

IMPROVING WRITING USING QUESTIONING TECHNIQUE



Improving Writing by Using Questioning Technique in A2 EFL Students

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Abstract

The objective of this action research was to improve writing skills using the questioning technique. The participants were a group of 17 students, 10 females and 7 males from a private high school located in Guayaquil-Ecuador. The students attended the 7th-grade and their range of ages was 9-11. The instruments to collect data were; interviews, surveys, observation. These instruments provided qualitative data while pre and post-test. provided quantitative data. The results showed a significant impact (Cohen's $d= 0,66$) demonstrating a real improvement in writing skills applying questioning technique after the intervention. Questioning technique activities were included by using images, foldable, and WIKI, and evidenced sgradually significant progress in writing skills during the sample test as the application of the innovation. Finally, due to the necessities of Ecuadorian students from public schools, it is suggested to go on investigating and applying this innovation with other groups of students.

Keywords: Writing, questioning technique, improvement EFL.

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación-acción fue mejorar las habilidades de escritura mediante la técnica del cuestionamiento. Los participantes fueron un grupo de 17 estudiantes, 10 mujeres y 7 niños de una escuela secundaria particular ubicado en Guayaquil-Ecuador. Los estudiantes asistieron al séptimo grado y su rango de edad fue de 9-11 años. Los instrumentos para la recolección de datos fueron; entrevista, encuesta, observación, estos instrumentos proporcionaron datos cualitativos durante el pre y post-test. proporcionó datos cuantitativos. Los resultados mostraron un impacto significativo (d de Cohen = 0,66) demostrando una mejora real en la capacidad de escribir aplicando la técnica de preguntas después de la intervención. Las actividades de la técnica de cuestionamiento se incluyeron mediante el uso de imágenes plegables y WIKI, y evidenciaron un progreso gradualmente significativo en la capacidad de escritura durante la prueba de muestra como una aplicación de la innovación. Finalmente, debido a las necesidades de los estudiantes ecuatorianos en las escuelas públicas, se sugiere continuar investigando y aplicando esta innovación con otros grupos de estudiantes.

Palabras clave: redacción, técnica de cuestionamiento, perfeccionamiento del inglés como lengua extranjera.

Improving Writing by the Using Questioning Technique in A2 EFL Students

Before starting the research was necessary to look for similar information, related to the topic, so that it can be useful to compare and contrast the information in terms of participants and context with the present research from other authors who have explored the same situation. Etemadzadeha, et al., (2014) researched “the role of questioning technique in developing thinking skills”. The objective was to determine whether asking questions before writing improves the written performance of high school students in a school in Malaysia. The findings showed that participants who received two weeks of treatment demonstrated 17% improvement in their writing skills. They concluded that the use of the questioning technique in teaching writing had a good impact on student`s writing, as it changes passive participation to actively participate in the questions and answer discussion session. Moreover, this technique helped them to improve their critical thinking through stages as they learned how to organize and develop their existing ideas in writing through their teacher and peer`s support.

Riwayatiningsih (2019) carried out some research related to “Improving Writing Skill with Questioning: A Path on Critical Thinking Skill”, the purpose was to investigate whether the use of questions could generate students` critical thinking in their writing process. The results of the study showed that the significance of exploring questions in helping students` critical thinking for meaningful learning, especially in the connectivity and coherency of their writing and the flow of the sentences. Moreover, the students were actively involved in meaningful communicative language during the process of writing. In consequence, the author concluded that the use of questions could assist students in developing their writing skills.

Peña (2017) stated that English corresponds to a language universally used in different countries of the world, not only as a mother tongue but also as a foreign language. English proficiency is increasingly necessary for business and international communication. In that regard, it is linked with prospects for economic competitiveness and growth in the global economy. Some Governments around the world, particularly those countries that do not speak English, have made considerable efforts to improve English language learning through policies and programs, resulting in more people in the region having access to English language learning (ELL). In Latin America, efforts to improve teaching and learning have come since 2000 from the DAKA convention where education for all was proposed. The proposal's purpose was to include English in the teaching curricula as a foreign language since it is a fundamental language of social interaction in today's globalized world. The current Latin American educational institution requires that students be competent and able to function fully in their daily tasks, for which the command of the foreign language is relevant.

