



**Self-Assessment of Students' Blog to Enhance Paragraph Writing**

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Research Report

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### **Self-Assessment of Students' Blog to Enhance Paragraphs Writing**

Mohammad and Hazarika (2016) expressed that writing is essential for developing ideas and the language system, which is used for conveying information in an active form. Nunan (2015) also claimed that writing involves both physical and mental processes; the first refers to the fact of using symbols and letters on a piece of paper by using supplies and the second is related to the development of thinking skills such as generating ideas, organizing content, connecting paragraphs, revising, and editing. Writing is undoubtedly one of the most important skills when learning English due to its multiple uses in communication.

In a global vision, learners have common problems such as the poor practice of formal writing, difficulties with the formal language, and misuse of the grammar rules (Klimova, 2013). Ibnian (2017) explained that learners presented difficulties when writing in English either to express their thoughts correctly and understandably or to write a piece of work due to the lack of self-confidence.

In Ecuador, Cabrera et al. (2014) stated that students struggle with grammar mistakes, low level of vocabulary words, mother tongue interference, and unfamiliarity of writing strategies. Students are required to get the B1 level at the end of their school-life with great improvement in writing according to the National Curriculum Guidelines (Ministerio de Educacion, 2012). In a particular Ecuadorian context, learners present severe problems in their assigned writing work due to the lack of vocabulary, grammar errors, misspelling, mistakes in punctuation, and capitalization. They also show a low production of ideas and disorganization, a lack of coherence when connecting ideas and thoughts to structure a paragraph.

This study is focused on enhancing paragraph writing by applying the self-assessment strategy to help learners be more aware of their learning process.

## **Literature Review**

This section describes the basic concepts regarding the Self-assessment strategy and writing skills as the core part of the research and the elements that structure the design of the innovation with the corresponding support of the authors and their findings.

### **Self-Assessment Strategy**

Andrade and Du (2007) stated that self-assessment involves learners' self-reflection on how they are learning and whether the goals are being accomplished or not to improve their performance; it promotes the development of learners' skills by making them more aware of their difficulties to overcome. Naeini (2011) highlighted that self-assessment brings a wide range of benefits to learners such as enhancing the process of acquiring knowledge to be more conscious of their strengths and weaknesses, conducting learners to accomplish their goals, broadening the variety of assessments options, and diminishing the teachers' work to make students more independent at learning. Thus, applying the self-assessment strategy will encourage learners to be more responsible for their learning.

### **Self-Assessment Training**

Noonan and Duncan (2005) asserted that self-assessment ought to be a skill developed and trained in schools to obtain good results in the learners' performances; it is a time for students to build, validate, apply, and evaluate their work to make the right choices when interacting with the content. Brown and Harris (2014) adduced that teachers and students should be trained about the self-assessment strategies and techniques to use the appropriate ones for their levels; learners might develop a meaningful assessment to reach their goals and achievements in the learning. Therefore, training on self-assessment is a requirement for the success of this project.

**Rubrics**

Andrade (2008) indicated that rubrics are much more than an evaluation tool or a summative test; they may serve as formative tools as well; they may guide teachers and students to achieve high-quality level performances based on reporting self or peer assessment results and revising mistakes to correct them for improvement. Wang (2016) considered rubrics of great importance in developing speaking and writing skills since there is no correct answer as it occurs in the multiple-choice format, instead they bring learners a more specific perspective of what the goals are and how to get them. Hence, rubrics constitute an exceptional assessment tool for learners' performances.

**Feedback**

Tavakoli and Zarrinabadi (2016) considered that teachers should scaffold learners to encourage the continuity of the language learning development by helping them realize their problems to correct them in the process. It is recommendable for motivating students to keep up with the learning growth. Owen (2016) referred to feedback and formative assessment as very consistent strategies for successful teaching and learning. Teachers may use feedback as diagnostic tools by structuring authentic performance tasks and assessments to improve their pedagogical work and students may enhance their abilities. Thus, feedback will help students identify their weaknesses and motivate them to be confident and self-efficient.

