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Tema: **HAIKU COMPOSITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS**

Trabajo de Titulación Previo a la obtención del Grado Académico de Magíster en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

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DEDICATORIA

A Dios, mi esposa y mi hijo.

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TEMA:
HAIKU COMPOSITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS

AUTOR: Licenciado Juan José Santillán Iñiguez
DIRECTOR: Licenciado Manuel Xavier Sulca Guale Magíster
FECHA: 19 de marzo de 2018

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

La inclusión de actividades basadas en la poesía en el aula de idiomas no es de ninguna manera una práctica común. Aunque este hecho compromete a todas las dimensiones de la enseñanza de una lengua, la exclusión de la poesía es particularmente latente con respecto a actividades de escritura creativa. Mucha de la razón para esta negativa a incluir poesía en la enseñanza de una lengua, segunda o extranjera, es que los docentes comúnmente asumen que la escritura de poemas es muy difícil para los estudiantes. Sin embargo, la evidencia empírica acerca del tema pareciera contradecir esta postura. En este contexto, el objetivo del presente estudio de investigación fue determinar si la composición de haikus promovió el desarrollo de las destrezas de escritura académica de un grupo de treinta estudiantes de la Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa de la Universidad de Cuenca. El diseño de la investigación estuvo basado en un enfoque de Métodos Mixtos; es decir, incluyó técnicas de análisis y recolección de datos tanto cuantitativos como cualitativos. Los primeros se relacionaron a la aplicación de pruebas, basadas en ensayos, antes y después de una intervención de seis semanas, en la que la composición de haikus fue promovida. Los resultados de estas pruebas fueron analizados estadísticamente tomando en cuenta sus medias y deviaciones estándar,

las que fueron empleadas en el cálculo de la Prueba T de Student para mediciones repetidas. Por su lado, el aspecto cualitativo del estudio estuvo conectado con el análisis de las respuestas que los participantes dieron a una encuesta de preguntas abiertas aplicada al final de la intervención. Los resultados el estudio demostraron que la composición de haikus tuvo un efecto beneficioso en el desarrollo de las destrezas de escritura académica de los participantes del estudio, siendo el enriquecimiento de vocabulario una de las principales contribuciones. Además, el análisis de los resultados de las pruebas y la concurrencia de respuestas positivas en la encuesta demostraron que esta contribución fue significativa.

Descriptores: composición de haikus, destreza de escritura académica, enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, poesía, escritura creativa, ensayo académico, desarrollo de destrezas, estudiantes de la enseñanza del inglés, expresión personal, adquisición de vocabulario.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The inclusion of poetry-based activities in the language classroom is by no means a common practice. Although this circumstance comprises all the dimensions of language instruction, the exclusion of poetry is particularly latent when dealing with creative writing tasks. Much of the reason for this reluctance to include poetry when teaching and learning a second or foreign language is that teachers commonly assume that poetry writing is just too challenging for language students. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence regarding the issue seems to contradict this assumption. Under these circumstances, the objective of this research study was to determine whether haiku composition fostered the development of the academic writing skills of a group of thirty students of the English Language and Literature (TEFL) Major of Universidad de Cuenca. The research design of the study was based on a Mixed-Methods approach; in other words, it included both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. The former related to the application of essay-based tests before and after a six-week intervention in which haiku composition tasks were promoted. The results of these tests were statistically analyzed on account of their means and standard deviations, which were employed in the administration of the Student's T-Test for repeated measures. For its part, the

qualitative aspect of this research study was linked to the analysis of the answers that the participants of the study provided to a survey constituted by open-ended questions, which was administered at the end of the treatment. The findings of the study demonstrated that haiku composition had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants, a prime contribution being that of vocabulary enrichment. In addition, the statistical analysis of the pre and post-test results and the concurrence of positive survey responses indicated that this promotion was significant.

Key words: haiku composition, academic writing skills, EFL instruction, poetry, creative writing, academic essay, TEFL majors, skill development, self-expression, vocabulary acquisition.

INTRODUCTION

The use of poetry in the language classroom is not a common practice. Much of the reason for this exclusion springs from generalized beliefs about the complexity of the medium, which are, in many cases, strengthened by negative experiences some language instructors have had with poetry. Furthermore, one has to consider the reported scarcity of empirical evidence regarding the influence of poetry-based activities in the language classroom.

On the other hand, it has long been argued that the current second and foreign language instruction features an emphasis on the structural elements of the target language and on the development of communicative skills that can be straightforwardly measured through standardized instruments. One alleged consequence of this fact is an inadequate real-life performance, particularly in regard to academic writing because of its characteristic intricacy. This situation is aggravated in countries, such as Ecuador, with an identified low English proficiency level.

Under these circumstances, this research project has attempted to ascertain and examine the effect that haiku composition has on the academic writing skills of a specific group of TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca. The report of this study is structured in the following chapters:

Chapter I. The topic of the research is presented in this chapter. In addition, the problem statement of the study is introduced, contextualized, and analyzed. Moreover, the justification of the research project is provided, and its objectives are established.

Chapter II. This chapter features the Theoretical Framework of the study, which comprises its research background, philosophical and pedagogical foundations, legal basis, and key categories. These elements endow the study with scientific and bibliographical support.

Chapter III. The methodology, or research design, is explained in this chapter. This description comprises an explanation of the study's approach, method, level, and type. Likewise, the population of the research is identified and described,

and the operationalization of the variables is carried out. Lastly, the data collection and analysis procedures are detailed.

Chapter IV. In this chapter, the analysis and interpretation of the results – obtained through the administration of survey and the application of pre and post-intervention essay-based tests – takes place.

Chapter V. The conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study are provided in this chapter.

Chapter VI. A proposal for the incorporation of creative writing practices in the EFL classroom is presented in this chapter. This proposal encompasses a scheme of work for a six-week haiku composition workshop.

CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM

1.1. Theme

Haiku composition and the development of academic writing skills.

1.2. Problem Statement

1.2.1. Contextualization

The use of poetry in the language classroom is, to say the least, a controversial topic. Khatib (2011), Hişmanoğlu (2005), and Spack (1985) assert that a resurgence of interest in the use of literature in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments has taken place in recent years. Nevertheless, poetry continues to be shunned from these contexts (Khatib, 2011; Panavelil, 2011). Much of this reluctance to use poetic texts when teaching/learning a second or foreign language can be linked to personal beliefs and opinions about this literary medium (Scrivener, 2011, Khatib, 2011). In addition, as reported by many authors (Iida, 2012; Hall, 2005; Hanauer, 2012), poetry has received relatively little attention in ESL and EFL research.

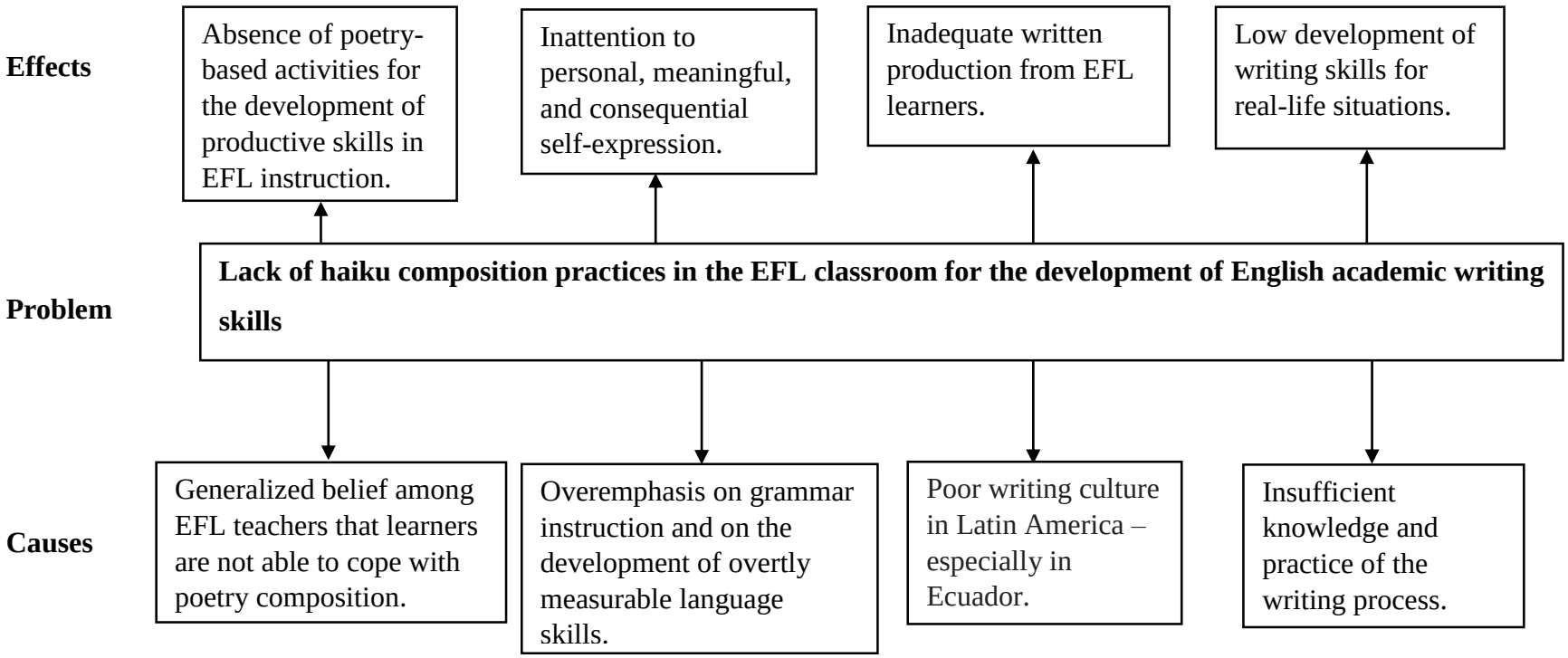
On the other hand, Iida (2011) argues that the contemporary emphasis on grammar instruction and on the development of overtly observable language skills causes many EFL students to be "at a disadvantage when they have to use English in real-world situations" (p. 1). In connection with these last statements, it should be remarked that, according to the English Proficiency Index (EPI) Report published by Education First (EF) in 2017, Ecuador has a low proficiency level in this language, raking – at a global scale – 55 among 80 evaluated countries, with an EF EPI score of 49.42/100. Hence, in the Latin American context, Ecuador is positioned 13 among 15 countries. Given that the productive skills are considered to bear greater problems for second and foreign language learners (Fareed, Ashraf,

& Bilal, 2016; Golkova & Hubackovab, 2014), one can confidently infer that writing in English presents serious difficulties for Ecuadorians, especially with regard to academic tasks because of their particularly complex nature (Cummins, 2008; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). This fact holds stark contrast with the global importance that English has acquired in the last decades.

Universidad de Cuenca is located in the Azuay province of the Southern Highlands region of Ecuador. The University's address is 12 de Abril Avenue and Agustín Cueva Street, Cuenca. This Higher Education Institution provides academic formation for approximately 13,000 students. Furthermore, there are 252 students currently enrolled in the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca. Within this context, the aforementioned exclusion of poetry from the language classroom because of generalized beliefs and experiences and the need of developing clearly observable communicative skills can be thought as part of the reason why poetry is very rarely encountered in the EFL teaching-learning processes at the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca. One should also consider the fact that the low development of academic writing skills among students has been reported as a recurrent problem by the faculty staff of the program. This circumstance is evinced, for example, in the serious difficulties students have when trying to attain approval for their preliminary graduation projects.

1.2.2. Critical Analysis

Figure 1.1. Problem Tree



Source: First hand research/experience
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

As mentioned above, much of the unwillingness to incorporate poetry in the ESL/EFL teaching practice is caused by personal opinions and assumptions about this literary manifestation. Specifically, there is a generalized belief among EFL teachers that learners are not able to cope with poetry composition. Maldonado (2015) claims that the performance of a teacher is significantly influenced by his mental models about education, which are forged on the basis of experience and cultural context. Moreover, Scrivener (2011) argues that the unwillingness to use poetry that many language teachers have is likely caused by the fact that they themselves feel insecure when it comes to reading and writing poetic texts. In line with this assertion, Povey reports that "one of the most difficult things about teaching poetry to foreign students is handling the teacher's own deeply wrought unhappiness with verse, the result of experiences he or she has suffered" (as cited in Khatib, 2011, p. 165). The effect of these adverse notions is the absence of poetry-based activities for the development of productive skills in EFL instruction.

In addition, as Hanauer (2012) explains, second and foreign language classrooms have become dehumanized, with a severe disregard for learner subjectivity. As a consequence, "[l]anguage learning […] is defined overwhelmingly in linguistic, structural, and cognitive terms" (p. 105). Hence, one can speak of an overemphasis on grammar instruction and on the development of overtly measurable language skills. Under these circumstances, attention to the inner self subsides before the need of meeting deadlines, covering content, and developing observable skills to be tested through standardized instruments. As a result, there is an inattention to personal, meaningful, and consequential self-expression. As Iida (2011) asserts, the fact that many, if not the majority of ESL/EFL curricula are centered on linguistic structures brings forth a heightened prominence of "error reduction and memorization of forms" (p. 1) that subsequently causes difficulties in written self-expression in the target language.

With regard to academic writing in English, it has to be noted that, despite the indisputable status of this language as the world's lingua franca (Widdowson, 1994; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015) and its undeniable importance for the production and transmission of knowledge through the written word (Harmer, 2004; Sajid &

Siddiqui, 2015), writing has been characterized as one of the most problematic dimensions in ESL and EFL learning. Part of the reason for this fact is the inherent complexity of the skill. Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) argue that writing "is based on appropriate and strategic use of language with structural accuracy and communicative potential" (p. 82). Thus, according to Harmer (2004) the writing process comprises planning, drafting, editing, and arrival to a final version. This process holds true for all text types; nevertheless, as aforementioned, the complexity of writing is heightened in academic tasks (Baker, 2001; Cummins, 2008; Bilash, 2011; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015).

Moreover, Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) report that the factors affecting the development of writing skills in ESL/EFL learners can be grouped "into linguistic, psychological, cognitive, and pedagogical categories" (p. 82), this last domain being of special interest for the purposes of this study. It should be highlighted, likewise, that the intrinsic difficulty of writing, both general and academic, is intensified by the poor writing culture in Latin America – especially in Ecuador. One can anticipate, therefore, that the low developmental level of mother-language literacy skills in Ecuadorians is to be transferred and deepened when learning English. Consequently, inadequate written production from EFL learners is to be expected in the country.

Furthermore, and specifically addressing EFL instruction in Cuenca, one has to consider that, according to Calle et al. (2012), 44% of the EFL teaching-learning practices in the city can be connected to traditional methodologies. Hence, insufficient knowledge and practice of the writing process is to be predicted. Moreover, and with regard to EFL instruction at the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca, the development of communicative competence in the target language has to be dealt with at the same time as the acquisition of principles and competences of linguistics, pedagogy, and specialized didactics. As a result, issues concerning the conflict between curricular breath and curricular depth arise. Under these circumstances, the improvement of the writing skill is negatively affected, since, as Iida (2011) notes, "[i]n order to develop students' written communication skills, […] it is crucial for writing instructors to

teach students how to discover and reveal their unique perspectives on the world in the EFL writing classroom" (p. 2). When these considerations fail to be attended to, the outcome is a low development of writing skills for real-life situations. Within this context, haiku composition presents itself as a valid resource for developing academic writing skills.

To the ideas discussed above, one has to add the fact that, within EFL and ESL education research, literature in general and poetry in specific have received comparatively little attention; accordingly, there seems to be a deficit in empirical evidence concerning the incorporation of poetry in ESL/EFL teaching-learning environments. It is important to stress that this scarcity of empirical evidence is aggravated in Ecuador, a country where education research has been addressed only in the last decade (Embleton, 2012).

1.2.3. Prognosis

The issues described above must be attended to without delay. Otherwise, the following consequences can be predicted.

If the generalized belief among EFL teachers regarding the fact that learners are not able to cope with poetry composition persists, this literary manifestation will continue to be excluded from language learning environments – specifically, at the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca. This exclusion, furthermore, will be intensified in regard to haiku composition. As a result, if no other measures are taken, the development of academic writing skills will continue to be sought through traditional approaches; therefore, low performance levels are prone to remain unaltered.

Moreover, if the current overemphasis on grammar instruction and on the development of explicitly measurable language skills perseveres, the neglect of personal, meaningful, and consequential self-expression from the learners will endure, with the corresponding negative effects on performance and genuine communication skill development. Besides, and addressing a greater context, if solutions to deal with the poor writing culture in Latin America – and in Ecuador, in particular – are not planned and implemented, an adequate EFL written

production will not be achieved. Finally, if the insufficient knowledge and practice regarding the writing process is not addressed, attaining high levels of EFL writing skills for real-life situations will not be possible. One has to bear in mind that this circumstance will be especially latent in regard to academic writing. This fact contrasts with the above-discussed relevance that this medium has acquired recently for academic and professional development.

1.2.4. Formulation of the problem

Does haiku composition promote the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca?

1.2.5. Directive questions

1. What are the current, pre-treatment academic writing skills of the sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca?
2. What are the differences in the rubric-based grades of the argumentative essays written before and after a six-week intervention in which haiku composition is fostered?
3. What are the self-reported reactions of the participants of the study towards haiku composition?

1.2.6. Delimitation of the object of the research

Field: Education.

Area: Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Aspect: Teaching-learning methodologies.

Spatial scope: This research study was developed with TEFL students belonging to the sixth-semester Conversation and Composition course offered by the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca, which is located in the Azuay province of southern Ecuador.

Temporal scope: The study was carried out during the September 2017 – February semester.

1.3. Justification

This project aligns with the first line of research of the TEFL Master's Program offered by Universidad Técnica de Ambato: Methodology. In particular, the research focuses on the analysis of teaching strategies in EFL higher education.

Furthermore, the study is of significant interest for those involved in teaching and learning English as a foreign language, the reason is that the studied problem is not exclusive to the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca, but it is shared by the great majority of EFL environments in Ecuador and beyond.

The study is original because it deals with a theme that has not been extensively examined in ESL/EFL research. Specifically regarding Ecuador, the pertinent inquiry about the topic has revealed that there are not research studies concerning the influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills. One should remember the already-mentioned need of empirical evidence with regard to the use of poetry in ESL/EFL environments.

The importance of this research dwells in the fact that it provides empirical support for the reported advantages of the use of literature and poetry in ESL/EFL instruction. These benefits have been described by authors such as Iida (2010, 2011, 2012, 2016), Bjelland (2016), Pushpa and Savaedi (2014), Chamcharatsri (2013), Hanauer (2010, 2012), Liao (2012), Khatib (2011), Panavelil (2011), Kong (2010) Kırkgöz (2008), Hişmanoğlu (2005), Hess (2003), among many others; and they encompass the following dimensions of language teaching and learning:

1. Provision of authentic language models (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Panavelil, 2011; Lazar 1993).
2. Vocabulary development (Nation, 2005; Kırkgöz, 2008; Panavelil, 2011; Scrivener, 2011).
3. Macro-skill development:
    a. Writing (Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Collie and Slater as cited in Panavelil, 2011).
    b. Reading (Kong, 2010; Silberstein, 1994).

c. Listening and speaking (Khansir, 2012; Harmer, 2010; Lazar, 1993).

4. Grammar (Khatib, 2011; Panavelil, 2011; Lazar, 1993).
5. Motivation (Scrivener, 2011; Hanauer, 2012; Lazar, 1993; Panavelil, 2011; Kong, 2010).

Iida and Hanauer have been particularly involved in demonstrating that poetry writing in the target language is not only a feasible practice but also a constructive one. Specifically, the work of Iida has focused on the benefits of haiku writing when learning a foreign language.

Complementarily, one has to bear in mind the importance that academic writing skills have for the academic and professional lives of ESL/EFL learners. In addition, the discussed importance of English and the written word for knowledge construction and diffusion must be considered as well. This significance holds true not only for Ecuadorian EFL students but also for learners all-around the world.

The impact of this study is directly linked to the improvement of EFL teaching and learning practices through the provision of empirical evidence that can potentially prompt the inclusion of poetry writing practices in the language classroom. Additionally, the study's impact is justified in the above-described contemporary attention to the use of literature in the language classroom. This renewed interest is verified in the fact that the 2016 EFL National Curriculum for primary and secondary education in Ecuador features Language through the Arts as one of its threads.

The immediate beneficiaries of this study are the students and professors of the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca. The project offers furtherance for Meaningful Literacy (Hanauer, 2012) practices in the EFL environments of this higher education institution. These practices aim at enabling students to achieve real proficiency of the target language (Widdowson, 1994) by connecting the teaching-learning process to their individualities.

Finally, the feasibility of this research has been demonstrated in the support that the authorities at Universidad de Cuenca have provided for the development of

the study. Besides, the project has been carried out on the basis of a sufficient theoretical and empirical background.

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. General objective

- To assess the influence of haiku composition in English on the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

1.4.2. Specific objectives

- To determine the current, pre-treatment academic writing skills of the participants of the study.
- To involve the participants in haiku composition processes during a six-week intervention.
- To examine the effects of the intervention on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants, by means of the comparison of essays written before and after the treatment and of the analysis of answers to an open-ended-question survey.

CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Research background

The role of literature in ESL/EFL classrooms has gone through different stages and facets. Nkwetisama (2013) argues that, during the 15th and 19th centuries, literature was used in the instruction of classical rhetoric, which aimed at the development of discovery and communication capacities. For her part, Larsen-Freeman (2011) points out that literary texts were a crucial component in teaching-learning processes set within the Grammar-Translation Method. As a point of fact, understanding of these texts, as characterized by translation, was the goal of the method. Nevertheless, when employed in this manner, literature was not regarded as a resource for communicative competence development (Nkwetisama, 2013).

In the second half of the 19th century, the focus of language instruction was placed on linguistic accuracy. As a consequence, literature began to be excluded from second and foreign language teaching-learning processes (Nkwetisama, 2013). This exclusion was progressively accentuated in the following decades. In fact, Mackay (1982) states that, by the end of the 20th century, second and foreign language teaching emphasized the achievement of academic and professional objectives. Therefore, as Spack (1985) argues, the importance of literature in ESL/EFL environments "faded as linguistics became the focal point of language programs" (p. 704).

Coincidentally, a renewed interest in the role of literature as a resource for ESL/EFL teaching and learning started to develop precisely in the eighties (Spack, 1985; Paran, 2008). However, Hall (2005) suggests that language teachers often consider literature to be "a source of activities, as 'material', with too little concern for the wider curricular issues" (p. 47). In line with this idea, Bloemert et al. (2017) maintain that, despite contemporary efforts, literature has not been thoroughly integrated into ESL/EFL curricula.

Another feature of this modern attention to literature is its relative deficiency of empirical validation. The arguments that support the inclusion of literature in the language classroom are often adapted from first-language contexts (Hall, 2005) or constructed on the basis of practitioner evidence (Paran, 2008). Specifically concerning the topic of this project, one should bear in mind that this deficiency in field research is heightened with regard to poetry (Hanauer, 2010; Iida, 2012).

Nevertheless, empirical research, however limited, has been developed. It is important, therefore, to discuss the studies that have been carried out about the topic, to later address the reported advantages of the use of literature – particularly, poetry – in ESL/EFL environments. This latter discussion is found in section 2.4.1.2.

2.1.1. Empirical evidence of the role of literature and poetry in language instruction

As in most areas of language teaching and learning, the empirical evidence is limited when compared with the conventional assumptions that spring from practice. Notwithstanding, the evidence does not seem to contradict these assumptions.

Literature and language instruction. Liaw (2001) examines the implications of a reader-centered approach when incorporating literature into EFL instruction. The researcher explores the responses and reactions of 31 Taiwanese university EFL students to five American short stories. The study's methodological procedures encompass interviewing and content analysis of journal entries. The results reveal that, for the participants, literature reading is an enjoyable activity that can lead to personal reflection. This enjoyment, furthermore, is mainly linked to the readers' responses towards the text, rather than to their command of the target language. The findings additionally emphasize the importance of pre and post-reading activities. Besides, Liaw (2001) attests that appropriate student-centered tasks lead to the establishment of "a community of readers [where] foreign literature and language [is made] more accessible [and where] [t]he acquisition of both literary and linguistic competence [becomes] natural" (p. 42).

Nkwetisama (2013) states that the introduction of literature in language-teaching training programs has a positive effect on performance. His conclusions derive from the statistical comparison of the performance of Anglophone and Francophone teacher trainees from Cameroon. The author reports that the study of "literatures in French by Anglophones […] positively [influence] their performances. [Conversely,] poor performances of Francophone student-teachers […] are attributable to the fact that they do not study literatures in English at the secondary school level" (p. 178).

For their part, Basabe and Germani (2014) qualitatively analyze the influence of literature on the development of reflective thinking and critical literacy in three Argentinian EFL teacher trainees. Specifically, the authors study the effects of integrating critical literacy practices into the teacher-training curricula. From the results of ethnographic observations, personal interviews, focus groups, and text analyses, the researchers conclude that literature, when correctly employed, does aid the development of higher-order thinking skills. Basabe and Germani's (2014) findings are connected to the redefinition of roles and relationships in the classroom and to the incorporation of personal experience in the teaching-learning process.

Within the field of student discernments, Bloemert et al. (2017) explore the perceptions of students towards the presence of literature in the EFL classroom. The study's framework is that of the Comprehensive Approach to foreign language literature learning, which in turn encompasses four areas or approaches: text, context, reader, and language. The field research of the study consists of the application of a one-item open-ended-question survey to 635 Dutch EFL students from 15 high schools. The results reveal that the student-perceived benefits of the use of literature in the language classroom comprise all dimensions of the Comprehensive Approach, albeit in different proportions. Therefore, the reciprocal interrelationships of these dimensions are the core of the beneficial inclusion of literature in EFL instruction.

Poetry and language learning. Specifically with regard to the use of poetry in the language classroom, Kırkgöz's (2008) study attempts to identify the benefits of poetry-based reading and writing activities, as reported in journal entries and

informal feedback sessions involving 28 Turkish university EFL students. The author ascertains five positive features of poetry in the language classroom. First, Kırkgöz (2008) asserts that poetry has a beneficial role in "practicing effectively and meaningfully students' knowledge of grammar, thereby reinforcing linguistic structures" (p. 102). Moreover, the author affirms that poems support vocabulary enrichment. The third feature relates to the promotion of meaningful and personalized learning experiences that stimulate motivation and authentic communication. Participants report as well that poetry has a constructive effect on creative writing efforts by facilitating the incorporation of personal experiences and emotions into the tasks. Lastly, Kırkgöz (2008) argues that poetry strengthens retention because "the repetitive nature of the words and patterns [in a poem] can promote learning of phrases and lexical items that can be transferred to not only writing but also to everyday use" (p. 104).

Khatib's (2011) research, developed with 200 college EFL students from Iran, provides empirical evidence for the advantages of reader-centered approaches to poetry use in ESL/EFL contexts. The study compares the performance and Likert Scale results of a control and an experimental group. The findings of the research prompt the author to claim that traditional approaches to poetry teaching are the root of the students' aversion towards the medium. According to Khatib, (2011) these approaches disregard the learners' intellectual and emotional reactions to the text. As a result, a teacher-based, technical examination of the formal elements of poems is encouraged. The ensuing consequence is the students' antipathy towards poetry and its corresponding effect on performance.

Conversely, Khatib (2011) attests that innovative learner-centered approaches to poetry teaching welcome diversity and value the responses and opinions from students. Learners are provided with opportunities to "react to the poems based on their own experiences, emotions, and ideas" (p. 168). Consequently, the reader-centered treatment of poetry inside the EFL classroom nurtures positive attitudes towards TL poetry. These favorable attitudes in their turn have a beneficial effect on the overall performance of students.

Pushpa and Savaedi (2014), for their part, assess the influence of poetry on autonomous EFL courses. The study analyzes the performance and attitude of 60 Iranian university EFL students equally divided into a control and an experimental group. The researchers make use of an Oral Proficiency Test to determine pre-treatment homogeneity. In addition, a final test and an attitude survey questionnaire are administered to gather data. The results suggest that the inclusion of poetry in language instruction has a positive impact on performance. Moreover, this literary manifestation arouses interest in learners by allowing them to identify themselves with universal topics. One of the consequences of this fact is the provision of more opportunities for effective communication, which is fostered by creativity and expressive freedom.

Hall (2005) reports that Hanauer's research project, carried out in 2001, tests the hypothesis that poetry reading promotes the development of linguistic and cultural awareness. Hanauer's study is based on protocol analyses of 20 – 10 dyads – Hebrew teacher trainees. The findings demonstrate that "the surface linguistic forms of poetry are typically noticed more and retained for longer" (as cited in Hall, 2005, p. 166 - 167). Furthermore, Hanauer (2010) affirms that the empirical evidence in the field "hold[s] that advanced second language learners are capable of reading and interpreting poetry and are oriented by the process of directing attention to meaning construction and linguistic form" (p. 36).

Bjelland (2016) explores the experience of 39 tenth-grade Norwegian EFL students while reading Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken*. The participants are exposed to the poem through a prima vista – line-by-line – method. The researcher develops a qualitative analysis of the participants' written responses to ten tasks about the poem. These tasks address the thoughts, emotions, personal insight, and responses that the poem elicits in the students, as well as their knowledge of basic literary terms. The categories of analysis for the collected data emerge from the tasks and the features of the prima vista method.

The findings of Bjelland's (2016) research reveal that the participants are able to successfully recognize and interpret instances of figurative language embedded in poetry. The results evince as well that foreign language learners are

able to identify and appreciate literary devices such as allegories and metaphors. Hence, instructors should refrain from imposing their own interpretations and opinions.

Additionally, Bjelland (2016) reports that learners depart from their personal life experiences to interpret the meaning of a poem. The author also asserts that "[r]esearch shows that there is little difference between expert readers and ordinary readers when it comes to the appreciation of literature and the readers' involvement in literature" (p. 34). Bjelland, therefore, (2016) claims that, independently of their poetic literacy, language learners are able to enjoy poetry reading and "gain a new and personal insight [that] lasts longer than the lesson in the classroom and […] reaches beyond what can be measured or fully understood" (p. 100).

Regarding poetry writing in language learning, Hanauer (2010) presents clear evidence against considering this practice as too difficult for second language learners. By analyzing a corpus of 844 second language poems, the result of Hanauer's teaching practice, the author concludes that the linguistic evidence shares three features: the texts are short, the employed vocabulary is simple, and the writers' emphasis is on imagery. The conclusion that ensues is that writing poetry is not a difficult task for well-stimulated students, especially those at advanced levels.

In the same line of research, Liao (2012) explores the relationships between the reported writing experiences and the perceived values of poetry writing of 18 TESOL graduate students in the United States. The researcher employs personal interviews and a rating scale to collect data. These collected data are studied by means of content and cluster analyses. The former is based on three coding systems: general writing, creative writing, and narrative of writing experiences types. Each one of these categories is further divided into several subsections. Through cluster analysis, Liao (2012) groups the participants according to their reported writing experiences.

The results of the analysis of the collected data reveal that "ESL students have the tendency to doubt the values of experiencing creative writing when first

introduced to it" (p. 94). Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, Liao (2012) identifies positive attitudes towards creative writing efforts in the target language. In fact, the author states that poetry writing is considered to be a practice that fosters engagement, favorable emotions, and confidence.

Moreover, from a functional perspective, Liao (2012) ascertains six reported values of poetry-based creative writing. The researcher suggests that poetry writing nurtures self-expression, self-discovery, and emotional release. Liao (2012) also attests that poetry-based creative writing practices benefit linguistic knowledge and competence, as exemplified by vocabulary enrichment. Likewise, the participants' responses allow Liao (2012) to claim that "applying creative writing to ESL students can encourage them to embrace the authorship and ownership of their writing and the English language, and see themselves as multilingual writers" (p. 97). Lastly, the author argues that writing poetry in the target language promotes recalling of experiences through which ESL learners gain deeper awareness of their roles as writers and readers of the target language.

For his part, Chamcharatsri (2013) examines the experience of four Thai ESL students while expressing love through poems written in both their native language and in English. Chamcharatsri's (2013) study makes use of writing prompts and semi-structured interviews as data gathering techniques. The analysis of the collected data reveals preference towards the use of English as an expressive medium in two students. This preference is linked to the participants' academic background and exposure to the target language.

Based on the findings of the research, Chamcharatsri (2013) advocates for the treatment of emotions in the language classroom. He argues that, although with avowed difficulty, second language learners are able to write poems and effectively express love through these literary texts. Furthermore, Chamcharatsri (2013) claims that poetry allows language learners "to shift the focus of their writing from structural to content concerns" (p. 155), and to gain awareness of the "linguistic, cultural, and emotional use of their first […] and second […] languages" (p. 141).

Haiku writing and EFL instruction. Iida (2011, 2012, 2016) has been specifically involved in studying the influence of haiku composition on second

language learning. His research field directly relates to that of this research project, i.e., the effects of haiku writing on the development of academic writing skills. The findings of Iida's (2011, 2012, 2016) research prompt the author to conclude that haiku composition is a beneficial practice for the development of academic writing skills in EFL students. This conclusion is reached not only through an analysis of performance but also through the participants' own reported insights. The methodology and results of Iida's (2011, 2012, 2016) research are addressed in more detail in section 2.4.1.4.

The analysis of the empirical evidence of the topic of this study allows one to draw several inferences. For one part, contrary to common beliefs, the inclusion of literature-based activities, particularly, poetry, in the ESL/EFL classroom is not an unsurmountable task for language learners. In fact, all the self-reported insights from the participants of the studies accounted for above indicate that, when adequately implemented, working with literary texts is feasible, enjoyable, and valuable for language students.

Specifically concerning the inclusion of poetry in ESL/EFL environments, the empirical evidence reveals a benefit in terms of actual performance. These positive findings are corroborated by the students' own reports. Furthermore, the value of poetry encompasses several dimensions of language learning that range for linguistic awareness and vocabulary enrichment to motivation and self-expression. All in all, poetry writing tasks – haiku writing, in particular – should be viewed as valid resources for communicative competence development.

It is interesting to note that, from the qualitative evidence discussed above, one can identify markedly positive attitudes towards the incorporation of poetry in the language classroom. The situation, moreover, does not differ when either reading or writing tasks are involved. This circumstance prompts one to advocate for a more careful selection of tasks and materials to be employed when teaching and learning a second or foreign language; such selective decisions ought not to depart from preconceived notions teachers may have about their students. In the same line of thought, it is imperative to remark that the examined empirical evidence evinces an advantageous effect of poetry-based activities that depends on

learner-centered methodologies. Such learner-centeredness vindicates the importance of the background knowledge and experience learners bring to the classroom. Indeed, it would be almost impossible to imagine an effective poetry-based task that does not depart from the students' own lives.

Lastly, the analysis of the empirical background of this study encourages further research. It is adequate, nevertheless, to point out that these future efforts ought to be structured around research designs that take into account both qualitative and qualitative techniques, with the intention of providing more comprehensive findings. Moreover, forthcoming research should address traditionally neglected areas of language instruction such as the perceptions, attitudes, and worth that learners attach to English and how these can change when students are involved in poetry-based tasks.

2.2. Philosophical and pedagogical foundations

According to Alvarado and García (2008), the socio-critical paradigm assumes that knowledge development in the Social Sciences is not exclusively empirical or interpretivist. Hence, this paradigm seeks to provide solutions to specific social issues by prompting changes that encompass the participation of the individuals who are part of the community where the issue has been identified. This research project has been developed on the basis of the socio-critical paradigm since it seeks to understand and propose a solution to a problem recognized at the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca by involving the learners themselves in the process. Additionally, the study is solely based neither on an empirical nor on an interpretivist approach, but it rather combines both of them in the attempt to provide more comprehensive results and conclusions.

2.2.1. Epistemological basis

Byron, Browne, and Porter define epistemology as the philosophical theory that attempts to explain the nature, varieties, origins, objects, and limits of scientific knowledge (as cited in Bernal, 2010). Specifically, this research study is set within what Bernal (2010) calls scientific epistemologies, which seek an explanation of

scientific knowledge rather than the acquisition of general knowledge. Furthermore, it is important to note that, in line with the ideas presented by Bernal (2010), each field of knowledge has its own epistemology. Thus, this research is framed within the Epistemology of Education. Within this context, knowledge construction is advocated in detriment of knowledge transmission. In other words, one should reject the assumption that learners are empty vessels to be filled with the knowledge the teacher *pours*. In contrast, knowledge in learning environments is to be built in a dialogical process that considers and appreciates the background experiences, feelings, and information that students bring to class.

