



The writing of university students in a Venezuela in crisis

La escritura de universitarios en una Venezuela en crisis

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Abstract

The research presents the writing competence of young Venezuelan university students considering the surrounding extra-academic and academic situation. It is qualitative and descriptive, based on a field research carried out in 2018 at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas with 37 students in their first semester of Social Communication, Psychology and Education. It was carried out in three phases developed during 15 weeks: diagnosis, intervention and verification of changes in writing. It concludes that there was progress in pragmatic notions or factors to be considered in moments prior to writing and during the process itself, referring to metacognitive, cognitive and axiological aspects. It is suggested to continue working on all these aspects so that there is consolidation of what has been achieved and not involution.

Keywords: Venezuela, crisis, writing, University.

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Resumen

La investigación presenta la competencia escrituraria de jóvenes universitarios venezolanos considerando la situación extra-académica y académica que le circunda. Es cualitativa y descriptiva, fundamentada en una investigación de campo que se llevó a cabo en 2018 en la Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, núcleo Caracas con 37 estudiantes que cursaban el primer semestre de las carreras Comunicación Social, Psicología y Educación. Se efectuó en tres fases desarrolladas durante 15 semanas: diagnóstico, intervención y constatación de cambios en la escritura. Concluye que hubo avances en las nociones pragmáticas o factores que deben considerarse en momentos previos a la escritura y durante el proceso en sí referido a aspectos metacognitivos, cognitivos y axiológicos. Se sugiere que se continúe trabajando en todos esos aspectos para que haya consolidación de lo logrado y no involución.

Palabras clave: Venezuela, crisis, escritura, Universidad.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to present the writing competence of young Venezuelan university students considering the extra-academic and academic situation that surrounds them. The approach is made through the socio-economic scenario exposed by university teachers and the writing production of students in the first semester of Social Communication, Psychology and Education at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas.

From a superstructural point of view, in order to achieve the objective, this text was organized in three essential sections, in addition to the Introduction and Final Reflections: the first -Contextualization- refers to the importance of language proficiency as a way to develop intelligence; the second -An approach to the Venezuelan scenario- describes a university context battered by a deep political, economic and social crisis; and the third -Student production- examines the writing competence of young people through their productions and a work or intervention plan.

Writing and reading have offered humans the possibility of knowing and of developing higher cognitive operations of high complexity such as abstraction (Vygotsky, 1995/1934 and Luria, 1987/1976) and evaluation and implication (Guilford, 1967). José Antonio Marina, almost two decades ago, returned to the subject, but now from a philosophical perspective:

reading is not important because it is fun, nor because it transmits information, but because of something more transcendental: because human intelligence is linguistic intelligence. It is only thanks to language that we can develop it, understand the world, invent great things, live together, clarify our feelings, solve

our problems, make plans. An intelligence full of images and empty of words is a minimal, coarse and almost useless intelligence. (...) For our intelligence to be lively, flexible, insightful, amusing, rational, convincing, we need, first of all, to know many words [because each] word is a tool for analyzing reality.

In those times, it used to be required in the academic environment that students should respect spelling, punctuate well, structure sentences correctly and integrate their paragraphs with a main sentence and several secondary sentences; while simultaneously textual notions began to be introduced, first from Systemic Functional Grammar, and then from Textual Linguistics. At present, these requirements are maintained, but others of a communicative or pragmatic nature have been added. At the time of writing, scribes were asked to consider the addressee, the relationship between the addressee and the sender, and the purpose of the writing.

This present document testifies to the passage from sentence to text and from text to discourse; also from the determination of writing as a product to the value of writing as a process and of metacognition as a very important accumulation of strategies. Theoretical progress has been made and the teacher's task has become more complex, but the path that leads to writing competence has also become more real and level. Accepting this psychological, pedagogical and didactic reality arising from this area of knowledge, we will now review what is happening in Venezuela.

