

Writing from multiple sources and digital competences in blended learning environments: Tutors' beliefs and perceptions of students' abilities

Natalia Verónica Dalla Costa
Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
Córdoba, Argentina
natalia.dalla.costa@unc.edu.ar

María Victoria Sánchez
Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
Córdoba, Argentina
victoria.sanchez@unc.edu.ar

Natalia Andrea Bersano
Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
Córdoba, Argentina
natalia.bersano@unc.edu.ar

Fecha de recepción / Zusendungsdatum / Date de réception / Reception date / Data di ricezione / Data de recepção: 21/12/2024
Fecha de aceptación / Annahmedatum / Date d'acceptation / Date of acceptance / Data di accettazione / Data de aceitação: 19/03/2025

Abstract

This article presents the findings of an investigation into tutors' beliefs regarding academic writing, and their perceptions of students' digital competences and abilities to write from multiple sources. The theoretical framework is a multidimensional approach to writing from sources focusing on content, discourse, sentence, process, response dimensions, and digital skills. The methodology includes the following data collection instruments: a written survey administered to the tutors of English Language I, and a protocol used to interview the Heads of the Chair. The data analysis procedures consist in qualitative methods used to analyse open-ended questions and quantitative methods used for close-ended questions. Besides, an ethnographic approach was adopted to investigate the context of text production and tutors' points of view. We report the results of the analysis of surveys administered to the course tutors to obtain information about their beliefs regarding academic writing, attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching. We also provide conclusions derived from analysing their opinions of students' abilities and digital literacy. Similarly, we report on the interviews administered to the Heads of the Chair. We discuss the pedagogical implications of the study and future lines of research. These results will enable us to derive guidelines for the design of materials to apply the multidimensional approach and develop digital capabilities in blended learning environments, make curricular recommendations to promote autonomy in

academic literacy, and enhance the process of writing in the context of this study.

Keywords: tutors' beliefs and perceptions, students' abilities, writing from multiple sources, digital competences, blended learning environments

Schreiben anhand verschiedener Quellen und digitale Kompetenzen in hybriden Umgebungen: Vorstellungen und Wahrnehmungen von Lehrkräften hinsichtlich der Fähigkeiten von Studierenden

Abstract

Dieser Beitrag befasst sich mit den Ergebnissen einer Untersuchung über die Ansichten von Hochschullehrern zum akademischen Schreiben und ihre Wahrnehmung der Fähigkeiten der Studierenden, anhand verschiedener Quellen zu schreiben, sowie ihrer digitalen Kompetenzen. Der theoretische Rahmen beruht auf einem vielseitigen Ansatz für das Lehren des Schreibens anhand von Quellen, der sich auf inhaltliche, diskursive, satzbezogene, prozessbezogene und feedbackbezogene Aspekte sowie auf digitale Kompetenzen konzentriert. Die Methodik umfasst die folgenden Instrumente zur Datenerhebung: Eine Umfrage unter Lehrkräften des Faches Englische Sprache I und ein Protokoll für die Befragung der Lehrstuhlleiter. Die Datenanalyse erfolgt anhand qualitativer Methoden im Falle offener Fragen und quantitativer Methoden im Falle geschlossener Fragen. Darüber hinaus wird ein

ethnografischer Ansatz gewählt, um den Kontext der Textproduktion und die Sichtweisen der Lehrkräfte zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse der Analyse der Interviews mit den Lehrkräften des Fachs werden berichtet, um Informationen über ihre Überzeugungen zum akademischen Schreiben, ihre Einstellungen zu Strategien des quellenbasierten Schreibens und dessen Vermittlung sowie ihre Meinungen zu den Fähigkeiten der Studierenden und deren digitaler Kompetenz zu erhalten. Ebenso werden die Interviews mit den Lehrstuhlleiterinnen analysiert und schließlich die pädagogischen Implikationen der Studie und zukünftige Forschungswege diskutiert. Diese Ergebnisse ermöglichen es, Leitlinien für die Gestaltung von Materialien abzuleiten, um den multidimensionalen Ansatz für das akademische Schreiben anhand von Quellen anzuwenden und digitale Kompetenzen in hybriden Umgebungen zu entwickeln. Außerdem können Empfehlungen für Lehrpläne erarbeitet werden, die die Selbstständigkeit im akademischen Lesen und Schreiben fördern und den Prozess des Schreibens anhand von Quellen im Studienkontext optimieren.

