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SCHOOL OF PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN
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The effect of RAFT strategy on improving EFL descriptive writing skills among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule.

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Espinoza Pinzón, Liz Stephanie, Med.

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We certify that this research project was presented by **Espinoza Valenzuela, Meyling Milen** & **Naranjo Moreno, Dayana Noemí** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Bachelor's Degree in EFL Pedagogy.**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of the RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) strategy on improving EFL content development skills for descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students in a non-bilingual private school in Daule. This research employs a pre-experimental one-group pretest and posttest design with a mixed-method approach to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. The study was conducted with a single 9th-grade class, where students were exposed to the RAFT strategy as part of their writing instruction. Qualitative data was collected through observations. Quantitative data was gathered from surveys. Additionally, mixed data was collected using checklists and tests as writing assessment. The findings indicate that after implementing the RAFT strategy, students demonstrated moderate improvement in content development, creativity, and engagement in their writing compared to their initial performance before using the strategy. Based on these results, recommendations are provided for integrating RAFT into writing instruction to support EFL learners in developing their descriptive writing skills.

INTRODUCTION

English has become an indispensable language in today's interconnected world. While Spanish is the official language in Ecuador, English Proficiency is crucial for academic, professional, and personal success. The Ecuadorian education system recognizes this and emphasizes the development of English language skills, including writing. However, writing, particularly descriptive texts, can pose significant challenges for secondary students. Many students struggle with expressing their ideas clearly, using appropriate grammar and vocabulary, and engaging in the writing process. Traditional teaching methods, often relying on rote memorization and grammar rules, may not effectively address these challenges.

To enhance students' writing abilities, this research investigates the impact of the RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, and Topic) strategy on improving EFL writing skills in descriptive texts. This strategy encourages students to consider their writing from a unique perspective by defining their role, identifying their audience, selecting an appropriate format, and determining the specific topic. By thinking about these elements, students can create more interesting and relevant writing (Pratiwi *et al.*, 2024). This approach aligns with the principles of process writing, emphasizing pre-writing planning, and inspiring student engagement.

RAFT motivates students to write with enthusiasm and creativity by assigning specific roles and audiences (Pratiwi *et al.*, 2024). As a result, it enhances their engagement and fosters a more meaningful writing experience. Furthermore Rahmasari & Rifa'i, (2022) highlight the potential of the RAFT strategy to make writing a positive experience and help students become more creative because they are able to choose their audience, specify their writing style, adopt a particular format and write on a particular subject. This research investigates whether the implementation of the RAFT strategy can significantly improve the quality of students' descriptive writing, enhance their creativity, and ultimately increase their confidence in their own English language abilities.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As it is widely known, writing is part of the four main language skills in English. Richards & Renandya, (2002) pointed out that among the four main language skills, writing is the most challenging, whether it is in a person's native language or in a second or foreign language. It is also considered one of the most essential language and educational skills that students begin to learn during primary school and continue to develop and improve throughout their lives (Rukavina & Nikčević-Milković, 2016).

Since writing is not an easy task to master among EFL learners, it is common that problems arise when trying to complete a writing assignment. Students usually face difficulties when producing a written composition, most of them related to content development and emotional struggles due to a lack of motivation in practicing that skill. Research by Pratiwi (2016) suggests that students often struggle to produce well-written texts due to their difficulty in developing ideas. Additionally, even when they do manage to come up with ideas, their thoughts are not organized in a coherent or logical structure. One of the causes of those struggles in writing might be related to the strategies EFL teachers use for teaching writing in the classroom, which could not be the most appropriate for a particular group of students. This results in limitations within the teaching and learning process.

Based on the activities done in a particular class of 9th-grade EFL students who study in a non-bilingual private school located in Daule, the type of text they are currently covering is descriptive. According to Kane (2000), "description" can be defined as the act of conveying sensory experiences, such as how something looks, sounds, or tastes, sometimes including other sensory impressions other than visual descriptions depending on the tasks given. However, learning how to write descriptive texts can be challenging for some students. They often struggle to express their ideas about a given topic, even when it has been introduced by the teacher. This confusion prevents them from clearly understanding how to write descriptive content.

The challenges in content development faced by this group of students stem primarily from the lack of an effective, structured and consistent teaching strategy for writing instruction. Although the teacher informed the researchers that he uses the "Paragraph Hamburger" method and stories to support students in content development, classroom observations revealed that these methods are rarely applied to this group and are ineffective in fostering motivation or addressing their writing challenges. Instead, it was noticed that writing instruction is often limited to general instructions about the topic and line requirements. At times, videos are used as supplementary material, but they do noy provide enough support to help students develop their writing skills. Given these issues, the researchers chose to implement the RAFT strategy, as it provides an engaging, structured, student-centered approach that could improve students' descriptive writing performance.

This research paper focuses on identifying and describing some of the writing challenges faced by EFL learners in a 9th-grade class at a non-bilingual private school located in Daule. Its aim is to examine the impact of implementing the RAFT strategy as a way to address and minimize specific challenges identified by the researchers related to content development, which includes difficulty in idea generation, fluency, length and poor content organization. Nevertheless, if these issues are not properly addressed by the teacher, they could negatively affect students' overall writing performance and learning outcomes in the long run.

JUSTIFICATION

Struggles in writing are experienced by the majority of EFL learners, including Ecuadorian students since English language teaching in this country does not seem as important as in developed ones. In Ecuador, a study by Cabrera Solano *et al.* (2014) found that 66% of senior high school students exhibited difficulties in writing. Therefore, this study is crucial for language educators to know how to help overcome the difficulties in writing using other methods apart from the traditional ones.

This undergraduate research analyzed the effect of applying a writing strategy designed to enhance EFL writing skills for descriptive texts among 9th-grade EFL students in a non-bilingual private school in Daule. The research will focus on the implementation of the RAFT strategy as a method to minimize common challenges faced by the learners, specifically in content development. Additionally, the findings will serve as valuable insights into the effectiveness of the strategy and encourage other researchers to conduct more comprehensive studies in this area with larger samples. However, it is important to clarify that the findings obtained cannot be generalized to the broader population due to the study's pre-experimental design, which relies on a single-group pretest-posttest approach. Moreover, the strategy is tested only once on a small-scale group, limiting the ability to establish casual relationships or account for external variables that may influence the results.

The study is grounded in the premise that writing is a fundamental skill for effective language acquisition, particularly for EFL learners. Developing descriptive writing abilities allows students to express their ideas clearly and creatively, which is essential for their academic success. Many students struggle with this skill due to issues such as poor content structuring or minimal exposure to strategies that encourage creativity and engagement. A study by Tamayo & Cajas (2020) identified that "many instructors rely heavily on textbooks and traditional methods, neglecting interactive and student-centered approaches, which hampers the development of writing skills." Similarly, when dealing with the students' difficulties in writing English, Mukminatien (1991)

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states that "the difficulties are not caused by the students themselves but also because of inappropriate techniques of approaching language teaching" (p. 114).

Nevertheless, EFL learners' struggles in writing is not an issue that happens only locally but also internationally, where EFL students face similar situations. For instance, in Colombia, Corrales & Maloof (2011) reported that "students perceived content-based instruction as beneficial for language development, yet many continued to struggle with writing tasks, especially in organizing ideas and using appropriate academic language". Furthermore, even though in South American countries it is more common for EFL learners to face English learning problems, this could also happen in countries where English is considered as their second language. Consider the case of Malaysia, where many studies were conducted to analyze and explore how learners of the English language struggle with writing. Research conducted by Baharudin *et al.* (2023), revealed that the main difficulty faced by the ESL foundation learners from Malaysia in writing is the inability to achieve the goal of the writing task given to them in language classrooms.

Significance of the research:

By doing this research the authors expect to provide valuable contributions to those 9th-grade EFL students from the school mentioned by identifying the key challenges they face in writing descriptive texts and proposing practical solutions using the RAFT writing strategy. This strategy has the potential to encourage students to give their best to overcome their difficulties such as in content development and develop their creativity in writing.

Additionally, the implementation of the RAFT strategy can be helpful for the English teacher to extend their knowledge and improve their teaching skills in writing lessons. In this way they will be able to give appropriate support and even useful resources such as designing a supplementary hands-on learning tool as a booklet based on the RAFT elements. Consequently, all these contributions to the teaching and learning process would have positive effects on the quality of the school's education. Lastly, as mentioned previously, this

study also seeks to encourage other researchers to conduct further studies on this current problem in ELT.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the impact of the RAFT strategy on content development skills in descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule?

MAIN OBJECTIVE:

To examine the effectiveness of applying the RAFT strategy in improving content development skills in descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify the common challenges in content development faced by 9th-grade EFL students when writing descriptive texts.

2. To analyze the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy in addressing and minimizing content development difficulties in descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students.

3. To design a printed practice booklet as a supplementary hands-on learning resource based on the RAFT elements to improve EFL students' descriptive writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores the theoretical basis of writing, analyzing the most important aspects of this skill. Various viewpoints presented by previous studies will be examined, concentrating on the obstacles encountered by ESL 9th students. Through the exploration of these theoretical frameworks, the aim is to achieve a richer insight into the writing process and its intrinsic complexities thus facilitating a more knowledgeable and refined method for aiding effective writing instructions and practice.

The information is divided into two main parts, the first one covers essential aspects related to writing as a language skill as well as understanding the importance of the writing process when producing written compositions in English as a foreign language. The second part will mention relevant details regarding a particular type of text in writing, which is a descriptive text, since this study involves analyzing a case of a specific group of students facing challenges when producing descriptive texts.

1.1   Writing

Students essentially need to learn writing as a language skill. Harmer (1988) shows that writing skills are one of the aspects of language skills that are important to master, especially junior high school students because the younger the learners are, the more they will gain the acquisition of language, especially in learning a foreign language.

1.1.1   Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the activities that is performed in everyday life. Beyond its practical applications, writing is considered a productive skill that involves the organization of opinions and ideas into a coherent text using proper language and structure. According to Harmer (2004), writing is a means of communication but also a tool for learning, allowing individuals to express their ideas, argue points, and share experiences in a structured and organized

manner. Unlike speaking, which allows for immediate interaction and feedback from an audience, writing requires a higher degree of accuracy and organization. This need for precision arises from the absence of real-time clarification in written communication, which places a great burden on the writer to ensure clarity and avoid ambiguity.

Moreover, writing is a mentally challenging task. As Flynn and Stainthorp (2006) point out, it's so complex that it really pushes the limits of our ability to process information. This observation underscores the mental effort involved in constructing well-formed and logical sentences while simultaneously conveying thoughts and emotions. For many individuals, this combination of tasks can be particularly challenging, as it requires balancing linguistic precision with creative expression.

In contrast, Sale (1970) offers an alternative perspective, defining writing as a "mechanical skill". By labelling it mechanical, Sale emphasizes the systematic and repeatable nature of the writing process, suggesting that writing can be broken down into a series of manageable steps. These steps, such as planning, drafting and editing, provide writers with a clear framework for tackling the inherent complexities of producing coherent and impactful texts. Sale's perspective aligns with modern approaches to writing instruction, which advocate for explicit teaching of these steps to enhance learners' writing fluency and confidence.

Writing, therefore, is a multifaceted skill that bridges cognitive, linguistic and creative domains. While it can be demanding, understanding it as both an expressive and procedural activity allows educators and learners to approach it with strategies that balance its challenges and benefits.

1.1.2 Elements of Writing

Writing is a skill that requires students to dominate several critical elements to produce effective and coherent texts. Research has consistently emphasized the importance of understanding and implementing these components in writing instruction.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2001), effective writing relies on five fundamental components: *Content*, which encompasses the main ideas and their development for meaningful communication; *Form*, referring to the logical organization of content for coherent structure; *Grammar*, the rules of language use, including sentence structure, for clarity and comprehensibility; *Style*, reflecting the writer's voice through word choice, sentence structure, and tone to connect with the audience; and *Mechanics*, the technical details like spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, ensuring professionalism and minimizing misinterpretations.

Building upon these foundational elements, various studies have further explored the dimensions of writing quality and assessment. Early work by Diederich (1974) identified five primary factors influencing writing quality: ideas expressed, mechanics, organization and analysis, wording and phrasing (vocabulary), and style. These factors highlight the multidimensional nature of writing, where clarity, technical accuracy, coherence, and personal expression intersect to define quality.

Research by Mehta *et al.*, (2005) introduced a writing ability estimate that incorporates eight aspects: addressing the prompt, unity and logical organization, vocabulary usage, sentence completion, grammar usage, capitalization, punctuation and spelling. This holistic approach underscores the interconnectedness of structural, linguistic, and mechanical elements in writing.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) further refines these considerations through its writing framework, which evaluates development of ideas, organization, and language facility (ACT Inc., 2007). This model emphasizes effective depth of ideas, coherence and the use of conventions such as grammar and mechanics, aligning closely with Nurgiyantoro's five components.

Studies employing factor analysis and structural equation modeling offer deeper insights into the components of writing. For instance, Attali & Powers (2008) identified three factors which are fluency, sentence-level connections

and word choice, as critical dimensions of writing quality in higher grade levels. Similarly, Puranik *et al.*, (2008) proposed a framework of productivity, complexity, and accuracy, while Kim *et al.*, (2011) added macro-organization as a crucial element. These models provide nuanced perspectives that highlight the evolving complexity of writing skills across grade levels.

Harmer (2004) argues that writing is crucial for language acquisition, offering several key advantages. It promotes cognitive growth and language improvement by demanding careful language use and word choice. Writing reinforces learning by providing opportunities to practice and solidify previously acquired grammar and vocabulary. It also prepares students for interactive classroom activities, such as discussions, by requiring them to formulate and express their ideas in written form beforehand. Furthermore, writing can be integrated into diverse classroom tasks beyond traditional exercises, supporting activities like role-plays and oral presentations. Critically, writing cultivates research and inquiry skills through activities like designing questionnaires and conducting surveys, thus enhancing students' analytical abilities. Finally, while a distinct skill itself, writing supports other communicative skills, notably speaking and listening, by fostering clear and confident expression and comprehension.

1.1.3 Advantages of Writing

Writing is an essential skill in the process of learning a language. As noted by Harmer (2004), developing strong writing skills provides numerous benefits for students across various aspects of language acquisition. First, writing fosters cognitive growth and language improvement by requiring students to focus on precise language application. As they engage in the writing process, they carefully consider and refine their word choices, which promotes cognitive development and facilitates natural language acquisition. Additionally, writing serves as a reinforcement tool for previously learned linguistic concepts and structures. Through consistent practice, students strengthen their comprehension and overall proficiency. Moreover, writing often functions as preparation for interactive activities in the classroom, particularly discussions and group interactions. For instance, students may first articulate their

thoughts in writing before engaging in meaningful discussions, allowing them to express their ideas more effectively. Furthermore, writing seamlessly integrates into various learning activities, extending beyond traditional exercises to support role-playing, oral presentations, and other interactive tasks that enrich the overall learning experience. Another critical aspect of writing is its role in enhancing research and inquiry skills. Engaging in tasks such as developing questionnaires or conducting surveys provides students with hands-on experience in data collection and analysis, sharpening their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Finally, while writing is a distinct skill, it plays a supportive role in other communicative skills, particularly speaking and listening. Strong written communication lays the foundation for clear and confident verbal expression, as well as improved listening comprehension. Collectively, these aspects highlight the indispensable role of writing in language learning and underscore its far-reaching impact on students' academic and linguistic development.

1.1.4 Writing Difficulties

It is known that during the drafting and editing stages of the writing process, students start writing their paragraphs and checking if their production is good to make the necessary changes. However, during the process of drafting EFL writers tend to encounter several challenges that make it difficult to produce their written composition successfully. As a result, students get frustrated and lose their motivation to finish the task.

The process of writing, though exceptional for personal expression and educational achievement, frequently poses considerable challenges for students. As Al Ahwal, (2018) stated, writing serves as a strong medium for students to convey their distinct ideas, language skills and creative intellect, but this potential is often suppressed by conventional teaching approaches that emphasize memorization rather than true involvement.

Several research studies often indicate a gap between these conventional methods and the intricate requirements of creative writing. Dakhel (2018), Qatamee & Allozey, (2018), and Zaier & Dakhel (2016), all emphasize the

negative effects of teacher-focused correction lacking objective criteria, resulting in subjective evaluations that may obstruct student development. Moreover, Parilasanti *et al.*, (2014) point out the significance of encouraging brainstorming and idea creation, which are frequently overlooked in conventional classrooms where learners must manage the writing process independently.

Apart from educational constraints, students face numerous internal and external challenges. According to Ceylan (2019), these encompass *challenges in transcription, organizing thoughts, vocabulary proficiency*, and *understanding directions*. Richards & Renandya (2002) specify that the challenge is in the creation process and organization of thoughts, particularly in selecting the most suitable word, constructing sentences and paragraphs, and translating people's ideas into a coherent and understandable text. Internal conflicts, including diminished interest, motivation, and self-esteem, can greatly obstruct the writing process, resulting in anxiety and writers block (Bulqiyah *et al.*, 2021). Budjalemba & Listyani (2020) additionally emphasize the impact of teaching style and classroom atmosphere on students' writing experiences.

The digital era brings unique challenges of its own. Although technology provides fresh opportunities for communication and information retrieval, it may also unintentionally impede writing progress. Riadil *et al.*, (2023) state that overexposure to social media and digital platforms can adversely affect writing abilities, resulting in the use of casual language and reduced ability for thorough analysis and critical thinking. Asare *et al.*, (2022) support these results, highlighting the possibility of social media language spreading through students' formal writing.

In spite of these difficulties, the spirit of humanity has a natural urge to express and innovate. Acknowledging and tackling these writing challenges entails a transition to more humanistic and student-focused methods. Regarding how to address students' challenges in writing English, researchers note that these difficulties often stem not only from the students' abilities but also from the lack of effective teaching strategies and limited exposure to reading materials

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(Moses & Mohamad, 2019). This requires an educational framework that values personal expression, promotes critical thought, and nurtures a passion for language. By fostering a nurturing and supportive educational atmosphere, teachers can enable students to conquer their writing fears, unleash their creative abilities, and eventually discover their voices in society.

Writing difficulties can be categorized into 4 main aspects, which are based on a particular rubric developed by Jacobs *et al.*, (1981) to assess the students' writing. The said rubric assesses writing according to five important main aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic.

Muamaroh *et al.* (2020) identify five key aspects of effective writing. *Content* involves planning, writing, and editing for clarity, focusing on unity and completeness through a single main idea per paragraph and cohesive supporting sentences. *Organization* refers to the systematic arrangement of thoughts, ensuring a logical flow of ideas and coherence throughout the text. *Vocabulary*, a crucial language element, involves carefully selecting and arranging words to create sentences and paragraphs that contribute to coherent writing and a diverse style. *Language use* emphasizes adherence to grammatical rules, particularly verb and noun usage, aiming for precise descriptions through strong verbs and specific nouns, modified effectively. And *Mechanics,* which encompasses the correct application of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, which are essential for guiding reader comprehension and conveying the author's intended message.

1.1.5 Assessment in Writing

According to Bachman & Palmer (1996), evaluating students' writing is regarded as difficult in the framework of EFL/ESL. Assessing the written work of students demands significant effort, time, and evaluation of skills. Based on research made by Harlen (2005), assessment refers to the processes used by academic staff to make judgements about the achievement of students in units of study and over a course of study. These processes involve deciding what constitutes relevant evidence for a specific purpose, collecting and

interpreting that evidence, and communicating it to intended users (students, academic colleagues, university administrators).

In this context, as noted by Hughes (1989), educators consistently grade various parts of students' assignments by defining clear criteria for evaluations. Evaluating performance is the primary objective of the rubric. As stated by Nemati & Bayer (2007), rubrics enable teachers to observe and connect their findings with descriptions, avoiding quick judgments during class. It is crucial to remark that those rubrics can be modified according to the needs of the teacher, such as what kind of aspects they want to assess in the writing tasks.

In 1981, Jacobs *et al.*, created an analytical type of profile. Moreover, it is considered one of the most recognized rubrics in the domain of writing in a second language (Brooks, 2012). As noted by Hamp-Lyons (1991), the ESL Composition Profile has existed since 1981, yet it has only recently gained traction among educators of second languages and scholars in the field.

The ESL Composition Profile is a resource designed to evaluate the writing skills of non-native English speakers. It was developed by Holly L. Jacobs, a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) educator, and was first published in 1981. The ESL Composition Profile consists of a set of criteria for evaluating different aspects of writing, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. According to Jacobs, *et al.*, (1981), its aim is to provide a comprehensive evaluation of a student's writing abilities and support teachers in identifying areas where students may need additional instruction and practice. The profile is typically used by teachers to assess the writing skills of their students. Scholars can use it to assess the writing skills of non-native English users.

1.1.6 Rubrics for grading

It is remarkable to highlight that the original rubric developed by Jacobs *et al.*, in 1981, can be adapted according to what the teachers want to assess and what is effective for their group of students as stated previously.

The format and aspects of Jacobs' ESL rubric is the following:

ESL Scoring Rubric for Writing

Aspect of Writing	Score	Category
Content	30-27	Excellent to very good
	26-22	Good to average
	21-17	Fair to poor
	16-13	Very poor
Organization	20-18	Excellent to very good
	17-14	Good to average
	13-10	Fair to poor
	9-7	Very poor
Vocabulary	20-18	Excellent to very good
	17-14	Good to average
	13-10	Fair to poor
	9-7	Very poor
Language Use	25-22	Excellent to very good
	21-18	Good to average
	17-11	Fair to poor
	10-5	Very poor

Table 1: Jacobs et al. (1995). Scoring Rubric for Writing Skills.

1.1.7 The Writing Process

Developing writing skills necessitates that learners engage in the process of learning to generate ideas, organize them, transcribe them onto paper and refine them into a coherent piece of writing (Umaemah *et al.*, 2016). The act of writing encompasses content, structure, word choice, language style and mechanics. A writing assignment includes basic sentences and detailed texts or essays. It involves expressing, exploring, and arranging emotions, convictions and concepts using symbols and a thoughtfully structured narrative.

The challenge of writing primarily stems from numerous steps necessary for composition; yet, if ESL/EFL learners bypass these steps, it could render writing even more difficult. While female authors implemented more techniques in their writing than male authors, Aripin & Rahmat (2021) stress that regardless of the strategies employed; planning, observing and evaluating are essential steps in helping writers produce high-quality work. According to Flower & Hayes (1981), writing is more accurately distinguished as a set of varied cognitive processes that writers manage or arrange during the act of creation. Flower and Hayes's writing model focuses on recognizing issues and the intended audience for these problems, which subsequently facilitates planning, translating, reviewing and monitoring. Therefore, although the writing process may differ among individuals, it typically involves these essential steps: Prior to writing (pre-writing); During writing; and Following writing (post-writing).

The writing process is not always straightforward, and authors might return to and go through stages multiple times as necessary. It is a systematic yet flexible framework that enables creativity, iteration, and enhancement during the writing process.

1.1.8 Benefits of the Writing Process

Writing is a multifaceted task that requires meticulous focus on both language and ideas. Successful writing needs a nuanced grasp of how to organize concepts, choose suitable language, and maintain overall cohesion Richards & Renandya, (2002) However, the process of writing extends beyond simple mechanics, as it promotes considerable cognitive and personal growth. The act of creating writing content actively involves the author, prompting them to try out language, investigate various word selections, and enhance their grasp of grammatical frameworks (Raimes, 1983). This active involvement goes further than just learning a language. Writing requires critical thinking because people arrange their ideas, examine information, and address issues that arise during the writing process. This cognitive involvement boosts memory,

improves analytical problem-solving abilities, and deepens comprehension of the topic being studied.

To foster a more captivating and efficient writing experience, teachers should adopt creative teaching methods. One method is the RAFT Strategy, a powerful framework that encourages students to think about their Role, Audience, Format, and Topic, thus fostering creativity and improving the writing process. By changing the emphasis from memorizing facts to creative expression, The RAFT approach promotes critical thinking and motivates students to consider various viewpoints, involving them more thoroughly in the writing process (Alisa & Rosa, 2013).