Despite the many efforts made and the fact that Venezuela was declared free of illiteracy on October 28, 2005 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), its reality is not satisfactory. It is confronted with severe restrictions of various kinds that have a direct impact on education and language proficiency. Venezuelan specialists continue to lament the meager student performance associated with the area of oral and written language at all levels, which belies the merits considered to receive the aforementioned declaration. In this order of ideas, recapitulated Serrano de Moreno and Mostacero in 2014:

Forty-nine years have passed since Angel Rosenblat published *La educación en Venezuela: voz de alerta* (Education in Venezuela: a voice of alert) in 1964. In almost half a century the situation has not changed nor has it been intervened, on the contrary, it has reached much more worrying levels since the difficulties that students usually have with conventional writing are now added to those derived from the use of the same but with technological and digital supports (p.11).

This panorama could get a little darker, since there are university professors who maintain that during the last two decades the national government has made efforts, on the one hand, to reduce student linguistic and communication skills and, on the other hand, to annul the university as an institution that produces solutions to social problems.

All of us who are active in the university educational apparatus can attest to how the oral and written expression of our students in the last fifteen years has declined

and their thinking has become less capable of producing and understanding nuances and complexities (Leáñez, 2015, p.76).

Leáñez relates our circumstances to the political calamity that is currently dismantling the country. He explains how the government has tried to minimize the appropriate uses of language, to undermine it in order to disable the higher cognitive competences of citizens and to dismantle linguistic intelligence. He assures that the government, through its discourse, builds a dystopian society and that leaders, even educated public figures, strive to establish themselves in power through the total and unique narrative, the reiteration of empty and hollow expressions, phrases or words, charged exclusively with emotion. At the same time, it lays siege to the universities. By withdrawing financial support for research, scientific productivity has declined. In this regard, Betancourt (2018) stated the following:

The deterioration of the country has permeated to all levels, including academic spaces. Every day more and more researchers and professors emigrate from the country in search of better opportunities and leave behind a vacuum, with which it is difficult to face and train the future, which condemns us to involution in the scientific and technological development of Venezuela.

And he made his case very well:

In June 2014, the journal *Nature*, already revealed that our science was falling shockingly in the scientific indexes between the years 2009-2013, and currently the fall does not stop, experiencing a decline of 79% between 2009 and 2017. The results are clear, we are less competitive than the rest of the countries in the region and we have been not only in the last place in growth, but we have regressed to the decade of the 80's of the last century. We have lost 30 years!

Vinogradoff (2018) updated the data with a barren picture: educational institutions remind ghost towns, desolation, deterioration and looting spread in them; exodus and student absence increased by 60%, while teacher resignation ranges between 30% and 40%. Hurtado (2018) finishes describing the crisis: the university is becoming, in "spaces full of uncertainty where survival becomes the main challenge of all" its members. What hungry, what deprived will advance major research projects? In this way, by demolishing dignity and undermining the quality of life, the malevolent and not at all candid purpose of gradually contracting the importance of the university for society is achieved.

By virtue of the above and with the desire to contribute with a more detailed look at what happens with the writing competence of Venezuelan university students, a methodology was developed that will be detailed immediately as the first part of the section entitled Student Production and that will be complemented as the description of the actions progresses.

Materials and methods

This field research, descriptive and qualitative, was developed in three stages: Diagnosis, intervention and verification of changes in writing. She used a convenience sample or "formed by the available cases to which we have access" (Hernández et al., 2014, p.390). Specifically, the researcher worked with the 37 trainees who were in her charge in the subject Production and Comprehension of Written Texts (4 hours per week, equally distributed in two days, Monday and Wednesday) taught in the first semester at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB), at the Montalbán campus, capital nucleus. Three students were enrolled in Psychology, one in Education and the rest in Social Communication. The experience was carried out during the March-July 2018 academic cycle, which was taken in 16 weeks as established.

The first two class hours of the semester were reserved for the presentation of the subject: i) The program, the work plan and the schedule of activities were socialized. ii) The diagnosis for the following two hours was agreed upon, the actions to be carried out during 13 weeks and iii) the final evaluation that would be given in the penultimate one, after the execution of the mentioned intervention. For this evaluation, the reading of the book *Ethics for Lovers* by Fernando Savater was assigned. This text was chosen for its axiological value: its content would help to lead students along the path of values, respect, effort, honesty and hope, while offering them the opportunity to express their ideas in a society that is politically and economically unbalanced, and in which teachers crusade every day to prevent it from sinking socially and morally.