**Writing Skills**

Danhya and Alamelu (2019) reported that writing is the most important skill for communication but it can be a difficult ability to acquire since it requires learners' attention, reflection, and mastering the skill; it involves a great knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic parts. Fageeh (2011) shared that writing is an essential element in learning a foreign language that integrates the development of listening and

speaking skills to comprehend information in readings to finally include more elements in the production of writing; in modern times with the help of technology, learners may improve their writing by using chatting, emails, and blogs. Thus, learners will enhance their writing skills by using blogging as a collaborative technological tool.

### **Writing Strategies**

Al-Asmari (2013) explained that writing is a process that implies social interaction. Learners should elaborate a designing plan before starting their compositions, being prewriting the first step taken by beginners in the form of sketching, creating conversations, reading, and writing. Some other strategies may be used to develop comprehensive writing, such as connecting the text to the learners' experiences, making summaries and conclusions at the end. Lastly, it could take some time of hard work to manage the writing process. Sangeetha (2020) indicated that drafting and revising are the main steps of the writing process since grammar mistakes, organization, and appropriate style may be corrected in the revision of the first draft. Learners can identify their errors to make corrections by applying the stages of the writing process.

### **Paragraph Writing**

Kartawijaya (2018) reiterated that writing is an essential activity in foreign language learning. But it is not appreciated by most students. They find writing difficult due to the lack of ideas to construct sentences and not knowing how to organize their thoughts into paragraphs. Organization refers to the paragraph formation that is structured with the main elements introduction, body, and conclusion. Maharani (2018) proposed using graphic organizers as a pivotal technique to enhance paragraph writing; they improve learners' production in varied ways. Students can remember, connect ideas, and sum up information. In addition, learners have a general view of the

paragraph structure from the topic sentence to the conclusion. Hence, students could enhance their paragraph writing by the self-assessment strategy.

### **Backward Design**

Hosseini et al. (2019) affirmed that the curriculum development should be focused on problem-solving with learners' critical understanding. With this in mind, the Understanding by Design model is an exceptional educative tool for improving students' learning. "UbD has three main stages: (a) Identify the desired results, (b) determine the desired evidence, and (c) plan instruction and experiences to meet the results" (p.35). Wiggins and Mc Tighe (2005) emphasized that UbD or Backward design, as it is well-known, is focused on learners' needs to accomplish their goals. In the first stage, teachers examine what students know, understand, and what they will do; then, they determine the possible evidence of achieving the goals. Finally, they establish the strategies and procedures by which learners will perform their tasks.

Therefore, this research will be focused on applying the self-assessment strategy for enhancing writing skills in A1 level students according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018). Students will create paragraphs as responses to entries on a blog especially designed for students to describe personal experiences, opinions, points of view, and feelings about topics of great interest. The construction of the paragraphs will constitute the final task after revising the components and elements they should include and the improvement of the writing process. The following are the research questions:

1. To what extent does the self-assessment strategy enhance paragraph writing?
2. What are students' perspectives regarding writing improvement?
3. How do students feel about the Self-assessment strategy implementation to improve their paragraph writing?

### **Innovation**

The innovation was carried out during twelve sessions divided into six weeks, two sessions per week started in October 2021, with ten students who accepted to participate freely to improve their skills in writing paragraphs. The instructor applied a placement test to determine the students' English level, which brought A1 level of proficiency instead of B1 as expected.

The innovation was initially aimed to reinforce the writing skills in students of the second year of baccalaureate through the application of self-assessment. However, they presented some difficulties during the first sessions of practicing the strategy, such as lack of appropriate vocabulary to be used for descriptions, incomplete sentences to express their ideas, and incorrect use of punctuation marks. It was necessary to introduce some vocabulary words and practice some basic grammar structures at that time since students had probably forgotten what they learned due to the pandemic situation.

