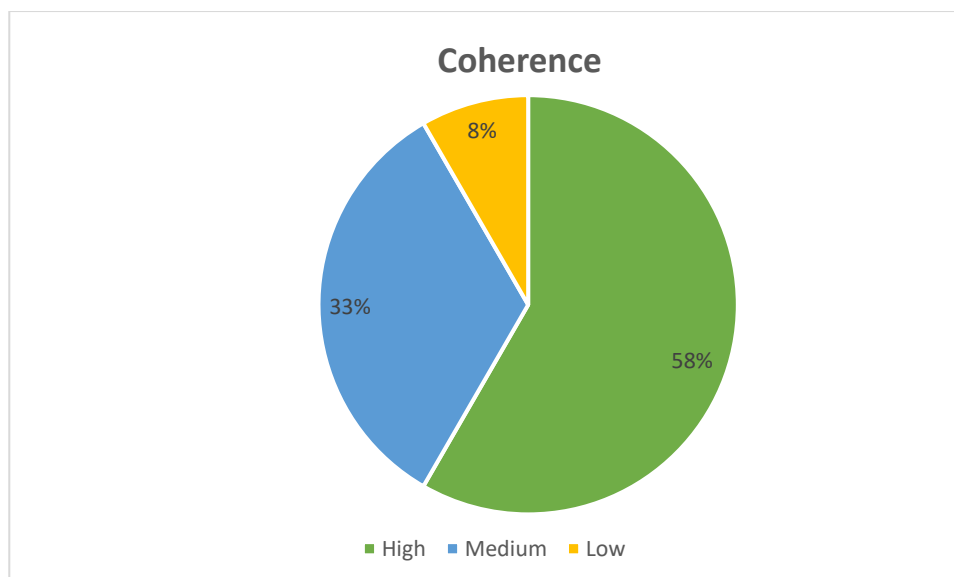
Below are the organized results for each dimension: connective connectives, coherence of ideas, participation, vocabulary, and independent review.

Connectors
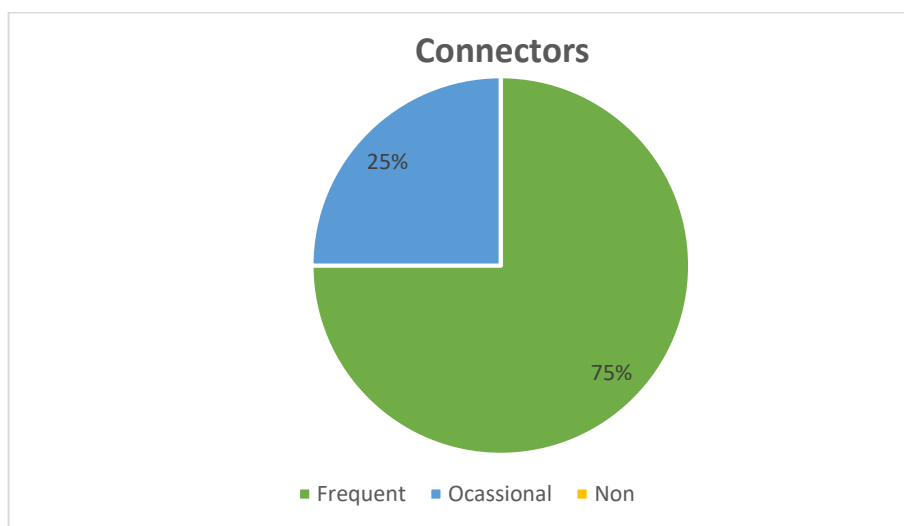
75% of students used connectives consistently, compared to 25% who did so occasionally. None stopped using them, indicating a progressive internalization of the resource.

Coherence

Regarding coherence of ideas, 58% of the students achieved high levels of organization, while 33% achieved average performance. Only 8% showed low coherence, which demonstrates an overall improvement in the logical sequencing of texts after the intervention.

