

RAFT strategy and writing descriptive texts among eighth-year students

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed to improve the EFL descriptive writing skills through RAFT (Role, Audience, Topic, Format) strategy among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja, Ecuador during the 2021 - 2022 school year. In order to carry out this research, a mixed method was used which combines quantitative and qualitative data. For quantitative data, one group pretest-posttest design was applied in order to know the students' knowledge before and after the treatment. On the other hand, for qualitative data, questionnaires were administered with the purpose of noticing the students' perceptions regarding to RAFT strategy. The results showed that there was a significant difference ($p \leq 0,05$) before and after the treatment which demonstrated that students had a relevant improvement in the descriptive texts aspects such as identification of the phenomena, vocabulary, grammar patterns and mechanics. Additionally, it could be evidenced that RAFT strategy developed their critical thinking skills (imagination, curiosity and research skills) and trigger their interest due to its aspects flexibility (Role, Audience, Format, Topic). It was concluded that RAFT strategy improved students' descriptive texts writing performance as well as activated the students' imagination, interest and curiosity to develop the RAFT assignments.

Keywords: *descriptive texts; grammar patterns; mechanics; RAFT strategy; vocabulary.*

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Estrategia RAFT y redacción de textos descriptivos entre estudiantes de octavo año

RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo mejorar las habilidades de escritura descriptiva de EFL a través de la estrategia RAFT (Role, Audience, Topic, Format) entre los estudiantes de octavo año de una escuela pública en la ciudad de Loja, Ecuador durante el año escolar 2021 - 2022. Para llevar a cabo esta investigación se utilizó un método mixto que combina datos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Para los datos cuantitativos se aplicó un diseño de pretest-postest de un grupo para conocer los conocimientos de los estudiantes antes y después del tratamiento. Por otro lado, para los datos cualitativos, se administraron cuestionarios con el fin de conocer las percepciones de los estudiantes con respecto a la estrategia RAFT. Los resultados mostraron que hubo una diferencia significativa ($p \leq 0,05$) antes y después del tratamiento lo que demostró que los estudiantes tuvieron una mejora relevante en los textos descriptivos aspectos como identificación de los fenómenos, vocabulario, patrones gramaticales y mecánica. Además, se pudo evidenciar que la estrategia RAFT desarrolló sus habilidades de pensamiento crítico (imaginación, curiosidad y habilidades de investigación) y despertó su interés debido a la flexibilidad de sus aspectos (Rol, Audiencia, Formato, Tema). Se concluyó que la estrategia RAFT mejoró el rendimiento de escritura de textos descriptivos de los estudiantes y activó la imaginación, el interés y la curiosidad de los estudiantes para desarrollar las tareas RAFT.

Palabras clave: textos descriptivos; patrones gramaticales; mecánica; estrategia RAFT; vocabulario.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the ways for people to communicate ideas and information. They can express themselves effectively in a written form. For school students, writing is a medium to express their thoughts and feelings. Besides, it is aimed to produce and prepare the students as the creative generation and also the critical thinkers (Husna, 2013). Descriptive text is one genre that must be mastered by students in learning English. According to Ecuador's National English Curriculum (2016), in writing descriptive text, eighth-year students should be able to write a short simple paragraph to describe themselves or other people, animals, places and things, with limited support (Example: by answering questions or using keywords).

Despite the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education's expectations, students face a variety of challenges in writing descriptive texts due to the lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. A certain amount of researchers (Husna, 2013; Ratih, 2017; Ritonga, 2019; Riyanti, 2015; Umaemah, 2017; Werdiningsih, 2018) agree that writing descriptive text represents a problem because students are being troubled by searching and organizing ideas, using correct and appropriate vocabulary relevant to the objects that they want to describe, and using the correct grammatical patterns. It is obvious that teaching writing of descriptive text to students is problematic and challenging as well. That is why, in this research work, Role, Audience, Form, Topic (RAFT) strategy is selected as the most suitable strategy to improve write descriptive writing texts among eighth-year students because of its practical managing of the problems aforementioned seeking to address the following question: how does RAFT (Role, Audience, Form, Topic) strategy improve descriptive text writing among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja during 2021-2022 school year?

RAFT strategy was developed by Carol Santa in 1988 and it has a purpose "To increase the quality of students' writing by personalizing the task and transforming students' perception of both the writing topic and writing event." RAFT is an acronym for the following: R—Role of the writer (Who are you?), A—Audience for the writer (To whom are you writing?), F—Format of the writing (What form will your writing take?), T—Topic of the writing (What are you writing about?)