Stichwörter: Vorstellungen und Wahrnehmungen von Lehrkräften, Fähigkeiten der Studierenden, Schreiben anhand verschiedener Quellen, digitale Kompetenzen, hybride Lernumgebungen

L'écriture à partir de sources multiples et les compétences numériques dans des environnements hybrides : croyances et perceptions des enseignants sur les compétences des élèves

Résumé

Cet article présente les résultats d'une recherche sur les croyances des professeurs universitaires concernant l'écriture académique et leurs perceptions de la capacité des étudiants à écrire à partir de sources multiples et de leurs compétences numériques. Le cadre théorique repose sur une approche multidimensionnelle de l'enseignement de l'écriture à partir des sources, axée sur les dimensions du contenu, du discours, de la phrase, du processus et du retour de l'information, ainsi que sur les compétences numériques. La méthodologie comprend les instruments de collecte de données suivants : une enquête destinée aux enseignants de Langue Anglaise I et un protocole pour interviewer les chaires. Les procédures d'analyse de données consistent en des méthodes qualitatives pour les questions ouvertes et quantitatives pour les questions fermées. En outre, une approche ethnographique est adoptée afin d'étudier le contexte de production des textes et les points de vue des enseignants. Les résultats de l'analyse des entretiens avec les enseignants

de la matière sont rapportés pour obtenir des informations sur leurs croyances concernant l'écriture académique, les attitudes envers les stratégies d'écriture à partir de sources et leur enseignement, et des opinions sur les compétences des élèves et leur maîtrise du numérique. Les entretiens avec les chefs de chaire sont également analysés et, finalement, les implications pédagogiques de l'étude et les voies futures de recherche sont discutées. Ces résultats permettront de dégager des lignes directrices pour la conception de matériaux afin d'appliquer l'approche multidimensionnelle à l'écriture académique à partir de sources et de développer des compétences numériques dans des environnements hybrides, ainsi que de formuler des recommandations sur les programmes d'études qui favorisent l'autonomie en matière d'alphabetisation académique et d'optimiser le processus d'écriture à partir de sources dans le contexte de l'étude.

Mots-clés : croyances et perceptions des enseignants, compétences des élèves, écriture à partir de sources multiples, compétences numériques, environnements d'apprentissage hybrides

La escritura a partir de fuentes múltiples y las competencias digitales en entornos híbridos: creencias y percepciones docentes sobre las habilidades de los estudiantes

Resumen

Este artículo presenta los hallazgos de una investigación sobre creencias de profesores universitarios acerca de la escritura académica y sus percepciones sobre las habilidades de los estudiantes para escribir a partir de fuentes múltiples y sus competencias digitales. El marco teórico se basa en un enfoque multidimensional para la enseñanza de la escritura a partir de fuentes orientado en las dimensiones de contenido, discursiva, oracional, procesual y retroalimentativa, y en habilidades digitales. La metodología incluye los siguientes instrumentos de recolección de datos: una encuesta dirigida a docentes de Lengua Inglesa I y un protocolo para entrevistar a las Jefas de Cátedra. Los procedimientos de análisis de datos consisten en métodos cualitativos en el caso de preguntas abiertas y métodos cuantitativos para preguntas cerradas. Además, se adopta un enfoque etnográfico con el objeto de investigar el contexto de producción de textos y los puntos de vista de los docentes. Se reportan los resultados del análisis de las entrevistas a los docentes de la asignatura para obtener información sobre sus creencias acerca de la escritura académica, actitudes hacia las estrategias de escritura a partir de fuentes y su enseñanza, y opiniones sobre las habilidades

de los estudiantes y su alfabetización digital. Asimismo, se analizan las entrevistas a las Jefas de Cátedra y en última instancia se discuten las implicancias pedagógicas del estudio y las vías futuras de investigación. Estos resultados permitirán derivar lineamientos para el diseño de materiales con el fin de aplicar el enfoque multidimensional a la escritura académica a partir de fuentes y desarrollar capacidades digitales en entornos híbridos, así como también realizar recomendaciones curriculares que promuevan la autonomía en la alfabetización académica y optimizar el proceso de escritura a partir de fuentes en el contexto del estudio.

Palabras clave: creencias y percepciones docentes, habilidades de los estudiantes, escritura a partir de fuentes múltiples, competencias digitales, entornos híbridos de aprendizaje

La scrittura a partire da fonti multiple e le competenze digitali in contesti ibridi: credenze e percezioni dei docenti sulle abilità degli studenti

Riassunto

Quest'articolo presenta i risultati di una ricerca sulle credenze dei professori universitari riguardo alla scrittura accademica e alle loro percezioni sulle abilità degli studenti per scrivere a partire da fonti multiple e dalle relative componenti digitali. Il quadro teorico si basa su una prospettiva multidimensionale per l'insegnamento della scrittura a partire da fonti orientate verso le dimensioni del contenuto, discorsiva, della frase, processuale e di retroalimentazione, e verso le abilità digitali. La metodologia utilizzata include i seguenti strumenti di raccolta dei dati: un sondaggio rivolto ai docenti di Lingua Inglese I e un protocollo per le interviste alle Titolari della Cattedra. I procedimenti di analisi dei dati consistono in metodi qualitativi, nel caso di domande aperte, e in metodi quantitativi, per le domande a risposta chiusa. Inoltre è stata adottata una prospettiva etnografica con l'obiettivo di indagare sul contesto della produzione dei testi e sul punto di vista dei docenti. Si riportano i risultati dell'analisi delle interviste ai docenti della materia per ottenere delle informazioni sulle credenze sulla scrittura accademica, sugli atteggiamenti verso le strategie di scrittura a partire dalle fonti, sull'insegnamento, sulle opinioni sulle abilità degli studenti e sull'alfabetizzazione digitale. Si analizzano anche le interviste alle Titolari delle Cattedre e per ultimo si discute sulle applicazioni pedagogiche dello studio e sulle vie future di ricerca. Questi risultati permetteranno