Studies have reliably shown the beneficial effects of the RAFT Strategy on Student writing. Research indicates notable advancements in writing abilities, magnified student involvement, and improved creative expression among learners who have employed this method (Lindawaty *et al.*, 2014); (Sudarningsih & Wardana, 2011). Moreover, by linking existing knowledge with new ideas and promoting critical thinking, the RAFT Strategy promotes deeper learning and improves students' comprehension of the topic.

1.1.9 Stages of the Writing Process:

Successful written communication involves a fluid and repetitive process that goes beyond just putting ideas down on paper. As stated by Riyanti (2015), this procedure usually involves four unique but related phases: planning, drafting, revising and editing. These stages, however, do not always follow a straight path; writers frequently revisit and navigate between them as they develop their concepts and craft their writing.

Riyanti (2015) describes each stage as follows:

1. **Planning (Pre- writing stage):** This vital first step entails establishing the foundation for the writing project. It is a time of cognitive involvement where authors deliberately develop concepts, collect pertinent details, and investigate possible methods concerning the subject. This could

include brainstorming, engaging in freewriting, creating mind maps, performing initial research or just thinking about the topic.

Role of Prompts: According to Wiles (2014) in his dissertation, "Prompting Discussion: Writing Prompts, Habits of Mind, and the Shape of the Writing Classroom," writing prompts act as essential facilitating instruments in the writing classroom. They not only aid in developing a disciplinary genre but also represent a significant genre of their own, calling on the practical social action of the writing classroom. Prompts offer a distinct direction, aiding the writer's initial investigation and assisting them in recognizing important questions and possible paths of research. For instance, a prompt like "Examine how social media influenced political discussions in the U.S. during the 2020 presidential election" highlights a particular subject, audience (academics, researchers), and emphasize analysis, thus guiding the preliminary planning stage.

2. **Drafting:** The drafting phase consists of converting thoughts and concepts into written expressions. This is the stage at which the author starts to build the actual content, concentrating on articulating their thoughts in a clear and structured way. It is crucial to keep in mind that the first draft is seldom flawless. It is frequently disorganized and can include mistakes in grammar, punctuation, and style.

Role of prompts: Prompts can offer a guideline for the writing phase by proposing a specific structure or arrangement pattern. For example, a prompt asking for a comparison and contrast essay could subtly steer the writer towards a particular organizational format (e.g., point-by-point or subject-by-subject). Nevertheless, it is essential to steer clear of excessively detailed prompts that hinder creativity and deter experimentation.

3. **Revising:** Revising is an essential phase that entails reviewing the draft to enhance its content, structure, and clarity. This could include rearranging arguments, polishing the thesis statement, including or removing details, and enhancing the text's flow and coherence.

Role of Prompts: Prompts aid the revision process by offering a framework for assessment. For instance, a prompt highlighting the significance of evidence-based reasoning can lead the writer to thoughtfully evaluate the strength and legitimacy of their supporting evidence in the revision phase. Requesting input from colleagues or teachers can likewise be extremely beneficial throughout the editing stage.

4. **Editing:** The last phase requires careful attention to detail, emphasizing the correction of grammatical mistakes, proper punctuation, and the enhancement of word choice and sentence construction for optimal clarity and effectiveness. This could include reviewing for errors, checking spelling, and asking for input from others.

Role of Prompts: Although prompts may not have a direct impact on the editing phase, they play an indirect role in enhancing the overall quality of the final output. By offering a structured framework and directing the writing journey from the initial planning phases, prompts assist in ensuring that the final draft is organized, supported and effectively tackles the assigned task.

1.1.10 Past Studies on Writing Difficulties

Bulqiyah *et al.*, (2021) examined the writing challenges faced by ESL students at the tertiary level. Their approach, which used mixed methods, included both questionnaires and interviews with 21 participants. The research identified two main types of writing challenges: Affective and Cognitive. Affective challenges relate to the perspective of students and teachers regarding writing education. Cognitive challenges, on the other hand, involve issues about the technical facets of writing, including restricted vocabulary, poorly developed concepts, and inadequate organization. These results indicate that ESL students face challenges with writing in both emotional and technical aspects.

Different research conducted by Uba & Souidi, (2020) investigated writing challenges and writing methods among ESL students at Dhofar University in Oman. The researchers utilized a textography method to examine 40 essays composed by undergraduate business students. Their examination revealed multiple writing difficulties, such as issues with thesis statements, topic sentences, generating ideas, organization, coherence, and vocabulary usage.

Notably, the research connected these challenges to the restricted time assigned for writing teaching in the curriculum. Uba & Souidi (2020) discovered that students received a maximum of four hours of writing instruction during the entire course. Drawing from this discovery, they proposed various enhancements, such as extended contact hours for essay writing guidance, greater engagement in critical thinking exercises, and an intensified emphasis on the development of academic vocabulary.

Phuong (2021) investigated the challenges in writing encountered by English majors at Tay Do University in Vietnam. A study involving 50 sophomore students identified seven main difficulties: restricted vocabulary, grammar and mechanical problems, insufficient background knowledge, weak organization, time limitations, and language transfer. The research revealed persistent mistakes in students' academic writing, highlighting lexical issues and time limitations as the thief challenges. In reply, Phuong highlighted the need for teachers to enhance writing instruction to better students' writing abilities. Like Uba & Souidi (2020), Phuong (2021) recommended dedicating additional time for writing exercises in the classroom.

1.1.11 Past Studies on the Writing Process

The writing process, usually encompassing phases like planning, drafting, revising and editing, is broadly acknowledged as an essential structure for language learners to enhance their writing abilities. Muamaroh *et al.*, (2020) highlight the significance of these phases in addressing frequent writing difficulties, such as problems with content creation, structure, word choice, grammar and mechanics. Likewise, Wayan & Alexandra (2021) emphasize the importance of regular engagement with the writing process, using methods such as brainstorming, organizing ideas, and revising to enhance writing skills. Nonetheless, they also recognize that the writing process may be taxing for students, requiring considerable effort, and usually viewed as more difficult than other language abilities.

Although the theoretical advantages of the writing process exist, some research still encounters considerable difficulties. Muamaroh *et al.*, (2020) carried out a study examining the writing process in undergraduate students,

using a mixed-method approach that included writing assignments, surveys, and interviews. Although all participants engaged in the four stages of the writing process, they consistently faced challenges in multiple facets of writing, such as content development, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Additionally, the research recognized multiple factors that hindered writing performance, including limited grammar and vocabulary skills, insufficient writing practice, and a deficiency in self-confidence. These results highlight the intricacies of the writing process and the ongoing difficulties faced by students even as they participate in its different phases.

Wayan & Alexandra (2021) explored the involvement and engagement of ESL students in the writing process in a classroom environment that used a process-oriented approach and collaborative learning. Their research, grounded in observations, interviews, and surveys, employed a five-stage writing framework (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) and concentrated on the significance of scaffolding in collaborative learning. Although the research indicated that students were actively involved in the revision phase, their involvement in other phases was not as consistent.

Recognizing the ongoing difficulties encountered by learners, such as content and mechanical mistakes, Wayan & Alexandra (2021) highlighted the essential responsibility of educators to support students throughout the writing journey and help them address their writing challenges. This underscores the necessity for efficient teaching methods and nurturing learning settings to enhance the advantages of the writing process for language learners.

These research findings offer an important understanding of the intricacies involved in the writing process. Although the writing process framework provides a structural and organized method for writing growth, it is crucial to acknowledge the unique needs and difficulties of learners. Elements like motivation, self-esteem, and availability of resources can greatly impact the efficiency of the writing procedure. Future studies should explore the effects of various teaching methods, such as technology-assisted learning and peer review systems, on student involvement and writing results. Additionally, examining the impact of cultural influences and personal learning preferences

in writing can offer important insights for creating more inclusive and effective writing education.

1.2 Descriptive Texts

As it is widely known, there are several types of texts in writing, and each of them has different features and serves different purposes. However, for this research, the focus would be on descriptive text as it is the type of text the participants have difficulty in.

1.2.1 Definition of Descriptive text

Mattix (2003) found out that based on the writer's opinion about description, it has been defined by philosophers as "a mode of perception," or a means of knowing. At its core, descriptive texts can portray people, places, objects, or events by organizing their attributes and characteristics in a coherent way. It often begins with an identification or general statement to introduce the subject, followed by detailed descriptions of its appearance, qualities, and behaviors. Anderson & Anderson, (2003), stated that descriptive texts describe people, things or places. They also mentioned that descriptive texts talk about a subject by describing its features without including personal opinions. In addition, according to Pardiyono, (2007), the descriptive text gives descriptions of living or non-living things to the reader. In other words, the text can tell whether an object is still alive or not. Moreover, Barbara (2004) added that description gives a significant point of view because it transforms our feelings and extends our experiences.

Based on the concepts provided above, it can be said that descriptive writing serves as a vital tool for conveying sensory experiences, allowing readers to visualize and emotionally connect with the subject being described. It enriches our understanding by offering detailed accounts of objects, scenes, or events, making them tangible through vivid imagery. This form of writing enhances imagination by creating lifelike representations, as it taps into our senses to evoke emotions and expand perspectives. Broadly speaking, Kane (2000) defines *description* as the process of conveying sensory experiences, how

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something appears, sounds, or tastes. While it primarily focuses on visual impressions, it also incorporates other sensory perceptions. Moreover, descriptions are a common part of our daily lives, appearing in everything from news articles discussing current issues to conversations where vivid retellings of events can allow listeners to share in the emotion of the moment. For example, a detailed recount of a vacation can transport the listener to the scene.

As noted in Gerot & Wignel (1994); Knapp & Watkins (2005), descriptive text is a form of writing or speech aimed at providing detailed descriptions of a specific object, person, animal, place, or event to engage readers or listeners. Whether it involves describing a person's personality, an animal's unique habits, or the distinct features of a place, descriptive writing ensures clarity and depth, making even abstract or unfamiliar concepts accessible to readers.

Furthermore, description relies on engaging the senses, encompassing how something looks, sounds, feels, or tastes. It is important to mention that it is not just about providing but creating immersive experiences that stir emotions and connect the audience to the subject of the descriptive text. Writers use descriptive text to reveal and represent the world in a way that feels tangible, whether the subject is concrete, like a physical object, or abstract, like a feeling or concept. By offering detailed and vivid accounts, description bridges gaps in understanding, making both the ordinary and extraordinary relatable and emotionally resonant.

In simpler terms, *description* offers detailed information about a particular person or thing, helping to change the reader's perspective and deepen their understanding.

1.2.2 Purpose of Descriptive Writing

Wilbur (1996) stated that the purpose of descriptive writing is to vividly portray a person, place, or object, creating a clear and lasting impression of the subject being described in the text. Based on this information, it can be said that one of the aims of descriptive texts is to engage the reader's senses and imagination while reading all the details provided. Similarly, Barnet & Marcia

(1983) explained in their research that description transforms sensory experiences into words, capturing moments in time. They also highlight that visual imagery plays a dominant role in descriptive writing, often shaping how readers perceive and imagine the situation described.

Moreover, according to Fink *et al.*, (1983), the purpose of description is to imagine the reader by using a picture of a person, subject, or setting. This points to the idea that it is allowed to use pictures, videos, novels, or any other resources so that the reader can visualize or have a clear idea about the subject that will be talked about in their writing task. According to Febriani (2011), the purpose of a descriptive text is to get the reader to imagine within the story to get pleasure and information.

As noticed, all the definitions provided previously that tell what descriptive text is about convey similar ideas. Also, it is important to mention that descriptive is used in various kinds of writing or contexts, such as college paper, job application, report, or other documents. On the other hand, in different scopes like research, business, and technical writing, authors use description to help readers in understanding the material characteristics and essential structure of physical items, organisms, and phenomena. Additionally, in the case of expressive writing forms like personal essays, stories, autobiographies, and poems, writers guide and influence the emotions of their readers.

Different types of descriptive writing serve varied purposes, so appropriate and suitable descriptive details can enhance the central idea Mattix (2003, p.139) As referenced in Riyanti (2015), there are several purposes of description as illustrated below:

Think Like a Writer: Purposes for Description

PURPOSES	DESCRIPTION - EXAMPLES

To entartain	A lively and humorous portrayal of a messy teenager's room that captures its chaos and character.
To express feelings	An emotive description of the kind of relationship the writer has with someone they cherish (parents/best friends, etc.)
To relate experience	A description of your childhood home emphasizing its humble conditions and the struggles faced there to convey a sense of the poverty you grew up in.
To inform (for a reader unfamiliar with the subject)	A clear description of a trip to a particular place/country for a reader who has never been there before.
To inform (to create a fresh appreciation for the familiar)	A thoughtful description of an apple that highlights its taste, appearance and the small joys it can bring to help the reader rediscover the joys of this simple fruit.
To persuade (to convince the reader that something is true)	A description of a music video that challenges its portrayal of women to convince the reader that it contains degrading elements.

Table 2: Adapted from Riyanti, Y. (2015). Purposes for description

Furthermore, the following table includes other similar important purposes of the descriptive text stated by Fred D. White, (1986):

To see	It means to help the reader to see the objects, people, and sensations you present. Description is important for all rhetorical aims, not just for expressiveness.
To explain	It means to explain to the reader about a subject. For example: a science writer will describe the shape of an airplane wing to help explain to readers how mechanized flight is possible.
To persuade	It means the writer describes something to make readers interested. For example: an attorney might describe the damage done to a bedroom window to help prove forced entry and thereby persuade the jury that the accused committed burglary.
To re-create	It means allowing the reader to re-create the experience, particularly the sensory pleasures of that experience, in their own minds. Thereby enhancing their delight in the subject at hand.
To demonstrate	It means the writer wants to demonstrate something to a reader. When a writer describes the thawing of Walden Pond after a long, cold winter is to demonstrate the animated quality of nature and how its processes are more complex and beautiful than non-observers can realize.

Table 3: White (1986). Purposes of descriptive texts.

1.2.3 Language features of descriptive texts

To produce a descriptive text successfully, it is important to understand the language features of descriptive texts since they are essential for writers to effectively communicate their ideas and bring their descriptions to life.

Derewianka (1990), Emilia & Christie (2013), Gerot & Wignel (1994), and Knapp & Watkins (2005) identify several key linguistic features of descriptive texts. These include a focus on specific participants, using particular nouns

rather than general ones (e.g., "an ancient oak" instead of "a tree"); the simple present tense to describe current states or characteristics (e.g., "The mountains are covered with snow"); linking verbs (e.g., "is," "are") to connect subjects with their attributes (e.g., "The library is quiet"); action verbs (e.g., "run," "play") to depict the subject's actions; adjectives and adverbs (e.g., "serene lake," "glistens softly") to add descriptive detail; mental verbs (e.g., "think," "feel") to convey thoughts and emotions; and adverbial phrases and circumstances (e.g., "in the early spring") to provide context related to time, place, or manner.

In addition to the linguistic features previously mentioned, Kemendikbud (2013) emphasizes practical classroom applications. Specifically, students should be reminded of the importance of clear spelling and neat handwriting to ensure their written work is easily legible and understood by the reader. When presenting their writing orally, students should focus on proper stress and intonation, using clear pronunciation, emphasizing key words, and varying their tone to create engaging and meaningful presentations. Finally, Kemendikbud places emphasis on the use of appropriate vocabulary, encouraging students to select words and phrases that accurately and effectively describe their chosen topic, thus ensuring clarity and detail in their writing, which are key assessment criteria.

As noticed, descriptive texts use a variety of crucial linguistic features that the writers can make use of to create detailed and appropriate descriptions of the subjects. Together, these elements are crucial because it enhances factors in writing such as clarity, fluency, and engagement.

1.2.4 Types of Descriptive Texts

As with any other texts, descriptive texts can be categorized into different types, each serving a different purpose depending on the context. Understanding the types and its features, as well as when and how to use them, can enhance the writer's ability to adapt their style to different contexts,

making sure that the message of the text is effective. In other words, it allows the writers to be more dynamic in their texts.

According to Buscemi, (2002), there are two types of descriptive texts: Objective Descriptive and Subjective Descriptive. It will depend on the writer if they want to mix both types for their descriptive text or only one of them. This researcher defines *objective descriptive* as a type of text that provides factual and precise details of the subject being described in the text, ensuring that the information is impartial and not biased. For this, the writers make use of their senses to write the details. For instance, in the case of journalists or scientists, whenever they write something to inform the audience regarding news or any other situation, they use facts instead of personal opinions. Students can be asked to write a text where they have to describe what their favorite piece of art looks like, detailing its physical attributes. On the other hand, *subjective descriptive* is a text that involves describing a subject using the writer's individual view, opinion, or feelings. In such a descriptive work, the writer aims to portray reactions through expressive language, seeking to evoke specific emotions in the reader. As a result, this type of writing does not maintain an impartial tone like the objective one. Instead, writers express their own perspective, making their descriptions inherently biased. For instance, since in this case the description will be subjective, students are not going to write factual information about their favorite piece of art, instead, they will focus on the feelings it evokes and personal interpretations of its meaning.

1.2.5 The Generic Structure of Descriptive Writing

Descriptive texts often have a certain generic structure that, while writers are not forced always to follow it, can significantly improve the organization and flow of the writing. This structure serves as a guide to ensure that the content is presented clearly, coherently, and effectively even though it might seem simple.

According to Harmenita & Tiarina (2013), descriptive texts are structured around two key components. The *identification section* serves as the

introduction, clearly stating the topic and identifying the person, place, or thing that will be described. Following the identification, the *description section* provides detailed information about the subject, elaborating on its specific attributes, qualities, characteristics, and other relevant features to create a vivid picture for the reader.

Based on the research of Wardiman *et al.*, (2008), a good example of a short descriptive text that includes both sections accurately can be the following:

"My name is Kevin. My parents' names are Mr. and Mrs. Steward. I have two elder sisters. Their names are Jessica and Hanna. We like travelling.
The place that we often visit is Bali. Almost every holiday, we go to my grandfather's house in Bali. He has a restaurant near Kuta Beach. The restaurant faces directly to the beach so that the people in the restaurant can see the sunset. The tourists like to visit my grandfather's restaurant."

Analysis:
This is a short paragraph that describes a place the writer's family loves to visit or a memorable family tradition.

The introduction of this text would be:
"My name is Kevin. My parents' names are Mr. and Mrs. Steward. I have two elder sisters. Their names are Jessica and Hanna. We like traveling."

For this part, the writer presents the topic that is going to be described, in this case, some of his family members and their love for traveling.

The description would be:
"The place that we often visit is Bali. Almost every holiday, we go to my grandfather's house in Bali. He has a restaurant near Kuta Beach. The restaurant faces directly to the beach so that the people in the restaurant can see the sunset. The tourists like to visit my grandfather's restaurant."

In this section, the writer focuses on adding the rest of the details that are necessary to describe effectively what is asked in the task.

1.3   Teaching Writing Strategies

A strategy is an important tool teachers use to implement their teaching activities in the classroom. One of its benefits is that it helps put ideas, plans, and goals of the lesson into action within a specific timeframe. According to Lestari *et al.*, (2020) in education, a strategy can be defined as a plan, approach, or set of activities aimed at achieving given or set learning objectives.

As mentioned previously, teaching strategies play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process, in this case, in the context of ELT (English Language Teaching). Ayua (2017) defines a teaching strategy as an educational approach used during lessons, serving as a planned method or design of activities aimed at achieving the specific objectives of the lesson. Based on this information, it can be said that teaching strategies are carefully thought-out methods that teachers use to ensure students grasp the intended concepts or skills. Similarly, as highlighted in Munawaroh (2017) teaching strategies refer to selected methods that assist students in reaching specific learning objectives.

A teaching strategy is a comprehensive plan for a lesson that incorporates the lesson's structure, clearly defined instructional objectives, and a framework of tactics required to carry out the strategy effectively Stone and Morris, as cited in Bayu & Abdul, (2014). In simpler words, these strategies are tools or techniques chosen by teachers to guide and support students in achieving their learning goals successfully. It is essential to emphasize that since one of the main goals of this research is to improve EFL learners' writing abilities, then the focus would be the application of writing teaching strategies in the classroom to reach that goal.

Furthermore, it has been known that there are several challenges that EFL students usually face when learning English, especially when producing a written composition. To support learners in addressing their challenges during the writing process, writing strategies have been introduced as practical tools, techniques, or operations that learners can use to improve their writing

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efficiency and effectiveness (Creswell, 2000); (Graham, 2006). Therefore, the role of English teachers to help minimize those problems in writing lessons is to actively find and develop new methods for presenting materials to develop students' writing skills. This involves putting effort into applying more creative and engaging strategies to teach writing that goes well with the group of students, making it less difficult for them to learn and practice effectively. As a result, by creating an enjoyable and interactive learning environment, students could get more interested in the subject and have the motivation to actively participate in the process of improving their writing abilities.

Important information is found in the research conducted by Ferris & Hedgcock, (2011), which states that writing is a complex process that requires learners to actively develop ideas, organize and construct information across various genres, and refine their work through revising and editing. This points to the idea that English teachers need to find a way to teach learners first how to think of what to write successfully as well as how to arrange their ideas properly in their text to avoid having issues with the quality of their writing.

Moreover, Qamariah (2016) emphasizes that a key aspect of teaching writing to EFL learners is helping them overcome mental blocks during the writing process. She highlights the need for strategies that can minimize those issues. This implies that the need to reduce students' anxiety and help them feel confident while writing are crucial steps toward improving their abilities in that language skill.

Regarding the definition of writing strategies, as described by Graham *et al.*, (2013), they refer to intentional techniques writers use to develop ideas, organize and plan their work, revise their text, and reflect on the writing process. Similarly, Flower (1998) defined writing strategies as the decisions writers make to overcome obstacles encountered during a writing task. Therefore, given that writing strategies are an active and cognitive process that plays a significant role in L2/FL writing, numerous studies have been conducted over the past two decades to explore the writing strategies employed by L2/FL learners.

While research has explored various topics, most studies have compared the strategies used by more successful writers to those used by less successful ones. The goal has been to identify effective strategies that can improve EFL learners' writing performance. This research thus focuses on and intends to analyze the effects of applying a specific writing strategy on students' descriptive writing performance for a particular group of Ecuadorian EFL high school students who study in a non-bilingual private school located in Daule.

1.4 The RAFT Strategy

As highlighted previously, it is essential for this study to analyze the effect of one particular writing strategy that can help minimize some of the most common struggles that students face when producing descriptive written composition in the L2, particularly in creativity and content development, which includes challenges such as idea generation, fluency, length and organization, being those four issues the focus for this study.

Barry *et al.*, (2010) describe good writing as being clear, direct, and easy to comprehend, with strong, confident openings and conclusions. In addition, good writing demonstrates the writer's engagement with the subject and tries to capture the reader's interest. It also requires teachers to remind students to be aware of their audience and the purpose of their writing. According to Lucantoni, (2002), effective writing allows students to express themselves fluently and with intention, keeping the audience in mind.

The focus of this study is to analyze the impact of the RAFT strategy on a particular group of EFL high school students on solving the 3 main challenges mentioned at the beginning. Regarding what it involves, the RAFT strategy is recognized as an effective tool for addressing challenges students face, such as the ones mentioned above, when completing writing tasks in the L2. According to Santa *et al.*, (2004), this approach stands for Role (R), Audience (A), Format (F), and Topic with strong verbs (Ts); the last element being optional. These are considered essential elements of any well-structured writing assignment. Being that said, by using the RAFTs strategy, students develop a clearer understanding of their role as writers, their intended audience, the various formats they can use, and the content they are expected

to produce. At the same time, with the use of this strategy, they will put their creativity into practice, making the writing activity more engaging. As mentioned in Sejnost & Thiese's research (2007), the strategy's emphasis on specificity and a well-defined focus can help students find writing more enjoyable.

Moreover, the RAFTs strategy plays an important role in the writing process by helping students develop and organize ideas through structured assignments. Research by Umaemah *et al.*, (2016) supports the effectiveness of the RAFTs strategy in addressing writing difficulties across various grade levels. This makes RAFTs a valuable approach for improving students' writing skills at different educational stages.