As Buehl (2013) states, a RAFT activity gives a writing assignment with imagination, creativity, and

motivation. The strategy involves writing from a viewpoint other than that of a student, to an audience other than the teacher, and in a form other than a standard assignment or written answer to questions. Additionally, Souranti (2017) states that RAFT strategy encourages students to connect their past information with new knowledge as well as concepts. It also helps students to think critically in the topic and put it in a good context. Riyante (2015) and Umaemah et al. (2016) mentions that students' interests are activated by giving students several options to choose from allowing for students to craft their RAFT based on the topic which is a great way to foster student voice. Sourani (2017) explains that the position of RAFT strategy in the descriptive text writing process is to open the students' minds for generating ideas by connecting the concept of Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. The integration of the four elements leads the direction of process of descriptive text writing according to the context and what they are describing (identification of the phenomena). Additionally, the column of topic provides some vocabularies and language features in order to become the descriptive paragraph writing process easy. Some experts give their points of view of applying RAFT strategy. According to Buehl (2013), using RAFT strategy can be done as follows: a) First introduce the elements of the RAFT strategy to the students. b) Next, together with the students, determine the important ideas, concept, or information from the reading assignment in order to determine the topic of the assignment. c) Then, with students, brainstorm possible roles class members could assume in their writing. This will determine the role for the assignment. d) Now, ask the students to determine the audience for this writing. e) Decide the format writing will take. f) Make available sample authentic examples for a specific RAFT project for students to consult as they plan their writing.

At the same manner, Buehl (2013) establishes some advantages of RAFT strategy that teacher should know, as follows: a) Students are more motivated to do a writing assignment because the task involves them personally and allows for more creative responses to learning the material. b) Students are given a clear structure for their writing; they know what point to assume, and they are provided with an organizational scheme. Furthermore, the purpose of the writing is outlined clearly. c) Encouraging students to organize their thoughts and holding their attention because they are focused on the writing activity. This strategy is attractive to the students to study so that they will give their effort to the writing

task. d) Solving students 'problems or difficulties in understanding a sentence. e) Improving students 'interest and motivation of studying in the classroom

A large group of studies shows that RAFT strategy helps students to write descriptive texts. Applying experimental and classroom-action research, they believed that this strategy is one of writing strategies that is able to help students to understand their role as a writer, to choose the audience for their writing, to use a certain writing format, and to determine what kind of topic they will take for the writing. By using RAFT strategy students have the opportunity to explore many different discourse forms and to use various formats for their writing exercise. Additionally, students will be able to generate and organize their ideas before they start to write. (Ratih, 2017; Ritonga, 2019; Riyanti, 2015; Umaemah, 2017; Werdiningsih, 2018). Some researchers (Ratih, 2017; Riyanti, 2015) affirm that by implementing this technique, the teachers can activate the students' prior knowledge and let them to discuss in pairs and enrich the students' vocabulary. Moreover, it enables the students to be more active and motivated in the teaching and learning process. Another group of researchers (Ritonga, 2019; Umaemah, 2017; Werdiningsih, 2018) express that by using RAFT strategy, teachers are able to create a positive learner-centered environment and help learners to participate freely in a nonthreatening environment.

Unfortunately, the focus of RAFT strategy on improving descriptive text writing is not considered by researchers, they emphasize on two types of writing (narrative or informative) and reading comprehension. Therefore, the RAFT strategy is expected to be applied in an another type of writing (descriptive text) among eighth-year students in order to notice the efficacy of this strategy in this type of text. Additionally, there were limited EFL settings in which the studies were carried out. Thus, it would be significant to take the Ecuadorian context in order to notice how effective the topic is in the national education.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to improve the EFL descriptive writing skills through RAFT strategy among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja during the 2021 - 2022 school year.

METHODOLOGY

Mixed method was taken into consideration in this study which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to understand the phenomena in a fully way. Both sides were analyzed, the students'

knowledge before and after the treatment (pretest and posttest) and the students' perceptions (questionnaires) (Gay et al., 2012).

Under the principles of quantitative research, one group pretest-posttest design was applied in order to know the students' knowledge before and after the treatment regarding to the effect of RAFT strategy on writing descriptive texts among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja during 2021-2022 school year. No control group was not considered since the manipulation of the RAFT strategy was noticed in the same group. At the same manner, with the purpose of noticing the students' perceptions towards the intervention plan, qualitative research guidelines were applied. In this instance, the research looked for knowing the students' attitudes and feelings toward RAFT strategy in writing descriptive texts. Therefore, in order to collect data of the attitudes of the participants, questionnaires were implemented.