Participation
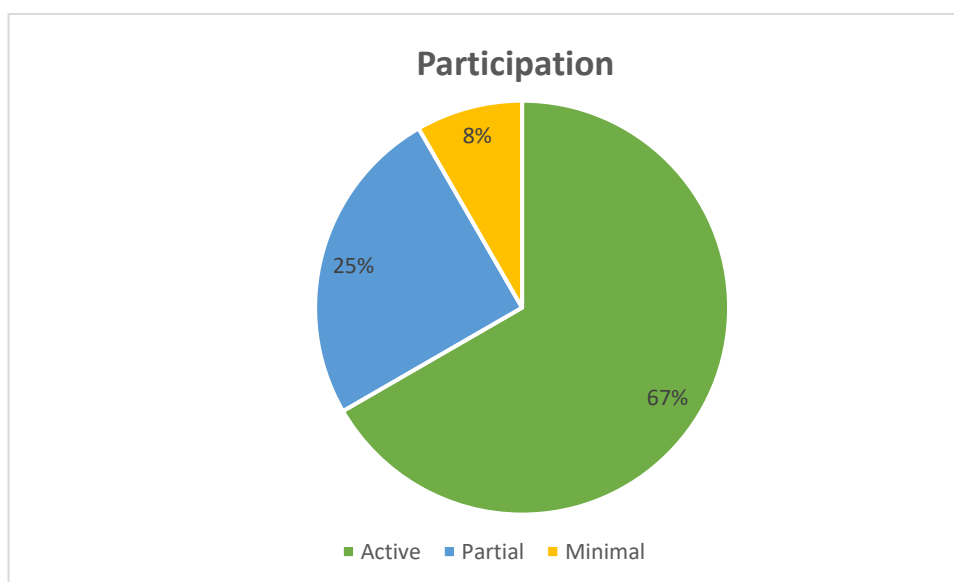
It was observed that 92% of students actively participated in the process, demonstrating a high level of commitment to the written task. Only 8% participated partially.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary

Advanced — 58%
Adequate — 33%
Limited — 8%
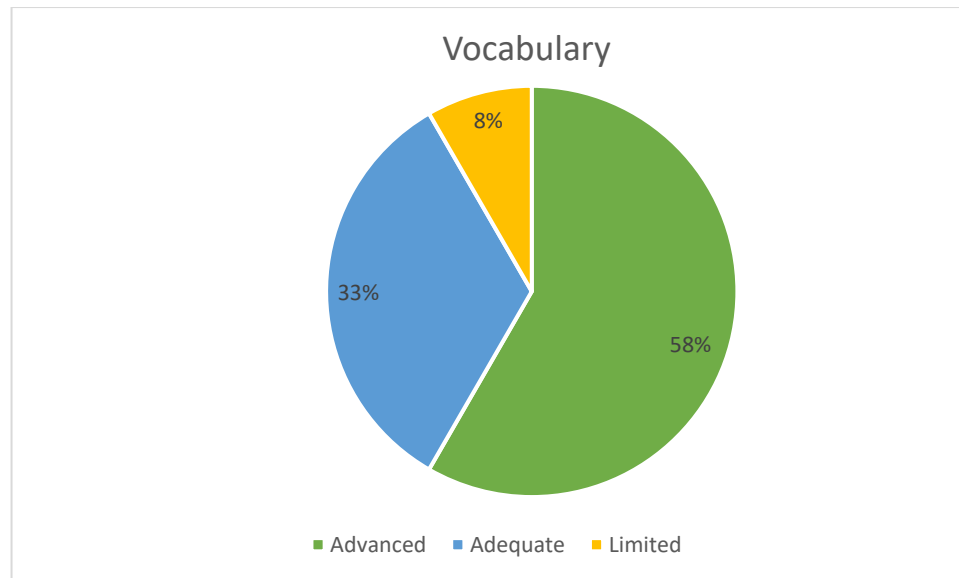
58% of students used appropriate vocabulary, while 33% did so partially. No students used it incorrectly, showing progress in vocabulary selection.

Autonomous revision

Autonomous Revision

Frequent — 67%
Ocassional — 33%
Non
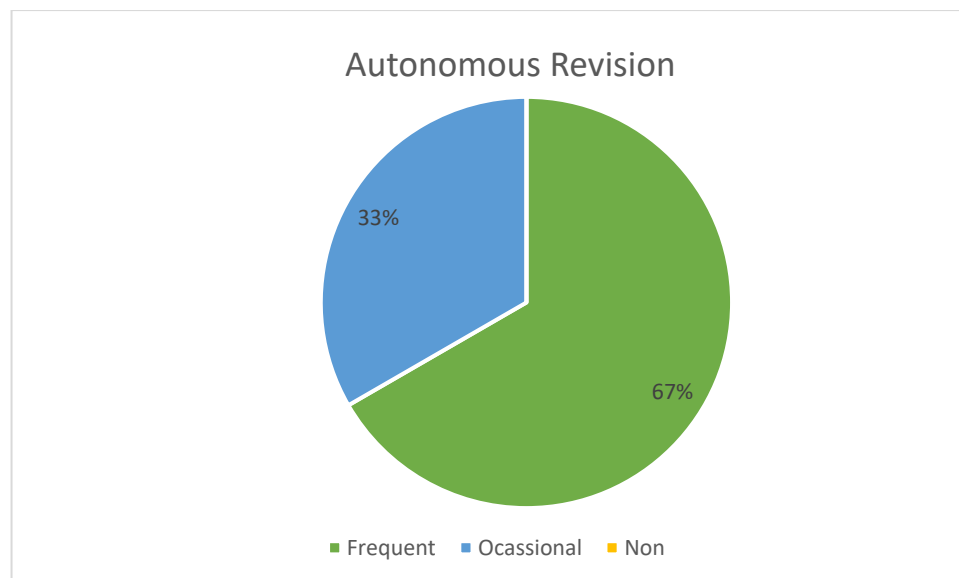
Sixty-seven percent of the students reviewed their writing frequently, and another 33% did so occasionally. This demonstrates an improvement in self-regulation of the writing process.