1.4.1 Definitions of RAFT Strategy

RAFT, sometimes RAFTs, is a structured writing strategy developed by Carol Santa, alongside Havens and Valdes in 1988. As stated previously, it refers to an acronym that stands for Role, Audience, Format, and Topic + strong verbs. This approach is designed to guide students in their writing process by helping them focus on these key elements. According to Santa *et al.*, (2004), the main objective of this strategy is to improve the quality of students' writing by making tasks more personalized and changing positively the way students perceive the topic and the act of writing itself, since the majority consider it as one of the most difficult skills when learning a second language. In other words, it encourages them to engage with the topic on a deeper level and view this skill as an interactive process.

Santa *et al.*, (2004) define RAFT strategy as a way to support EFL learners in developing and understanding the importance of their role as a writer, sense of purpose, and audience, as well as expressing their ideas clearly in their writing. Moreover, Simon, (2012) described RAFT as a tool that enables students to understand their role as writers and effectively communicate their ideas and arguments in a way that readers can clearly grasp. This strategy also promotes creativity and critical thinking, as it allows students to make decisions about their writing while drafting. Teachers can use RAFT to help

students develop their writing skills by encouraging them to make thoughtful choices regarding their format, audience, and style. Similarly, Singleton & Newman (2009) emphasized that RAFT allows writers to approach topics from different perspectives, fostering both creativity and the ability to present ideas uniquely. In simpler terms, it shows promise to help students expand their thinking and express their knowledge in more innovative ways.

Furthermore, as noted by Buehl (2009), this strategy involves adopting a specific point of view in writing, allowing students to approach assignments with enhanced creativity and a broad imagination. As a result, it can be understood that with the application of this strategy when producing a written composition, students will make use of other creative abilities they possess that will make the task more enjoyable and engaging. Students can practice expressing their ideas clearly and effectively while considering their target audience and chosen format. By doing so, students not only enhance their writing skills but also learn to adapt their writing to suit various contexts and readers.

Research has shown positive outcomes from using the RAFT strategy in the classroom. For instance, Groenke & Puckett (2016) noted that RAFT helps students connect prior knowledge with new information, fostering creativity while maintaining structure in writing assignments. As a result, students think critically and deepen their understanding of the topic. Likewise, Santa, as cited in Mohamed *et al.*, (2020) highlighted that this connection between old and new knowledge helps students contextualize their ideas. From this, it can be said that this strategy can serve as a helpful tool to avoid common challenges students usually face when completing writing assignments such as generating ideas and organizing them. This strategy has the potential to help learners write with less difficulty since they have a better understanding of what they have to write based on the prompt provided.

Lindawaty & Clarry (2014) observed that implementing the RAFT strategy significantly improved students' writing abilities, particularly in crafting formal letters. Therefore, by using interactive practice, students can improve their

ability to respond accurately to prompts, use appropriate expressions, and recognize the impact of their writing on their target audience.

Additionally, Umaemah *et al.*, (2016), concluded that the RAFT strategy was effective in enhancing students' writing skills. This strategy encourages teachers to focus on students' writing development by creating differentiated tasks tailored to different types of writing. Originally designed to help educators plan and teach writing more effectively, RAFT provides a structured approach to guide and support students in their tasks. Santa, as cited in Mohamed *et al.*, (2020), emphasized that RAFT is a tool that can be adapted depending on the purposes of the writer, such as creating meaningful learning activities, group tasks such as jigsaws, homework, or even summative assessments.

Building on the several definitions provided by these experts, RAFT can be used as a very useful, valuable and accessible tool for fostering creativity during the writing process. It offers students a fresh, engaging, and innovative approach to developing and communicating their ideas. RAFT is a form of guided writing that can be implemented in teaching to improve students' writing competence (Parilasanti *et al.*, 2014). This points to the idea that it has the potential to support both teachers and learners to improve the teaching and learning process of writing in L2.

1.4.2 Elements of the RAFT Strategy

To start, according to Meredith & Steele (2010), using the RAFT strategy is fairly simple once students are familiar with its basic elements connected to writing skills. It stands for some important elements that are crucial for EFL teachers and learners to know their meaning.

The questions based on the RAFT elements the writer should ask themselves before starting to write and some possible examples students can choose from for each element are the following:

R – Role of the writer	Who am I as the author?
A – Audience for the writer	To whom am I writing?
F – Format of the writing	What form will my writing take?
T – Topic of the writing	What am I writing about?
S – Strong verb	What is the main purpose of my writing task? (Describe)

Table 4: Adapted from Ahmad Iseifan (2017). RAFTs Elements Questions

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC	STRONG VERB
-writer -superhero -inventor -scientist -adventurer -singer -journalist -actor	-self -peer group/ classmates -parents -teachers -fictional characters -animals or objects	-paragraph -letter -journal -newspaper article -a poster -critique -essay	-topic relates to an essential question -topic of personal interest or concern for the role or audience -issue relevant to the text	-describe -convince -explain -reflect -entertain -review -inform -evoke emotion

Table 5: Adapted from Ahmad Iseifan (2017). Examples of RAFTs elements.

Meredith & Steele (2010) explain each element as:

The **Role** of the writer is one of the foundational concepts of RAFT. For this, the writer can take the role of any person or character that goes well with the task. It is important for the writer to gain insight into how their writing can express different viewpoints and perspectives depending on the task, allowing

them to be more focused on who they are while writing the text. This helps recognize the significance of adopting specific roles when writing.

The **Audience** is another crucial element that makes writing both engaging and challenging. As in the role, students learn that writing also varies depending on who will read their work. Writing on the same topic for different audiences such as classmates, teachers, or any public figures, train students how to adjust their style and approach to suit their readers of the task. For instance, if the writing task involves texting a friend to describe your holidays, then it would refer to informal writing; however, if it involves composing something to an authority such as the principal of a school, then it would refer to formal writing because of the people involved. It is important to mention that writers should understand the fact that writing varies according to audience as well as the format.

The **Format** element encourages students to explore various writing styles beyond traditional paragraphs. Teachers must present students with a wide range of options of formats they can choose from. These formats can be posters, letters, narratives, etc. In this way, students expand their "communication toolbox". Moreover, this variety of options for their tasks fosters creativity and provides opportunities for self-expression that may not happen if students are limited to one type of writing.

For Topic selection teachers typically provide guiding questions or prompts to help students identify the conceptual aspects of the subject they are describing. Adding clear prompts in the instruction helps students focus their ideas and write more effectively what they are asked to. In other words, when considering topics, it is useful to think in terms of what kind of questions students should address.

Lastly, the addition of **Strong Verbs**, which is one adaptation to the RAFT strategy, helps and guides the writer in identifying the purpose of their writing such as persuading, informing, describing, etc. You will find the strong verb within the prompt/instruction of the task, that is why it should be read carefully.

To sum up, through the application of these elements when completing a writing activity in class, students develop a deeper understanding of writing as a dynamic and versatile form of communication. The RAFT strategy fosters creativity, critical thinking, and clarity in writing by guiding students through a structured approach that has the potential to improve their writing process.

1.4.3 Importance of the RAFT Strategy

Besides understanding the definition of the RAFT strategy, it is also crucial for teachers to be aware of all the benefits that this tool can bring to the practice of writing skills in the second language inside the classroom. It holds significant importance as it can improve both the teaching and learning process.

Research by Parilasanti *et al.*, (2014) suggested the following general reasons why the RAFT strategy can be considered a very important tool to use during writing lessons with EFL learners:

a. Through the application of this strategy, EFL learners' writing abilities can be improved.
b. It has the potential to minimize some of the common challenges students face when producing a written composition, especially in content development.
c. It can increase EFL learners' interest in studying and improving their writing skills.
d. It makes writers acknowledge the variety of roles, audiences, writing product formats, as well as the different topics they can cover in their written composition. This will depend on what they intend to describe in their texts.
e. It gives EFL students the chance to make use of their experiences and express what they know from different topics. As a result, they will be able to make use of their creativity to describe the subject and communicate their understanding of it.

1.4.4 Benefits of the RAFT strategy

The RAFT strategy allows for some differentiation based on learning profile, student interest and readiness level. This differentiation is designed to meet the needs of each student in the classroom. The elements of this strategy, (Role, Audience, Format, and Topic) provide support to EFL learners who struggle in writing by offering needed guided instruction, focusing on a particular topic and point of view.

With constant practice, EFL students would be able to totally master the use of this strategy successfully. Once they have developed that mastery, they can be offered plenty of options, including the creation of their own prompt for writing tasks, which encourages creativity Buehl, as cited in El Sourani (2017).

Before implementing a certain method in class, teachers should be aware of the benefits it can bring. According to Santa & Havens (1995), this strategy can benefit both EFL teachers and students during writing lessons. As a result, students become more creative because of teachers encouraging them to explore their ideas.

Buehl (2009) mentioned some of them:

- **EFL teachers:**

Some advantages of implementing the RAFT strategy in the teaching process are the following:

a. There are no limitations regarding the subjects in which this strategy can be used. English teachers who teach content areas in the L2 such as science, social studies and literature can make use of this approach during writing activities.

b. EFL teachers enhance their teaching performance by extending their knowledge and mastery of additional helpful writing strategies that can be effectively used in the classroom to support students overcome their writing difficulties.

c. Therefore, this approach can be used by all EFL teachers to create a brand-new, energizing learning environment.

- **EFL students:**

There is an improvement in EFL students' writing process, especially regarding content development such as:

a. The length of their written responses will be broader and wiser since they are able to develop ideas with less difficulty, improving the fluency of them in the text. The strategy allows them to understand in a better way what they have to write.

b. This strategy fosters creativity and more commitment to put much more effort into the assignments. As a result, students are more driven to complete them.

c. Through the application of the RAFT, the writers are provided with an effective organizational plan and point-by-point instructions to arrange their ideas, resulting in getting a helpful structure and a clearer purpose that will guide them throughout the development of their activity.

d. There is a positive change in the way they process the information and fully develop their responses, which involves understanding what they have to write with the use of prompts.

1.4.5 RAFT in Teaching Writing to EFL learners

As discussed before, it is very useful in the writing process, especially in improving content development. By integrating the four key elements, students are guided in creating drafts that are appropriate and well-structured. The "Topic" component provides vocabulary and language features, simplifying the writing process and addressing common difficulties in generating ideas. As highlighted in Melin & Schiller (2011), the RAFT strategy provides opportunities for differentiated learning in activities related to writing, making it suitable for both formative and summative assessments. Additionally, offering choices is an effective way to engage and motivate students to complete their work. The RAFT strategy allows students to explore various perspectives on

the same topic by selecting different roles or adjusting the intended audience, all while completing the same assessment.

1.4.6 Guidelines for teachers to implement the Raft Strategy:

To apply RAFT in the classroom, start by working with students to develop a class RAFT related to a current topic of study. According to Sejnost & Thiese (2007), introducing the elements of the RAFT strategy to the students is considered the most essential step to implement the strategy effectively. Similarly, talk about the material while letting students contribute their thoughts on the Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. Then, facilitate a classroom think-aloud, demonstrating the writing process on a whiteboard or chart paper while integrating student suggestions and creativity for descriptive texts (Santa *et al.*, 2004); (Dean, 2006).

Subsequently, give students an explanation of the use of RAFT prompts and how to analyze them (including a set Role, Audience, Format, and Topic) and ask them to reply either individually or in small groups. This enables the comparison and acquisition of knowledge from various replies. Exercises on identifying each element in descriptive texts can also deepen their understanding of the strategy. Slowly enhance student independence by providing options for every element, eventually allowing them to choose their own Role, Audience, Format, and Topic (Santa *et al.*, 2004); (Dean, 2006).

When applying RAFT for writing instruction, like in procedural texts, educators should emphasize the writing process rather than solely the result. Start by presenting examples of procedural texts that are not composed using RAFT components and demonstrate their application in crafting a procedural text, like "How to Create a Student Card" (Mewasari, 2021). Teachers should prepare resources and media prior to classroom implementation. This involves choosing captivating and suitable materials for the age group, like pictures or videos, and making sure the selected procedural text is straightforward and appealing for learners.

To successfully implement RAFT, educators need to present a finished RAFT sample and thoroughly describe each component (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) using examples. Teachers should also demonstrate writing responses to prompts and engage the class in a discussion about essential elements (Santa & Havens, 1995); (Mitchell, 1996).

Overall, this integrated information offers a thorough framework for educators to efficiently apply the RAFT strategy in their classrooms, improving content development and promoting creative writing abilities in their students.

1.4.7 Examples of RAFT Strategy Format

Having previously introduced the RAFT strategy as a versatile pedagogical tool for different content subjects, this section will explore specific examples of its application within the EFL classroom. These examples will demonstrate the diverse possibilities of the RAFT strategy in fostering creative expression, critical thinking, and deeper engagement with language learning among English Language Learners.

Subject – Astronomy			
Role	**Audience**	**Format**	**Topic**
Astronaut	NASA	Scientific Log	Scientific entry on each planet you pass on your way to Pluto.
Advertising Agent	Tourists	Advertisement	An advertisement for an adventure in the Solar System that persuades people to become cosmic tourists.
Subject – Science			

"Living Things / Plants"			
Role	**Audience**	**Format**	**Topic**
Student	Parent	Post Card	Draw and describe the parts of a plant and their purpose.
Flower	Children	Story Book	Describe how the parts of a plant are like a factory.

Table 6: Developed by Learning Focused RAFT Chart (n.d.)

1.4.8 Written compositions performed using the RAFT strategy

Example 1	
Role	Yourself
Audience	Classmates
Format	Paragraph
Topic	My family
Strong verb	Describe
Write a descriptive paragraph about your family. Include details about the members of your family, their daily routines, and their unique qualities. Make sure to describe at least one thing you admire about each family member. Use specific examples to show why your family is special to you.	
There are 6 people in my family. I have two brothers and one sister. I am the second oldest of my brothers and sister. *My Dad goes to work everyday from 8 am to 8 pm. His job is to communicate with Vietnamese people. My mom doesn't work outside the home. She stays home and takes care of the house. She also raises the kids and cooks everyday. My oldest brother is 23 years old. He doesn't work or go to school. He just stays home and only does the things he wants to do. He also spends a lot of money that dad earns. My younger brother is just the opposite. He is 18 years old. Everyday he goes to school and sometimes he goes to work. He also helps my parents when he has*	

free time. He had a diploma from high school and now he is enrolled in the University. My parents are proud of him very much. Finally, my sister is 11 years old and a cute girl. She is in the fifth grade. I think she is a very smart girl. I love her and my parents very much.

Table 7: Riyanti,Y. (2015). Example of the RAFT Strategy.

Example 2	
Role	Percy Jackson
Audience	New campers
Format	A letter
Topic	Life at Camp Half-Blood
Strong verb	Describe

You are taking the role of Percy Jackson. You are asked to write a letter to new campers at Camp Half-Blood. In your letter, describe your friendships with other campers and what daily life is like at Camp Half-Blood. Include details about routines, activities, and any memorable moments you've shared with your friends.

Dear Future Camper,

Welcome to Camp Half-Blood! Life here is an adventure every day. Mornings start with breakfast, and don't forget to offer some to the gods, followed by training in sword fighting, archery, or survival skills. On the other hand, afternoons are for fun games like Capture the Flag!

You'll make amazing friends here. Grover, my best friend, is incredibly loyal, and Annabeth, daughter of Athena, is as brilliant as she is tough. One of my favorite memories is racing on Blackjack, the camp's Pegasus, it was unforgettable!

Camp Half-Blood isn't just a camp; it's a family. Get ready for amazing adventures, challenges, and finding your place among demigods!

See you soon!

Percy Jackson

Table 8: Authors' Example of the RAFT Strategy.

However, it is essential to highlight the fact that this engaging writing strategy can be used not only for developing descriptive texts but also for other purposes and types of texts as in the exercise below:

Example 3	
Role	A turkey
Audience	A farmer
Format	A letter
Topic	Begging the farmer to choose some other turkey for Thanksgiving dinner
Strong verb	Convince
Imagine you are a turkey writing a letter to a farmer to convince them not to choose you for Thanksgiving dinner. In your letter, mention why you shouldn't be chosen and suggest another one who might be a better option. Use a polite and persuasive tone to make your argument clear and include creative or humorous details to make your letter more compelling.	
November 20, 2002 *Dear Farmer Bob:* *I understand you are about to choose a turkey for this year's feast. Well, you can pass right by my coop. I have been really sick---chicken pox! Those chickens came to visit us last week to brag about being safe for a while this month, and before you know it, I got sick. You certainly do not want your family to catch this disease, so choose another turkey. I think Sam in coop 5 looks healthy and fat this year. I am losing weight daily, so I could never feed you and your wife and kids. Maybe next year. . .* *Your friend,* *Turkey*	

Table 9: Riyanti, Y. (2015). Example of the RAFT Strategy.

1.4.9 Previous Related Studies of the RAFT Strategy

Numerous studies have examined the efficacy of the RAFT strategy in improving different facets of writing abilities. Nengsih, as cited in Riyanti (2015), investigated how the RAFT strategy paired with interactive writing affects the writing performance of eighth-grade learners. This experimental research showed a notable enhancement in writing abilities among students in the experimental group. Alisa & Rosa (2013) concentrated on applying the RAFT strategy to improve functional text-writing skills in junior high school learners. Their results showed that the approach successfully encouraged students and aided in structuring ideas. Parilasanti *et al.*, (2014) studied the impact of the RAFT method on writing skills. Taking into account students' anxiety levels. Their study showed a notable positive effect of the RAFT strategy on writing skills, especially for students experiencing high anxiety.

Additionally, many research investigations have examined the efficacy of the RAFT strategy in enhancing diverse writing levels at various educational stages. Khasawneh (2012) showed that the approach effectively enhanced spelling concepts for fourth-grade students. Alisa & Rosa (2013) highlighted the importance of the strategy in improving students' focus and idea-sharing during practical writing. Mukhaiyar & Radjab (2013) discovered notable advancements in paragraph writing in first-year university students who used the RAFT strategy. Parilasanti *et al.*, (2014) similarly confirmed that the RAFT strategy positively affects writing skills and helps decrease student anxiety. Widiyati, (2014) and Riyanti, (2015) add the success of the RAFT strategy in improving writing abilities and student involvement.

Numerous additional studies have also emphasized the beneficial effects of the RAFT strategy on different facets of writing. Abd Elaal, (2016) illustrated its efficacy in fostering environmental values and enhancing creative writing abilities in secondary school students. Pratiwi (2016) noted enhancements in students' abilities to write procedural texts following the use of the RAFT strategy. El Sourani, (2017) and Fawziah, (2017) discovered notable advancements in English writing abilities among learners in Palestine and Indonesia, respectively. Al-Mahdawi & Al-Smadi, (2019) along with

Intharakasem & Boonhok, (2019) validated the RAFT strategy's effectiveness in enhancing creative writing abilities in secondary and university students. Al-Maliki, (2020) showed the strategy's beneficial effect on reading comprehension and writing skills.

Furthermore, Hidayah (2020); Kabigting (2020); Seliem *et al.*, (2020); and Taha & Azahrani (2020) have additional proof for the efficacy of the RAFT strategy in improving different writing abilities, such as narrative writing, English writing performance, creative writing, and writing skills via online platforms. Ultimately, Ola Ranjilita, (2021), illustrated the beneficial effect of the RAFT strategy on enhancing analytical text-writing abilities in eleventh-grade pupils.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in the study, which aims to examine the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy in improving content development skills in EFL descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule, Ecuador. It provides a detailed explanation of the research design used and the subjects involved. Additionally, it describes the instruments utilized for data collection, the protocol, which describes the implementation of the RAFT strategy, and the appropriate analysis of the information collected. This chapter ensures a comprehensive understanding of the research.

1.5 Methodology design

In this research work, the implementation of the RAFT writing strategy as a way to help EFL students overcome some of their common struggles during writing assignments is described through a pre-experimental one-group pre-test/post-test design. This approach was selected to analyze students' writing performance before and after implementing the RAFT strategy and get insights about whether the students had improved or not. A study conducted by Thyer, (2012) from the University of Oxford, which was based on Campbell & Stanley's research (1963), pointed out the following:

> This design can also serve a useful role in providing pilot data to be included in research grant applications, in addition to being published in their own right. Grant applications are considerably strengthened via the inclusion of solid pilot data and may pave the way to receive the funding necessary to conduct stronger evaluation studies (p. 24).

This research is classified as pre-experimental, as it involves a small-scale version of a full study that uses a single/experimental group but not a control one. The control class consists of the class that does not receive treatment,

whereas the experimental class is the one that undergoes the intervention (Campbell & Stanley, 1963); (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Additionally, the study applies non-random sampling. The reason for this is that the researchers selected a particular 9th-grade class based on specific criteria, so the process of selecting them was not done randomly which limits the generalizability of results (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). As pointed out by Campbell & Stanley (1963), when conducting true experiments or quasi-experiments is not possible due to specific circumstances, researchers might opt for applying a pre-experimental design.

According to Campbell & Stanley (1963), pre-experimental designs are still widely used in educational research. Creswell (2009) stated that "with pre-experimental designs, the researcher studies a single group and provides an intervention during the experiment" (p. 149). Thyer B., (2012) highlighted "pre-experimental designs look at a group of clients posttreatment o only or compare post-treatment outcomes with pre-treatment observations obtained from the same group" (p. 56). Furthermore, it is named like that because they are typically carried out prior conducting a true experiment. This points to the idea that researchers use this term to test the potential impact of their interventions on a small group before conducting a full-scale experiment. As a result, this type of research is normally used as the initial step in gathering data to support or go against an intervention to an experimental group of study.

Campbell & Stanley (1963) and Creswell (2009) emphasized that one-group pre-experimental designs can be divided into two types: one-shot case study and one-group pretest-posttest design, the latter being the one applied for this study as it aligns with its characteristics.

One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design:

As noted by Campbell & Stanley (1963), a way to address the lack of a control group is by measuring scores before the treatment and then again afterward. Similarly, Creswell (2009) highlighted that "this design includes a pre-test measure followed by a treatment and a post-test for a single group" (p. 150).

The design for this study can be visually interpreted by using a classic notation system provided by Campbell & Stanley (1963, p.6):

O1   **X**   **O2**
(Pre-test)   *(Treatment)*   *(Post-test)*

While the findings cannot be generalized due to the lack of large-scale focus that normally holds true experimental studies, this one still offers valuable insights of the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy in improving EFL descriptive writing skills and gives the opportunity to other researchers to carry out a larger and more comprehensive research in the future as it was mentioned previously. That being said, the advantage of this study is that it can provide information regarding the strengths as well as early indications of potential issues, such as whether proposed methods, in this case the RAFT writing strategy, are totally inappropriate to carry out or not.

Regarding the method the authors applied to carry out this research, the mixed method was chosen as qualitative and quantitative instruments were used to collect both types of data from the participants to analyze the impact of the RAFT strategy during descriptive writing lessons in a class of 9th-grade EFL students. According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2008), mixed approaches make use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. It incorporates philosophical assumptions, employs both research approaches, and blends them within single research. Rather than solely gathering and analyzing both types of data, this approach highlights their combined use to strengthen the study beyond what either method could accomplish on its own. There are many reasons why it is used by researchers, one of them can be to broaden understanding by incorporating both types of data. Additionally, Bryman (2006), as well as Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998), highlighted that this approach can be named differently, such as synthesis, integrating, multimethod, or mixed methodology. However, recent studies, such as the "SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in the Social & Behavioral Sciences" and "SAGE's Journal of Mixed Methods Research", call it "mixed methods".

It is crucial to emphasize that in this approach, sometimes one type of data might have more priority or be emphasized more than the other one, but both, quantitative and qualitative data, are still crucial for the study (Lodico *et al.*, 2006). Qualitative data involves steps in data analysis and strategies of inquiry, based particularly on text and image data. Whereas quantitative data involves objective data obtained from empirical observations and measures (Creswell, 2009).