As it was previously stated, quantitative and qualitative techniques were used in order to collect data about the effectiveness of RAFT strategy to write descriptive texts. Therefore, paper and pencil method were applied as a technique with the purpose of measuring the students' cognitive dimension (Gay et al., 2012). In such a way, pretest and posttest were designed by the researcher to apply it before and after the treatment. That test was a criterion referenced one, in which it measured the students' performance consideration the standards established by the Ministry of Education. On the other hand, questionnaires were used and designed for exploring the students' affective dimension about RAFT strategy (Gay et al., 2012). Therefore, those questionnaires consisted in 7 questions divided in open and close ones. The open questions looked for specific information of the students' perceptions and the close ones went beyond a simple answer and sought personal opinions.

For the quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics were carried out. Stated by Sage (2019), it is used to summarize, organize, and make sense of a set of scores called data. Considering this point, the tabulation of pre and posttest scores was developed using statistics formulas to find the significance of the study for the pretest and posttest. Apart from that, the qualitative data obtained from the questionnaires was presented by graphs and analyzed using categorical and intensity scales. The categorical scales were focused on the classification of the students' preference using a range of numbers (1 to 3) relating to the elements of RAFT strategy (Role, Audience, Form and Topic) and the intensity

scales which were based on the students' preference degree regarding to RAFT strategy (I like a lot, I like a little, I don't like).

RESULTS

Pretest and posttest results

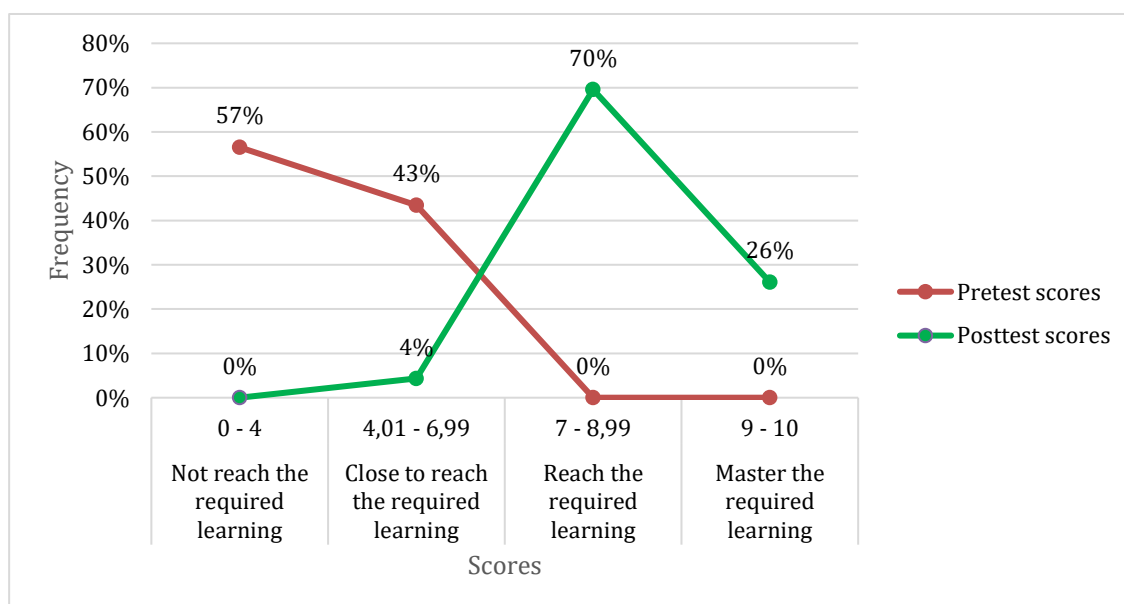
Table 1. *Wilcoxon Test to compare the Pretest and Posttest scores on writing descriptive texts.*