According to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación 2017), the study of this language does not reach internationally acceptable standards. In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education evaluates students in mathematics, social studies, language, and natural sciences with the PISA test. However, Ecuador does not have programs or agreements to carry out evaluations in the subject of English, at least not in public institutions, which means a devaluation of a subject that is supposed to be an exit profile for third-year high school students towards a professional career. The Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación, 2017) pointed out that this situation came from several decades ago, in Ecuador, from the moment the English subject was incorporated into the national educational curriculum, due attention had not been given to the teaching of languages as a foreign language. UNESCO (as cited in

Stabback, 2016) expressed that learning another language was not considered a necessary element within the curriculum, and today, thanks to the programs that have promoted its strengthening and due to the demands of a globalized world, there is still much to do.

National English Curriculum Guidelines (2014) The Ecuadorian government introduced a new curriculum in 2016-2017 which establishes the application of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from second grade in primary schools, where the goals for proficiency are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Private institutions in Ecuador offer English teaching at a high-level thanks to the implementation of English tests from well-known publishers. The Educacion First Program (2019) indicated that each of the tests gives a specific certificate with indefinite validity. In various English as Foreign Language exams, writing is one of the four skills tested, along with reading, listening, and speaking.

The students in 7th-grade showed several problems in their writing. The first factor provoking problems in writing is the lack of knowledge of appropriate vocabulary or lack of a method where students can learn and memorize words easily. Students showed problems in grammar and syntax. They make mistakes in the use of the verb in the third person singular, plural of nouns, prepositions, and basic sentence structures. Additionally, lack of ideas affects students' writing skills since they cannot write small sentences because they do not have clear ideas. Another factor affecting writing skill is the combination of competencies (writing and speaking; listening-writing; reading-writing) that writing requires often results in student confusion and anxiety. For this reason, the present study aimed to develop writing skills, particularly.

The seventh-grade students at a private High school in Guayaquil-Ecuador have been taking exams for five years and there have been results between six and seven

points in these last two years which means low-performance of students in the test. Through an observation sheet (as it is shown in appendix I), it was possible to determine some aspects that limit the good performance in writing skill in which the lack of vocabulary can be mentioned, which is necessary for the comprehension and production of contents as it is expressed by Rianingsih (2015). Another aspect that was considered was the fact that the main test needs 60 minutes to be completed. In the writing section, it should take 40 minutes to read and write. However, it was observed that the students, who were preparing for the FLYER test took more time to write a story based on three pictures. It was expected between five and seven minutes to write sentences, but they took between ten and twelve minutes to complete it. Most of all with a score under 7 points showed a similar qualification during three years, for this reason, the author decided to help these students develop their writing skills. In addition, the researcher verified the last Cambridge test information, which results showed low percentages (from 1 to 2 out of 5 points) in the writing skills section.

In order to develop their writing skills in seventh-grade students, the researcher proposed to understand the purpose of this objective through the following questions:

- To what extent does the questioning technique impact students' writings?
- What questioning resources are more effective for improving the writing skills of seven-grade students?
- What is the student perception of the innovation?

Literature Review

Questioning Technique

Sadker and Sadker (2014) explained that a true teaching process rests on the skillful use of the question because it is the guide to, prompts imagination, stimulates thought, and encourages action. In other words, asking is teaching well. Etemadzadeha

et al. (2014) expressed that "Studies in the field of training in a foreign language propose that asking questions is an essential factor in the teaching and learning process. Subsequently, learners get knowledge, thinking, interest, and their degree of commitment depend on requirements that teacher defines and use in the class" (p.1025). Sadker and Sadker (2014) stated that in order to formulate questions for primary students the following process is needed:

- Plan key questions about the topic to provide lesson structure and direction
- Ask for short questions
- Ask questions logically and sequentially based on actions happening in the picture.
- Ask questions for seventh-grade students according to the Common European framework
- Follow up on student responses. It motivates learners to explain, grow, or uphold introductory reactions to more elevated level questions.
- Give students time to think when responding or writing.
- Use questions to engage students' participation.
- Ask questions to involve students in learning activities in a distributive way.
- Encourage student's questions. This encourages active participation.

English teachers have always seen that questioning technique is linked to the improvement of reading comprehension, since it is an active reading strategy. As Zaiter (2020) stated, reading comprehension has a variety of strategies such as the connection of ideas, the visualization of new terms, inference, the determination of the importance in the text, and synthesizing. This strategy of questioning is used to interact with the text and understanding what you are reading. However, the present study is focused on the improvement of writing skills using the questioning technique. That is to say, taking

advantage of the development of reading comprehension, the teacher wants to invite students so that this understanding is reflected in writing, making students produce content and thereby improve both fluency and precision in writing.