1.6 Participants

The selection process for the participants in this study was non-random also known as non-probability sampling, which according to Babbie, (1990), "respondents are chosen based on their convenience and availability". In other words, they were conveniently selected as the authors chose only one 9th-grade class from the many pre-existing courses in the school selected for the study based on their observed writing difficulties, so no statistical sample size calculation was performed since the study aimed to work with a particular group rather than generalizing results to a larger population.

The participants consisted of a whole single class with a total of 21 ninth-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school located in Daule. These EFL students have been learning English as a foreign language in previous courses; however, they have not been exposed to bilingual education programs. The group comprised 13 females and 8 males, aged between 13 and 14 years as shown in Table 11 below. The researchers themselves administrated the study, and outcomes were measured before and after the intervention within the same group.

Participants	
Group of study	A single 9th-grade class
Female students	13
Male students	8

Some participants previously attended public schools where the English instruction was limited, which may contribute to their persistent challenges in EFL writing. Moreover, according to the CEFR, their English proficiency levels in writing, as determined by a pre-test, ranged from A2+ to B1+ varying among students. This information aligns with the Cambridge EFL textbook "Shape It! Level 2" (adapted for Ecuador), which is currently being used in their English classes.

In addition to the students, the study involved their English teacher, who has a C2 level of English proficiency and specializes in Language Acquisition and EFL instruction in the secondary level of the school. The teacher was a crucial part of the study when obtaining data regarding his writing teaching techniques used during writing lessons.

1.7   Data gathering instruments

To achieve the aim of this study, the authors have chosen quantitative and qualitative data-gathering tools as part of the mixed-method design.

The quantitative tools included pre- and post- surveys in the form of questionnaire checklists, as well as a structured rubric used to assess the tests, as they provide measurable data to track changes in performance and engagement. Regarding qualitative tools, there are unstructured observation notes taken for the identification of the problem, and the pre-interview to the teacher in the form of open-ended questions, which offered deeper insights into perceptions and experiences. On the other hand, mixed-method tools that could gather both types of data involve the post-interview checklist, structured observation checklist, as well as the pre-action test and post-action test. These tools could combine statistical data with descriptive responses for a thorough evaluation.

As mentioned previously, the study uses both structured and unstructured tools, but it highly prioritizes the use of structured ones for collecting data.

Moreover, as noted by Creswell (2009), it is important to specify whether the instrument is created by the authors of the study, an adapted one or an intact instrument created by someone else.

To have a better understating of the tools applied, a table categorizing them is included below:

TOOL	CLASSIFICATION	TYPE
Observation notes	Unstructured	Qualitative
Pre- Interview (a set of open-ended questions)	Semi-structured	Qualitative
Pre- Action Test	Structured	Mixed
Pre- Survey (Questionnaire Checklist)	Structured	Quantitative
Post- Action Test	Structured	Mixed
Post- Survey (Questionnaire Checklist)	Structured	Quantitative
Post- Interview Checklist	Semi-structured	Mixed
Observation Checklist	Semi-structured	Mixed
Rubric	Structured	Quantitative

Table 11: Classification of the tools. Developed by the authors.

For better understanding of the tools applied for this study, each tool will be given a brief description:

1. Unstructured Observation notes

This technique is one of the oldest forms of qualitative data collection in the world of research. It is part of one of the essential tools for this study as it allows to get valuable information regarding problem identification to carry out the study. Notes about teacher and student performance were taken when the

teaching and learning writing process happened in class. Based on the studies of Gorman & Clayton, (2004), this technique may not offer extensive information about participants' expressed attitudes or self-perceptions, but it can reveal valuable insights into the unconscious behaviors of the individuals being observed.

The observation technique, according to Sproull (1988), is "a data collection method in which a person (usually trained), observes subjects of phenomena and records information about characteristics of the phenomena". It is crucial to highlight that these classroom observations were done only by taking free notes on a Microsoft Word document about the things the researchers observed during the three sessions of problem identification. Therefore, no structured format was used since the observers did it only by typing on a computer everything they saw as important to carry out the study, using a free notes app to record the observations.

2. Semi-structured Pre-Interview

According to Creswell (2012), interviews are primarily used for collecting qualitative data, where researchers ask general, open-ended questions to one or more individuals from the target population and record their responses. This points to the idea that open-ended questions in interviews provide participants with a wider range of possible responses where the answers are not limited to "yes" or "no", and if worded appropriately, those will be truthful answers. Similarly, McCracken (1998) emphasized the need for qualitative interviews to give the interviewer the opportunity to describe his or her experience.

For this research, a semi-structured format was used as a predetermined set of open-ended questions was prepared in advance. Tharenou *et al.*, (2007) explain that semi-structured interviews are characterized by a defined topic, specific issues and particular questions. They offer greater flexibility compared to structured interviews while remaining more focused than unstructured ones. Similar to unstructured interviews, they still allow the interviewer the freedom to explore topics as needed based on the situation.

Therefore, while the questions are predefined, their nature provides flexibility for the interviewer to explore answers in greater depth, which aligns with semi-structured format. For the study, the questions were specifically designed by the authors of this study and were duly reviewed and approved by three experts in the field, who are experienced EFL teachers from a prestigious university.

The interview was done within the pre-stage of the study. The researchers used Microsoft Word to plan and write the questions that could collect and analyze important data about teachers' perforce, that is why it is called "pre-interview". It consisted of seven open-ended questions asked face-to-face to the EFL teacher involved, and it is considered a useful tool for this research since it has the potential to uncover crucial information behind his experience in teaching writing skills to his 9th-grade EFL students from the course selected as the participants for this study. During the interview, one researcher asked the questions while the other wrote down the answers given by the interviewee on a paper containing the set of questions. As highlighted by McNamara (2009), one of the objectives of interviewing is to interpret and comprehend the meaning behind the interviewees' responses.

3. Structured Pre- & Post- Survey (Questionnaire Checklist)

For collecting quantitative data, questionnaires have primarily been used, particularly in surveys. According to O'Leary, (2014), surveying refers to the process in which a researcher gathers data using a questionnaire, which is defined by Cohen *et al.*, (2013) as a tool for gathering primary data created specifically for the research process and would not exist without it. Pickard (2007) mentioned that they are designed in a highly structured format and are often employed to collect quantitative data from large samples, primarily to test research questions or hypothesis. Similarly, Singh (2007) pointed out that questionnaires are typically self-administered, enabling respondents to complete them on their own. The researcher's role is limited to organizing their distribution and collection.

Furthermore, as reported by Singh (2007), questionnaires have three types of questions: open-ended, dichotomous questions that have two possible responses such as yes/no or true/false, and multiple-response questions. Based on this, it can be said that the type of questions for both the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire is "dichotomous" as each checklist consisted of eleven questions with only close answers of yes/no, and they covered four categories: clarity and understanding of instructions, writing process and skills, emotional and psychological factors, and perceived need for improvement. These questions were adapted from existing research focused on the same topic, measuring the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy to improve EFL descriptive writing, and the original questionnaire was developed by Riyanti (2015).

These questionnaires were created using Microsoft Word and then printed and distributed to all EFL students who were part of the selected course to carry out the study. The pre-questionnaire was completed during the pre-stage of the study in order to get crucial information about how the students view their own writing performance before implementing the RAFT strategy. On the other hand, the post-questionnaire was completed during the final stage of the study, where they are still asked about their writing performance but after having implemented the strategy.

4. Structured Action Test:

As previously mentioned, Creswell (2009) pointed out that pre-experimental studies included the one-group pre-test and post-test design. According to Airasian & Russell (2008), a test is a structured and systematic method used to collect data on students' academic performance or other cognitive abilities. In this case, these tests are about writing descriptive paragraphs, and they are used as the most important tools to carry out this study since with them, researchers could get valuable insights of students' writing performance before and after implementing the RAFT strategy. In this case, the data collected from these tests will be mixed, as researchers will receive qualitative information first in the form of written productions, and then they will transform that

qualitative data into scores, which are quantitative. Moreover, they were assessed based on a rubric that follows a set of specific criteria to measure key writing components.

These tests were both developed by the authors specifically to carry out this study, and they use Microsoft Excel for a more organized format. They were taken in different stages throughout the study:

- **Pre-Stage: Pre- Action Test**

The pre-action test was taken by the students before implementing the RAFT strategy, so it took place during the pre-stage of the research. It consisted of producing a short descriptive paragraph using the technique that the teacher of that course normally used during writing activities. Its purpose was to assess and gather information regarding students' performance when writing descriptive texts in English. In that way, by analyzing students' productions, researchers can get valuable insights into some of the existing writing difficulties they commonly face. Additionally, the pre-test could help researchers determine students' proficiency level in writing.

- **Cycle 2: Post- Action Test**

The post-action test was printed and distributed to the students from the class during the second cycle of the study. It served as the first form of assessing descriptive writing after having introduced the RAFT strategy to the students in previous sessions. In this test, the students are asked to implement the RAFT elements given in the prompt, and based on that, they had to write a descriptive paragraph. In that way, researchers could analyze the written productions and get insights of possible changes.

Overall, the objective of implementing the pre-test and post-test is to show physical evidence of the insights of how the implementation of the RAFT strategy could impact the students' descriptive writing performance and make comparison between both works.

5. Semi-structured Post-Interview Checklist

The format for this tool is semi-structured. As noted by Bell & Waters (2014), the majority of interviews are a mix of structured and unstructured, providing a level of flexibility. It is important to clarify that just as was done in the pre-interview, these questions were carefully designed by the authors of this study and thoroughly reviewed and approved by the same three field experts.

As mentioned in the pre-interview, open-ended questions are a key feature of unstructured interviews as they allow for flexibility in responses and collecting qualitative information. This interview includes some of these questions. However, it also incorporates close-ended ones, which contribute to a structured format, collecting in this case quantitative data through these types of questions. This aligns with the way Tharenou *et al.*, (2007) described structured format in interviews, which is pre-set standardized questions that are typically close-ended and presented in a fixed sequence. However, some experts argue that this type of interview is actually a questionnaire delivered verbally to respondents but offers fixed response options that cannot be altered. As a result, this interview represents a combination of both structured and unstructured elements, as well as a combination of both types of data.

This is the second interview done with the EFL teacher but during the final stage of the study after having implemented the strategy (treatment). It was a crucial tool to apply as it allows the researchers to get the teacher's point of view regarding the impact of implementing the RAFT strategy in descriptive writing tasks. As in the pre-interview, one researcher was in charge of asking the questions, while the other recorded the answers on a printed checklist.

For the making of this tool, researchers used Microsoft Word to design the format of the checklist and include a set of ten questions in the format of a checklist. It was divided into three specific criteria: impact of students, challenges and adjustments, and overall effectiveness. Below each criterion there is a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The checklist

contained three open-ended questions. The other seven questions are close ended, which includes two specific options to check off: "yes" or "no".

6. Semi-structured Observation Checklist

This instrument was implemented to record any kind of behavior or situation regarding students' participation in each session. The checklist was done using Microsoft Excel for a more organized and visually appealing format. The researchers will bring a copy of this checklist in all sessions so that while one researcher is conducting the class, the other is making the observations. This tool allows the collection of both types of data as there is a rating system in numbers that evaluates specific criteria as well as a space to take observation notes, which serves as qualitative data. This is also why the format is categorized as semi-structured: they have a structured rating system to follow but allowing space to make flexible comments. As noted by Given (2008), structured observations, also known as systemic observations, involve gathering data based on a predetermined set of rules and procedures.

Moreover, Jibril (2018) stated that this method relies on observation schedules or checklists to systematically record data according to established criteria, ensuring consistency throughout the data collection process. This statement aligns with the format applied for this tool, which is a structured checklist. However, as mentioned before, it has also a space to make free comments, which is a feature of unstructured observations. Jibril (2018) pointed out that unstructured observations are helpful in a study since this approach acknowledges that significant patterns or insights may arise naturally during the observation process. Therefore, the researchers consider that it was crucial to combine both types of data for this tool.

A crucial piece of information about this tool is that it is a translation and adaptation of an observation checklist designed by Riyanti (2015) for his research related to the use of the RAFT strategy. The authors of this research decided to first translate the original checklist which was written in Indonesian

into English using a translating app and then make a modification in the checklist by adding a space to write down observations in each session.

Student participation was evaluated according to three main criteria, each one containing specific performance descriptions: student activeness and engagement, student attention, and assignments. The scale applied to rate criteria is the following: 4 (very good), 3 (good), 2 (fair), 1 (poor). This allows effective observations of student participation throughout the study.

7. Structured Rubric

According to Jonsson (2014); Lasater (2007); Reddy & Andrade (2010) a rubric is an assessment tool that outlines specific expectations and criteria for a task, measuring performance against those standards. It communicates instructional goals to students and stakeholders while serving as an effective tool for evaluation and feedback. Additionally, Brookhart (2018) pointed out that this instrument measures two types of performances: processes, which involve actions like playing an instrument, and products, which refer to completed works like a written essay. The latter will be the type of performance assessed in this study as the aim is to measure the written productions of the participants using a rubric.

For this research, the rubric used for assessing writing is a modified version of the one designed by Riyanti (2015) to assess the tasks implemented in his research. It is crucial to clarify that this author's version of the rubric was also an adaptation of the original one, which was developed by Jacobs *et al.* (1981), and called the "Analytical Scoring Rubric". The authors of this study then decided to modify the aspects and the scoring of each aspect so that it aligns better with the aim of this research. For the making of this instrument, the authors used Microsoft Word.

Rubric scoring uses a quantitative method to evaluate qualitative data obtained from the written productions of the students. This is why the rubric used to assess those productions included numbers from 0 to 4 that represent how

effectively student work demonstrates specific qualities. The rubric assessed one main aspect: Content Development. This assessed four specific writing skills, which were the ones identified as the most common struggles this group of students faced: generation of ideas, fluency of ideas, length, and organization of ideas. Next to the criteria, the scores (4-3-2-1-0) were specified. Each number represents and rates the performance description that was included next to them and aligns with each aspect. From 0 to 2 points will be considered as low scores, while 3 to 4 points will be considered as high scores. In this way, researchers could assess effectively the written productions of each participant and measure their performance through numbers. These scores then will be used to analyze their improvement pre- and post- implementation of the strategy.

1.8   Protocol

A letter of permission approved by the school authorities was obtained as the first step in carrying out the study. The researchers made a total of nine visits to the school to conduct the writing assessments. They took part during the whole study by being involved in the pre-stage, cycle 1 and cycle 2. They actively participated by taking on dual roles: planners and teachers. Some of the responsibilities they had that allowed them to analyze the problem and collect data were preparing lesson plans, activities, classroom observations, implementation of a writing strategy, conducting assessments, etc. To ensure comprehensive observation and teaching effectiveness regarding the application of the RAFT strategy with the group of students, they decided to alternate roles throughout the sessions. This means that while one researcher was conducting the class, the other was observing and recording students' participation and performance using the appropriate tools during the teaching and learning process. This role reversal allowed for more organization in data collection as well as a thorough and better-balanced perspective across all sessions.

This research was carried out from November 19th, until December 19th, 2024. The study was split into three stages, starting with a pre-stage study that lasted three weeks with a total of two "out of class" activities, classroom observations

and the first session in which the researchers started working directly with the students. This stage started from November 20th to November 28th, 2024, and its purpose was to identify the specific problem the participants face during English lessons. By the use of some data gathering tools, specifically for this stage, researchers could collect useful information regarding the teaching and learning process from the target population and have a better understanding of the issue.

Then, after the pre-stage and having a clear view of the problem, the writers started introducing the RAFT strategy to the students during the rest of the sessions which were divided into two cycles. The first cycle lasted the first two weeks of December with a total of three sessions with the students, from December 9th to December 13th, 2024. During these sessions with the students, the researchers actively participated by introducing and explaining the strategy to the target group. A combination of theory, practice and feedback was given in each session so that the students could understand the new content effectively.

After that, the writers conducted a second cycle during the last week of December with a total of two sessions and one "out of class" activity. It lasted from December 17th to December 19th, 2024. During this cycle, students were now asked to apply the strategy in their respective descriptive writing texts. By doing this, researchers could analyze, measure and compare EFL students' writing performance between the pre-test and post-test, in other words, before and after implementing the writing strategy.

Below there is a basic Gantt chart that illustrates in a better way the timeline of the whole research as well as the activities carried out in each stage:

Schedule of the study

Cycle	Session	Activities	Month and Week	
			November	December

			1	2	3	4	1	2	3
Pre-Stage	(out of class)	**Permission letter**		x					
	Classroom observation sessions	**Unstructured classroom observations: Problem Identification**		x					
	(out of class)	**Pre-Interview (teacher)**			x				
	Session 2	**Pre-Action Test 1 (without RAFT)**				x			
		Pre-Questionnaire (students)				x			
Cycle 1	**Session 3**	**Explaining Writing process and Review of descriptive texts (The generic structure)**					x		
	Session 4	**Introducing RAFT STRATEGY**					x		
		Interactive whole-group practice: Creating prompts using RAFT					x		
	Session 5	**Review Concepts (EducaPlay activity)**						x	
		Identifying RAFT elements exercises + Feedback						x	
Cycle 2	**Session 6**	**Review RAFT concepts (Kahoot activity)**							x
		Review: the generic structure of descriptive writing							x
		Post-Action Test 1 (with RAFT)							x
	Session 7	**Post- Questionnaire (students)**							x
	Out of class	**Post-Interview (teacher)**							x

Table 12: Schedule of the study. Developed by the authors

1.8.1 Planning Phase

The study followed a structured process using a one-group pretest-posttest design to investigate the impact of the RAFT strategy on the students' descriptive writing performance. During the planning phase, the researchers focused on preparing for the implementation of this study. This included organizing the timeline and sequence of sessions, ensuring all necessary materials were available, and coordinating with the school to align the study with the academic schedule. The researchers also developed a clear structure for the intervention, detailing the activities to be conducted in each session to ensure consistency and effectiveness. It is important to mention that in all sessions, a semi-structured observation checklist was used to record important events or behaviors from the participants. This phase ensured that the study was systematically planned and ready for implementation.

1.8.2 Pre-Stage

The pre-stage aimed to collect baseline data on students writing skills and identify specific challenges. During this phase, unstructured classroom observations were conducted over three days to gather insights into students' natural writing behaviors and classroom interactions. These observations allowed researchers to understand the challenges students faced during descriptive writing tasks in class.

Following the observations, the researchers approached the teacher during their free time at school to conduct the semi-structured pre-interview. This was done to collect qualitative data about the teacher's perceptions of their students' writing difficulties and the strategies currently employed in the classroom. The interview helped refine the focus of the intervention. However, the researchers noticed some interesting things when analyzing the responses, which will be explained in the data analysis. Subsequently, the pre-action test was administered during a scheduled session with the class. They were asked to write a short descriptive paragraph about parts of a house, which aligned with the vocabulary topics they were covering in the unit and using their regular classroom approach that was observed during pre-classroom observations. This activity was critical for assessing their

proficiency in writing and identifying common writing challenges regarding content development.

Finally, the structured pre-survey, in the form of a questionnaire, was printed and distributed to the students in class. This tool gathered information regarding their experience when completing the descriptive writing task (post-test), including their feelings and general attitudes toward writing in English. The information collected during this phase informed the planning of the next cycles.

1.8.3 First Cycle

The first cycle consisted of three sessions designed to introduce and build familiarity with the RAFT strategy with the participants of the study. In the first session, the researchers explained the writing process and reviewed the generic structure of descriptive texts. This foundational activity ensured that all students had a clear understanding of the basic components of descriptive writing.

In the second session, the RAFT strategy was introduced. The researchers explained its elements: role, audience, format and topic. They also provided examples to demonstrate its application in descriptive writing. Students practiced creating their own RAFT prompts as an interactive activity using the format of the famous word board game "Tutti Frutti". It was done under guided supervision to develop students' understanding and confidence, and to make this strategy fun for them. In the third session, students participated in two different engaging formative assessment activities to monitor again their understanding of the topic. First, an online learning exercise was done through EducaPlay. The exercise consisted of a matching activity that included questions regarding the topic. The other task was identifying RAFT elements within short descriptive texts. Immediate feedback was provided to address misconceptions and reinforce learning. This cycle was structured to gradually build students' competence and confidence in applying the RAFT strategy in their writing tasks.

1.8.4 Second Cycle

The second cycle focused on the practical application of the RAFT strategy and evaluating its impact on students' descriptive writing performance. This cycle began with a final review session where students revisited the RAFT strategy through an engaging Kahoot quiz. For this, they were divided into three columns and competed against each other. This was done to reinforce their understanding. They also revisited the generic structure of descriptive texts to ensure consistency.

In the next session, the post-action test was administered. Students were given a RAFT prompt and some guided questions in the instruction that could give support when coming up with ideas. The addition of guided questions was done after noticing that one of the most common struggles for the majority of the students is not knowing how to start their paragraph. In this case, they were asked to write a descriptive one about their favorite dish. This test was essential for comparing their performance with the pre-action test and determining the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy. Following this, the structured post-survey, in the format of a questionnaire, was also printed and distributed to students to collect feedback on their experiences with the strategy and its impact on their writing process and motivation.

Finally, the researchers conducted a semi-structured post-interview with the teacher outside class during their free time. This interview provided qualitative and quantitative insights into the teacher's observations of the intervention's outcomes and its influence on students' descriptive writing abilities. The sequence of tasks in this cycle ensured a thorough evaluation of the RAFT strategy's effectiveness.

1.8.5 Reflection Phase

In this phase, the researchers analyzed both types of data collected, including the observations taken during each session, pre- and post- test results, interview and questionnaire responses, to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the RAFT strategy. The results obtained from applying all these instruments provided information about the strategy's strengths and possible areas for

improvement. This study, even though it was short as it is just a pre-experimental one, demonstrated valuable insights regarding the potential of the RAFT strategy to enhance students' descriptive writing skills and offered recommendations for its broader application in similar educational settings.

DATA ANALYSIS

This section details the data analysis procedures employed to evaluate the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy in enhancing 9th-grade EFL students' content development skills in descriptive writing. Data were collected through a variety of instruments, including pre- and post-writing tasks, student surveys, teacher interviews, and checklists. Each data source was analyzed interpretatively, with a focus on identifying patterns, trends, and changes in student performance. For the writing tasks, student work was assessed using a rubric adapted from Riyanti, (2015), allowing for a detailed examination of specific writing skills. Graphical representations of the data, including comparisons of pre and post-test scores, will be presented to illustrate the impact of the RAFT strategy on student writing development. The analysis will explore the progress made by students across all data collection points, providing a comprehensive understanding of the strategy's influence on their descriptive writing abilities.

Aspect	Score	Performance Description	Total
Content (C)			**16 points**
Generation of Ideas	4	Ideas are highly creative, relevant, and supported with rich details and a continuous flow.	4 p.
	3	Ideas are mostly clear with relevant details, but some descriptions lack depth.	
	2	Some details are present, but they are vague or repetitive.	
	1	Few or unclear details, making the description weak or incomplete.	

	0	Ideas are not relevant to the topic.	
Fluency of Ideas	4	Descriptions flow smoothly with well-connected ideas and appropriate transitions.	4 p.
	3	The paragraph mostly flows well, with minor awkward transitions.	
	2	Some jumps between ideas or abrupt descriptions affect readability.	
	1	Disjointed or choppy sentences that make it hard to follow the description.	
	0	The text lacks coherence entirely, with no logical connections or transitions between ideas.	
Length	4	Meets or exceeds the required length. (10 + lines)	4 p.
	3	Almost meets the required length. (6-9 lines)	
	2	Falls slightly short of the required length. (3-5 lines)	
	1	Falls significantly short of the required length. (1-2 lines)	
	0	The submission is missing, making evaluation impossible. (0 lines)	
	4	The paragraph follows a logical structure. Clear topic sentence introduces the subject, details are well-organized, and the conclusion	

		provides a strong final impression.	
	3	Mostly organized, but details could be arranged more effectively for clarity.	
Organization of Ideas	2	Some organization issues: missing or weak topic/concluding sentences, or details appear randomly placed.	4 p.
	1	Lacks clear structure; ideas are scattered, making the description confusing, but some effort to organize is evident.	
	0	No discernible structure, the paragraph is a random collection of unrelated sentences or ideas, with no attempt at organization.	