Students	Pretest score	Posttest score	Difference	Rank
UEMDV8C01	4	7	-3	3,5
UEMDV8C02	4	8	-4	12
UEMDV8C03	3	7	-4	12
UEMDV8C04	5,16	9,33	-4,17	16
UEMDV8C05	2,6	8	-5,4	22
UEMDV8C06	3	8	-5	19,5
UEMDV8C07	4	9	-5	19,5
UEMDV8C08	4,6	8	-3,4	7
UEMDV8C09	4	8	-4	12
UEMDV8C10	4,6	8	-3,4	7
UEMDV8C11	5	9	-4	12
UEMDV8C12	5	8	-3	3,5
UEMDV8C13	4,3	7,33	-3,03	5
UEMDV8C14	4	8	-4	12
UEMDV8C15	4,6	8	-3,4	7
UEMDV8C16	4	6	-2	1
UEMDV8C17	5	9	-4	12
UEMDV8C18	3,6	9	-5,4	22
UEMDV8C19	2,6	8	-5,4	22
UEMDV8C20	5	7,33	-2,33	2
UEMDV8C21	3,6	8	-4,4	17,5
UEMDV8C22	5	9	-4	12
UEMDV8C23	2,6	7	-4,4	17,5
Media	4,00	8,00		

Table 2. *Wilcoxon Ranks*

Pretest scores Posttest scores	Ranks	N	Sum of ranks
	Negative ranks	23	276
	Positive ranks	0	0
	Total population	23	
	Critic value	73	
	$p \leq 0,05$		

After applying the pretest and posttest, the results are presented and summarized in the Table 2 which provides the scores of the eighth-year students' performance before (pretest) and after (posttest) the intervention plan based on the use of RAFT strategy to write descriptive texts. As it can be evidenced, the ranks show that all students obtained a higher level on writing descriptive texts after the treatment. Low students' levels were not identified. As the Wilcoxon test shows, there was a statistically significant difference since p was minor or equal to 0,05 ($p \leq 0,05$), which means that the probability of being an effective treatment is 95%. To substantiate its effectiveness, the questionnaire answers will be analyzed further in order to notice the students' perception regarding to RAFT strategy on writing descriptive texts.

Figure 1. *Pretest and Posttest Comparison regarding to the National Scale*

The pretest was administered in order to know the previous knowledge of eighth-year students on writing descriptive texts. The results obtained from it are set out in Figure 1, which shows that all the students did not reach the required learning (7 - 8,99) established by the Ecuadorian national scale. That means that 100% of the students struggled to write descriptive texts. This was because firstly, they could not describe all the characteristics of a place, thing and people and the setting. Secondly, they did not use the appropriate descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs) to describe the topic. Finally, it was difficult to understand and read the descriptive paragraph since the use of the mechanics (spelling and punctuation) was not properly and the verbs patterns (present simple) were not applied correctly. Consequently, writing descriptive texts was considered a problem to develop the research in this classroom.

On the other hand, after applying the intervention plan, the posttest was administered, and there could be noticed an increase level of students' performance on writing descriptive texts as it is shown in the Figure 6. As it is indicated, 96% of the students reached and mastered the required learning as specified by the national scales which means that students were able to describe relevant characteristics of the place, thing and people that they were describing with a clear identification of the setting. Additionally, they were able to use the sufficient descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs) to describe the topic. Furthermore, the use of spelling rules, the punctuation, capitalization of the words and the verb patterns (present simple) was good with minor errors in the usage of each one which allowed to comprehend and read the descriptive paragraph in a better manner.

Questionnaire results

Questionnaires development was focused on the four elements of the RAFT strategy: Role, Audience, Format and Topic. That is why, the results presentation was made using graphs and guided by categorical and intensity scales for each question and their analysis was interpreted linking questions that are related to each element. The description of each one was focused on students' perceptions and feelings regarding to the elements of RAFT strategy during the whole intervention period.

Role Element

Figure 2.