Peer assessment
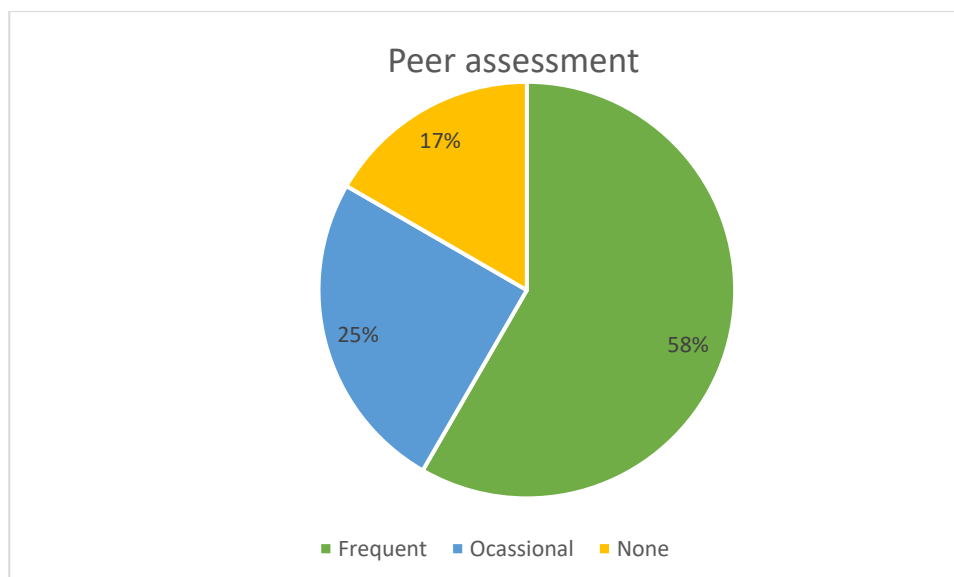
Peer assessment

In the peer assessment dimension, the post-test results reflect predominantly active participation. 58% of students frequently completed assessments, demonstrating a consistent commitment to mutual feedback. Twenty-five percent did so occasionally, suggesting a medium level of involvement. Only 17% did not participate in this practice, which represents a minority.

Overall, these results indicate that most students were actively involved in reviewing their peers' work, fostering the development of critical thinking and collaborative improvement of texts.

Observation Guide (Post-test)
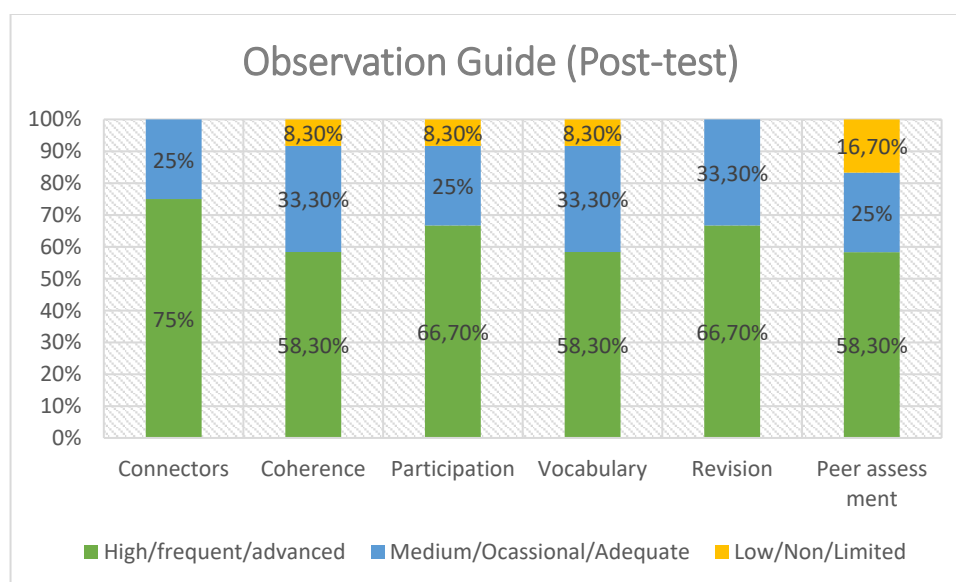
It was observed that 63% of the dimensions assessed reach a high level, which reflects a significant advancement in the written process, particularly in the use of connectors, textual coherence, adequate vocabulary used, active participation in classes, peer revision, and collaborative feedback.

On the other hand, 29 of the registers were placed in a medium level, which indicates that some students still show partial or inconsistent performance in certain dimensions, specifically, vocabulary, coherence, and peer-evaluation. However, this result remains positive if it is compared to the level registered in the pre-test.