di proporre delle linee guida per il disegno di materiali con la finalità di applicare la prospettiva multidimensionale alla scrittura accademica a partire dalle fonti e sviluppare le capacità digitali nei contesti ibridi, e così anche di realizzare delle linee guida curricolari che possano promuovere l'autonomia nell'alfabetizzazione accademica e l'ottimizzazione del processo di scrittura a partire dalle fonti nel contesto di studio.

Parole chiave: credenze e percezioni dei docenti, abilità degli studenti, scrittura a partire da fonti multiple, competenze digitali, contesti ibridi di apprendimento

A escrita a partir de múltiplas fontes e as competências digitais em ambientes híbridos: crenças e percepções de professores sobre as habilidades dos alunos

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta os resultados de um estudo sobre as crenças de professores universitários em relação à escrita acadêmica e suas percepções sobre as habilidades dos alunos para escrever a partir de múltiplas fontes e suas competências digitais. O quadro teórico baseia-se em uma abordagem multidimensional para o ensino da escrita, orientada nas dimensões de conteúdo, discursiva, oracional, processual e feedback, bem como nas habilidades digitais. A metodologia inclui um questionário com professores de Língua Inglesa I e um protocolo para entrevistar os Chefes de cátedra. Os procedimentos de análise de dados consistem em métodos qualitativos no caso de perguntas abertas e métodos quantitativos para perguntas fechadas. Além disso, adota-se uma abordagem etnográfica com o objetivo de investigar o contexto de produção do texto e os pontos de vista dos professores. São relatados os resultados da análise das entrevistas realizadas com os professores. Por fim, as implicações pedagógicas do estudo e as futuras linhas de pesquisa são discutidas. Esses resultados permitirão derivar diretrizes para o design de materiais para aplicar a abordagem multidimensional à escrita acadêmica e desenvolver habilidades digitais em ambientes híbridos, bem como fazer recomendações curriculares que promovam a autonomia na alfabetização acadêmica e otimizem o processo de escrita no contexto de estudo.

Palavras-chave: crenças e percepções dos professor, habilidades dos alunos, escrita de múltiplas fontes, competências digitais, ambientes híbridos de aprendizagem

Introduction

Over the last thirty years, there has been a growing interest in the relationships between reading and writing and the need to teach a fundamental aspect of academic literacy, writing from multiple sources, has emerged. In this context, Educational Technology can be employed to design blended learning environments using ICT tools and resources for a multidimensional approach (Moth-Smith et al., 2020) to writing from multiple sources, and thus help EFL students to acquire autonomous reading and writing skills in academic settings and to develop digital competences (Vuorikari et al., 2022) related to such abilities.

Even though the ability to write from sources is frequently required in academic settings, many students of English for academic purposes do not have this ability and are often underprepared for the demands of academic literacy. In fact, they often find it difficult to use information from the texts they read in the texts they write as they do not know to use the conventions to cite, paraphrase, summarise and synthesise texts in the digital contexts that characterise communication nowadays.

This paper is framed within a larger research project carried out at the Faculty of Languages, National University of Córdoba and funded by *Secretaría de Ciencia y Tecnología, UNC*, which investigates autonomy in academic literacy through writing from multiple sources in blended learning environments that combine face-to-face classes and online classes in the context of English Language and Specialised Translation courses. The paper presents an analysis of the situational context of English Language I undergraduate courses, in particular, tutors' beliefs regarding academic writing, and their perceptions of students' abilities to write from multiple sources and digital competences. Such analysis was carried out to design blended learning environments in order to apply a multidimensional approach (Moth-Smith et al., 2020) to academic writing from multiple sources. This analysis aims at promoting autonomy in academic literacy and enhancing the process of writing from multiple sources in online environments in the abovementioned courses.

Theoretical framework

The multidimensional approach to the teaching of writing from multiple sources

The effective use of strategies to write from multiple sources is a complex undertaking, especially for a nonnative speaker. Several studies coincide that the use of ineffective strategies such as copy or plagiarism is not always intentional and is not due to dishonest behavior but to the lack of explicit instruction (Angéllil-Carter, 2000; Chandrasoma et al.,

2004; Ellery, 2008; Howard, 1996; Shi, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to resort to a constructive approach centered on the teaching of such strategies and their functions.