Irmawati (2015) argued that the questioning technique is an implementation that is fundamental to develop critical thinking. Etemadzadeha et al. (2014) expressed “the questioning technique is considered as the key strategy to promote students to think critically and allows them to express their ideas by writing about personal information, describing pictures, or comparing things” (p.1).

Irmawati (2015) also highlighted that teachers should be careful because the questioning technique used in class requires a lot of skills on their part to make proper use of this method. It may, sometimes, kill the learning atmosphere of the class. Teachers should consider all those students who are timid at the moment of answering questions. The questioning technique is also a time-consuming activity because it requires the design of appropriate questions according to students’ age, level, and personal characteristics.

Questioning Technique Types

Guthrie (2018) expressed that “the answers you get depend on the questions you ask” (p.1). When asked, the student is being given the opportunity to learn more easily about the world and the people around them, and to satisfy that continuous search for information as they learn a second language. Questions are quite an important form of communication. Through the questions, students begin to identify objects, describe figures, actions, compare actions and compare objects, among others. In this proposal the following types of questions were considered; open, closed, and funnels.

Closed questions. - Guthrie (2018) expressed that this type of question invites a one-word answer, such as ‘yes’ or ‘no’. For example, ‘is it a basketball?’ or, ‘are they eating a sandwich?’ They could also include answers to factual or multiple-

choice questions, such as ‘what’s your name?’ or ‘would you like tea, coffee, or water?’

Open questions. - Guthrie (2018) indicated that this type of question requires a little more thought and generally encourages wider discussion and elaboration. For example: ‘what do you do on your vacations?’ Or ‘what do you do on Christmas day?’

Funnel questions. - Guthrie (2018) expressed that this type of question begins broadly before narrowing to a specific point. These types of questions have three stages; questions for prior knowledge, questions to build knowledge, and questions for reflection.

Development of Questioning Technique with Pictures

Asking questions is a necessary activity for checking students’ understanding and keeping them engaged with the task at hand. In consequence, it encourages independent and critical thinking. Asteid (2019) stated that the teacher applies the questioning technique because it helps students to think out loud, facilitates learning through active discussion, empowers students to feel confident about their ideas, and improves language skills, in particular writing. The questioning technique gives students time to think and rehearse their answers before writing, and motivates students, and develops interest from students in the topic. One way to promote the questioning technique is by using pictures to identify, describe, compare and reflect.

Pictures are used in the study to encourage students to answer different questions about what they see in the image. For Rae (2018), image signals can increase students' participation and understanding by measuring their ability to answer questions with "wh". Understanding is not simply something learners do in text. It also implies making connections and summarizing contents. Parrish (2020) stated that there are many

frustrated readers because the long texts slow down the development of comprehension skills. For this reason, images come into play because they encourage participation; break down language barriers and make writing production practice fun.

Rae (2018) indicated that teachers should utilize picture cues to activate prior knowledge, self-monitor comprehension, and support access and understanding to comprehension questions. Montesdeoca (2017) expressed images are a pedagogical privilege especially in the first years of schooling because it is associated with skills in which children learn capacities to know, understand, interpret and express themselves. Montesdeoca, (2017) also expressed that pictures are related to communicational structures represented through iconographic symbols (images) with deep subjectivity and ambiguity in early childhood. It is an exercise in the construction of knowledge that collects elements from a specific environment where the child is building knowledge by distinguishing between iconic and non-iconic modes of representation, with images of different sizes, colors, and shapes. In this way, the student begins to differentiate between images, drawings, and letters.

Writing Skill

From the beginning of the human civilization, at the stone age, writing skill has been a part of communication. Writing skill allows people to communicate ideas and feelings with clarity and ease to read. People learn language skills in order to keep their relations with others. Srinivas (2019) expressed that to learn a language, people require to learn the skills of that particular language. Those who learn English as a second language should learn all language skills to prove themselves as good communicators. Writing skills are aimed at developing communication among people, helping students to learn. For Irmawati (2015), it consists of three points: 1) reinforcing the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary that students have been taught; 2) motivating

students to write, and have a chance to take risks, be adventurous and go beyond what they have just learned to say; 3) engaging students with the new dialect, where the push to communicate thoughts and the consistent utilization of eye, hand, and mind are methods to strengthen learning (Srinivas, 2019).

Stanley (2020) stated that students who learn English as a second language find many problems in the beginning when they try to learn the English language because everything seems to be new to them from vocabulary, grammatical structure, pronunciation, and the usage of language. In other words, writing is a productive skill that represents symbols and letters as a message by expressing meanings. The writing process is carried out by the teachers using three steps: prewriting, while, and post-writing to help students to built knowledge. Applying in them different strategies such as questioning technique, use of images, use of foldable and moodle platform activities.