Eighth-year students' perspective on role element

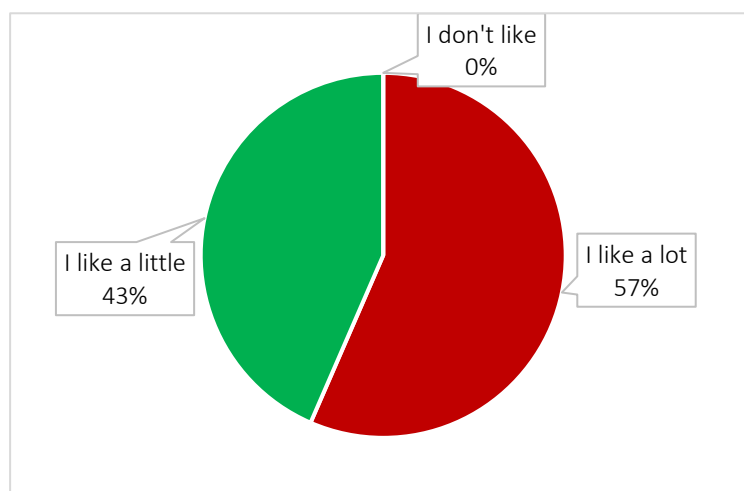
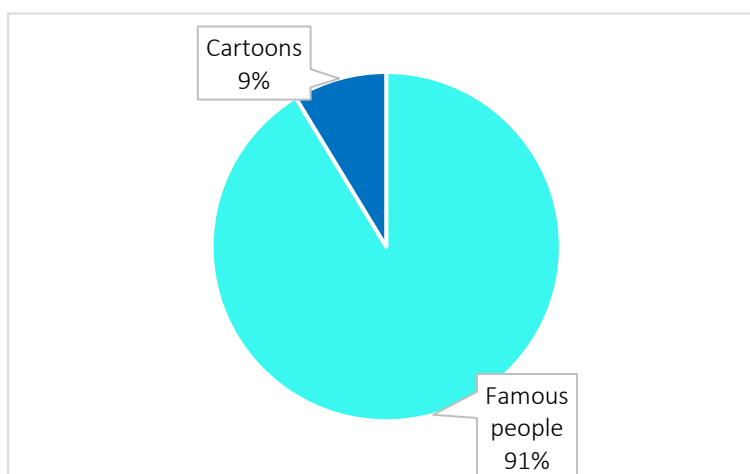


Figure 3.

Eighth-year students' preference on role element



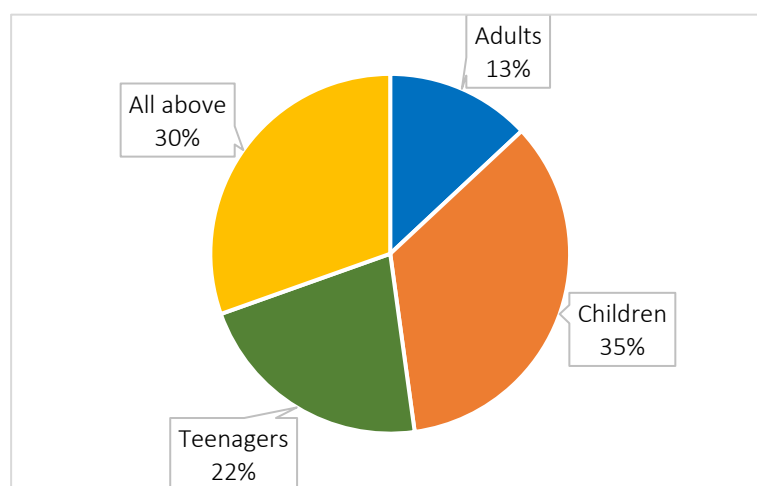
In the questions 1 and 2 of the questionnaire revealed how students felt regarding to the Role element. Therefore, two aspects were analyzed: the first one, the students' role perspective and the second one, their role preference. As it is shown in the Figure 2, just over half of the students (57%) liked a lot to take different roles to write their descriptive texts since they were engaged to think about their roles. On the other hand, the rest of the students (43%) did not find attractive to take different roles at the moment of writing descriptive texts.

Regarding to the students' role preference, among the roles that they liked to take, famous people was the most preferred with a 91% of the total of students as it is presented in the Figure 3. They could manifest that they were able to activate their imagination and curiosity to describe them because they were capable of forming a vivid picture of their favorite famous person, "I liked to take the role of a famous person because I could imagine what they look like if I had the opportunity to meet him/her". Additionally, the curiosity to look for more information about them in order to develop a complete and real description, "I found interesting to take the role of a famous person that I admire because I could look for more details about him/her." On the contrary, a minority of the students (9%) indicated that cartoons were appealing to take it as they were easier to describe.

Audience Element

Figure 4.

Eighth-year students audience target



The question 3 of the questionnaire was related to the students' point of view about the audience address. As it is noticeable in the Figure 4, the results show that approximately a third of the students' population (35%) thought that children could be the audience target who would read their descriptive texts due to the fact that both have the same age which means that they could have the same interest in reading their descriptive text, "I think that children could be the audience who will read my descriptive text because we are children and we are interested in the same things". On the other hand, the 30% of the students expressed that adults, children and teenagers could grab their attention to read their descriptive paragraphs since those kinds of texts are suitable for any kind of audience. Apart from that, a small

number of students (22%) believed that teenagers would be the audience who were able to read their descriptions due to their learning interest in those kinds of texts, “Teenagers could read my descriptive paragraph because they are more interested in learning new things”. Finally, the last 13% of the students indicated that the audience who would read their description is adults.