Finally, only 8% of the observations corresponded to a low level, which means a considerable diminution to the diagnostic phase. This result supports the effectiveness of the workshop system implemented as a pedagogical strategy focused on the development of writing from a formative, gradual, and participatory approach.

To sum up, the intervention generates positive aspects in the student's written production. Most students were able to strengthen their skills and improve their performance throughout the activities. Although individual progress rates persisted, the process helped to overcome the main initial difficulties and steadily strengthen their writing skills. Following the implementation of the workshop system, a new pedagogical test was administered to assess students' progress in their writing skills. The results reflect notable improvements in all the dimensions assessed by the rubric:

Linguistic dimension

Linguistic dimension

■ Excelent ■ Very good ■ Good ■ Aceptable ■ Low
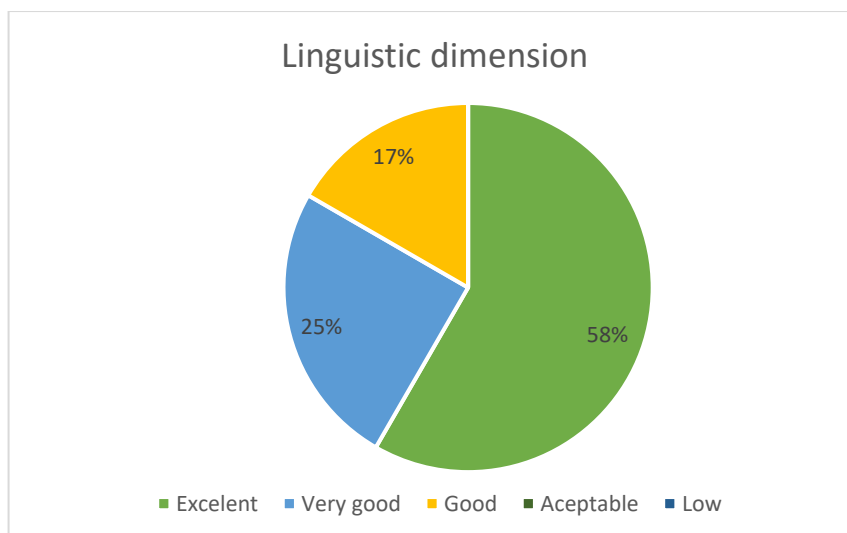
After the intervention, the results in this dimension show a substantial change. No student remained at the Low or Acceptable levels, representing a complete reduction in poor performance. The majority of the group reached high levels: 58.3% reached the Excellent level, 25% Very Good, and 16.7% Good. This indicates significant progress in linguistic accuracy, with clear improvements in the use of grammatical structures, spelling, and punctuation, which are essential elements for the clarity and quality of written text.

Cognitive dimension

Cognitive dimension

■ Excelent ■ Very good ■ Good ■ Aceptable ■ Low
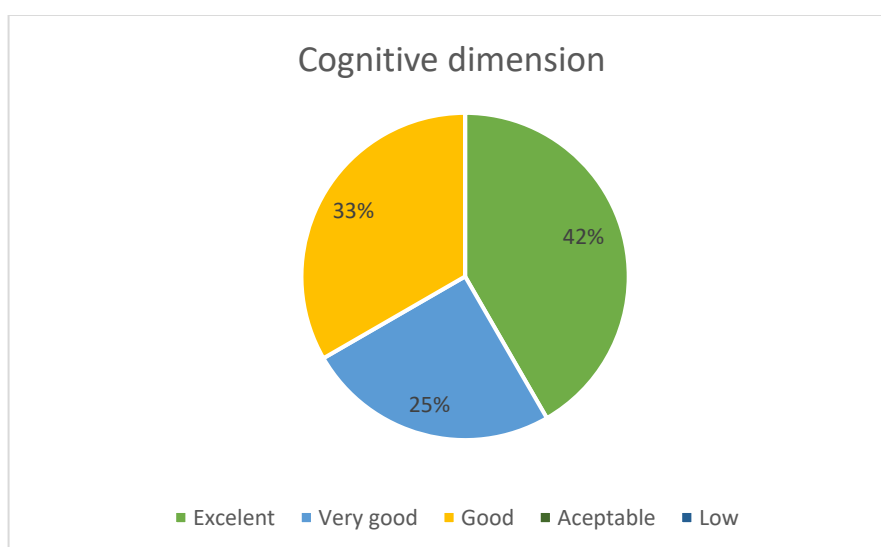
The lowest levels also disappeared in this dimension. The group was positively redistributed, with 41.7% of students scoring Excellent, 25% Very Good, and 33.3% Good. This improvement reflects concrete development in the organization of ideas and understanding of instructions, as well as in the planning and logical sequencing of texts. Students demonstrated a greater ability to structure their thinking coherently.

