DIARIOS REFLEXIVOS EN WHATSAPP PARA MEJORAR LAS HABILIDADES DE ESCRITURA EN ESTUDIANTES DE NIVEL A2
REFLECTIVE JOURNALS IN WHATSAPP TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS IN A2 LEVEL STUDENTS

Autores: **¹Marcelo Javier Figueroa Ramos, ²Jacqueline Elizabeth López López, y ³Josué Reinaldo Bonilla Tenesaca.**

¹ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6849-0744

²ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1765-8103

³ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6748-2345

¹E-mail de contacto: mjfigueroar@ube.edu.ec

²E-mail de contacto: jelopezl@ube.edu.ec

³E-mail de contacto: jrbonillat@ube.edu.ec

Afiliación: ¹*Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova, (Ecuador). ²*³* Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador, (Ecuador).

¹Licenciatura en Pedagogía, mención en enseñanza del idioma Inglés adquirida egresado de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, (Ecuador). Maestrante de la maestría en Pedagogía, mención enseñanza del idioma Inglés de la Universidad Bolivariana del Ecuador, (Ecuador).

²Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Educación, mención en Administración y Supervisión Educativa adquirida egresada de la Universidad de Guayaquil, (Ecuador) con años de experiencia laboral. Magister en Pedagogía mención en enseñanza del idioma Inglés como lengua extranjera adquirida egresada de la Universidad de Jaen, (España). Master universitario en Lingüística Aplicada, mención en enseñanza del Inglés como lengua extranjera. Doctorante en Educación, Universidad de Ciencias Pedagógicas Enrique José Varona, (Cuba)

³Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Educación, mención Inglés adquirida egresado de la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, (Ecuador). Ingeniería comercial adquirida egresado de la Universidad Metropolitana, (Ecuador). Magister en Tecnología e Innovación Educativa adquirida egresado de la Universidad Casa Grande, (Ecuador). Magister en Pedagogía de los idiomas nacionales y extranjeros, mención en enseñanza de Inglés adquirida egresado de la Universidad Casa Grande, (Ecuador). Phd. En ciencias pedagógicas adquirido egresado de la Universidad de Oriente, (Cuba).

Resumen

El objetivo del trabajo presentado era determinar si la implementación de los diarios reflexivos en WhatsApp tiene una incidencia positiva en el desarrollo de las habilidades de escritura en el idioma inglés en estudiantes del segundo año de bachillerato, especialidad en informática, paralelo "C" en la Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova, cuya hipótesis se basa en la premisa que las habilidades de escritura en inglés se pueden mejorar implementando los diarios reflexivos en WhatsApp. Se usó el enfoque de investigación cuantitativo; los métodos teóricos de investigación fueron análisis-síntesis, inductiva-deductiva y sistemática-estructural; las técnicas para la recolección de datos fueron una encuesta e interpretación estadística, mientras que los instrumentos fueron un cuestionario, el segundo modelo para el análisis de las necesidades de Hutchinson and Waters, una prueba de diagnóstico, una prueba antes y otra después de la implementación de la propuesta. Los resultados mostraron que el nivel de competencia lingüística en inglés promedio de los estudiantes era A2, los estudiantes querían mejorar sus habilidades de escritura redactando diarios reflexivos en WhatsApp fuera de clases, mientras que el análisis de los resultados después de la implementación de los diarios reflexivos evidenció una mejora en la escritura de los estudiantes. Basado en los resultados del estudio, se concluye que los diarios reflexivos en WhatsApp tuvieron una incidencia positiva en el mejoramiento de las habilidades de escritura en el idioma inglés.

Palabras clave: Diarios reflexivos, WhatsApp, Mejoramiento, Habilidades de escritura, Estudiantes de nivel A2.

Abstract

The objective of this research work presented was to determine if the implementation of reflective journals in WhatsApp has a positive incidence in the development of writing skills in the English language in students at second

baccalaureate level, informatics specialization, parallel "C" at Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova, which hypothesis is based on the premise that writing skills in English can be improved by the implementation of reflective journals in WhatsApp. The quantitative research approach was used; the research theoretical methods were analysis-synthesis, inductive-deductive and systemic-structural, and the techniques for data collection were a survey and statistical interpretations, whereas the instruments were a questionnaire, the second model of needs analysis proposed by Hutchinson and Waters, a diagnostic test, a pretest before and another after the implementation of the proposal. The results showed that the average level of students' proficiency in English was A2, the students wanted to improve their writing skills by composing reflective journals in WhatsApp outside the classes, whilst the analysis of the results after the implementation of the reflective journals evidenced an improvement on students' writing skills. Based on the results of the research, it was concluded that reflective journals in WhatsApp had a positive incidence on the improvement of writing skills in the English language.

Keywords: Reflective journals, WhatsApp, Improvement, Writing skills, A2 level students.