2.2.2. Ontological basis

Ontology is defined as the study of reality, i.e., "the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes, and relations in every area of reality" (Smith, 2004, p. 155). This research study adopts the ontological perspective in which humans are considered as rational beings with a unique status. Moreover, human reality is marked by the ability to communicate using a language, that is, a complex system of symbols and underlying rules and relationships that allow the conveyance of ideas, knowledge, feelings, and experiences. As noted above, within this context, this study examines the reality of the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca in relation to the academic writing skills of its students and the influence that haiku composition has on their development.

2.2.4. Communicative Language Teaching

The main pedagogical basis of this research is the Communicative Language Teaching paradigm. Brown (2007) argues that CLT is an approach with current advocacy and acceptance in the language teaching/learning field. The same author reports that CLT considers language to be an organic entity, not the mere "sum of […] many dissectible and discrete parts" (p. 49).

Richards and Rogers (2014) assert that CLT originated as a response to the Noam Chomsky's criticism towards the structural linguistic theory of the middle of the 20th century. According to Chomsky, this theory failed to address "the

fundamental characteristic of language – the creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences" (p. 153). Concurrently, British applied linguists highlighted the fact that the approaches to language teaching of that time did not attend to the inherent power of language to fulfill communicative functions and convey messages.

As a consequence, since the 1970's, Communicative Language Teaching has been regarded as an approach that seeks to position communicative competence as the ultimate goal of second and foreign language instruction. This is done by developing procedures for the holistic treatment of the four language macro-skills. Such procedures are to "acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication" (Richards & Rogers, 2014, p. 155).

Regarding the language theory behind CLT, Richards and Rogers (2014) state that the approach "starts from a theory of language as communication" (p. 159). Therefore, communicative competence, as understood by Hymes, entails knowledge of language and language use. Hence, this view includes treatment of not only structural elements of the target language but also of concepts such as appropriateness, feasibility, frequency, interaction, among others. Furthermore, Canale and Swain provide a more pedagogical analysis of communicative competence. For these authors, communicative competence involves four dimensions: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences (as cited in Richards & Rogers, 2014).

Concerning the theory of learning of CLT, Richards and Rogers (2014) affirm that there is a lack of discussion about the topic. Nevertheless, three main principles are distinguished in CLT practice: communication, task, and meaningfulness. The first one states that language learning is promoted by activities that comprise real communication. The second principle sponsors the development of activities in which language use relates to the fulfillment to meaningful tasks. Finally, the meaningfulness principle holds that "[l]anguage that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process" (p. 161). Consequently, activities should be selected according to their effectiveness for engaging students in significant and real uses of the language.

2.2.3. Axiological basis

Axiology is "[t]he branch of Philosophy concerned with the general problem of values, that is, [their] nature, origin, and permanence" (Tomar, 2014, p. 52). Within the field of research, Bernal (2010) characterizes axiology as the study of the system of values of the scientific community. Under these perspectives, this research study has observed ethical principles of research; as a consequence, the division of participants in control and experimental groups has been avoided (Margetts & Stoker, 2010). Thus, a potential beneficial treatment has been applied to the whole unit of analysis.

Furthermore, this research study has heeded Tomar's (2014) advice regarding the fact that "[t]he teacher must never impose ethical codes or standards of behavior: these should arise out from social situation and the pupil's evaluating of his own behavior" (p. 53). Besides, the study has been careful to avoid the reduction of learners to "actual or aspiring members of speech communities that impose on them their standards" (Kramsch, 2009, p. 30). Conversely, this study advocates for a practice – namely, haiku composition – that provides learners with the opportunity to reflect on their own experience to express personal feelings, ideas, and, of course, values.

2.3. Legal Basis

Educación:

Constitución de la República del Ecuador (2008):

Art. 27.- La educación se centrará en el ser humano y garantizará su desarrollo holístico, en el marco del respeto a los derechos humanos, al medio ambiente sustentable y a la democracia; será participativa, obligatoria, intercultural, democrática, incluyente y diversa, de calidad y calidez; impulsará la equidad de género, la justicia, la solidaridad y la paz; estimulará el sentido crítico, el arte y la cultura física, la iniciativa individual y comunitaria, y el desarrollo de competencias y capacidades para crear y trabajar.

La educación es indispensable para el conocimiento, el ejercicio de los derechos y la construcción de un país soberano, y constituye un eje estratégico para el desarrollo nacional.

Art. 343.- El sistema nacional de educación tendrá como finalidad el desarrollo de capacidades y potencialidades individuales y colectivas de la población, que posibiliten el aprendizaje, y la generación y utilización de conocimientos, técnicas, saberes, artes y cultura. El sistema tendrá como centro al sujeto que aprende, y funcionará de manera flexible y dinámica, incluyente, eficaz y eficiente.

Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés

Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir (2013 – 2017):

Objetivo 4.- Fortalecer las capacidades y potencialidades de la ciudadanía.

Política 4.8. Impulsar el diálogo intercultural como eje articulador del modelo pedagógico y del uso del espacio educativo.

Lineamiento 4.8.i. Promover el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera bajo parámetros de acreditación internacional, desde la educación temprana hasta el nivel superior.

Reglamento de Régimen Académico (2013):

Articulo 31.- Aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. Las asignaturas destinadas al aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera podrán o no formar parte de la malla curricular de la carrera, en todo caso las IES deberán planificar este aprendizaje en una formación gradual y progresiva. Sin embargo, las IES garantizarán el nivel de suficiencia del idioma para cumplir con el requisito de graduación de las carreras de nivel técnico superior, tecnológico superior y sus equivalentes; y, tercer nivel, de grado, deberán organizar u homologar las asignaturas correspondientes desde el inicio de la carrera. La suficiencia de la lengua extranjera deberá ser evaluada antes de que el estudiante se matricule en el último periodo académico ordinario de la respectiva carrera; tal prueba será

habilitante para la continuación de sus estudios, sin perjuicio de que este requisito pueda ser cumplido con anterioridad.

En las carreras de nivel técnico superior, tecnológico superior y equivalentes, se entenderá por suficiencia en el manejo de una lengua extranjera el nivel correspondiente a B1.1 y Bl.2, respectivamente, del Marco Común Europeo de referencia para las Lenguas.

En las carreras de tercer nivel, de grado, se entenderá por suficiencia en el manejo de una lengua extranjera al menos el nivel correspondiente a B2 del Marco Común Europeo de referencia para las Lenguas.

Para que los estudiantes regulares matriculados en una carrera cumplan el requisito de suficiencia de una lengua extranjera, las instituciones de educación superior, en el caso de que así lo requieran, podrán realizar convenios con otras IES o instituciones que, si bien no forman parte del Sistema de Educación Superior, brindan programas o cursos de lenguas, siempre que éstas emitan certificados de suficiencia mediante la rendición de exámenes con reconocimiento internacional.

Las instituciones de educación superior, además de sus propios profesores, podrán contar con personal académico no titular ocasional 2 para la realización de cursos de idiomas regulares, que sirvan a los estudiantes en el propósito de aprender una lengua extranjera.

Las mismas condiciones se podrán aplicar para el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua. La presente disposición no se aplicará para las carreras de idiomas. En los programas de posgrado, las universidades y escuelas politécnicas definirán, en función del desarrollo del campo del conocimiento, el nivel de dominio de la lengua extranjera requerido como requisito de ingreso a cada programa.

The legal framework for this research project is found in the Ecuadorian Constitution, the National Plan for Good Living, and the Ecuadorian Higher-Education Bylaw.

In its Art. 27, the Ecuadorian Constitution decrees that education in the country is to be human-centered. Additionally, Ecuadorian education should guarantee the holistic development of individuals. In this context, education in the country has to be participatory, mandatory, intercultural, democratic, inclusive,

diverse, high quality, and warm. Moreover, Art. 343 overtly states that the Ecuadorian National Education System – which encompasses elementary, secondary, and higher education – will aim at the development of the individuals' abilities and potentialities. As a result, the system will have the learner as its center, and it will operate in a flexible, dynamic, inclusive, effective, and efficient manner.

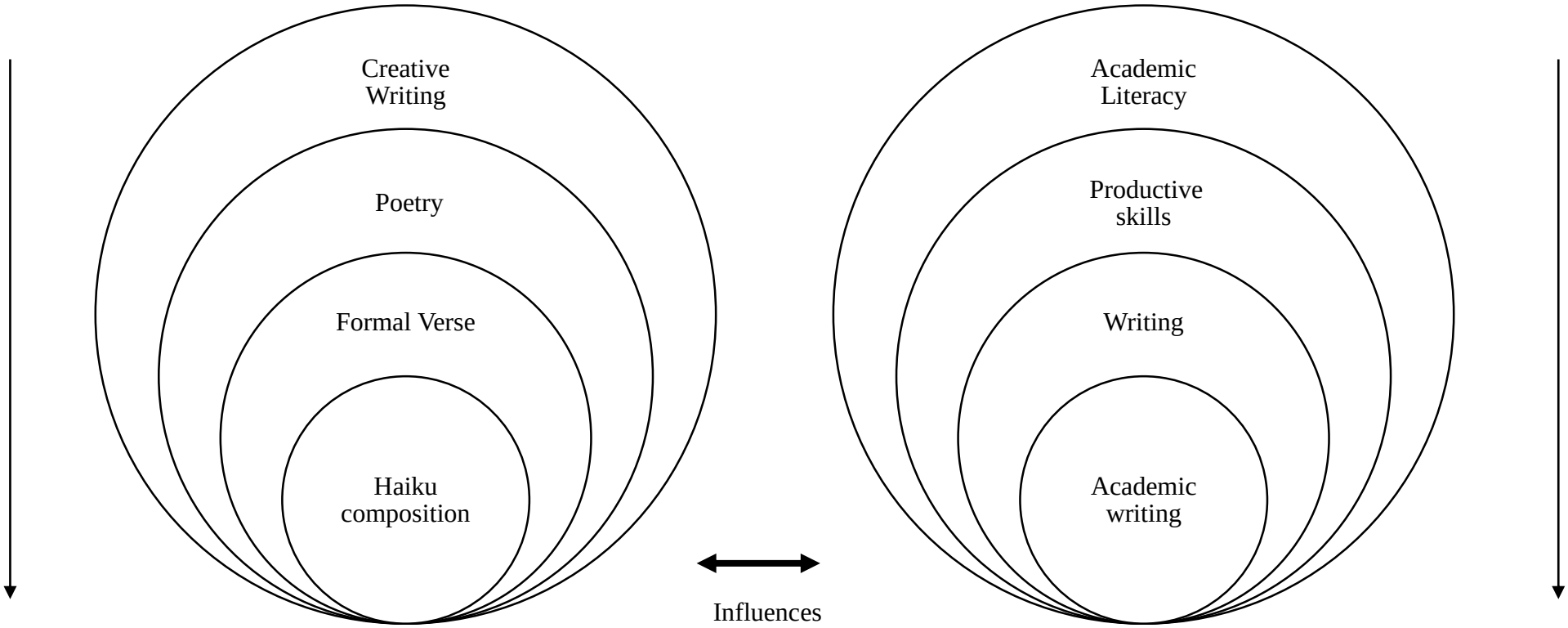
Complementarily, the National Plan for Good Living, in its Objective 4.8i, establishes the promotion of educational processes that support foreign language learning, under international accreditation parameters, throughout all the levels of the Ecuadorian Education System. Hence, the Ecuadorian EFL National Curriculum, which was developed in 2016, has organized and standardized EFL instruction in all the primary and secondary education levels. One fact that has particular significance for this project is that the EFL National Curriculum stems from five threads. Of these threads, the last one, Language through the Arts, directly links literary manifestations to EFL instruction.

Finally, Art. 31 of the Ecuadorian Higher-Education Bylaw dictates that Ecuadorian Higher Education Institutions, i.e., both universities and technical institutes, are to guarantee a specific foreign language proficiency level as a graduation requirement for their students. This requisite is to be observed regardless of the inclusion or not of foreign language instruction within the curricula of the programs offered by the higher education institutions. Thus, Ecuadorian universities and technical institutes are at liberty to either establish cooperation agreements with language institutes that do not belong to the National Education System or provide foreign language instruction themselves. In the case of universities, the required proficiency is a B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This proficiency is to be assessed as a condition for registration in the last academic period of undergraduate programs.

It is crucial to remark that, interestingly enough, learners who belong to language and language-teaching training majors are exonerated from this foreign language proficiency requirement. This, of course, has implications for the language teaching practice of the country.

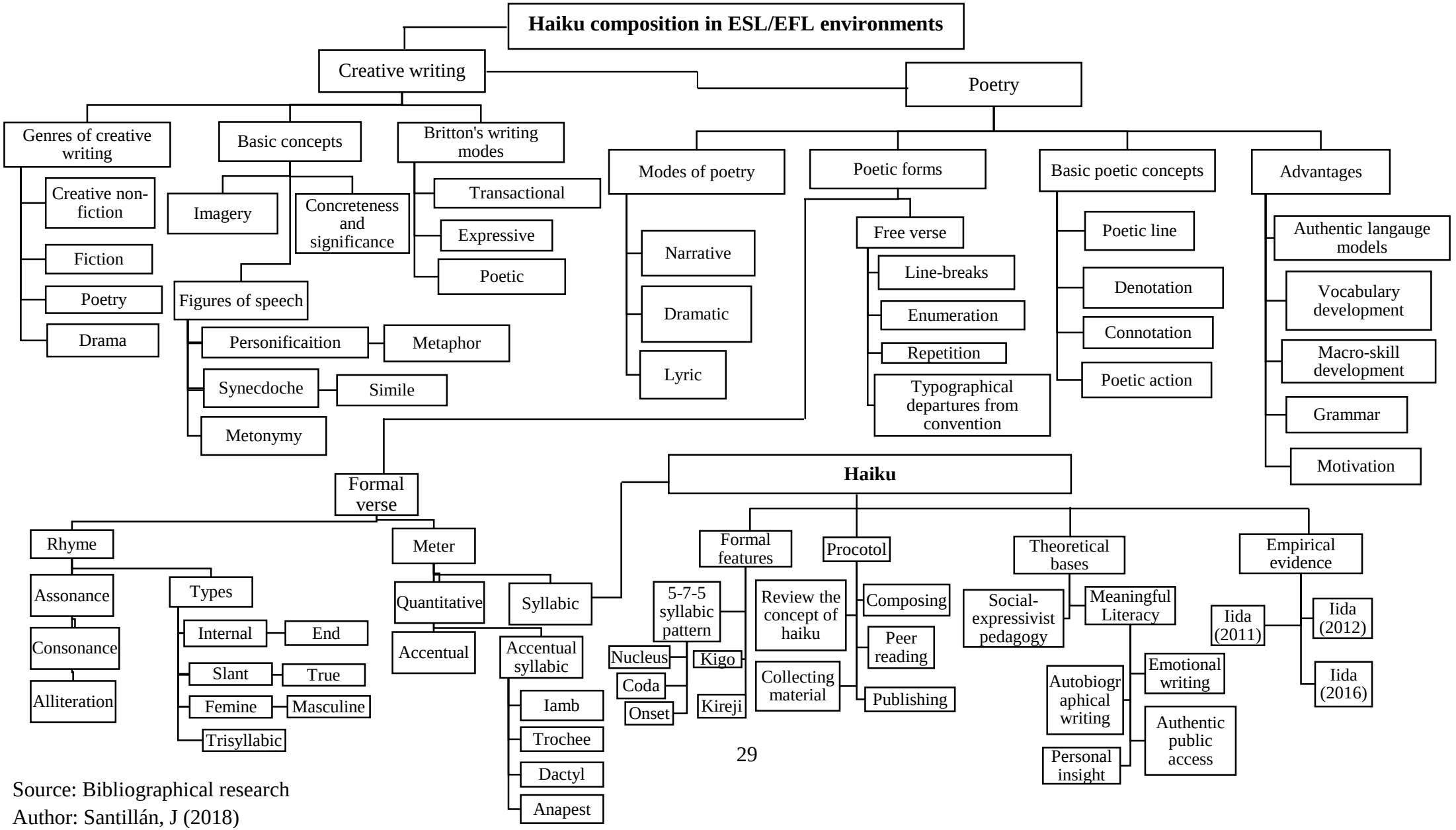
2.4. Key Categories

Figure 2.1. Variable super-ordination



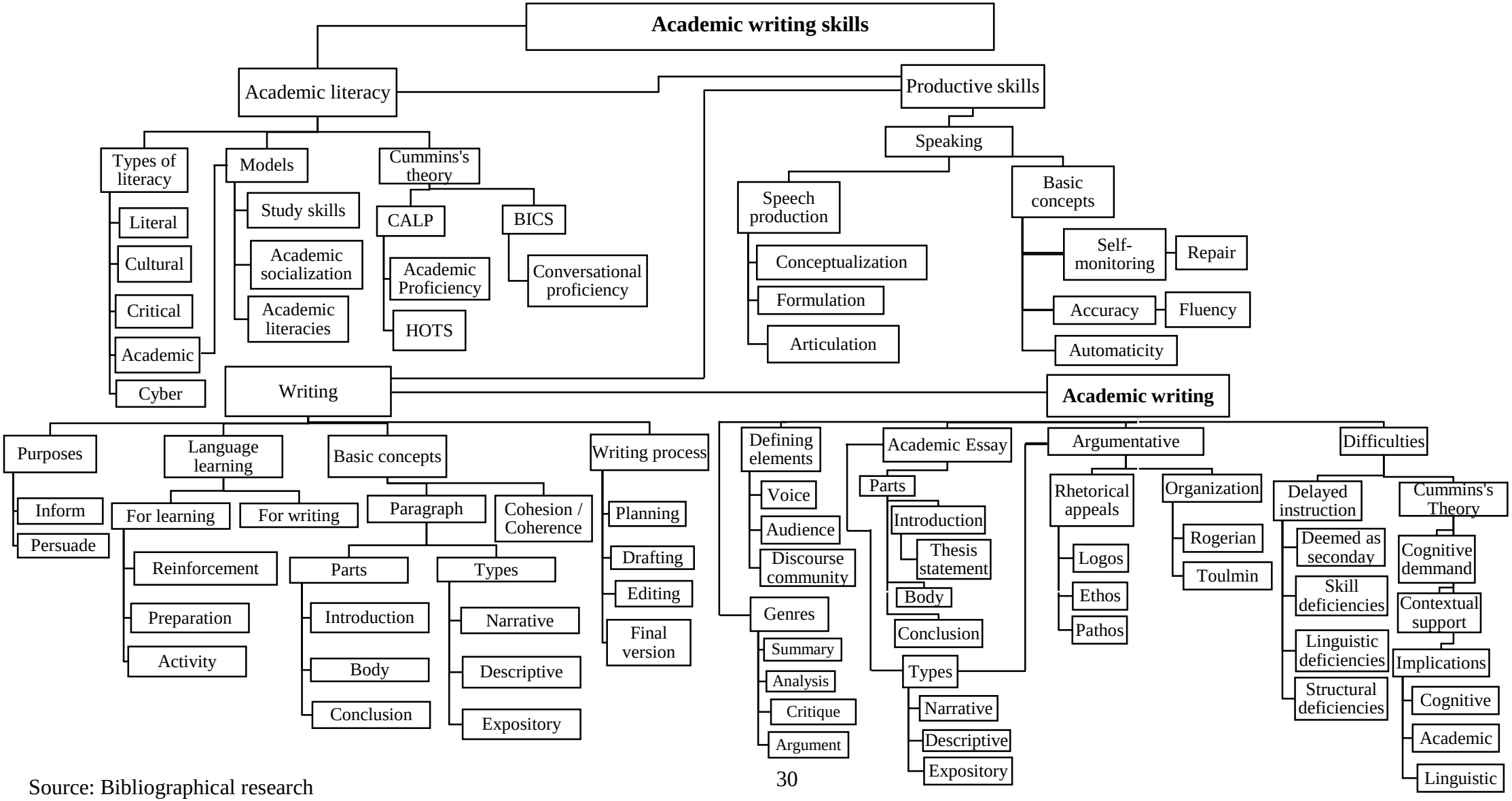
Source: First hand research/experience
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 2.2. Independent variable interrelated graphic



Source: Bibliographical research
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 2.3. Dependent variable interrelated graphic



Source: Bibliographical research
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

2.4.1. Independent variable key categories

2.4.1.1. Creative writing

Defining creative writing

Mason (2013) defines creative writing as "an open and imaginative form of writing in which the author[s] freely [express] their unique thoughts and feelings" (p. 6). The author remarks that creative writing focuses on authenticity, imaginations, and expression.

Furthermore, Witty and LeBrant remarks that writing of any type primarily serves three needs (as cited in Mason, 2013):

a) "[K]eeping records of significant experience […]
b) [S]haring experience with an interested group, and […]
c) Free individual expression which contributes to mental and physical health" (p. 6 – 7).

Besides, as Mason (2013) points out, originality is a key element in creative writing; that is, creative writing should encompass an element or elements whose existence started with the creation of the writer, even if it is an interpretation or adaption of an already existing text.

Genres of creative writing

Burroway (2011) explains that creative writing – or imaginative writing as she terms it – can be classified into four categories: creative non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and drama.

Creative non-fiction. Burroway (2011) links this creative writing genre to the essay; however, she emphasizes the fact that the creative essay bears little to no resemblance to the academic essay individuals write in educational and professional contexts. Mason (2013) complements these ideas and argues that "essays have long been a form of creative writing before they ever became a part of a school language curriculum. An essay is a piece of writing from the author's point of view" (p.11).

Complementarily, Burroway (2011) asserts that creative non-fiction essays commonly take two forms: the memoir and the personal essay. The former corresponds to "a story retrieved from the writer's memory, with the writer as the protagonist, [that is,] the *I* remembering and commenting on the events described in the [text]" (p. 232). On the other hand, although the personal essay is prone to originate in the writer's personal experience, its main focus is prompting an intellectual reflective quest through the representation of an area of interest that is subjected to deliberate examination.

Fiction. Mason (2013) defines fiction as "writing that is not true, but rather […] imagined" (p. 80). The same author relates this creative writing genre to novels, novellas, and short stories. Burroway (2011) remarks that fictional creative writing rests on the differentiation between story and plot. Story, according to Burroway (2011), is a chronological sequence of events. Conversely, the author states that a plot is the deliberate arrangement of events in order "to reveal their dramatic, thematic, and emotional significance" (p. 266).

Poetry. Mason (2013) maintains that poetry is better described as a "major form of literature" than as a genre of creative writing (p. 47). For her part, Burroway (2011) openly admits the impossibility of providing a complete definition of poetry. Further discussion on the topic is found in the next section of this chapter.

Drama. For Burroway (2011), drama is a genre of creative writing that encompasses texts that have been created with the purpose of being presented on stage. As a result, drama has a synchronic nature that largely depends on the interpretation of the director and cast and the performance of the actors. Furthermore, all ideas and thoughts the writer has developed in the script must be indirectly externalized through the actors' dialogues.

Three basic concepts in creative writing

Imagery. Burroway (2011) ascertains that one key element in creative writing is the sensorial appeal to be achieved through words. The author, moreover, states that this evocation to the senses is a commonality in all creative writing. Mason (2013) complements these ideas and argues that imagery is the use of

"descriptive or figurative language to conjure images in the reader's mind and enable them to experience scenes as though they were present" (p. 81).

Concreteness and significance in detail. The characteristic of concreteness refers to an appeal to the senses; i.e., the text makes skillful use of images that, according to Burroway (2011), "can be seen, heard, smelled, tastes, or touched" (p. 17). Besides, the author observes that significance implies that the image the writer uses can concurrently stimulate the senses and make reference to abstractions, generalizations, and judgments.

Figures of speech. Burroway (2011) observes that figures of speech – also called tropes – are "expression not meant to be taken literally, but as standing for something related" (p. 21). The author notes that, in spite of the significant number of figures of speech, five deserve special attention:

a) Metonymy, which, according to Burroway (2011), is an associative representation. For instance, in the sentence *He is a wonderful **shot**,* the word in bold stands for *sharpshooter*.

b) Synecdoche, that is, a figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole, or the whole for the part (Youman, 2008). An example of the first case is the sentence *That is a nice set of **wheels**,* where *wheels* represents *automobile* or *car*. The whole-to-part substitution can be appreciated in the example ***Argentina** beat **Ecuador** in last week's game*, where the names of the countries stand for twenty-two players on a field.

c) Personification, which is "the representation of abstractions, ideas, animals, or inanimate objects as human beings by endowing them with human qualities" (Youman, 2008, p. 152), as in the phrase *the **bleeding** country.*

d) Simile, i.e., a *direct* comparison introduced by words such as *like, as, such as,* among others (Youman, 2008). An example of simile is the sentence *Her blonde hair shone **like** gold.*

e) Metaphor, which is characterized by Youman (2008) as an indirect or parallel comparison that does not feature any signal words. For

instance, in the sentence *A **golden cascade** fell on her shoulders,* the bold words stand for *blonde hair.*

Britton's Theory on Composition

In 1975, researchers Britton, Burgess, Martin, Mclead, and Rosen carried out a quantitative study that allowed them to identify three discourse modes in student writing: expressive, transactional, and poetic (Iida, 2011).

According to Durst (2015), transactional writing "includes formal academic writing and incorporates […] an intellectual hierarchy ranging from copying to reporting, recording, summarizing, analyzing, and theorizing" (p. 390). For its part, the expressive mode involves individual, intimate, and even private language use that aims at attaining awareness and understanding of personal thoughts and emotions. Finally, the poetic mode encompasses fictional, dramatic, and poetic literary genres.

Iida (2011) and Durst (2015) agree in that Britton's theory gives preeminence to the expressive mode, which is characterized as the genesis of others forms of writing. In fact, Iida (2011) claims that:

> Britton's theory indicates that any type of writing starts from expressive writing, which allows students to use informal, casual, and less structured language in an undeveloped way with a strong sense of self, and that the expressive function changes [to] either transactional or poetic modes depending on the purpose of learning (p. 15).

Iida (2011) explains this relationship among the three modes in the following scheme:

Figure 2.4. Britton's writing modes

Source: Iida (2011)

2.4.1.2. Poetry

Defining poetry

Providing a straightforward definition of poetry is unquestionably challenging, as there are innumerable perspectives and points of view as to what makes a text poetic. However, as this study does not deal with literary theory, it is appropriate to use W. H. Auden's characterization, as cited in Burroway (2011), and define poetry as *memorable speech* (p. 295). The same source explains that, since its origins, poetry has had the purpose of being read aloud and remembered by its audience. Therefore, poetic texts reflect an unbreakable and everlasting connection between sound and meaning (Burroway, 2011). To this, it has to be added that one of the most important features of poetry is figurative language; this means that poetic texts transmit a message that goes beyond the literal meaning of its constituent words. Consequently, a text is poetic when, independently of the formal aspects it subjects itself to, conveys meaning beyond the denotational level, stimulating oral reproduction and recollection.

Modes of poetry

Fussell (1979) explains that poetry has three main modes: narrative, dramatic, and lyric.

Narrative poetry. This mode of poetry comprises texts that *tell a story*, and it is traditionally classified into epics and ballads (Neziroski, 2003). Mason (2013) explains epic poetry as "a long narrative poem[s] depicting a story which often includes a hero" (p. 79). An important characteristic of epics is that, in Neziroski's (2003) words, they are *non-stanzaic.* On the other hand, ballads are stanzaic rhymed poems of a relatively short length that relate the story of common individuals (Neziroski, 2003). Both Mason (2013) and Neziroski (2003) remark that ballads were originally developed with the aim of being sung aloud by groups of people.

Dramatic poetry. According to Neziroski (2003), dramatic poetry originated in Ancient Greek and was revived in the Middle Ages through church plays. This poetic mode involves poems that tell a story that is meant to be

performed on a stage in front of an audience. Youman (2008) ascertains that some of the most important English plays – the Shakespearean production, for instance – are written in meter, specifically, iambic pentameter (see below). Therefore, these literary texts are catalogued by many as forms of poetry.

Lyric poetry. Mason (2013) typifies lyric poetry as "personal poetry [, which is] generally contemplative" (p. 48). Neziroski (2003) expands this definition and attests that lyric poetry makes reference to "non-narrative, non-dramatic poetry, which was originally sung or recited with a musical instrument called a lyre […] The central content of lyric poems is not the story or the interaction between characters [,but] the poet's feelings and personal views" (par. 10). The same author also explains that lyric poetry has been developed into three categories: Lyric of vision, which corresponds to the structural representation of the meaning that is being conveyed; lyric of thought, that is, informative and educational poems; and lyric of feeling, which is based on the manifestation of the personal emotions, ideas, and desires of the writer.

Poetic forms

Traditionally, poetry has been grouped into formal and free verse. Since formal verse is analyzed below, this section addresses the description of free verse.

Free verse encompasses poetic texts that are arranged according to the rhythms and patterns of spoken language and imagery, and not according to a standardized metrical design ("Free Verse," par. 1). One should bear in mind, nevertheless, that free verse poetry does not relate to the abhorrence towards any manifestation of patterned organization; in other words, free verse should not be understood as *anything-but-formal verse.*

Fussell (1979) acknowledges the importance of free verse in contemporary poetry and states that "anyone aspiring to experience the permanent masterpieces of modern poetry must achieve some understanding of [free verse] techniques" (p. 77). Moreover, the author highlights the fact that the term *free verse* can be seen as an oxymoron; the reason is that, according to Fussell (1979), free verse poems still have to subject themselves to the principle which holds that "every technical

gesture in a poem [formal or not] must justify itself in meaning" (p. 88). Poet Mary Oliver agrees with Fussell's (1979) claim and asserts that "[f]ree verse […] is of course not free" (as cited in Burroway, 2011, p. 295). Therefore, free verse writers make use of several structural techniques in their poems. Among these techniques, Fussell (1979) considers the following to be bearers of special importance:

a) Typographical and orthographical departures from formal poetic conventions, for example, not capitalizing the first letter of each line, employing idiosyncratic abbreviations and constructions such as *should of,* and apparently abandoning punctuation rules.
b) Enumeration or catalogue.
c) Deliberate repetition of phrases or other syntactic forms.
d) Purposeful, feel-driven line breaks with frequent enjambments.

Some basic poetic concepts

Poetic line. Burroway (2011) defines poetic line as "a unit of verse ending in a typographical break" (p. 301). The author remarks that the words that begin and end a poetic line are provided with special importance; particularly, the end of a poetic line carries the greatest relevance. Additionally, Burroway (2011) highlights the fact that the poetic line is not to be understood as operating in substitution of the syntactic sentence, but in its complement. Furthermore, the author lists three definitions that are directly connected to the concept of poetic line:

a) Caesura, that is, an internal pause in a poetic line.
b) Enjambment, i.e., the continuance of sense into a subsequent line.
c) End-stop, which means the agreement or coincidence of both line break and sense pause.

Denotation. For Youman (2016a) and Burroway (2011), denotation is the literal or dictionary meaning of words. For instance, the word *heart* has the denotative meaning of a muscular organ in higher animals that pumps blood through the circularity system.

Connotation. According to Mason (2013), connotation is an extra meaning that a word develops in addition to its denotational implication. Burroway (2011),

for her part, argues that connotation "refers to the layers of suggestion that [words] acquire through usage" (p. 301). For example, the word *heart* has the connotation of kindness, good nature, and warm feelings.

Poetic action. Kizer explains that poems do not "require physical action, but there has to be some mental an emotional movement that carries through the [text]" (as cited in Burroway, 2011, p. 309). As a consequence, in Burroway's (2011) and Fussell's (1979) words, poems should start, develop, and end. Moreover, as Kumin points out, the ending of a poem can take four forms (as cited in Burroway, 2011):

a) Full logical or chronological circle.
b) Startling understatement.
c) Apocalyptic – fatalistic – statement.
d) Aggressive shift of balance.

Poetic mode as differentiated from poetry writing

On the basis of Britton's Theory, Florio-Ruane and Lensmire characterize the poetic mode as "aesthetically pleasing representations of experience" (as cited in Iida, 2011, p. 27). Accordingly, as Iida (2011) remarks, the form of a text created by an application of the poetic mode is not restricted to poems, but rather ranges from the different creative writing genres, such as short stories, scripts, and memoirs.

Conversely, according to Hanauer, poetry writing is the production of literary texts that expresses the experience, emotions, and ideas of the writer by means of a "self-referential use of language that creates for the reader and writer a new understanding of the experience, thought, or feeling expressed in the text" (as cited in Iida, 2011, p. 27). As a consequence, in line with Iida's (2011) and Hanauer's (2010) ideas, poetry writing encompasses lexical, semantic, and syntactic negotiations from the part of the writer, with the purpose of representing and redefining reality through the words contained in a comparatively short text.

Reported advantages of the use of literature and poetry in the language classroom

Several authors have discussed the advantages of the use of literature and poetry in the language classroom. The conclusion that has been reached is that literature and poetry-based activities, when appropriately employed, have a beneficial effect on various dimensions of language learning. These favorable features are addressed below.

Provision authentic language models. Bobkina and Dominguez (2014) assert that advocates of the use of literature in the ESL/EFL environments consider literary texts to be providers of authentic language manifestations with significant variety regarding style, text type, and register. Hence, there is exposure to real-life language use, which fosters familiarity with the target language's (TL) formal structures and functional communicative elements. In relationship to poetry, Panavelil (2011) claims that the use of this literary manifestation in the language classroom facilitates acquaintance with real-life uses of TL, this being one of the crucial requirements of successful language learning. The same author, citing Brumfit and Cater, states that poems are able to constitute themselves in contextualized models of language, as used by native speakers.

It is important to remember that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a language teaching/learning approach widely accepted and appreciated in contemporary ESL/EFL practice (Brown, 2007), encourages employing authentic materials in the foreign and second language classroom. Larsen-Freeman (2011) explains that CLT advocates promote the use of authentic materials as a way of helping students apply what is learned in class in real situations outside school environments. The author also emphasizes the need of selecting texts that are suitable for the students.

Moreover, Lazar (1993), in his pioneering text, remarks that EFL learners might find it difficult to gain access to authentic spoken language. As a result, written English becomes preeminently significant for the process of learning a foreign language. Under these circumstances, literary texts become a source of valuable contexts to assist the analysis and interpretation of the target language.

The same author addresses the alleged issues that arise from the unconventional use of language in poetry. Lazar (1993) argues that the language teacher can employ this unique feature of poetic texts in order to improve the learners' linguistic responsiveness and attentiveness, along with their interpretative skills. This is to be done through contrasting the language used in a poem with the linguistic conventions and norms addressed in class. It is imperative, however, to remember that all of this must depart from an effective selection of texts that takes into account the students' level.

Vocabulary development. Another aspect of the linguistic advantages of using poetry in the ESL/EFL classroom relates to vocabulary. Wilkins highlights the importance of vocabulary acquisition and argues that a want of grammatical competence hinders communication; however, lacking vocabulary completely prevents meaning conveyance (as cited in Min, 2013). Nation (2005), moreover, asserts that vocabulary acquisition ought to be understood as "a cumulative process where knowledge is built up over a series of varied meetings with the word" (p. 48).

Concerning Nation's assertion, Panavelil (2011) defends the use of poems when teaching/learning a second or foreign language because they stimulate TL vocabulary enrichment. The reason for this claim is that, in a poem, words are meaningfully contextualized and, because of this, more likely to be remembered. Scrivener (2011) also underscores this feature of poetry and attests that, to more efficiently recall a language item, a person needs to be startled by an innovative and peculiar idea or lexical choice. Besides, the author mentions that one should bear in mind that children acquire many mother-tongue elements in this fashion.

It shall be noted that as well, in Perrine's words, "[p]oetry is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature, saying most in the fewest of words than any other forms of literature" (as cited in Kong, 2011, p. 919). Therefore, bearing in mind that deducing meaning from the context is one of the sub-skills whose development is sought for in ESL/EFL environments, involving learners in poem-based activities should be encouraged, as this type of literary texts provides rich context, along with anaphoric and cataphoric reference, in a relatively short length.