Mott-Smith, Tomas and Kostka (2020) propose a multidimensional approach that has five dimensions. The *conceptual dimension* addresses the meaning of the strategies to write from sources and defines cultural aspects, values and keywords that underlie the use of sources such as authority, voice, originality, knowledge transformation, authorship, discursive community, plagiarism and copyright. The *discursive dimension* includes the strategies to write from sources and integrate them in a new text to serve a specific rhetorical function such as creating a context, providing evidence, establishing authority and justifying an argument. The *sentence dimension* addresses the strategies to quote, paraphrase, summarise and synthesise in an effective manner at the level of the sentence. This implies proper use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, idiomatic expressions and discourse markers. The *process dimension* centers on the strategies for the effective use of sources during the reading and writing process such as choosing sources, evaluating and integrating them in one's own text to transform information into knowledge, and the role of critical thinking. Finally, the *feedback dimension* emphasises cognitive, metacognitive and socioaffective strategies for self-assessment and for peer and teacher feedback.

In blended learning environments, which are the most frequently used ones nowadays for work and study, it is also necessary to acquire digital competences to write from sources in an effective manner.

Digital competences to write from multiple sources

Digital competences to write from sources become increasingly important in the context of post-pandemic higher education for two main reasons. First, the teaching of at least a percentage of many courses still takes place online, so it makes sense to develop students' digital skills to interact in such environment. Secondly, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing traditional academic writing practices. In fact, at The European Conference on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism, Wilder et al. (2021) focused on the impact of the increasing changes in academic practices due to tools based on AI and on who is responsible for ensuring academic integrity in such practices. This is so due to the quality of AI-based tools for text production, such as ChatGPT, and their outcomes, which are often indistinguishable from human ones and even outperform college students. Therefore, the use of AI for text production is becoming increasingly common, as well as the opportunities and risks associated with it. In this context, it becomes paramount to develop students' digital competences to write from sources.

The *Framework for Digital Competences for Citizenship* (Vuorikari et al., 2022) defines the concept of digital competence in the following way: “Digital competence implies the safe, critical and responsible use of digital technologies to learn, work and participate in society, as well the interaction with them.” (p. 3). This framework proposes a classification of digital competences that presents five areas: 1) *search and management of information and data*, 2) *communication and collaboration*, 3) *creation of digital content*, 4) *safety* and 5) *problem solving*. In the context of this study, we focus on the following specific competences related to the area of *communication and collaboration* to write from sources:

- interacting with others through digital technologies;
- sharing information through technologies and applying the practices of reference and attribution;
- using digital technologies in collaborative processes for the joint construction of knowledge;
- being familiar with the norms of behaviour (netiquette) and the knowhow of the use of technologies and interaction in digital environments.

These competences are developed in the blended learning context of this study by means of virtual learning environments (VLE) that complement face-to-face classes by means of multiple resources, tools and materials. Formal education, especially at university, makes the most of virtual classrooms due to the fact that as Asinsten et al. (2012) suggest, these are closed spaces, formed with the students attending the course and offer a structure that facilitates the systematization of the teaching and learning processes. These authors refer to the concept of the virtual classroom as a *space of communication* (p. 27) and propose utilising it not only to complement face-to-face classes and integrate digital resources, but also as a process of *convergence, fusion and integration* (p. 34) of ICTs in education.

In the present study, the multidimensional approach has been adapted to a blended learning environment to develop the digital competences discussed above and strategies to write from sources.

Relationship between the multidimensional approach and digital competences in a blended environment

In the blended learning environment of this study, we use a virtual classroom in the Moodle platform as the means to carry out the process of teaching and learning writing from sources as there is no time available to do so in face-to-face classes. Therefore, the

multidimensional approach (Moth-Smith et al., 2020) adopted has been adapted to a blended environment where a close relationship between its dimensions and digital competences has been established. As a result, diverse digital tools, resources and functions of the virtual classroom are employed to promote the acquisition of strategies to write from sources in tandem with digital abilities.

For the *concept dimension*, access to websites on the use of sources is provided (for instance, APA and MLA style manuals), as well as to multimedia resources (videos) for students to get familiar with the conventions and plagiarism detection systems.

For the *discourse and sentence dimensions*, by means of the functions that make it possible to link web pages to the virtual classroom, different digital source texts are available for students to read and analyse critically. The tool *quizzes* available in Moodle is used for self-correction exercises (true and false, multiple choice, multiple matching, etc.) to practise the conventions of strategies to write from sources at sentence level and their rhetorical functions at text level. Besides, debate forums on writing from sources and the topics assigned for text production are employed to foster critical thinking, collaborative learning and teamwork.