How was the diagnosis developed? With the purpose of providing students with a framework of knowledge about the topic that they should develop in the writing that would be assessed as diagnostic, the first meeting was closed with the assignment of the reading that would be discussed in the following two hours of class: *Del sonido a la grafía: texto oral y texto escrito* by Barrera (1991). It was also recommended that they complement it with other materials of their choice. Based on these readings, they reflected and exchanged opinions in class during the following two hours. In the first session of the second week, the students were asked to write an essay of four paragraphs (one for the introduction, two for the development and one for the closing or conclusion) on the care required in writing an academic text. The most relevant results of this first phase will be presented below.

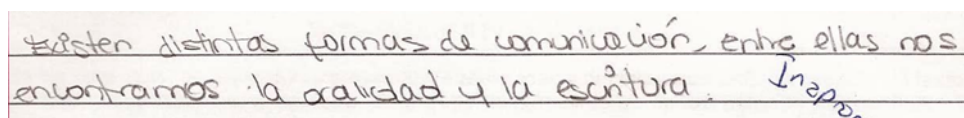
Results

Students erred in the placement of punctuation and accents in words that did not end in "ción". They omitted the accent mark in monosyllabic voices, whose difference is achieved with the diacritic (plus) and in such common bisyllables as the adverbs "también" and "después"; but they could violently add it in equally familiar terms such as the pronoun "éllos" and the preposition "desdÉ". As can be seen, in this last example and in "úsar" some additional accents did not even coincide with the prosodic accent, which denotes thoughtlessness or excessive spontaneity, attitudes that are enemies of academic writing. Sporadically they used the semicolon and, indiscriminately, the semicolon and the comma.

Dysgraphia appeared in several words, always reflecting phonetic neutrality: "cede" (place), "emociones", "bulgar" and "conyeva". Transpositions ("spontaniedad") were also found. The youngsters often confused ha/a and transcribed "through" in various ways, also, they got different presentations of "because". They separated inappropriately (cual quier), they agglutinated especially contiguous monosyllabic terms (selo for se lo; yaque for ya que). Eventually, the enclitic or non-enclitic character of some unstressed pronouns was ignored. They made substitutions in similar pairs such as ósea/ o sea; sino/ si no. Occasionally, lexias emerged whose meanings did not correspond to the expected one (adquirir for satisfacer; metafórico for intangible or imperceptible) or which were created on the basis of some analogical criterion (escribemente).

Paragraphs of a single sentence, almost always simple, abounded. When they tried to build a complex one, they compromised cohesion.

Figure 1. Exercise 1

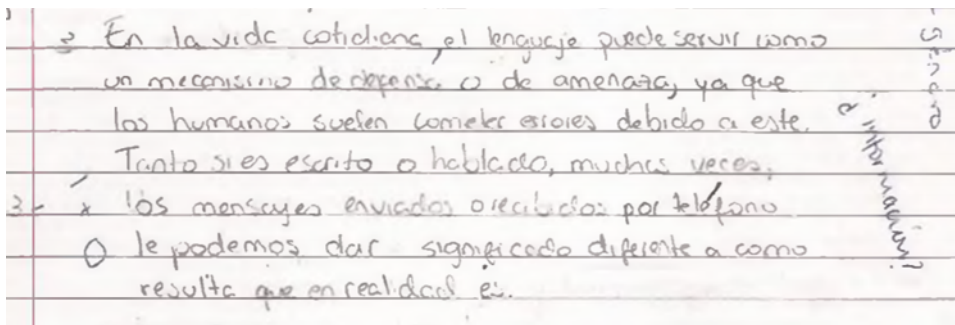


The referent (unstressed and personal pronouns) and the agreement of gender, number and verb tense are lost. The pronominal locution "la cual" was reiterated as an imprecise anaphora. To connect ideas, the use of the conjunctions "ya que" and "y" predominated. It was evident that the habit of using the relative adverb "donde" as a connector is remarkably widespread. The oral trait was seen in the unconnected juxtaposition of statements, which reflects thoughtless writing or writing without order or agreement of the ideas evoked; also in the addition of sentence after sentence without finishing the development of the idea, resulting in truncated structures or syntactic dislocation and entanglement of notions. Copulative verbs or verbs empty of content (ser and estar) predominated.