Table 13: Adapted from Riyanti, Y. (2015). Rubric for assessing each criterion.

1.9 Unstructured Observation Notes

The researchers collected important information through unstructured observation notes during three classroom sessions focused on descriptive writing. It was observed that both the teacher's and the students' performances exhibited consistent patterns, revealing significant areas for improvement.

1.9.1 Session 1: Descriptive Writing from the Textbook

Regarding the teacher's performance in this session, the researchers noted that his approach lacked structured guidance essential for effective descriptive writing. Minimal instructions were given, such as, "Write a 10-line description based on the example in the book," without any pre-writing activities to activate students' prior knowledge or inspire creativity. The researchers noticed that there was "no discussion or brainstorming conducted before writing," and that

"writing strategies, such as sensory details or structuring ideas were not introduced." Feedback was limited, as the teacher stated, "I'll give you feedback later," rather than providing formative support during the writing process.

About the students' performance, the researchers discovered that students showed signs of confusion and disengagement due to the lack of clear guidance. Many struggled to start the task, while others completed it with minimal effort or copied directly from the textbook. Students repeatedly asked questions like, "What exactly do we write?" and "Do we just copy from the book?" Visible frustration and confusion were common, with some students remarking, "I don't get it," or expressing boredom by stating, "This is boring." The written work produced during this session was often repetitive and lacked originality.

1.9.2 Session 2: Descriptive Writing Based on a Video

In this second session, regarding the teacher's performance, the researchers found that his instructional approach continued to be minimalist. After showing a video, the teacher stated, "Now, describe the video in 10 lines," without offering pre-writing activities, guiding questions, or vocabulary support. Observations revealed that "students were not encouraged to analyze the video's elements or emotions before writing," and that "the teacher did not scaffold the task or model descriptive writing techniques." Once again, feedback was limited to post-submission comments, as the teacher reiterated, "I'll check your work afterward."

On the other hand, regarding students' performance, the researcher noticed that they appeared to be confused and unmotivated. Many struggled to differentiate between summarizing and describing, leading to incomplete or superficial submissions. Students showed confusion by asking, "Do we just write what happened in the video?" and "I don't know what to write." Several students got distracted, with some whispering or doodling instead of participating. Frustration was palpable as one student commented, "This doesn't make sense," while another asked, "Can we do something else?"

1.9.3 Session 3: Free Descriptive Writing on Paper

In this final session, the teacher gave the students more autonomy, but the researchers noticed that the absence of guidance and organization impeded advancement. The teacher instructed, "Choose any topic you like," and "Just start writing," without providing brainstorming prompts or examples. The researchers observed that "no strategies for content development or clarity were introduced," and that students were left to work to work by themselves, with no peer interaction or collaboration. Feedback remained reactive rather than proactive, as the teacher emphasized, "I'll review it after class."

The students continued to struggle with content development. The researchers discovered that the lack of support led to increased stress and disengagement. Many students abandoned the task midway, with incomplete submissions One student expressed frustration by saying, "This is too hard," while another sighed, "Why doesn't the teacher help us more?" Writing outputs during this session were brief, underdeveloped, and lacked creativity. Stress was noticeable, as students expressed their struggles with statements like, "I give up," or "This is stressful."

To sum up, the researchers observed that the teacher's instructional approach across all three sessions relied heavily on assigning tasks without providing appropriate support or scaffolding. This lack of structured guidance, pre-writing activities, and interactive elements negatively impacted students' motivation, engagement, and writing performance. Students consistently struggled with content development and task completion, expressing frustration through comments such as, "This is too hard," and "I don't know what to write." The findings emphasize the need for implementing structured, student-centered teaching strategies, including clear instructions, collaborative activities, and formative feedback, to foster a supportive and engaging learning environment and significantly enhance students' descriptive writing skills.

1.10 Semi-structured Pre – Interview

The pre-interview provided insights into the teacher's approach to teaching writing skills before implementing the RAFT strategy through open ended

questions. The first question revealed that writing exercises were incorporated in every unit, with at least two or more activities designed to build students' writing skills. The next question showed that writing assessments were based on encouraging students to read more, followed by idea development, peer review, and rubric-based evaluation. When asked about students' interest in writing, he stated that students did not enjoy reading or writing, indicating a lack of enthusiasm. Regarding tools used to motivate students, the teacher mentioned selecting engaging stories to capture student interest. In the fifth question, he explained that he used the "paragraph hamburger" method to help students organize their ideas into topic sentences, detail sentences, and closing sentences. However, when the researchers observed his class, no structured strategy was implemented, suggesting a gap between reported and actual teaching practices. The next question highlighted the most common writing challenges faced by students, specifically a lack of vocabulary and generating ideas. Finally, when asked about familiarity with the RAFT strategy, the teacher admitted to not knowing how it worked and therefore did not use it. These responses provided a baseline for understanding the teacher's instructional methods and the challenges students faced before the implementation of the RAFT strategy.

1.11 Semi-structured Observation Checklist

This tool reveals a gradual improvement throughout the sessions across three key criteria: students' activeness and engagement, student attention, and assignment completion. Initially, many students hesitated to participate in discussions and activities, showing limited interest. Student attention was inconsistent, with some learners easily distracted during longer or more structured tasks. For example, some students started to doodle on their notebooks. Moreover, assignment completion was also irregular, as some students submitted incomplete work. Most of them started talking to each other during the test asking what they have to do and then getting distracted. However, as the sessions incorporated interactive practices and exercises centered around the RAFT strategy, students' motivation and participation improved significantly. These activities made learning more engaging and encouraged to take a more active role during writing lessons.

Throughout the sessions, the structured and interactive nature of RAFT-based exercises led to more engagement and improvement in the students' attitude and participation towards writing assessments. The majority showed increased confidence in expressing ideas, leading to higher activeness and engagement in discussions and group activities. Student attention improved as they became more involved in creative writing tasks or interactive review activities using technology, which also helped maintain their interest. Assignment completion also saw a moderate increase, with more students submitting well-developed writing tasks. However, despite the improvement, there was still a small number of students who continued to misbehave in class, occasionally disrupting activities and requiring additional guidance to stay focused. Furthermore, some students were absent during key review sessions and test sessions which might have impacted their overall progress and understanding of the RAFT strategy.

1.12 Pre-Action Test vs Post-Action Test Results

Pre-Action Test (without RAFT)					
Criteria	Score 0	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Total of students
Generation of Ideas	1	5	12	3	0	21
Fluency of Ideas	1	8	9	2	1	21
Length	1	1	8	5	6	21
Organization of Ideas	1	8	6	6	0	21

Table 14: Pre-Action Test Results. Developed by the authors

Post-Action Test (with RAFT)					
Criteria	Score 0	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Total of students
Generation of Ideas	0	4	4	6	7	21

Fluency of Ideas	2	4	4	9	2	21
Length	0	4	5	8	4	21
Organization of Ideas	2	4	3	8	4	21

***Table 15**: Post-Action Test Results. Developed by the authors*

The tables above display the number of students who obtained each score (0 to 4) across four writing criteria: Generation of ideas, Fluency of ideas, Length, and Organization of ideas. They indicate the number of students who received scores ranging from 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest) in each criterion. The first table (table 15) presents the results of the pre-test, where students completed a writing task without using the RAFT strategy. On the other hand, the second table (table 16) presents the results of the post-test, where students performed another writing task but, in this case, they had to implement the RAFT strategy.

The difference in performance in each criterion during the pre-test and post-test can be represented in percentages of the students who got low scores (ranging from 0 to 2) and students who got high scores (ranging from 3 to 4) according to the rubric used for assessing both tests. The following tables and pie charts represent those percentages per criterion:

Generation of Ideas:

GENERATION OF IDEAS			
Pre-Test	**Percentage of Ss (%)**	**Post-Test**	**Percentage of Ss (%)**
Low Scores (0-2)	85,71	Low Scores (0-2)	38,1
High Scores (3-4)	14,29	High Scores (3-4)	61,9

***Table 16:** Generation of ideas – Percentage of students with low and high scores*
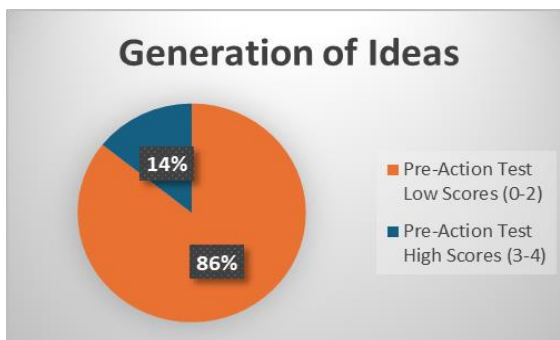
Figure 1: *Generation of Ideas – Pretest*
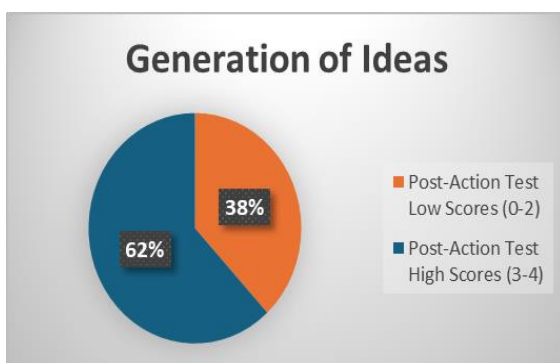
Figure 2: *Generation of ideas – Posttest*

Analysis	
Pre-Test Results	**Post-Test Results**
For "Generation of ideas", the majority of students' works (86%) reflected vague, repetitive or underdeveloped ideas that lacked creativity and depth. This shows difficulty in expanding on a topic, making it clear that they needed support in developing and structuring their thoughts as they got frustrated in doing so. This affected their ability to produce engaging, well-developed responses. Only few students (14%) managed to reach high scores, from 3 to 4 points in this criterion. These	For "Generation of ideas", these results indicate a significant improvement, with the majority of students achieving high scores, increasing from 14% to 62%, showing approximately a 48% of improvement when implementing the RAFT strategy. Meanwhile, low scores dropped significantly from 86% to 38%, showing that more than half of the students improved their creativity, relevance in their responses, and deeper engagement with the topic thanks to the RAFT

results suggested a strong need for writing strategies that encourage idea development and creativity.	prompt and the guided questions provided that helped students come up with new ideas for their writing, reducing students' struggles in this criterion. However, a small group still struggled with idea generation, suggesting the need for continued practice.

Table 17: *Comparison of pre-test & post-test performance in "Generation of ideas"*

Fluency of Ideas:

FLUENCY OF IDEAS			
Pre-Test	**Percentage of Ss (%)**	**Post-Test**	**Percentage of Ss (%)**
Low Scores (0-2)	85,71	**Low Scores (0-2)**	47,62
High Scores (3-4)	14,29	**High Scores (3-4)**	52,38

Table 18: *Fluency of ideas – Percentage of students with low and high scores*
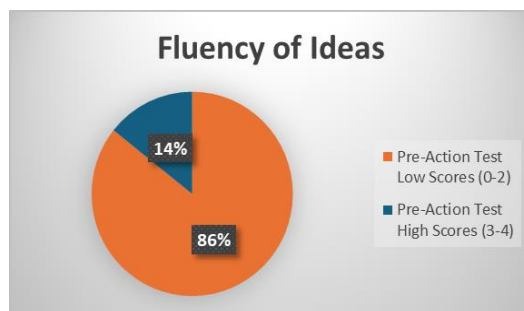
Figure 3: *Fluency of ideas - Pretest*
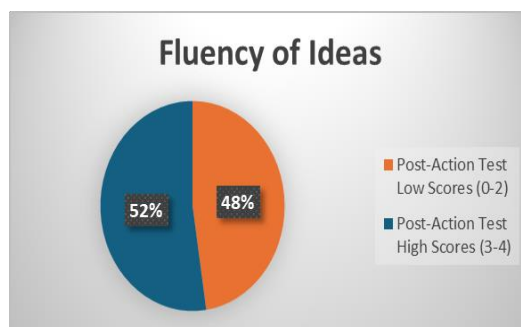
Figure 4: *Fluency of ideas – Posttest*

Analysis	
Pre-Test Results	**Post-Test Results**

For "Fluency of ideas", the majority of students' works (86%) showed weak transitions and abrupt connections that disrupted the flow of their writing. Very few students (14%) demonstrated good performance in connecting ideas, ranging from 3 to 4 points in this criterion.	For "Fluency of ideas", nearly half of the students who initially had weak fluency showed notable improvement after instructional interventions. Their works reflected better-connected ideas and less abrupt jumps between thoughts compared to the pre-action test, showing a moderate 38% decrease in low scores: from 86% to 48% of the students. However, despite progress, this suggests that some of them remain struggling, meaning there is still a need for further support in transitions and coherence.

Table 19: *Comparison of pre-test & post-test performance in "Fluency of ideas"*

Length:

LENGTH			
Pre-Test	**Percentage of Ss (%)**	**Post-Test**	**Percentage of Ss (%)**
Low Scores (0-2)	47,62	**Low Scores (0-2)**	42,86
High Scores (3-4)	52,38	**High Scores (3-4)**	57,14

Table 20: *Length – Percentage of students with low and high scores*
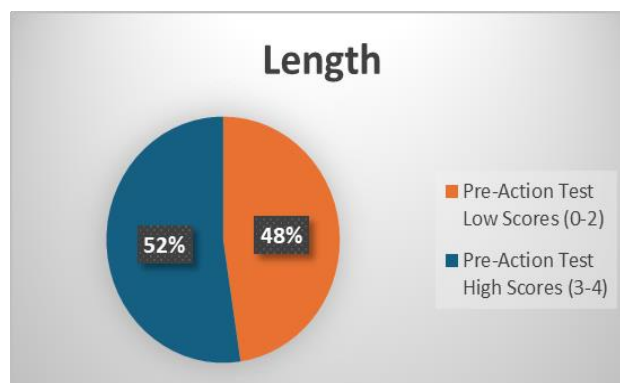
Figure 5: *Length - Pretest*
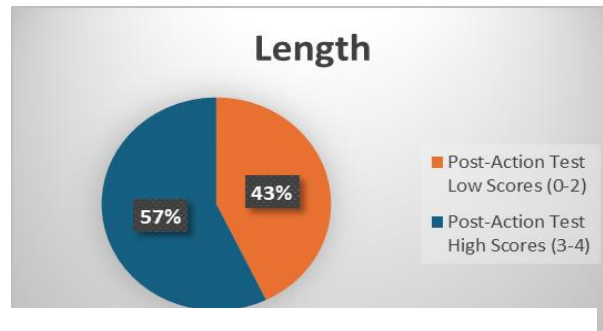
Figure 6: Length - Posttest

Analysis	
Pre-Test Results	**Post-Test Results**
For "Length", the percentage of students who scored low (0-2 points) was 48%, indicating that nearly half of the students failed to meet the required text length (10 lines), often providing incomplete responses with insufficient elaboration. Meanwhile, 52% achieved high scores, showing that most of them were able to meet the require length. However, researchers noticed that their ideas were not that aligned with the topic or well structured, suggesting that they only complied with the number of lines but the quality of their production was not good.	For "Length", there was a moderate improvement as 57% students could meet the required text length (10 lines) or come close to it. The percentage of students who scored low decreased to 43%, reflecting approximately a 4% reduction in incomplete responses. This suggests that the strategy helped some students improved their text length. However, similar to the previous criterion, there are students who still fail to meet the required length. Researchers noticed that this was not entirely due to a lack of ability in doing so, some students demonstrated strong content development but rushed to complete the task, causing them to overlook the required number of lines.

Table 21: Comparison of pre-test & and post-test performance in "Length"

Organization of Ideas:

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ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS			
Pre-Test	**Percentage of Ss (%)**	**Post-Test**	**Percentage of Ss (%)**
Low Scores (0-2)	71,43	Low Scores (0-2)	42,86
High Scores (3-4)	28,57	High Scores (3-4)	57,14

Table 22: *Organization of ideas – Percentage of students with low and high scores*
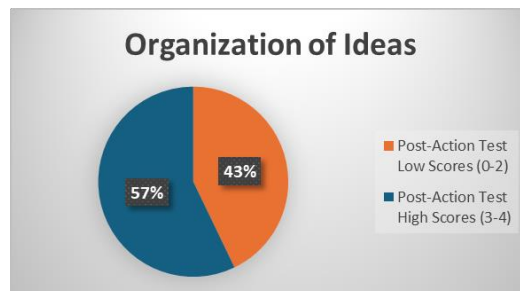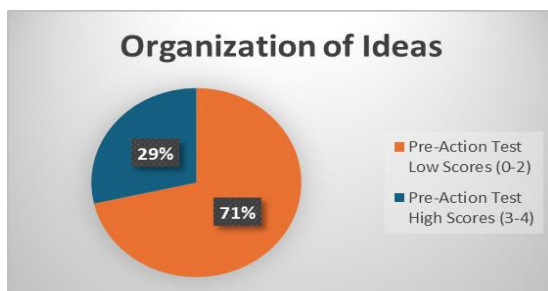
Figure 7: *Organization of ideas – Pretest*

Figure 8: *Organization of ideas – Posttest*

Analysis	
Pre-Test Results	**Post-Test Results**
For "Organization of ideas", the majority of the students (71%) produced disorganized texts, with scattered ideas and missing or weak concluding sentences, making it difficult for readers to follow their ideas. Only a small group of students (29%) was able to structured their ideas effectively. The high percentage of low scores suggested that students struggled with text organization, requiring guidance to improve it.	For "Organization of ideas", the results show approximately a 28% reduction in low scores. Meanwhile, high scores increased from 29% to 57%, indicating that students demonstrated clearer structure in their writing. They remembered to incorporate proper introductions, sequencing of ideas, and improved concluding sentences. This moderate progress suggests that feedback on the generic structure of descriptive texts given in previous sessions helped students improve their writing organization. However, 43% still faced difficulties, indicating the need for further reinforcement.

Table 23: *Comparison of pre-test & post-test performance in "Organization of ideas"*

Final Analysis:

The poor performance observed in the pre-test was primarily due to the lack of teacher support and the ineffectiveness of the initial strategy applied, which involved just providing a general instruction without further guidance. These results highlight a significant need for strategies to enhance students' writing skills, which is why the RAFT strategy was implemented. Its purpose was to help overcome the struggles identified in the pre-test.

Overall, the improvement in the post-test can be categorized as moderate, meaning that while there was some real progress, it was not a drastic one since this was the students' first time in using the strategy during writing assignments, so it was still relatively new for them. Nevertheless, the results reflect a positive shift, obtaining valuable insights into the strengths of this strategy, with most students achieving a good performance across all aspects after its implementation. Additionally, the researchers could notice that the addition of guided questions in the instruction provided significant support in content development. It is also important to mention that after reviewing all student productions, it was noted that some of them struggled the most in correctly adopt the "role" element in their texts, but as stated before, content development remained good. Therefore, this strategy requires further application and regular practice to achieve more consistent and significant results in all four aspects. It is also recommended to experiment with other groups of students, as this study was conducted only once with a single group, meaning findings cannot yet be generalized.

1.13 Structured Pre-Survey vs Structured Post-Survey Results (Questionnaire Checklists)

STRUCTURED PRE-SURVEY			
CATEGORY (11 Questions)	YES PERCENTAGE	NO PERCENTAGE	TOTAL (21 Students)
Emotional and Psychological Factors	42.86 %	57.14 %	100 %

Clarity and Understanding of Instruction	76.19 %	23.81 %	100%
Writing Process and Skills	71.43 %	28.57 %	100 %
Perceived Need for Improvement	71.43 %	28.57 %	100 %

Table 24: *Structured Pre-survey Results per Category.*
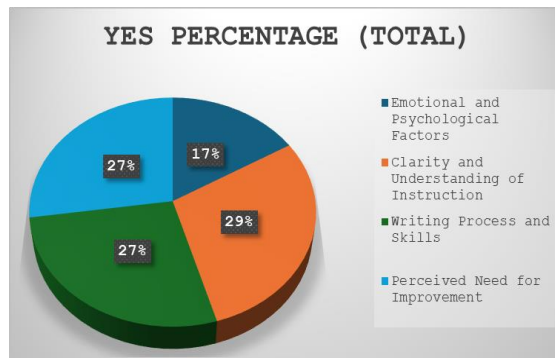
Figure 9: *Pre-Survey - "Yes" Percentage Results*
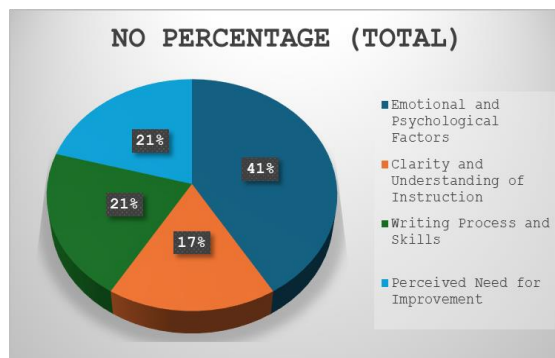
Figure 10: *Pre-Survey - "No" Percentage Results*

STRUCTURED POST-SURVEY			
CATEGORY (11 Questions)	YES PERCENTAGE	NO PERCENTAGE	TOTAL (21 Students)
Emotional and Psychological Factors	78.57 %	21.43 %	100 %
Clarity and Understanding of Instruction	73.81 %	26.19 %	100%

Writing Process and Skills	63.81 %	36.19 %	100 %
Perceived Need for Improvement	85.71 %	14.29 %	100 %

Table 25: Structured Post-Survey Results per Category
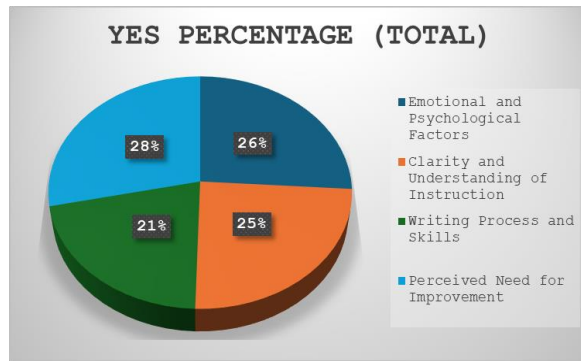
Figure 11: Post-Survey - "Yes" Percentage Results
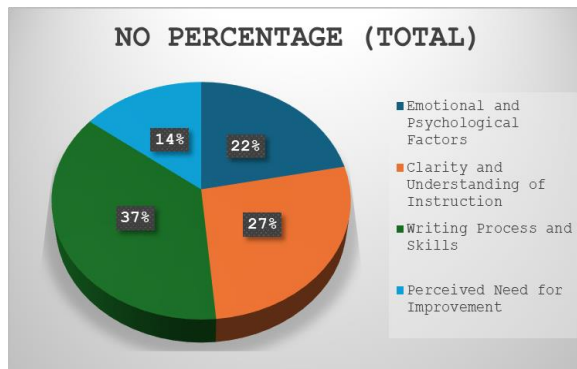
Figure 12: Post-Survey - "No" Percentage Results

Analysis	
Pre-Survey Results	**Post-Survey Results**
Before implementing the RAFT strategy, students faced significant challenges in motivation, clarity of instruction, writing skills, and perceived need for improvement. Only 17% of students felt motivated	After implementing the RAFT strategy, students showed notable improvements, particularly in motivation and confidence in writing. The percentage of students who felt motivated and engaged increased to

and engaged in the writing process, while 41% reported feeling frustrated or overwhelmed. In terms of clarity, 29% found the instructions clear, but 17% still struggled to understand them, and 62% frequently asked the teacher for clarification. Regarding writing skills, 27% of students felt comfortable generating ideas and organizing their writing, but 21% found it difficult to complete the task within the allocated time. Additionally, 27% of students recognized the need for structured guidance, with 21% strongly believing their writing required improvement. These results highlight that many students lacked confidence in their writing abilities and required additional support to complete the descriptive text effectively	26%, while those who reported frustration dropped to 22%, indicating a more positive emotional experience. Clarity of instruction remained relatively stable, with 25% of students finding the RAFT strategy helpful, although 27% still required further clarification. In terms of writing skills, 21% of students felt comfortable generating ideas and structuring their text, but challenges persisted, as 37% continued to struggle with the writing process. The perceived need for improvement also shifted, with 28% of students recognizing the effectiveness of RAFT in enhancing their writing, while only 14% felt their writing still needed significant improvement. These results suggest that while the RAFT strategy helped students feel more engaged and structured in their writing, ongoing support is necessary to further develop their writing skills.