Sumário
O objetivo do trabalho apresentado foi determinar se a implementação de diários reflexivos no WhatsApp tem um impacto positivo no desenvolvimento de habilidades de escrita em inglês em alunos do segundo ano do ensino médio, com especialização em ciência da computação, paralelo "C" na Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova, cuja hipótese se baseia no fato de que as habilidades de escrita em inglês podem ser melhoradas com a implementação de diários reflexivos no WhatsApp. Foi utilizada a abordagem de pesquisa quantitativa; os métodos teóricos de pesquisa foram análise-síntese, indutivo-dedutivo e sistemático-estrutural; as técnicas de coleta de dados foram uma pesquisa e interpretação estatística, enquanto os instrumentos foram um questionário, o segundo modelo de análise de necessidades de Hutchinson e Waters, um teste de diagnóstico, um teste antes e um teste depois da implementação da proposta. Os resultados mostraram que o nível médio de proficiência linguística dos alunos era A2, os alunos queriam melhorar suas habilidades de escrita escrevendo diários reflexivos no WhatsApp fora da sala de aula, enquanto a análise dos resultados após a implementação dos diários reflexivos evidenciou uma melhoria na escrita dos alunos. Com base nos resultados do estudo, conclui-se que os diários reflexivos no WhatsApp tiveram um impacto positivo no aprimoramento das habilidades de redação dos alunos.

Palavras-chave: Diários reflexivos, WhatsApp, Aprimoramento, Habilidades de redação, Alunos de nível A2

Introduction
According to Nishanthi (2018), the impact and importance of the English language in the contemporary society is extremely noticeable since it is spoken in every part of the world. Akther (2022) states that this foreign language is vital for the personal and professional growth of any human being in the world. Andayani (2022) commnted that English is also a requisite in the work place for finding a job and also for obtaining a promotion in their jobs resulting in people's motivation as well as their interest in learning English. As a result, Ilyosovna (2020) affirmed that many nations include English in their school syllabus so that children study the language from childhood; educational institutions have decided to implement the learning of this language in their curriculums as an obligatory subject; to increase the advantages of people worldwide so that individuals can access to international opportunities in the work or education field. Needless to say, Latin American countries, such as Chile, Costa Rica and Ecuador, too.

There have been done some previous studies that have positioned the Latin American nations as the less proficient in the English language, and in Ecuador, the situation the same, in fact, Ortega et al. (2017) found out that the proficiency in English of students was not satisfactory, which clearly evidenced the data that talk about the low level in the foreign language of Ecuadorian learners.

On the other hand, the English learning is a process that takes time in order to achieve a proficiency in the language, H. (2023) said that it is needed 200 assisted learning hours for reaching the next level, and that it is required at least 1200 hours to achieve a C2 proficiency. Due to the fact that it involves the development of receptive and productive skills, Sreena and Ilankumaran (2018) voiced that this were listening, reading, writing and speaking. From them writing could be a challenging skill to domain, indeed, the English writing is tough for native speakers, and this is equivalent for the non-native ones because these speakers evidence difficulties in composing understandable paragraphs, determing the skills required for writing as well as the omission of ineffective words or phrases (Sulaiman & Muhajir, 2019).

As it was pointed out before, the problem is the students' limitations in the English language. This limitations are because the lack of use of innovative and engaging learning activities. Rone et al. (2023) stated that professors are in charge of finding stratgies and teaching methods that are more suitable for the learners and their level since teachers ought to engage learners in their lessons. In other words, students engagement is gained by teachers as long as their learning activities catch students' attention because of interactive features.

Teachers also need to find activities that involve reflection in class.

Theoretical Framework

One relevant character who was interested in reflecting was the famous John Dewey. Dewey (1910) mentioned that the process of reflective thought is a belief intentionally sought and its adequacy to support it. In other words, it is the pursuit of the reasons and foundations of a belief using reflective thought, known as critical thinking in this modern age. Adam (2020) affirmed that the art of reflecting is a vital element of learning and teaching, in other words, it is necessary to apply reflection activities in school lessons to assess and make students relate what it has been learned to what learners already know about the topic. Additionally, Waugh (2023) claimed that Schön also proposed the reflection-on-action which refers to reflecting after an event has happened.

These principles could be applied in education since students could reflect on what it was learned after receiving specific content, which involves the analysis and evaluation of that content, which supports the idea of reflection as a means to lead a meaningful students' learning. Nevertheless, it is believed that professors have to establish reflection in the educational curriculum (Yost et al., 2000 as cited in Cavilla, 2017)**,** which means that reflection is left behind by educators. These reflection activities could be covered by the implementation of reflective journals.