Prewriting. - It is a process aimed to gather information; choosing a form and making a plan for organizing and elaborating ideas. Schuman (2012) mentioned that brainstorming can be used to encourage or generate a lot of information by using the questioning technique. For example; “What do you see in the picture?”, “Do you like a carrot?” , “How does it taste?”

While-writing. - After the first phase, where the teacher has involved questions to encourage prior knowledge, it is suggested to drill down to a more specific point in the text or picture to look for more and more details. For instance; this picture is different from picture B... because...; this picture made me think about.

Post-writing. – Etemadzadeha et al. (2014) stated that “the questioning technique consists of applying Socratic questions based on enabling learners to produce ideas logically” (p.1026). Teachers can use questions to explore a general aspect,

for example describing any situation in a picture (using the present continuous form).

Teachers can use questions to encourage creativity and brainstorming, such as give opinions about attitudes characters in a picture have. Teachers can also use questions to focus attention on a specific problem; this point helps students to examine their thinking processes, for instance, when students should give an explanation or reason for a situation on the picture. Etemadzadeha et al. (2014) mentioned that it is essential the teachers develop questioning technique by taking into account six different categories of questions: Clarify students thinking (Why do you say that?); Challenging students about assumptions, (Do you usually eat that for breakfast?); Give arguments (Why do not you eat that for breakfast?); Alternative viewpoints and perspectives, (Who eats anything different at breakfast?); Implications and consequences, (How does it affect you on your health?).

Strategies to Develop Writing Skills by Using the Questioning Technique

Strategies to develop writing skills by using the questioning technique consisted of a set of pedagogical resources. The first one consists of one or two pictures to put into practice vocabulary, descriptive words, grammar structures, and reflection. The teacher has designed different activities where students are questioned about things, they look at the picture (e.g., what is it at the top of the tree? What are there in the park? what are they doing at the park? what things do you like most doing at the park?). All questions are formulated in a very well-organized way, take into account activities to encourage prior knowledge, activities to build knowledge, and activities to reflect content with their own life. In some oral and written expression tests, the student has to talk about photos or images (See Appendix II). This strategy has been taken into

account because it is part of the standardized test scheme. According to Webster's principle (2018), in standardized tests for elementary school, the visual aspect is vital to motivate and improve the formulation of ideas in the student. As mentioned, to develop writing skills, the teacher should always consider reading through pictures first because figures will help the teacher to formulate the appropriate questions for understanding the message of the figure and its components. According to Montesdeoca (2017), reading comprehension of images seeks to demonstrate orderly, sequential ideas that reach a concrete and concise conclusion about the learning that boys and girls have. The figures and their understanding will help the teacher to ask questions and give the students a model of words or phrases that they can use to describe the figure. The intention in using the questioning technique is to use closed and open questions bearing in mind the level of proficiency and use questions in a progressively and logical way.

The second strategy consists of encouraging students to write sentences through a model in a foldable (graphic organizer). Foldables can be shown in different shapes. The teacher helped students to build and design different types of activities for the present proposal. It was used foldable in the classroom to engage students in writing activities along with questioning techniques exercises. This activity encouraged students not only to write sentences but also to develop creativity.

Visual representations of information are in no way innovative in education. The use of graphic organizers to represent information is a tool that is used a lot in language teaching. It is intended that a group of students improve their performance in terms of the development of written ability, and their understanding of images through the questioning technique. Zike (2015) assumed that the use of foldable also has a theoretical basis in the development of creativity and critical thinking of students (see Appendix III). Zike (2015) mentioned that with the foldable students can perform

different functions such as describe, compare, classify, perform a sequence, and determine cause and effect or decision making.

Among the advantages of the foldable are: give the student a different way of seeing and thinking about the information. The language barrier (words, grammar) is removed so that students can focus on the connections between information. In other words, to create the Foldable, the student must identify the relationships between the elements, examine the meanings attributed to them, prioritize the information, and decide where each element should be placed in the foldable. Lots of information turns into an easy-to-read. Foldables are easy to edit, review, and add.

The creation of the foldable helps the student to generate ideas and improve the written production and see the possibilities associated with a topic. Foldables have multiple uses including summarizing reading texts, organizing and storing vocabulary, and assisting in problem-solving, decision making, study, and research planning and brainstorming. The subject is understood more quickly and effectively. Foldables can be used with words or short phrases and sometimes pictures; they can be used with all levels. Foldables are used to assess students' knowledge and understanding of content, thinking skills, and creativity.