Table 26: *Comparison of Pre-Survey & Post-Survey Results*

The comparison between the pre-survey and post-survey results demonstrates the positive impact of the RAFT strategy on students' writing performance, motivation, and confidence. After implementing RAFT, students showed increased engagement and reduced frustration, with a significant improvement in their ability to generate and organize ideas. The clarity of instruction also improved, as fewer students needed constant teacher clarification. Additionally, more students felt satisfied with their writing, indicating that RAFT provided a more structured and supportive framework for

developing their descriptive texts. However, despite these improvements, some students still faced challenges in writing, highlighting the need for continued reinforcement and practice. Overall, the findings suggest that the RAFT strategy is an effective tool for enhancing writing skills in EFL classrooms.

1.14 Semi-structured Post-Interview Checklist

The post-interview checklist highlights the impact of the RAFT strategy, divided into three key categories: Impact on Students, Challenges and Adjustments, and Overall Effectiveness. The teacher observed several positive changes in students, including increased engagement, clearer purpose for writing, enhanced use of descriptive vocabulary, and improved fluency and organization of ideas, with all responses marked as "YES" under the impact on students' category. Under the challenges and adjustments category, the question was marked as "NO," which is a positive indication that the strategy was implemented smoothly without major issues. However, upon analyzing the data, a small number of students were noted to have struggled with understanding the strategy initially. This difficulty was counterbalanced by the high level of motivation observed, as the interactive nature of the RAFT strategy seemed to engage students effectively. Finally, under the overall effectiveness category, the RAFT strategy was reported to make descriptive writing more purposeful, imaginative, and structured, with the teacher strongly recommending its use across various grade levels and subjects. The three open-ended questions allowed for deeper reflections, highlighting the potential for continued growth in student performance through sustained use of this innovative approach.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study explored the impact of the RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) strategy on improving content development skills in EFL descriptive writing among 9th-grade students in a non-bilingual private school. Through a pre-experimental approach, this research sought to determine the effectiveness of RAFT in enhancing students' writing abilities while also identifying any challenges faced during its implementation. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were derived:

- **Effectiveness of the RAFT Strategy**

  RAFT proved to be more effective than traditional methods in teaching and learning writing skills. The structured approach provided by the strategy enabled students to improve the quality and coherence of their written work, emphasizing creativity and focusing on content development. However, it is important to emphasize that this change was moderate, so the students still need further practice in order to get better results on overcoming content development difficulties.

- **Limitations in Generalizability**

  Given the study's pre-experimental nature and its implementation with only one group of 9th graders, the findings cannot be generalized to the entire secondary level or beyond. A more comprehensive experimental design involving control groups and multiple groups would yield results with higher validity. Nevertheless, this study contributes valuable insights and establishes a foundation for future, more extensive research.

- **Promoting Student Engagement and Exploration**

  The RAFT strategy engaged students by encouraging active participation and creative thinking. By exploring different roles, audiences, and formats, students were able to approach writing tasks

with curiosity and a sense of purpose. This process not only made writing more enjoyable but also helped them develop a deeper understanding of how context influences written communication.

- **Enhanced Student Motivation and Collaboration**

  The RAFT strategy significantly boosted student's motivation to learn and fostered a higher degree of collaboration among peers. The interactive nature of the strategy promoted group discussions, idea-sharing, and cooperative efforts, which enriched the overall learning experience.

- **Challenges in Mastering RAFT Elements**

  Some students faced initial difficulties in mastering the specific elements of the RAFT strategy, particularly in identifying the role and the audience aspects of their writing tasks. Despite these challenges, the strategy still led to noticeable improvements in content development and writing proficiency.

- **Support through Guided Questions**

  The inclusion of guided questions and detailed instructions was instrumental in supporting students throughout the writing process. This scaffolding minimized dependence on the teacher and classmates, empowering students to generate ideas and organize their thoughts more independently, thereby enhancing their confidence and autonomy in writing.

  These conclusions underscore the potential of the RAFT strategy as an effective tool for improving EFL students' writing skills, while also highlighting areas for refinement and future research opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the findings, this study offers some recommendations for other researchers, educators in ELT, and EFL students on incorporating the RAFT strategy in their writing lessons as a helpful teaching tool to overcome content development challenges and increase motivation when writing descriptive texts.

For future research and implementation
- Since there are limited studies on the effectiveness of the RAFT strategy, and this one just provides valuable insights of it, more thorough research is needed to explore its impact on different proficiency levels, genres, and learning environments.
- Researchers could analyze how consistent use of the RAFT strategy over an extended period affects students' writing proficiency and creativity. This could be done by conducting true experimental studies.

For EFL Students
- Since more than half of the students in the study struggled in vocabulary, which was a major limitation, they should be encourage to use a dictionary during writing activities. Having a dictionary (a printed one due to the school policies) will help them expand their vocabulary, improve word choice, and strengthen their descriptive texts.
- Paying attention to teacher explanations and participating in discussions about different RAFT prompts will enhance understanding of how to adapt writing for different roles and audiences.

For English teachers
- To fully grasp and master the RAFT strategy, students need continuous exposure and practice in class. Frequent writing activities help them internalize the skills developed with RAFT and become more independent writers.
- Initially, offer guided practice with structure with structured support, but gradually reduce assistance as students become more proficient. This

aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where the teacher provides strong support at the beginning and then allows students to work more independently as they internalize the skills.

- Many students struggled with identifying the role and audience. To overcome this difficulty, include constant feedback to help students understand their mistakes, offer peer review and interactive exercises to reinforce comprehension of RAFT elements and guide them toward better execution.

- Adapt RAFT strategy to cater to students with different learning needs by offering choice-based prompts, varying complexity levels, and diverse response formats.

- RAFT can be combined with graphic organizers, guided questions, brainstorming activities, and visual prompts to help students generate ideas before writing.

- To design a booklet that will serve as a supplementary practice hands-on learning resource based on the RAFT element to foster the deliberate practice needed to fully overcome the writing challenges identified in the participants regarding content development.

- To implement a structured evaluation process that evaluates the effectiveness of the RAFT-based writing tasks in the booklet with the help of an appropriate rubric to monitor students' progress in descriptive writing production for half of the scholastic year.

PROPOSAL

This project aims to help EFL students enhance their content development skills in descriptive writing by training English teachers on how to implement the RAFT strategy in class through engaging, theme-based exercises in the form of a booklet. It includes five engaging sections covering "book and movie characters", "touristic places in Guayaquil", "family & friends", "professions", and "superheroes". Some tasks provide guided questions, while others encourage independent writing, with the final exercises requiring them to show understanding by creating their own prompts using RAFT elements. Through deliberate practice using engaging structured descriptive writing tasks, students could be more motivated in developing and internalizing useful skills in the language.

General Data			
Project Title:	Sail into writing!		
Project Team:	Meyling Espinoza & Dayana Naranjo		
Main Objective:	To create a printed practice booklet for 9th-grade EFL students that will serve as a supplementary hands-on learning resource using RAFT elements to boost content development skills in descriptive writing, motivation and creativity.		
Specific Objectives:	To create a detailed digital teacher's guide to support EFL educators in effectively implementing the RAFT strategy.		
	To design a printed booklet containing several engaging writing tasks and where they can make use of the RAFT elements		
	To organize face-to-face training sessions with English teachers of secondary level focused on pedagogical skills development		
	To implement a structured weekly evaluation process that evaluates the effectiveness of the RAFT-based writing tasks and monitor students' progress.		
Execution time:	Starting	20/11/2024 Ending	28/11/2025

Evaluation time:	Starting	01/12/2025	Ending	12/12/2025

Project Description
This project aims to design a printed practice booklet for 9th graders (CEFR level A2-B1), integrating the RAFT strategy elements to enhance their content development skills in descriptive writing. It will contain a series of engaging writing tasks with guided prompts that align with the RAFT framework. To support the effective implementation of this resource, a detailed teacher's guide will be developed to assist EFL teachers in understanding the use of the RAFT strategy within the classroom context. Furthermore, the project will include the use of a structured evaluation process to monitor students' progress. This approach aims to create an engaging and supportive learning environment where both teachers and students achieve better writing outcomes.

Execution Matrix						
Object ive (numb er)	Activity	What will be done	What change is expected - Outcomes	Resource s	Time	Respon sibility
S.O.1	To create a detailed digital teacher's guide to support EFL Secondary educators in effectively implementin g the RAFT strategy.	A digital detailed guideline for English teachers on how to use the RAFT strategy in writing lessons will be developed as support. This guide will contain clear instructions, practical examples, and tips to	The aim of this guideline is to assist Secondary English teachers in understanding the use of the RAFT strategy in order to foster creativity, motivation, and content development during writing lessons in class.	a computer, internet, Microsoft Office (software)	4 weeks	Teacher' s guide creators

		implement it in the classroom.				
S.O.2	To design a booklet containing several engaging writing tasks for the students and where they can make use of the RAFT elements.	A printed practice booklet that includes a variety of writing tasks designed with the RAFT strategy will be created. Tasks will include clear guidelines, graphics, templates and prompts, and undergo a review process before printing and distribution.	9th-grade EFL students will have a structured hands-on learning resource that engages them in creativity, enhancing their content development skills in descriptive writing through deliberate practice using the RAFT strategy.	internet, Microsoft Office (software), printer, b/w & color ink, a binding machine, paper (A4 size)	4 weeks	Booklet creators
S.O.3	To organize face-to-face training sessions with English teachers of secondary level focused on pedagogical skills development	The English coordinator oversees organizing the meetings. The digital guide as well as the booklets are going to be distributed. There, English teachers will be given an	The main purpose of these training meetings is to provide Secondary English teachers essential information so that they are able to implement the RAFT strategy	a classroom, mobiliary, projector, computer, internet, the digital guideline, worksheets	3 weeks	Secondary English coordinator, A trainer, Secondary English teachers

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		appropriate introduction to the RAFT strategy. Discussions of concepts, worksheets and tips to follow about the use of the RAFT strategy will be delivered to the teachers so that they can use them in the classroom. Through this training, they'll be able to fully understand the guidelines and how to implement the booklet in the classroom.	with their students in the classroom effectively. EFL teachers are expected to support students in minimizing their challenges when completing descriptive writing activities in the booklet provided.			
S.O.4	To implement a structured weekly evaluation process that evaluates the effectivenes s of the RAFT-	The English teacher will conduct weekly evaluations of students' RAFT-based writing assignments of the booklet using a standardized	The English teacher will have a systematic process to monitor students' progress and make any necessary adjustments in the instructions	Evaluation rubric, student work samples, paper-based quizzes, tracking system (digital)	During the completi on of the booklet: 6 months	The English teacher

	based writing tasks and monitor students' progress.	rubric. They will provide feedback, record progress, and monthly formal assessment to address challenges.	to address writing challenges, improving students' overall performance.			

GANTT CHART

	Strategy	Starts	Ends	2024			2025											
				November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
1	**Diagnostic phase (pre-stage):** Identification of the problem (classroom observations, structured pre-survey to the students, pre-interview with the teacher, and pre-action test)	**20/11/24**	**28/11/24**															
2	**Cycle 1:** RAFT strategy introduction	**06/12/24**	**13/12/24**															
3	**Cycle 2:** RAFT strategy implementation (post-action test)	**17/12/24**	**19/12/24**															
4	**Planning** and **Approval** of the proposal	**06/01/25**	**31/01/25**			H H												
5	**Designing the booklet and Teacher guide** (including Final Review, Approval and Printing)	**03/02/25**	**28/02/25**															
6	**Teacher Training Sessions-RAFT Strategy** (Explanation and distribution of the teacher guide and orientation on how to implement the booklets)	**01/04/25**	**18/04/25**				H H H H											

7	**Introducing** students to the RAFT strategy	05/05/25	30/05/25	I I I I
8	**Implementation:** Weekly Booklet Completion using the RAFT strategy + Weekly evaluation process	02/06/25	28/11/25	
9	**Weekly tracking progress** and **Monthly formal writing assessment** to check progress and autonomy without using the RAFT strategy (6 quizzes in total)	02/06/25	28/11/25	
10	**Evaluation of the project:** Booklet (Final Presentation by the students with personalized feedback / Teacher does an analysis and comparison of final results)	01/12/25	12/12/25	

Starts	20/11/24	**I:Introduction to the strategy to Ss**
Ends	12/12/25	**H: Holidays**

BUDGET

PROJECT	Sail into writing!
RESPONSIBLE	Meyling Espinoza & Dayana Naranjo
DATE	6th of January, 2025
INSTITUTION	Private non-bilingual school

			UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
Diagnostic phase	**Equipment**			
	Laptop		$300	$300
	Binding machine		$85	$85
	Printer machine		$180	$180
	Per diem (training sessions)			
	Trainer's service (10 hours)		$30	$300
	Food expenses (10 days)		$5	$50
Implementation phase	**Office supplies**			
	Software: Microsoft Office & Canva (for booklet and teacher's guide design)		$0	$0
	Paper ream (A4 size)		$4	$16
	Color Ink (kit)		$20	$40
	Index tabs		$0,80	$8
	Erasers		$0,15	$8,1
	Pencils		$0,35	$18,9
	Sticky notes		$1,50	$3
	Equipment			
	Projector		$100	$100
	Internet		$40	$40

	Office supplies		
	Paper ream (A4 size)	$4	$8
	B/W Ink	$10	$30
Project evaluation	**Subtotal**	$780,8	$1,187
	Contingency reserves	5%	$59
		TOTAL BUDGET	$1,246

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

Facultad de
Artes y Humanidades

FAH-PINE-013-2024

Martes, 19 de noviembre del 2024

PhD. Cecilia Elizalde Cordero
Rectora
Unidad Educativa Torremolinos

En su despacho.

Reciba un cordial saludo. Por el presente solicito a usted muy comedidamente, salvo su mejor criterio, se permita a las señoritas Meyling Espinoza Valenzuela con CI # 0930494000 y Dayana Naranjo Moreno 0605797018, estudiantes del 8vo ciclo de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros – inglés, de la Facultad de Artes y Humanidades de la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil, realizar observaciones áulicas que les permita recolectar información para elaborar su Trabajo de Integración Curricular (Proyecto de titulación) denominado *The Effect of RAFT Strategy on improving EFL Writing Skills for Descriptive Texts Among 9th-Grade EFL Students from a Non-Bilingual Private School in Daule.*

Las señoritas Espinoza y Naranjo estarían realizando dicha actividad en la clase de inglés que reciben los estudiantes, durante los meses de noviembre y diciembre 2024 y enero 2025.

De antemano agradezco la atención brindada.

Atentamente,

Lcdo. Stanley González Ubilla, M.Ed.
Director
Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas
Nacionales y Extranjeros – inglés
stanley.gonzalez@cu.ucsg.edu.ec

UNSTRUCTURED CLASSROOM OBSERVATION NOTES

Date: November 20th - 21st - 22nd
Grade Level: 9th Grade
Subject: English

Focus: Descriptive Writing Activities

Problem Identification - During writing lessons

Session 1: Descriptive Writing from the textbook

Teacher:

- The teacher asks students to open their textbooks to a descriptive writing activity.
- Instructions are minimal: "Write a 10-line description based on the example in the book."
- No discussion, brainstorming, or vocabulary activation is conducted before students start.
- No modeling or example responses are provided to guide students.
- The teacher does not discuss writing strategies such as using sensory details or structuring ideas.
- Feedback is given only after students submit their writing, with no formative guidance during the process.

Students:

- Many students appear uninterested and disengaged.
- Several students struggle to start writing, staring at their papers in confusion.
- Some ask, "What exactly do we write?" or "Do we just copy from the book?"
- A few students complete the task quickly but with minimal effort, providing vague or repetitive descriptions.
- Some students copy directly from the textbook rather than creating original content.
- Frustration is visible among students who struggle with idea generation.

Session 2: Descriptive Writing based on a video

Teacher:

- Students watch a short video about love.
- Immediately after, the teacher states: "Now, write a 10-line paragraph describing the video."
- No pre-writing discussion, guiding questions, or vocabulary introduction is provided.
- Students are not encouraged to analyze the video's elements or emotions before writing.
- Again, no scaffolding, brainstorming, or structured writing guidance is offered.
- The teacher does not provide any examples of descriptive writing techniques.
- Students receive written feedback after submission, but no in-the-moment assistance.

Students:

- Many students seem confused about the task, as no discussion occurs before writing.
- Some students write only a few lines, summarizing the video rather than describing it.
- Several students sit silently, looking around the classroom or appearing unmotivated.
- A noticeable number of students submit incomplete work, writing only 3-4 lines.
- Some students copy ideas from their peers rather than independently developing descriptions.
- A few students whisper among themselves, doodle, or disengage from the activity entirely.

Session 3: Free descriptive writing on Paper

Teacher:

- Students are instructed to write a 10-line descriptive paragraph on a topic of their choice.
- No brainstorming, prompts, or structured guidance is given to help students generate ideas.
- The teacher does not offer techniques for improving writing clarity or depth.
- Students work independently with no peer discussions, collaborative activities, or interactive elements.
- The lesson remains teacher-directed with minimal engagement strategies

Students:

- The majority of students struggle to come up with a topic and develop ideas.
- Some students ask, "Can you give us an example?" but receive no additional guidance.
- Frustration increases, with students showing signs of stress and disengagement.
- Many students write brief, underdeveloped descriptions without depth or creativity.
- Several students abandon the task midway, leaving their papers incomplete.
- Few students express dissatisfaction, whispering comments like, "This is too hard," or "I don't know what to write."

Conclusion:

The teacher's approach to descriptive writing relies solely on assigning a 10-line task with no additional support, discussion, or engagement strategies. Across all three sessions, students struggle with content development and motivation. Without scaffolding techniques such as brainstorming, guided discussions, vocabulary support, or modeling, many students feel frustrated and disengaged. The lack of interactive elements leads to incomplete work, copying from peers, and a general disinterest in writing. Implementing structured pre-writing activities, clear examples, and collaborative exercises could significantly improve student performance and enthusiasm for descriptive writing.

APPENDIX 3

Scanned Documents

Revised and Signed Documents (Pre- & Post-Interview)

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS -

INGLÉS

TEACHER PRE-INTERVIEW (Before Implementing the RAFT Strategy

Answer the following open-ended questions based on your experience in teaching writing skills to 9th-grade EFL students:
1.How often do you implement writing exercises that require students to describe something?
2. How do you assess your students' writing activities? (Mention strategies - activities, etc.)
3. Do your students show interest or enthusiasm toward writing activities? Why or why not?
4. What tools do you use to encourage students to start writing?
5. How do you help or suggest to your students to organize their ideas before writing?
6. What are the most common challenges your students face when attempting to write descriptive texts? Mention some of them (e.g.: time, the flow of ideas, etc.)

7. Are you familiar with the RAFT strategy? (If so, mention what you know about it)

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CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS -
INGLÉS
POST-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST (After Implementing RAFT Strategy)

Date:_____

Check YES or NO based on your experience:

Impact on Students		
Questions:	**YES**	**NO**
Did you observe any impact on student engagement during the RAFT writing activities? (increased focus, participation, creativity, etc.)		
Did students seem to have a clearer purpose for their writing due to the RAFT prompts?		
Did you notice any positive impact on the use of descriptive vocabulary compared to previous writing exercises?		
Did the RAFT process provide a more helpful structure or guide for students to generate and organize their ideas before writing?		
Did you notice any positive impact on the fluency of ideas when writing their descriptive texts?		

Challenges and Adjustments		
Questions:	**YES**	**NO**
Did you encounter any difficulties when implementing the RAFT strategy? (e.g., understanding, student confusion, time constraints).		
If any, mention some of those challenges briefly:		

_____

_____

_____

Overall Effectiveness		
Questions:	**YES**	**NO**
Based on your observations and experience, did the RAFT strategy help students improve their descriptive writing skills and minimize some of their struggles?		
How would you compare the quality of descriptive writing produced through the RAFT strategy to previous attempts?		
Would you recommend using the RAFT strategies with other students of the school?		

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Semi-structured Observation Checklists

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Session 2

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DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS - INGLÉS

COURSE: 9th "B" DATE: 20/11/24

SCALE: 4 (VERY GOOD) - 3 (GOOD) - 2 (FAIR) - 1 (POOR)

PRE-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: STUDENT PARTICIPATION

No.	Criteria	4	3	2	1	Comments
1	**Student Activeness and Engagement:**					
a	Students actively take notes on learning material.					No theory was taught.
b	Students actively ask questions.	✓				They asked for the names of the house items very often.
c	Students actively propose ideas.			✓		
2	**Student Attention:**					
a	Quiet and calm.			✓		They got distracted easily, but after some time, they keep working. The background music only helped at the beginning. Desuggestopedia method
b	Focused on the material.		✓			Students were focused and a few of them even used their book as support to check vocabulary words
c	Enthusiastic and motivated to learn.			✓		They tried their best to write the correct names of the items with a correct structure
3	**Assignments:**					
a	Completes the task.		✓			Most of them completed the task.
b	Finishes task on time.			✓		Because of distractions it's difficult for most of them to finish the assignment on time
c	Completes task according to instructions.			✓		One of the students wrote the text in spanish to translate it after.
d	Finishes task without too many difficulties.				✓	Students struggled a lot in content development and vocabulary. They got anxious

→ During the pre-writing task, desuggestopedia method was used.

→ We set a rule of not speaking in spanish (4 to 0%)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1sPSLw-f7hdiBhGpeejSJuZB5csoDNzkqrWOMWOBLPCQ/edit?gid=1243850847#gid=1243850847 1/1

Session 4

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS - INGLÉS

COURSE: 9th "B" DATE: 4/12/24

SCALE: 4 (VERY GOOD) - 3 (GOOD) - 2 (FAIR) - 1 (POOR)

PRE-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: STUDENT PARTICIPATION

No.	Criteria	4	3	2	1	Comments
1	**Student Activeness and Engagement:**					
a	Students actively take notes on learning material.			✓		Only very few students took notes
b	Students actively ask questions.		✓			They asked questions about the RAFT strategy / clarify doubts
c	Students actively propose ideas. Most of them got rid of the fear of participating when they saw the enthusiasm of the others	✓	✓			They participated a lot during the practice activity. They wanted to share their ideas with so much enthusiasm
2	**Student Attention:**					
a	Quiet and calm.	✓				At the beginning, during the explanation of the concepts they paid silent on their seats
b	Focused on the material.	✓				They maintain focus on the material during the 2 hours.
c	Enthusiastic and motivated to learn.	✓ (2h)		✓ (1h)		At the start, during explanation of the theory, they seemed kinda bored, but then that changed during the practice activity.
3	**Assignments:**					
a	Completes the task.					There were no assignments today
b	Finishes task on time.					
c	Completes task according to instructions.					
d	Finishes task without too many difficulties.					

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DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

Session 5

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS - INGLÉS

COURSE: 9th "B"　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　DATE: 13/12/24

| | SCALE: 4 (VERY GOOD) - 3 (GOOD) - 2 (FAIR) - 1 (POOR) | | | | | |

PRE-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: STUDENT PARTICIPATION　　*Review + Practice*

No.	Criteria	4	3	2	1	Comments
1	**Student Activeness and Engagement:**					
a	Students actively take notes on learning material.			✓		They learned to be auditory learners.
b	Students actively ask questions.	✓				Whenever they have doubts, they asked the teacher.
c	Students actively propose ideas.	✓				They were not afraid of sharing their thoughts/ideas about the topic.
2	**Student Attention:**					
a	Quiet and calm.		✓			2 students were misbehaving sometimes so after we got tired of calling them out, we made them switch spots.
b	Focused on the material.	✓				Yes, they found the topic interesting so they payed attention to the whole hours of class.
c	Enthusiastic and motivated to learn.		✓			Most of them were eager to participate in the game activity (Eduaplay) and they demonstrate that they understood the topic.