From the point of view of the overall organization, the introduction followed by a development outline was the best. The conclusion or closing was almost never elaborated. Only one student initiated, developed and closed. The paratextual aspect showed an absence of headings and subheadings, and little attention to the symmetrical distribution achieved with the use of indentation, uniform margins and structural formalization of paragraphs.

With respect to the contents of the ideas, the works that prevailed were those that reiterated with significant proximity the words of the text read, that is, the students did not dare to propose different ideas or to integrate contents from different texts as they were proposed. The following are samples of writing that moved away from repetition, but whose ideas were not so clear and in which the implicatures are rather distinguishable:

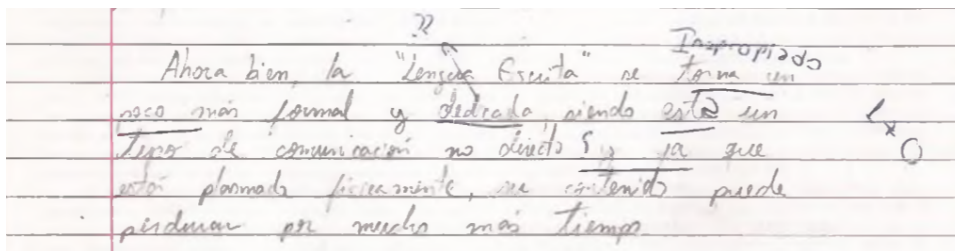
Figure 2. Exercise 2



The idea of language as defense or threat and erring is not understood. Nor how the first sentence and the second complement each other. It is deduced that the second idea has to do with the confusions generated by lack of contextual knowledge. On the other hand, a lack of agreement is also identified with the unstressed pronoun that should be "les" because it refers to "mensajes"; likewise, the preposition "a" preceding "mensajes" is missing. Finally, it should be noted that the two commas and the tilde were added by the teacher during the revision process.

In the second sample, in addition to the reiteration of "ya que" as a connector, as in the previous fragment, there is some confusion and disconnection in the development of the ideas, perhaps produced by the use of improper terms (*delicada*) and the gerund (*siendo*). The idea is understood given the framework of the reader's knowledge.

Figure 3. Exercise 3



Although we lack the means to compare and corroborate the words of Serrano de Moreno and Mostacero (2014), and those of Leñez (2015) and others, who refer that the levels of inadequacy in this era are higher than yesterday, the texts reviewed testify to several shortcomings. Also, the exposition of ideas remains very close to the notions handled by the author read, which could mean insecurity or incompetence to expose their own arguments.

Work plan or intervention

After reviewing the texts produced and considered as diagnostic, over thirteen (13) weeks the four thematic units demanded by the program of the subject were

developed: Spelling, Introduction to textual typologies, Strategy for critical understanding of expository and argumentative academic and informative texts, and Production of expository and argumentative texts.

Following the guidelines of competency-based teaching, the intervention combined theory and practice, emphasizing practice. Considering the principles of Academic Literacy (Carlino, 2011), several activities were carried out in pairs or in groups of up to four learners, although individual activities were also carried out, especially during moments dedicated to reflection at the beginning and end of the activities. From the theories of writing, traditional approaches were integrated for the teaching-learning of spelling and sentence writing; textual for cohesion and coherence, paragraph and text writing; and communicative to address the purpose, context and addressee of writing; the three approaches were supported by writing as a process (Cassany et al., 1994) and metacognition (Flavell, 1979, p. 907).

The dynamics used to be developed in this way: students were informed in advance by e-mail about the topic to be covered the following week, the purpose of the activity and the benefits they would obtain with that knowledge. Despite the fact that the subject is instrumental in nature and that production and comprehension were evaluated exclusively, students were also provided with theoretical material that offered the possibility of structuring previous knowledge (spelling and punctuation rules issued by the Royal Spanish Academy, Fragments of Enseñar lengua on textual typology, textual properties, adequacy, etc.).