This project proposes the use of foldable to motivate students to write in English and develop comprehension and critical thinking during the class period. As has been observed, the figures will be used for the development of the topic in general, the foldable as work where the written production was accompanied by the development of creativity and the WIKIs for homework with the use of ICTs, in which, the student can answer the questions proposed by the teacher regarding a particular topic.

The resources will be organized on the platform Moodle. Christian High School of Guayaquil uses it to send activities to its students through this tool. The use of TIC is

a very important part of the students' education since it allows students to interact with interesting activities that engage them with their learning. The teacher will use a WIKI (a tool used to write comments) to continue practicing from home. LeBar (2017) explained that a wiki is a website that allows collaborative editing of contents and structure by users.

WIKI is a tool that will be applied at first like an opinion section before they learn to edit the content proposed by the teacher. The teacher asked for a Big question and students answered to a sample proposed by the teacher but adding their ideas to complete the sample. Students could carry out their WIKIS through the MOODLE platform of the educational institution. The teacher who must master access to the MOODLE platform must create a WIKI, which can include an image and a question so that students can respond by way of comments, for example, next to the image the instruction "Describe the picture" can be noted, or write the questions related to the image. In this way, the reading comprehension of the image, the questioning technique, the written production, the communicative interaction, the use of the technological communication instruments "ICTs", and the motivation are promoted.

All activities are based on a constructivism approach because students create their learning based on their previous experience, students take what they are being instructed and add it to their past information and encounters, making an extraordinary reality that is only for them (McLeod, 2019, p.1). Teachers use constructivism to help understand that each student will bring their past to the classroom every day. The teacher in the constructivist study helps students to make their learning and comprehension. They assist students with making their cycle and reality dependent on their past. This is vital to helping numerous sorts of learners take their encounters and remember them for their learning.

Cognitivism also appears in the teaching process because according to Rae (2018) and Rhalmi (2020), students are influenced by both internal (experience) and external elements (environment). The cognitive hypothesis has developed over time, breaking off into sub-theories that were based on unique elements of learning and understanding. For this study, images, foldable, and WIKI are used to stimulate learning and previous experiences. Seventh-grade students can understand how their thinking impacts their learning and behavior; they can have more control over their learning. The cognitive learning hypothesis impacts learners in light of the fact that the comprehension of their point of view can enable them to learn. Teachers can ask their students to make their own questions. This procedure can assist students to learn how their point of view functions, and use this information to develop opportunities to get better learning.

It is well-known by teachers that students are different, that is why different methods must be used due to that diversity. Today, the most widely used method is that which contemplates the theory of learning styles to follow a correct and better option when transmitting and capturing knowledge. According to González (2020), learning styles are "cognitive, physiological and affective traits, which are the indicators of how students perceive, interact and respond to different learning environments" (p.1). In the classroom, each student is different and each situation requires a different approach when teaching, for example, some people prefer to learn with images, others with only text, others prefer in groups. This is why some styles may not be suitable for certain students. Every individual adapts in an unexpected way, speed, interest, and even interest than others. Chick (2018) communicated that there are individuals who use more significant learning pathways: hearing, others visually, others both, and others a combination of various variables. Learning is information on every circumstance, every

individual, and every climate that students can discover. For this reason, activities have been developed taking into account this theory by using pictures for those who learn easier with visual representation. The use of platform Moodle by using videos to reinforce content for those who learn with auditory representation system and foldable to motivate attention, collaborative work, and creativity for those who learn with kinesthetic representation system.

Innovation

At the moment of applying a class focus on writing and without questioning technique, some aspects teacher observed, for example, students get bored with many traditional written exercises or gap-fill activities from the text. In the second place, in this class were formulated questions from the beginning using short and easy questions related to vocabulary and progressively make more complex the activities according to the content. Students answered questions in a limited way it was due to lack of vocabulary related to the topic, lack of practicing of grammar, and lack of modeling technique activities. Students were not working with any didactic materials to develop writing skills such as papers, card papers, flip-flap books, or foldable to consolidate all they have learned in groups or an individual way. Students have a virtual platform, but it has been used to send activities to reinforce the learning and motivate students to learn English. This class had the objective of knowing strategies applied to writing skills. From this moment was identified the problem whose solution is to apply a good questioning technique process to improve writing skills.

Writing skill activities must be developed following the parameters of the 5-component in Cambridge tests; Vocabulary, use of grammar, description of images, comparison of the elements that make up the image, and reflection of the proposed topic. All these components were included in the three strategies; the use of images, the

development of writing in foldable, and the reflection assigned in the Moodle platform with its WIKI tool.