Communicative dimension
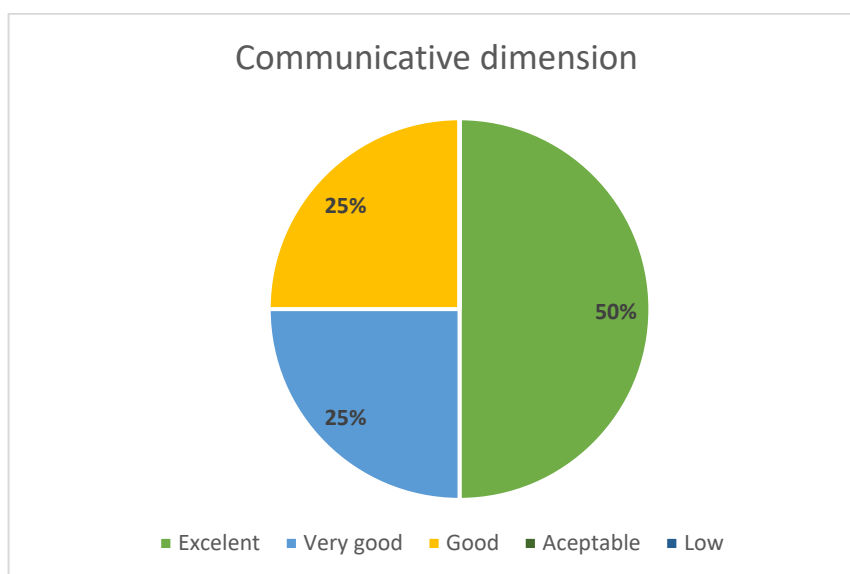
The results show high performance: half of the group (50%) achieved the Excellent level, while the rest were evenly distributed between Very Good (25%) and Good (25%). This reveals that the students were able to communicate their ideas in a clearer, more coherent, and more reader-oriented manner, which represents an improvement in communicative intent and the overall effectiveness of the written message.

Pragmatic dimension

Pragmatic dimension
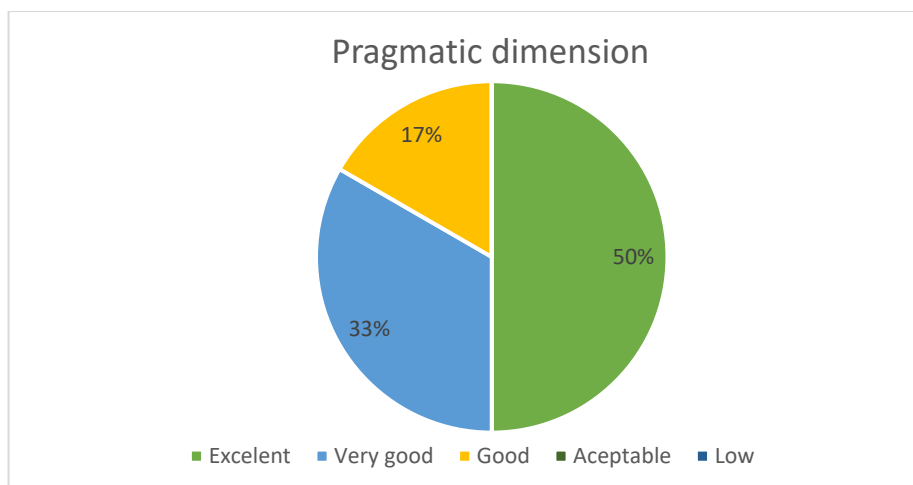
Solid improvements were also evident in this dimension: 50% of the group scored at the Excellent level, 33.3% at the Very Good level, and 16.7% at the Good level, with no records at the low level. These data indicate that students learned to adjust their language according to purpose and context, demonstrating a more functional and strategic use of language in their productions.

Stylistic dimension

Stylistic dimension
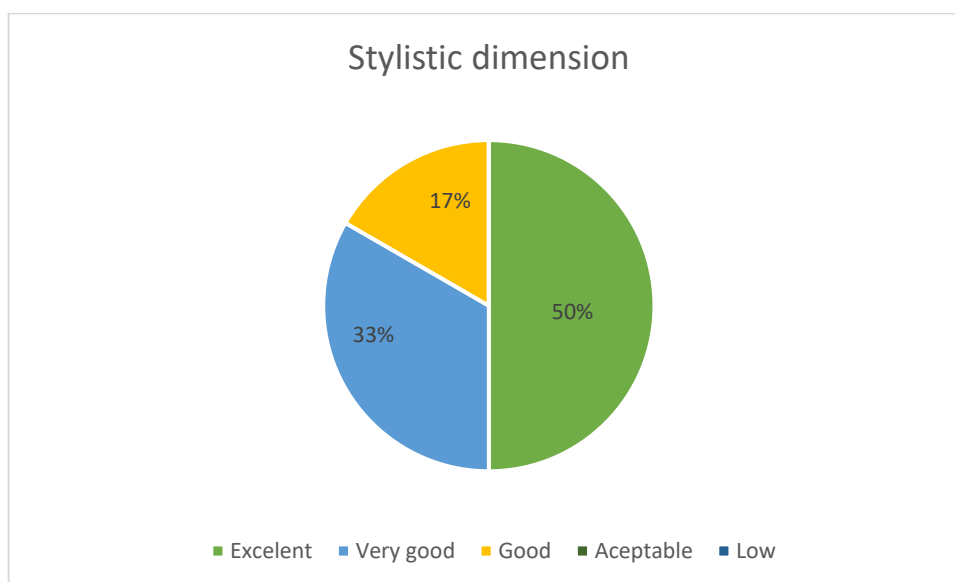
The distribution of levels was identical to the pragmatic dimension: 50% Excellent, 33.3% Very Good, and 16.7% Good, with no low performance. This suggests a clear