Speaking about reflective journals, Seema Yadav (2022) sustained that reflection activities as the composition of reflective journals can help in the connection of previous and current knowledge. The University of Edinburgh (2024) declared that there are some aspects which are in favor of reflective journals since

these enable students to develop their critical thinking skills and other complex learning outcomes. Another point of view that supports the use of reflective journals is provided by Ahmed (2019) who remarked the usefulness of reflective journals as these encourage students to learn, master written skills, assess how well students deliver their reflections, and promote professional growth. Santiana et al. (2024) revealed that reflective journals have the potential to increase their self-awareness as well as their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which means that these journals can help to discover what learners think about the class and what they have really learned from the lesson while putting into practice critical thinking and writing skills. The composition of reflective journals is a common activity prepared in order to reflect on the learning course. However, there are also some drawbacks when writing reflective journals.

According to Akhmetova and Khaliullina (2023) one key challenge at the moment of composing reflective journals is the students' ability to formulate their ideas or reflections in sentences. This means that it is limiting for students to express themselves clearly. In addition to this, prior experiences using reflection activities in class, language barriers, and differences of conceptual understanding of reflection because of culture are other challenges (Moon, 2004 as cited in Veine et al., 2019).

The good point is that these reflective journals can be implemented by the use of technological means in the classroom. Ratheeswari (2018) pointed up that technology can play a vital role in the education field as it could provide innovation and engagment in the classroom. This can be reached through the application of the information and communication

technologies in the teaching and learning process. Technology has the potential to establish students engagement in the classroom.

The use of information and communication technologies, also known as ICT, are extremely important because not only does technology catch students' attention but also create interest in learning about any topic in this new technological and digital era. Henderson (2020) asserted that the use of technology in the classroom has the power to transform a traditional class into a more hilarious and enjoyable one, improves students' retention since learners are more likely to recall information when it interests them, foster individual learning because of the flexibility that digital tools offer to the learners, and encourages collaboration owing to the fact that young adults prefer virtual interaction than the face-to-face one and students can work without being physically in the same place. Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) developed a research whose results manifested that teachers who have implemented ICT in their lessons have made their teaching more effective, and the teachers who do not apply them expressed their willingness to learn how to use ICT in the teaching and learning process. Charles et al. (2023) also agreed that will definitely have a positive impact on the teaching pracitce as it has been doing in the last years.

There are some ways in which technology can be employed in English classes. For example, Santiana et al. (2024) also concluded that learners admitted that digital reflective journals are beneficial in English lessons; needless to say, the use of technology was required in order to write those digital journals. The development of these reflective journals provided accessibilty and flexibility to students. However, there are other alternatives to take

advantage of technology in the English lessons and classrooms.

According to the Oxford University (2011), the use apps can make the teaching of a foreign language a more catching process. It is undeniable that there have been designed some applications developed specifically for learning languages, but there are also others whose function is helping people to socialize and express their feelings and thoughts, but English teachers may use them as technopoedagogical resources. In fact, it was concluded that WhatsApp can be used for teaching English thanks to its benefits, which makes it more interesting (Afsyah, 2019). Rai Savitri (2022) comments that WhatsApp can certainly boost students' writing skills by using one app English language learners all know how it works.

Coulmas (2002) exposed that writing can be defined as a system of language through visible marks. This is the representation of a language through signs, symbols and marks that are put on a piece of paper by making hand movements in order to form them by using an item that allows to make it visible for others who read it. Furthermore, there are four elements which take part in the writing process, which are the messenger, the content, the media, and readers Suparno and Yunus 2008 as cited in Ferira (2020). Writing skills also involve vocabulary, spelling, accuracy and communicative competence.

The three main indicators of vocabulary are form, meaning and use. Form is the written forms of a word and the recognition of its parts, meaning is interpreted as the form-meaning relationship, and use refers to the grammar function of words, collocations and its usage (Nation's, 2013 as cited in KILIÇ, 2019). Afzal

(2019) concluded that students faced difficulties in structuring words as well as guessing the meaning of words from the contexts. In accordance with Harb (2020) spelling is challenging for language learners as they need to connect patterns and also because it involves spelling rules which are indicators of the spelling dimension. According to Hahn et al. (2020), accuracy goes hand in hand with both grammar and word order/arragement. Fauzan et al. (2022) found that students' challenges encompass grammar and syntax errors, which means that their grammar is limited as well as the knowledge of how words are arranged in a sentence. For Kiessling and Fabry (2021) communicative competence involves organization, selection and application of skills. Competence also implies processes and coordination in a sequence. Fauzan et al. (2022) also discovered that students had difficulties in organizing their ideas because of the lack of appropriate words, writing logical sentences and punctuation, which are important element for reaching the communicative competence in writing.

Writing is also crucial for reaching communicative competence through written communication since Walsh (2010) claimed that if a learner is unable express himself written, he will also be unable to communicate properly with his professor, colleagues or employers, due to the fact that the majority of professional communication is carried out by writing essays, proposals, formal letters, and reports, which demands a high proficiency in writing.

Hence, the research object of this study is to demonstrate if applying reflective journals by using WhatsApp has an incidence on writing skills in students in the second level of Unified

General Baccalaureate, class C, informatics specialty, at Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova.