Participants were 7th-grade students with an A1 level of English according to CEFR. The proposal was applied in seven hours during three weeks. The innovation was based on identifying vocabulary from a picture before the questioning technique began. After that the teacher questions to develop the prior knowledge. (e.g. what is the place in the picture? a.-jungle, b.-desert, c. mountains). Questions about the use of language were applied in the second exercise answering questions as *what are people doing in the picture?*. In the third activity, questions refer to the description of the picture as *How many people are there in the picture? are there animals in the picture?*. During the fourth activity students should answer the question *What is the difference between picture A with picture B*, they had two pictures to compare and answer the question. In the last activity questions aimed to reflect on the topic (e.g. are there animals at the place where you live? List some of them).

Three didactic resources were used to identify objects, actions, and qualities (pictures); to create little cards with pictures and answering some questions, students could design beautiful foldable and they had the opportunity of using English by writing sentences in them; questions are written at the foldable and students should answer questions and at the same time they can develop their creativity by personalizing their foldable.

The WIKI was used to reinforce the writing skill development using modeling exercises, besides, WIKI was used to implement ICT to the proposal. The use of these strategies allowed students to reinforce and gain confidence to complete the test writing activities whose purpose was to prepare to get their certificate not with a good grade, but with a grade between 8 up to 10 points.

Methodology

This section describes how the study was carried out. It includes conceptual and operational definitions of the questioning technique and writing skill used in the study. This also will be useful to other researchers to replicate the innovation. It indicates the type of research and some theory of how it is defined. This action research included four research instruments; Qualitative: observation sheet and interview and Quantitative: survey, pre-test and post-test.

Research questions

Due to all these aspects related to questioning technique and writing skills there is the necessity to plan exercises to develop writing skill by using questioning technique. The researcher has established different questions to clear and give readers the opportunity of understanding the purpose of using writing strategies to improve English language proficiency. These questions were answered by the use of research techniques.

- To what extent does the questioning technique impact students' writings?
(interview and observation sheet)
- What questioning resources are more effective for improving the writing skills of seven-grade students? (observation sheet, survey)
- What is the student perception of the innovation? (pre-test and post-test)

Participants

Participants in the present study were students from Guayaquil Christian school. They were 17 students in seventh grade. They were students around of age of 10 and 11 years old. They study in the morning section. They receive Spanish and English classes with two different teachers. They represent the study sample.

Instruments

This section was organized according to the research questions. There is a complete description of the instruments and how they answer the research questions. The first technique used to collect data for this study was *classroom observation*, which consisted of taking notes within a class during normal hours with respect to the pedagogical technical processes, noting improvement agreements in pedagogical practice (Menchú, 2017, p .3).

Another technique used was the *survey*, which according to Casas, et al., (2014) is a technique that uses a set of research procedures through which a series of data that is intended to be explored is obtained and analyzed, to describe, predict or explain a series of characteristics. *The interview* is also part of the techniques used for this study, this technique, as defined by Díaz, et al., (2015), is a conversation that is proposed in order to collect information from the interviewed person. Finally, there were two *tests* that, according to Muñiz (2014, serve to measure the abilities of individuals, in this case, students regarding the questioning technique, the understanding of texts and images used, and the ability to write.

Observation Sheet

By using the observation sheet, the aim was to obtain data and then analyze and interpret them. This classroom observation sheet had the objective of showing how a writing skill was developed and how the questioning technique was applied in seventh-grade students, from its beginning to the end of the class, evaluating the process of subject inquiry, before, during, and after. The logical order of the questions was evaluated for the age and level of English of the students. The researcher has also observed the ability of the students to write their ideas in another language and the skills of the teacher to carry out the preparation of their students in the components of reading with images and writing. During the realization of this study, it was necessary to find

relevant aspects that may indicate the good management of the contents, resources, and teaching strategies. Sala (2012) proposed a classroom observation scheme. This scheme focuses on 6 themes: The student, the teacher, learning, the class session, classroom management, materials, and resources (See appendix I). This instrument helped to answer the question; How does the questioning technique help to develop writing skills?

Interview Questionnaire

The interview was conducted using a questionnaire with eight questions addressed to the seventh-grade English teacher with questions related to the development of writing skills and the use of the questioning technique with images (see appendix I). This instrument helped to answer the question; What questioning resources are more effective for improving the writing skills of seven-grade students?