improvement in writing style, including fluency, vocabulary richness, tone, and textual cohesion. Students demonstrated greater expressiveness and control in their language choices.
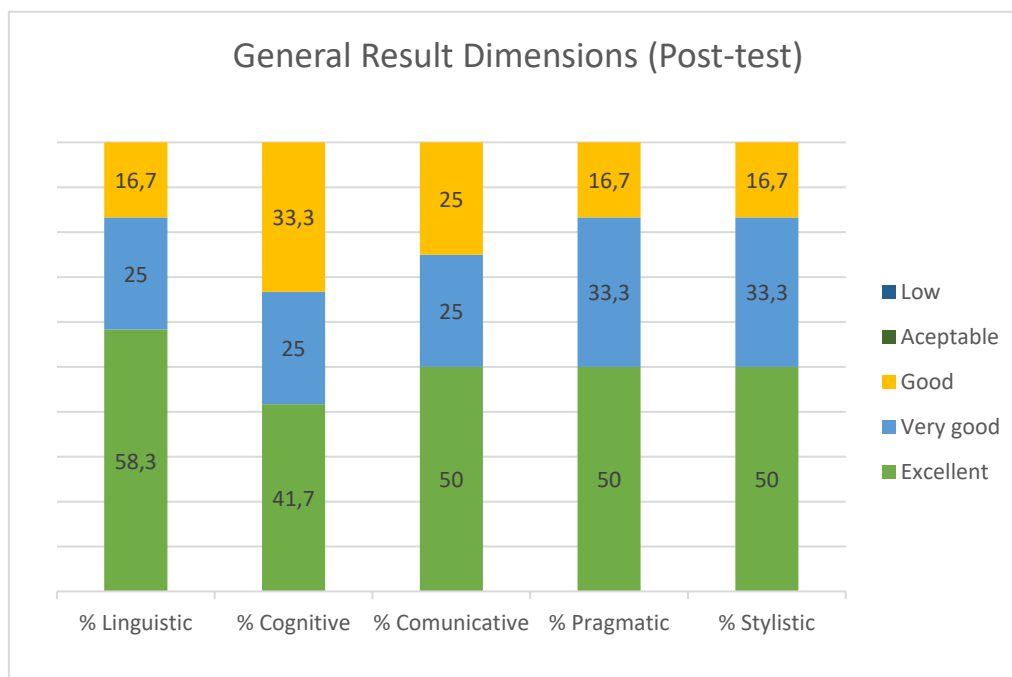
The results obtained after the implementation of the workshop system show a significant and sustained improvement in the development of students' written proficiency. In all the dimensions assessed, there was an overall reduction in the Low and Acceptable levels, and a redistribution toward medium-high and high levels, indicating a clear and widespread pedagogical impact.

The pragmatic, stylistic, and communicative dimensions reflect the most notable progress: half of the group achieved the Excellent level in each of them, and the rest concentrated exclusively on the Very Good and Good levels. This suggests that the students not only improved in structural aspects of writing, but also in adapting language to different purposes, contexts, and communicative styles.

In the linguistic and cognitive dimensions, although the starting point was lower, the post-test results show a significant transformation. Most students managed to overcome their

initial difficulties, achieving levels of grammatical accuracy and textual organization that allowed them to express themselves with greater clarity, cohesion, and precision.

Taking all of this into account, these results confirm that the pedagogical intervention was effective and meaningful. The students not only improved their written output, but also did so comprehensively, developing skills that encompass both the formal and structural aspects of language, as well as the functional and expressive aspects.

4.1.1. *Hypothesis comparison*

To determine if the application of the written workshop system produced a relevant effect in the development of the English written expression of 12 students, the t-student statistical test was applied to compare the results obtained from the pre-test and post-test. This test is adequate to identify the existence of significant differences in a group before and after the intervention. Thus, its aim is to demonstrate the impact of the pedagogical proposal on written expression.