Materials and Methods

It was decided to apply the quantitative one. Ghanad (2023) told that the quantitative approach is addressed to quantify data and generalize findings from various perspectives. It consists of gathering and analyzing numerical data, multiple-choice interrogations, and array-type questions by using standard research instruments to describe characteristics and find correlations, which means that the type of research is the descriptive one. Ghanad also put an emphasis on statistical information presented through charts, tables, figures among others. This research approach will be applied to determine and know if there is an improvement in students' writing skills from the educational institution after applying the composition of reflective journals.

The research theoretical methods are analysis-synthesis for the collection of data and students' needs analysis for the characterization of the object considering the phycological, linguistic, didactic features of the language and technological aspects of the research through the second model of needs analysis proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), which classifies these target needs into three caregories, which are necessities that make reference to what students must know to act successfully, wants that are viewed as what students think it is needed to learn, and lacks that are gaps between what students know and the necessities; inductive-deductive for the logical understanding of the problem and object, to substantiate the nexus between the different structures that frame the logic of this research, arrive at pertinent conclusions, including the final proposal; and systemic-structural for the selection of topics, establish the links that

guarantee their practical functioning of the research proposal.

Regarding the population to be considered for this research paper, the overall population is constituted by the educational community from Unidad Educativa Salinas Innova, which institutional AMIE code is 24H00328 District 24D02 zone 5 in Salinas city, province of Santa Elena, Ecuador. Salinas Innova is known for its prestige, having primary and high school education working with children and teenagers who are studying at their school level in the morning. It has a complete infrastructure since it has science and robotics laboratories, as well as computer and media labs, a cafeteria, library, and green areas. Besides, it also recognized in the province because of its curriculum prioritizing the English subject as students receive 10 hours per week of English classes, which are covered by six teachers in high school and 4 in the primary level; some of them are certified by international qualifications.

The sample will be composed of 11 students from the Informatics specialty, second Unified General Baccalaureate, class C whose ages range from 15 to 17.

Table 1. Summary of the sample

Participants	Sample	Percentage
Males	8	72,73%
Females	3	27,27%
Total	11	100%

Source: Elaborated by the author

The research instruments, surveys and statistical interpretation will be carried out in order to know what students think about the use of reflective journals, the use of technology and WhatsApp in the classroom, and students' perceptions of writing skills; as well as the second model questions of Need Analysis in order to determine the effectiveness of

reflective journals in WhatsApp on students' writing skills based on the results obtained.

The instruments to gather data are a questionnaire for the survey with closed-end statements and the second model questions proposed by Hutchinson and Waters. Additionally, a diagnostic test will be applied to know the students' English levels, a pretest to assess students' level regarding writing skills before the implementation of the proposal and a posttest after it to identify whether students had an improvement in their writing skills or not. The intervention was applied for 8 weeks in which students answered the survey, took a diagnostic test and a pretest before the implementation of the proposal; and a posttest after the implementation.

The diagnostic test was elaborated by Cambridge University Press. This consisted of 60 multiple-choice questions related to the grammar and vocabulary that appears in all the parts and skills of the international Cambridge exams of English proficiency from the Cambridge A1 Movers to the B2 First.

Table 2. Description of the diagnostic test

Skill	Number of items	Points	Task
Use of English (Grammar and Vocabulary)	60 (each answer 1 point)	60	Multiple-choice

Source: (Cambridge University Press and UCLES (2016)

Table 3. Scores and levels

Scores	Levels
0-9	Level 1 (A1)
10-18	Level 2 (A2)
19-27	Level 3 (A2+)
28-36	Level 4 (B1)
37-45	Level 5 (B1+)
46-54	Level 6 (B2)
55-60	Level 7 (B2+)

Source: Cambridge University Press and UCLES (2016)

The pretest consisted of 4 parts, with 10 as the full score. The dimensions are in order to determine how well students' level regarding their writing skills are before the implementation of the proposal.

The posttest consisted of 4 parts, with 10 as the full score. The dimensions are in order to determine how well students' level regarding their writing skills are after the implementation of the proposal.

Table 4. Description of the pretest

Dimensions & indicators	Number of items	Points	Type
Vocabular: word form and meaning	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Multiple-choice
Spelling: recognition of patterns and spelling rules	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Selection of elements
Accuracy: grammar usage and word order	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Selection of elements
Written communicative competence: coherence, cohesion and punctuation	1 (2,50 points)	2,50	Development

Source: Elaborated by the author

Table 5. Description of the posttest

Dimensions & indicators	Number of items	Points	Task
Vocabulary: word form and meaning	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Multiple-choice
Spelling: recognition of patterns and spelling rules	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Selection of elements
Accuracy: grammar usage and word order	5 (each answer 0,50 points)	2,50	Selection of elements
Written communicative competence: coherence, cohesion and punctuation	1 (2,50 points)	2,50	Development

Source: Elaborated by the author

After administrating the diagnostic test, pretest and the survey, the students performed the proposal which consisted of sending the learners answering reflective questions every

day, and the learners had to send their journals in a private WhatsApp group.