Survey

The survey questionnaire consisted of ten questions intended for seventh-graders to assess their interest in learning English, their level of English proficiency, their ability to answer questions and write short sentences. Besides, the survey was approved by using the Cronbach formula with the purpose to know the reliability of the instrument (See appendix IV). This instrument helped to answer the question; What is the student perception about the innovation?

Pre-Test and Post Test

Once the data from this test have been obtained, another test was carried out to evaluate the improvement of the writing skill by applying the strategies proposed in the research work and determine the effect that exists in applying writing strategies and the development of the questioning technique. Both, pretest and posttest consisted of five activities. Each activity has different questions and they are divided into questions to evaluate vocabulary and prior knowledge, evaluate the description of the picture,

evaluate grammar development, evaluate the use of language by comparing two pictures and evaluate questions for reflexión. Pretest and posttest results were compared to identify and show evidence of improvement. In addition, a mathematical process was applied to measure the impact of the innovation for learning through a test through the Cohen formula.

Ethical Considerations

For this process, authorities allowed the researcher applies virtual classes by using Moodle platform, Teams, and Stream Platform. It took into account the confidentiality part of the professional ethics that the researcher must have (Sánchez, 2019). The manipulation of information had the objective of not relating or involving names, addresses, phone numbers, or red social accounts under any condition. As the study involves younger students the application of the research instruments, needed authorization from the school authorities and the parents who were required to give their consent to preserve the integrity of the participants. The identity of the students was protected, the data has been confidential with the exception of the academic authority (vice-rector) and the Casa Grande University. The students were informed of the application of the research instruments and have freely and spontaneously decided to participate.

Results

Interview and observation sheet

Research instruments evidenced that the questioning technique is the engine that moves participation in students, encourages students to write better ideas, promotes critical thinking by writing the correct answers and expressing situations happening in the pictures.

Research instruments evidenced that the teacher only uses a text in a reading activity with five or six questions where students have to write the answers by reading again the text. After class observation, it was evident that the teacher felt well because the use of images, foldable, and wiki encourages students to answer questions and write what they learn in class. The questioning techniques allowed students to improve their ideas and answer questions correctly.

Research instrument evidenced that the students find writing in English very difficult, they can write their own sentences, but they do that by using a model. They feel that they are not practicing writing exercises to improve their performance in the English test.

According to the teacher interview, the teacher applies Cambridge Test every year, but the teacher has never applied a sample test to practice before the main test. The teacher also mentioned that students find writing sentences difficult because they need more vocabulary and reinforce some grammar structure as present continuous. The teacher mentioned that questions are limited and they are focused on grammar. Students used the platform to receive tasks. The teacher believes that a guide with exercises based on the Cambridge test is necessary to reinforce language competencies before they do their main test.

Survey

Table 1

Survey questions

	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree
1.I like to speak and write in English.	70%	12%	18%
2.I like to read when there are figures in the text.	88%	12%	0%
3.My teacher gives me new words according to the topic of the class.	100%	0%	0%

4.I am confident in answering the teacher's questions.	23%	18%	59%
5.I write simple sentences by using of a model that the teacher indicates.	70%	18%	12%
6.I can write small sentences in English by my own without a model.	23%	18%	59%
7.I would like writing sentences, short stories, decorate cards, etc. by using foldables.	88%	12%	0%
8.We practice writing skill by using Cambridge test samples.	0%	18%	82%
9.I like to learn English using virtual platform.	64%	18%	18%
10.I would like to improve performance in the Cambridge test by practicing with more writing activities.	88%	12%	0%

Results in the survey indicated that students (70%) like to speak and write in English. (88%) like to read when there are figures in the text. (100%) mentioned to receive new words according to the topic of the class. Only (23%) of students felt confident in answering the teacher's questions. (70%) of students write simple sentences by using a model that the teacher indicates. Only (23%) of students write small sentences in English on their own without a model. (88%) of students like writing sentences, short stories, decorate cards, etc. by using foldable. (82%) of students do not practice writing skills by using Cambridge test samples. (64%) of students like to learn English using a virtual platform. (88%) of students like to improve performance in the Cambridge test by practicing with more writing activities.

*Survey Reliability**Cronbach***Figure 1**

Cronbach formula

0.885823

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} * \left(1 - \frac{\sum_{i=0}^K s_i^2}{s_t^2} \right)$$

 Note: This figure shows the Cronbach calculation formula

The results of the calculation of the reliability coefficient (Cronbach) indicated that the survey applied to have a high degree of reliability (0.885823) which indicates that the survey was correctly designed (see Appendix V)

Pre-Test Results

Thanks to this instrument it was evidenced that the students feel that they need to improve their performance. Pretest results showed that a considerable number of students have problems with vocabulary acquisition, only 35% of them could complete the first activity. Pretest also showed deficiency in the use of language, only (29%) could complete the activity correctly. There is a deficiency in grammar development, particularly at the moment to compare things, only (5%) of students could complete the activity correctly.