For the *process dimension*, Google drive is used since it enables teachers to follow the process of writing (by means of the *history of interventions*) and is also suitable for teamwork. The use of Word's comments function enables students to give and receive peer feedback. Then, students hand in their assignments by means of the task function in the virtual classroom to receive teacher feedback.

For the *response dimension*, the tool *surveys* is used for students' written questionnaires to obtain their perceptions and for peer and self-assessment checklists are submitted through the virtual classroom for both self-evaluation and to receive their classmates' comments. The same criteria are used by the teacher to assess students' productions.

Some external resources are also employed such as Padlet and Canva for students' contributions and teachers' online presentations of each dimension respectively. Such applications are employed due to their attractive design and their potential to facilitate collaboration and foster creativity. Office hours are offered through Google Meet to promote interaction and dialogue among teachers and students in an environment that transcends the limits of the traditional classroom. In this way, the virtual classroom and its tools, resources and functions is used to establish a close relationship between the dimensions of the multidimensional approach and digital competences in a blended environment that enables teachers to overcome the limitations and time constraints of face-to-face classes.

As regards the design of activities, and the selection of topics and texts, the multidimensional approach was followed to design the materials for the blended learning course, so the activities were organized taking into account the five dimensions proposed by the authors: *concept, discourse, sentence, process* and *feedback*. The topics for the activities were selected from the syllabus units of the English Language I course which is the object of this study, namely, Technology and Telecommunications, House and Home, Food and Health and Money and Shopping. The texts belong to the handbook compiled by the teachers of the course and are available online. The blended learning environment is organized into different sections and tabs that structure the course theoretical content and practice activities and are labelled as follows:

- *About the Subject*: This section contains an introduction to the course and presents the teaching team. It introduces the tutors responsible for the course and also provides the syllabus and a detailed schedule that serves as a roadmap.
- *Communication*: This section allows the instructors to post important updates such as changes in the schedule or reminders. It also includes a forum that serves as a means of communication for students to pose questions and clear doubts concerning the course.
- *Dimensions and Competences*: this section presents both theoretical and practical aspects of writing from sources and digital skills. It includes the different dimensions (i.e. *concept, sentence, discourse, process and response*), which guide students through the development of their writing skills.
- *The Digital Competences*: this section focuses on the technological skills, tools, resources and functions of the virtual classroom needed for academic writing.
- *Surveys*: This section contains surveys aimed at gathering students' perceptions of their abilities to write from sources, their attitudes to writing from sources and the multidimensional approach, and their opinions of their digital competences. It is intended to obtain feedback on their learning experience and elicit information related to areas of improvement.
- *Tests*: In this section, students can test their understanding of the dimensions and competences covered in the course.
- *Forum*: A discussion area where students and instructors can interact, ask and answer questions, and share insights related to the course.

In sum, in the course that is the object of this study, students evidence difficulties to integrate information from their reading into their own writing that could be solved by means of the integration of the multidimensional approach to writing from sources and the digital competences developed in a blended learning environment as explained above.

Literature review

At international level, Makovskaya and Radjabzabe (2022) investigated the use of sources and plagiarism in the process of essay writing on the part of EFL university students in Uzbekistan. Thirteen first year students who had failed the language programme were selected for the study. A mixed-methods design was employed for data collection and the language programme was analysed for two consecutive years. To evaluate the use of sources and students' opinions, textual analysis was carried out and a survey was administered. A comparative analysis of plagiarism and students' performance in writing showed improvement in the organization of written productions but no significant difference in relation to plagiarism. These findings suggest the need for more explicit and systematic teaching of strategies to write from sources.

At the national level, in the context of this study, there is a tradition of research into this topic. Pasquini (2017) investigated the use of strategies to write from sources of advanced EFL university students. Five aspects of the use of sources were analysed: direct quote, indirect quote or paraphrase, format and function of the citation, and reporting verbs. Paraphrase with minimal revision was the most widely used strategy, followed by near copy, moderate revision and exact copy. Non-integral citations were not used and their function was predominantly attribution to describe instead of analyzing, synthesizing or evaluating sources. Reporting verbs were mostly factual. Students' perceptions explored by means of surveys revealed that they know the strategies to write from sources but are unaware of what constitutes plagiarism due to lack of instruction. Teachers' perceptions were not explored. The results suggest the need to provide pedagogical support to develop the ability to write from sources and to take into account tutors' perceptions during such process.

In a similar line of research, Morra (2003, 2005, 2007) carried out studies of the use of strategies to write from sources in EFL on the part of graduate and undergraduate students. In a study carried out in 2005, this researcher explored the strategies to write from sources of expert subjects and students. She analysed concurrent verbal protocols to observe the strategies used complemented by an analysis of written products. Such protocols of experts and students revealed the same strategies to write from sources: selecting, structuring, integrating and correcting coordinated by strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating but the frequency of the use of such strategies was higher in

the case of experts than in that of novice students. Besides, the former approached the task as a problem-solving activity following the *knowledge-transforming model* to produce a synthesis whereas students followed the *knowledge-telling model* (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) and produced summary sequences. This study did not focus on the approach teachers' used to provide training in strategies to write from sources or their perceptions of that aspect of academic literacy.