Results

The first results are from the diagnostic test.

Table 6. Students' English level

Total	Number of students	Percentage	Level
11	2	18,20%	A1
	5	45,50%	A2
	1	9,10%	A2+
	0	0%	B1
	2	18,20%	B1+
	1	9,10%	B2

Source: Elaborated by the author

These results evidenced that the average level of English proficiency is falls into the A2 level which fits the level to work with. As the diagnostic test was designed to identify students' English proficiency, this means that their writing skills could be at an A2 or nearly a B1. The Council of Europe (2001) established that an A2 can produce a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because". A B1 can produce straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within their field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.

The second results are from the pretest.

Table 7. Results of the pretest applied to students

N°	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
11	2,50	9,50	5,27

Source: Elaborated by the author

The third results are the description of students' needs analysis

Students' necessities are what they need to know. So, they need to know that English is necessary here because is a compulsory subject in all courses. Also, the English language will be used in class in informal interactions with other classmates, for writing reflective journals. It is needed that students know that the language taught is General English. It is essential that they bear in mind that General English is used for communicating with other students, teacher, friends from other countries or relatives. Students' wants are personal expectations. So, one expectation about learning English is that it can increase the opportunities of finding a job. Also, students have commented that English is necessary for getting promotions at work, which is something they want to. Students would like to communicate more effectively in English. Students want to learn English with attractive and engaging teaching methodologies. They also want to learn English vocabulary through didactic and unconventional learning activities outside the classroom using technological means, including WhatsApp. Students' lacks are aspects that learners ignore or do not do for developing their English language. So, students do not practice English outside the classroom. They have some opportunities to reflect on the content checked in class. Students do not know how to use smartphone apps for educational purposes. Students do not do activities using other technological means. Students do not have the opportunity to perform many learning activities outside the physical learning environment.

The fourth results from the survey applied to students consisting of 10 statements and a scale of agreement, which are from totally disagree (TD), disagree (D), neutral (N), agree (A) to totally agree (TA). These survey results are represented in percentages.

For the first statement, 18,2% of the participants totally disagreed, 0% disagreed, 36,4% were neutral, 9,1% agreed and 36,4% totally agreed with this statement, which means that most of

the participants reflected on the content learned in each class, but also some of them do it.

For the second one, 18,2% of the participants totally disagreed, 9,1% disagreed, 18,2% were neutral, 27,3% agreed and 27,3% totally agreed with this statement, which means that most of the students write reflective journals regularly, but others do not employ them.

For the third statement, 9,1% of the participants totally disagreed, 9,1% disagreed, 9,1% were neutral, 9,1% agreed and 63,6% totally agreed with this statement, which means that many of the participants share the view that reflective journals can develop critical thinking skills whilst some of them do not consider it.

For the fourth statement 18,2% of the participants totally disagreed, 0% disagreed, 9,1% were neutral, 36,4% agreed and 36,4% totally agreed with this statement, which means that most of the learners consider that reflective journals in WhatsApp can be useful in English classes, but few of them did not consider their effectiveness in English classes.

For the fifth statement, 9,1% of the participants totally disagreed, 9,1% disagreed, 9,1% were neutral, 54,5% agreed and 18,2% totally agreed with this statement, which means that the majority of the students relate what they have learned to what they already know about the topic, whereas few of them do not do it.

For the sixth statement, 18,2% of the participants totally disagreed, 9,1% disagreed, 36,4% were neutral, 18,2% agreed and 18,2% totally agreed with this statement, which means a few of them do not face problems with vocabulary, most students do not have any idea of their difficulties in vocabulary while some struggle with vocabulary with vocabulary since it requires word form and meaning.

Table 8. Results of survey applied to students

N°	Statements	TD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	TA (%)
1	I reflect on the content learned.	18,2	0	36,4	9,1	36,4
2	I regularly employ reflective journals.	18,2	9,1	18,2	27,3	27,3
3	Reflective journals can develop my critical thinking.	9,1	9,1	9,1	9,1	63,6
4	Reflective journals in WhatsApp can be useful in English classes.	18,2	0	9,1	36,4	36,4
5	I relate what I have learned to what I already know about the topic.	9,1	9,1	9,1	54,5	18,2
6	I have difficulties with vocabulary since it requires word form and meaning.	18,2	9,1	36,4	18,2	18,2
7	Spelling is hard as it involves recognition of patterns and spelling rules.	27,3	36,4	0	18,2	18,2
8	Accuracy is not easy since it has to do with grammar usage and word order.	36,4	0	27,3	18,2	18,2
9	Written communicative competence is difficult for me as it requires coherence, cohesion, and punctuation marks to organize my ideas correctly.	27,3	27,3	9,1	18,2	18,2
10	Writing is vital in the development of my communicative competence.	18,2	0	18,2	18,2	45,5

Source: Elaborated by the author

For the seventh statement 27,3% of the participants totally disagreed, 36,4% disagreed, 0% were neutral, 18,2% agreed and 18,2% totally agreed with this statement, which means that most of the learners do not consider that spelling is that hard even if it involves recognition of patterns and spelling rules, but some of them agree with this element.