For his part, Kırkgöz (2008) also highlights the benefits of poetry for vocabulary development. The author suggests that memorization and translation of textbook lexemes are practices often found in the language classroom. In contrast, "[p]oems [have] an important role in supplementing the inevitably restricted input of the classroom by offering a meaningful context, in which they could be used and hence be remembered more effectively" (p. 95).

Macro-skill development. In addition to the abovementioned assertions, it is appropriate to briefly discuss the reported advantages of poetry when used to foster the development of the target language's macro-skills.

Hişmanoğlu (2005) claims that "[l]iterature can be a powerful and motivating source for writing in ESL/EFL, both as a model and as subject matter" (p. 57). Regarding the use of literary texts as model for writing, Hişmanoğlu (2005) lists three kinds of writing activities: controlled writing, guided writing, and model reproduction. Of these, the type of task that directly relates to the topic of this research is the writing practice that seeks to emulate a model. Particularly concerning poetic texts, Collie and Slater state that "using poetry in the language classroom can lead naturally on to freer and creative written expression" (as cited in Panavelil, 2011, p. 12). In the same line of thought, Harmer (2010) asserts that writing poetry is a suitable and beneficial activity for both young and adult learners, as it encourages creativity in a manner that is impossible for other written expressions.

In relation to reading, Kong (2010) argues that, when efficiently applied in the language classroom, poetry is a valuable tool towards the development of the students' reading skills. The author links this claim to the fact that poetry is able to enhance motivation, stimulate imagination, increase experience, and improve self-cultivation. In accordance with these ideas, Silberstein (1994), in her seminal textbook about reading-skill development, affirms that, because of its special features, poetry allows learners to practice the totality of reading aspects.

Complementarily, Harmer (2010) and Lazar (1993) empathize the fact that poetry can promote the development of the listening and speaking skills. Khansir (2012) states that exposing language learners to poetry fosters familiarization of

"suprasegmental [elements] of the target language, such as stress, pitch, juncture, [and] intonation" (p. 244). This is explained by the fact that poetry is originally meant to be read aloud and heard by an audience (Burroway, 2011).

For his part, Lazar (1993) mentions that just focusing on the silent reading a poem might cause teachers and students to be unaware of the "rich patterns of sound that contribute to the special qualities of most poems" (p. 89). The author also encourages the application of poetry-based *choral reading* tasks in ESL/EFL environments. It is important to state that, in Lazar's (1993) treatment of poetry, choral reading takes place after students have familiarized themselves with the poem. However, there is no reason to believe that reading a poem aloud cannot be used as an opening activity. As it can be noticed, oral practice can be promoted by employing poem-based activities; through them, students can get a real sense of the rich intonation and rhythmic patterns of the English language, which, in turn, can move learners to appreciate and value the target language from a different perspective.

Grammar. As noted above, authors such as Khatib (2011), Panavelil (2011), and Lazar (1993) remark that the inherent complexity of poetry might lead many teachers to suggest that this literary manifestation should not be used in ESL/EFL environments. The reason of this point of view is that poems occasionally bend the generally accepted rules and conventions of language use, including grammar, to serve aesthetic and semantic needs. Nevertheless, Lazar (1993) argues that poetry can be included in many of the activities, techniques, and tasks that are normally used in the language classroom; moreover, reflection on the distinctive features of poetry aids and prompts its use in benefit of the learners, rather than causing the teacher to reject this literary medium.

In connection with these ideas, Tomlinson maintains that an appropriate use of poetic texts in the classroom can be more beneficial than a strong emphasis on presenting and practicing structural elements (as cited in Panavelil, 2011). In addition to this, and regarding the criticism to the use of poetry mentioned at the beginning of this section, Lazar (1993) explains that one should remember that the English language, as spoken by native speakers, is not as unbendingly structured as

one might think at first; besides, deviations from the rules are not exclusive to poetry. Furthermore, the teacher can exploit these rule breaks by encouraging learners to compare and contrast them with their knowledge of generally accepted norms and structures. The author also mentions that connecting linguistic or structural elements to a poem and planning a lesson on that basis promotes the learner's understating and responsiveness towards those language items.

Notwithstanding, it shall not be forgotten that, as empathized by all the authors in this review, the success of using poetry when teaching and learning a target language depends on an appropriate selection of texts that takes into consideration the students' backgrounds, as understood by their previous knowledge, interests, and needs.

Motivation. To finalize this section, it is important to note that, as Scrivener (2011) maintains, the teaching-learning process of a foreign or second language can become monotonous and uninteresting if the teacher and students exclusively use course book material and examples. In response, Lazar (1993) makes reference to the fact that learners might find working with literary texts to be a very rewarding activity. Since literature is regarded as having a high-level complexity, adequately performing an activity that includes a literary text can bring forth authentic feelings of success.

Dealing specifically with poetry, Lazar (1993) considers that poems are likely to stimulate intense emotional responses in the learners. The author defends this claim by arguing that, because of the social value and intrinsic complexity of literature, "students of English may experience a real sense of achievement at tackling literary materials in the classroom" (p. 18). Being involved in a task that includes materials which are deemed to be *difficult*, even when perfect performance is not achieved, is indeed more rewarding than correctly filling-in blacks on a workbook page.

For his part, Panavelil (2011) argues that poetry has the quality of significantly motivating language learners. Moreover, Kong (2010) complements Panavelil's claim, and states that correctly employing poetry in ESL/EFL environments can awaken the students' interests and passions, prompting them to

be involved with and learn the target language inside and outside the classroom. In fact, a different kind of appreciation for English can come from witnessing how the language has been used to express beautiful and complex ideas, while obeying formal norms that provide it with aesthetic value. In agreement with these assertions, Hess (2003) advocates for the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom and suggests that poems can be used in the creation of "meaning-filled language lessons that integrate the four skills, allow for cohesion of text with the life experiences of students, and heighten both interest and involvement" (p. 20).

2.4.1.3. Formal verse

Formal verse poems are those that follow regular patterns of rhyme and meter. This definition, therefore, unfolds into two concepts which are described below.

Rhyme

To fully understand the concept of rhyme, one first has to gain acquaintance with those of assonance and consonance, as described by Burroway (2011).

a) Assonance comprises the "repetition of a vowel sound between consonants that may or may not match" (p. 300), as in *slow* and *road*, or *bat* and *cap*.
b) Consonance entails the recurrence of the end or middle consonant sound of a word, as in *bree**ze*** and *snee**ze***, or *pe**pp**er* and *pi**p**er*.

Once these previous concepts have been described, it is proper to introduce the definition of rhyme. According to the Encyclopædia Britannica, rhyme refers to "the correspondence of two or more words with similar-sounding final syllables placed so as to echo one another" ("Rhyme," par. 1). The same source asserts that there are two types of rhyme used in poetry: internal rhyme and end rhyme. The latter is the most common, and makes reference to agreeing sounds at the end of two of more lines of a poem. Burroway (2011), for her part, states that internal rhyme entails the sound agreement between the end sound of one a poetic line, and the beginning or middle or another.

Rhyme, both end and internal, can be further classified into true and slant (Burroway, 2011):

a) True rhyme involves the agreement of both the consonant and vowel sounds of the last stressed syllable of a poetic line with a middle or end syllable in the subsequent lines. Examples of this type of rhyme are the lexical pairs *light / night* and *cry* / *try*.
b) Slant rhyme corresponds to a somewhat discordant sound agreement that usually entails consonance. Instances of slant rhyme are *hill / heel* and *goad* / *god*.

Moreover, true rhymes are categorized into masculine, feminine and trisyllabic. The first type corresponds to sound agreements between monosyllabic words or between end stressed syllables of polysyllabic ones ("Rhyme," par. 2). *Bow / row* and *desire / fire* are examples of the first and second cases, respectively. In a feminine rhyme, the sound agreement is established between the first stressed syllables of polysyllabic words ("Feminine rhyme," par. 1), as in *tower / flower* and *master / disaster.* For its part, trisyllabic rhyme, as the name suggests, is the sound correspondence among the three syllables of polysyllabic words ("Rhyme," par. 2), as in *article* / *particle.*

Finally, there is one subcategory of slant rhyme that deserves attention: eye rhyme. This type of rhyme is found in two words with similar spelling but different pronunciation ("Eye rhyme," par. 1). Examples of eye rhyme are *bough / cough* and *wind / blind*.

Meter

Fussell (1979) and Burroway (2011) explain that meter was first used as a mnemonic device in epic and dramatic poetry. Notwithstanding, the former author stresses that the importance of meter in both ancient and contemporary poetry goes beyond an aid to the memory. In fact, Fussell (1979) states that "[t]he empirical study of poetry [reveals that] meter is a prime physical and emotional constituent of poetic meaning" (p. 3). The same author provides a complete definition of meter that evinces its significance and complexity:

> Meter is what results when the natural rhythmical movements of colloquial speech are heightened, organized, and regulated so that pattern – which means repetition – emerges from the relative phonetic haphazard of ordinary utterance. Because it inhibits the physical form of the words themselves, meter is the most fundamental technique of order available to the poet (p. 4 – 5).

Furthermore, Fussell (1979) remarks that the popularity of meter is connected to the yearning for order that high civilizations have. Moreover, meter is valued because it prompts the reader to focus his attention and refine his awareness. Fussell (1979) points out that the appreciation for meter also springs from its quality of inducing the reader of poetry to a state that resembles hypnosis; besides, meter is pleasurable because its echoes rhythmical human phenomena such as phenomena such as breathing and walking.

Types of meter

According to Powell and Halperin (2004), there are four systems of meter used in poetry: quantitative, accentual, syllabic, and accentual-syllabic.

Quantitative. This type of meter measures duration rather than accent or number of syllables (Fussell, 1979). Therefore, quantitative meter is based on a regular interaction between short and long syllables (Powell & Halperin, 2004). This type of meter is a distinctive feature of classical poetry – Sanskrit, Greek, and Roman. Nevertheless, according to Fussell (1979), although quantitative meter has been emulated in English, the results seem awkward and self-conscious.

Accentual. Powell and Halperin (2004) argue that accentual meter is determined by the number of stresses within a line of poetry, regardless of how many syllables are found in the same line. Fussell (1979) remarks that accentual meter rests in the assumption that "three or more short syllables can be uttered in the same time than one or two long ones can" (p. 9). The same author remarks that this type of meter is characteristic of Germanic languages.

Syllabic. Powell and Halperin (2004) assert that "Syllabic verse depends on a consistent number of syllables in each line, regardless of where the stresses

happen to fall" (p. 8). Although the number of accented syllables in a line of poetry is unimportant for syllabic meter, stress is employed for aesthetic and rhetorical reasons (Fussell, 1979). Syllabic meter is a distinguishing feature of poetry written in the Romance languages and in Japanese (Fussell, 1979; Powell & Halperin 2004); nevertheless, Fussell (1979) remarks that skilful emulations of the syllabic verse in English are common and have gained popularity. This type of meter is particularly important for the purposes of this research project because haiku, a Japanese poem with significant acceptance in English (Iida, 2010), is written in syllabic verse.

Accentual-syllabic. Youman (2008) ascertains that this type of meter corresponds to the "the systematic arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables within a line of poetry" (p. 64). The basis for this organization is the poetic foot, which, in words of Fussell (1979), is the basic quantifiable element of rhythm in an accentual-syllabic poem. As explained by the editors of the Encyclopædia Britannica, in the English language, a poetic foot is a unit consisting of "one stressed (´) and one or two unstressed (˘) syllables" ("Foot," par. 1). The poetic feet of English poetry are classified according to the order followed by the stressed and unstressed syllables within each one. Thus, as explained by Youman (2008) and Powell and Halperin (2004), English poetry has four basic feet:

a) Iamb: one stressed follows one unstressed syllable, as in the word *at**tend*** and the phrase *he **tries***.

b) Trochee: one unstressed and one stressed syllable, as in ***rain**bow* and ***flo**wer*.

c) Anapest: two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed one, as in *contra**dict*** and *he will **dance***.

d) Dactyl: one stressed syllable that precedes two stressed syllables, as in ***straw**berry* and ***a**nimal*.

It shall be noted that, as shown in the examples, the arrangement of poetic feet goes beyond word boundaries. Furthermore, the name of a poetic line is given by the number of times the poetic foot is repeated. Hence, a poetic line can be a trochaic trimeter, an anapestic dimeter, or an iambic pentameter, which is the most

important and widely used poetic line in formal English poetry (Fussell, 1979; Powell & Halperin, 2004; Youman, 2008). An example of an iambic pentameter line is shown below:

° / ° / ° / ° / ° /

And breed a love that takes away all mars

2.4.1.4. Haiku composition

Iida (2011) states that haiku poetry in Japan appeared in the 16th century; Moon (2001) adds that originally haiku were employed as opening verses of lengthier poems called *tanka*; nevertheless, haiku acquired status as independent poems in the 17th century. The most representative haiku writers are Matsuo Basho, Kobayashi Issa, and Masaoka Shiki (Iida, 2010; Moon, 2001). For his part, Fussell (1979) refers to haiku as a "reputedly exquisite form imported from Japan" (p. 132). Iida (2010) complements Fussell's (1979) assertion by arguing that, although initially endemic to Japan, the popularity of haiku has gone beyond its original language, and currently the poem is read and written in diverse settings where English is employed as a mother or second language.

As to the characteristics of haiku, Moon (2001) explains that poem features the following key elements:

a) Seventeen-syllable structure organized among the three lines in a 5-7-5 pattern.
b) Distinctive subject matter that emphasizes nature and the seasons, and their interaction with human experience.
c) Prominence on imagery
d) One-line and two-line image structural organization.
e) Transition from large-scale images to small-scale ones, or vice versa.

Formal features of haiku

Moon (2001) claims that the length of haiku may prompt one to be misled regarding the poem's formal complexity. Haiku are, in fact, intricate semantic and structural texts that adhere to three formal features (Iida, 2010, 2011):

Syllabic meter. Haiku contain seventeen syllables organized in tree lines according to a 5-7-5 pattern; that is, the first and third line hold five syllables, while the second line has seven (Moon, 2001; Iida, 2010, 2011).

Kigo or seasonal reference. Iida (2011) explains that "Kigo are words or phrases which can be associated with a particular season" (p. 29). For example, *robin, blossomed daisy,* and *strawberries* suggest spring, while *palm tree, green grass,* and *blue jay* represent summer. Notwithstanding, Iida (2010) declares that kigo is not always observed in English haiku.

Kireji. This formal feature relates to a cutting word or punctuation mark at the end of the second line of the haiku (Iida, 2010). According to Iida (2011), the use of kireji splits haiku in two sections – a scene and a message – while establishing a creative gap in between. It is important to note that the cutting word or punctuation mark aids readers understand the poem (Iida, 2010).

Given that haiku is a syllabic formal verse poem, it is adequate to provide a description of the concept of syllable. Powell and Halperin (2004) explain that syllables are the basic lexical units of sound that determine word pronunciation. In English, a syllable comprises the following elements (Briton, L. & Briton, D., 2010):

a) A nucleus, which consists of a mandatory vowel – or syllabic consonant.
b) Onset, i.e., one to three consonants that may precede the nucleus.
c) Coda, that is, one to four consonants that may follow the nucleus.

The presence of both onset and coda depends on the nature of the syllable. Thus, *I* only features a nucleus; *she* has a nucleus and an onset; *all* contains a nucleus and a coda; and *bark* encompasses the three elements.

It is imperative to remark that the number of syllables in a word is determined by the number of vowel sounds, stressed or not, that the word has, and

not by the number of letters that constitute that word. Hence, *snake* has five letters, two of which are vowels, but only one syllable; on the other hand, *poet* contains only four letters but two syllables.

Furthermore, since haiku does not feature rhyme, sound effects in the poem can be achieved through internal assonance, consonance, or alliteration. The first two concepts are discussed above; it is necessary, therefore, to introduce alliteration. Youman (2008) describes alliteration as the technique of "beginning two or more words with the same [consonant or vowel] sound" (p. 21) in a single line of poetry. Alliteration is clearly exemplified in English epics, which, according to Youman (2008), feature four main beats in each line that correspond to four alliterations. This characteristic can be appreciated in this excerpt from the epic poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (as cited in Youman, 2008, p. 46): ***H**olding his **h**ead in his **h**and by the **h**air*. Complementarily, the following haiku illustrates the use of alliteration in this type of poem:

***D**ew **d**rops in winter*
***Sh**ine and **sh**ower the forest:*
***A** new dawn **a**rrives*

Interpreting haiku

Higginson states that, at its beginnings, haiku composition consisted of a mere portrayal of natural phenomena as however, starting in the 19th century, the poem emphasizes the integration of the poet's personal emotions and thoughts into the text (as cited in Iida, 2011). Hence, as Iida (2010) argues "haiku is neither a fiction nor an imagination; rather, it refers to a direct response to the world" (p. 30).

Furthermore, as Iida (2010, 2011) suggests, reader-centeredness is a crucial element in haiku. The major consequence of this fact is that the interpretation of the poem cannot be restricted to the author's intentions and desires; in other words, haiku must allow for multiple interpretations which vary according to the reaction each reader has towards the content of the poem.

As an illustration of the reader-centeredness of haiku, it is proper to analyze one poem composed by Iida (2010):

A bright red maple
Whispering among green leaves:
A start of new life

In the above haiku, one can recognize all of the poem's formal features. The tree lines follow a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern; moreover, *bright red maple* is a seasonal reference to autumn; finally, the kireji is a colon after *leaves*, which indeed divides the poem into a scene and a message. As for the interpretation of the poem, it should be varied, as in all good haiku. Iida (2010) asserts that, if autumn is taken as the central theme, the poem might be interpreted as sorrowful. Conversely, a different reader might focus on the last line, and therefore understand the poem as a hopeful message. Nevertheless, Iida (2010), the author, declares that the haiku "describes a scene where he watches a maple tree from a window in his apartment while feeling the change of season and recalling his first day of having attended a class in an American graduate school" (p. 31). In fact, *bright red maple* stands for the author's blushing because of nervousness. As it can be appreciated, the poem has private and multiple interpretations, which is precisely a defining characteristic of good haiku.

Haiku composition in ESL/EFL environments

Iida (2010) provides a five-step protocol for the inclusion of haiku composition practices in ESL/EFL teaching-learning processes. These steps are described below:

Review the concept of haiku. This stage involves introducing learners to the formal features of haiku by means of direct instruction and analysis of examples. For Iida (2010), the central aim of the stage is to prompt understanding of the fact that "haiku is not a simple sketch of students' observations but rather their direct, personal response to nature and events" (p. 32).

Collecting material for haiku. This second stage relates to an out-of-classroom reflection on writing-fostering questions. Iida (2010) recommends the following prompts:

- What do you see and hear?

- What do you smell and taste?
- What do you feel?

Iida (2010) asserts that this stage enables students to develop a temporal and spatial situation on which to base their composition.

Composing haiku. In this stage, students actually compose their poems. Iida (2010) warns that haiku composition can be very challenging for students; therefore, the author suggests to exploit as much as possible the material that has been collected in stage two; this can be done by means of group or whole-class discussions. In addition, since students are forced to negotiate meaning to observe the syllabic structure of the poem, the teacher should support them by prompting and assisting in the search of synonyms.

Peer reading. Iida (2010) advocates for the importance of this stage by maintaining that peer reading allow "students to see how an audience interprets and reacts to their voice and intent" (p. 32). The format of the technique requires students to be divided in groups of three of four. Each member is to read his haiku two times, while the rest of the group write down their personal interpretations. Afterwards, the members of the audience share their reactions to the poem. Finally, the author explains his original intention while composing the poem, and discussion ensues.

As a complementary task, Iida (2010) proposes a free-writing activity concerning five memorable events in the students' lives, as a way of generating *material* for the composition of a second haiku.

Publishing haiku. In line with Hanauer's (2012) Meaningful Literacy Instruction (see below), Iida (2010) advocates for involving students in activities that aim at compiling and preparing their written haiku for potential publication. The author claims that doing so "increases the awareness of audience by going beyond the traditional perspective that the instructor is the only reader for [the students'] work" (p. 33).

Empirical evidence of the influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills

Iida (2011, 2012, 2016) has specifically studied the influence of haiku composition on the development of EFL language skills, particularly, on academic writing. Iida's (2011, 2012, 2016) work has been developed on the basis of Social-expressivist Pedagogy and Meaningful Literacy Instruction. It is appropriate, therefore, to first briefly describe these theoretical bases, to later discuss Iida's (2011, 2012, 2016) research in more detail.

Social-expressivist pedagogy. Iida (2010) connects this concept to Communicative Language Teaching practice and characterizes it as structuring the teaching-learning process around communicative environments where students learn how to express their voices within socially set contexts that assume the existence of an audience. The author, using Ivanic's words, defines voice as "a socially shaped discourse which a speaker can draw upon, and/or an actual voice in the speaker's individual history, and/or the current speaker's unique combination of these resources" (p. 28).

Iida (2010) empathizes that voice cannot exist without an audience. In fact, according to Vygotsky's inner speech theory, the self has to be mediated in society before being developed inside individuals (as cited in Iida, 2010). Within this framework, "writing is an ongoing process of negotiation to make meaning, which in turn develops voice and a sense of audience in a specific community" (Iida, 2010, p. 29).

Meaningful Literacy Instruction. Hanauer (2012) advocates for the inclusion poetry-based creative writing efforts when teaching/learning a second or foreign language because of their value for humanizing the classroom. The author makes use of Kramsch's ideas to suggest that the traditional emphasis on measurable results is reflected in a stress on structural elements and observable communicative competence. Nevertheless, learning another language is liable cause emotional, moral, and aesthetical engagement in the individual.

Hanauer (2012) declares that Meaningful Literacy is a learner-centered approach to second and foreign language literacy instruction. According to the

author, the approach is based on specific conceptions of language learners and their experience. Hence, Meaning Literacy relies on three assumptions which Hanauer (2012) describes as follows:

> Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, [….] the language learner [is] a socially and culturally contextualized individual with a rich, extended history of personal experience. This sense of the richness of the internal world of the individual extensively informs […] instructional design and everyday interaction with language learners. Secondly, […] learning a language [is] part of a process of widening and deepening the ways an individual can understand, interpret, feel and express her or his personally meaningful understandings to themselves and within social settings. Finally, […] learning a language involves an interaction with everything that [constitutes] the experience and understanding of the learner, including issues of identity and self-perception (p. 108).

Hanauer's research and teaching practice are framed within Meaningful Literacy Instruction. The author explains that the approach has four principles. These principles are listed and briefly described below (Hanauer, 2012):

a) Autobiographical writing, which makes reference to writing efforts that make use of the learner's personal experience, along with memory and imagination, to promote exploration and understanding of the self.
b) Emotional writing, which encourages the stimulation of emotional reactions and the manifestation of the learner's feelings.
c) Personal insight, i.e., integrating self-reflection into the composition process in order to deepen self-understanding.
d) Authentic public access, that is, sharing what the learners have written, and the emotions implicit in these texts, with significant people in the students' lives, inside and outside the language classroom.

Hanauer (2012) maintains that significant poetry-based creative writing practice in the classroom addresses Widdowson's (1994) notion of authentic

proficiency in a second or foreign language. The latter author argues that real proficiency is not revealed through mere submission to commonly accepted structural norms. Genuine mastery of the target language is demonstrated by consequential and deliberate self-expression (as cited in Hanauer, 2012).

Widdowson (1994) defends the idiosyncratic value of second/foreign language proficiency. The author claims that a non-native language "is learned, not just as a set of fixed conventions to conform to, but as an adaptable resource for making meaning. And making meaning which [the individual calls his own]" (p. 384). Under this perspective, and in agreement with Hanauer's (2012) ideas, poetry writing is a straightforward manifestation of meaningful literacy in language learning environments.

Once these theoretical foundations have been addressed, it is proper to discuss Iida's (2011, 2012, 2016) research studies: their methodology and results. Iida's (2011) study addresses two research questions that relate to a) the influence of haiku writing on second/foreign language (L2) academic literacy and b) the perceived attitudes and emotions of language learners with regard to haiku writing in the target language. The participants of the study are 20 Japanese EFL students. Besides, the research design entails the application of essay-based tests and the development of interviews before and after a six-week intervention in which haiku writing practices are promoted. Iida (2011) analyzes as well the contents of weekly journal entries, reflection forms, and a book of 10 compiled haiku from each participant.

The findings of the study demonstrate that haiku writing positively influences the development of EFL academic writing skills. Iida (2011) reaches this conclusion on the basis of the results of the textual analysis of the pre and post-tests and of the compiled haiku. The comparison of the tests applied before and after the intervention reveals "a significant increase in word counts and the number of paragraphs in an essay. [The results also illustrate an increased] use of verbs, passive forms, perfect forms, impersonal pronouns, and transition words" (p. 179 – 180). Moreover, the content analysis of the book of haiku evinces a frequent use of

verbs, as compared with a rare employment of negations. Iida (2011) connects these features to proper academic writing.

Concerning the perceived value of TL haiku composition, Iida (2011) reports that participants acknowledge that writing haiku in a language other than their mother tongue is a difficult endeavor. The researcher relates this difficulty to the participants' need of adjustment to the structure of the poem, as well as to their previous experience with the target language. Nevertheless, Iida (2011) claims that the majority of participants of the study consider haiku composition in the target language as "a valuable task in terms of providing opportunities to acquire new vocabulary, understand a greater sense of self- expression, and gain transferable L2 literacy knowledge" (p. 180).

Furthermore, from Iida's (2011) research, two complementary studies derive. Iida (2012) specifically focuses on the examination of EFL students' perceptions towards haiku writing. The findings support Hanauer's (2010), Liao's (2012), Chamcharatsri's (2013), and Iida's (2011) conclusions. Iida's (2012) study employs the same subject pool as the 2011 research. Likewise, the research design resembles the one previously discussed.

In Iida's (2012) research project, 20 Japanese university EFL students are part of a six-week course where they are first introduced to the form and composition process of haiku. Afterwards, they are asked to compose 20 poems, which are peer reviewed. As a final project, students select and compile 10 haiku in a book that includes an introduction and a final reflection. As suggested by Hanauer (2012), the participants' writing efforts depart from their own experiences and emotions. Additionally, while writing the poems, students are required to keep a journal in their mother tongue, recording their thoughts about their learning experience. Finally, at the end of the course, the participants are interviewed.

Data categorization and analysis are based on a coding system that reveals the frequency of the students' responses. The results of the study indicate that "writing haiku in English is a valuable task for L2 learning. A principal contribution of haiku composition is the development of L2 linguistic awareness" (Iida, 2012, p.

1482). Moreover, the findings evince positive attitudes towards haiku writing, which is deemed to be a constructive practice for English learning.

In addition, most participants coincide in that writing poetry leads to vocabulary enrichment. Iida (2012) explains this assertion in the fact that, when writing a haiku, students have to negotiate meaning conveyance. This means that that they have to find words that express their emotions while also fitting into the poem's structure, i.e., three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables, respectively. Iida (2012), therefore, concludes that haiku writing in the target language is a practice that potentially fosters linguistic knowledge development, self-expression, and literacy-skill transfer from and to other writing genres.

As a complement for the previous assertions, one ought to consider the results of Iida's (2016) case study involving a Myanmarese EFL student in Japan. The research follows a similar procedure to the ones described above. However, this time, the content analysis of the book of 10 haiku, the final project of the six-week course, is carried out in terms of context writing, content analysis, and writing stylistics. The findings lead the author to affirm that poetry writing in the target language not only offers language practice but also "has the potential of making L2 literacy practice personal, dynamic, humanistic, and meaningful. [Furthermore,] it can allow L2 writers to explore, discover, and express themselves in their language learning process" (p. 11). It is important to remark that Iida (2011, 2012, 2016) characterizes the development of voice and self-expression as one significant basis for the improvement of EFL academic writing skills.

2.4.2. Dependent variable key categories

2.4.2.1. Academic literacy

Dunn (2005) asserts that human interaction with language, culture, and cognition reveals five types of literacy, which she describes as follows:

a) Literal literacy, understood as the capacity of reading and writing in one's mother language.
b) Cultural literacy, that is, the successful use of language within a common culture.
c) Critical literacy, i.e., the *rational* use of language that attempts to question the existing state of affairs in societies.
d) **Academic literacy**, which Dunn (2005) defines as "ways of thinking, reading, speaking, and writing dominant in the academic setting; involving ways of receiving knowledge, managing knowledge, and creating knowledge for the benefit of a field of study" (p. 8).
e) Cyber literacy, in other words, the use of language through current technological means, such as e-mail accounts, instant messaging, and social networks.

For his part, Weideman (2014) argues that academic literacy should be understood "as the ability to use language to meet the demands of tertiary education" (ii). The author stresses the fact that the interaction of individuals with academic language does not start in higher education, but rather it is developed throughout the elementary and secondary education levels. Nevertheless, it is during university that the need and complexities of academic literacy become overtly noticeable (Dunn, 2005; Weideman, 2014).

As it can be inferred from the above descriptions, the concept of academic literacy is broader than that of literacy – namely, the ability to read and write in a specific language. Academic literacy encompasses several capabilities that cover the four language macro-skills. The following list of academic literacy abilities –

which is taken from Weideman (2014) – clearly illustrates this comprehensive nature:

- Contextual understanding and use of *academic* vocabulary
- Effective interpretation of the academic use of figurative language devices and concepts such as metaphors, idioms, and connotations.
- Awareness and competent use of the logical sequence of academic texts, as revealed by introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
- Interpretation and understanding of the differences of genre and audience and their corresponding effects.
- Effective presentation and interpretation of visual / graphic information.
- Discrimination between important, non-essential, and irrelevant information; factual and opinion-based data; proposition and argument; and cause-effect relationships.
- Identification of sequences and hierarchies.
- Carrying out simple numeral approximations and mathematical operations to facilitate comparison and argument development.
- Identification and presentation of evidence, complemented with extrapolations and inferences to and from other areas and cases.
- Understanding and appropriate use of the communicative functions of academic language: definitions, exemplifications, and argumentations.
- Supra-sentential meaning construction.

As a complement for the above description, it is adequate to discuss Lea and Street's models for academic literacy development in higher education. These models are explained by Iida (2011) in the following manner:

Study skills model. In this approach, writing is regarded as a *cognitive skill;* therefore, the aim of the teaching-learning process is to instruct students in the

forms and uses of grammatical, orthographical, lexical and structural linguistic formal features, under the assumption that these skills and knowledge can be transferred to other situations and contexts.

Academic socialization model. This model seeks learner adjustment to the specific discourses and genres of academic fields. For the academic socialization model, given that, academic discourses are deemed to be regular and patterned, the teaching-learning process should focus on developing understating of essential rules of conventions of a specific academic discourse, with the objective for fostering reproduction skills in students.

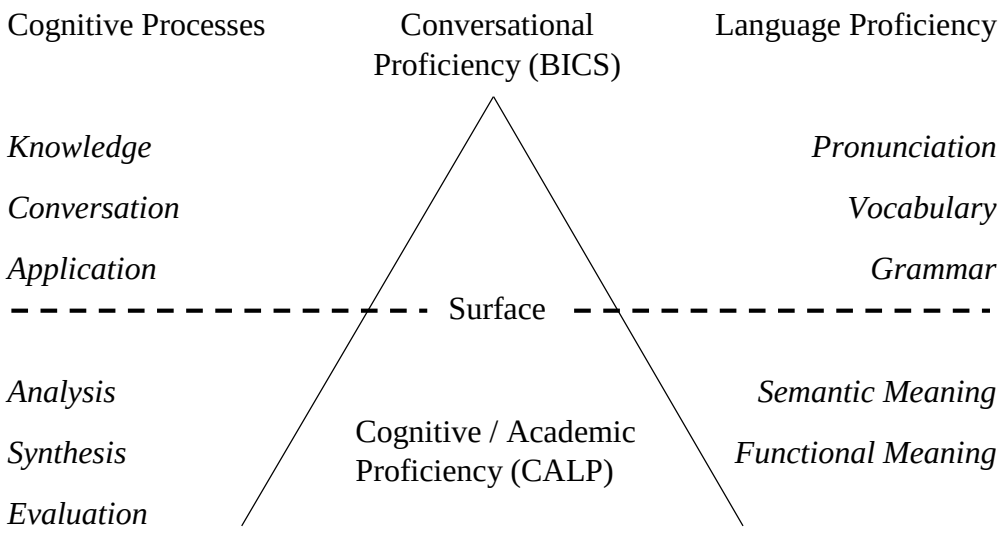
Academic literacies model. Lea and Street, as cited in Iida (2011), maintain that this model redefines the understanding of knowledge in academic contexts. As a consequence, the academic literacies models incorporates principles of the study skills and the academic socialization models, and, at the same time, "deals with the relationship between power and authority in constructing meaning" (Iida, 2011, p. 53). Thus, this models vindicates the importance of both micro – cognition, individuality – and macro – culture, politics – elements and factors in academic literacy development.

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) vs. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

One theoretical basis that directly relates to academic writing in ESL and EFL contexts is Cummins's distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

BICS mainly concern "the development of conversational [non-academic] fluency in the second [or foreign] language" (Bilash, 2011, par. 2). On the other hand, Cummins characterizes CALP as "the extent to which an individual has access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling" (as cited in Cummins, 2008, p. 72). The following diagram clarifies the distinction between the two concepts:

Figure 2.5. BICS vs. CALP



Source: Baker (2001)

As it can be appreciated, BICS involve overtly perceptible proficiency and cognitive processes, which in Bloom's taxonomy are typified as low-level. Contrastively, CALP encompasses high order cognitive processes and high-level, yet not explicitly noticeable, language proficiency. Moreover, context plays an important role in the BICS/CALP distinction; the discussion of this factor, nevertheless, takes place in section 2.4.2.4.

Furthermore, Cummins (2008) argues that the BICS/CALP differentiation is directly connected to Gee's distinction between primary and secondary discourses. The former "are acquired through face-to-face interactions in the home and represent the language of initial socialization" (Cummins, 2008, p. 75). The acquisition and development of secondary discourses, on the other hand, take place beyond the family context, that is, in school, business, and even religious environments. As a consequence, secondary discourses comprise acquiring specialized vocabulary and language functions that are suitable for these contexts. An immediate inference that results from the above discussion is that academic

literacy in second and foreign language use is straightforwardly linked to both CALP and secondary discourses.

2.4.2.2. Productive skills

Definitions

The four language macro-skills have been traditionally grouped into receptive and productive. Additionally, language macro-skills are also classified, according to the message-conveyance medium, into written and spoken. These categorizations bring forth the establishment to four dyads – two vertical and two horizontal – which are displayed in the following table:

Table 2.1. Language Macro-skills

	Written	**Oral**
Receptive skills	Reading	Listening
Productive skills	Writing	Speaking

Source: First-hand experience
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Golkova and Hubackova (2014) assert that productive skills, also referred to as active skills, encompass the "transmission of information that a language user produces in either spoken or written form," on the basis of the data received and interpreted through the receptive or passive skills (p. 478). The authors highlight the interdependence of the four language macro-skills, and emphasize that neither the passive nor the active skills can be developed without the support of their counterparts. Hence, the information and knowledge that individuals gather through the receptive skills is to be considered as the foundation for the actual real-life activation of the productive skills. In fact, many current teaching and learning methodologies suggest that the receptive skills are acquired first during a *silent*

period in which the basis for the development of the productive skills is established. This sequence, moreover, resembles the first language acquisition process (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Once these preliminary considerations have been addressed, it is necessary to discuss both writing and speaking in more depth.

Carel (2012) remarks that writing comprises message conveyance through symbols and signs inscribed on paper or any related material. As a result, writing depends on the existence of an idea, thought or feeling – a message – to be transmitted, and an audience to receive it. Besides, the message conveyance requires individuals to form symbols – letters – and combine them into words, which are subsequently combined into sentences that, depending on the purpose of the interaction, should be linked into larger segments of language – paragraphs. The next section of the chapter further discusses writing.

On the other hand, speaking involves message conveyance through speech (Carel, 2012). Thornbury (2005) states that speech production is to be understood as a linear process in which words are strung to form phrases that subsequently are strung into utterances that constitute larger strings of language.