In the same context, Dalla Costa (2012) investigated writing from a single source text on the part of EFL university students at an advanced level. The analysis of the strategies to summarise used by students revealed that they performed better in a post-test after genre-based instruction since they used the more effective strategies of paraphrase, generalization and construction/integration instead of copy after instruction. This information was triangulated with student test scores and data provided by surveys administered to both students and teachers.

Dalla Costa (2020) also investigated writing from multiple sources on the part of EFL university students at an advanced level. The teaching of argumentative essay writing from multiple sources within the framework of genre pedagogy produced positive effects on students' grades; their use of strategies to write from sources; abilities, attitudes and self-perceptions; on teachers' attitudes; and on the processes of teaching and learning of specific students by means of case studies. These results were triangulated with the analysis of the context in which the genre is produced to obtain information about the practices that regulate it in the academic community it is immersed in and its conventions. Results support the hypothesis that genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to improve advanced EFL students' performance in argumentative essay writing from sources in the context of this study. Nevertheless, this study employed a pedagogical approach to teach academic writing in general rather than a specific approach designed to teach writing from sources.

As regards the blended learning environments in which strategies to write from sources and digital competences are intended to be developed, according to Viera (2023), b-learning allows students to have access to a variety of educational resources such as multimedia materials and collaborative tools. Besides, it develops fundamental skills such as time management, self-regulation and autonomous learning, since students take an active role in their learning process. However, students with limited access to the Internet may face difficulties that affect their performance and generate inequality. Therefore, institutions should design inclusive strategies that guarantee equality and maximize the benefits of this model.

In this respect, Rentería Macías (2021) analysed the level of digital competences of systems engineering students, especially those related to the processes of teaching and learning in virtual environments. Findings demonstrate that, in tests carried out, the lowest scores were in areas such as communication, which is of interest in our study. This indicates that, in spite of being students pursuing a degree in Technology, they could not get high scores in such area. Taking these results into account, it can be expected that, in degree programmes not related to ICT, scores below those levels of digital competence will be obtained. On the other hand, the authors suggest that, if teachers themselves do not possess digital competences or add them to their teaching methodologies, it cannot be assumed that students will develop such abilities which are so important for their academic activities. This justifies the explicit instruction proposed in this study and the consideration of tutors' beliefs and perceptions in relation to blended learning environments.

For Morejón et al. (2022), such environments favour the development of digital competences integrating digital resources and face-to-face activities that foster language learning. In particular, academic writing is supported by collaborative platforms and interactive resources that enable students to write and revise their texts in virtual contexts. Moreover, critical comprehension of texts is promoted by means of reading and analysis of digital materials that are later discussed in face-to-face classes.

Jimbo Román (2023) also explains that blended learning is a new alternative for the development of essential communicative competences, such as academic writing and critical comprehension of texts. The author investigated the effectiveness of b-learning in the development of communicative competences in the context of language teaching in higher education. A meta-analysis was carried out to revise the literature, and focus on investigations that explore the impact of digital resources, online platforms and the combination of virtual and face-to-face classes in the development of communicative competences. This enabled the author to identify effective practices and challenges related to the adoption of this pedagogical model in university contexts. Factors that contribute to success in its implementation such as teacher training, access to technological tools and adequacy of materials were identified. In conclusion, hybrid education seems to be an effective model in higher education combining the advantages of face-to-face and virtual approaches. Such model facilitates the development of essential competences such as autonomy, self-regulation and time management, fundamental skills in today's educational context.

A study carried out by Har and Konhnke (2021) explored hybrid approaches to the teaching of writing from sources in a group of graduate students in a university in Hong Kong. Results

of teacher and student interviews indicate that the adoption of a blended learning approach, that is, a pedagogy that combines virtual and face-to-face teaching helped students understand an academic genre from sources. This study suggests that integrating methods of instruction such as videos, quizzes, forum debates, and peer feedback provides several advantages.

In the context of this investigation, Gava (2012) explored the written productions of undergraduate students in forums and blogs for collaborative learning and the development of critical thinking in the English Language II class. A survey was administered to obtain students' perceptions of the activities carried out. This study offers a taxonomy of contributions that reflect critical thinking and the meaningful and creative use of sources and digital competences, and evidences that virtual environments foster collaborative learning. The findings show that debate forums and blogs allow students to construct knowledge during the process of foreign language learning but highlight the need to explore teachers' perceptions as well.