For the eighth statement, 36,4% of the participants totally disagreed, 0% disagreed, 27,3% were neutral, 18,2% agreed and 18,2% totally agreed with this statement, which means that some of the participants do not face

accuracy problems, some consider that accuracy is hard since it has to do with grammar usage and word arrangement while others think that in some cases it is also hard.

For the nineth statement, 27,3% of the participants totally disagreed, 27,3% disagreed, 9,1% were neutral, 18,2% agreed and 18,2% totally agreed with this statement, which means that a good number of the participants believe that written communicative competence is not difficult despite it requires coherence, cohesion and punctuation.

For the tenth statement, 18,2% of the participants totally disagreed, 0% disagreed, 18,2% were neutral, 18,2% agreed and 45,5% totally agreed with this statement, which means that the vast majority of the participants agreed that writing is a vital element in the development of their overall communicative competence whereas few of them do not feel the same.

Last but not least, the fifth results to be revealed are the scores obtained in the posttest

Table 9. *Results of the posttest applied to students*

N°	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
11	6,00	10,00	8,05

Source: Elaborated by the autor

Discussion of Results

Students' overall level of proficiency in English is A2. The council of Europe (2001) stated that users of level A2 can produce a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because". This is evidenced in the students results in the diagnostic and pre tests since in one question students needed to write an essay in which all of them could write a piece of writing using simple sentences and connectors, but a reduced number of them could write straightforward connected

texts in a familiar subject within their field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence, which are the descriptors of higher levels.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) asserted that considering students' necessities, wants and lacks are necessary. Students' needed to know that pupils had to write their reflective journals with general English to share with their classmates. Students wanted to learn English through other engaging learning activities motivated by the idea that learning this language could be useful for getting a promotion at work and academic purposes. Students' lacks of opportunities to learn English using other technological means to practice their writing skills outide the classroom by reflecting on the contents learned in class.

Adam (2020) affirmed that reflection is vital for learning and teaching. The data obtained from the survey revealed that a good number of the participants reflect on the content learned in each class because of the vitality for the teaching and learning process of every subject. This assumption agreed with Adam's affirmation

Moreover, professors need to establish reflection in the educational curriculum (Yost et al., 2000 as cited in Cavilla, 2017)**,** in other words, it says that reflection is left behind by educators since they need to put it into practice in their teaching praxis. The data obtained from the survey revealed that they do apply reflection activities in class, therefore, reflective journals are somehow included in their learning activities. This is the reason why students employ reflective journals regularly as a good number stated this fact in their responses. This result contrasts with the perspective commented before.

Santiana et al. (2024) revealed that reflective journals have the potential to increase their self-awareness as well as their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Taking into consideration this premise, the data exposed that the participants share the view that reflective journals can develop critical thinking skills. This finding confirms that reflective journals can promote the development of critical thinking skills.

Ratheeswari (2018) pointed up that technology can play a vital role in the education field as it could provide innovation and engagment in the classroom. Furthermore, the Oxford University (2011) manifested that the use of apps can make the teaching of a foreign language a more catching process. What's more, Afsyah (2019) concluded that WhatsApp can be used for teaching English thanks to its benefits, which makes it more interesting. In other words, these reflective journals can be implemented by the use of technological means in the classroom. Agreeing with these conceptions, most of the participants consider that reflective journals in WhatsApp can be useful in English classes, which means Ratheeswari's point of view is supported by the learners' opinion.

Seema Yadav (2022) sustained that reflection activities as the composition of reflective jouenals can help in the connection of previous and current knowledge. In accordance with the previous description, the data from the survey confirmed this thought as the participants expressed that they relate the content learned to what they already know about it. This result concords with the Seema Yadav's affirmation.

Afzal (2019) concluded that students faced difficulties in structuring words as well as guessing the meaning of words from different contexts. Stemming from these notions, most

students manifested that they do not have any idea of their difficulties in vocabulary bearing in mind that it requires word form and the meaning of them.

In accordance with Harb (2020) spelling is demanding for language learners as it is needed to connect patterns and also because it involves spelling rules. Considering these parameters, a good number of participants do not consider that spelling is that hard although it involves recognition of patterns and spelling rules. These results refute Harb's argument.

According Fauzan et al. (2022) found that students' challenges encompass grammar and syntax errors, which means that their grammar domain is limited as well as the knowledge of how words are arranged in a sentence. Based on the data garhered by means of the survey, some consider that accuracy is hard since it has to do with grammar usage and word arrangement while others think that in some cases it is also hard.