Speech production

Thornbury (2005) maintains that speech production is a three-step progression. The author describes this three-fold process in the following manner:

a) Message conceptualization at an ideational level. This stage implicates generating thoughts, at an ideational level, according to the type, topic, and purpose.
b) Formulation. At this level, individuals make decisions regarding the discursive, syntactic, and lexical nature of their speech.
c) Articulation. This stage encompasses using the speech organs to produce sounds. These sounds receive the technical name of phonemes, which, in English, account to more than 40, depending on the taxonomy (Thornbury, 2005). Youman (2016b) explains that English consonants are produced when an articulator – the tongue and the lower lips – touches a place of articulation – lips, teeth,

> alveolar ridge, palate, and velum – while the vocal cords, which actually produce the sounds, either vibrate or not. Complementarily, vowel discrimination is caused by the position the tongue assumes during the production of sounds in the vocal cords. For their part, nasal sounds are generated by an obstruction of the air stream at either the lips, the alveolar ridge or the velum. Furthermore, Thornbury (2005) explains that "sounds are produced in a continuous stream, with many different vocal organs involved concurrently, such that the articulation of one sound will affect [that] of its neighbors" (p. 5).

Four basic concepts of speaking

In addition to the stages described in the previous section, speaking is significantly related to self-monitoring and repair, automaticity, fluency, and accuracy.

Self-monitoring and repair. Thornbury (2005) argues that self-monitoring and repair are part of a process that, taking place at either the conceptualization, formulation, or articulation stage, causes changes or even desertion of the speech production. When self-monitoring occurs during the conceptualization stage, the message may be altogether altered or even abandoned. If self-monitoring concurs with formulation, the speaker may *repair* the speech production and slow down, pause, backtrack, or rephrase. During articulation, self-monitoring may result in modifications or corrections concerning word choice and pronunciation.

Automaticity. For Thornbury (2005) asserts that automaticity enables speakers "to focus attention on the aspect of the speaking tasks that immediately requires it" (p. 6). The author adds that automaticity is attained in part because of the employment of *prefabricated chunks* of language, which are words or phrases that speakers automatically associate with specific contexts and interactions. For example, when relating a children's story, people spontaneously start with *Once upon a time.*

Fluency and accuracy. According to Carel (2012), fluency relates to the "smooth use of connected speech" that is characterized by standard speed, certainty, and not recurring repetition or self-correction. Thornbury (2005) completes Carel's (2012) ideas by attesting that appropriate pausing and natural utterance length are two crucial factors in fluency. On the other hand, accuracy is the proper and context-suitable application of grammatical, lexical, and pronunciation conventions.

2.4.2.3. Writing

Definition and purposes of writing

Coulmas (2003) typifies writing as a "system of recording language by means of visible or tactile marks" (p. 1). Harmer (2004), for his part, identifies writing "as a fairly recent development in [human] evolution" (p. 1). In addition, when comparing and contrasting the two productive skills, Harmer (2004) identifies some defining characteristics of writing as distinguished from speaking. The author's ideas concerning the essential features of writing are summarized in the following list:

a) Need of being learned/taught.
b) Temporal and spatial transcendence.
c) Greater possibility of addressing a general, rather than a specific, audience.
d) Less opportunities for instantaneous *repairs*.
e) No immediate writer – audience interaction.
f) More opportunity/time for planning and modifying before arriving at a *final product.*
g) Definite and conventional organizations for specific genres.
h) Greater emphasis placed on the correctness of the final product.
i) More dependence and expectancy of well-formed strings of language, i.e., sentences.
j) Greater language density, that is, more frequent use of content words.

k) Medium based grammatical, syntactical, and lexical choices.
l) Reliance on punctuation marks and word order to compensate for the relative absence of paralinguistic features.

With regard to the purposes of writing, Sproat, Driscoll, and Brizee (2013) argue that, in academic and professional settings, individuals write texts for two broad reasons: to inform and to persuade. These two general purposes can comprise more specific reasons for writing. Informative writing, for instance, can encompass warnings, descriptions, notifications, instructions, announcement, and more. On the other hand, the aim of a persuasive text can be convincing, influencing, arguing, recommending, justifying, and supporting.

Furthermore, Harmer (2004) claims that in language-teaching environments written expressions take two forms: writing for learning and writing for writing. The following are descriptions the author gives to each group.

Writing for learning. As one of the target language's macro-skills, writing is a crucial element of language instruction. Within this context, writing tasks can take three forms:

a) Reinforcement writing, that is, a means of strengthening language structures and functions that have been covered during a lessons or unit.
b) Preparation writing, i.e., writing as a prelude to another task, such as noting down ideas about a topic that is later debated in group or whole-class activities.
c) Activity writing, which involves tasks that are constituting elements of larger activities that have a broader goal, namely, communicative competence development.

Writing for writing. Harmer (2004) states that objective of writing-for-writing practices is to "help students […] become better writers, and […] learn to write various genres using different registers" (p. 34). The author explains that communicative competence development in the target language is likely to take place; nevertheless, it is not the focal aim of these activities. These ideas are clearly connected to Widdowson's (1994) notion of real proficiency: personal and

purposeful language use, rather than mere submission to structures and conventions.

Three basic concepts of writing

Paragraph. Driscoll and Brizee (2015) characterize a paragraph as "a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic" (par. 1). This definition can be expanded to state that a paragraph, as the core structural constituent of a piece of writing (University of Minnesota, 2015), incorporates the following integral elements (Indiana University, 2011):

a) Introduction, which is the opening section of a paragraph and generally includes a "topic sentence and any other sentences that give background information or provide transition" (Indiana University, 2011, par. 4).
    i. Topic sentence. Driscoll and Brizee (2015) maintain that the topic sentence of a paragraph presents the main idea – or thesis – with which text deals. The authors also remark that, although it is recommended to include the topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph, this is not a restrictive rule or requirement. Moreover, some paragraphs do not feature an overtly recognizable topic sentence. Nevertheless, the quality of a paragraph is determined by reader's ease in understanding its topic.
b) Body, which comprises the sentences that follow the introduction, and provide secondary ideas – arguments – or supporting details – facts and examples – for the development of main idea of the text (Indiana University, 2011).
c) Conclusion, i.e., the final segment of a paragraph that summarizes the information that has been presented in the preceding sentences (Indiana University, 2011). In multi-paragraph texts, the conclusion can also provide a connection and transition into subsequent sections (Driscoll & Brizee, 2015).

In addition, according to Boardman and Frydenberg (2002), paragraphs can be of three types: narrative, descriptive, and expository.

a) Narrative paragraphs are texts that relate a story.
b) Descriptive paragraphs are those that portray entities in space.
c) Expository paragraphs aim at explaining a process, entity, or idea to the reader; this can be achieved through comparison and contrast, process or sequence description, analysis, and persuasion.

Cohesion. Cohesion is associated with the accord and unity among the different elements of a text (Harmer, 2004). Moxley (2015) asserts that, in a cohesive text, the relationships among the written components are clear and logical. The author remarks as well that cohesion should be sought and maintained both at the sentence and the paragraph levels. For his part, Harmer (2004) affirms that cohesion is of two types: lexical and grammatical. The author states that lexical cohesion can be achieved by the employment of repetitions and lexical set chains; the first device refers to the purposeful and recurrent appearance of specific words throughout the text. Likewise, through lexical chains, writers can interrelate words with topical connection. Complementarily, Harmer (2004) suggests that grammatical cohesion can be attained through the correct use of grammatical and syntactical features and constructions such as anaphoric pronoun and article reference, and tense agreements. Furthermore, Moxley (2015) observes that cohesion is accomplished with the use of cohesive words and phrases. These words and phrases, also known as links or discourse markers, can be of varied nature such as addition – *moreover, as well, besides;* amplification – *in fact, particularly, that is;* contrast – *conversely, despite, on the other hand;* cause-and-effect – *therefore, thus, hence*; and exemplification – *for instance, for example* (Harmer, 2004; Moxley, 2015).

Coherence. Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) argue that, in a coherent text, "sentences […] are ordered according to a principle" that is determined by the type of writing (p. 31). Driscoll and Brizee (2015) add that coherence in a text can be developed through logical and lexical bridges. The former relate to the prevalence of one single thesis or topic idea, and to the parallel construction of the sentences

in the text. Lexical bridges, on the other hand, correspond to the effective use of repetitions, pronouns, synonyms, and linking or transition words.

Harmer (2004) complements these ideas by claiming that "for a text to have coherence, it needs to have some kind of internal logic which the reader can follow with or without the use of prominent cohesive devices" (p. 24). Consequently, in a coherent text, readers are able to identify and understand the writer's purpose and line of reasoning. It is important to remark as well that coherence has an effect on the length of the text; for instance, long paragraphs should be revised to verify if more than one main idea is being addressed; if that is the case, the text should be divided into two sections. Conversely, short paragraphs should be examined to determine whether further development or fusion with other passages is required (Indiana University, 2011).

The writing process

There are numerous descriptions of the writing process developed by different authors. For the purposes of this paper, it is adequate to discuss the process explained by Harmer (2004, 2010), as it is the most inclusive and realistic. Nevertheless, pertinent observations from other sources are also presented when necessary. For Harmer (2004, 2010), the writing process comprises planning, drafting, editing, and producing a final version.

Planning. Harmer (2004) remarks that this stage involves reflection on three issues: purpose, audience, and content structure. The definition of the purpose of writing influences the type of text to be produced, the language to be employed, and the information to be included. Moreover, the audience determines the layout of the text and the choice of language, particularly, the register. For their part, decisions concerning the content structure of the text define the order and sequence in which ideas, facts, and arguments are presented.

Other authors refer to this stage as *pre-writing*. According to the writing department of the University of Minnesota (2015), this stage allows writers to endow abstract ideas and thoughts with concreteness. This source ascertains four techniques that are commonly used in the pre-writing stage: reliance on experience

and observation, exploratory reading and inquiry, freewriting, and reflective questioning. Additionally, brainstorming and idea mapping – the visual representation of ideas through graphic organizers – are also commonly employed during pre-writing as either an individual, group, or whole-class activity.

Furthermore, Leki (2000) notes that outlining is another technique to prepare for the writing task. The author argues that outlining can be seen as a transition between the planning and drafting stages, since an outline facilities the hierarchical organization of the ideas that are later matured and written down. Tardiff and Brizee (2013) explain that there are three types of outlines that are developed in preparation for a writing task:

a) Alphanumerical outlines, which organize information, usually in the form of short phrases, using roman numerals, capitalized letters, Arabic numerals, and lower case letters to systematize the data.
b) Full-sentence outlines, which differs from the alphanumerical type only in that the information that is included is presented in complete sentences.
c) Decimal outlines, in which information is organized in levels and sublevels that are labeled according to the decimal system.

Regardless the type of outline that is employed, it is important to bear in mind that outlining "is not an end in itself, [but] a tool to help" and enable the production of an organized basis for writing (Leki, 2000, p. 31).

Drafting. A draft is the "first version of a piece of writing" (Harmer, 2004, p. 5). This stage, therefore, focuses on the creation of that first version of a text. The emphasis of the writing task during drafting is placed on materializing the information that has been gathered and organized in the previous stage in an actual text. As a result, it is essential to carry out the stage on the premise that the product is not final but subjected to revisions and changes (Harmer, 2004). Nevertheless, there are specific conventions that must be observed when writing a draft; these include, among others, indentation, page format, and pagination (Leki, 2002). In addition, a draft, particularly for academic and professional writing tasks, should include at minimum, an introduction, a thesis statement – for multi-paragraph texts,

a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a conclusion (University of Minnesota, 2015).

Editing (reflecting and revising). Harmer (2004) asserts that, during this stage, writers peruse the text they have produced in order to identify both *strengths* and *weaknesses*. According to the author, the latter may refer to ambiguity, paragraph or sentence order, word choice, overall structure, cohesion, coherence, and accuracy. Complementary, Leki (2001) suggests that revising and editing should start with an analysis of the general features of the text. For her, writers should begin their revisions by re-examining the purpose and audience of the text to verify if the original writing plan has been kept. Next, the author recommends the creation of an outline of the draft to determine if the main ideas and supporting sentences are straightforwardly connected, and, above all, if they serve the general purpose/thesis of the text. Furthermore, both Harmer (2004) and Leki (2001) agree in that revising and editing are enhanced by the assistance provided by peers who thus become readers and *editors* of the text.

Producing a final version. At this stage, Harmer (2004) notes, writers generate a final product to be presented to its projected audience. Because of the changes that the text has been subjected to, this final version is likely to bear considerable differences with the first draft that was produced. This final stage, moreover, is also linked to proofreading, that is, inspecting the document in order to identify and correct orthographical – spelling and punctuation – and grammatical mistakes.

As final remarks, it is important to emphasize that, in Harmer's (2004) words, the writing process is not linear but recursive. Therefore, writers revisit one or several of the above-described stages in order to produce a more satisfactory text. Nevertheless, the author claims that, although the emphasis that writers give to particular stages depends on genre and medium, the discussed process holds true for all types and purposes of writing.

2.4.2.4. Academic writing

Chandrasegaran (2008) remarks that academic writing should be understood as "expository writing [that] includes the argumentative essay and any writing in which a thesis or point of view is sustained through acts of interpreting, arguing, and persuading, [which are] acts recognized as genre practices in academic writing" (p. 238). For his part, Iida (2011) provides a more systematic definition of academic writing and states that:

> Academic writing is a disciplinarily contextualized practice in which writers construct, develop and convey their argument (voice), employing academically expected conventions, to readers (audience) who are members of a specific discourse community in which the academic purposes, goals, knowledge, expectations, and conventions are shared (p. 68)

For Iida (2011), therefore, academic writing – and any other form of writing – is a social practice. Under this perspective, and as stated in the above definition, voice, audience, and discourse communities have significant importance for academic writing; consequently, it is necessary to briefly discuss these concepts.

Voice. As mentioned when dealing with social-expressivist pedagogy, voice is characterized by Ivanič as a threefold concept: a) a discourse that has been socially constructed, b) an actual and concrete voice of a person's reality, and c) the distinctive and personal amalgamation of the former (as cited in Iida, 2010). Based on this idea of voice, Iida (2011) defines this concept as the "writer's personal style to construct arguments with consideration of social and cultural factors by going beyond the notion of individual behavior of discovery" (p. 62). The same author advocates for the recognition of voice as an essential element in academic writing practices, which, according to him, are to be considered as one of the human endeavors that prompt the construction and reconstruction of identity.

Audience. Within the context of writing, audience is understood as the person or group of people for which the text has been produced; in other words, audience is the reader – or readers – of a piece of writing (Harmer, 2004; Dunn, 2005; Iida, 2011). Iida (2011) remarks that, since "writing is the writing is the dialogic interaction between a writer and a reader," success in communication

demands recognition and understanding of the expectations and background knowledge of the audience (p. 56).

Furthermore, Dunn (2005) claims that "[t]he act of writing is rhetoric in practice" (p. 40). Thus, when a writer produces a text, he does so in the expectation of its being read by an audience; as a consequence, he becomes a participant in a rhetorical situation. According to Bitzer, a rhetorical situation has five essential elements: text, reader, author, constraints, and exigency (as cited in Dunn, 2005). Dunn (2005) explains that the three first elements can be equated to the message, the writer, and the audience, respectively. For their part, constrains refer to the obstacles that may interfere in the writer-reader interaction, for instance, not sharing the same language or background knowledge. Finally, exigency is the implicit motivation the reader has for perusing a text, e.g., personal preference or academic/professional growth.

Discourse community. Dunn (2005) describes the concept of discourse community as "group of people who share language and communication practices" (p. 145). The author argues that discourse communities behave similarity in academic and non-academic context on the basis of shared knowledge, conventions, and even beliefs. As a result, comprehension of the expectations that these communities have is crucial for successful communication.

Hyland (2004), who is cited by Iida (2011), highlights the relevance of disciplinary discourse communities in academic writing. For Hyland (2004), communicative success in academic writer relies on the personal projections of common academic contexts; in other words, in the pursue of personal, academic, and professional objectives, writers attempt to insert their texts into specific settings, over which they ponder by means of a conventionalized discourse. Iida (2011) also stresses the importance of disciplinary discourse communities in academic writing. The author maintains that understanding the expectations and conventions of particular discourse communities allows writers to observe formal, content, and contextual norms in order to increase the possibilities of effective communication.

To finalize this section, it is proper to note that one distinctive characteristic of academic writing is its level of formality. Hamp-Lyons and Heasley (2006) summarize the differences in formality between academic and non-academic writing in the following table:

Table 2.2. Levels of formality in writing

	Academic	**Non-academic**
Reader	Scholars and academics.	*Lay* people (non-academics)
Content	Complex ideas	Conversational
Style	Complex sentences that show considerable variety in construction.	Mostly simple and compound sentences joined by conjunctions such as *and* or *but.*
Organization	Clear and well planned	Less likely to be as clear and as organized.
Grammar	No tolerance for errors.	May not always use complete sentences.
Vocabulary	Technical and academic language used accurately.	Frequent use of short forms, idioms, and slang.

Source: Hamp-Lyons & Heasley (2006)

Hamp-Lyons and Heasley (2006) also remark that academic writing is distinguished by the following key textual attributes:

a) Use of full forms.
b) Conventionalized *formal* connectors – *moreover*, *furthermore*, etc.
c) Use of nominal groups.
d) More frequent employment of the passive voice.
e) Concise and technical vocabulary (jargon).
f) Objective and impersonal *point of view*.

Academic writing genres

Dunn (2005) asserts that the mental work of academics fall into specific frameworks from which particular genres derive. The author argues that academic writing encompass four broad genres: summary, analysis, evaluation, and argument. Dunn (2005) suggests as well that these genres are cross-disciplinary, albeit with special preferences within definite fields. Moreover, each genre can be materialized into particular subgenres; for instance, arguments can be presented in the form of a proposal, a rebuttal, or an essay.

Summary. Dunn (2005) characterizes summaries as "brief description[s] of the main points of an information source" (p. 80). The author emphasizes that effective summarizing heavily depends on clarity and efficiency. Additionally, Dunn (2005) claims that, in order to create a good summary, writers should rely on the annotations, careful planning and organization, enumerations, and adequate quotation.

Analysis. According to Dunn (2005), it is important to clearly discriminate between summaries and analyses, since confusion may prompt writers to respond to an analytical writing task by simply condensing main ideas in a text. The author clarifies the difference between the two genres by asserting that analyses include summarized information, but they also encompass an examination of formal and content elements of a piece of writing. For Dunn (2005), analysis, critical thinking, and interpretation are directly connected; in an analysis, the writer critically explores and examines, causality, motivation, sequences, etc., in order to present an individual "understanding of a source as one valid interpretation" (Dunn, 2005, p. 82).

Evaluation or critique. This academic writing genre "involves analyzing information with the [specific] purpose of judging its relevance, significance, or value" (Dunn, 2005, p. 83). Moreover, Dunn (2005) claims that effective evaluative academic writing is concise and straightforward, yet it keeps a sensible, non-violent tone.

Argument. Hamp-Lyons and Heasley (2006) observe that "knowledge is created by original research, and original research requires original thinking" (p.

104). For these authors, individuals display original thinking through critical reasoning and arguing. In agreement with these ideas, Dunn (2005) remarks that academic argument is a written "presentation of a specific point of view or opinion on a subject that is debatable" (p. 84). The same source indicates that persuasion and argumentation, though related, are not necessarily the same; arguments become persuasive when they successfully convince the readers and prompt them to act accordingly.

Furthermore, Hamp-Lyons and Heasley (2006) declare that the spread and acceptance of innovative ideas largely depend on effective argumentation. In this endeavor, language plays a crucial role. The authors list examples of verbs, adverbs, and formulaic phrases that are often employed when presenting and developing an argument:

Table 2.3. Argumentative verbs, adverbs, and formulaic expressions

Argumentative verbs
Pro: *believe, think, prove, advocate.*
Con: *doubt, question, challenge.*
Emotionally-charged *boosters*
particularly, definitely, certainly.
Personalization (when arguing one's position)
1st person nominative pronouns + argumentative verbs.
Formulaic phrases
Beyond a doubt, undeniably, a serious flaw.
De-personalizations (when criticizing others)
The findings may be challenged because...

Source: Hamp-Lyons & Heasley (2006)

It is important to state that the language to be employed in an academic argument largely depends on *sub-genre* features and the conventions of the discourse community for which the text is produced (Dunn, 2005; Iida, 2011). Thus,

while the use of first person may be acceptable for some readers, it is adamantly avoided in other contexts.

With regard to the concrete actions that ought to be taken in order to produce an acceptable academic argument, Dunn (2005) describes the following process:

a) Identification of problems and imprecise questions.
b) Research on existing claims and arguments.
c) Personal and rhetorical reflection.
d) Development of argument / claim.

The academic essay

The etymology of the word *essay* sheds interesting insights about its definition. The word entered the English language through French during the Middle English period in the 14th and 15th centuries; the French root, furthermore, derives from the Latin verb *exigere*, which, according to Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013b), means "to examine, test, or (literally) to drive out" (par. 5). From this information, it can be inferred, as the same source suggests, that an academic essay, at its core, is a text through which a writer examines, tests, and ascertains his thoughts about a specific topic.

Mason (2013) provides another definition of essay. For this author, an essay is "a relatively short piece of writing, comprising a number of paragraphs, that […] presents some […] cohesive communication such as an argument, explanation, description or commentary" (p. 79). It should be remembered that an essay is also a form of non-fiction creative writing. Nevertheless, Mason's (2013) definition, as it is presented, distinctly refers to the academic essay, which is the topic of this section. Besides, Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013b) remark that academic essays are inherently "concise and require clarity in purpose and direction" (par. 7). Hence, these texts do not furnish opportunities for the writer's ideas to *wander off;* at the same time, academic essays, Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013b) explain, ought to be interesting and purposeful.

The importance of academic essays is evinced in the fact they constitute the most common academic writing task in higher education (Dunn, 2005). In ESL and

EFL environments, moreover, the significance of academic essays is revealed through their relevant role in international standardized tests such as the IELTS and the TOEFL. Because of this importance, the subsequent sections provide further discussion concerning the academic essay – its structure and typology.

Parts of an essay

Independently of their type – which are discussed in the next section – academic essays are comprised of three sections: introduction, body, and conclusion.

Introduction. According to Boardman and Frydenberg (2002), the introductory paragraph is the first one in an essay, and it serves two purposes: attaining the reader's attention and introducing the subject or topic of the essay. As a consequence, an introductory paragraph ought to perform four functions (Brizee, 2013b; University of Minnesota, 2015):

a) Establish a context by presenting general information concerning the topic of the essay.
b) Justify the topic, that is, explain its importance.
c) Introduce writer's voice, tone, and attitude towards the topic.
d) State the thesis or claim to be expounded in the text.

The introductory paragraph, therefore, incorporates the thesis statement of the essay. Wells (2013b) describes a thesis statement as "a sentence that summarizes the main point of [an] essay and previews [its] supporting points" (par. 1). Wells (2013b) argues as well that a thesis statement can be developed in two sentences, depending on the preference and needs of the writer. Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) and Dunn (2005) add that a thesis statement is usually located at the end of the introductory paragraph, but this position is not a restrictive requirement. The authors, moreover, remark that a thesis statement is composed of two parts: a topic and a controlling idea. Depending on the nature of the text, the topic is the theme, subject matter or claim of the essay; on the other hand, the controlling idea identifies the specific aspect of the subject or the position concerning the claim that the rest of the essay addresses. Besides, Boardman and

Frydenberg (2002) maintain that, in addition to presenting and delimiting the topic or claim of the essay, the thesis statement also reveals, in a direct or an indirect manner, the number and content of the text's body paragraphs; this element is referred to as a predictor.

To illustrate the structure of thesis statements, the examples below feature an underlined topic, a cursive controlling idea, and a highlighted – in bold – predictor. It shall be remarked, as it becomes apparent in the examples, that the order of these elements varies according to the topic and style of writing.

- Wars in the twentieth century were fought for three *main reasons*: **ethnic, economic, and religious** (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002).
- It is hoped that after having considered **the U.S. statistics, the example of other countries, and the explanations regarding concerns about religion and brain death**, the readers will consider accepting presumed organ donation consent as *a valid and humanitarian policy*.

Body. An essay's body is a groups of paragraphs that "present the evidence [that has been gathered] to confirm [or explicate the essay's] thesis" (University of Minnesota, 2015, p. 350). The number and content of body paragraphs depends on the thesis statement, which in turn is determined by the nature and type of essay. Nevertheless, Furthermore, Brizee (2013a) states that the support or explanation for the thesis statement can be provided in the body paragraphs through induction or deduction. The former is "the type of reasoning that moves from specific facts to a general conclusion" (Brizee, 2013a, par. 4). Conversely, when deduction is employed, the writer starts from a general premise – or premises – and arrives at a conclusion. Thus, according to Brizee (2013a), deductive thinking – also known as syllogistic reasoning – follows a three-fold pattern:

a) Major premise.
b) Minor premise.
c) Deduction (conclusion or inference).

Another explanation of the structure of body paragraphs is that of primary support sentences, complemented by supporting detail sentences. Primary support

relates to the main arguments that are chosen to develop the thesis statement of the essay. Complementarily, supporting details provide clarification and demonstration of these arguments (University of Minnesota, 2015).

Concerning the topic and concluding sentences of body paragraphs, Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) explain that, when a thesis statement features a predictor that unambiguously introduces the main ideas of an essay's body paragraphs, these paragraphs do not necessarily have to start with a topic sentence and end with a concluding one. Therefore, depending on how the writer decides to interweave the body paragraphs of his essay, either their first or last sentences can serve as a transition or *bridge* between adjacent paragraphs.

Conclusion. As the last paragraph of an essay, a concluding paragraph has three functions: restate – through paraphrasing – the text's thesis statement, summarize the main points of the body paragraphs, and present a last remark about the topic of the essay (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002). This last function may, if the writer chooses to do so, be achieved through a *strong closing statement* that intends to prompt continual consideration about the information of the essay. Additionally, a concluding paragraph, especially in an argumentative essay, may also feature a challenge to take action (University of Minnesota, 2011). Nevertheless, Wells (2013a) and Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) emphasize the fact that a concluding paragraph should not offer new information about the topic of the essay.

Types of essay

Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013b) claim that essays are of four types: expository, descriptive, narrative, and argumentative. The subsequent paragraphs provide a brief description of each one of these essays. The discussion is structured around the information found in various articles written by the above-mentioned authors, who belong to the Writing Department of Purdue University. Moreover, as the argumentative essay has special importance for this research project, this variety of essay is treated more thoroughly.

The expository essay. Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013c) argue that an expository essay is developed around research about a specific topic or idea. The writer then assesses the information that has been gathered, and uses it to systematically explain his original idea or topic. This explanation leads to the establishment and presentation of a condensed and well-defined argument. Hence, expository essays compare and contrast, define, exemplify, or analyze causality. Furthermore, Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013c) suggest that a proper expository essay relies on a concise and distinct thesis statement, consistent and logical transitions, adequate evidential support – body paragraphs, and effective restatement of both the thesis statement and its major points.

The descriptive essay. According to Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013d), a descriptive essay is "a written account of a particular experience" (par. 1). In other words, a descriptive essay is a *portrayal* of an entity, be it a person, an object, an event, a process, or even an attitude. Because of this nature, consequently, the successful composition of a descriptive essay depends on an appropriate organization and an effective use of language, that is, reliance on concise, accurate, and sense-appealing vocabulary.

The narrative essay. This type of essay is understood as the relation, i.e., the account of an event or story. Given that, in Baker, Brizee, and Angeli's (2013e) words, narrative essays are "are often anecdotal, experiential, and personal—allowing [writers] to express themselves in a creative and, quite often, moving ways" (par. 1), this type of essay is also set within the non-fiction creative writing genre, which was already explained above. However, academic writing task, such as book reports, can take the form of narrative essays. These compositions are differentiated from the creative writing ones because of the former's employment of academic vocabulary and structures to meet the expectations of an academic discourse community. Moreover, academic narrative essays always serve a higher purpose than the mere account of an event or story. Thus, analytical reasoning, critical thinking, and even argumentation are embedded in these academic texts.

The argumentative essay. Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013a) define an argumentative essay as "[academic] writing that requires the [writer] to investigate

a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner" (par. 1). The authors remark that the composition of an argumentative essay demands substantial second-hand – bibliographical – research; an argumentative essay, moreover, might also entail primary data collection – empirical research; nevertheless, this level of research is much less common when writing an argumentative essay. Be it as it may, Baker, Brizee, and Angeli (2013a) emphasize that research is crucial for composing an argumentative essay; the reason is that, through research, the writer gains deep understanding of the topic at hand and of the various outlooks concerning it; hence, research enables the writer to take a position and properly support it.

For her part, Dunn (2005) claims that "[a]rguments in academic writing state a specific claim and place it in dialogue with or in opposition to other claims within an ongoing conversation regarding an issue" (p. 132). This characterization also reveals the importance of research for argumentative essays, as it is not possible to establish a dialogical interaction involving the agreeing and/or opposing points of view about a topic if these positions are not identified and understood. Furthermore, as mentioned above, Dunn (2005) differentiates between argumentation and persuasion by maintaining that the latter is a type of argument that attempts to convince an audience to act upon a particular issue. According this author, therefore, persuasion does not occur until individuals actually take action.

Another relevant characteristic of an argumentative essay is that it cannot be developed on the basis of a factual or non-debatable thesis statement. Regarding this claim, Dunn (2005) stresses that building an argument concerning an incontestable topic only results in temporal and intellectual squandering. For this reason, the author maintains that effective argumentation springs from skilled identification and analysis of problems; hence, problem-solving – which is argued for – largely depends on problem-posing. Under the premise that, through his text, the writer participates in a rhetorical situation, Dunn (2005) suggests that consideration of the levels of the Stasis Theory is likely to provide useful assistance in determining the argument to be addressed in an essay. The four levels of the

Stasis Theory and the reflective questions about each one that Dunn (2005) proposes are included in the following table:

Table 2.4. Stasis Theory: Levels and reflective questions

Stasis of Fact
Did something happen? What was it? What was necessary for it to happen? Can it be proven?
Stasis of Definition
How does one define/describe what happened? What is it like? Can it be categorized?
Stasis of Quality
How can one evaluate what happened? Was it good/bad, right/wrong?
Stasis of Policy
Is this the right way or place to argue this issue? Why or why not?

Source: Dunn (2005)

Once the writer has decided on an argument, he is to research and analyze evidence both in favor and against this argument. As discussed above, this information can be obtained from first and second-hand research. In relation to the evidence that is gathered from published sources, Weida and Stolley (2013a) observe that the credibility of a source is determined by the credentials of the author, his purpose in writing the document, the date of publication, and the audience's values and preferences regarding bibliographical material.

Furthermore, rhetorical appeals or strategies are commonly used in argumentative essays. These appeals, which have been used since the Classical Tradition (Dunn, 2005), are of three types: logos, ethos, and pathos.

a) Logos. These are appeals to logic and reason, and are commonly introduces through induction – beginning from specific instances and arriving at generalizations – and deduction – departing from a general claim and presenting specific support for it (Dunn, 2005; Weida & Stolley, 2013b). Dunn (2005) asserts that "[l]ogical appeals depend upon the ability of the

[writer] to create reasonable claims and the ability of the audience to respond to [those] claims" (p. 49).

b) Ethos. Johnson explains that ethos, the ethical appeal, is "mode of persuasion that relies on the speaker creating a credible character for rhetorical occasions" (as cited in Dunn, 2005, p. 46). According to Weida and Stolley (2013b), the writers credibility is established and strengthened through the use of trustworthy sources, the discussion of opposing claims, the recognition of communities between the opposing sides of the argument, and even the careful subjection to formal, grammatical, and orthographical conventions.

c) Pathos. This rhetorical strategy appeals to the values, beliefs, and emotions of the audience (Dunn, 2005). Weida and Stolley (2013b) note that writers are likely to employ "sources such as interviews and individual stories to paint a more legitimate and moving picture of reality or illuminate the truth" (par. 48). However, it is imperative to state that the effectiveness of pathos depends on its careful and balanced use. In other words, emotional appeals should be employed sporadically and only when truly necessary (Dunn, 2005; Weida & Stolley, 2013b).

Concerning the structural organization of argumentative essays, these academic texts follow the standard structure of essays: introduction, body, and conclusion. Nevertheless, the number of body paragraphs is prone to be greater than in other forms of academic writing; the reason is that "[c]omplex issues and detailed research call for complex and detailed essays" (Baker, Brizee, & Angeli, 2013a, par.18). Moreover, arguments can be arranged in accordance to two methods: the Rogerian and the Toulmin.

Dunn (2005) explicates that, in the focus of the Rogerian Method is on reaching a consensus, rather than on determining a winning party. Hence, the Rogerian development of an argument considers the claims of all those who take part of the issue, considering their interest, needs, and potential gains and losses. As a result, an argumentative essay arranged according to the Rogerian Method

places special emphasis on the identification and establishment of common grounds through negotiation.

On the other hand, the Toulmin method takes into account the following components of an argument: its main claim or thesis, its warrants, its rationale and evidence, and the possible refutations (Dunn, 2005). According to Weida and Stolley (2017), the Toulmin method arranges an argument as shown below:

a) Main claim / Thesis
b) Support evidence and data for the claim.
c) Clarification of the manner in which the evidence corroborates and supports the claim – Warrant.
d) Supplementary support rationalizing for the claim – Backing.
e) An opposing claim that refutes the thesis – Counterclaim.
f) Evidence that, in turn, refutes the counterclaim – Rebuttal.

Difficulties of academic writing in ESL/EFL contexts

Being able to compose adequate academic texts has become a desirable aptitude in language learning environments; this assertion is particularly true for higher education and teacher-training programs. Hence, a variety of modules and courses have been developed for this specific purpose. In addition, English academic writing skills have acquired relevance because of this language's position as the world's lingua franca (Widdowson, 1994; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015) and the crucial role of the written word in the production and spread of knowledge (Harmer, 2004; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). Furthermore, the significance of academic writing is also linked to the contemporary attention that research has gained in non-English speaking developing countries, as academic writing and research are intrinsically integrated. In fact, English academic literacy has become an almost ubiquitous requirement in postgraduate programs (Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015).

Notwithstanding, the development of both general and academic writing skills is a problematic issue in ESL and EFL environments. Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) claim that the empirical research on the subject has revealed that language learners in different settings face similar difficulties with regard to academic

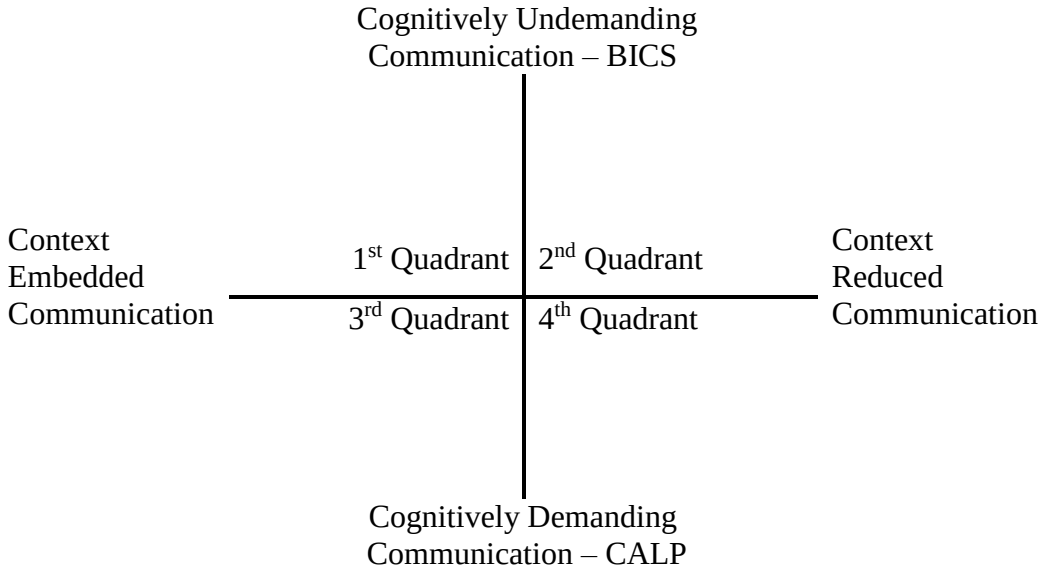
writing. Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016), for their part, argue that a major obstacle in the development of writing in language students is the fact that this skill is often deemed as secondary, after speaking; as a result, "the culture of reading and writing does not flourish at academic and social levels, and these skills remain ignored" (p. 86).