Format Element

Figure 5. *Format preference on eighth-year students*

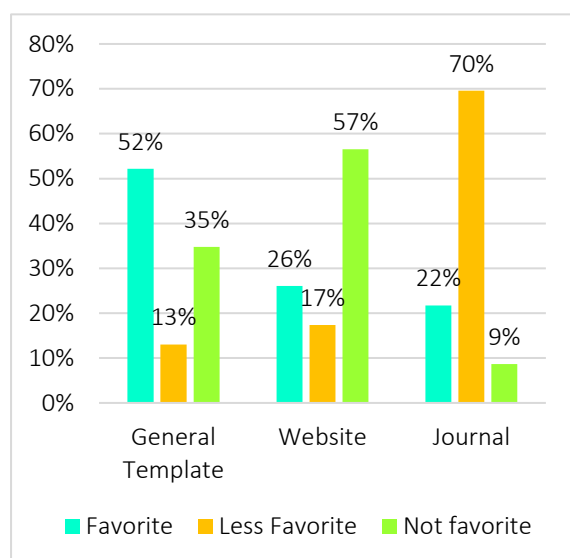
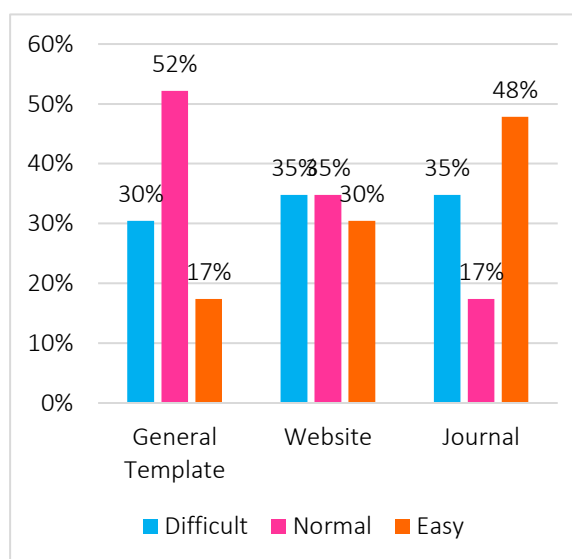


Figure 6. *Level of difficulty of format aspect on eighth-year students*



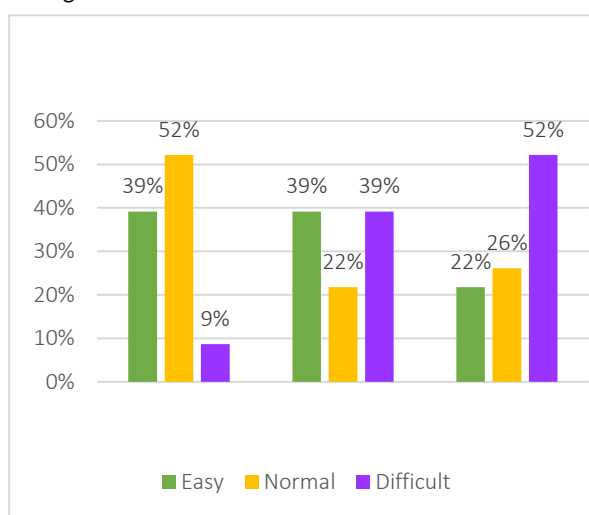
Following with the questionnaire questions, the fourth and fifth ones corresponded to the students' perception about Format element. Therefore, format preference and level of difficulty of it were examined. As the results are illustrated of the first aspect in the Figure 5, just over half of the students (52%) indicated that the general template was their favorite format to write their descriptive texts since they considered that the degree of understanding how to complete it was higher than the other formats. Some students agree with that, “I chose the general template because it was the format that I understood better”. According to the students' responses, a great deal of them (70%) considered that journal was the least favorite format to write their descriptions. Subsequently, over half of the students (57%) indicated that website format was the least attractive to develop their descriptive paragraphs.

Concerning the second aspect which is associated to the level of difficulty of the format, no significant differences were found between website and journal format because both have the same percentage (35) as it is illustrated in the Figure 6. Students believed that both formats were difficult to complete because it was hard for them to organize their ideas and understand what they had to do there, “I tried to

understand how to write my descriptive paragraph in a website but I can't because it was hard to arrange my ideas in a clear way". Continuing to the format that students considered neither difficult nor easy to write their descriptive paragraphs, just over half of the students (52%) indicated that general template was that one. On the other side, journal format was divided into two degree of difficulty. Some students thought that journal format was the most difficult to write their descriptive texts, However, the other part of the students (48%) thought that journal format was the easiest one when they were writing their descriptions.