Students learned how to use the rubrics regarding the main idea, supporting sentences, conclusion, cohesion, and mechanics; they were designed to enhance paragraph writing. They were given two paragraphs of different levels to identify the mistakes and errors and realize how they could improve their productive skills. In some cases, they were asked to share ideas about a specific topic and make sentences on their own to construct a meaningful paragraph; finally, they had to assess their work using a checklist applying the self-assessment strategy.

It is worth noting that these changes were applied in all the sessions as demonstrated in the lesson plan (Appendix 1). Thus, in week five, students were introduced to a topic related to books made into movies through a series of engaging online activities where they participated actively. They watched a video, learned new

words on the Quizlet platform, practiced with regular verbs using the Liveworksheets tool, read a fascinating text about a famous movie, and answered personal questions to complete a graphic organizer with their ideas regarding the topic.

The next session was linked to the previous one. But more focused on the paragraph production using the content of the graphic organizer to reinforce their ideas. The instructor tried to create a working routine based on video observations, introducing new vocabulary necessary for developing the skill, practicing some grammar structure, and writing a paragraph about their favorite movie using the rubric. Then, students sent it to the teacher to receive feedback and improve it. Lastly, they self-assessed their work using the checklist with excellent, very good, good or need help in each criterion.

During sessions seven and eight, students learned some facts about alebrijes, which represent Mexican culture through varied activities performed on Kahoot, Jamboard, and Mentimeter platforms. They also learned vocabulary related to the Ecuadorian New Year's Eve celebrated with the burning of puppets on streets and representing our culture and traditions. They practiced relative pronouns, transition words, capitalization, and punctuation to improve their writing skills. They always finished with the graphic organizer before writing the paragraph, receiving feedback, and self-assessing their work. The topics were of students' great interest and covered the five curricular threads described in the curriculum prioritized during the emergency.

In session nine, students addressed topics regarding the beauty of their country and learned about the world travel awards once Ecuador won. They identified relevant information in oral communication (listening and speaking skills) using the Veed.io platform and a Google doc. In session ten, they discussed the advantages and disadvantages of getting four worlds in one place and wrote a paragraph promoting



Ecuador as a tourist destination. After receiving feedback on their work and improving it through the self-assessment strategy, they published their paragraphs on the blog.

Sessions eleven and twelve were the most important since students had to use all the vocabulary and structure learned and develop a paragraph describing the relationship between language and culture. As usual, they checked, practiced, and discussed the origin of the languages in the world using Quizizz and Edpuzzle platforms to have a clear perspective of its role in culture. In the last session, they used all this information to write a new paragraph about how language and culture are intertwined to become part of ourselves. Although learners had time to practice the self-assessment strategy through a checklist and handle the writing process as a form to enhance their writing skills, it is critical to state that some time was employed to reinforce the strategy before starting the content in each session.

### **Research Methodology**

Stringer (2004) outlined “Action research is not just a formal process of inquiry, but may be applied systematically as a tool for learning in classrooms and schools” (p.2). This action research with the application of quantitative and qualitative instruments was designed to help learners overcome their problems in writing, expressing their ideas in the foreign language when constructing paragraphs at a public institution in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The research was focused on strengthening students’ confidence by applying the self-assessment strategy, making them more aware of their learning process.

It is crucial to define the two variables to have a better understanding of the research goals. The self-assessment strategy corresponds to the independent variable, which is the main resource to be used for students. Panadero and Romero (2014)

emphasized that self-assessment implicates the participation of learners in monitoring their own progress, making their own judgements about achievements and success.

The dependent variable refers to paragraph writing and all the factors that affect its production. Kellogg and Raulerson (2007) expressed that writing implies three fundamental steps regarding planning, ideas generation, and revising; this process is linked with the working memory where all the information is stored, automatic handwriting and spelling, and thinking creatively as a means of writing production.

The data gathered from this study will help other professionals who present the same difficulty and answer the research questions previously proposed.