About 15 minutes of the first two hours of the weekly class were taken to inquire about previous knowledge and the importance of mastering this content in professional life. Then, the teacher, in about half an hour, would explain, supported by slides, the corresponding theoretical postulate (e.g., accentuation rules, punctuation, use of capital or lowercase letters, reading strategies and writing as a process, etc.). I always used a good number of examples for the students to explain and exercises to solve. For example, they punctuated a projected or printed text, marked words, differentiated the main idea from the secondary ones in a paragraph, identified the superstructure, performed paraphrasing or drafted paragraphs and texts that would be examined and reworked later. These activities could be done in groups or individually.

Finally, the class ended with an oral summary prepared voluntarily by one or more students about what had been discussed in that meeting. The teacher always monitored the class and only if necessary would make clarifications. It was also agreed that, as an autonomous activity, alone or accompanied, they should return in extra time and before the next meeting perform other exercises, all with the aim of reviewing, evaluating the draft and anchoring knowledge.

In the first 40 minutes of the following session (the last two hours of the week), the students -individually, in pairs or in groups- read the material achieved by another classmate, and then communicated to the whole group what they had found, what they

believed to be correct, incorrect and even aspects that raised doubts. The listeners wrote down the irresolutions, clarifications and questions that arose from these interventions and their experience in order to express them publicly and initiate a guided discussion. The teacher also wrote down any inaccuracies in content and procedural or attitudinal aspects on which she felt she should return before the end of the class. She would spend the last half hour attending to student demands and addressing what she believed to be indispensable. Finally, if a student requested it or if the teacher felt that a point should be taken up again in the following week, she would assign a reading, exercise or internet consultation, as was the case, for example, with "donde" used as a connector and "sendos" referred to with a different meaning than the standard one.

Before asking the students to write paragraphs autonomously, they practiced on the basis of various themes and topics. They started their elaboration with single or isolated sentences. One operated as the main idea and others as secondary ideas. They identified in each one the subject, the verb and the object. They added juxtaposition and then made adjustments in search of texture. To do this, they relied on the use of anaphora, cataphora, ellipsis, synonyms, connectors, avoidance of repetition, etc. As corrections were made, they elaborated drafts. Sometimes, up to five versions of the same paragraph were produced.

Paragraph classification was approached considering their function depending on the place they occupy within the text and the type of text being constructed: paragraphs for the introduction, for the development and for the conclusion. Thus, different models were reviewed and introductory paragraphs were constructed (those posing a problem, announcing the order of the information, relating anecdotes, asking questions, etc.); developmental paragraphs (conceptual, sequential or chronological, comparative, etc.) and concluding paragraphs (summary, affirmative, projective, interrogative, etc.).

On several occasions, the teacher collected the students' productions and reworked them, that is, she evaluated them as draft versions and showed the different compositions in the classroom so that the students could find the differences, explain and justify what had been optimized. On four occasions, he even showed gradations of improvements. In this way, the students fixed that each draft represented a substantive improvement of the text in question. This was the indirect way of including the theory and practice of writing as a process: the scribes were induced to read, extract different information and integrate it; to paraphrase, edit and revise.

Procedural and attitudinal aspects were addressed. Emphasis was placed on the need for language proficiency not only as an epistemic resource, but also as a human right and ideological resource. We worked with documents such as *La inteligencia y la palabra* by Marina (1997), *El tamaño del mundo* by Uslar (1986) and *Periodismo cultural* by Gabriel Zaid (2006). In several videos, situations were analyzed in which the lack of knowledge compromised the professional prestige of a social communicator in functions and digital language challenges were made, the first student who sent an

email to the teacher in which he/she solved a linguistic riddle received an additional positive that favored his/her qualification.

From values and the need for the development of critical thinking, the Venezuelan crisis was addressed in essays such as *Morir lejos de casa: el exilio médico de los venezolanos* by Chang (2017) and *Comer basura: la última esperanza para sobrevivir* by Yorman Guerrero (2017). Reading was always understood as a complex activity that demands at least tasks distributed in three stages: strategies before reading, during and post-reading. In the interventions with respect to this type of reading, care was taken that the student used arguments by ethos and logos, if he resorted to arguments by pathos, after his exposition, an opinion was given and with questions (or mayeutic technique) it was achieved that he reelaborated his commentary now from reason or from ethics; additionally, it was requested that he or others distinguish the different Aristotelian arguments wielded: logos, ethos or pathos. The purpose of this activity was twofold: first, to work on the development of critical thinking and, second, for students to respect the opinion of others and to understand the natural nature of diversity of thought.