4.1.2. *Hypothesis*

- Null hypothesis (H0): The application of a workshop system implementing connectors will not improve English written expression significantly.

- Alternative hypothesis (H1): The application of a workshop system implementing connectors will improve English written expression significantly.

Paired t-test Analysis (Overall results)

Table 1: Complete Data and Differences (Pre-test vs. Post-test)

N°	Pre-test (X_1)	Post-test (X_2)	Difference ($d_i = X_2 - X_1$)
1	5	5	0,0
2	4,6	5	0,4
3	3,6	5	1,4
4	2,8	5	2,2

5	2,2	5	2,8
6	2	4,8	2,8
7	1,6	4,2	2,6
8	1	4	3
9	1	3,8	2,8
10	1	3,6	2,6
11	1	3	2
12	1	3	2

- The table showed the final individual scores obtained by each student before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the pedagogical intervention.

- In all of the cases, the difference between the scores $(X_2 - X_1)$ is positive, which evidences that all students experienced an improvement in their performance after participating in the workshops.

- The magnitude of progress varies among students; some showed moderate improvement, while others reached a significant improvement. However, the progress was generalized, since everybody obtained better results in the last test.

Table 2: Key statistical calculations

Concept	Result
Pre-Test media	2.23
Post-Test media	4.28
Mean of the Differences ($\bar{d}$)	2.05
Standard Deviation of the Differences (Sd)	0.98
T value	7.24
Degrees of Freedom (df)	11
Critical t **Value** ($\alpha = 0.05$, two-tailed)	± 2.20
p-Value (two-tailed)	0.001

Analysis dimension

Lingüístic dimension

Level of performance	Pre-test (n° students)	Post-test (n° students)	Difference
Excellent (5P)	1	2	+1
Very good (4P)	1	7	+6
Good (3P)	1	3	+2
Acceptable (2P)	4	0	-4
Low (1P)	5	0	-5

In the cognitive dimension, the Excellent level increased significantly from 1 to 5 students (+4), and there were also increases in Very Good and Good. The Acceptable and Low levels disappeared completely. This reflects a substantial improvement in students' analytical and cognitive processing skills.

Cognitive dimension

Level of performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Excellent (5P)	1	5	+4
Very good (4P)	1	3	+2
Good (3P)	1	4	+3
Acceptable (2P)	3	0	-3
Low (1P)	6	0	-6

In the cognitive dimension, the Excellent level increased significantly from 1 to 5 students (+4), and there were also increases in Very Good and Good. The Acceptable and Low levels disappeared completely. This reflects a substantial improvement in students' analytical and cognitive processing skills.

Pragmatic dimension

Level of performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Diferencia
Excellent (5P)	2	6	+4
Very good (4P)	1	4	+3
Good (3P)	1	2	+1
Acceptable (2P)	3	0	-3
Low (1P)	5	0	-5

The Excellent (+4) and Very Good (+3) levels showed considerable improvements. No students were recorded at lower levels after the post-test. The progress suggests that students were able to use language in a more functional and contextualized way.

This dimension showed the greatest growth. The acceptable level predominated in the pre-test, while in the post-test, the majority reached the very good level, demonstrating a more varied and correct use of connectives that strengthen textual coherence.

Communicative dimension

Level of performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Diferencia
Excellent (5P)	2	6	+4
Very good (4P)	2	3	+1
Good (3P)	1	3	+2
Acceptable (2P)	1	0	-1
Low (1P)	6	0	-6

The Excellent level increased from 2 to 6 students (+4) and Very Good from 2 to 3 (+1).

The Acceptable and Low levels decreased to 0, reflecting progress in the ability to express oneself and communicate. There was a significant transformation toward high performance in this dimension.

Stylistic dimension

Level of performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Diferencia
Excellent (5P)	2	6	+4
Very good (4P)	1	4	+3
Good (3P)	1	2	+1
Acceptable (2P)	3	0	-3
Low (1P)	5	0	-5

The high levels (Excellent and Very Good) increased, while the Acceptable and Low levels disappeared. This shows that students improved in aspects of style, coherence, and appropriateness of their written texts. These results indicate a clear redistribution toward higher levels of performance, demonstrating that the pedagogical intervention had a significant and positive impact on this dimension.

4.1.3. Comparison by categories (Pre-test vs.Post-test)

Table: Means by dimension

Dimension	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Difference (Post - Pre)	% Improv.
Linguistic	2,08	3,92	+1,83	88.0%
Cognitive	2,00	4,08	+2,08	104.2%
Communicative	2,42	4,25	+1,83	75.9%
Pragmatic	2.33	4.33	+2,00	85.7%
Stylistic	2,33	4,33	+2,00	85.7%

Paired t-tests by Dimension

(Are the improvements observed in each category statistically significant?)