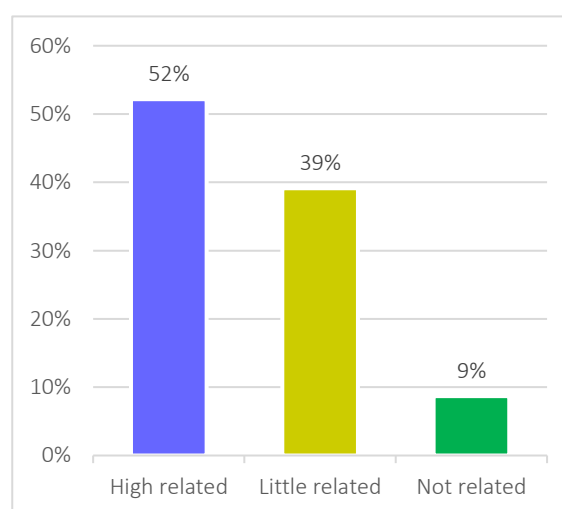
Topic Element

Figure 7. *Level of Difficulty of Topic aspect on Eighth-Year Students*



Source: Own elaboration

Figure 8. *Authenticity of Topic*



Source: Own elaboration

The last two questions of the questionnaire (sixth and seventh) were emphasized to the students' feelings regarding to the topic element. Level of difficulty and authenticity were the two aspects to be analyzed. As it is presented in the Figure 7, there was no a remarkable difference between people description and place would like to visit topics as they presented the same percentage of the students' responses (39%). Students could manifest that both topics were easy to describe because they were able to choose the person and the place that they wanted to describe (students' interest) which made more exciting to develop the descriptions. It was corroborated by this student' answer, "I consider that people description was easy for me to make because I really wanted to describe my famous person. For that reason, I really enjoyed the process of describe him/her". On the flip side, just over half of the students (52%) selected

people description as a normal topic to describe which means that they were not presented difficulties when they made their descriptions. In the last instance, the most difficult topic to make was my meals of day with a 52% of the students a favor.

What is more, authenticity was the second aspect to be interpreted which is related to the students' engagement to the language using real activities. As a result, the figure 13 shows that 52% of the students regarded that all the topics given during the intervention period were high related to real activities since the topics were open to the students' personification which means they were influenced by the students' preference and interest. To be topics which required the students' selection, they had the opportunity to choose the person or the place that they wanted to describe, "I think that the topics are high related to real activities because I felt free to select the country I would like to visit, the person I wanted to describe and the food that I want to eat". However, a third part of the students (39%) believed that the topics were related a little to real activities since they were slightly involved with their daily activities. Lastly, a minor percentage of the students' responses (9%) wrote that the topics taught were not related to real activities at all because they were not engaging enough to be considered as real activities.

DISCUSSION

This study was aimed to improve the EFL descriptive writing skills through RAFT strategy among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja during the 2021 - 2022 school year. The comparison between pretest and posttest results showed that there is a significant difference ($p \leq 0,05$) before and after applying the RAFT strategy on writing descriptive texts. According to the students' performance, they had a positive improvement in the aspects related to descriptive texts which are the identification of the phenomena, vocabulary, grammar patterns and mechanics usage.

These findings answered the central questions of the research: How does the RAFT (Role, Audience, Form, Topic) strategy improve descriptive text writing among eighth-year students at a public school in the city of Loja during 2021-2022 school year? The improvement of the identification of the phenomena in the students' descriptive texts in this study is corroborated by Masruri (2010, as cited in Dwi, 2019) who states that identification is a part of paragraph which introduces or identifies the character. If a student writes an identification part clearly, he/she will develop the ideas easily in description part. Similarly, the results suggested that the use of vocabulary fostered students to make more vivid their

descriptive paragraphs. This finding is in agreement with Dwi (2019) who confirms that the use of vocabulary can make readers explore more deeply in what is telling about. In such a manner, the adjectives play an important role with the use of vocabulary usage in descriptive texts since they provide information about the qualities of something. Finally, the last two aspects that students improved were grammar patterns and the mechanics usage with minor errors of their application in the descriptive texts. Oshima and Hogue (1991) suggested that grammar patterns (present simple) and the mechanics usage (spelling and capitalization) contribute to make students' descriptive texts more comprehensible and meaningful which provide a better understanding of the students' ideas to the readers.