### **Participants**

The sample was formed initially by ten students. However, two of them dropped out of the program due to personal problems, and two others did not finish it. Their ages ranged from 15 to 17 years old. They were attending virtual classes because of the pandemic at a high school in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and agreed to participate freely. The participants were seven girls and three boys, representing 70% and 30%, respectively; they belonged to the media class according to their socioeconomic status.

All of them were Spanish native speakers of Ecuadorian nationality who were currently studying the second year of the baccalaureate. They were in A1 English level according to the results of the placement test and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Participants spent two months working in twelve online sessions.

### **Instruments**

The study was carried out with the application of several instruments to gather the information to demonstrate the progress of the investigation. The application of a pre-test and post-test was required to answer the first question about to what extent the

self-assessment strategy enhanced paragraph writing. The results yielded the quantitative data necessary to demonstrate the advance of the innovation.

A semi-structured interview was designed to answer the qualitative questions regarding the students' perceptions about writing improvement and the self-assessment strategy to enhance paragraph writing. The data were analyzed and classified to have a better understanding of the information.

### **Placement Test**

The placement test, applied to the students, was taken from the New Inside Out course displayed on the web. It contained sixty multiple-choice questions divided into five sections that measured the students' English proficiency level. It was essential to give students the test for several reasons; first, to know students' strengths and weaknesses in writing, which became the starting point of the innovation. Second, to design the appropriate activities according to their interests, knowledge level, and curiosity for students to develop in the lesson plan; finally, students will be aware of their current position in their learning process to meet their achievement goals.

### **Pre-Test and Post-Test**

The pre-test used for the innovation was taken from the Cambridge English KET test and adapted to the learner's context since not the whole test was applied, only the writing section (Appendix 2). The test was revised by other colleagues before its application to confirm validity. The pre-test contained the instructions for students to write a paragraph about a festivity celebrated in Ecuador and some indications regarding the main topic, supporting sentences, and conclusions. They also included caring about cohesion between the sentences and the mechanics that implied spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. In addition, the rubrics were given to students to verify the construction of the paragraphs.

The post-test was similar to the pre-test (Appendix 3). Students had to write a paragraph about language and culture and check the rubrics before delivering it to include all the elements required for good work. Finally, they used a checklist to assess their work.

### **Interviews**

The interview was semi-structured and implemented by the instructor using the Teams platform due to students' accessibility to the technological tool. The instructor gathered information about students' perceptions of the writing improvement and the self-assessment strategy as the core of the innovation and took notes as it was in process. The students felt confident to talk and convey their different points of view, their answers were not limited; instead, new information came out while the interview was going on. There were ten questions focused on knowing the students' positions regarding the innovation, as well as the positive and negative aspects of the strategy implementation.

1. Do you enjoy writing in English? Why or why not?
2. Do you consider yourself as a person who can express your ideas easily in English? Explain.
3. What do you think are the factors that prevent expressing your thoughts in English as you would like to?
4. What do you consider are the elements necessary for writing in English in a good way?
5. How did you feel when writing in English before these sessions?
6. How do you think the process of checking, revising, and correcting your own work helps you in writing?
7. Do you think you can apply the self-assessment strategy in other subjects?

8. How did you feel about using the checklist when self-assessing your work?
9. Did you like the self-assessment training you received before starting the program? Was it necessary for you? Why or why not?
10. Did you have any problems when self-assessing your work? Explain.

### **Rubrics**

The rubrics used in assessing paragraphs' writing involved five assessment criteria. The first aspect referred to the main idea, usually implied in the topic sentence. It had to be original and interesting with a clear purpose. The second aspect focused on the supporting sentences and details, which provided evidence and sustained the main idea. The third criterion was related to the concluding sentence that restated the main facts in the topic sentence and the supporting statements. The fourth aspect involved the coherence between the ideas; the sentences needed precise vocabulary and transition words to transmit the right emotion and sentiments to the reader. The last criterion dealt with the mechanics, which included correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

### **Checklists**

Banerjee (2016) proposed the use of checklists and rating scales as assessment methods to gather students' information about their progress in learning and social development to make the appropriate changes providing a vision of mastering the skills, attitudes, and content with simple two-option questions of yes or no. Rating scales also provide information but in ranges of accomplishment degrees. Rowlands (2007) postulated that checklists can be used individually or in groups to keep track of learners' skills on a specific task. In addition, they can be used to collect information during assessment or provide evidence for evaluation at the end of a term. Learners will use checklists to analyze and evaluate their own progress to realize which aspects they will need to improve.