Fauzan et al. (2022) also discovered that students had difficulties in organizing their ideas because of the lack of appropriate words, writing logical sentences and punctuation, which are crucial elements for reaching the communicative competence through writing. Taking into account this fact, a good number of the participants believe that written communicative competence is not difficult despite it requires coherence, cohesion and punctuation to organize their ideas correctly. This means that students feel that they can organize their ideas sequentially using features of written communicative competence, which does not support the previous statement.

Writing is also crucial for reaching communicative competence through written communication since Walsh (2010) claimed

that if a learner is unable express himself written, he will also be unable to communicate properly with his professor, colleagues or employers, due to the fact that the majority of professional communication is carried out by writing essays, proposals, formal letters, reports, and articles, which demands a high proficiency in writing skills. This fact tallies the participants' answers as most of them expressed that writing is vital in the development of their communicative competence.

Last but not least, after taking the posttest to the learners who took part in this research work, it disclosed the students really improved their writing skills as the pretest, the first mean was 5,27, obtaining 2,50 as the lowest score and 9,50 as the highest one. In contrast, the second mean was 8,05, the lowest score was 6,00 and the highest one was 10,00 which was the full score in the posttest. This indicates that their writing skills had a positive impact after practicing their writing skills by composing reflective journals using the smartphone app known as WhatsApp due to the fact all of the participants obtained nearly a B1 level in writing. The council of Europe (2001) states that a B1 can produce straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within their field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.

Conclusions

From the results presented, of their analysis and discussion, the following conclusions can be obtained regarding the implementation of reflective journals in WhatsApp: 1) the main characteristic of the proposal employed lies on the significant improvement on writing skills in A2 level learners of English as a foreign language; 2) the proposal does not require demanding effort to implement in English classes because of the fact that teachers only need to establish reflection by formulating reflective questions to be sent through WhatsApp, which is a smartphone app that every student knows to use, so that not only can the learners develop their critical thinking but also their writing skills, including their communicative competence in the English language by using technology outside the classroom; 3) the results attained demonstrate that the use of reflective journals in WhatsApp can develop students' writing skills as the participants showed an improvement in their vocabulary, spelling, accuracy and written communicative competence; 4) the proposal employed on the 11 participants can be applied in other contexts with a wider range of sample to know how well it works in other English as a foreign language contexts around the world.

Acknowledgement

Bibliographic References

Adam, S. (2020, December 26). *What is Donald Schon's Theory of Reflective Practice?* Online Assignment Expert.com: https://www.onlineassignment-expert.com/blog/donald-schons-theory-of-reflective-practice

Afsyah, S. (2019). WhatsApp application in English language teaching (ELT) Context: Media to Describe People. *Utamax Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education, 1*(1), 23-38. https://doi.org/10.31849/utamax.v1i1.2743

Afzal, N. (2019). A study on vocabulary-learning problems encountered by BA English majors at the university level of

education. *Arab World English Journal, 10*(3), 81-98. https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no3.6

Ahmed, M. (2019). Students' reflective journaling: an impactful strategy that informs instructional practices in an EFL writing university context in Qatar. *International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 20*(4), 483-500. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2019.1638246

Akhmetova, G., & Khaliullina, L. (2023). Reflective writing in social sciences: challenges andopportunities for medical students. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 24*(6), 693-706. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2023.2237447

Akther, F. (2022). English for personal and career development and its importance for better employment opportunities. *Journal of Languages Linguistics and Literary Studies, 2*(3), 95-100. https://doi.org/10.57040/jlllls.v2i3.258

Andayani, S. (2022). The importance of learning and knowing English in higher education in Indonesia. *Research and Development Journal Of Education, 8*(1), 372-379. https://doi.org/10.30998/rdje.v8i1.13315

Cambridge University Press and UCLES. (2016). *Prepare: Placement test.* Cambridge Univerity Press.

Cavilla, D. (2017). The effects of student reflection on academic performance and motivation. *SAGE Open, 7*(3), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017733790

Charles, K., Awila, G., Kargbo, M., & Makindu Luyeye, B. (2023). Impact of ICT on teaching and learning process in secondary schools in Uganda: Literature review. *International Journal of Mobile Communications, 11*(2), 220-226. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10453829

Coulmas, F. (2002). *Writing Systems: An Introduction to Their Linguistic Analysis.* Cambridge University Press.

Dewey, J. (1910). *How we think.* D. C. Heath & Co.

Fauzan, U., Hasanah, N., & Hadijah, S. (2022). The undergraduate students' difficulties in writing thesis proposal. *Indonesian Journal of EFL and Linguistics, 7*(1), 175-192. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.21462/ijefl.v7i1.515

Ferira, R. (2020). *An Analysis of Sentence Fragments on Students' Academic Writing at the Second Semester of English Education Study Program in University of Muhammadiyah Kotabumi Academic Year 2018/2019 [Bachelor's thesis, University of Muhammadiyah Kotabumi].* Digital Repository. https://perpustakaan.umko.ac.id/

Ghanad, A. (2023). An overview of quantitative research methods. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis, 6*(8), 3794-3803. https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v6-i8-52

Ghavifekr, S., & Rosdy , W. (2015). Teaching and learning with technology: effectiveness of ICT Integration in schools . *International Journal of Research in Education and Science (IJRES), 1*(2), 175-191.