After completing the programmed activities aimed at improving student writing, the first session of week 15 reflected on the content of *Ética para Amador* and on the paratextual aspect. In the latter, we discussed the author, the purpose and addressee or motivator of the work and its organization, the prologue, the chapters and subchapters. The first one discussed several topics dealt with in the work: ethics, freedom and decision; the challenges of life, whims, responsibilities and consequences of actions; the good and bad life; being a jerk, empathy, courage, cowardice, comfort and conformity. This content was related to the Venezuelan reality, corruption, freedom, justice, education, quality, the practice of values, etc. This was to ensure that each student possessed the framework of knowledge at the time of writing about the play, which he or she had to do in the second meeting of that week.

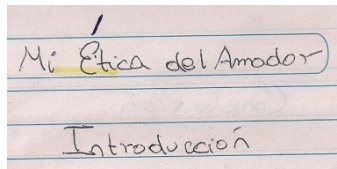
Changes in college students' writing after thirteen weeks of work.

On that day, students were asked the following activity: In the current Venezuelan scenario, how useful is the work *Ethics for Amador*? Why? Argue your answer based on the content of the book. Develop a writing that contains an introduction, a development and a conclusion. Also, do not exceed five paragraphs. Remember that the writing process involves three phases: planning, writing, and revising. The following are the results of your writing:

Although there were improvements in most students in all aspects, insufficiencies still persist. These results recall the words of Carlino (2003): one does not learn to write once and forever. Nevertheless, two clear advances were identified: i) there was no dysgraphia, because students who identified words with complex or unknown morphology asked for their correct spelling or consulted the Internet, which is valued as an advance because they recognized the need to respect the norm and because it denotes reflection. The oral and written codes support each other, but they are different

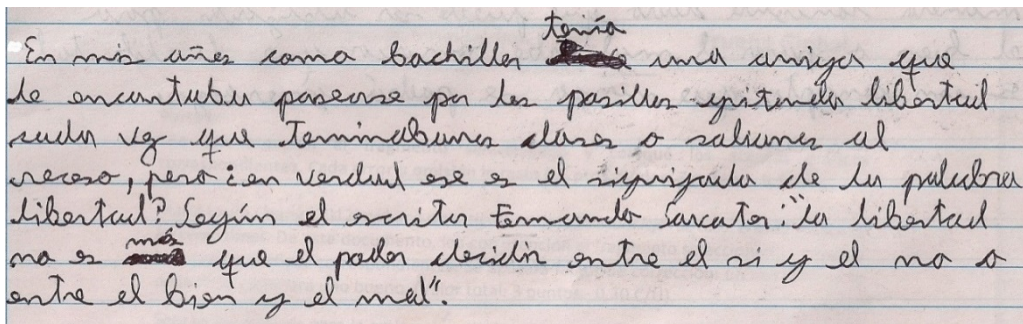
and work with different socio-cognitive mechanisms. ii) All the texts achieved the introduction, development and conclusion, which shows that there was no overtly thoughtless writing; the students thought about what information should be placed in each part of the manuscript. However, there was one scribe who subtitled with the nomination of these, deviating from what was agreed:

Figure 4. Exercise 4



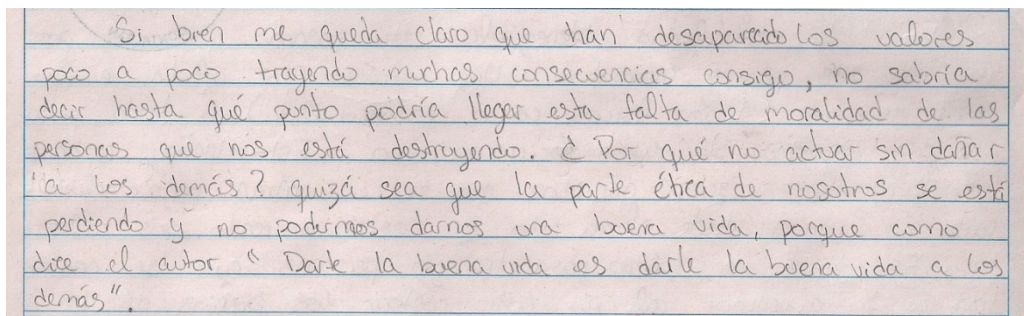
In the introduction paragraphs, there were anecdotes, questions and even quotations:

Figure 5. Exercise 5



Similar progress was noted in the last paragraphs of the writings. The producers closed the ideas they developed, added questions and even quotation marks to third-party comments:

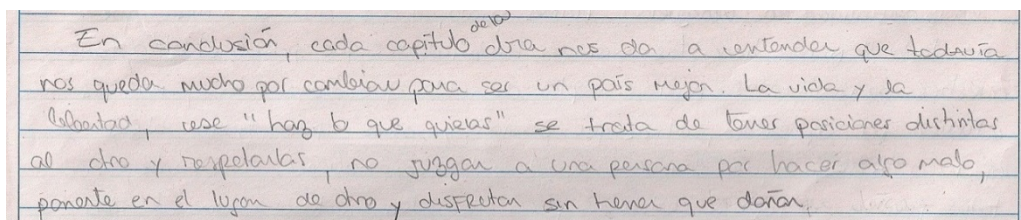
Figure 6. Exercise 6



Paragraphs, such as this conclusive pair, were constituted by more than one sentence that, due to the correct syntax, let the different ideas be clearly seen, although some capital letters are missing (Maybe). The use of conclusive connectors is appreciated (In

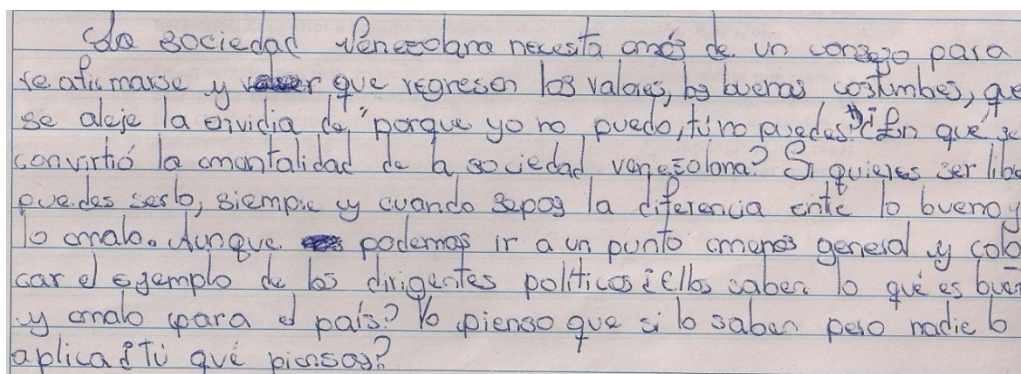
conclusion, ...). These examples also show progress in the use of punctuation marks such as commas and periods, as well as in the use of accents. The "qué" that marks an indirect question, the "por qué" with the accent and separated and the accenting of the first person singular of the postpreterite of the verbs "saber" and "poder" are valued, as well as the temporal concordance that is maintained in the development of ideas thanks to this verb tense.

Figure 7. Exercise 7



In some paragraphs, crossing out evidences reading and rereading. Paragraphs elaborated on the basis of developed ideas are observed. However, the correct use of commas to separate elements or sentences within the same statement (malo, aunque...) or the use of the semicolon as a reference of syntactic autonomy and conclusion of ideas (aplica. ¿Tú....?), as shown below, needs to be strengthened:

Figure 8. Exercise 8



These fragments also show the incorporation of new connectors: "si bien", "aunque" and the stressing of monosyllabic voices in some cases: in "tú" pronoun, but not in the adverb "sí".

The four referenced fragments indicate that the use of indentation was not absolutely achieved, nor were the margins uniform, although they are now more regular; in fact, no excessively asymmetrical paragraphs or texts were identified.