In this area, Gava (2021) also studied the use of the writing strategies and digital competences needed for specialised translation on the basis of students' and teachers' written productions in virtual classrooms of postgraduate courses. This author elaborated a pedagogical model with four components: i) teacher functions and competences for strategy training in virtual environments, ii) students' role in strategic learning, iii) task-based approach and translation projects, and iv) resources and digital environments for these tasks. Of special interest for the present study is the role of the teacher as a guide, the function of learning tasks and resources, and the role of writing to put into practice strategies such as paraphrasing, summarising, analysing and synthesising, among others.

The literature reviewed evidences that several studies are devoted to writing from sources on the part of undergraduate university students at an advanced rather than intermediate level. As regards investigations into the production of academic genres from sources on the part of students in the first years of their EFL degree programmes and their development of digital competences, to the best of our knowledge, there have been no studies of such genres and competences following the multidimensional approach in the context of this study. Moreover, some of the studies reviewed have been limited in their design in the sense that they focus exclusively on the written products and students' perceptions without analysing the process of writing from sources or teachers' opinions during such process. Therefore, we propose to investigate writing from sources and digital competences taking into account the findings of previous studies that have demonstrated the effectiveness of explicit instruction in writing from sources, and of the development of

digital competences in blended environments to foster communicative competence, in particular, writing skills.

Objectives

The general objective of the larger project this study is part of is to promote autonomy in academic literacy enhancing the process of writing from multiple sources and digital competences in blended learning environments in undergraduate courses in English Language and Specialised Translation.

The specific objectives of this paper are to present the results of the analysis of the following:

- a) surveys administered to tutors of English Language I courses which provide information about their beliefs regarding academic writing, attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching, and perceptions of students' abilities to write from sources and digital competences, and
- b) interviews administered to the Heads of the Chair of English Language I which deepen into the results of the surveys.

Methodology

Context

This study was carried out in the context of the English Language I course at the Faculty of Languages, National University of Córdoba. This institution offers degree programmes in Teacher Training, Translation and Licentiate in EFL in which students often write from multiple sources without satisfactory results.

Data collection and analysis

The following data collection instruments were used: a written survey administered to all the members of the Chair of English Language I (twelve tutors), and an interview protocol used to interview the two Heads of the Chair. These participants were chosen since they are all the teachers in charge of the course which is the object of this study and thus the subjects of interest. Therefore, the sample for this investigation was selected on the basis of *convenience sampling* (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991, p. 42), the selection of individuals who happen to be available for the study.

The written survey consisted in 31 questions (open-, close-ended and multiple choice questions). This survey enabled us to collect information about the teaching of academic

writing in the context of this study, tutors' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching, and to instruction based on the linguistic, cognitive and social approach promoted by the multidimensional approach, tutors' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources, and of students' digital competences. The survey was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis of the close-ended questions was carried out by means of the tool offered by Google Docs, which offered absolute and relative frequencies and graphic representations of the information. The results of tutors' surveys were triangulated with the interviews with the Heads of the Chair.

The Head Teacher interview protocol consisted in 17 open-ended questions. This protocol was designed to analyse the results of the tutors' survey with specialists. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The semi-structured interview approach was followed. In this approach, a guide that provides a general plan to conduct the interview is prepared. Structured questions are specified in order to ensure that the interviewee focuses on the target topic area, but other topics that develop from the answers are pursued without adhering to the guide rigidly. Flexibility was allowed so that the researcher had the freedom to digress, elicit additional data, and encourage the interviewees to elaborate on certain issues.

Qualitative analysis of open-ended questions was carried out by means of content analysis to establish patterns in the data. To that end, key ideas were identified to detect recurrent themes. A list of categories was derived inductively from the emerging nature of the data using the process as open coding (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 241). The categories obtained were used to summarise answers, and examples were chosen to illustrate main topics. This cyclical process of going over the data in a non-linear manner and interpreting results is known as iteration, and implies precodifying topics searching for patterns, codifying patterns, and carrying out interpretations (Dörnyei, 2011). Qualitative research of this type adopts an emic perspective since its objective is interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings subjects assign to them; in this case, the method known as *dense description* was used, which implies a general description of the patterns in the data, a particular description with representative examples, and an interpretative comment of the findings (MacKey & Gass, 2005). Besides, an ethnographic approach was adopted since it enabled us to investigate not only texts but also their context of production and tutors' points of view.

Results of the analysis of the survey administered to tutors

Information about the teaching of academic writing in the context of this study

As regards the teaching of academic writing, in particular, the types of texts and academic genres students are expected to be able to write in the English Language I course, all tutors answered that students are expected to produce expository paragraphs.