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delay + Part 1

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Session 6

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS - INGLÉS

COURSE: 9th "B"　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　DATE: 17/12/24

| | SCALE: 4 (VERY GOOD) - 3 (GOOD) - 2 (FAIR) - 1 (POOR) | | | | | |

PRE-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: STUDENT PARTICIPATION

No.	Criteria	4	3	2	1	Comments
1	**Student Activeness and Engagement:**					
a	Students actively take notes on learning material.			✓		They seem to be auditory learners.
b	Students actively ask questions.	✓				They asked questions throughout the feedback (structure of changing the writing)
c	Students actively propose ideas.	✓				They weren't afraid of sharing their thoughts and ideas about the topic.
2	**Student Attention:**					
a	Quiet and calm.			✓		Two SS were misbehaving so after we got tired of calling them out, we found out that to say to make them switch places.
b	Focused on the material.	✓				Most of them were focused on the material since the class was very interactive.
c	Enthusiastic and motivated to learn.		✓			Most of the SS were eager to participate in the game activity (Kahoot) and they demonstrated they understood the topic.
3	**Assignments:**					
a	Completes the task.		✓			Everyone finished the test. However, some students were absent that day.
b	Finishes task on time.		✓			Most of them finished on time. However, a few of them completed the task after the time was over.
c	Completes task according to instructions.		✓			The instructions were clear for them. They understood what they have to do. Guided questions help out a bit.
d	Finishes task without too many difficulties.		✓			The difficulty they faced sometimes was vocabulary. They constantly asked for the translation of some words but there was improvement in fluency and generation of ideas

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Semi-structured Pre-Interview

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

FACULTAD DE ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS -

INGLÉS

TEACHER PRE-INTERVIEW (Before Implementing the RAFT Strategy

Answer the following open-ended questions based on your experience in teaching writing skills to 9th-grade EFL students:
1. How often do you implement writing exercises that require students to describe something?
Every unit has two or more exercises to help students to build skills in writing.
2. How do you assess your students' writing activities? (Mention strategies - activities, etc.)
I encourage my students to read for pleasure, the more they read, the more vocabulary they will have to write. First, students write several ideas, then they have to elaborate on the paragraph. I give them the rubrics and have the pages change with each other.
3. Do your students show interest or enthusiasm toward writing activities? Why or why not?
No, they don't. They don't like reading and writing.
4. What tools do you use to encourage students to start writing?
I have them select fun, engaging stories that students will relate to.
5. How do you help or suggest to your students to organize their ideas before writing?
By using the "paragraph hamburger" which is a writing organizer that visually outlines the key components of a paragraph. It's divided into topic sentences, detail sentences, and closing sentences.
6. What are the most common challenges your students face when attempting to write descriptive texts? Mention some of them (e.g.: time, the flow of ideas, etc.)
Lack of vocabulary and generating ideas.
7. Are you familiar with the RAFT strategy? (If so, mention what you know about it)
I do not use that strategy because I don't know how it works.

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Structured Pre-Survey (Questionnaire Checklist)

Course: _____   Date 28/11/24

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CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS - INGLÉS

Read the following statements below and tick the box of your corresponding answer (YES or NO):

No.	STATEMENTS	CHECKMARK YES	CHECKMARK NO
	PRE-SURVEY CHECKLIST (EFL Students' Writing Performance Before Implementing RAFT Strategy)		
1	Students were motivated and maintained a consistent focus on the teaching-learning process.		No
2	Students felt frustrated or overwhelmed during the writing task.	Yes	
3	Students found the instructions given for writing the descriptive text sufficient and clear to follow.	Yes	
4	Students approached the teacher several times during the task to ask a lot of questions regarding the activity and how to do it.	Yes	
5	Students could complete the descriptive paragraph within the time allocated by the teacher.		No
6	Students found it easy to start their descriptive text without additional guidance.		No
7	Students could generate ideas fluently and easily when writing their descriptive paragraphs.	Yes	No
8	Students could organize their ideas clearly and logically in their writing, without any difficulty.	Yes	No
9	Students felt that their vocabulary was sufficient to express ideas effectively in the descriptive paragraph.		No
10	Students were satisfied with their performance and the outcome of their descriptive paragraph.		No
11	Students believed they could improve their descriptive writing with more structured guidance and practice.	Yes	

Structured Post-Survey (Questionnaire Checklist)

Course: _____   Date: 18 - 12 - 2024

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Read the following statements below and tick the box of your corresponding answer (YES or NO):

No.	STATEMENTS	CHECKMARK YES	CHECKMARK NO
	POST-SURVEY CHECKLIST (EFL Students' Writing Performance After Implementing RAFT Strategy)		
1	Students were more interested, comfortable, and motivated to learn writing after implementing the RAFT strategy.	✓	
2	Students felt less frustrated while writing their descriptive text with the support of the prompts provided with the use of the RAFT strategy.	✓	
3	Students could easily understand the explanation given by the teacher of how to use the RAFT strategy in their writing.	✓	
4	Students agreed that the RAFT strategy provided clear guidelines for structuring their descriptive paragraphs.	✓	
5	The teacher gave the students opportunities to ask questions about the RAFT strategy.	✓	
6	Students could complete most of the tasks without the constant need to ask too many questions to the teacher regarding what to write.		✗
7	Students felt that producing a descriptive text was less difficult than before.	✓	
8	Students found it easier to generate and organize their ideas for their descriptive text after implementing the RAFT strategy.	✓	
9	Students felt that their vocabulary and ability to describe improved with the use of the RAFT strategy.		✗
10	The RAFT strategy helped students stay on track and complete the paragraph within the given time.	✓	
11	Students were satisfied with the quality and structure of their descriptive paragraphs after using the RAFT strategy.	✓	

Semi-structured Post-Interview Checklist

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DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

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CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS -
INGLÉS
POST-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST (After Implementing RAFT Strategy)

Date:1 /2 /2025

Check YES or NO based on your experience:

Impact on Students		
Questions:	YES	NO
Did you observe any impact on student engagement during the RAFT writing activities? (increased focus, participation, creativity, etc.)	x	
Did students seem to have a clearer purpose for their writing due to the RAFT prompts?	x	
Did you notice any positive impact on the use of descriptive vocabulary compared to previous writing exercises?	x	
Did the RAFT process provide a more helpful structure or guide for students to generate and organize their ideas before writing?	x	
Did you notice any positive impact on the fluency of ideas when writing their descriptive texts?	x	

Challenges and Adjustments		
Questions:	YES	NO
Did you encounter any difficulties when implementing the RAFT strategy? (e.g., understanding, student confusion, time constraints).		x
If any, mention some of those challenges briefly: _____		

Overall Effectiveness		
Questions:	YES	NO
Based on your observations and experience, did the RAFT strategy help students improve their descriptive writing skills and minimize some of their struggles?	x	
How would you compare the quality of descriptive writing produced through the RAFT strategy to previous attempts? Descriptive writing produced through RAFT is likely to be more purposeful, imaginative, and structured compared to earlier attempts that may not have had the same level of focus or depth. The RAFT strategy gives the writer a clear lens through which to view their description, leading to more dynamic and thoughtful writing.		
Would you recommend using the RAFT strategies with other students of the school? Absolutely, I think RAFT strategies can be really helpful for a variety of students across different grade levels and subjects. The RAFT model—Role, Audience, Format, and Topic—provides a structured way for students to think critically about their writing and communication, encouraging them to consider different perspectives and express their ideas more creatively.		

Pre-Action Tests scores (out of 10)

Students	Generation of Ideas	Fluency of Ideas	Length	Organization of Ideas	Total /16	Total/10
RESULTS: PRE-ACTION TEST 1 (WITHOUT RAFT STRATEGY)						
S1	2	2	4	3	11	6.87
S2	2	1	2	1	6	3.75
S3	1	1	1	1	4	2.5
S4	3	2	2	2	9	5.62
S5	2	2	4	2	10	6.25
S6	2	2	2	2	8	5
S7	2	2	4	2	10	6.25
S8	1	1	2	1	5	3.12
S9	1	1	2	1	5	3.12
S10	2	2	3	2	9	5.62
S11	1	1	3	1	6	3.75
S12	0	0	0	0	0	0
S13	2	2	3	3	10	6.25
S14	2	1	2	3	8	5
S15	2	2	4	2	10	6.25
S16	3	4	4	3	14	8.75
S17	2	3	3	3	11	6.87
S18	2	2	2	1	7	4.37
S19	2	1	2	1	6	3.75
S20	1	1	3	1	6	3.75
S21	3	3	4	3	13	8.12

Post-Action Tests scores (out of 10)

Students	Generation of Ideas	Fluency of Ideas	Length	Organization of Ideas	Total /16	Total/10
RESULTS: POST-ACTION TEST 1 (WITH RAFT STRATEGY)						
S1	4	3	3	4	14	8.75
S2	4	3	4	3	14	8.75
S3	4	4	4	4	16	10
S4	3	2	3	2	10	6.25
S5	3	3	3	3	12	7.5
S6	3	3	4	3	13	8.12
S7	4	3	4	3	14	8.75
S8	1	1	1	1	4	2.5
S9	2	2	2	2	8	5
S10	2	1	2	1	6	3.75
S11	2	1	2	1	6	3.75
S12	1	1	1	1	4	2.5
S13	1	0	1	0	2	1.25
S14	1	0	1	0	2	1.25
S15	3	3	3	3	12	7.5
S16	3	2	2	3	10	6.25
S17	2	2	3	2	9	5.62
S18	4	4	3	4	15	9.37
S19	4	3	3	3	13	8.12
S20	4	3	3	4	14	8.75
S21	3	3	2	3	11	6.87

Pre-Survey (Questionnaire Checklist) Results - Per Question

	Category	Question	Yes Count	No Count	TOTAL		Yes Percentage	No Percentage	TOTAL
1	Emotional and Psychological Factors	Students were motivated and maintained a consistent focus on the teaching-learning process.	8	13	21		38%	62%	100%
		Students felt frustrated or overwhelmed during the writing task.	10	11	21		48%	52%	100%
2	Clarity and Understanding of Instruction	Students found the instructions given for writing the descriptive text sufficient and clear to follow.	19	2	21		90%	10%	100%
		Students approached the teacher several times during the task to ask a lot of questions regarding the activity and how to do it	13	8	21		62%	38%	100%
3	Writing Process and Skills	Students could complete the descriptive paragraph within the time allocated by the teacher.	14	7	21		67%	33%	100%
		Students found it easy to start their descriptive text without additional guidance.	13	8	21		62%	38%	100%
		Students could generate ideas fluently and easily when writing their descriptive paragraphs.	20	1	21		95%	5%	100%
		Students could organize their ideas clearly and logically in their writing, without any difficulty.	17	4	21		81%	19%	100%
		Students felt that their vocabulary was sufficient to express ideas effectively in the descriptive paragraph.	11	10	21		52%	48%	100%
4	Perceived Need for Improvement	Students were satisfied with their performance and the outcome of their descriptive paragraph.	11	10	21		52%	48%	100%
		Students believed they could improve their descriptive writing with more structured guidance and practice.	19	2	21		90%	10%	100%

Post-Survey (Questionnaire Checklist) Results - Per Question

	Category	Question	Yes Count	No Count	TOTAL		Yes Percentage	No Percentage	TOTAL
1	Emotional and Psychological Factors	Students were more interested, comfortable, and motivated to learn writing after implementing the RAFT strategy.	17	4	21		81%	19%	100%
		Students felt less frustrated while writing their descriptive text with the support of the prompts provided with the use of the RAFT strategy.	16	5	21		76%	24%	100%
2	Clarity and Understanding of Instruction	Students could easily understand the explanation given by the teacher of how to use the RAFT strategy in their writing.	20	1	21		95%	5%	100%
		Students agreed that the RAFT strategy provided clear guidelines for structuring their descriptive paragraphs.	11	10	21		52%	48%	100%
3	Writing Process and Skills	The teacher gave the students opportunities to ask questions about the RAFT strategy.	19	2	21		90%	10%	100%
		Students could complete most of the tasks without the constant need to ask too many questions to the teacher regarding what to write.	9	12	21		43%	57%	100%
		Students felt that producing a descriptive text was less difficult than before.	12	9	21		57%	43%	100%
		Students found it easier to generate and organize their ideas for their descriptive text after implementing the RAFT strategy.	19	2	21		90%	10%	100%
		Students felt that their vocabulary and ability to describe improved with the use of the RAFT strategy.	8	13	21		38%	62%	100%
4	Perceived Need for Improvement	The RAFT strategy helped students stay on track and complete the paragraph within the given time.	18	3	21		86%	14%	100%
		Students were satisfied with the quality and structure of their descriptive paragraphs after using the RAFT strategy.	18	3	21		86%	14%	100%

APPENDIX 4

RAFT writing templates:

A.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Who or what are you? What are your feelings, ideas, and perspective?	Who are you writing to?	What kind of writing will you do?	What are you writing about? Brainstorm and

			organize your ideas.

Table 18. RAFT Writing Template 1

B.

Role:	Audience:
Format:	Topic:
Writing piece:	

Table 19. RAFT Writing Template 2

APPENDIX 5

Rubric:

A. Adapted

Aspect	Score	Performance Description	Total

Content (C)				16 points
Generation of Ideas	4	Ideas are highly creative, relevant, and supported with rich details and a continuous flow.	4 p.	
	3	Ideas are mostly clear with relevant details, but some descriptions lack depth.		
	2	Some details are present, but they are vague or repetitive.		
	1	Few or unclear details, making the description weak or incomplete.		
	0	Ideas are not relevant to the topic.		
Fluency of Ideas	4	Descriptions flow smoothly with well-connected ideas and appropriate transitions.	4 p.	
	3	The paragraph mostly flows well, with minor awkward transitions.		
	2	Some jumps between ideas or abrupt descriptions affect readability.		
	1	Disjointed or choppy sentences that make it hard to follow the description.		
	0	The text lacks coherence entirely, with no logical connections or transitions between ideas.		
	4	Meets or exceeds the required length. (10 + lines)		

Length	3	Almost meets the required length. (6-9 lines)	4 p.
	2	Falls slightly short of the required length. (3-5 lines)	
	1	Falls significantly short of the required length. (1-2 lines)	
	0	The submission is missing, making evaluation impossible. (0 lines)	
Organization of Ideas	4	The paragraph follows a logical structure. Clear topic sentence introduces the subject, details are well-organized, and the conclusion provides a strong final impression.	4 p.
	3	Mostly organized, but details could be arranged more effectively for clarity.	
	2	Some organization issues: missing or weak topic/concluding sentences, or details appear randomly placed.	
	1	Lacks clear structure; ideas are scattered, making the description confusing, but some effort to organize is evident.	
	0	No discernible structure, the paragraph is a random collection of unrelated sentences or ideas, with no attempt at organization.	

Table 20. Rubric adapted by researchers

B. Original rubric

Aspect	Score	Performance Description	Weighting
Content (C) 20% Topic Detailed	4	The topic is complete and clear, and the details are relating to the topic	x20
	3	The topic is complete and clear, but the details are almost relating to the topic	
	2	The topic is complete and clear, but the details are not relating to the topic	
	1	The topic is not clear, and the details are not relating to the topic	
Organization (O) 20% Identification Description	4	Identification is complete and descriptions are arranged with proper connectives	x20
	3	Identification is almost complete, and descriptions are arranged in almost proper connectives	
	2	Identification is not complete, and descriptions are arranged with few misuse of connectives	
	1	Identification is not complete and descriptions are arranged with misuse of connectives	
Grammar (G) 20% - Use present tense - Agreement	4	Very few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	x20
	3	few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies but not effect on meaning	
	2	Numerous grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	
	1	Frequent grammatical or agreement inaccuracies	
Vocabulary (V) 20%	4	Effective choice and words and word forms	

Table 21. Riyanti, Y. (2015). Analytical Scoring Rubric

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APPENDIX 6

Samples of Students' Written Productions (Pre-test & Post-Test)

STUDENT 1 IMPROVEMENT:

A. Pre-Action test

Date: 3ᵗʰ december 2024   Isabella Navia   1 4B 1.

Your house items

Task:
Write a descriptive paragraph, 10 lines about your house items

In my house I have helpful things, decorations, thing for entretaiment, for example in my bedroom I have my bed, my wardrove, chest of drawers, etc. I know very well my house because I lived here my whole life.

B. Post-Action Test

roce   POST-ACTION TASK 1 (WITH PROMPT)

Write a descriptive text based on the promt below

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC
Famous chef	Teenagers	Short paragraph	Describe a new dish to try

You are a famous chef tasked with writing a short paragraph to inspire teenagers to try a new international dish you like. In your paragraph, describe the dish, its flavors, and why they should try it. Use vivid details to make the dish sound irresistible.

Answer these questions in your paragraph:
1. What is the name of the dish, and which country or culture is it from?
2. How would you describe the taste, ingredients, and appearance of the dish?
3. Why is this dish special, and why would teenagers enjoy it?

Vocabulary words:
Ingredients, taste. spicy, sweet, salty, delicious, dish, etc.

Salchipapa, is from Por . Ecuador, the ingredients of the salchipapa are sausage, potato and topics if you want (mayonaise or tomato sauce), the steps to do it are: first, peel of the potatoes and cut the sausage (cut the potatoes too), next fry the potatoes and the sausages on the hot oil and finally you can eat it. if you want you can add sauces or a bit of salt to do it salty. In my opinion the salchipapa taste really good. The dish are especial because is cheap and delicious, that why I like it.

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STUDENT 2 IMPROVEMENT:

A. Pre-Action test

> Fioull a Briones
>
> Write a descriptive
>
> the ~~wi~~ house has big window
> and a fantastic view of there
> a lovely yard, too. It's large
> enough for people to play outdoor
> games

B. Post-Action Test

POST-ACTION TASK 1 (WITH PROMPT)

Write a descriptive text based on the promt below			

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC
Famous chef	Teenagers	Short paragraph	Describe a new dish to try

You are a famous chef tasked with writing a short paragraph to inspire teenagers to try a new international dish you like. In your paragraph, describe the dish, its flavors, and why they should try it. Use vivid details to make the dish sound irresistible.

Answer these questions in your paragraph:
1. What is the name of the dish, and which country or culture is it from?
2. How would you describe the taste, ingredients, and appearance of the dish?
3. Why is this dish special, and why would teenagers enjoy it?

Vocabulary words:
Ingredients, taste. spicy, sweet, salty, delicious, dish, etc.

> My favorite dish is pizza, I like, this dish is for Italy is a popular
> culture, everybody it liked! my taste or ingredients for this dish
> is flour for the dough, the second ingredients is a pepperoni
> that is my favorite part for the pizza, the tretith ingredients
> is a tomatoes, too have a cheese, have too salt and pepper,
> and jamón, and salsa tomatoes, I like the pizza with
> pineaplle sweet, I loved it!
> So this dish is special for me because I want to eat an
> morning or nigth Its perfect in the two times. so i eat with
> my best friends or my family. ♡

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STUDENT 3 IMPROVEMENT:

A. Pre-Action Test

Date: 7/12/2024 Topic:

My country is Ecuador, my city is Guayaquil - Daule.
I 14 years old the, mamy school is Terranosinos, I like
play futbol, paint, swimg, play basket, play estations,
play Pin Pom,

B. Post-Action Test

POST-ACTION TASK 1 (WITH PROMPT)

Write a descriptive text based on the promt below

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC
Famous chef	Teenagers	Short paragraph	Describe a new dish to try

You are a famous chef tasked with writing a short paragraph to inspire teenagers to try a new international dish you like. In your paragraph, describe the dish, its flavors, and why they should try it. Use vivid details to make the dish sound irresistible.

Answer these questions in your paragraph:
1. What is the name of the dish, and which country or culture is it from?
2. How would you describe the taste, ingredients, and appearance of the dish?
3. Why is this dish special, and why would teenagers enjoy it?

Vocabulary words:
Ingredients, taste. spicy, sweet, salty, delicious, dish, etc.

My favorite food is lasgna is it from
italy. the ingredients consist in meet,
noodles, tomato, onions, cheese,
tomato pasta, salt. the appearance of
the dish is similar a cubic or
rectangle. the dish is special for me
because is delicing and why would
teenagers enjoy it, (I know) I not know
but I supposed for the taste because
the taste is salty and soft, and that's
all

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APPENDIX 7

Lesson Plan:

Session 2   **Date: 28/11/24**

Objectives:

- To collect data through a pre-writing test and establish a baseline understanding of students' descriptive writing skills before implementing the RAFT strategy.
- To gather student feedback on their experience completing the writing assignment through a pre-survey (questionnaire checklist).

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed Pre-Action Test (without RAFT).
- Background soft music (Desuggestopedia method was applied)
- Printed Pre-survey (questionnaires checklist)
- Pens/pencils
- Printed observation notes checklist (for the researchers)

Session 3   **Date: 9/12/24**

Objectives:

- To review the writing process and the generic structure of descriptive texts.

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed observation notes checklist (for the researchers)
- Slides presentation about writing process
- Computer
- Projector
- Visual aids: videos about descriptive text

Session 4   **Date: 11/12/24**

Objectives:

- To introduce the RAFT strategy to the students.
- To engage students in interactive group practice by creating prompts based on RAFT elements using the "Tutti Frutti" game idea.

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed observation notes checklist (for the researchers)

- Slide Presentation
- Projector
- Computer
- Whiteboard
- Markers

Session 5   **Date: 13/12/24**

Objectives:
- To deepen students' understanding of RAFT elements through review, interactive practice and constructive feedback.

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed observation notes checklist (for the researchers)
- EducaPlay website: Matching activity about RAFT concepts
- Projector
- Computer

Session 6   **Date: 17/12/24**

Objectives:
- To clear students' doubts regarding concepts of the RAFT strategy and structure of descriptive texts.
- To practice identification of RAFT elements through whole-group exercises.
- To assess students' descriptive writing performance with a post-action test using the RAFT strategy.

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed observation notes checklist (for the researchers)
- Kahoot game
- Slide presentation (identification exercises)
- Projector
- Computer
- Printed Post-Action Tests (with RAFT)
- Pens/Pencils

Session 7   **Date: 18/12/24**

Objectives:

- To gather student feedback on their experience completing the writing assignment using the RAFT strategy through a post-survey (questionnaire checklist).