Moreover, and dealing specifically with academic writing, Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) remark that language learners have serious difficulties identifying and obtaining valid information from credible sources; besides, if this information is acquired, students face severe challenges when analyzing, paraphrasing, summarizing, and incorporating these data in a text that observes academic expectations. Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) complement these ideas by maintaining that, in addition to linguistic and structural deficits, language learners are not commonly "well-versed with academic writing conventions in genre-specific disciplines" (p. 175).

Both sources connect these deficiencies in academic writing to a delayed academic writing instruction. In this regard, Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) reason that general English courses cannot attend to the specific needs of academic writing development. Furthermore, as Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) highlight, this late instruction is aggravated by the use of obsolete course books and a traditional, exam-oriented teaching-learning process. One ought to remember Iida's (2011) reflection regarding the fact that structure-based language instruction does not prepare language learners for real-life language use.

Finally, it is adequate to observe that obstacles in academic writing development also originate in the inherent complex nature of the skill. Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016) suggest that writing "is based on appropriate and strategic use of language with structural accuracy and communicative potential, [thus becoming] a cognitive process that tests memory, thinking ability and verbal command" (p. 82). Another approach to evincing the intrinsic complexity of academic writing is through Cummins's BICS/CALP theory. Baker (2001) states that a further development of Cummins's model understands TL communicative performance in two dimensions, which are illustrated in the diagram shown below:

Figure 2.6. Dimensions of Cummins's Theory



Sources: Baker (2001) and Bilash (2011)

As it can be noticed, the first dimension – horizontal axis – is related to the provision of context to support communication (Baker, 2001). Bilash (2011) explains that the left extreme of this dimension is associated with a communicative circumstance in which external support such as body language, realia, and visual material is available to facilitate understanding. Conversely, on the other extreme, "the learner must rely [solely] on linguistic cues and knowledge about language and text" to communicate (par. 3).

The second dimension – vertical axis – refers to the cognitive exigencies of a communicative action. As Baker (2001) suggests, while cognitively undemanding communication occurs when individuals master the necessary language skills to interact with ease, cognitively demanding tasks require quick and accurate information processing. As shown in the diagram, BICS are connected to the first scenario, whereas CALP is linked to higher cognitive demands.

Bilash (2011) presents clarifying examples of the ideas discussed above. The author maintains that basic interpersonal communication – BICS – moves from the first to the second quadrant of the diagram. For instance, a face-to-face conversation is both context embedded and cognitively undemanding, and a telephone conversation, while still cognitively unchallenging, has less contextual

support. For their part, cognitive academic language tasks range from the third to the fourth quadrant. Thus, an academic reading or even a presentation supported by visual material is cognitively demanding, yet contextualized. On the other hand, writing an academic essay fits into the fourth quadrant; i.e., it is a communicative endeavor that requires high-order thinking skills, while being deprived of contextual assistance. Hence, the aforementioned intrinsic complexity and difficulty of TL academic writing is theoretically elucidated.

To finalize this section, it is imperative to state that Cummins's theory has instructional repercussions that directly influence the development of academic writing skills in EFL and ESL learners. Baker (2001) groups these implications in three areas and describes them as follows:

a) Cognitive. The teaching learning process ought to encompass higher-order thinking skills; that is, it should involve learners in activities that require them to analyze, evaluate, and create.
b) Academic. Second or foreign language curricula should integrate academic content of various fields and subjects.
c) Language. The teaching and learning of a second/foreign language ought to pursue the development of critical language awareness by addressing both linguistic and socio-cultural issues.

2.5. Hypothesis

Null hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H0). Writing haiku poems in English does not promote the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

Alternative hypothesis (H1). Writing haiku poems in English promotes the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

2.6. Research variables

Independent variable: Haiku composition

Dependent variable: Academic writing skills of a group of sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

This research study has followed a Hypothetical-Deductive Approach to research. Bernal (2010) describes this approach as one that departs from an asseveration stated in the form of a hypothesis and seeks to prove or disprove it. Additionally, the approach allows the inference of conclusions that are confronted with facts.

The hypothesis of this research proposes that haiku composition has a positive effect on the development of academic writing skills in a specific group of sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca. This hypothesis has been confronted with the results of the analysis of the data collected in the study.

3.2. Basic method of research

This study is set within Mixed-Methods research; that is, both quantitative and qualitative research techniques and procedures have been employed to collect and analyze data. Gheitasi and Lindgren (2015) relate Mixed-Methods studies to a pragmatic research paradigm in which decisions regarding design are made because of suitability for the purposes and objectives of the study, rather than in obedience to philosophical commitments. The authors claim as well that the underlying principle of Mixed-Methods research is that "by combining quantitative and qualitative methods, researchers can make the most of the strengths of each approach and compensate for their weaknesses" in order to better understand and address a research problem (p. 23).

Bernal (2010) argues that quantitative social research is developed on the basis of the measurement of particular features of social phenomena. Complementarily, Mackay (2010) asserts that quantitative research begins with a definite hypothesis which the study tests. In contrast, the qualitative method

attempts the holistic understanding of the research phenomenon (Zacharias, 2012). Consequently, qualitative research pursues description not generalization (Bernal, 2010; Mackay & Grass, 2005).

The research study described in his report is based on both quantitative and qualitative research, as reflected by the employment of a rubric to examine both the pre and post-tests, complemented by the administration of a self-reflection survey constituted by open-ended questions. Therefore, probabilistic generalization has not been attempted. Conversely, it has been expected that the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques has enabled a better understanding of the impact of haiku composition on the academic writing skills of a specific group of TEFL majors.

3.3. Level and type of research

3.3.1. Primary research

According to Zacharias (2012), primary research encompasses studies that are developed on the basis of original data, that is, information that researchers gather themselves. The level of research of this study, therefore, has been primary; in other words, the research project has been carried out by means of original, real-world data (Zacharias, 2012) personally collected by the researcher through quantitative and qualitative instruments. Specifically, the study has employed pre and post-intervention essay-based tests and a post-treatment open-ended-question survey to obtain data directly from the participants of the study.

3.3.2. Descriptive research

Salkind argues that descriptive research relates to the account, portrayal, or explanation of the features and characteristics of the situation or phenomenon which is the object of study of a given research project (as cited in Bernal, 2010). Williams (2007) and Dulock (1993), for their part, argue that descriptive research comprises the examination of the associations between two phenomena or variables. Bernal (2018) adds that descriptive research departs from research questions formulated

by the researcher, which develop into hypotheses that are descriptively confirmed. Consequently, descriptive research mainly employs observations, interviews, and surveys as data gathering techniques. In agreement with these assertions, this research study has sought to examine and explain the relationship between haiku composition and the development of academic writing skills. This aim has been attained through the analysis and comparative description of pre and post-intervention test results, as well as of the responses participants provided to a survey administered at the end of the treatment.

3.3.3. Correlational research

For Bernal (2010), correlational research pursues revealing and examining the connection or relationship between two variables or results of variables. The author emphasizes the fact that this type of research does not pursue to establish causal links; in other words, correlational research focuses on determining "whether two or more variables are related," and it is usually associated with statistical analysis (Williams, 2007, p. 67). In line with the characteristics of correlational research, this study has attempted to ascertain and examine the connection between haiku composition and academic writing skill development, specifically, if the former promotes the latter.

3.3.4. Case study research

This project falls into the category of case study research. Bernal (2010) reports that this type of research aims at the in-depth study of a unit of analysis that is drawn from the research universe. Mackay (2010), for her part, declares that the unit of analysis of a case study can comprise a single individual, a group of participants, an entire class, or a whole institution. The author also attests that case study research is used to "explain causal links in real-life situations" (p. 72).

According to Bernal (2010), case studies depart from the establishment of a relevant research topic that is thoroughly examined in the unit of analysis. This is done by means of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Besides, case studies make use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Nonetheless,

generalization is admittedly not sought for by case study researchers. Moreover, the principal sources of data in this type of research are the individuals directly related or belonging to the unit of analysis and the documents of diverse nature that they produce. In accordance with the features of case study research, this study has attempted to examine the influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills in a specific group – case – of sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

3.4. Population and sample

The English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca provides higher-education academic formation in TEFL to 252 students. Of this general universe, the study described in this report has analyzed the effects of haiku composition on the development of the academic writing skills of one sixth-semester Conversation and Composition class of the program. This class, therefore, has been the population of the study.

The mentioned sixth-semester Conversation and Composition class – the unit of analysis of this research study – is composed of 30 Ecuadorian students: 8 males and 22 females. All of them are Spanish native speakers for whom English is a foreign language. The age of the participants ranges between 20 and 40 years.

Table 3.1. Research Population

General Universe: 252 TEFL majors	
Unit of analysis (research population): Sixth-Semester Students – Conversation and Composition class.	
Number of participants	30
Percentage (whole major)	11.904%
Percentage (unit of analysis)	100%

Source: Registers of Universidad de Cuenca.
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The selection of one unit of analysis has obeyed to the research background of the topic of this study, to the features of case study research, and to the practicalities of convenience sampling (Bernal, 2010). Etikan, Abubakar, and Sunusi (2016) refer to convenience sampling as a form of non-probability sampling whereby participants are chosen because of their meeting "certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate [….]. It is also referred to [as the selection of] subjects of the population that are easily accessible to the researcher" (p. 2). The researcher of this study belongs to the faculty staff of Universidad de Cuenca. As a result, access to a unit of analysis in this institution has been facilitated. It is imperative to emphasize the fact that this study has not sought generalization, but rather understanding and description of the influence of haiku writing on the academic writing skills of a specific group of TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

The rationale for choosing sixth-semester students is that, at this stage of their academic instruction, learners are expected to have attained proficiency skills corresponding to the B1 CEFR level. This proficiency has been determined by the assessment instruments developed by the English Language and Literature Major, which the participants have had to take and approve in the first five semesters of the program.

According to the Council of Europe (2001) B1 language students are able to "write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, [as well as] accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text" (p. 62). Consequently, there has been alignment between the B1 CEFR level and the nature of this research study. In other words, because of their proficiency level, the participants of the research have been able to cope with haiku writing. In addition, the nature of the Conversation and Composition course directly agrees with that of this research project, as it specifically deals with academic writing in English.

Lastly, to prevent potential ethical issues, the participants of the study have been requested to sign an Informed Consent Form. Mackay and Grass (2005) remark that, by signing this document, research subjects acknowledge their

voluntary participation in a study about which sufficient information has been provided. This entails that the subjects understand the nature and purposes of the research project, as well as their role in it. A sample of the Informed Consent Form used in this study is found in Appendix 1.

3.5. Operationalization of variables

Independent variable: Haiku composition

Table 3.2. Independent variable operationalization

Conceptualization	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Techniques / Instruments
Haiku is defined as a formal **syllabic** poem that conveys complex **meaning** while observing three **formal features:** a three-line 5-7-5 pattern; kigo, a reference to the seasons; and kireji, a cutting word or punctuation mark at	Syllable structure. Meaning. Formal features of haiku.	• Onset. • Nucleus. • Coda. • Denotation. • Connotation. • Figurative language. • Three lines with a 5-7-5-	1.1. Rubric criteria: • Content. • Communicative achievement. • Organization. • Language. 1.2. Rubric 0 – 5 scale and descriptors (Appendix 3). 2.1. Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English? Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer	1. Pre and Post testing. 1.1. Validated rubric for assessing B1 writing. 2. Survey. 2.1. Open-ended questionnaire.

the end of the second line. Moreover, although haiku themes are linked to nature, the poem should be understood as the writer's response to specific circumstances, rather than just a portrayal of the environment.		syllabic pattern. • Kigo - seasonal reference. • Kireji - cutting word/punctuation mark.	honestly)? If so, what did this task contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English? 2.2. What were your strengths as a writer of haiku? 2.3. What was difficult about writing haiku? 2.4. Take a few moments to read through both of your essays. Do you think there are any differences between the first and second essay? If so, what are they? 2.5. Would you recommend this learning strategy to other EFL students? If so, why?	

Source: Direct research
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Dependent variable: Academic writing skills of a group of sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

Table 3.3. Dependent variable operationalization

Conceptualization	**Dimensions**	**Indicators**	**Items**	**Techniques / Instruments**
Academic writing is a type of writing in which the author purposely makes use of specific **genre and style features** to present information and/or introduce and support a **thesis** or point of view. Consequently, academic writing presupposes the correct and effective	Genre and style features. Thesis statement.	• Cohesion. • Coherence. • Syntax. • Word choice. • Orthography. • Topic. • Controlling idea. • Predictor.	1.1. Rubric criteria: • Content. • Communicative achievement. • Organization. • Language. 1.2. Rubric 0 – 5 scale and descriptors (Appendix 3). 2.1. Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English? Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer honestly)? If so, what did this task	1. Pre and Post testing. 1.1. Validated rubric for assessing B1 writing. 2. Survey. 2.1. Open-ended questionnaire.

use of syntax**,** word choice, and orthography. One of the most common forms of academic writing is the **academic essay,** which is a relatively short multi-paragraph text that conveys a cohesive message.	Academic essay.	• Introduction. • Body. • Conclusion.	contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English? 2.2. What were your strengths as a writer of haiku? 2.3. What was difficult about writing haiku? 2.4. Take a few moments to read through both of your essays. Do you think there are any differences between the first and second essay? If so, what are they? 2.5. Would you recommend this learning strategy to other EFL students? If so, why?	

Source: Direct research
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

This has been a case study developed in a six-week period during the September 2017 – March 2018 semester at Universidad de Cuenca. The length of the treatment adheres to the experience of previous studies specifically dealing with the influence of haiku writing on EFL instruction (Iida, 2011, 2012, 2016). Besides, because of administrative and academic restrictions, obtaining permission for the application of a longer treatment has not been possible.

To identify the pre-treatment academic writing skills of the participants, a pre-test was applied. This pre-test required participants to write a short argumentative essay on a specific topic (Iida, 2011). Participants were divided in two groups, and each group was provided with a different essay writing prompt. Following the identification of pre-treatment academic writing skills, the participants were introduced to the structure and composition process of haiku. Afterwards, weekly creative writing lessons were held for a six weeks. Each weekly lesson encompassed two one-hour sessions devoted to in-class activities and one hour of autonomous composition. The treatment was based on an adaption of Iida's (2010) protocol for the inclusion of haiku in the EFL classroom. The intervention's scheme of work is thoroughly systematized in Chapter VI, also referred to as the Proposal.

After the treatment, participants were required to write another argumentative essay as a post-test. Following Iida's (2011) research design, participants were divided in the same groups as in the pre-test, and they were provided with the writing prompt that was originally given to the other group. This was done in order to minimize the probability that the differences between the pre and post-tests could be affected by topical commonality.

Complementarily, an open-ended-question survey was administered at the end of the treatment with the aim of gaining a self-reported perspective from the participants regarding haiku composition and its influence on the development of their academic writing skills.

3.6. Data collection

This research study employed primary-source of data collection inside the classroom, i.e., two English written texts produced by the participants before and after the intervention (Iida, 2011). These texts were two short argumentative essays. In order to achieve the collection of data through these argumentative essays, two distinct writing prompts, A and B (instruments), were given to two different groups of participants. As mentioned above, the participants who had received the writing prompt A in the pre-test were provided with the writing prompt B for the post-test, and vice versa. These writing prompts were adapted from the ones employed by Iida (2011), and they required the participants to express and support their point of view regarding a specific topic. The allotted time was 60 minutes; nevertheless, a required word count was deliberately not informed. A sample of the writing prompts can be found in Appendix 2.

Additionally, a survey (Bloemert et al., 2017; Pushpa & Savaedi, 2014) constituted by open-ended self-reflection questions was applied after the treatment. The five questions of the survey were drawn from Iida's (2011) post-treatment reflection form and interview questions. These questions aimed at obtaining data regarding the participants own perspectives and impressions towards the treatment and its effect on their academic writing skills. The survey was administer to the totality of the participants, using Google Forms. The template of the survey is included in Appendix 4.

Table 3.4. Data collection

Why?	In order to achieve the objectives of the research study, namely, to identify and analyze the influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills.
From whom?	The project has been developed with a group of 30 sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

About what aspects?	Haiku composition and its influence on the development of academic writing skills.
Who?	Juan José Santillán Iñiguez, the researcher.
When?	The intervention started in the first week of November, 2017, and it ended in the third week of December, 2017
Where?	Data collection was developed at Universidad de Cuenca, specifically, at the English Language and Literature Major of its Philosophy, Letters, and Education Sciences Faculty.
How many times?	Data collection took place before and after the intervention.
In what situation?	As part of a research study that was pertinently integrated into the regular schedule of the Conversation and Composition course of the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca.
What data gathering techniques?	Pre and post testing Surveying
What data collection instruments?	Pre and post-intervention essays written by the students, as a response to two different argumentative essay writing prompts. Validated rubric for assessing B1 writing. Written open-ended-question survey.

Source: Study's intervention
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

3.7. Data analysis

The pre and post-treatment data gathered through the argumentative essays were analyzed on the basis of a validated rubric specifically developed for B1 language learners by the University of Cambridge (Lim, 2012). This rubric assesses four criteria on a 0-5 scale. These criteria are content, communicative achievement, organization, and language. A sample of the rubric can be found in Appendix 3.

It is important to mention that, in order to avoid bias and ensure result reliability, both the pre and post-test essays were graded by two TEFL professors from Universidad de Cuenca, who did not participate in any other stage of the study. Additionally, the results were analyzed by a professional statistician. This analysis comprised the overall grade that was assigned to each essay, as well as the performance in each individual rubric criterion. In addition, the statistical analysis also considered the mistakes – spelling, grammar, and punctuation – that participants made in the essays they wrote before and after the intervention. More information regarding the data analysis procedure is provided in section 4.2.1.

Complementarily, the analysis of the post-treatment survey departed from a preliminary examination of the participants' responses. The categories of analysis were inductively determined after the texts underwent this initial scrutiny (Vromen, 2010). Moreover, these categories sprang from the survey questions themselves. This process was developed using the specialized software ATLAS.ti 7.5.18.

CHAPTER IV
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Analysis and discussion of the post-intervention survey

This section discusses the data obtained from the post-intervention survey. Google Forms – the on-line software employed to administer the survey – provided the researcher with responses already transcribed. Nevertheless, it was necessary to organize these data in a Word Document compatible with ATLAS.ti 7.5.18. This format swap allowed the researcher to undertake a preliminary examination of the responses.

The analysis of the data was carried out, as mentioned above, using the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti 7.5.18. The process encompassed the creation of specific quotes and the codification of these quotes. The categories of analysis, therefore, originated from this codification procedure.

The discussion of the results in this section is developed in a question-to-question basis that features perceptual analysis and the inclusion of pertinent quotes for the most relevant categories. To ensure confidentially and anonymity, the quotes are referenced with fictitious names. Finally, discussion ensues the presentation of the results of each question. It is imperative to clarify that, since in many cases students provided more than one answer or perspective for each question, the percentages of the responses, which were calculated in terms of the total number of participants (Iida, 2011), might not always add up to 100%.

Question One

Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English? Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer honestly)? If so, what did this task contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English?

This first survey item actually comprises three questions: a) Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English? b) Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer honestly)? c) If so, what did this task contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English? It is necessary, therefore, to discuss the responses to each one of these questions.

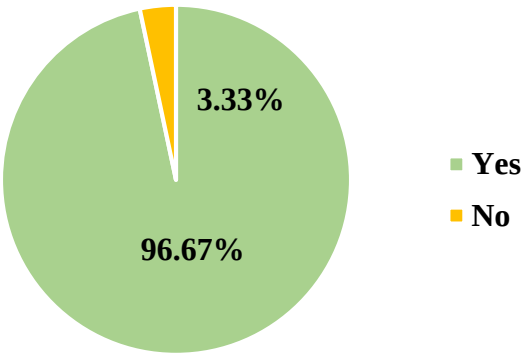
a) Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English?

Table 4.1. Did participants enjoy haiku composition?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	29	96.67 %
No	1	3.33 %

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.1. Did participants enjoy haiku composition?



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

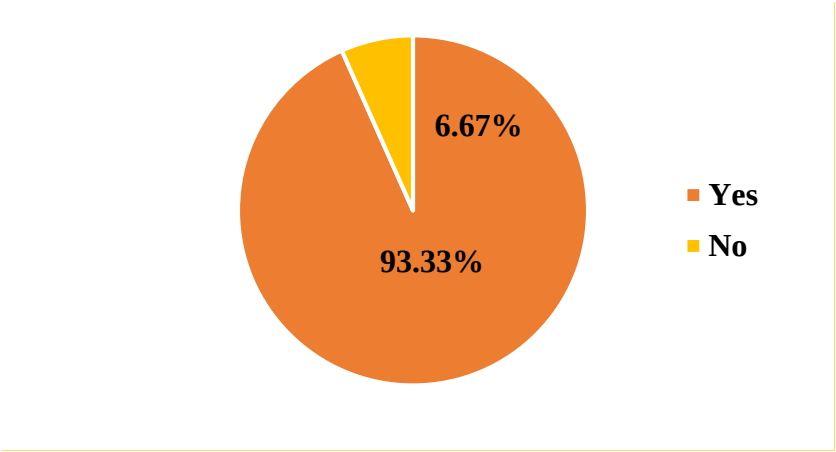
b) Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer honestly)?

Table 4.2. Haiku composition as a valuable task

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	28	93.33 %
No	2	6.67 %

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.2. Haiku composition as a valuable task



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The results of these items unmistakably reveal a positive attitude towards haiku composition and its value for the participants' learning process. In fact, 29 students reported that they enjoyed the task, and 28 asserted that they considered it to be valuable. These responses correspond to 96.67% and 93.33% of participants, respectively. This positive perception of haiku composition is also evinced in the following quotes:

> *Yes, I did enjoy writing haiku. Of course, it was a valuable experience for me* (Marcos, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

Yes, I enjoyed writing haiku very much. It was a great and valuable task (Agustina, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

I really enjoyed learning how to write haiku in English, first of all, because I did not know anything about haiku poems before (Andrés, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

I´ve never heard about haiku before, but I really enjoyed writing it. I am not into poetry or anything like it; however, I really think it was a valuable task (Matías, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

On the other hand, one participant reported that she did not enjoy haiku writing. Another participant expressed that, although she enjoyed the task, she did not find it valuable. These participants explained their point of view as follows:

No, I didn´t enjoy haiku writing. I have never liked to write poetry because it´s very difficult (Marta, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

I enjoyed writing haiku a lot because I could write about my feelings, but I don't think it is a beneficial task, at least for me (Adriana, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

As it can be noticed, the negative attitudes towards the task are linked to the participants' past experience with poetry. Scrivener (2011) and Povey, as cited in Khatib (2011), argue that negative perspectives towards the value of poetry in language learning environments are often caused by adverse personal experiences with the literary medium. This aversion, moreover, is likely to be found in teachers as well as in students. This last assertion is particularly relevant when one considers the fact that the participants of the study are English teacher trainees.

Conversely, the positive attitudes in regard to haiku composition constitute an unquestionable majority. One can expect these perceptions to be associated with the emotional and practical value that the participants attached to haiku composition (see below). Furthermore, the responses show that, when properly applied in class (Khatib, 2011), a positive attitude towards poetry can spring regardless of background knowledge and previous experience with the literary manifestation, or

the absence thereof. As Albergotti (2012) remarks, there is a tendency to fear and avoid poetry among students; nevertheless, the ones that *discover* it develop a personal lifetime appreciation for the medium.

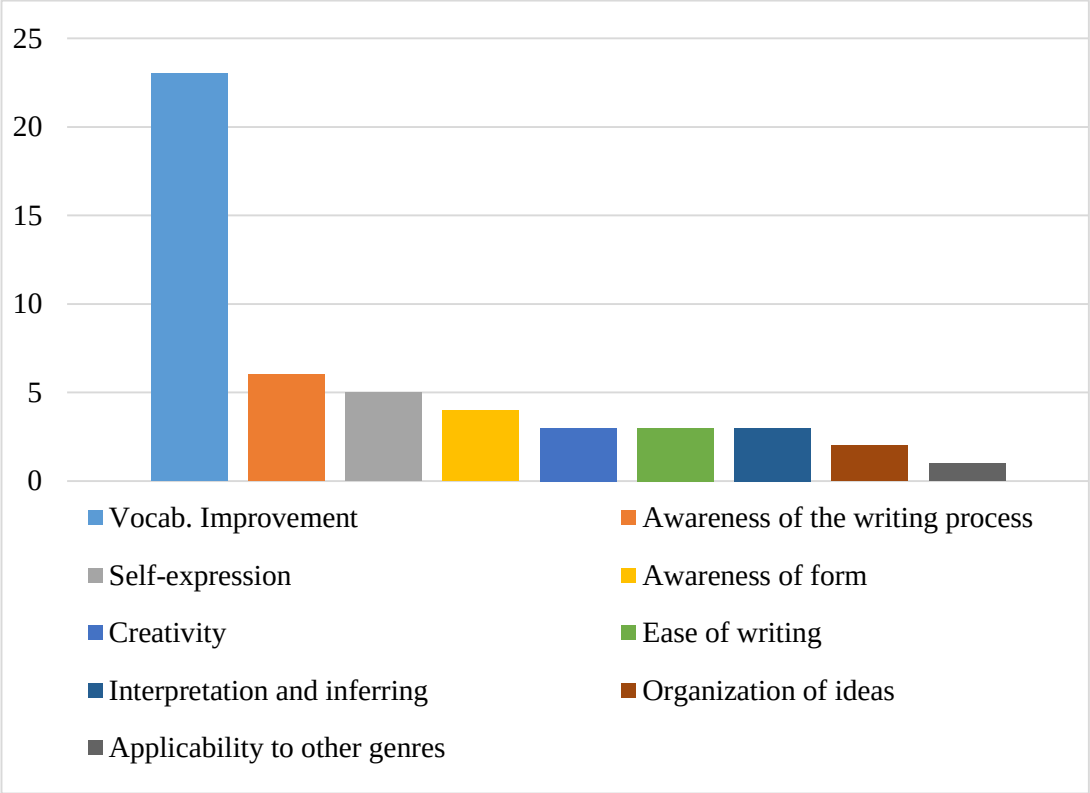
c) If so, what did this task contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English?

Table 4.3. Contribution of haiku composition

Categories	Responses	Percentage
Vocabulary improvement	23	76.67%
Vocabulary acquisition	17	56.67%
Awareness of connotation / other uses of words	7	23.33%
Not specified	3	10.00%
Better awareness of the writing process	6	20.00%
Self-expression	5	16.67%
Awareness of form	4	13.33%
Creativity	3	10.00%
Ease of writing	3	10.00%
Interpretation and inferring	3	10.00%
Organization of ideas	2	6.67%
Applicability to other genres	1	3.33%

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.3. Contribution of haiku composition



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The participants' responses demonstrate the value of haiku composition, particularly with regard to vocabulary development, as reported by 76.67% percent of participants. This positive effect of haiku writing, moreover, encompasses two aspects: vocabulary acquisition (56.67%) and awareness of the connotative worth of words (23.33%). The following quotes illustrate these features of haiku writing:

> *Writing haiku was a reminder that I need to learn more vocabulary* (Elsa, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *It [writing haiku] also increased my vocabulary and the ability to go beyond the literal meaning [of words] because, with haiku, the meaning is not explicit* (María, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I think it [haiku composition] helped me to write better by forcing me to give a much more significant and deep meaning to every word* (Jessica, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *It [haiku composition] helped me realize that there are tons of synonyms I can choose from. Therefore, my vocabulary has increased. I also liked the idea of 'playing with the words'* (William, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

These results are in straightforward agreement with what Iida (2011, 2012) reports concerning the findings of his research. Additionally, one should bear in mind Kırkgöz's (2008), Panavelil's (2011), Scrivener's (2011), and Liao's (2012) assertions and findings concerning the value of poetry for vocabulary enrichment in ESL/EFL environments. This positive characteristic of poetry is explained in the meaningful contextualization of lexical items, which stimulates recollection.

The first aspect of vocabulary development commented by the participants, namely, learning new words, is likely caused by the fact that haiku writers have to negotiate meaning; i.e., they have to make use of words that, while expressing their desired message, conform to the poem's syllabic meter pattern. This aspect of haiku composition is also discussed by Iida (2012). New lexical items are acquired in the search for syllable-appropriate lexical alternatives that express a common meaning. Consequently, as reported by one of the participants, the use of synonyms is paramount in haiku composition. Furthermore, the meaningful personal composition of haiku not only encourages one-time uses of new vocabulary items, but it additionally facilitates their long-term acquisition. The reason is that, when a word is used in an original creation of the student, the vocabulary item becomes personal and significant for the writer, thus enabling real vocabulary enrichment.

The second aspect of vocabulary development reported by the participants, greater awareness of the connotative value of words, is connected to the very nature of haiku as a personal response to specific events and situations (Iida, 2010). In other words, because of their reader-centeredness, haiku allow for multiple interpretations (Iida, 2010, 2011). This feature is actively sought for by both writers and readers of haiku. Therefore, when perusing a haiku, the reader constructs his

own meaning of the poem, while trying to figure out the original message. Complementarily, the writer of haiku deliberately looks for ways in which his intended message is conveyed without becoming obvious. It is in the construction of this personal relationship with the poem that the participants gained better cognizance of the semantic value of the words they used in their compositions and read in their classmates' haiku.

With regard to the other categories mentioned by the students, attaining greater awareness of the process of writing immediately follows vocabulary improvement, although with a comparatively low rate of response: 20.00%. Nevertheless, the importance of this reported benefit should not be undervalued. The relevance of this category becomes evident in the following comments by two participants of the study:

> *It [writing haiku] made me realize that writing is a really conscious process, and that when I write, most of the time, I am used to write mechanically* (Luisa, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Writing haiku was a valuable experience since it helped me focus myself on the writing tasks* (Pedro, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The first comment shows that haiku composition for this participant fostered self-reflection of her personal writing habits. This personal consideration evolved in a recognition of the complexity of the writing process (Harmer, 2004), which, as corroborated by the second comment, demands concentration and effort. It is interesting to note as well that none of the responses of this category indicates frustration or even aversion towards writing in the target language.

As to self-expression, five participants reported that haiku writing facilitated the conveyance of personal feelings and emotions. These responses correspond to the 16.67% of the total of participants. The excerpts included below describe this category:

> *I enjoyed writing haiku a lot because I could write about my feelings* (Pamela, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Haiku writing gave us another way [medium] to express our feelings, without [their] being explicitly written* (Carmen, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I think that it is better to write when you want to express your feelings* (Viviana, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

All of these responses are connected to genuine, purposeful, and personal uses of the target language, through which the learning process becomes significant. According to Iida (2011), haiku composition promotes the understanding that writing in a target language serves to a communicative purpose. This last assertion is in direct agreement with the participants' responses. For his part, Liao (2012) maintains that creative writing promotes meaningful proprietorship of the target language, which, in Widdowson's (1994) words, involves bending the target language to one's will to "assert [oneself] through it rather than simply [summiting] to the dictates of its form" (p. 384).

Complementarily, the participants' answers correspond themselves to the features of Hanauer's (2012) Meaningful Literacy Instruction, especially to emotional writing and personal insight. Haiku writing aids students to realize that writing in the target language can serve to express their feelings. Through this realization, approval and admiration towards English can spring from observing and understanding how a text that they can call their own has employed the language to communicate pleasing, yet complex ideas, while conforming to formal standards that endow the piece with artistic worth.

Finally, the relatively low-rate responses associate haiku composition with increased awareness of form (13.33%), promotion of creativity (10.00%), ease of writing (10.00%), improvement of interpretation and inferring skills (10.00%), organization of ideas (6.67%), and applicability to other writing genres (3.33%). The quotes presented below correspond to each one of these categories. The excerpts are organized according to frequency of response:

I think it [haiku composition] does contribute to my writing because I had to check spelling, grammar, that gender or number were correct, and these kind of things (Tita, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

It [haiku writing] helped me a lot in order to have a much more open mind to imagine, remember, and write (Fernando, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

I consider it [haiku writing] was beneficial to learn more vocabulary in order to make writing tasks easier (Gabriela, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

It [working with haiku] also helped us to infer and interpret information in a better way (Diana, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

It [haiku composition] contributed to me by helping me think in different ways to write ideas in order to have a good structure of a paragraph (Denis, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

Now, I'm more comfortable at the moment of writing down my ideas in any type of paragraph that I need to do (Patricio, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

These results indicate that, for the participants of the study, haiku composition improved their writing skills in a variety of ways that range from accuracy and text organization to ingenuity and imagination. In addition, the categories that were mentioned by the participants relate one to the other. For instance, ease of writing is connected to vocabulary enrichment; that is, students write faster because their repertoires of available lexical items have increased. Besides, although only two participants explicitly declared that haiku composition improved their academic writing skills, the responses of the participants in all of the categories discussed above are linked to the enhancement of this genre of writing. In fact, vocabulary enrichment, greater consciousness of the writing process, and better organization of ideas – to name a few categories – all contribute to the development of academic writing skills. Moreover, these last remarks, along with the participants' responses, support Iida's (2012) conclusions regarding the value of haiku composition for literacy-skill transfer to other writing genres.

Question two

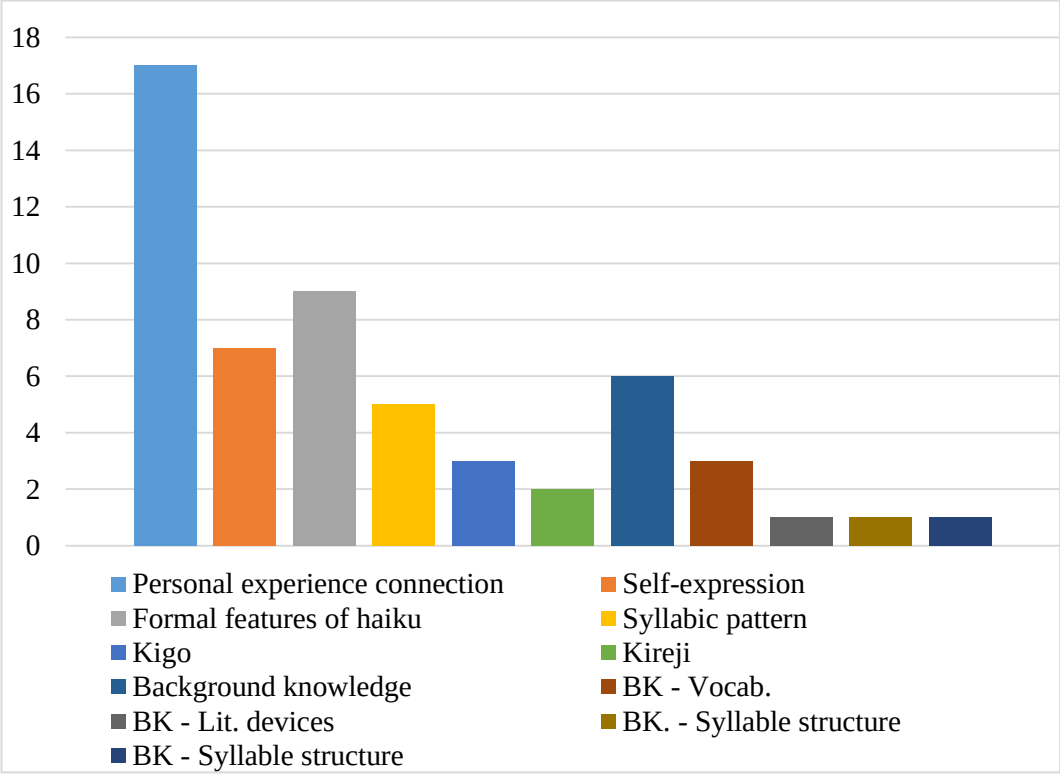
What were your strengths as a writer of haiku?