H, S. (2023). *Guided learning hours.* Cambridge English: https://support.cambridgeenglish.org/hc/en-gb/articles/202838506-Guided-learning-hours

Hahn, M., Jurafsky, D., & Futrell, R. (2020). Universals of word order reflect optimization of grammars for efficient communication. *Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, 117*(5), 2347-2353. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1910923117

Harb, J. (2020). Errors analysis of spelling among university students of English in Jordan: An analytical study. *Asian Social Science, 16*(12), 19-26. https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v16n12p19

Henderson, D. (2020). Benefits of ICT in Education. *Idosr Journal of Arts and Management, 5*(1), 51-57.

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach.* Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO978051173303 1

Ilyosovna, A. (2020). The importance of English language. *International Journal on Oange Technologies, 2*(1), 22-24. www.researchparks.org

Kiessling, C., & Fabry, G. (2021). What is communicative competence and how can it be acquired? *GMS Journal for Medical Education, 38*(3), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.3205/zma001445

KILIÇ, M. (2019). Vocabulary knowledge as a predictor of performance in writing and speaking: A case of Turkish EFL learners. *PASAA, 57*, 134-164.

Nishanthi, R. (2018). The importamce of English in today world. *International Journal of Trend and Scientific Research and Developement, 3*(1), 871-874. https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd19061.

Ortega Auquilla, D., Auccahuallpa, R., & Martínez, O. (2017). La Educación Ecuatoriana en Inglés: Nivel de Dominio y Competencias Lingüísticas de los Estudiantes Rurales. *Scientific, 2*(6), 52-73. https://doi.org/10.29394/scientific.issn.2542 -2987.2017.2.6.3.52-73

Oxford University. (2011, September 22). *How using apps and online resources benefits ESL students with limited resources*. Oxford University Press: https://teachingenglishwithoxford.oup.com/ 2011/09/22/how-using-apps-and-online-resources-benefits-esl-students-with-limited-resources/

Rai Savitri, A. (2022). Effective Strategy in Writing with WhatsApp. *International Journal of English Education and Linguistics, 4*(2), 137-144. file:///C:/Users/HP%20i5/Downloads/4840-13148-2-PB.pdf

Ratheeswari, K. (2018, May). Information Communication Technology in Education. *Journal of Applied and Advanced Research, 3*(1), 545-547. https://doi.org/10.21839

Rone, A., A Guao, A., Jariol Jr., M., Acedillo, N., Balinton, K., & Francisco, J. (2023). Students' lack of Interest, motivation in learning, and classroom participation: How to motivate them? *Educational Psychology, 7*(1), 636-645. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7749977

Santiana, S., (2024). Reflection in pixels: Scrutinizing students' perspectives on digital reflective journals. *Journal of English Education and Teaching, 8*(1), 141–155. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet. 8.1.141-155

Seema Y., (2022). Reflective journals: A tool for self-reflection, self-awareness and professional development. *Educational Resurgence Journal, 5*(1), 109-118. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5281/zenod o.6908641

Sreena, S., & Ilankumaran, M. (2018). Developing productive skills through receptive skills – A cognitive approach. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology, 7*(4), 669-673. https://doi.org/10.14419/ijet.v7i4.36.24220

Sulaiman, R., & Muhajir, M. (2019). The Difficulties of Writing Scientific Works ar the English education students. *Journal of English Education, 4*(1), 54-60. https://doi.org/10.31327/jee.v4i1.923

The Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment.* Council of Europe. www.coe.int/lang-cefr

University of Edinburgh. (2024, February 26). *Reflective journals*. Institute for Academic Development: https://www.google.com/search?q=reflectiv e+journals+for+students&sca_esv=7082fde 6dba84aef&rlz=1C1ALOY_esEC1062EC1 070&biw=1366&bih=633&sxsrf=ADLYWI IIup6LQfbkTcUbHdOBs_7ymiipXg%3A17 25327661036&ei=LWnWZuLrAZ6GwbkPl 8TzwQo&oq=reflective+journals+for+s&gs _lp=Eg

Veine, S., Kalvig Anderson, M., Haugland Andersen, N., Espenes, T. C., Bredesen Søyland, T., Wallin, P., & Reams, J. (2019). Reflection as a core student learning activity

in higher education - Insights from nearly two decades of academic development. *International Journal for Academic Development,* *25*(2), 147-161. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2019.1659797

Walsh, K. (2010, November 22). *The Importance of Writing Skills: Online Tools to Encourage Success*. Classroom 2.0: https://www.classroom20.com/profiles/blogs/the-importance-of-writing

Waugh, A. (2023, March 14). *The Schön reflective model: A guide.* AssignmentHelp: https://www.totalassignment.com/blog/the-schon-reflective-model/