Only two students forgot to title the essay, the rest produced titles such as the following: Ethics in Venezuela; Ethics for Amador and its necessity in the Venezuelan reality; Ethics for Amador; Ethics for a better Venezuela; The ambiguity of freedom; Re-learning to live. These can be interpreted as a synthesis of the global understanding of the text.

With respect to the content of the writings and the social, moral, economic and political situation of Venezuela, the students observe serious problems. They are convinced that a change of mentality is urgently needed in all people. Their main concerns are freedom and dishonesty. The former they link to political issues and hold the government responsible for improper actions; the latter they relate to generalized misconduct. They are of the opinion that the loss of values extends to different areas and levels. They believe that by abandoning individual interests for group interests and that with honesty and effort, the country's course can be changed.

Conclusions

The approach to university writing was proposed considering the undermined educational reality of the country that has been described by some Venezuelan teachers working in Higher Education. Since it was about writing, it was always considered that students should have information to communicate, that is to say, that they should possess a framework of knowledge.

In the first instance, they were asked to write a four-paragraph text on the care required in writing an academic text. In general, the content of their writings showed excessive adherence to the original text, conformism (or laconism) in explaining that there were two codes (one oral and the other written): they defined, characterized and little else. Only one student detached himself from the original text and referred to writing as a weapon of defense or threat, although he was unable to adequately develop this idea.

Regarding formal and textual aspects, several inadequacies were recognized, which denoted a poor level of writing. There were spelling errors, especially in ll/y; v/b, etc. The almost total tildado in acute words ending in "ción" stood out, but there were many mistakes and certain additions in other kinds of words. Eventually, amalgamations appear in contiguous monosyllabic words and undue separation. Syntactic maturity was lacking; in the development of complex ideas, coherence in number, gender and time is lost, as well as the subject as reference. Juxtaposition and the use of connectors such as "and" and "since" abound. Only one student managed an essay with introduction, development and closing.

Based on this finding, an action plan was designed, to be developed in thirteen weeks, based on the principles of traditional grammar (spelling, accentuation and paragraphing), textual linguistics (coherence and cohesion), pragmatics (appropriateness, context, purpose and relationship between interlocutors), writing as a process, metacognition and academic literacy (support among students through work in pairs and groups).

The last piece of writing, an argumentative essay, shows important advances, the university students improve their writing in all aspects. It is understood that the teacher would have to be dishonest and the students very careless for there to be none, but there were ethical attitudes that are considered of high positive value. It is believed that improvement is most evident when students are intrinsically motivated. The techniques that achieved this individual commitment were retolanguage and YouTube videos containing real cases in which the prestige of a professional was affected by his or her lack of training.

In practice, only two students remained attached to the idea of writing as a product, the rest planned their writing and used the rough draft. Likewise, they are more concerned about using punctuation marks and understand that their arbitrary use not only compromises a professional, but also the ideas they wish to convey and the purpose of their text. Students hesitate when writing complex words (e.g., exhaustive), so they ask or consult, which indicates reflection before writing and respect for the norm.

The progress achieved shows the need to incorporate the entire university in this movement or, in the worst case, to include another subject in the following semester that will allow the young people to consolidate the writing skills they have started and insist on consolidating the positive attitude towards language proficiency. Sixteen to fourteen weeks serves primarily to make students aware of the existence of the regulations and the importance of complying with them, as well as to get them on track, but not to master writing, which may take a lifetime.

From the axiological and attitudinal points of view, the last essay elaborated from the reading *Ethics for Amador*, shows that the young people believe, dream or hope that if they change their behavior they can build a better nation; they expressed this through arguments by ethos and logos. As in the classroom activities, they worked on the abandonment or overcoming of simple arguments by pathos and on the incorporation and diversity of ethical and rational arguments, these results suggest that, in spite of certain political actions that the national government is believed to be taking to undermine important cognitive operations, teachers continue to have the possibility of favoring the development of the deductive, reflective and critical faculties of students, which ratifies Savater (1991): "We are not free to choose what happens to us (...), but free to respond to what happens to us" (p.16).

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