Table 4.4. Strengths when writing haiku

Categories	Responses	Percentage
Connecting haiku to personal experience	17	56.67%
Self-expression	7	23.33%
Formal features of haiku	9	30.00%
Syllabic pattern	5	16.67%
Kigo	3	10.00%
Kireji	2	6.67%
Background knowledge	6	20.00%
Background knowledge – vocabulary	3	10.00%
Background knowledge – literary devices	1	3.33%
Background knowledge - haiku	1	3.33%
Background knowledge - syllable structure	1	3.33%

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.4. Strengths when writing haiku



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The responses to the second question of the survey indicate that, for the participants of the study, the most common strength when composing haiku is connecting the text to their personal experience and emotions. In total, 17 participants, that is, 56.67%, ascertained this personal identification as their forte when writing haiku. The following quotes from the participants clarify this result:

> *I love nature, and haiku are related to it; so I could get ideas easily* (Miguel, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *To me, it was easy to write about the topics of the haiku because I felt identified with them* (Judith, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I think they were the moments that I never forget; these times came to me when I was trying to remember something in order to write the haiku* (Marcelo, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

Within this category, furthermore, seven participants, 23.33%, overtly reported that they felt confident expressing their personal ideas and emotions. In other words, their strength was self-expression. This particular perspective is illustrated in the following comments:

> *I think that what helped me to write haikus was that I could express my feelings in a good way; this was very interesting for me* (Taís, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *My strengths as a writer of haiku were that I had a lot of unexpressed feelings and thoughts. I did not know how to let them out, and haiku was definitely an excellent option. Through haiku, I can now express my emotions, and the words I use don´t necessarily have to be the same words for each idea* (Andrés, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The frequency of these responses suggests that poetry-based creative writing practices in the language classroom are not, as it is often thought, too challenging for language learners. These self-reported data agree with what Hanauer (2010) argues about the feasibility of second/foreign-language poetry composition. Moreover, one has to remember the beneficial influence on motivation that poetry writing in the target language has (Lazar, 1993; Hess, 2003; Scrivener, 2011; Panavelil 2011; Kong, 2010; Bjelland, 2016). As shown in the above quotes, participants connected their personal experience to the composition process; doing so, in fact, became their strength as haiku writers. Being able to express their feelings in a foreign language, and through a medium of inherent complexity, is not only rewarding in terms of language use, but it also endows the target language with a new merit, namely, meaningful self-expression.

In addition, the participants' responses prompt reflection on the value of the knowledge and experience that learners bring to the language classroom. As Hanauer (2012) remarks, ESL/EFL students, as any other individual, are filled with ideas, beliefs, and emotions, which have been forged within a rich social and cultural context. Thus, learning a second or foreign language ought to be seen as a

process through which learners are equipped with means for understanding and communicating themselves. Hence, as the participants' comments indicate, poetry composition vindicates the value and identity of students, fostering learner-centeredness and providing the learning process with genuine purpose.

The second most important category in terms of what participants considered to be their strengths in haiku composition relates to the formal features of the poem. In fact, nine participants (30.00%) identified the formality of haiku as their asset. Of these participants, five (16.67%) indicated that their strength when composing haiku was observing the 5-7-5 syllabic pattern of the poem. Complementarily, three students (10.00%) connected their strength to kigo, that is, the seasonal reference, while two participants (6.67%) did so to kireji or the inclusion of a cutting word or punctuation mark at the end of the second line. The following excerpts from the survey transcriptions explain these results:

> *It was somehow easy for me to organize my haiku in the 5-7-5 syllabic structure* (Ricardo, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *My strength was associating the poem with nature to make reference to a season* (Alexandra, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I was very good at kireji* (Jessica, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The fact that a significant group of participants ascertained the formal features of haiku as their strengths offers additional support for the inclusion of poetry-based activities – particularly, composition tasks – in language learning environments. These results, moreover, complement Hanauer's (2010) findings regarding the nature of ESL/ESL poetry writing. The participants' responses demonstrate that, despite generalized beliefs, writing poetry in the language classroom, albeit challenging, is not only feasible but also highly beneficial.

The final category of analysis of this survey question relates to background knowledge. Six students (20.00%) expressed that their experience as language learners facilitated their composition practices. Of these six participants, three (10.00%) associated this background knowledge with vocabulary; that is, they

explained that their lexical repertoires before and during the intervention were ample enough to facilitate the composition tasks. In addition, one student (3.33%) reported that her previous experience with literary devices became an asset when writing haiku. Another student (3.33%), moreover, declared that he had already worked with haiku when learning Japanese. Finally, one student (3.33%) explained that her strength when writing haiku was that she had a good understanding of how syllables are structured in English. Each one of these subcategories is elucidated by the quotes presented below:

> *I had many ideas. I already knew a lot of vocabulary* (Karla, 12-21-2017, Survey response).
>
> *One important strength for me was that I know about some literary devices such as metaphors. I used this knowledge when writing my haiku* (Ximena, 12-21-2017, Survey response).
>
> *I had written some haiku in Japanese before, so this helped me to do it in English* (Diego, 12-21-2017, Survey response).
>
> *One strength could be knowing about words pronunciation to count syllables* (Amelia, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

These results provide extra endorsement for the importance and worth of the knowledge and experience students bring to class. Therefore, they are also an encouragement for student-based instruction. One has to bear in mind, furthermore, the reported beneficial effects on performance related to learner-centeredness (Khatib, 2011). Although this fact acquires particular importance for the topic of this project, one has to be aware that the value of student-centered practices is not exclusive to the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom, but it encompasses all the dimensions of second/foreign language teaching and learning.

Question three

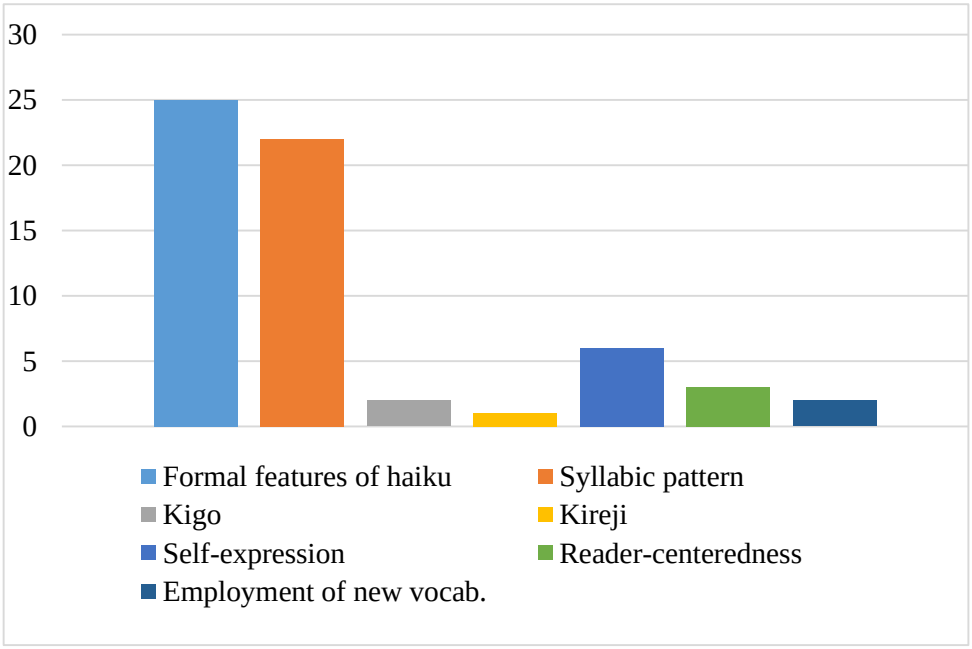
What was difficult about writing haiku?

Table 4.5. Difficulties when writing haiku

Categories	Responses	Percentage
Formal features of haiku	25	83.33%
Syllabic pattern	22	73.33%
Kigo	2	6.67%
Kireji	1	3.33%
Self-expression	6	20.00%
Reader – centeredness	3	10.00%
Employment of new vocabulary	2	6.67%

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.5. Difficulties when writing haiku



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The results of this question show that the most difficult aspect of haiku composition for the participants (83.33%) was observing the poem's formal features. Of the three elements of form that haiku have, the one to which the participants of the study referred with the highest frequency was the 5-7-5 syllabic meter, with 22 responses (73.33%). For their part, kigo and kireji were mentioned twice (6.67%) and once (3.33%), respectively. The quotes presented below describe the difficulty faced by the students in terms of formality:

> *The most difficult part for me was being aware of the syllabic pattern. When writing a haiku, I realized that my words did not follow that rule, so I had to find another word without changing the meaning* (Julia, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *For me, expressing all of my ideas and emotions in a few syllables was something hard to accomplish* (Mónica, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *The most difficult part for me was making reference to a specific season or time of the year. That's why I ended up using summer (my favorite season) in many cases* (Joaquín, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Kireji was difficult for me because it has hard to finish the poem* (Robertina, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The difficulty concerning the syllabic meter pattern is linked to the requirement of adjusting to the poem's meter while conveying meaning. The high frequency of comments related to this issue agrees with Iida's (2011) results, thus suggesting that the submission to the formal aspects of poetry, particularly, meter, is a generalized challenge for language learners who are involved in poetry-based creative writing. Moreover, as the first and second statements reveal, the compliance to the 5-7-5 syllabic pattern of haiku demands two tasks from students: finding syllable-appropriate lexical substitutions and condensing complex meaning in a short text. Both of these demands are connected to communicative competence development, as they foster vocabulary enrichment and encourage more

straightforward – yet meaning-filled – interactions. This last aspect, furthermore, is of special importance for academic writing communicative skills (see below).

Concerning the two other elements of haiku, kigo and kireji, the difficulty participants found in relation to them is likely caused by their inexperience with haiku. It is important, nevertheless, to stress that the identification of difficulties when composing haiku does not mean that the participants of the study rejected the intervention or did not value haiku composition; in fact, as shown in by the results of the first question, the majority of participants considered haiku writing to be both enjoyable and advantageous. Besides, as remarked by Lazar (1993) competent performance in challenging tasks brings forth a genuine sense of achievement that benefits the motivation of language learners.

In regard to the second category of analysis of the survey's second question, self-expression, six participants (20.00%) commented that they found it problematic to communicate their ideas and emotions through haiku. This difficulty is accurately described in the in the following statements:

> *The most difficult for me was that I could not find the exact words that to express what I feel or what I could feel through poems* (Noemí, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Sometimes I didn't have enough inspiration to write the haiku* (Elizabeth, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

As suggested by the participants' comments, the self-expression difficulty when writing haiku can be associated with lack of vocabulary to complete the task. In addition, one could attribute this self-expression difficulty to the above-discussed contemporary emphasis on the development of overtly measurable and standardized communicative skills (Hanauer, 2012; Iida, 2011). In other words, because of the current *dehumanized* status of the language classroom (Hanauer, 2012; Kramsch, 2009), it is likely that the participants of the study had not been involved in activities that comprise personal and meaningful communication. Consequently, as Iida

(2011) asserts, they are not used to employing the target language to express their ideas and feelings.

The next category, reader-centeredness refers the complications participants encountered when attempting to provide their haiku with multiple interpretations. In the study, three participants (10.00%) reported that they had difficulties when concealing the original meaning of their haiku. This circumstance was explained by one participant as follows:

> *For me, it was difficult to make my haiku not easy to figure out; I mean, it was hard to hide the real meaning* (Paúl, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

Lastly, two participants (6.67%) asserted that their major challenge when composing haiku was struggling to include innovative vocabulary in their texts. This difficulty is linked to the students' individual repertoires of available words. Furthermore, as evidenced in the following quote, this complication is also connected to the participants' personal writing practices:

> *Probably the most difficult part of writing haiku for me was that I was used to using only familiar or common words. Creating haiku with different words was definitely not easy* (Juan, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The responses of these last two categories can be attributed to the previously mentioned inexperience with poetry. Their significance, nevertheless, is that they exhibit positive attitudes towards haiku composition and their value for language learning. It is important to remember that reader-centeredness is an indicative of high-quality haiku composition; that is, good haiku ought to allow for varied interpretations from the readers, while deftly concealing the author's original meaning. For its part, the desire to include novel vocabulary when writing haiku also indicates an aspiration for the production of first-rate texts, which, in turn, evinces appreciation for the creative writing practice. At the same time, the concern regarding the skillful and inventive use of vocabulary, which is included in the last quote, suggests a constructive self-reflection about communicative-competence

development from the part of the participant. It is adequate to reason that this personal deliberation has a beneficial influence on learning.

Question four

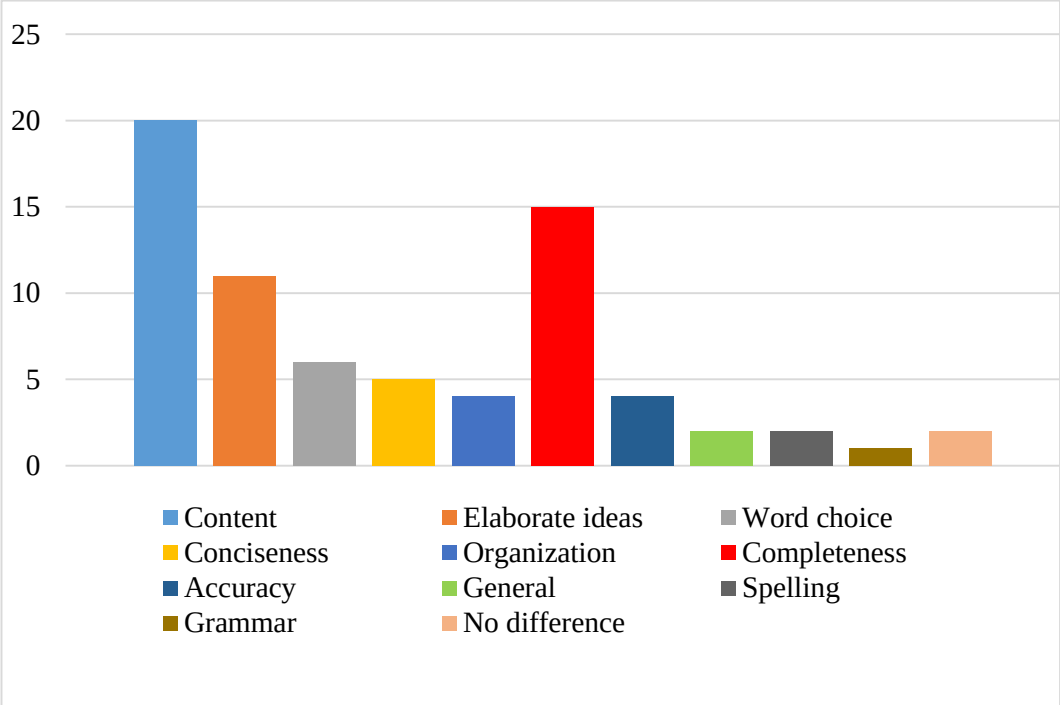
Take a few moments to read through both of your essays. Do you think there are any differences between the first and second essay? If so, what are they?

Table 4.6. Differences between pre and post-intervention essays

Categories	Responses	Percentage
Content	20	66.67%
More elaborate ideas	11	36.67%
Better word choice	6	20.00%
Conciseness	5	16.67%
Better organization	4	13.33%
Completeness (length)	15	50.00%
Accuracy (form)	4	13.33%
General	2	6.67%
Spelling	2	6.67%
Grammar	1	3.33%
No difference	2	6.67%

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.6. Differences between pre and post-intervention essays



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The results reveal that, for the majority of participants (20 responses – 66.67%), the essay they wrote after the intervention displays improvement in terms of content. Eleven students (36.67%) linked this improvement to the inclusion of more elaborate ideas in the second essay; six participants (20.00%) commented that the second essay displayed better word choice; five subjects indicated that their second essays were clearer and more concise; and four participants (13.33%) reported that they considered their post-intervention essays to be better organized. These perceptions are explained in the following excerpts:

> *I believe I had better arguments for this second essay* (Fabián, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *The first essay, in general terms, is more 'simple.' The vocabulary use is very poor. Although there aren´t enormous differences, the vocabulary*

choice in the second essay has a wider variety (Pedro, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The most important difference is that I was able to complete the second essay because I understood that, in many cases, using less words can help us convey clear and explicit messages. In the first essay, I was trying to elaborate too much. That's why I couldn't even finish half of it (Bryan, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The ideas are more organized in the second essay (Nicole, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The results, interpreted in light of the quotes presented above, suggest a beneficial effect of haiku composition on the academic writing skills of the participants. This positive influence is corroborated by the statistical analysis of the pre and post-test results (see below). Moreover, the findings, both quantitative and qualitative, add to the corpus of evidence regarding the value of poetry composition for the development of communicative skills – particularly, writing – in ESL/EFL environments (Iida, 2011, 2012, 2016; Pushpa & Savaedi, 2014; Liao, 2012; Chamcharatsri, 2013). Furthermore, the inclusion of more elaborate ideas can be explained in the fact that, as asserted by Iida (2011), haiku composition increases the awareness of voice in language students. A better understanding of their own voices allows learners to include more complex, yet clear ideas in their texts, regardless the genre. At the same time, the greater elaboration of ideas reported by the participants ought also to be understood through an improved attentiveness towards audience expectations (Iida, 2011), which the reader-centeredness of haiku promotes. Complementarily, the described improvement in word choice is straightforwardly connected to the above-discussed benefits of haiku writing in terms of vocabulary enrichment. This fact, likewise, explicates the more elaborate nature of the ideas included in the second essays. The reason is that participants relied on increased lexical repertoires to communicate their thoughts in the post-test essays.

In addition, the increased conciseness that the participants perceived in their second essays is linked to the formal nature of haiku, particularly, to its syllabic meter. The metrical constrains of haiku forced students to express their ideas more directly and concisely, fostering, at the same time, vocabulary development (Iida, 2011, 2012). It is important to bear in mind that clarity and succinctness are highly valued in academic writing. For its part, the reported enhancement in organization is connected to a greater attentiveness towards the writing process, which was addressed in the initial section of this chapter. Likewise, as reported by the answers to the first question of the survey, haiku composition encourages ease in writing, thus providing more opportunities for editing, which comprises reflecting and revising. Overall, as Chamcharatsri (2013) points out, incorporating poetry-based creative writing tasks into the language classroom stimulates an increased emphasis and care with regard to the content aspects of the learner's written production. Therefore, further benefits of haiku composition in terms of the improvement of academic writing skills are identified.

With regard to the second category of analysis of this survey question, 15 participants (50.00%) stated that, for them, one significant difference between the essays written before and after the intervention is that the latter are more complete. This completeness relates to both the length of the essay and the inclusion of all its constitutive elements. The nature of this category was described by the participants as follows:

> *A big difference is that my first essay is incomplete. It contains only three of the necessary five paragraphs. On the other hand, my second essay is complete* (Esteban, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I think that my second essay is more complete and has all the elements that essays should have* (Carmen, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *There are a lot of things missing in the first essay; for example, it does not have many supporting details* (Laura, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

As the quotes evince, participants connected the perceived completeness of their second essays to their number of paragraphs and the inclusion of all the components of this academic writing genre. The participants' responses are likely caused by the identified benefits of haiku composition in terms of vocabulary enrichment and awareness of the writing process. If the idiosyncratic lexicon of students augments, their writing efforts are facilitated in terms of expressive power. At the same time, a greater responsiveness and attentiveness towards the writing process prompts increased care for the incorporation of the relevant elements of an essay. The conclusion that ensues is that haiku composition stimulated both the desire and the creation of academic texts of a higher quality in the participants of the study.

The next category of this survey question relates to accuracy. Four participants (13.33%) asserted that they considered their second essays to be better because they contained less mistakes. Two participants did not specify the nature of the improvement. Conversely, two students (6.67%) linked the advance to spelling, and one (3.33%) to grammar. The most representative comments of this category are presented below:

> *The difference between the essays is that the second one is longer and has less mistakes* (Ana, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Of course, the essays are different; the second one has less spelling and grammatical mistakes* (Fernando, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Another difference is about spelling mistakes, in the first essay I made more spelling mistakes than the second time* (Sofía, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

The relatively low percentage of responses of this category can be attributed to the attention shift that poetry encourages from form to content (Chamcharatsri, 2013). Nevertheless, this assertion should not prompt one to discard the benefits of poetry composition for the accuracy of the written texts produced by language learners, regardless their genre. This fact is corroborated in the quantitative analysis

of the students' pre and post-intervention essays (see below). Moreover, the participants' responses about spelling are explained in the discussed value of poetry writing for vocabulary acquisition; at the same time, the students' remarks provide additional evidence for this profitable feature of poetry. Besides, the fact that the participants commented on the improved correctness of their second essays supports Lazar's (1993), Panavelil's (2011), and Kırkgöz's (2008) assertions concerning the usefulness of poetry-based activities for the development of grammatical competence. Both of these aspects of accuracy development ought to be understood in light of the personal and meaningful use of the target language that poetry facilitates.

As to the last category of analysis of this question, two participants (6.67%) claimed that they did not identify any difference between the first and second essay. These statements are linked to the participants' self-perceived pre-intervention competence level. The following quote clarifies this position:

> *I can't really see a difference between the two essays, maybe because I have always been good at writing* (Jessica, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

Question five

Would you recommend this learning strategy to other EFL students? If so, why?

As in the case of the first item of the survey, this last question encompasses reflection about two aspects: a) Would you recommend this learning strategy to other EFL students? b) If so, why? The results for each question are presented and discussed separately. Their analysis, moreover, is complement with excerpts from the students' answers.

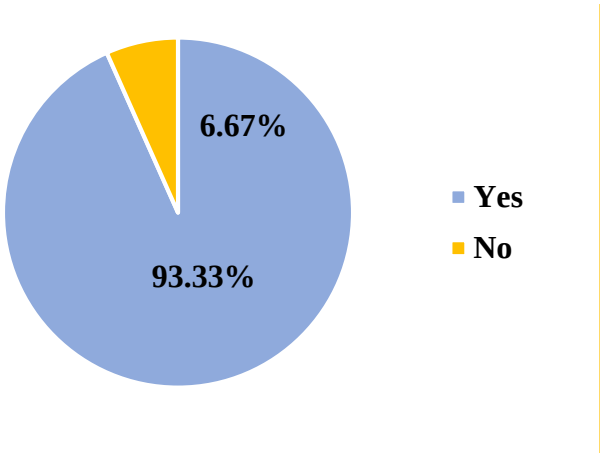
a) Would you recommend this learning strategy to other EFL students?

Table 4.7. Would participants recommend haiku composition?

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	28	93.33 %
No	2	6.67 %

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.7. Would participants recommend haiku composition?



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The indisputable majority of participants (93.33%) stated that they would recommend haiku composition as a constructive practice in EFL environments. This result is in direct agreement with what has been discussed so far, as well as with the reasons for recommendation that are addressed in the next section. On the other hand, two participants (6.67%) commented that they would not recommend haiku composition to other EFL students. As the below excerpt reveals, this position is connected to the participants' individual preferences. This fact provides more evidence for the notion that the reluctance to include poetry-based activities in the language classroom springs from negative personal experiences with the medium (Scrivener, 2011; Panavelil, 2011).

> *I can't say that it is not good at all because we know that all students can learn in different ways, so maybe for some students this method can be really good. But I personally would not recommend it because I have never liked poetry* (Alicia, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

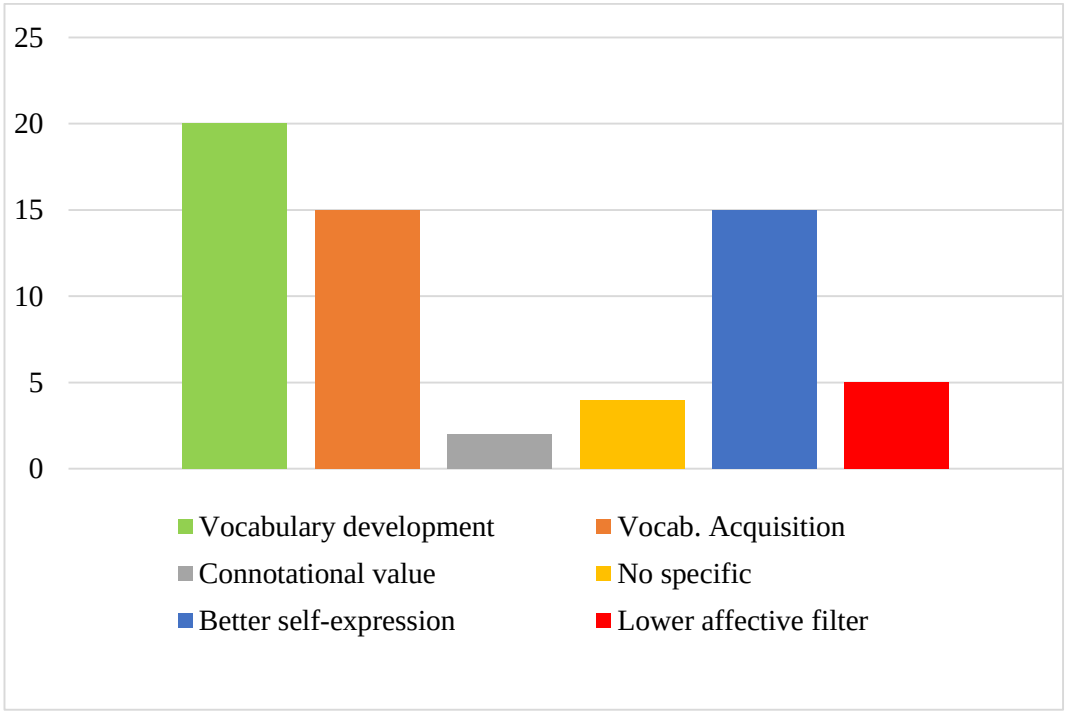
b) If so, why?

Table 4.8. Reasons for recommending haiku composition

Categories	Responses	Percentage
Vocabulary development	20	66.67%
Vocabulary acquisition	15	50.00%
Connotational value	2	6.67%
No specific	4	13.33%
Better self-expression	15	50.00%
Lower affective filter	5	16.67%

Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.8. Reasons for recommending haiku composition



Source: Post-intervention survey
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Most participants, specifically, 20 (66.67%), remarked that their reason for recommending haiku composition to other EFL students is that the practice fosters the development of vocabulary. Of this group, 15 (50.00%) explicitly made reference to vocabulary acquisition; two (6.67%) commented that haiku composition is likely to encourage awareness of the connotative value of words; four (13.33%) participants, for their part, did not specify the type of vocabulary development they considered haiku composition can foster. The following quotes illustrate this category of analysis:

> *Yes, I would recommend haiku composition because students can improve their vocabulary* (Doménica, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *You can learn new vocabulary because you have to look for synonyms to write haikus* (Mariana, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Yes, absolutely. I think it [haiku composition] is a helpful strategy to learn new vocabulary and also the different meaning a single word can have* (Miriam, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

These findings thoroughly agree with what was identified in the previous questions, as well as with the empirical background of the topic of this project (Iida, 2011, 2012; Liao 2012; Kırkgöz, 2008). As argued above, the vocabulary development haiku composition promotes is above all related to the acquisition of formerly unknown lexical items. This is caused by the meaning negotiation (Iida, 2011) process with which students have to involve themselves to convey meaning while observing the syllabic pattern of the poem. In addition, given that haiku composition is personal and emotional, it provides opportunities for students to be engaged in meaningful encounters (Nation, 2005) with the words they use in their texts. At the same time, and in agreement with the results of the preceding questions, the reader-centered nature of haiku stimulates awareness of the connotative value of words, which is another aspect of the vocabulary-development benefit of haiku composition about which the participants commented.

The next category of analysis of this last question is self-expression. In total, 15 participants (50.00%) remarked that they would recommend haiku composition as a learning strategy because it nurtures expressiveness power in the target language. The excerpts included below provide an explanatory description of this outlook of the value of haiku writing practices:

> *This strategy is good since it lets us express ourselves through English* (Silvia, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *When you are writing Haiku, you need to contrast your ideas with your feelings and desires in order to express them clearly* (Mauricio, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Yes, I would strongly recommend this strategy because we could improve our English by connecting our ideas and thoughts to the language* (Rafaela, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *Writing haiku is a good and recommendable strategy because it has a strong connection to emotions and feelings. We feel more comfortable writing about something that matters to us* (Pamela, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

As the participants' responses indicate, the value language students attach to haiku composition in terms of self-expression has different aspects. For one part, they recommend haiku composition because of self-expression opportunity provision. Moreover, as shown in the second quote, haiku composition is considered to foster better self-understanding, which in turn facilitates self-expression. This perspective is in stark consonance with what Iida (2011) reports concerning the value of haiku for the development of voice awareness. In other words, if language learners understand themselves better, they are prone to identify their voice as writers, and hence, self-expression is strengthened.

The final facet of this category is linked to the incorporation of the students' inner selves into the writing task, and ultimately, the use of the target language. The participants' comments on this matter advocate for the vindication of the language

students' backgrounds and their importance for the learning process (Hanauer, 2012; Kramsch, 2009). Likewise, these findings highlight the value of poetry-based creative writing tasks for the promotion of Meaningful Literacy practices (Hanauer, 2012) in the language classroom, which, as mentioned above, encourage real-life and consequential proficiency (Widdowson, 1994).

Although the last category of analysis of this question has a relatively low response frequency, it comprises interesting and relevant implications for ESL/EFL instruction. Five participants (16.67%) asserted that their recommendation of haiku composition as a language learning strategy is based on the fact that the practice is liable to lower the affective filter of students. The quotes to follow explain this position:

> *Yes, because I felt free and relaxed when I wrote haiku. I think this helped me learn a lot, too* (Celia, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

> *I would definitely recommend it [haiku composition] because they would really enjoy doing it. I enjoyed doing it, and I learned a lot. I didn't feel as anxious as I usually do in a writing class* (Mauricio, 12-21-2017, Survey response).

According to Krashen (2013), the Affective Filter Hypothesis maintains that certain negative emotional variables inhibit – as if they were a screen – the internalization of TL input, thus preventing language acquisition. Within this context, the participants' responses could be understood as endowing haiku composition with *alleviating* effects for lowering the affective filter. For one part, these results support what the pertinent literature (Lazar, 1993; Hess, 2003; Scrivener, 2011; Panavelil 2011; Kong, 2010; Bjelland, 2016) argues concerning the benefits of the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom for learner motivation. Moreover, these findings suggest a more holistic value of haiku composition for ESL/EFL instruction. In other words, by lowering the affective filter, haiku writing provides furtherance for the development of all the aspects of communicative competence in the target language.

4.2. Analysis and discussion of the pre and post-test results

4.2.1. Data Analysis Procedure

This analysis was conducted with the software SPSS, 22 version, which allowed the researcher to determine descriptive and inferential results. The descriptive analysis is structured on the basis of Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD). The former show the tendencies according to the different criteria of the rubric used to assess the participants' performance. For their part, Standard Deviations reveal the amount of variation or the quantity of dispersion that exists around each mean. Additionally, the analysis has also taken into account the number of grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes that were identified in the essays written before and after the intervention.

The inferential analysis employed the Shapiro Wilk Nonparametric Test to prove the distribution of the data. Complementarily, the Student's T-Test for repeated measures was used to establish a contrast between the pre and post-test results. The findings of the latter test are presented in the next section. For its part, the report provided in this section has considered the p value as the result of probabilities to determine the effects of the intervention, as reflected in the comparison of the results of the initial and final evaluations. Therefore, the hypothesis concerning the influence of the haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills is confirmed if the p value is less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$).

4.2.2. Descriptive results

Table 4.9 shows the initial situation of the participants with regard to their academic writing skills, as described by the four criteria of the rubric employed in the study, as well as by sum of the results in each of them.

Table 4.9. Pre-test results

Criteria	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation SD
Content	30	3.33	1.49
Communicative achievement	30	3.03	1.30
Organization	30	3.03	1.40
Language	30	3.33	1.30
Sum	30	12.73	5.19

Source: Pre-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The initial sum of the results was 12.73 (SD 5.19); moreover, all the criteria had certain similarity among their means. *Content* was exactly equal to *Language* (3.33); likewise, *Communicative achievement* and *Organization* obtained the same values (3.03). As mentioned above, in addition to measuring performance in the four criteria of the rubric, this statistical analysis also considered the number of mistakes made in the first test. These results are displayed below:

Table 4.10. Pre-test mistake count

Indicators	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation SD
Spelling	30	6.27	3.65
Grammar	30	6.50	3.95
Punctuation	30	2.20	2.12
Sum	30	14.97	7.19

Source: Pre-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Table 4.10 shows a total of 14.97 (SD 7.19) mistakes per student. There was a greater number of mistakes in Grammar (6.50), followed by Spelling (6.27). Punctuation mistakes were less frequent (2.20).

After the intervention, a second evaluation was carried out considering the same criteria to determine if the participants' performance had changed. The results of the post-intervention test are presented in Table 4.11:

Table 4.11. Post-test results

Criteria	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation SD
Content	30	4.13	0.73
Communicative achievement	30	3.80	0.81
Organization	30	3.97	0.85
Language	30	4.20	0.76
Sum	30	16.10	2.63

Source: Post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

In this case, it was found that the averages of the rubric criteria also maintained a certain similarity. In fact, *Language* and *Content* obtained a similar average level (4.20 and 4.13, respectively). For their part, the results of *Communicative achievement* and *Organization*, although analogous, were somewhat lower (3.80 and 3.97, respectively). The sum of all four criteria in the post-test was 16.10 (SD 2.63).

Moreover, as in the pre-test, the post-test analysis also accounted for the number of mistakes made by the students in their second composition. The results are shown in Table 4.12:

Table 4.12. Post-test mistake count

Indicators	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation SD
Spelling	30	4.03	3.86
Grammar	30	4.40	4.25
Punctuation	30	2.07	1.87
Sum	30	10.50	7.13

Source: Post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The most frequent mistake type was found in Grammar (4.40), followed by Spelling (4.03). Punctuation mistakes, for their part, were the least recurrent (2.07). The total number of mistakes per student in the post-test was10.50 (SD 7.13).

4.2.3. Inferential results

Table 4.13 shows the comparison between the performances in the pre and post-tests. The table also features the difference of mean between the two tests, as well as the p value of each rubric criteria.

Table 4.13. Comparison of pre and post-test results

	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference		p value
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
Content	3.33	1.49	4.13	0.73	0.80	1.21	0.001150
Communicative achievement	3.03	1.30	3.80	0.81	0.77	0.90	0.000062
Organization	3.03	1.40	3.97	0.85	0.93	1.05	0.000036
Language	3.33	1.30	4.20	0.76	0.87	0.97	0.000036
Sum	12.73	5.19	16.10	2.63	3.37	3.37	0.000007

Note: Content (t -3.607, df 29, p .001), Communicative achievement (t -4.678, df 29, p .000), Organization (t -4.877, df 29, p .000), Language (t -4.878, df 29, p .000), Sum (t -5.475, df 29, p .000).

Source: Pre and post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The comparison between the pre and post-intervention tests reveals that there was a substantial increase in all the analyzed criteria, as well as in their sum. In fact, in *Content*, the difference between the pre and post-test means is 0.8; in *Communicative achievement*, 0.77; in *Organization*, 0.93; and in *Language*, 0.87. For its part, the difference between the sums of the criteria is 3.37 (SD 3.37). In all cases, the increase is significant because the p value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). As a consequence, there is evidence to affirm that the hypothesis about the positive influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills has been confirmed.

With regard to the difference between the mistake count in the pre and post-intervention tests, the number of identified mistakes decreased. These results are shown in Table 4.14:

Table 4.14. Mistake count comparison

	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference		p value
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
Spelling	6.27	3.65	4.03	3.86	2.23	5.06	0.022213
Grammar	6.50	3.95	4.40	4.25	2.10	4.05	0.008224
Punctuation	2.20	2.12	2.07	1.87	0.13	2.96	0.806631
Sum	14.97	7.19	10.50	7.13	4.47	7.62	0.003242

Note: Spelling (t 2.416, df 29, p .022), Grammar (t 2.837, df 29, p .008), Punctuation (t .247, df 29, p .807), Sum (t 3.209, df 29, p .003).