## Data Analysis

Data, gathered from the application of the instruments, were used to answer the research questions.

RQ#1. To what extent does the self-assessment strategy enhance students' paragraph writing.? Pre-test and post-test were applied to answer this question through engaging activities aimed at the elaboration of paragraphs. Once the tests were graded, all the data was saved in an excel format to be introduced in the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 program to obtain the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation (descriptive statistics). This information was relevant to calculate the Cohen's *d* explained in the results section.

RQ#2. What are students' perspectives regarding writing improvement? An interview was elaborated for students to answer this qualitative question to know their strengths and weaknesses in writing skills; thus, learners had the opportunity to share the difficulties they found to improve the writing process.

RQ#3. How do students feel about the Self-assessment strategy implementation to improve their paragraph writing.? Five questions were directed to inquire about their opinions and perspectives of the self-assessment strategy concerning the structure of a paragraph. The interview was in Spanish due to their English proficiency level and translated into English for this innovation.

Data were analyzed and classified. As a result, four main themes emerged during the open coding regarding the difficulties learners faced in the writing process, the elements of the writing skills, perceptions about the self-assessment strategy, and the improvement students had after the innovation. After a second revision, only three themes were defined since the elements of writing were related to the last code. The connection between themes and categories is shown in the axial coding (Appendix 4).

### **Ethical Considerations**

The researcher adhered to all the aspects of the ethical considerations during the investigation process. The authorities of the institution, along with the parents and students, were informed about the content of the project to have a clear understanding of the purpose of the innovation and the benefits for their future. All the sessions were fulfilled with honesty and sincerity in a peaceful and collaborative environment to help students enhance their writing skills.

The research was executed with integrity and dignity, respecting students' rights to participate freely and keeping their names anonymously to maintain their confidentiality. The activities were designed to promote their participation fairly, considering both points of view to avoid bias. The innovation was conducted with transparency in all sessions to benefit the educative and scientific community.

### **Results**

Regarding question one: To what extent does the self-assessment strategy enhance students' paragraph writing.? The quantitative data of the tests were analyzed as follows in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

#### **Pre and Post-test results.**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Pre-Test</b>	6	2	4	2.67	0.816
<b>Post-Test</b>	6	7	8	7.17	0.408

The results demonstrated a significant advance when structuring paragraphs after applying the self-assessment strategy. The pre-tests scores showed a low level of knowledge in paragraph building, whereas the post-test results were higher and better

than the first results. The difference was notorious when comparing the means and the standard deviations between these tests. Cohen's  $d = (717 - 267) / 645.104643 = 0.697561$  also suggested that the innovation had a large effect on enhancing paragraph writing through the self-assessment strategy. The improvement had a practical significance on the research outcome.

Regarding question two: What are students' perspectives regarding writing improvement.? The results of the interview are described as follows.

The students mentioned that writing was pretty complicated because several language aspects intervened in the writing process. One of them expressed, "*it is very attractive, but difficult when writing sentences to make paragraphs.*" They considered that writing involves listening skills to understand verbal messages, speaking skills to share their thoughts, and reading skills to comprehend and interpret information beyond lines. The students liked the target language, even three of them had learned English for ten years, which became a motive for enhancing writing skills.