Resources and teaching aids:

- Printed Post-Survey (questionnaire checklist)
- Pens/Pencils

APPENDIX 8: COMPLEMENTARY TEACHING RESOURCES

Kahoot! Activity
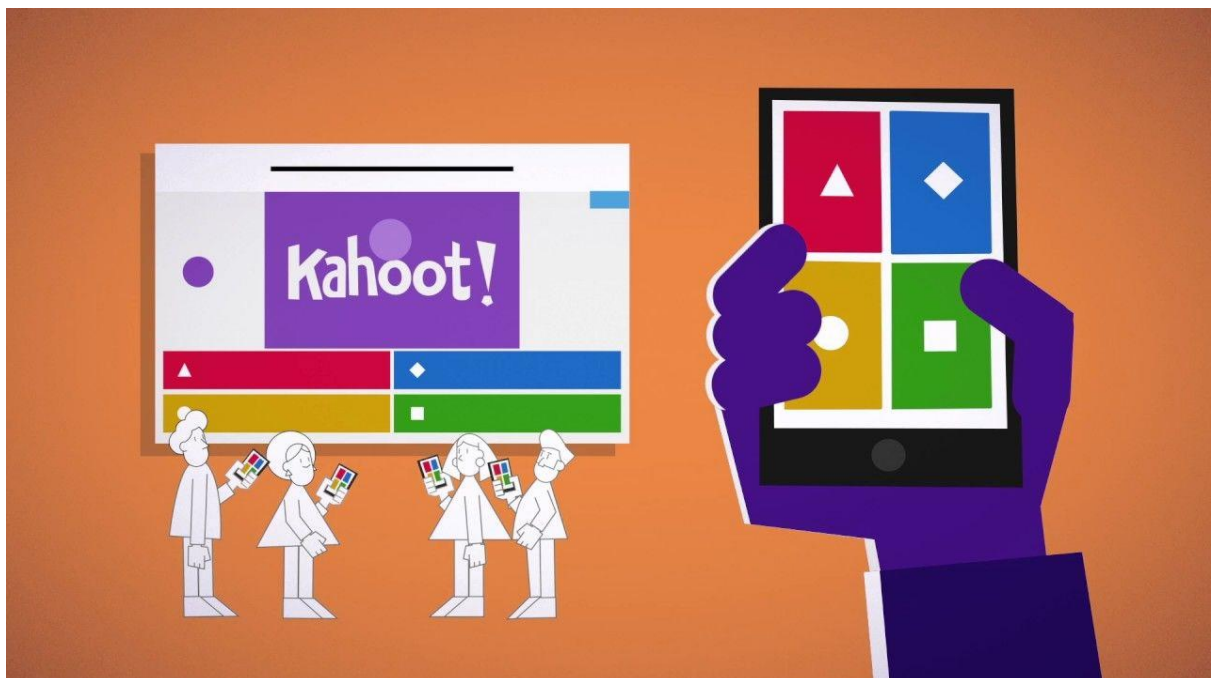
EducaPlay! Activity
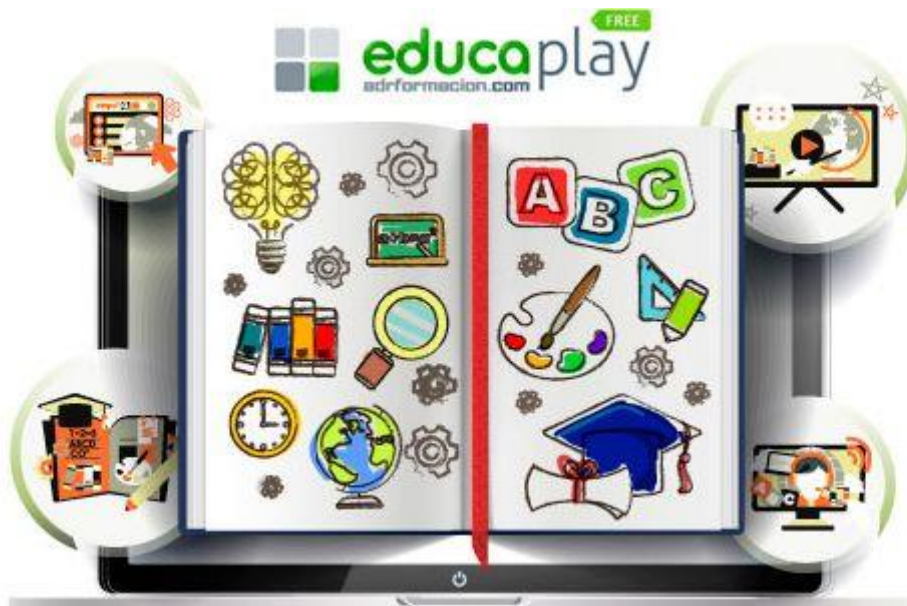
APPENDIX 9: PICTURES (EVIDENCE)
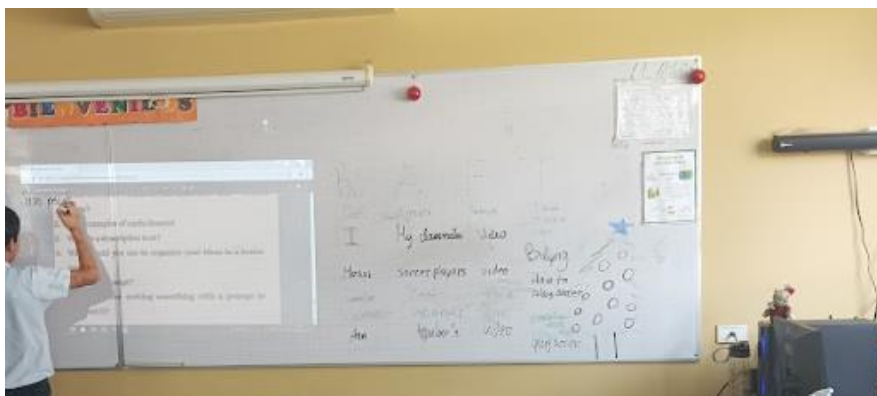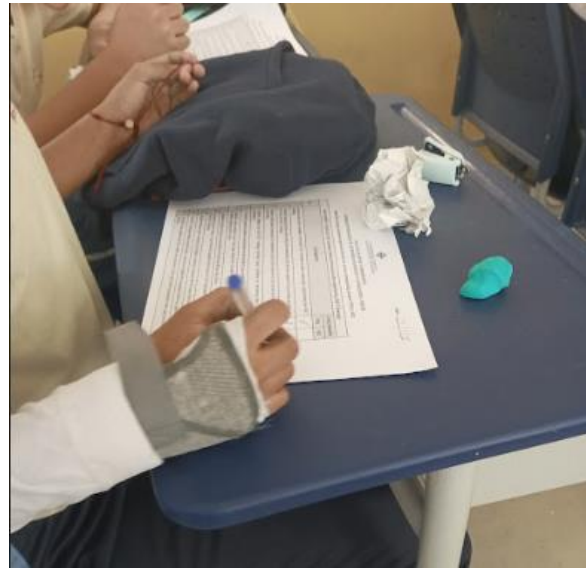
PRACTICE BOOKLET

"SAIL INTO WRITING!"

"SAIL INTO WRITING!"

BOOKLET- RAFT WRITING PRACTICE

STUDENT NAME: _____

COURSE: _____

SUBJECT: _____

BOOKLET
TABLE OF CONTENT

Booklet Sections

- **Page #148 - #153 (Section 2):** Touristic places in Guayaquil!

- **Page #154 - #159 (Section 3):** Family & friends!

- **Page #160 - #163 (Section 4):** Professions!

- **Page #164 - #167 (Section 5):** Superheroes!

- **Page #168 - #169:** Rubric

Nature of the writing tasks:

- **Task #1 - #15:** RAFT prompt + Guided questions

- **Task #16 - #21:** RAFT prompt (No guided questions included)

- **Task #22 - #26:** Create your own prompt!

APPLY THE RAFT STRATEGY ELEMENTS!

RAFTS

Before brainstorming and planning your writing, analyze the assignment using RAFTS

R OLE
(Who am I as the author of this piece of writing?)

A UDIENCE
(Who is my audience? ... peers, adults, younger children, community at large)

F ORMAT
(What format should I use? ... friendly letter, narrative, essay, etc.)

T OPIC
(What is the topic?)

S TRONG VERB
(What is my purpose/reason for writing? Some strong verbs are convince/persuade, explain, reflect, tell, enlighten, entertain, describe, review, inform, evoke emotion)

Figure taken from AdLit. (s.f.). RAFT writing

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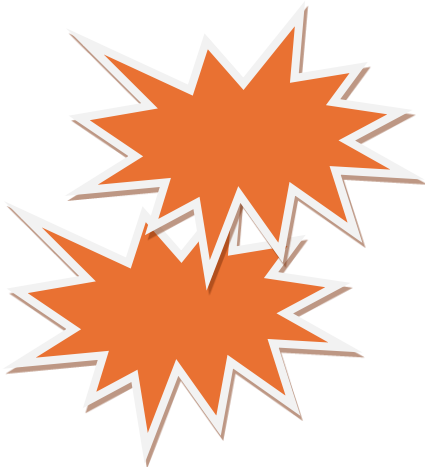
REMEMBER!

"COMPLETE THE REFLECTION LOG ENTRY AFTER COMPLETING EACH WRITING TASK TO TRACK YOUR PROGRESS!"

Deliberate practice is beneficial for you!

It greatly enhances students' ability to retain new knowledge and skills.
(Anderson, 2008)
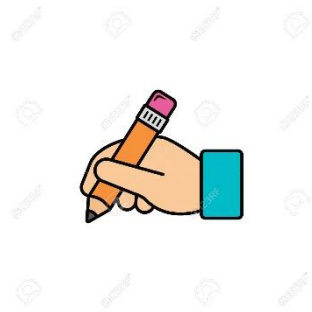
SECTION 1

"BOOK & MOVIE CHARACTERS!"

RAFT Elements:

Role: Student

Audience: Classmates

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe your understanding of August, main character from the movie "Wonder".

Instructions: Watch a <mark>short clip</mark> from the movie "Wonder". After that, write a paragraph that describes your understanding of his character. You can use specific examples from the video to support your descriptions.

Guided Questions:

- How could you describe August's condition or any disability he might have?

- How could you describe August's personality traits and the emotions he seemed to experience in the video?

- What struggles or challenges does August face?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

RAFT Elements:

Role: Harry Potter

Audience: New students

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Description of your favorite sport, Quidditch, and its magic!

Instructions: Watch a <mark>short clip</mark> from the movie "Harry Potter" where the characters play Quidditch. Then, for this task use your creativity and take the role of Harry Potter to write a brief paragraph for new Hogwarts students describing this magical sport. Help the new students feel the excitement of this magical game!

Guided Questions:

- What are some features of Quidditch that make it exciting?

- What objects are used in this sport?

- How do you feel when playing Quidditch, what emotions or sensations does it bring you?

Helpful Vocabulary:

chaser, seeker, Golden Snitch, magical, mid-air, exciting, dangerous, etc.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

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RAFT Elements:

Role: Percy Jackson

Audience: New campers at Camp Half-Blood

Format: Letter

Topic: Describe your daily life at Camp Half-Blood.

Instructions: Watch a <mark>short clip</mark> from the movie "Percy Jackson". Then, use your imagination by taking the role of Percy. Write a letter to new campers at Camp Half-Blood mentioning some interesting characteristics of how life is at Camp Half-Blood!

Guided Questions:

- How could you describe the camp?

- How is your relationship with your friends at the camp?

- What are some of the activities or adventures you experience with your friends at camp Half-Blood?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

146

RAFT Elements:

Role: Adventurer

Audience: Readers fascinated by magical worlds

Format: Diary Entry

Topic: Describe Narnia

Instructions: First, look at and analyze the 3 pictures above taken from the movie "The Chronicles of Narnia". After that, write a diary entry imagining you are stepping into Narnia for the first time. Use the picture provided as support when describing this magical place.

Guided Questions:

- What were your initial emotions upon entering Narnia?

- What could you observe in this new world?

- Use your imagination and describe how the inhabitants of Narnia would be.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 5

RAFT Elements:

Role: Yourself

Audience: Classmates

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe Detective Sherlock Holmes

Instructions: First, watch a <mark>short scene</mark> of an episode taken from the Sherlock Holmes TV show where he solves a case called "The blind banker: suicide or murder?". Then, from what you noticed in the video, write a paragraph providing different characteristics regarding the character and his job as a detective.

Guided Questions:

- How could you describe the setting?

- What could you notice about his personality?

- What was the case about? Describe it.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			
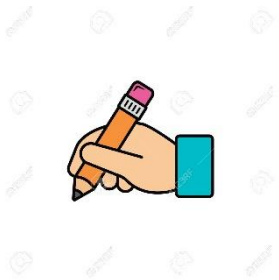
SECTION 2
"TOURISTIC PLACES IN GUAYAQUIL!"

EXERCISE 6

RAFT Elements:

Role: Tour Guide

Audience: Tourists

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe the Malecon 2000

Instructions: You are taking the role of a tour guide in Guayaquil. Write a paragraph to tourists describing the beauty of the Malecon 2000 and why it is a must-visit spot in the city.

Guided Questions:

- How could you describe this place?
- What activities can visitors do at the Malecon 2000?
- Why is it an important part of Guayaquil?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 7

RAFT Elements:

Role: Visitor to Cerro Santa Ana

Audience: Friends interested in traveling to Guayaquil

Format: Diary Entry

Topic: Describe the highlights of your visit

Instructions: Write a diary entry describing a holiday you spent at the Cerro Santa Ana. Include details about the highlights of your visit and how it made you feel.

Guided Questions:

- When did you go, and with whom?
- What did you see from the top, and how did it impact you?
- How did spending time at Cerro Santa Ana make you feel?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

RAFT Elements:

Role: Traveler

Audience: Friends back home

Format: Letter

Topic: Describe your visit to Parque Samanes

Instructions: Write a letter to your friends describing the park and its charm.

Guided Questions:

- What features does Parque Samanes have that make it different from other parks?
- What activities did you do there?
- Why should your friends visit this place?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 9

RAFT Elements:

Role: Yourself

Audience: Teacher

Format: Personal Narrative

Topic: Describe your school trip to Parque Histórico

Instructions: Write a personal narrative about visiting Parque Histórico with your classmates. Include details about everything you saw there.

Guided Questions:

- What animals did you encounter at Parque Histórico?
- Which places or buildings did you find most interesting and why?
- Would you recommend visiting the park again?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

RAFT Elements:

Role: Photographer

Audience: Travel Magazine Readers

Format: Review

Topic: Describe your experience capturing photos at the Guayas River.

Instructions: Write a short review for a travel magazine about photographing the Guayas River, its natural beauty, and its cultural significance.

Guided Questions:

- What does the river look like at different times of the day?
- What makes it an iconic symbol of Guayaquil?
- Why is it a great spot for photography?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

SECTION 3
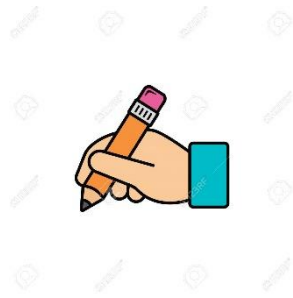
"FAMILY & FRIENDS!"

EXERCISE 11

RAFT Elements:

Role: Yourself

Audience: Classmates

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe your relationship with your parents

Instruction: Write a paragraph describing your relationship with your parents. This will help your classmates understand the unique bond you share with them and how important they are in your life.

Guided Questions:

- What are your parents' personalities like?
- What qualities do you admire most about your parents?
- What are some memorable moments you've shared with them?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

RAFT Elements:

Role: Family Member

Audience: Readers interested in family traditions

Format: Diary Entry

Topic: Describe a family tradition you love.

Instructions: Write a diary entry describing a family tradition. Include details that explain why you love it.

Guided Questions:

- What is the family tradition you cherish the most?
- How do you celebrate this tradition with your family?
- Why is this tradition important to you?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 13

RAFT Elements:

Role: Student

Audience: Classmates

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe your house

Instructions: Write a paragraph describing the place where you live with your family. Imagine you are sharing information with your classmates. Use descriptive language to help your classmates visualize your home.

Guided Questions:

- Where is your house located, and for how long have you lived there?

- Whom do you live with?

- What does your house look like? (e.g.: color, size, rooms, and any special features of your house.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 14

RAFT Elements:

Role: New Resident

Audience: New neighbors

Format: Letter

Topic: Introduce them to your neighborhood.

Instructions: Write a letter to new neighbors introducing them to your neighborhood. Describe its best features.

Guided Questions:

- What are the best features of your neighborhood?
- How does your neighborhood community support each other?
- What activities or places would you recommend to new neighbors?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 15

RAFT Elements:

Role: Yourself

Audience: Your best friend

Format: Letter

Topic: Describe your favorite memory with them

Instructions: Write a letter to your best friend describing a memory you both cherish the most and explaining why it's important.

Guided Questions:

- What is the memory you cherish the most?
- What are some of your favorite moments from it?
- What emotions did you feel during those moments?

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

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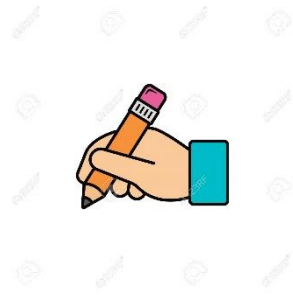
SECTION 4

"PROFESSIONS!"

EXERCISE 16

RAFT Elements:

Role: Chef

Audience: New kitchen staff

Format: Email

Topic: Describe your job as a chef

Instructions: You are a chef at a busy restaurant. Write an email to the new kitchen staff describing your job, including your responsibilities.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 17

RAFT Elements:

Role: Teacher

Audience: New teachers

Format: Personal Narrative

Topic: Describe your job as a Kindergarten teacher

Instructions: Write a personal narrative as a teacher. Describe the school you work at and some of the activities you do with the students.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 18

RAFT Elements:

Role: Singer *(choose one):* _____

Audience: Fans

Format: Letter

Topic: Describe your latest concert

Instructions: Write a letter as a singer describing your latest concert. Include different details about your performance and how your fans reacted.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 19

RAFT Elements:

Role: Doctor

Audience: Medicine students

Format: Paragraph

Topic: Describe your profession

Instructions: You are a doctor. Write a paragraph to medicine students describing your daily responsibilities.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 20

RAFT Elements:

Role: Actor *(choose one):* _____

Audience: Fans

Format: Personal Narrative

Topic: Describe your favorite movie you were part of

Instructions: Write a personal narrative as an actor describing your favorite movie you were part of and why it was a special experience for you.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

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SECTION 5

"SUPERHEROES!"

Instructions: Write a personal narrative about your dream job. Explain what it is and how you plan to achieve it.

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			
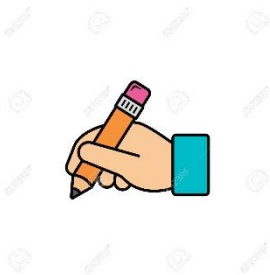
EXERCISE 21

RAFT Elements:

Role: _____ *[Choose a specific role related to your dream job]*

Audience: General audience interested in career paths

Format: Personal Narrative

Topic: Describe your dream job, why it excites you, and how you plan to achieve it.

Strong verb: _____

Now Create Your Prompts!

EXERCISE 22

Instructions: Write a descriptive text as a member of the Justice League. Describe a tool or device you invented that could save lives. Share details about its features and how it can help others in emergencies.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			

	Yes	No	
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 23

Instructions: Write a paragraph as someone who was saved by a superhero of your choice. Describe how they saved you, and what you think about their personality.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong verb: _____

EXERCISE 24

Instructions: Choose the superhero you consider has the best suit. Then, write a paragraph taking the role of that superhero describing the amazing suit you created.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

Topic: _____

Strong verb: _____

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			

2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			

4.Would you do something differently next time?			

Strong verb: _____

EXERCISE 25

Instructions: Think and write a paragraph that describes how you protect the environment and why it's important.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			
2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

EXERCISE 26

Instructions: Write a personal narrative as a superhero of your choice describing a day when you helped a community during a disaster (e.g., a flood or fire) and describe how you felt.

Role: _____

Audience: _____

Format: _____

Topic: _____

Strong verb: _____

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TIME TO REFLECT!			
Reflection Point	**Yes**	**No**	**Observations!**
1.Did you enjoy the task?			

2.Did you find any part of the task challenging?			
3.Did you learn something new from this task?			
4.Would you do something differently next time?			

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING WRITING			
Aspect	**Score**	**Performance Description**	**Total**
Content (C)			**16 points**
Generation of Ideas	4	Ideas are highly creative, relevant, and supported with rich details and a continuous flow.	4 p.
	3	Ideas are mostly clear with relevant details, but some descriptions lack depth.	
	2	Some details are present, but they are vague or repetitive.	
	1	Few or unclear details, making the description weak or incomplete.	
	0	Ideas are not relevant to the topic.	
Fluency of Ideas	4	Descriptions flow smoothly with well-connected ideas and appropriate transitions.	4 p.
	3	The paragraph mostly flows well, with minor awkward transitions.	
	2	Some jumps between ideas or abrupt descriptions affect readability.	
	1	Disjointed or choppy sentences that make it hard to follow the description.	

				4 p.
	0	The text lacks coherence entirely, with no logical connections or transitions between ideas.		
Length	4	Meets or exceeds the required length. (10 + lines)		4 p.
	3	Almost meets the required length. (6-9 lines)		
	2	Falls slightly short of the required length. (3-5 lines)		
	1	Falls significantly short of the required length. (1-2 lines)		
	0	The submission is missing, making evaluation impossible. (0 lines)		
Organization of Ideas	4	The paragraph follows a logical structure. Clear topic sentence introduces the subject, details are well-organized, and the conclusion provides a strong final impression.		4 p.
	3	Mostly organized, but details could be arranged more effectively for clarity.		
	2	Some organization issues: missing or weak topic/concluding sentences, or details appear randomly placed.		
	1	Lacks clear structure; ideas are scattered, making the description confusing, but some effort to organize is evident.		
	0	No discernible structure, the paragraph is a random collection of unrelated sentences or ideas, with no attempt at organization.		

FORMAT FOR THE WEEKLY / MONTHLY PROGRESS TRACKING CHART (TEACHER RESOURCE)							
STUDENT NAME: _____							
Week/Date	Exercise #	Generation of Ideas (4)	Fluency of Ideas (4)	Length (4)	Organization (4)	Total Score (16p.)	Teacher's Feedback
1 June, 6th	Task 1						Good start! Work on expanding ideas and structuring them clearly.
2 June, 13th	Task 2						Stronger organization, but add more details.
3 June, 20th	…						…
4 June, 26th							
Monthly Formal Assessment June, 27th							
5 July, 4th							
6 July, 11th							…
7 July, 18th							
8							

July, 24th						
Monthly Formal Assessment July, 25th						
9 **August, 1st**	…					…
10 **August, 8th**						
11 **August, 15th**						
12 **August, 21st**						
Monthly Formal Assessment August, 22nd						
13 **August, 29th**						
14 **September, 5th**	…					…
15 **September, 12th**						
16 **September, 18th**						
Monthly Formal Assessment September, 19th						…
17 **September, 26th**						
18 **October, 3rd**						
19 **October, 10th**						

20 **October, 16th**	…						…
Monthly Formal Assessment October, 17th							
21 **October, 24th**							
22 **October, 31st**							
23 **November, 7th**							
24 **November, 14th**							
25 **November, 21st**	…						…
26 **November, 27th**	Task 26						Perfect! You've mastered all areas!
Monthly Formal Assessment November, 28th							

DECLARACIÓN Y AUTORIZACIÓN

Nosotras, **Espinoza Valenzuela, Meyling Milen**, con C.C: # **0930494000** y **Naranjo Moreno, Dayana Noemí,** con C.C # **0605797018**, autoras del trabajo de titulación: **The effect of RAFT strategy on improving EFL descriptive writing skills among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule.** previo a la obtención del título de **Licenciadas en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros-Inglés** en la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

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f. _____   f. _____

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C.C: **0930494000**   C.C: **0605797018**

REPOSITORIO NACIONAL EN CIENCIA Y TECNOLOGÍA

FICHA DE REGISTRO DE TESIS/TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

TÍTULO Y SUBTÍTULO:	The effect of RAFT strategy on improving EFL descriptive writing skills among 9th-grade EFL students from a non-bilingual private school in Daule.
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INSTITUCIÓN:	Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil
FACULTAD:	Facultad de Artes y Humanidades
CARRERA:	Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros-Inglés
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FECHA DE PUBLICACIÓN:	21 de febrero de 2025	**No. DE PÁGINAS:**	**172 p.**

ÁREAS TEMÁTICAS:	Integrated Curriculum, Bilingual education, Writing Strategies, Language Teaching.
PALABRAS CLAVES/ KEYWORDS:	RAFT strategy, EFL writing skills, descriptive texts, 9th-grade EFL students, pre-experimental research, writing instruction.

RESUMEN/ABSTRACT (150-250 palabras):

This study examines the effect of the RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) strategy on improving EFL content development skills for descriptive writing among 9th-grade EFL students in a non-bilingual private school in Daule. This research employs a pre-experimental one-group pretest and posttest design with a mixed-method approach to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. The study was conducted with a single 9th-grade class, where students were exposed to the RAFT strategy as part of their writing instruction. Qualitative data was collected through observations. Quantitative data was gathered from surveys. Additionally, mixed data was collected using checklists and tests as writing assessment. The findings indicate that after implementing the RAFT strategy, students demonstrated moderate improvement in content development, creativity, and engagement in their writing compared to their initial performance before using the strategy. Based on these results, recommendations are provided for integrating RAFT into writing instruction to support EFL learners in developing their descriptive writing skills.

ADJUNTO PDF:	☒ SI	☐ NO
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