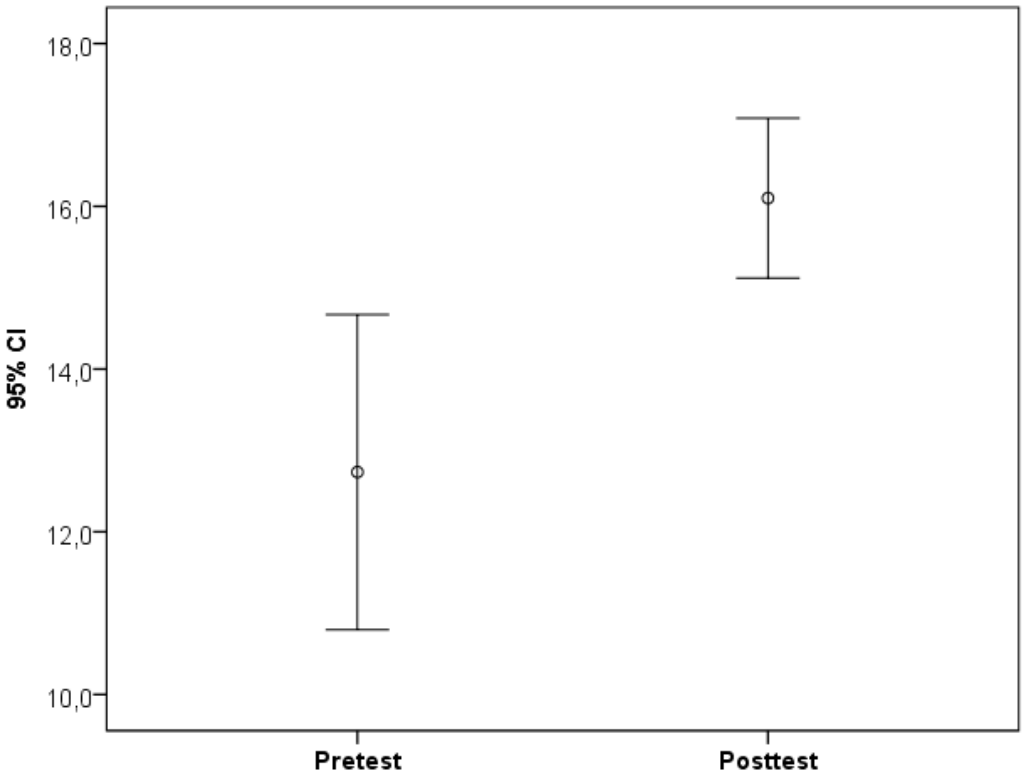
Source: Pre and post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

In two specific aspects, Spelling and Grammar, students made considerably less mistakes. In fact, the difference in regard to Spelling is 2.23, and in Grammar, 2.10. In both cases, the difference is significant since the p value is lower than 0.05. However, in Punctuation, the situation remained virtually the same, with a reduction of only 0.13 points and a p value that is greater than 0.05. All in all, the comparison of the sums of the pre and post-treatment mistake counts provides

relevant evidence regarding the reduction of the number of mistakes made by the participants; the total difference is 4.47 (SD 7.62), with a p value of 0.003.

Finally, Figure 4.9 portrays the behavior of the pre and post-test results. This diagram has been developed on the basis of the pre and post-test total means, as well as of their standard deviations.

Figure 4.9. Bar diagram of pre and post-test results



Source: Pre and post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

As it can be noticed, Figure 4.9 illustrates the beneficial effect of haiku composition on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of this study. When the pre and post-test results are compared, it becomes evident that the pre-test mean is lower (14.42) than the post-test result (16.10). This difference is revealed by the position of the two bars. Moreover, the diagram also shows that the pre-test results have more variation than in the post-test, since the SD in the former is 4.42, while, in the latter, it is 2.63.

Discussion. The results of the statistical examination of the pre and post-intervention tests corroborate the qualitative analysis of the post-treatment survey, which was addressed in the previous section. The conclusion that ensues is that the results, both quantitative and qualitative, demonstrate that haiku composition had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of this research study. The significance of this influence is supported by the p value of the results of each criterion of the rubric employed to assess the pre-and post-intervention essays. In all cases, this value is lower than 0.05.

With regard to the comparison of the results among the rubric criteria, the greater difference between the pre and post-treatment tests is found in *Organization* (0.93), immediately followed by *Language* (0.87). Nevertheless, it is important to remark that the standard deviation is lower in the latter (0.97) than in the former (1.05). This last fact adds to the relevance of the improvement in the *Language* criterion. The increase in the results pertaining to *Organization* can be understood in the above-discussed positive influence of haiku composition on the attentiveness students have towards the writing process. Additionally, the enhancement in *Organization* is also linked to other reported benefits of haiku composition such as literacy-skill transfer and the development of genre-specific writing skills and knowledge (Iida, 2011).

As the rubric descriptors for *Language* indicate, the improvement in this criterion relates to vocabulary acquisition, grammatical competence, and mistake reduction. Therefore, the results of the *Language* criterion straightforwardly support the notion that poetry writing – specifically, haiku composition – aids vocabulary enrichment (Iida, 2011, 2012; Kırkgöz, 2008; Panavelil, 2011; Scrivener, 2011; Liao, 2012). Likewise, one ought to bear in mind that vocabulary acquisition was identified by the participants of the study as the most important contribution of haiku composition in EFL environments. As explained above, this vocabulary enhancement is prompted by the formal structure of haiku (Iida, 2011, 2012), as well as by the meaningful use of language that poetry composition promotes (Hanauer, 2012). Concerning grammatical competence, it should be remarked that, although the survey responses endowed this category with

comparatively low relevance, the results of the statistical analysis reveal that haiku composition does have a constructive effect on accuracy. Moreover, these results agree with the reported benefits of poetry composition in regard to linguistic awareness (Iida, 2011) and grammatical competence development (Panavelil, 2011; Lazar, 1993; Kırkgöz, 2008). These last assertions, furthermore, are also confirmed by the mistake count analysis, as Spelling and Grammar were the categories with the most significant differences between the pre and post-intervention performances.

The relatively high p value of the Punctuation category of the mistake count analysis is likely caused by the fact that haiku have a somewhat predictable punctuation pattern. This circumstance is caused by the succinct nature of the poem, as well as by the compulsory employment of kireji. This characteristic of haiku contrasts with the punctuation expectations of academic writing. Notwithstanding, it has to be stated that an improvement in regard to punctuation was identified in the statistical analysis.

As to the *Communicative achievement* and *Content* criteria, their results, although lower than *Organization* and *Language*, are nevertheless relevant, as evinced in their p value. The advancement in *Communicative achievement* is explained in the enhanced audience awareness that haiku composition reportedly promotes (Iida, 2011). This greater attention to audience prompts the identification, consideration, and observance of specific conventions of particular speech communities. In addition, the improvement in *Communicative achievement* is also connected to a greater ease of writing and a heightened attention to the writing process, which were characterized by the participants of the study as important contributions of haiku composition.

The furtherance of the *Content* criterion is related to the increased opportunities for consequential self-expression that haiku composition allegedly fosters (Iida, 2011, 2012). It should be remembered that the content category was the one to which the participants of the study referred with the highest frequency in the post-intervention survey when asked to identify the differences they noticed between the pre and post-intervention essays they wrote. Moreover, as Iida (2011)

suggests, by writing structurally defined texts such as haiku, language students gain *expressive freedom* that materializes when the formal boundaries of the poem are not present. In other words, after having composed haiku, students face less structured writing tasks with greater ease and liberty to express their ideas. This circumstance is assisted by the aspects discussed above, i.e., an augmented lexical repertoire, a better attentiveness towards audience, and an enriched consciousness of the writing process.

4.3. Hypothesis testing

4.3.1. Hypothesis logical statement

Null hypothesis (H0). Writing haiku poems in English does not promote the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

Alternative hypothesis (H1). Writing haiku poems in English promotes the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca.

4.3.2. Significance level

The significance level – alpha (α) – for this research project was 5%, which corresponded to 0.05, and provided a confidence level of 95%, that is, 0.95.

4.3.3. Specification of test statistic

The Student's T-Test for repeated measures was employed to test the hypothesis of this research project. The formula of the test is the following:

$$t = \frac{\overline{D} - \mu_D}{s_D/\sqrt{N}}$$

Where:

$\overline{D}$ = Mean difference between samples

μ_D = Expected difference between population means

s_D = Standard error of the differences

N = Sample size

4.3.4. Ascertainment of the critical value for the test

To determine the critical value for a T-test, it is necessary to establish the degrees of freedom (df) of the test. In the case of this study, this value was obtained by subtracting one – as the research involved one group – from the number of observations (30). Thus, for this study, df = 29.

According to statistics theory, for a T-test with a significance level of 0.05 and 29 degrees of freedom, **t** must be equal to or exceed ±2.045 in order to validate the a1ternative hypothesis.

4.3.5. T-test results

The results of the T-test calculated on the basis of the data collected in this study are presented in Table 4.15:

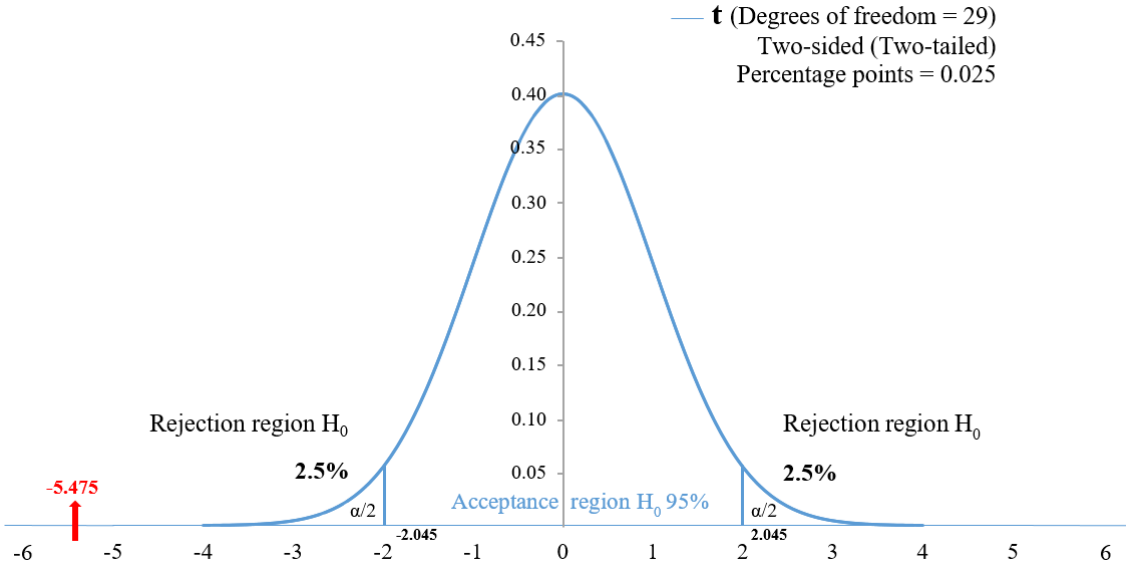
Table 4.15. T-test results

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	4	15
2	10	13
3	11	18
4	16	18
5	19	20
6	18	19
7	5	13
8	13	16
9	17	17
10	17	18
11	7	16
12	12	17
13	12	17
14	18	18

15	19	19
16	10	16
17	20	19
18	12	14
19	6	14
20	10	15
21	11	13
22	18	20
23	14	14
24	12	13
25	19	19
26	18	17
27	18	19
28	8	13
29	3	10
30	5	13
t = -5.475		
p = 0.000007		

Source: Pre and post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

Figure 4.10. Normal distribution density curve



Source: Pre and post-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

4.3.6. Decision

With 29 degrees of freedom, and a corresponding significance level of 0.05, the results of the T-test reveal that p = 0.000007, α = 0.05, and t = -5.475. Given that the calculated t value, -5.475, is greater than ±2.045, and given that the calculated p value, 0.000007 is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. This fact can be appreciated in Figure 4.10, in which t -5.475 falls into the null hypothesis rejection region. As a consequence, the alternative hypothesis (H1) is confirmed. This hypothesis states that "writing haiku poems in English promotes the development of academic writing skills in sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca."

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

After having analyzed the quantitative and qualitative results of the research study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- As argued by Iida (2011) and Hanauer (2012), the current emphasis on the structural aspects of the target language and on the development of overtly measurable communicative skills – which are to be tested by means of standardized instruments – causes deficiencies in real-life performance. This situation is confirmed in the Ecuadorian context by the country's Education First EPI score. Moreover, the results of the pre-intervention essay-based test further support this notion, since the performance level of the participants of the study at this moment was identified as low. The principal difficulties that were ascertained in the pre-test relate to the *Communicative Achievemen*t and *Organization* rubric criteria. This fact indicates problems with self-expression, as well as an inadequate audience awareness. Additionally, grammatical mistakes were the most frequent, closely followed by spelling. This circumstance also points out a deficient linguistic competence.
- The pre and post-test results reveal substantial differences in terms of performance. Students achieved higher grades in the post-test, the *Organization* and *Language* criteria being those of the greater divergences. These findings evince a positive effect of haiku composition in terms of linguistic competence, audience awareness, and consciousness of the writing process. This conception is also verified by the mistake count analysis of the pre and post-intervention essays. Furthermore, the test results, complemented by the qualitative analysis of the post-intervention survey, indicate that the most important

contribution of haiku composition to the academic writing skills of the participants of the study was that of vocabulary enrichment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of several research studies specifically carried out about the topic (Iida, 2011, 2012; Kırkgöz, 2008; Liao, 2012). This positive influence has a two-fold nature: a) vocabulary acquisition per se and b) enhancement of the awareness of the connotational value of words and other lexical items. These two aspects of vocabulary improvement through haiku writing are explained in the meaning negotiation (Iida, 2011) in which the participants engaged in order to adhere to the syllabic pattern of the poem. Consequently, one can confidently conclude that the hypothesis of the research has been confirmed. Therefore, it can be stated that haiku composition has had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of the study. In addition, the results of the research project indicate that this constructive influence has been significant.

- The post-intervention survey responses disclose markedly positive attitudes towards haiku composition. The responses suggest as well the recognition from the part of the students of the beneficial effects of the practice. These findings allow one to conclude that the preconceived notions regarding student aversion towards poetry-based tasks ought to be discarded. Besides, the fact that the participants of the study were able to complete the haiku composition tasks reveals that – contrary to the generalized beliefs about its complexity – poetry writing is a feasible undertaking for language learners. Furthermore, the results of this research, which add to the corpus of empirical evidence of the topic, clearly demonstrate that poetry composition – specifically, haiku writing – is not only achievable but also advantageous for language learners.

5.2. Recommendations

Consideration of the findings of the study makes it necessary to provide the following recommendations:

- Despite the emphasis on the development of explicitly measurable language skills found in many contemporary *standardized* and *dehumanized* (Hanauer, 2012) ESL/EFL classrooms, it is imperative that teachers vindicate the importance of consequential self-expression, as a way of *counterattacking* the pernicious effects that structural overemphasis has on real-life performance. The significance of this recommendation is found in that personal and meaningful expressiveness is at the heart of genuine communicative competence (Widdowson, 1994). The inclusion of creative writing tasks, such as haiku composition, when teaching and learning a second or foreign language presents itself as an adequate means for attaining this aim.
- The findings of the study prompt the recommendation of the inclusion of haiku composition in the language classroom. It is important to stress the fact that such creative writing activities ought to depart from reading and reflection tasks that *activate* the learners' senses; such activation is to play a crucial role in the composition task per se, promoting the above-mentioned meaningful, personal, and consequential self-expression. In addition, and bearing in mind the importance of vocabulary acquisition for the development of foreign language communicative competence (Nation, 2005; Min, 2013), it is adequate to recommend the incorporation of poetry-based creative writing activities, specifically, haiku composition, into the language classroom. Such tasks ought to be deemed as valuable means for vocabulary enrichment. To aid this inclusion, a scheme of work for a creative writing workshop based on haiku composition is presented in Chapter VI. It is proper, therefore, to endorse the application of this proposal.

- The qualitative results of the research encourage one to assert that the selection of classroom material and the planning of learning activities should not be based on generalized beliefs about specific tasks and resources, especially when these conceptions spring from the personal experiences of teachers. Under these circumstances, language instructors ought to examine their own practice to ensure that their teaching decisions are made in order to address their students' needs, rather than their personal preferences. Failing to do so might cause the exclusion of materials and tasks, such as poetry writing, with empirically proven benefits for language learning.

CHAPTER VI
THE PROPOSAL

Topic: Scheme of work for the inclusion of haiku composition practices in the EFL learning processes at the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca, through a six-week creative writing workshop

6.1. General information

Institution: Universidad de Cuenca – Philosophy, Letters, and Education Sciences Faculty – English Language and Literature Major
Province: Azuay
City: Cuenca
Location: 12 de Abril Avenue – Ciudadela Universitaria
Beneficiaries: Universidad de Cuenca's TEFL Major Professors and students.
Start date: November 7, 2017
End date: December 14, 2017
Person in charge: Juan José Santillán I.
Cost: $100

6.2. Background of the proposal

This proposal is part of a research study that originated as a response to the reported lack of empirical evidence with regard to the influence of poetry-based activities on ESL/EFL instruction (Hanauer, 2012; Iida, 2012). At the same time, the current emphasis on the development of overtly observable and measurable language skills has caused a dehumanization of the language classroom (Hanauer, 2012), which, in turn, has resulted in an inattention to the students' inner selves and their need for self-expression. In addition, it is important to consider that much of the reluctance that many ESL/EFL teachers have concerning the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom springs from generalized beliefs about the medium,

which are most likely caused by negative experiences with poetry (Scrivener, 2011; Khatib, 2011).

Under these circumstances, there is an almost exclusive focus on the grammatical structures and measurable language skills in ESL/EFL instruction. The consequence of this fact is that many language students face problems when using the target language for real-life purposes (Iida, 2011). Furthermore, the English Proficiency Index (EPI) Report published by Education First (EF) in 2017 reveals that Ecuador has a low proficiency level in this language, raking 55 among 80 evaluated countries, with an EF EPI score of 49.42/100. Bearing in mind that the productive skills are deemed to be particularly problematic (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016; Golkova & Hubackovab, 2014), one can confidently infer that writing in English presents serious difficulties for Ecuadorians. This assertion is especially true in regard to academic writing tasks because of their inherently complex nature (Cummins, 2008; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). This situation holds stark divergence with the global importance that English has acquired in the last decades.

Contrastively, the results of this research project have demonstrated that poetry-based activities – specifically, haiku composition practices – have a beneficial effect on foreign language instruction. This positive influence is shown in actual academic writing performance, as evidenced by the statistical analysis of pre and post-intervention essay-based tests. Besides, the qualitative aspect of the research study also evinces the valuable nature of poetry writing, particularly concerning vocabulary enrichment and consequential self-expression.

6.3. Justification

The incorporation of haiku composition in the language classroom should be promoted on the basis of the aforementioned research findings, which add to the body of empirical evidence regarding the topic. Kırkgöz (2008), Khatib (2011), Pushpa and Savaedi (2014), and Bjelland (2016) have identified several advantages of the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom. These benefits include, but are not limited to, linguistic awareness, vocabulary enrichment, motivation, and overall student performance. For their part, Hanauer (2010), Liao (2012), and

Chamcharatsri (2013) have concluded that poetry writing has positive effects on the learning process of a second or foreign language. The value of poetry composition is associated with both structural and lexical dimensions, as well as with motivation and self-expression. Specifically dealing with haiku composition, Iida (2011, 2012, 2016) has demonstrated that the inclusion of the practice in language instruction furthers the development of academic writing skills through vocabulary enrichment, voice and audience awareness, and literacy-skill transfer.

In contrast, Calle et al. (2012) report, that 44% of the EFL teaching-learning practices in Cuenca can be connected to traditional methodologies. This circumstance has a negative influence on the knowledge and practice of the writing process. Additionally, the development of communicative skills, especially academic writing, has been identified as a significant challenge in the English Language and Literature Major of Universidad de Cuenca. One of the reasons of this situation is that, in the Major, communicative competence in the target language has to be sought at the same time as the acquisition of linguistic, pedagogical, and didactical principles and competences. Hence, the enhancement of the writing skill is negatively affected, since, to develop written communicative competence, language learners ought to be encouraged to identify and value their uniqueness as writers in the target language (Iida, 2011). Doing so enables language learners to attain real proficiency, which, according to Widdowson (1994), is revealed through personal, meaningful, and consequential self-expression, rather than through accurate, yet quasi-mechanical, observance of structural conventions. Within this context, haiku composition can potentially become a significant means for the betterment of EFL writing skills.

6.4. Objectives

6.4.1. General objective

To provide a scheme of work for the inclusion of haiku composition practices in the EFL learning processes at the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca, through a six-week creative writing workshop.

6.4.2. Specific objectives

- To identify a pertinent protocol for the inclusion of haiku composition in EFL instruction.
- To develop pertinent tasks for each stage of the protocol.
- To systematize these activities in a scheme of work.

6.5. Feasibility of the proposal

The feasibility of this proposal is determined by its theoretical background, as well as by the empirical evidence of the topic. Both of these aspects demonstrate that poetry writing, particularly, haiku composition, is a practice that is both possible and valuable for EFL learning. Moreover, the position of the researcher as a full-time professor at the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca has facilitated the application of the proposal. At the same time, this application has been also sustained by the facilities and equipment of Philosophy, Letters and Education Sciences Faculty of Universidad de Cuenca. This aspect, furthermore, has been complemented by the support of the authorities of the Major and the Faculty.

6.6. Conceptual basis

Scheme of work. A scheme of work is a systematized guideline for a learning process that comprises the sequential explanation of the tasks to be carried out during several sessions.

Creative Writing. Mason (2013) defines creative writing as "an open and imaginative form of writing in which the author[s] freely [express] their unique thoughts and feelings" (p. 6). The author remarks that creative writing focuses on authenticity, imaginations, and expression.

Poetry. W. H. Auden, as cited in Burroway (2011), defines poetry as *memorable speech* (p. 295). The same source explains that, since its origins, poetry reflects an unbreakable and pervasive connection between sound and meaning (Burroway, 2011). It should be remembered as well that one of the most important characteristics of poetry is figurative language. Hence, poems transmit a message that goes beyond the literal meaning of their constituent words. Consequently, a

text is poetic when, independently from its form, it conveys meaning beyond the denotational level, stimulating oral reproduction and recollection.

Formal verse. Youman (2008) states that formal verse encompasses poems that follow regular patterns of rhyme and meter.

Haiku. It is as a formal syllabic poem of Japanese origin that conveys complex meaning while observing specific formal features. Moon (2001) explains that poem features the following key elements:

a) Seventeen-syllable structure.
b) Distinctive subject matter that emphasizes nature and the seasons, and their interaction with human experience.
c) Prominence on imagery
d) One-line and two-line image structural organization.
e) Transition from large-scale images to small-scale ones, or vice versa.

Syllabic pattern. This is the first formal feature of haiku. It affects the structure of the poem by regulating the distribution of its seventeen syllables among three lines, each containing five, seven, and five syllables (Iida, 2010; Moon, 2001).

Kigo or seasonal reference. This formal feature of haiku relates to the inclusion of words and phrases that make reference to a specific season (Iida, 2011). Nevertheless, this feature is not ubiquitous in English haiku (Iida, 2010).

Kireji. This final formal element of haiku concerns the inclusion of a cutting word or punctuation mark at the end of the second line of the haiku, which splits the poem in two sections and aids understanding and interpretation (Iida, 2010).

Academic literacy. According to Weideman (2014), academic literacy is the ability to, among other things, "understand a range of academic vocabulary in context, […] [appreciate] relations between different parts of a text, be aware of the logical development of an academic text […], and know how to use language that serves to make the [various] parts of a text hang together" (p. v).

Productive skills. Golkova and Hubackova (2014) assert that productive skills, also referred to as active skills, implicate the "transmission of information

that a language user produces in either spoken or written form," on the basis of the data received and interpreted through the receptive or passive skills (p. 478).

Writing. Coulmas (2003) characterizes writing as a "system of recording language by means of visible or tactile marks" (p. 1). Harmer (2004), for his part, identifies writing "as a fairly recent development in [human] evolution" (p. 1). The author differentiates writing from speaking because the former involves conscious and deliberate learning. The writing process, moreover, comprises planning, drafting, editing, and arrival to a final version. This process holds true for all text types. Nevertheless, the emphasis and recurrence of each stage depends on content and medium

Academic writing. According to Iida (2011), academic writing is a communicative practice, framed by disciplinary expectations, through which writers convey meaning in the form of an argument – while observing specific academic conventions – to readers who belong to particular discourse communities that share academic aims, knowledge, and standards.

6.7. Methodology

This proposal comprises the development of a scheme of work for the implementation of a creative writing workshop in the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca. The purpose of this workshop is to involve the Major's students in haiku composition practices with the aim of improving their communicative competence, particularly in regard to academic writing. Hence, the proposal has the following methodological bases:

Meaningful Literacy Instruction. Hanauer (2012) argues that Meaningful Literacy is a learner-centered approach to second and foreign language literacy instruction that abides by four principles:

e) Autobiographical writing, that is, making use of the learner's personal experience, along with memory and imagination, to promote self-understanding.
f) Emotional writing, i.e., encouraging the stimulation of emotional reactions and the manifestation of the learner's feelings.

g) Personal insight, which means integrating self-reflection into the composition process in order to deepen self-understanding.
h) Authentic public access, in other words, sharing what the learners have written with significant people in their lives.

Social-expressivist Pedagogy. Iida (2010) characterizes this concept as one that structures learning process around communicative environments where students learn to express their voices within socially set contexts that assume the existence of an audience, which is indispensable for the very existence of voice. In fact, according to Vygotsky's inner speech theory, the self has to be mediated in society before being developed inside individuals (as cited in Iida, 2010). Within this framework, "writing is an ongoing process of negotiation to make meaning, which in turn develops voice and a sense of audience in a specific community" (Iida, 2010, p. 29).

Protocol for the inclusion of haiku in EFL environments. Iida (2010) provides a five-step protocol for the incorporation of haiku in EFL instruction:

1. **Review the concept of haiku**. In this stage, learners are introduced to the nature and formal features of haiku by means of the analysis of examples.
2. **Collecting material for haiku.** This second stage is linked to a personal reflection process that might take place outside the classroom. This stage is to be based on writing-fostering questions.
3. **Composing haiku.** During this stage, learners are engaged in actual haiku composition practices. To minimize the inherent complexity of the task, it is important to encourage the students to exploit the information obtained in the previous stage as much as possible. At the same time, the teacher ought to be prepared and attentive to provide assistance when necessary.
4. **Peer reading.** In this stage, students present their haiku to an audience; this is to be done in small groups. Each member is to read his haiku to the other group members, who take notes on their reactions and interpretations. After the haiku is read, twice if

necessary, each member of the audience shares his personal interpretation. At the end, the writer reveals the original message of the haiku. The process is repeated until all haiku are read.

5. **Publishing haiku.** This stage is to be carried out at the end of the course or intervention, and it involves learners in activities of compilation, revision, and preparation of their haiku for potential publication. This stage aims at providing haiku composition with a palpable and definite purpose, while fostering audience awareness.

6.8. Proposal development

SCHEME OF WORK FOR INCORPORATING HAIKU COMPOSITION PRACTICES IN EFL INSTRUCTION: A SIX-WEEK CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

The following scheme of work is based on an adaption of Iida's (2010) protocol for the inclusion of haiku composition in EFL environments. The temporal framework for the workshop is six weeks. During each week, learners are to attend two one-hour sessions in different days. Additionally, the scheme encompasses one hour of autonomous work in between each session.

To facilitate understanding, it is important to explain the symbols of the fourth column of the table presented below. These symbols relate to the type of classroom interaction of each activity of the scheme of work:

T → Ss: Teacher to students.

T ↔ Ss: Teacher to students and **vice versa**.

Ss ↔ Ss: Students to students (group or whole-class work).

Ss: Individual work.

WEEK ONE

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Introduction to haiku composition: Analysis of the semantic and formal features of haiku. - Teacher gives a brief lecture about the origin, nature, and formal features of haiku.	15 min	T → Ss
One	Examination of first example: - Teacher projects one haiku on the whiteboard, and reads it aloud.	15 min	T ↔ Ss

	- Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the following questions (Iida, 2010): o How many syllables are used in each line? o What is the seasonal reference? o Do you see a cutting word or punctuation mark in this haiku? Where? o What is the theme? o What is the context? o What is happening in the poem? o What does the writer want to tell you in the haiku? o What is your impression from this haiku? - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku (Iida, 2010): *A bright red maple* *Whispering among green leaves:* *A start of new life* Original meaning: The red maple leaf makes reference to autumn, which is the time when the author started his graduate studies in the United States. This master program represented a new life, for which he felt both anxious and		T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	nervous. The red color can be linked to how he constantly blushed during the first day of class.		
One	Examination of second example: - Teacher projects a second haiku on the whiteboard, and reads it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the questions listed above. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *Dew drops in winter* *Shine and shower the forest:* *A new dawn arrives* Original meaning: The poem refers to the time when the author departed from his paternal home for the first time to be part of an exchange-student program in Maine, U.S. The seasonal reference is directly mentioned: winter. The forest stands for his family, and the dew drops represent the tears they shed when saying their farewells.	15 min	T ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - Students select and move to a place of their choice on campus, and they	15 min	Ss

	reflect on the following questions (Iida, 2010): o What do you see and hear? o What do you smell and taste? o What do you feel? Note: students are required to write down their answers to the questions posed in stage two every week. For this purpose, it is appropriate to provide students with notepads.		

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students start the composition of their first haiku using the information they have acquired in stage two.	60 min	Ss

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students finish composing / editing their first haiku. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	30 min	Ss T ↔ Ss
Four	Peer reading: - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4). - Each student reads his haiku aloud.	30 min	Ss ↔ Ss

	- Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - The audience share their ideas and impressions. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poem.		

WEEK TWO

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Review the concept of haiku: - Teacher and students go over the concept and characteristics of the formal elements of haiku.	5 min	T ↔ Ss
One	Examination of one example: - Teacher projects a haiku on the whiteboard, and asks a volunteer student to read it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the same questions as the previous week. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *Up and above, the* *Golden leaf floats and dances.* *The dark wind just sighs* Original meaning: The haiku is about the author's favorite season: autumn. On one occasion, when the author was living in the United States, he was invited to a high-school prom. In the event, he met an African-American young man who was part of a band and played the saxophone,	15 min	Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	a wind instrument. In the poem, this is shown in the last line. The young musician confessed that he was in love with a blond girl, the yellow leaf, but this love was impossible because of their different economic status. Throughout the night, the girl danced, while the young African-American performed with his band.		
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - Individually, students reflect on the following questions: o What is your favorite season/time of the year? Why? o What people/animals do you associate with this season/time of the year? Why? o What do you see, hear, taste, and smell in this season/tine of the year? - In groups (3 – 4), students share and comment on their answers, while the teacher monitors the activity.	20 min 20 min	Ss Ss ↔ Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students start the composition of their second haiku using the information they have acquired in stage two. Suggested topic: favorite season / time of the year.	60 min	Ss

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students finish composing / editing their second haiku. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	30 min	Ss T ↔ Ss
Four	Peer reading: Same procedure as the previous week. - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4). - Each student reads his haiku aloud. - Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - The audience share their ideas and impressions. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poem.	30 min	Ss ↔ Ss

WEEK THREE

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Review the concept of haiku: examination of one example. - Teacher projects a haiku on the whiteboard, and asks a volunteer student to read it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the same questions as the previous weeks. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *Green grass and clover* *Fast stand over the same soil,* *Both through hail and rain.* Original meaning: The haiku is about the author's best friend. The seasonal reference is summer, as exemplified by the greenness of the grass and clover. At the same time, the color green indicates the immutability of true friendship. Although they are not identical, the two friends have very similar characteristics, as grass and clover do. Moreover, even though	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	they do not have the same ancestry, their friendship has allowed them to endure harsh times (rain and hail) together.		
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - Individually, students reflect on the following questions: o For you, what is the color of friendship? Why? o When thinking about the word friendship, what place comes to your mind? Why? o What do you see, hear, and smell in that place? - In groups (3 – 4), students share and comment on their answers, while the teacher monitors the activity.	20 min 20 min	Ss Ss ↔ Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students start the composition of their third haiku using the information they have acquired in stage two. Suggested topic: friendship.	60 min	Ss

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students finish composing / editing their third haiku. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	30 min	Ss T ↔ Ss
Four	Peer reading: Same procedure as the previous weeks. - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4). - Each student reads his haiku aloud. - Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - The audience share their ideas and impressions. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poem.	30 min	Ss ↔ Ss

WEEK FOUR

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Review the concept of haiku: examination of one example. - Teacher projects a haiku on the whiteboard, and asks a volunteer student to read it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the same questions as the previous weeks. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *A peach and a pear* *Sprang from a southern orchard:* *Two dreams full of life.* Original meaning: The haiku is about the author's brother. Peach and pear represent their favorite fruit since childhood. For its part, the southern orchard stands for the place of birth of the brothers, Cuenca, which is located in the Southern Highlands of Ecuador. The seasonal reference is ambiguous, since apples and pears do not spring at a specific time of	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	the year; nevertheless, apples are usually associated with autumn in the United States. The last line is, at the same time, a play of words and a message about how the author has perceived his relationship with his brother.		
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - Individually, students reflect on the following questions: o When thinking about the word family, what single person comes to your mind? Why? o If this person were a season / time of the year, what would that be? Why? o If this person were an animal, what would he/she be? Why? o What colors, sounds, and feelings do you associate with this season / time of the year? - In groups (3 – 4), students share and comment on their answers, while the teacher monitors the activity.	20 min 20 min	Ss Ss ↔ Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students start the composition of their fourth haiku using the information	60 min	Ss

	they have acquired in stage two. Suggested topic: family.		

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students finish composing / editing their fourth haiku. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	30 min	Ss T ↔ Ss
Four	Peer reading: Same procedure as the previous weeks. - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4). - Each student reads his haiku aloud. - Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - The audience share their ideas and impressions. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poem.	30 min	Ss ↔ Ss

WEEK FIVE

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Review the concept of haiku: examination of one example. - Teacher projects a haiku on the whiteboard, and asks a volunteer student to read it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the same questions as the previous weeks. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *A red-stained white rose* *Bowed underneath long black thorns,* *Yet it rose again.* Original meaning: The haiku is about the Christian definition of love, i.e., the death and passion of Jesus. The seasonal reference is spring, as represented by blossoming roses. Furthermore, the white rose stands for Jesus, and the red-stains evoke his injuries during crucifixion. Bowing underneath long black thorns suggests the image of a dead Jesus hanging from the cross	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	with his head bowed under the weight of a crown of thorns. The color black, for its part, stands for sin. The final line illustrates the resurrection of Christ, and it is, at the same time, a play of words.		
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - In small groups (3 – 4), students discuss the following questions: o If love were a flower, what would it be? Why? o If love were an animal, what would it be? Why? - The activity is to be performed twice in different groups. - Individually, students reflect and answer the previous questions, plus the following: o When thinking about the word *love,* what place or event in your life comes to your mind? Why? o What do you see, hear, smell, and feel there?	20 min 20 min	Ss ↔ Ss Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students compose their fifth and sixth haiku using the information they have acquired in stage two. Students ought	60 min	Ss

	to be encouraged to employ the writing experience they have acquired in the previous sessions. Suggested topic: love.		

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students work in pairs. - Each student reads his two haiku to his classmate. - For each pair of haiku, students discuss and exchange ideas regarding the poems they hear. They employ the below questions as guidelines for the discussion: o Do the haiku observe the three formal elements of this type of poems? o Which of the two haiku has been their favorite? Why? o Should any changes be done to the texts? Which ones? Why? - If needed, students make pertinent changes in their poems. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	25 min	Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss T ↔ Ss

Four	Peer reading: Same procedure as the previous weeks, with the exception that, this time, each student reads his two haiku. - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4). - Each student reads his two haiku aloud. - Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - The audience share their ideas and impressions. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poems.	35 min	Ss ↔ Ss

WEEK SIX

Day 1

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
One	Review the concept of haiku: examination of one example. - Teacher projects a haiku on the whiteboard, and asks a volunteer student to read it aloud. - Problematic vocabulary is addressed. - In groups, students reflect on the same questions as the previous weeks. - Students share their answers in a whole-class activity. - Teacher discloses the original meaning of the haiku, and a brief whole-class discussion ensues. Suggested haiku: *Four brown myrtle leaves* *Fell and glided in the wind:* *A stream of blue hope.* Original meaning: The haiku is about the author's experience as an exchange student at Coastal Caroline University, which is located in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The seasonal reference is autumn, as shown through the brown myrtle leaves. The second line suggests that time passed quickly. The last line, for its part, specifically makes reference to a stream that	15 min	Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

	flowed through the university campus. At the same time, the last line evokes the expectations and hopes the author had when returning home after the program.		
Two	Collecting material for haiku: - Individually, students list three unforgettable moments in their lives. - For each one, students answer the following questions. o Where were you? Why were you there? o What did you see and hear? o What did you smell and taste? o What did you feel? - In small groups (3 – 4), students share their answers about the three unforgettable moments in their lives, while the teacher monitors the activity.	20 min 25 min	Ss Ss ↔ Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students select two of the events they listed in stage two, and compose a haiku for each one (seventh and eighth). Additionally, they compose two more haiku (ninth and tenth) on a topic of their choice. Students ought to be encouraged to employ the	60 min	Ss

	writing experience they have acquired in the previous sessions.		