Therefore, the findings of each aspect aforementioned analyzed support the idea of Sourani (2017) who explains that the position of RAFT strategy in the descriptive text writing process is to open the students' minds for generating ideas by connecting the concept of Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. The integration of the four elements leads the direction of process of descriptive text writing according to the context and what they are describing (identification of the phenomena). Additionally, the column of topic provides some vocabularies and language features in order to become the descriptive paragraph writing process easy.

On the other hand, questionnaires results showed the students' perspectives and feelings regarding to RAFT strategy as an instructional strategy. These results guided to answer the first sub question: What are the advantages of RAFT strategy on students' writing process? According to the students' responses, they thought that RAFT strategy allowed them to activate their imagination and curiosity when writing their descriptive texts. This finding seem to be consistent with Jacob (2005) who explains that writing from a different perspective helps students to develop critical thinking skills (imagination, curiosity and research skills) as they have to consider what would be important to the specific role they chose.

It is really fun for students to step into the shoes of someone (or something) else. It forces them to look at an issue from a new point of view. Similarly, Souranti (2017) agrees that RAFT strategy encourages students to connect their past information with new knowledge as well as concepts. It also helps students to think critically in the topic and put it in a good context. Another important aspect that students pointed out was that the RAFT assignments encouraged students' motivation to write their descriptive texts since they triggered their interest. This finding confirms the association between motivation and interest.

Buehl (2013) states that students are more motivated to do a RAFT writing assignment because those tasks involve them personally and allows for more creative responses to learning the material. What is more, students manifested that they could be open to choose what and who wanted to describe (students' preference and interested) because of the authenticity of the topics. Riyante (2015) and Umaemah et al. (2016) corroborated this finding mentioning that students' interests are activated by giving students several options to choose from allowing for students to craft their RAFT based on the topic which is a great way to foster student voice.

Finally, the last sub question was: How can teachers apply the RAFT strategy in an EFL classroom? RAFT strategy was applied in the classroom taking into account the four aspects that it includes: Role, Audience, Format and Topic. Firstly, researcher established two kinds of roles that students had to write their descriptive paragraphs: Famous people and cartoons. It is relevant to mention that students had the opportunity to choose one of them taking into account the most known or the most interesting to look for. This idea is supported by Souranti (2017) who mentions that one critical element that students must understand about all writing is that it reflects perspectives or points of view. This idea affects students to be mature and they also realize the significance of the perspective in writing because students need to be familiar with the different roles they can act as writers.

Continuing with the process, researcher set up the audience in which students were guided to write their descriptive texts considering the kind of people who possible will read their descriptions. This conception supports the idea of Jacobs (2005) who states that understanding your target audience can also help you to increase the impact of your words. If you know who you are writing for, you can identify what style would resonate best with them. In addition, the formats were selected taking into considering which ones fit better with the descriptive texts and the topics established. As a result, students were able to organize their ideas in a good way and at the same time provide understandable descriptions to the readers. Some previous studies (Ritonga, 2019; Riyanti, 2015; Umaemah, 2017; Werdiningsih, 2018) differ that depending on what kind of writing text, students have the opportunity to use various formats for their writing exercise which allow them generate and organize their ideas in a clear way.

Finally, the topics were selected taking into account the ones which accomplish to the idea of a descriptive text (describe person, place and a routine). Additionally, the topics were developed

considering the contents that researcher need to achieve during the intervention plan. This idea is in agreement with University of Central Florida (2019) that explains that topics can stem from the research students are doing within a subject, themes that are being studied in school, or subtopics within a unit that needs more clarification or enrichment.

However, the reader should bear in mind that the results of this study were limited by some aspects: firstly, being to a single pretest and posttest design, researcher did not make generalizations. Secondly, the time of the intervention was reduced which struggled to develop more different roles, audiences, formats and topics in the intervention plan. Therefore, in future investigations, it might be possible to consider to have a control group in order to make generalizations. Additionally, further investigations should be carried out in a longer time in order to address more RAFT writings.

CONCLUSIONS

Quantitative analysis confirmed that students had a great impact after applying RAFT strategy, highlighting two aspects of writing descriptive texts, phenomena and mechanics with the highest improvement and grammar patterns and vocabulary got the lowest impact.

RAFT strategy allowed students to activate their imagination and curiosity to develop the RAFT assignments. The opportunity to choose what role students wanted to take (students' interest), the audience address for those who wrote, the organization of their ideas in the different formats and the topics authenticity contributed to make RAFT a suitable instructional strategy to write descriptive texts.

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