When analyzing the difficulties students had faced developing their writing skills, various reasons were discussed. Two of them agreed that the lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge were principal factors that prevented them from writing in the right way. Three participants also indicated that expressing their ideas in another language was complex. One of them claimed, "*it is more difficult when the topic is not familiar, I don't know what to write.*" They exposed that writing paragraphs were more than joining sentences; it required a well-managing of connectors, transition words, punctuation, capitalization, and avoiding repetition. One of them commented, "*punctuation and capitalization is as much important as vocabulary since my thoughts do not seem to be clear; that is why I use Spanish sometimes.*"



Two students confirmed that structuring paragraphs and achieving coherence to ideas were indispensable elements for good writing. A student expressed, “*generating ideas about the topic is a big problem because I do not know how to organize them.*” They agreed on using graphic organizers to arrange their ideas. One of them stated, “*graphic organizers help present ideas correctly, preventing them from being scattered and not having coherence in the paragraph.*”

Students also indicated that before the sessions, they felt nervous and stressed when it was the writing time. An interviewee manifested, “*I felt frustrated and anxious when doing writing because I did not know how to do it well.*” Four of them used to translate their ideas from their mother tongue to the second language to present their homework. They revealed that now they could make complete statements on their own, but it was necessary to be focused and take some time to practice. One participant expressed, “*now I have my personal way to write paragraphs and I can apply it in other subjects.*”

Regarding question three: How do students feel about the self-assessment strategy implementation to improve their paragraph writing.? The results of the interview are the following.

The students admitted that self-assessment was fundamental in writing because it provided many opportunities to revise and correct their mistakes. One of them stated, “*I consider that self-assessment can be applied in other subjects to check the progress of improvement.*” They acknowledged the strategy was a tool to judge their performances to be better and more independent. Another student shared, “*the time for training the strategy was necessary for me. I needed the explanation and practice about how to use it. It helped me a lot because I was afraid of making mistakes.*” They considered the time of practicing the strategy before the sessions crucial for the success of this innovation.

### Discussion

The results of this research show compatibility with the authors' statements in the literature review as follows.

Q#1. To what extent does the self-assessment strategy enhance students' paragraph writing? The results demonstrated that the innovation had a large impact according to Cohen's *d* effect size of 0.69. Students improved their paragraph writing ability by being more aware of their errors and failures, which became strengths after implementing the self-assessment strategy. They reflected on the procedure of building sentences, corrected their mistakes, and were more focused on their goals to be better writers; this concept agreed with Andrade and Du (2007).

Q#2. What are students' perspectives regarding writing improvement? They concluded that writing about a specific topic took serious complications due to the involvement of the other language skills and elements such as vocabulary and grammar. This asseveration relates to what Danhya and Alamelu (2019) reported about several difficulties in vocabulary and grammar learners faced when writing. Students realized that writing is closely related to listening, speaking, and writing skills, as Fageeh (2011) mentioned in the section.

Furthermore, students presented problems in expressing their thoughts in coherent sentences because of a weak production of ideas. They did not have practice in the revising, editing, and proofreading procedures in English, which is imperative in the writing process, as Kartawijaya (2018) expressed in the paper about how to organize the ideas to make paragraphs, and Sangeetha (2020) granted importance to the writing process. Students had a considerable advance in writing by using graphic organizers; they had the opportunity of visualizing the topic sentences, supporting details, and conclusion to improve their mistakes, as Maharani (2018) manifested in the document.

Moreover, students declared that the appropriate elements for performing good writing were the ones concerning the writing skills, such as extensive vocabulary words and vast knowledge of grammatical structure. They also claimed that strategies and techniques complemented this process, as Al-Asmari (2013) indicated that writing is not an isolated skill. On the contrary, it is a social and interactive activity that includes varied techniques, for instance, brainstorming, discussion, identifying details in reading, using graphic organizers, summarizing, and more.

Q#3. How do students feel about the self-assessment strategy implementation to improve their paragraph writing.? Students used to feel frustrated and overwhelmed when completing their writing tasks before the pedagogical innovation. After that, they experienced a change in their writing skills and attitudes toward the strategy, as Naeini (2011) explained that self-assessment provides learners with tools to be more conscious and participate actively in their learning.