Day 2

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Three	Composing haiku: - Students work in pairs. - Each student reads his four haiku to his classmate. - For each group of haiku, students discuss and exchange ideas regarding the poems they hear. They employ the below questions as guidelines for the discussion: o Do the haiku observe the three formal elements of this type of poems? o Which of the four haiku has been their favorite? Why? o Should any changes be done to the texts? Which ones? Why? - If needed, students make pertinent changes in their poems. - Teacher provides assistance at the request of students.	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss T ↔ Ss
Four	Peer reading: - Students are divided into small groups (3 – 4).	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss

	- Each student reads his four haiku aloud. - Other group members note down their impressions and interpretations of their peer's haiku. - After all poems are read, the group briefly discusses them and selects two to be presented to the whole class. Whole-class activity: the selected haiku of each group are read and analyzed following a similar procedure as in the previous weeks. - The author of each haiku reads his poem aloud. - The rest of students note down and share their impressions and interpretations of their peers' haiku to the whole class. - The writer explains what he originally intended to express through his poem.	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss

At home

Stage	Task	Time	Interaction
Five	Creation of a book of haiku: - Each student reviews and edits, if necessary, the ten haiku they have written. - Students are instructed to place especial emphasis on reviewing meaning conveyance and the	60 min	Ss

	observance of the formal features of the poem. - Each student compiles the ten haiku in a portfolio/book that contains following elements: o Cover page. o Acknowledgements o Dedicatory note o The ten haiku organized according to criteria chosen by the writer. o Some sort of decorative feature for each poem.		

Feedback and reflection session

Task	Time	Interaction
Sharing their creations: - Students are organized in groups of (3 – 4). - Students are given the opportunity to show their classmates their book of haiku. - Students are encouraged to go over the books of haiku, exchange ideas, and make pertinent comments or questions about them.	15 min	Ss ↔ Ss
Group discussion: - In the same groups, each student shares his experience and reactions towards haiku composition. The following question can be used as guidelines for discussion: o Did you have any creative writing experience before this workshop?	20 min	Ss ↔ Ss

o How has this experience helped you in your learning process of English? o What have you learned about yourself through this experience? o What have you learned about English through this experience? o Do you think you will continue to write haiku or any other creative text in English? Why? - Teacher monitors the activity Whole-class activity: - Volunteer students from each group share the most important information that sprang from the previous discussion. The teacher can make use of the above questions to guide this activity. - Teacher and students give more comments and share their additional perspectives. - Teacher brings the session to an end by giving some closing remarks. o The importance of creative writing practices for EFL learning should be emphasized. o It is imperative to congratulate students for their creations. o Students ought to be encouraged to seek further contact with creative writing practices.	25 min	Ss ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss T ↔ Ss

6.9. Operative model

This proposal is part of a Thesis Dissertation that is a graduation requirement of the TEFL Master's Program offered by Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Consequently, the proposal has been developed on the basis of pertinent literature regarding the inclusion of creative writing practices in ESL/EFL learning contexts. The proposal attempts to address the alleged overemphasis on structural awareness (Iida, 2011) and overtly observable and measurable communicative skills (Hanauer, 2012), which causes problems in real-life communication. This difficulty has been evidenced in the performance of the sixth-semester English Language and Literature majors at Universidad de Cuenca, particularly in regard to academic writing.

Furthermore, the research component of the thesis project also supports the proposal. As explained above, the research design of the thesis comprised the application of essay-based tests before and after a six-week intervention. Additionally, a five-item open-ended-question survey was administered at the end of the treatment. The results of the research demonstrate that haiku composition has a positive influence on the learning process of English as foreign language, specifically, on the betterment of academic writing skills. It is hoped, therefore, that the findings of the research will motivate the professors and the authorities of the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca to use the systematized material presented in the above scheme of work to offer subsequent creative writing workshops in the future. It is imperative to stress the fact that the information presented in the scheme of work should not be seen as a prescribed recipe. In other words, the planning and application of additional workshops ought to address the specific needs of every educational context, while taking into account personal preferences of both learners and instructors.

Table 6.1. Operative model

STAGES	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	PERSON IN CHARGE	ASSESSMENT
1. Planning and socialization July – September 2017	- Development and approval of thesis project proposal. - Socialization meeting with authorities and professors of the TEFL Major of Universidad de Cuenca. - Obtaining permission for the implementation of the proposal.	- Classroom - Laptop - Projector - Written proposal	- Thesis project author. - Director of the TEFL Major	- Comments and suggestions from thesis project evaluator. - Official written record of the TEFL Major Academic Meeting.
2. Implementation of proposal November 7 – December 17 2017	- Pre-test application. - Workshop in-class sessions. - Learners' autonomous work.	- Classroom - Written prompts - Scheme of work - Laptop - Projector - Notepads	- Thesis project author. - Sixth-semester TEFL majors at U. Cuenca.	- Attendance registries. - Students' personal notes and haiku drafts.
3. Assessment Throughout the application of the proposal and at the feedback and reflection session.	- Post-test application. - Survey administration. - Compilation of book of haiku. - Feedback and reflection session	- Classroom - Written prompts - Digital survey - Laptop - Projector	- Thesis project author. - Sixth-semester TEFL majors at U. Cuenca. - Thesis project tutor.	- Pre and post-test results. - Survey responses - Comments from students and authorities.

Source: Project's proposal
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

6.10. Administration of the proposal

This proposal has comprised the planning and implementation of a six-week intervention in which haiku composition practices have been promoted. This has been done in order to attend to the lack of empirical evidence regarding the use and value of poetry-based activities in the language classroom. Specifically, the intervention, which constitutes a creative writing workshop, has attempted to determine the influence of haiku composition on the improvement of the academic writing skills of a group of sixth-semester TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca. The findings of the research study from which the proposal has sprung suggest that haiku writing has beneficial effects for the development of academic writing skills. Consequently, the scheme of work presented in this proposal can be used to plan and implement future creative writing workshops. Under these circumstances, it is appropriate to discuss the financial aspect of the project and its proposal. This information is summarized in the following table:

Table 6.2. Proposal's budget

Items	Amount
1. Office supplies	$15
2. Students' notepads	$15
3. Bibliographical sources	$50
4. Commuting	$20
TOTAL	$100

Source: Project's proposal
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

6.11. Proposal assessment

The assessment of the proposal is of a two-fold nature. For one part, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data obtained through the research project evince that the objectives of the study have been attained. This information can be found in Chapter IV. Moreover, the assessment of the intervention – on which the scheme of work presented in the proposal is based –

relies on the products of the intervention, i.e., the books of haiku; the attendance registries kept by the researcher; and the participants' impressions and comments, as revealed in the post-intervention survey and the discussion activities of the treatment.

Table 6.3. Proposal's assessment outline

Basic inquiries	Rationale
1. What is being assessed?	The implementation of the proposal
2. Why is it being assessed?	Because its monitoring is an academic and research necessity.
3. What is the purpose of the assessment?	To identify the outcomes of the proposal.
4. What are the criteria of assessment?	Effectiveness, feasibility, and result reliability.
5. Indicators	Temporal scope, practicability, and quantitative/qualitative findings.
6. Who is the person who assesses?	Thesis author
7. When does the assessment take place?	Throughout and after the implementation of the proposal.
8. How is the assessment carried out?	Through quantitative and qualitative techniques.
9. What are the data sources?	Participants' written production and comments. Credited bibliographic sources.
10. What are the instruments of assessment?	Pre and post essay-based tests, open-ended-question survey, and final report.

Source: Project's proposal
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Informed consent

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO

MAESTRÍA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA COHORTE 2016

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO DE PARTICIPACIÓN

Título de la investigación: "Haiku composition and the development of academic writing skills"

Investigador: Lcdo. Juan José Santillán I.

Estimado participante:

En mi calidad de maestrante del programa de Maestría en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, cohorte 2016, como parte de los requisitos de graduación del programa, es necesario desarrollar un proyecto de investigación. En este caso puntual, el estudio trata de identificar y analizar la influencia de la composición de haikus, poemas cortos de origen japonés, en el desarrollo de las destrezas de escritura académica. Se ha planteado que los participantes de la investigación sean los estudiantes matriculados en el grupo 1 de la asignatura de Conversation and Composition de sexto ciclo de la Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa de la Universidad de Cuenca. El estudio contempla una intervención de seis semanas, en las que se mantendrán dos sesiones de una hora dos veces por semana.

La investigación cuenta con la aprobación de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato, donde se oferta el programa de maestría; además, ha recibido el aval de la Junta Académica de la Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa y del H. Consejo Directivo de la Facultad de Filosofía, Letras, y Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad de Cuenca. Es imperativo recalcar que tanto el proceso como la presentación de los resultados de la investigación se llevarán bajo estrictas normas de confidencialidad; en tal instancia, su nombre no será utilizado en ningún informe ni publicación. Asimismo, este estudio no implica ningún riesgo ni afectación personal o académica. Además, usted goza del pleno derecho de escoger no participar en este estudio.

En caso tener alguna inquietud o pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede comunicarse directamente con mi persona a través de la cuenta institucional de correo electrónico: juan.santillan@ucuenca.edu.ec

AUTORIZACIÓN

Yo, _____, estudiante de la asignatura de Conversation and Composition, grupo 1, del sexto ciclo de la Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa de la Universidad de Cuenca, he leído esta información y estoy de acuerdo en participar en la investigación aquí descrita.

Firma del participante: _____ Cédula de identidad: _____

Fecha: _____

Firma del investigador: _____ Fecha: _____

Appendix 2: Pre and post-intervention essay writing prompts

Prompt A

You are required to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. This essay should be more or less one page in length. Please, make sure to include a thesis statement and provide specific reasons and examples to support your ideas. Your essay should be as clear and convincing as possible Remember that an essay contains an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. You will have **60** minutes to complete the task.

Topic: Do you agree or disagree with the current admission process to Ecuadorian public universities? Why?

Prompt B

You are required to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. This essay should be more or less one page in length. Please, make sure to include a thesis statement and provide specific reasons and examples to support your ideas. Your essay should be as clear and convincing as possible Remember that an essay contains an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. You will have **60** minutes to complete the task.

Topic: Do you agree or disagree with that English classes in high school (EFL) should be taught only in this language? Why?

Appendix 3: Assessment rubric

B1	CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	ORGANIZATION	LANGUAGE
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is generally well organized and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices.	Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately, with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication.
4	Performance shares features of bands 3 and 5.			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task in generally appropriate ways to communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices	Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis. Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control. While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.
2	Performance shares features of bands 1 and 3.			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Produces text that communicates simple ideas in simple ways.	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately. Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control. Errors may impede meaning at times.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed	Performance below band 1.		

Appendix 4: Post-intervention survey template

Haiku Composition Survey

Please, answer the following question honestly. Remember, there are not right or wrong answers. The questions merely intend to explore your reactions about haiku composition and its effect on your academic writing skills.

* Required

Did you enjoy learning to write and writing haiku in English? Do you think this was a valuable task for you (answer honestly)? If so, what did this task contribute to your understanding and ability to write in English? *

Your answer

What were your strengths as a writer of haiku? *

Your answer

What was difficult about writing haiku? *

Your answer

Take a few moments to read through both of your essays. Do you think there are any differences between the first and second essay? If so, what are they? *

Your answer

Would you recommend this learning method to other EFL students? If so, why? *

Your answer

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Appendix 5: Urkund Report

URKUND

Urkund Analysis Result

Analysed Document:	1. Thesis final - Juan José Santillán - Formato Urkund.docx (D37345023)
Submitted:	4/9/2018 4:54:00 AM
Submitted By:	juan.santillan@ucuenca.edu.ec
Significance:	1 %

Sources included in the report:

https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/42542

Instances where selected sources appear:

1

Appendix 6: Academic paper

Haiku composition and the development of academic writing skills
La composición de haikus y el desarollo de destrezas de escritura académica

Juan José Santillán I. juan.santillan@ucuenca.edu.ec
Manuel Xavier Sulca Guale manuelxsulcag@uta.edu.ec

Universidad Técnica de Ambato, Ecuador

Abstract

The objective of this research study is determining the influence of haiku composition on the development of the academic writing skills of a group of thirty students of the English Language and Literature (TEFL) Major of Universidad de Cuenca. This study is part of a larger project materialized in a Thesis Dissertation of a Master Program in TEFL offered by Universidad Técnica de Ambato, Ecuador. The research design of the study is of a quantitative nature; that is, it is based on the statistical analysis of the results of essay-based tests. These tests were administered before and after a six-week intervention in which haiku writing practices were promoted. The findings of the study demonstrate that haiku composition had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of the study.
Key words: haiku composition, academic writing skills, EFL learners.

Resumen

El objetivo de la presente investigación es determinar la influencia de la composición de haikus sobre el desarrollo de las destrezas de escritura académica de un grupo de treinta estudiantes de la Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa de la Universidad de Cuenca. Este estudio es parte de un projecto más amplio que se materializó en una Disertación de Tesis del Programa de Maestría en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés como Lengua Extranjera ofertado por la Universdiad Técnica de Ambato. El diseño de la investigación es de naturaleza cuantitativa; es decir, está estructurado en torno al anális estadístico de los resultados de pruebas escritas, basadas en ensayos, que fueron aplicadas antes y despúes de una intervención de seis semanas, en la que la escritura de haikus fue fomentada. Los resultados el estudio demuestran que la composición de haikus tuvo un efecto beneficioso en el desarrollo de las destrezas de escritura académica de los participantes del estudio.
Palabras clave: composición de haikus, destrezas de escritura académica, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera

Introduction

The inclusion of poetry in the EFL classroom is, to say the least, a controversial topic. Khatib (2011), Hişmanoğlu (2005), and Spack (1985) assert that a resurgence of interest in the use of literature in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments has taken place in recent years. Nevertheless, poetry continues to be shunned from these contexts (Khatib, 2011; Panavelil, 2011). Much of this reluctance to use poetic texts when teaching/learning a second or foreign language can be linked to personal beliefs and opinions about this literary medium (Scrivener, 2011, Khatib 2011). In addition, as reported by many authors (Iida, 2012; Hall, 2005; Hanauer, 2012), poetry has received relatively little attention in ESL and EFL research. On the other hand, Iida (2011) argues that the contemporary emphasis on grammar instruction and on the development of overtly observable language skills causes many EFL students to be "at a disadvantage when they have to use English in real-world situations" (p. 1).

Furthermore, and dealing specifically with the context of this study, it should be remarked that, according to the English Proficiency Index (EPI) Report published by Education First (EF) in 2017, Ecuador has a low proficiency level in this language, raking – at a global scale – 55 among 80 evaluated countries, with an EF EPI score of 49.42/100. Hence, in the Latin American context, Ecuador is positioned 13 among 15 countries. Given that the productive skills are considered to bear greater problems for second and foreign language learners (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016; Golkova & Hubackovab, 2014), one can confidently infer that writing in English presents serious difficulties for Ecuadorians, especially with regard to academic tasks because of their particularly complex nature (Cummins, 2008; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). This fact holds stark contrast with the global importance that English has acquired in the last decades. Both this situation and the above-discussed want of empirical evidence regarding the

influence of poetry-based activities in ESL/EFL environments constitute a research gap, which this study has attempted to address.

Literature Review

The role of literature in ESL/EFL classrooms has gone through different stages and facets. Nkwetisama (2013) argues that, during the 15th and 19th centuries, literature was used in the instruction of classical rhetoric, which aimed at the development of discovery and communication capacities. For her part, Larsen-Freeman (2011) points out that literary texts were a crucial component in teaching-learning processes set within the Grammar-Translation Method. Nevertheless, when employed in this manner, literature was not regarded as a resource for communicative competence development (Nkwetisama, 2013).

In the second half of the 19th century, the focus of language instruction was placed on linguistic accuracy. As a consequence, literature began to be excluded from second and foreign language teaching-learning processes (Nkwetisama, 2013). This exclusion was progressively accentuated in the following decades. Mackay (1982) states that, by the end of the 20th century, second and foreign language teaching emphasized the achievement of academic and professional objectives. Therefore, as Spack (1985) argues, the importance of literature in ESL/EFL environments "faded as linguistics became the focal point of language programs" (p. 704).

Coincidentally, a renewed interest in the role of literature as a resource for ESL/EFL teaching and learning started to develop precisely in the eighties (Spack, 1985; Paran, 2008). However, Hall (2005) suggests that language teachers often consider literature to be "a source of activities, as 'material', with too little concern for the wider curricular issues" (p. 47). In line with this idea, Bloemert et al. (2017) maintain that, despite contemporary efforts, literature has not been thoroughly integrated into ESL/EFL curricula.

Another feature of this modern attention to literature is its relative deficiency of empirical

validation. The arguments that support the inclusion of literature in the language classroom are often adapted from first-language contexts (Hall, 2005) or constructed on the basis of practitioner evidence (Paran, 2008). One should bear in mind that this deficiency in field research is heightened with regard to poetry (Hanauer, 2010; Iida, 2012). Nevertheless, empirical research, however limited, has been developed. It is important, therefore, to discuss the reported advantages of the use of literature – particularly, poetry – in ESL/EFL environments, to later address the studies that have been carried out about the topic.

Many authors have discussed the benefits of incorporating poetry in the language classroom. These reported advantages encompass several dimensions of language teaching and learning, which are listed below:

1. Provision of authentic language models (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Panavelil, 2011; Lazar 1993).
2. Vocabulary development (Nation, 2005; Kırkgöz, 2008; Panavelil, 2011; Scrivener, 2011).
3. Macro-skill development:
    a. Writing (Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Collie and Slater as cited in Panavelil, 2011).
    b. Reading (Kong, 2010; Silberstein, 1994).
    c. Listening and speaking (Khansir, 2012; Harmer, 2010; Lazar, 1993).
4. Grammar (Khatib, 2011; Panavelil, 2011; Lazar, 1993).
5. Motivation (Scrivener, 2011; Hanauer, 2012; Lazar, 1993; Panavelil, 2011; Kong, 2010).

With regard to the empirical evidence concerning the topic of this research, and despite its relative want, several studies have been carried out.

Kırkgöz (2008) identifies five positive features of the use poetry in the language classroom: a) meaningful practice for the linguistic structures addressed in class, b) support for vocabulary enrichment, c) promotion of meaningful and personalized learning experiences that stimulate motivation and authentic communication, d) constructive effect on creative writing

efforts by facilitating the incorporation of personal experiences and emotions into the tasks, and e) retention reinforcement that benefits every-day language use.

Pushpa and Savaedi (2014), for their part, assess the influence of poetry on autonomous EFL courses. The results of the study suggest that the inclusion of poetry in language instruction has a positive impact on performance. Moreover, this literary manifestation arouses interest in learners by allowing them to identify themselves with universal topics. One of the consequences of this fact is the provision of more opportunities for effective communication, which is fostered by creativity and expressive freedom.

Regarding poetry writing in language learning, Hanauer (2010) presents clear evidence against considering this practice as too difficult for second language learners. By analyzing a corpus of 844 second language poems, the result of Hanauer's teaching practice, the author concludes that the linguistic evidence shares three features: the texts are short, the employed vocabulary is simple, and the writers' emphasis is on imagery. The conclusion that ensues is that writing poetry is not a difficult task for well-stimulated students, especially those at advanced levels.

In the same line of research, Liao (2012) explores the relationships between the reported writing experiences and the perceived values of poetry writing of a group of TESOL graduate students in the United States. From the findings of the study, the researcher suggests that poetry writing nurtures self-expression, self-discovery, and emotional release. Liao (2012) also attests that poetry-based creative writing practices benefit linguistic knowledge and competence, as exemplified by vocabulary enrichment. Likewise, the participants' responses allow Liao (2012) to claim that, through poetry writing, language learners are encouraged "to embrace the authorship and ownership of their writing and the English language, and see themselves as multilingual writers" (p. 97).

For his part, Chamcharatsri (2013) examines the experience of four Thai ESL students while expressing love through poems written in both their native language and in English. Based on the findings of the research, Chamcharatsri (2013) argues that, although with avowed difficulty, second language learners are able to write poems and effectively express love through these literary texts. Furthermore, Chamcharatsri (2013) claims that poetry enables language learners to change the emphasis of their writing from structure to content, at the same time becoming aware of the self-expression value of the target language.

As to haiku composition, Iida (2011) addresses two research questions that relate to a) the influence of haiku writing on second/foreign language (L2) academic literacy and b) the perceived attitudes and emotions of language learners with regard to haiku writing in the target language. The participants of the study are 20 Japanese EFL students. The research design entails the application of essay-based tests and the development of interviews before and after a six-week intervention in which haiku writing practices are promoted. Iida (2011) analyzes as well the contents of weekly journal entries, reflection forms, and a book of 10 compiled haiku from each participant.

The results of the textual analysis of the pre and post-tests and of the compiled haiku demonstrate that haiku writing positively influences the development of EFL academic writing skills. Concerning the perceived value of TL haiku composition, Iida (2011) reports that participants acknowledge that writing haiku in a language other than their mother tongue is a difficult endeavor. Nevertheless, Iida (2011) claims that the majority of participants of the study consider haiku to be beneficial for vocabulary acquisition and self-expression, and the development of transferable literacy skills.

Furthermore, from Iida's (2011) research, two complementary studies derive. Iida (2012) specifically focuses on the examination of EFL students' perceptions towards haiku writing.

The findings support Hanauer's (2010), Liao's (2012), Chamcharatsri's (2013), and Iida's (2011) conclusions. Iida's (2012) study employs the same subject pool as the 2011 research. Likewise, the research design resembles the one previously discussed. The results of the study indicate positive attitudes towards haiku writing, which is deemed to be a constructive practice for English learning, especially in terms of vocabulary enrichment.

Iida's (2016) case study involving a Myanmarese EFL student in Japan follows a similar procedure to the ones described above. The findings lead the author to affirm that poetry writing in the target language not only offers language practice but also endows L2 literacy practice with personal meaning, thus encouraging self-discovery. It is important to remark that Iida (2011, 2012, 2016) characterizes the development of voice and self-expression as one significant foundation for the improvement of EFL academic writing skills.

Methodology

This study has been developed on the basis of quantitative research. Consequently, the methodology of the study relies on the statistical analysis of the results of essay-based tests administered before and after a six-week intervention.

Participants. The participants of the study were 30 TEFL majors at Universidad de Cuenca, 8 males and 22 females, who, during the September 2017 – February 2018 semester, were part of the Conversation and Composition Class offered in the sixth semester of the program. The rationale for choosing sixth-semester students is that, at this stage of their academic instruction, learners are expected to have attained proficiency skills corresponding to the B1 CEFR level. This proficiency has been determined by the assessment instruments developed by the English Language and Literature Major, which the participants have had to take and approve in the first five semesters of the program. Because of their proficiency level, the participants of the research were able to cope with

haiku writing. In addition, the nature of the Conversation and Composition course straightforwardly agrees with that of this research project, as it specifically deals with academic writing in English.

Data Collection. This research study employed primary-source of data collection inside the classroom, i.e., two English written texts produced by the participants before and after the intervention (Iida, 2011).

To identify the pre-treatment academic writing skills of the participants, a pre-test was applied. This pre-test required participants to write a short argumentative essay on a specific topic (Iida, 2011). Participants were divided in two groups, and each group was provided with a different essay writing prompt, A and B. These writing prompts were adapted from the ones employed by Iida (2011), and they required the participants to express and support their point of view regarding a specific topic. The allotted time was 60 minutes; nevertheless, a required word count was deliberately not informed.

Following the identification of pre-treatment academic writing skills, the participants were introduced to the structure and composition process of haiku. Afterwards, weekly creative writing lessons were held for a six-week period. Each weekly lesson encompassed two one-hour sessions devoted to in-class activities and one hour of autonomous composition. The treatment was based on an adaption of Iida's (2010) protocol for the inclusion of haiku in the EFL classroom.

After the treatment, participants were required to write another argumentative essay as a post-test. Following Iida's (2011) research design, participants were divided in the same groups as in the pre-test, and they were provided with the writing prompt that was originally given to the other group. This was done in order to minimize the probability that the differences between the pre and post-tests could be affected by topical commonality.

Data analysis. To ensure reliability, the pre and post-intervention tests were graded by two TEFL professors from Universidad de

Cuenca, who were not part of any other stage of the research. The grading process was carried out using a validated rubric (see Appendix 3) specifically developed for B1 language learners by the University of Cambridge (Lim, 2012). This rubric assesses four criteria on a 0-5 scale. These criteria are content, communicative achievement, organization, and language. The results were analyzed by a professional statistician. This analysis was conducted with the software SPSS, 22 version, which allowed the researcher to determine descriptive and inferential results. The descriptive analysis is structured on the basis of Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD). The former show the tendencies according to the different criteria of the rubric used to assess the participants. For their part, Standard Deviations reveal the amount of variation or the quantity of dispersion that exists around each mean. Additionally, the analysis has also taken into account the number of grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes that were identified in the essays written before and after the intervention.

The inferential analysis employed the Shapiro Wilk Nonparametric Test to prove the distribution of the data. This report has considered the p value as the result of probabilities to determine if the intervention changed the initial situation in the final evaluation. Therefore, the hypothesis concerning the influence of the haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills is confirmed if the p value is less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$).

Results

Table 1 shows the comparison between the performances in the pre and post-tests. The table also features the difference of mean between the two tests, as well as the p value of each rubric criteria.

Table 1. Comparison of pre and post-test results

	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference		p value
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
Content	3.33	1.49	4.13	0.73	0.80	1.21	0.001150
Communicative achievement	3.03	1.30	3.80	0.81	0.77	0.90	0.000062
Organization	3.03	1.40	3.97	0.85	0.93	1.05	0.000036
Language	3.33	1.30	4.20	0.76	0.87	0.97	0.000036
Sum	12.73	5.19	16.10	2.63	3.37	3.37	0.000007

Note: Content (t -3.607, df 29, p .001), Communicative achievement (t -4.678, df 29, p .000), Organization (t -4.877, df 29, p .000), Language (t -4.878, df 29, p .000), Sum (t -5.475, df 29, p .000).

Source: Pre-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

The comparison between the pre and post-intervention tests reveals that there was a substantial increase in all the criteria, as well as in their sum. In fact, in *Content*, the difference between the pre and post-test means is 0.8; in *Communicative achievement*, 0.77; in *Organization*, 0.93 points; and in *Language*, 0.87. For its part, the difference between the sums of the criteria is 3.37 (SD 3.37). In all cases, the increase is significant because the p value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). As a consequence, there is evidence to affirm that the hypothesis about the positive influence of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills has been confirmed.

With regard to the difference between the mistake count in the pre and post-intervention tests, the number of identified mistakes decreased. These results are shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Mistake count comparison

	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference		p value
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
Spelling	6.27	3.65	4.03	3.86	2.23	5.06	0.022213
Grammar	6.50	3.95	4.40	4.25	2.10	4.05	0.008224
Punctuation	2.20	2.12	2.07	1.87	0.13	2.96	0.806631
Sum	14.97	7.19	10.50	7.13	4.47	7.62	0.003242

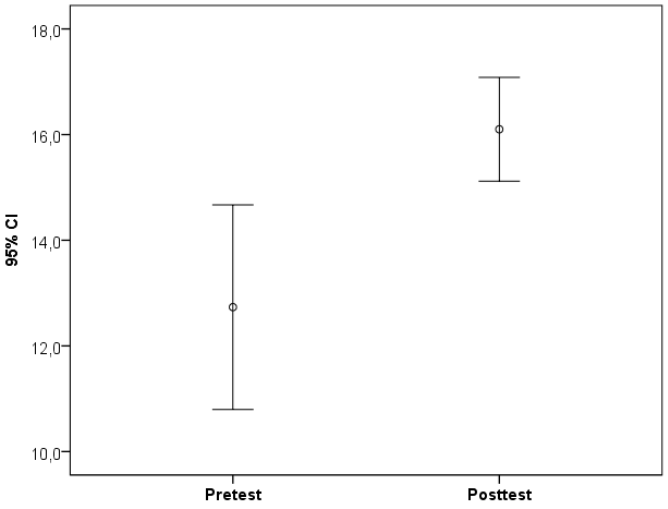
Note: Spelling (t 2.416, df 29, p .022), Grammar (t 2.837, df 29, p .008), Punctuation (t .247, df 29, p .807), Sum (t 3.209, df 29, p .003).

Source: Pre-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

In two specific aspects, Spelling and Grammar, students made considerably less mistakes. In fact, the difference in regard to Spelling is 2.23, and in Grammar, 2.10. In both cases, the difference is significant since the p value is lower than 0.05. However, in Punctuation, the situation remained virtually the same, with a reduction of only 0.13 points and a p value that is greater than 0.05. All in all, the comparison of the sums of the pre and post-treatment mistake counts provides relevant evidence regarding the reduction of the number of mistakes made by the participants; the total difference is 4.47 (SD 7.62), with a p value of 0.003.

Finally, Figure 1 portrays the behavior of the pre and post-test results. This diagram has been developed on the basis of the pre and post-test total means, as well as of their standard deviations.

Figure 1. Bar diagram of pre and post-test results



Source: Pre-test results
Author: Santillán, J (2018)

As it can be noticed, Figure 1 illustrates the beneficial effect of haiku composition on the development of academic writing skills. When the pre and post-test results are compared, it becomes evident that the pre-test mean is lower (14.42) than the post-test result (16.10). This difference is revealed by the position of the two bars. Moreover, the diagram also shows that the pre-test results have more variation than in the post-test, since the SD in the former is 4.42, while, in the latter, it is 2.63.

Discussion

The conclusion that ensues from the analysis of the statistical results is that haiku composition had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of this research study. The significance of this influence is supported by the p value of the results of each criterion of the rubric employed to assess the pre-and post-intervention essays. In all cases, this value is lower than 0.05.

With regard to the comparison of the results among the rubric criteria, the greater difference between the pre and post-treatment tests is found in *Organization* (0.93), immediately followed by *Language* (0.87). Nevertheless, it is important to remark that the standard deviation is lower in the latter (0.97) than in the former (1.05). This last fact adds to the relevance of the improvement in the *Language* criterion. The increase in the results pertaining to *Organization* can be understood in a positive influence of haiku composition on the attentiveness students have towards the writing process. Additionally, the enhancement in *Organization* is also linked to other reported benefits of haiku composition such as literacy-skill transfer and the development of genre-specific writing skills and knowledge (Iida, 2011).

As the rubric descriptors for *Language* indicate, the improvement in this criterion relates to vocabulary acquisition, grammatical competence, and mistake reduction. Therefore, the results of the *Language* criterion straightforwardly support the notion that poetry writing aids vocabulary enrichment (Iida, 2011, 2012;

Kırkgöz, 2008; Panavelil, 2011; Scrivener, 2011; Liao, 2012). Likewise, one ought to bear in mind that vocabulary acquisition has been identified as one important contribution of haiku composition in EFL environments (Iida, 2011). This vocabulary enhancement is prompted by the formal structure of haiku – three lines arranged in a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern (Iida, 2011, 2012) – as well as by the meaningful use of language that poetry composition promotes (Hanauer, 2012).

Concerning grammatical competence, the results of the statistical analysis reveal that haiku composition does have a constructive effect on accuracy. Moreover, these results agree with the reported benefits of poetry composition in regard to linguistic awareness (Iida, 2011) and grammatical competence development (Panavelil, 2011; Lazar, 1993; Kırkgöz, 2008). These last assertions, furthermore, are also confirmed by the mistake count analysis, as Spelling and Grammar were the categories with the most significant differences between the pre and post-intervention performances.

As to the *Communicative achievement* and *Content* criteria, their results, although lower than *Organization* and *Language*, are nevertheless relevant, as evinced in their p value. The advancement in *Communicative achievement* is explained in the enhanced audience awareness that haiku composition reportedly promotes (Iida, 2011). This greater attention to audience prompts the identification, consideration, and observance of specific conventions of particular speech communities. In addition, the improvement in *Communicative achievement* is also connected to a greater ease of writing and a heightened attention to the writing process.

The furtherance of the *Content* criterion is related to the increased opportunities for consequential self-expression that haiku composition allegedly stimulates (Iida, 2011, 2012). Moreover, as Iida (2011) suggests, by writing structurally defined texts such as haiku, language students gain

expressive freedom that materializes when the formal boundaries of the poem are not present. In other words, after having composed haiku, students face less structured writing tasks with greater ease and liberty to express their ideas. This circumstance is assisted by the aspects discussed above, i.e., an augmented lexical repertoire, a better attentiveness towards audience, and an enriched consciousness of the writing process.

Conclusions

The findings of the research – along with the consideration of the literature review of the project – allow one to conclude that, as suggested by Iida (2011) and Hanauer (2012), the current emphasis on the structural aspects of the target language, as well as on the development of overtly measurable communicative skills and standardization, causes deficiencies in real-life performance. This situation is confirmed in the Ecuadorian context by the country's Education First EPI score. Moreover, the results of the pre-intervention essay-based test also support this notion, since the performance level of the participants of the study at this moment was identified as low. The principal difficulties that were ascertained in the pre-test relate to the *Communicative Achievemen*t and *Organization* rubric criteria. This fact indicates problems with self-expression, as well as an inadequate audience awareness. Additionally, grammatical mistakes were the most frequent, closely followed by spelling. This circumstance also points out a deficient linguistic competence.

Furthermore, the pre and post-test results reveal substantial differences in terms of performance. Students achieved higher grades in the post-test, the *Organization* and *Language* criteria being those of the greater divergences. These findings evince a positive effect of haiku composition in terms of linguistic competence, audience awareness, and consciousness of the writing process. This conception is also verified by the mistake count analysis of the pre and post-intervention essays. Consequently, one can confidently conclude that the hypothesis of the research has been confirmed by

quantitative evidence. Therefore, it can be stated that haiku composition has had a beneficial effect on the development of the academic writing skills of the participants of the study. In addition, the results of the research project indicate that this constructive influence has been significant.

Besides, the fact that the participants of the study were able to complete the haiku composition tasks reveals that – contrary to the generalized beliefs about its complexity – poetry writing is a feasible undertaking for language learners. Furthermore, the results of this research, which add to the corpus of empirical evidence of the topic, clearly demonstrate that poetry composition – specifically, haiku writing – is not only achievable but also advantageous for language learners.

The development of the theoretical framework and the literature review – research background – of the study allows one to conclude that the empirical evidence regarding the benefits of the use of poetry in the language classroom, although relatively scarce, is enough to encourage the incorporation of poetry-based activities in language instruction. However, it is important to emphasize that the effectiveness of these activities depends on the selection of suitable texts and tasks, as well as on the establishment of an appropriate sequence of pre, while, and post-reading or writing tasks.

Lastly, the results indicate that the most important contribution of haiku composition to the academic writing skills of the participants of the study was that of vocabulary enrichment. This conclusion is supported by the findings of several research studies specifically carried out about the topic (Iida, 2011, 2012; Kırkgöz, 2008; Liao, 2012). Moreover, this positive influence has a two-fold nature: a) vocabulary acquisition per se and b) enhancement of the awareness of the connotational value of words and other lexical items. These two aspects of vocabulary improvement through haiku writing are explained in the meaning negotiation (Iida, 2011) in which the participants engaged in order to adhere to the syllabic pattern

of the poem. Nevertheless, it is essential to highlight that, although the research project analyzed the influence of haiku composition on academic writing, the findings of the study demonstrate that the writing practice has a somewhat holistic beneficial effect on communicative competence. In other words, the contribution of haiku composition encompasses communication aspects – such as vocabulary enrichment, self-expression, motivation, audience awareness, and accuracy improvement – that have a ubiquitous influence across the four language macro-skills.

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