*Posttest Results***Table 5**

Pretest and Posttest comparative table

PRETEST				POSTTEST			
SL	PL	BL	UL	SL	PL	BL	UL
35%	12%	35%	18%	41%	58%	0%	0%
29%	35%	23%	12%	29%	58%	12%	0%
23%	18%	29%	29%	23%	52%	5%	18%
5%	18%	29%	47%	12%	70%	18%	0%
18%	24%	52%	5%	35%	52%	29%	0%

According to the comparative table, it can be observed that there is a significant increase as a result of the application of the lesson plan with writing exercises using the question technique. A large number of students have left the unsatisfactory level, that is, they have improved their grade. This is confirmed through the application of the Cohen formula to measure the effect that has occurred since the first test and whose value has been 0.6625413. After having the preparatory class to develop writing skills and answer several questions by watching pictures students felt more confident at the moment to be evaluated, so that, they finished the test ten minutes before.

Discussion

The objective of the present study was to improve writing skills by using the questioning technique. The outcomes obtained in this action research reflected a Cohen's d of 0.6625413 which demonstrated an improvement after the intervention. At first, students got a low grade in the pre-test caused by the lack of pedagogical resources applied to support the writing skill development along with questioning technique. Etemadzadeha et al. (2014) expressed that questioning is important because questions motivate students, focus their attention, and give the student the opportunity to practice and rehearsal. Besides, this intervention allowed the teacher to encourage students by using the questioning technique.

This action research provided opportunities to students to improve their performance, develop writing skills by doing participants interact, work in pairs with their classmates and transfer their knowledge each day. Finally, the use of resources as foldable and wiki helped the researcher to replace the traditional teaching methods. Students were active participants during the process of the innovation, they liked to answer questions about pictures, describe, and compare them. They were confident and sure to answer

questions in oral and written way because the questions were appropriate for their level and because they had the opportunity to practice similar exercises by using modeling sentences.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to determine whether the questioning technique helped students to improve their writing skills. Based on the evidence, after seven weeks of intervention students cut down their difficulties to write sentences, recognize words, describe situations and compare pictures and actions, as a consequence they did not have problems solving a sample test from Cambridge University Press. Students participated actively when the teacher asked for specific actions in the picture and they felt motivated by giving their answers, they liked to design their own foldables because they could write their sentences describing pictures. They felt encouraged by using moodle platform in activities where they can answer questions about what they can see in a picture or video. Post results of the study demonstrated that they improved gradually writing skills during the intervention. It was the first time they practiced writing exercises using a WIKI in Moodle platform and it was also the first time they designed foldables to write their ideas according to different questions. The results of this investigation can be taken as support to include questioning technique in other skills.

Limitations

The present study faced the following limitations during the application of this research. First, the innovation was applied during the pandemia context in which virtual classes were applied. It could affect the development of writing skills by using foldables since foldable activity is designed with a collaborative purpose. The researcher mentioned that another difficulty in the present study was the application of research

instruments before and after applying the proposed strategies due to the schedules established by the high school. As the schedules were established, it faced the dilemma of preparing these classes on weekends or looking for a time within the normal class schedule.

Recommendations

Recommendations are given after finishing thesis work: first, according to the achieved results, it is important to promote vocabulary instruction in order to improve writing exercises. Second, encourage teachers to use Moodle platform tools in order to enhance students' knowledge by using TICs. Third, the application of innovation should be done during all academic years in order to reinforce oral and written communication. Finally, it is suggested to promote researches focus on modeling techniques.

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APPENDIX I
Research Instruments

1. Classroom Observation Sheet

Available upon request.

2. Interview

Available upon request.

3. Survey

Available upon request.

4. Sample Test

Available upon request.

APPENDIX II Proposal

Available upon request.

APPENDIX III Proposal Strategies

Available upon request.

RUBRIC Teacher's Scoring Writing Rubric

Available upon request.

LESSON PLAN

Design from Your Goals

Available upon request.

APPENDIX IV

Pre and Post test Results

Available upon request.

APPENDIX V

Level of Reliability of the Survey: CRONBACH CALCULATION and COHEN FORMULA

Available upon request.

COHEN FORMULA: It is a measure of effect size as standardized mean difference.PRE AND POST TEST

Available upon request.