Dimension	T value	Significance (p < 0.05)	Effect size (d)
Linguistic	7.61	Yes (p < 0.001)	2.2 (very high)
Cognitive	8.02	Yes (p < 0.001)	2.31 (very high)
Communicative	5.70	Yes (p < 0.01)	1,65 (very high)
Pragmatic	6.14	Yes (p < 0.001)	1,77 (very high)
Stylistic	6.14	Yes (p < 0.001)	1.77 (very high)

The results obtained from the paired-sample t-test clearly demonstrate substantial improvements across all dimensions evaluated after the implementation of the written expression workshop system. In every aspect, the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores were statistically significant (p < 0.001), and the effect sizes were consistently classified as very high. This indicates not only a measurable but also an educationally meaningful impact, confirming the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention.

In the linguistic dimension, a significant improvement in language proficiency was observed, with a t-value of 7.61, a p-value less than 0.001, and an effect size of 2.20.

In the cognitive dimension, the t-value was 8.02 (p < 0.001), with an effect size of 2.31. These results reflect a very strong impact on students' analytical and cognitive skills, including understanding instructions, logically organizing ideas, and planning their writing.

On the other hand, the communicative dimension with a t-value of 5.70 (p < 0.001), the results were significant, too. The effect size was 1.65, indicating a significant improvement in the students' ability to communicate their ideas clearly, coherently, and with a sense of audience. This suggests a strengthening of the communicative intent of their productions-

In the pragmatic dimension, the t-value was 6.14 ($p < 0.001$) with an effect size of 1.77, highlighting considerable improvement in the appropriate use of language according to communicative purpose and context.

Finally, the stylistic dimension also showed significant improvement, with a t-value of 6.14 ($p < 0.001$) and an effect size of 1.77. This demonstrates progress in lexical variety, stylistic coherence, and expressive richness, enhancing the overall quality of students' written texts.

The students also improved significantly in the stylistic dimension (t = 6.14; $p < 0.001$; d = 1.77). The use of expressive resources, lexical variety, and stylistic coherence were all aspects that were strengthened, elevating the overall quality of the texts.

Taken together, these findings confirm that the proposed workshop system had a positive, profound, and sustained impact on all the evaluated dimensions. The improvements were not only statistically significant but also pedagogically meaningful, strengthening the quality, adequacy, and functionality of students' writing.

5 Conclusions

Consequently, the general conclusion of the study is presented starting from the data analysis of the data obtained during the research process. These conclusions are structured in order to answer the specific objectives and allow us to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention.

The theoretical foundation of the research was obtained by consulting the work of various writing scholars. It was possible to determine that writing workshops constitute a form of teaching organization that is especially useful for improving this skill.

The diagnosis identified various difficulties among the students, including limited systematic writing practice in English, a lack of teaching materials that clearly and progressively address the use of connectives at this level, and a lack of student awareness of the importance of these elements in achieving cohesive and coherent texts. This showed that most students were at "acceptable" or "low" performance levels. The dimensions with the greatest difficulties were pragmatics and stylistics, marked by a limited and repetitive use of connectives, as well as a limited lexical variety. This led to the creation of a teaching proposal consisting of a system of writing workshops, with the aim of improving written expression in students at level A2.

The writing workshop system consisted of four sessions, with a sequential approach that allowed for the introduction, practice, and application of connective and sequence connectors. Each workshop included activating activities, explicit instruction, practical exercises, guided production, and formative feedback. This workshop design was consistent with the A2 level standards established by the Common Core Framework.

The application of the written workshop system to 12 A2 level students from the Language Center "Escola de Idiomas" was carried out during a short intervention period.

Throughout the process, it was observed an active participation from the students and a progressive improvement in the written production, specifically in the correct use of connectors and coherent organization of the ideas. These advancements were evident both in the written products and the observation guide applied during the sessions.

The post-test results showed significant improvements in all the assessed dimensions, supporting the effectiveness of the workshop system as a pedagogical strategy for strengthening writing skills in A2-level students. The differences were statistically significant in each of the five dimensions, and the effect sizes obtained (all classified as very high) confirmed a profound and widespread educational impact.

The improvements were especially noticeable in the pragmatic, stylistic, and communicative dimensions, in which the students demonstrated a more functional use of language, greater expressive coherence, and communicative clarity in their productions. Besides, the linguistic and cognitive dimensions, although starting from lower levels of performance, also showed statistically significant increases, reflecting substantial progress in mastery of the linguistic code and in the logical organization of ideas.

However, one of the main limitations of the process was the limited time for the full development of written productions and teacher feedback. This factor may have limited the degree of consolidation of certain learning outcomes, especially in areas that require greater reflection and revision, such as linguistic correction and cognitive structuring of the text.

6 Recommendations

To implement this workshop system with a more extended time and with additional spaces for personalized support, to reinforce the progress made, and consolidate an integral and sustained improvement in the different components of written expression.

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8   Appendix

Appendix 1

Pedagogical Test (pre-test)

Appendix 2. Application of the workshop system