Finally, students witnessed that self-assessment was significant for improving their paragraph writing and agreed that the strategy might be applied in other subjects; since it helped them be more mature and independent learners, as Naeini (2011) expressed in the paper. Students also participated in training the strategy before starting the sessions because they considered that honesty and sincerity were indispensable values to fulfill the project with success, as Noonan and Duncan (2005) stated in the research.

### **Conclusions**

The purpose of this research was to enhance paragraph writing by applying the self-assessment strategy to provide learners with opportunities to monitor, control, and assess their learning progress to become independent learners. The pedagogical innovation had positive results in the end, given the difficulties students had sorted

throughout their years of studying a foreign language. They improved their writing skills by implementing strategies and techniques to be more organized with the initial ideas to finally polish them to present an attractive set of sentences with coherence. Thus, the self-assessment strategy implementation is crucial when the target is to improve writing paragraphs.

Furthermore, the self-assessment strategy favored students with a better understanding of their learning path and helped them identify their weaknesses to make decisions that led them to succeed. In other words, they were more conscious and responsible for their knowledge. Although it was a hard-working process of introducing, explaining, and practicing the strategy to become a skill, they improved their writing abilities and the writing process to reach the established goals.

Finally, it is a reality that teachers are always searching for new ways to improve writing skills and assist learners in displaying creativity in their writing tasks. Likewise, researchers investigate an efficacious methodology to enhance learners' writing, especially in building paragraphs. In the future, this research will help others diminish the number of students with low grades in writing. It is essential to keep in mind that more research and innovations are required to assist learners in overcoming their difficulties in writing.

### **Limitations**

The pedagogical innovation had a positive impact on improving paragraph writing by applying the self-assessment strategy. However, some limitations in the process need to be mentioned.

The main difficulty was the lack of technological resources, such as computers, laptops, and smartphones, and weak connectivity that prevented students from finishing the activities within the assigned time. Indeed, four students dropped out of the program

because of issues related to the internet connection. Sometimes, the sessions took more time than usual; thus, the assignments were sent later. In addition, due to the program being worked during the pandemic, the sessions were carried out in online environments. Thus, the instructor could not perceive whether someone else was working instead of the students.

Another problem appeared when two students privately confessed they did not understand the activities. When the instructor inquired the students, they communicated their complications with the vocabulary and grammar structure because they had not received synchronous classes for a long time. The instructor had to remake the lesson plan to include more interactive exercises to help students understand the activities and get the goals.

Finally, the last difficulty the instructor faced was to count on a small sample. Even the calling was for more than two hundred participants, only ten responded, from which six students remained till the end. Probably, there would have had more issues to research if the sample had been substantial and varied.

### **Recommendations**

In case this action research needs to be replicated, the following recommendations should be taken into account.

It is suggested that the development of the activities contained in the lesson plan be through a platform with better accessibility; in the hypothetical case the pandemic continues in the next year, students could use WhatsApp as a better option. The use of the internet and computers is an essential requirement for the program; in this context, WhatsApp is a well-known application, easily managed by all students with video call options that can work with megabytes.

Regarding the students' several difficulties in the linguistics aspects of the second language, it is recommended that the innovation based on enhancing paragraph writing be developed with learners of a high English level due to the changes and implementations made to the original proposal of the lesson plan. Thus, students will be more focused on accomplishing the goals in one central target.

The last recommendation deals with the size of the sample. As described before, only six students participated in the pedagogical innovation freely, which could affect the reliability of the results. It is suggested to work with larger sample sizes to get more accurate mean values and provide a smaller margin of error. It is also convenient to avoid misleading statistics if an outlier appears. Thus, the larger the sample, the more precise the data.

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**Appendix 1**

**Lesson Plan**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 2**

**Pre-Test Sample**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 3**

**Post-Test Sample**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 3**

**Qualitative Analysis-Open Coding**

Available upon request.

**Appendix 4**

**Qualitative Analysis-Axial Coding**

Available upon request.