All teachers provide explicit instruction in the type of paragraphs they require students to write. They justified their answer explaining that, as stated in the syllabus, they devote a class per week to instruction, scaffolding and practice in academic paragraph writing (structure, register, purpose, audience, coherence, cohesion, lexico-grammatical features, etc.) since these students often do not have prior knowledge of the topic in their native language or English. Therefore, it cannot be taken for granted that they will be able to write academic texts at university. In fact, this is a new ability that requires explicit training and systematic practice as it differs from the one acquired in previous schooling. The teachers explained that they provide explicit instruction using the process approach to writing and the conventions of academic genres. To do so, they follow some of the suggestions of the genre approach and initially scaffold the process by means of the analysis of models. Then, they gradually remove scaffolding to promote autonomy and students' joint and independent construction. Many tutors (63.6%) evaluated their students' abilities to write paragraphs as good whereas the rest (36.4%) assessed them as bad.

The following extracts illustrate teachers' perceptions of the teaching of academic writing in the context of this study:

It is necessary to provide explicit instruction to first year students that do the English Language I course due to the fact that they are not familiar with academic writing and formal register. The development of writing skills in first year implies exposing students to texts with formal register, as opposed to the texts with informal register that they usually read outside the academic context.

I teach writing focusing on the process (process writing) and the conventions of academic genres. It is very useful to work with good samples of students' productions in class analysing each part and aspects to take into account (dos and don'ts). Throughout the year, together with the other teacher in charge, we make sure we provide at least five individual writing assignments to offer practice and then work in class with specific mistakes we spot.

We work on the analysis of models, presenting sample paragraphs written by former students, which are well developed and show relevant content. This technique enables students to identify effective structures and style. This type of analysis facilitates

comprehension of the essential components of the academic paragraph, such as coherence, cohesion, unity and clarity. Besides, after correcting the paragraphs, we provide constructive feedback with the aim of helping students to identify their mistakes and understand how to correct them. Finally, I choose the best paragraphs. We read and analyse effective and well organised paragraphs written by students. This practice not only celebrates achievements but also provides models that guide students' writing practice. The analysis and discussion of these examples foster a deeper comprehension of what is expected from them, their strengths and the areas of improvement.

Information about tutors' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching

In the context of the study, most tutors (75%) require students to write from multiple sources. In relation to tutors' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching, most of them (83.3%) said that they expect students to use strategies to write from sources and their corresponding conventions in academic writing tasks (assignments, quizzes, term tests, final exams and papers). They justified their answer stating that they emphasize the importance of integrating information obtained from reading in writing tasks backing up ideas in expository paragraphs with background reading and audiovisual materials that are part of the compulsory bibliography for the course. This is vital to show students' ability to read critically, evaluate and select relevant information.

Many tutors (58.3%) expressed that they provide explicit instruction in such strategies to write from sources, their conventions and the functions these serve but some others (41.7%) do not do so. Those that do it explained that they provide explicit instruction by teaching students to select relevant information from sources, to quote directly and indirectly, to summarise and synthesise. They focus on the conventions for referencing according to the APA style manual and on the functions of these strategies to add credibility to their work, avoid plagiarism and demonstrate their capacity to analyse and integrate information in a critical and coherent manner. Other tutors mentioned that they employ the technique of using graphic organizers to help students summarise information. From the teachers that provide explicit instruction in strategies to write from sources, only 8.3% use blended learning environments for such instruction. The tutors that do not provide explicit teaching maintained that they do not do so as they focus on the structure of the paragraph rather than on providing explicit instruction in strategies to write from sources, which is not part of the objectives of the course and would take time. Moreover, it is taken for granted that students already know such strategies.

The following extracts illustrate tutors' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching:

In academic writing, we expect students to use strategies to adequately integrate information obtained from reading the articles included in the material, videos and other resources we work with in class. I would say, at this level, students make use of indirect quotes of source texts. This is fundamental because it shows students' capacity to read critically, evaluate and select relevant information, which fosters critical thinking and analysis. It is worth noting that, in first year, we do not ask students to use direct quotes since they lack the necessary knowledge to do so. We may explain what a quote is, how to quote directly and acknowledge sources but we do not ask them to do so. In general, students are expected to quote the material we work with in class indirectly as the rubric explicitly asks them to make direct reference to the material.

In first year, students are not required to quote authorities or summarise since the focus is on writing academic paragraphs with adequate structure and incorporating ideas related to the topics we work with in class on the basis of the material or additional resources provided by the teachers.

Nothing is mentioned about referencing systems (for example, APA) since this is knowledge students start to incorporate in second year. I believe adding this topic in the first semester would be too demanding since there are other more urgent problems related to writing to solve.

Information about tutors' attitudes to instruction based on the linguistic, cognitive and social approach promoted by the multidimensional approach

Regarding tutors' attitudes to instruction based on the linguistic, cognitive and social approach promoted by the multidimensional approach, most tutors (75%) have not used such approach to provide explicit instruction in strategies to write from sources and only 25% of the tutors said that they have used such approach. Most of the tutors (75%) consider that it would be effective and could promote autonomy in academic literacy. They justify their answer explaining that it would provide students with instruction and practice in strategies to write from sources.

Information about tutors' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources

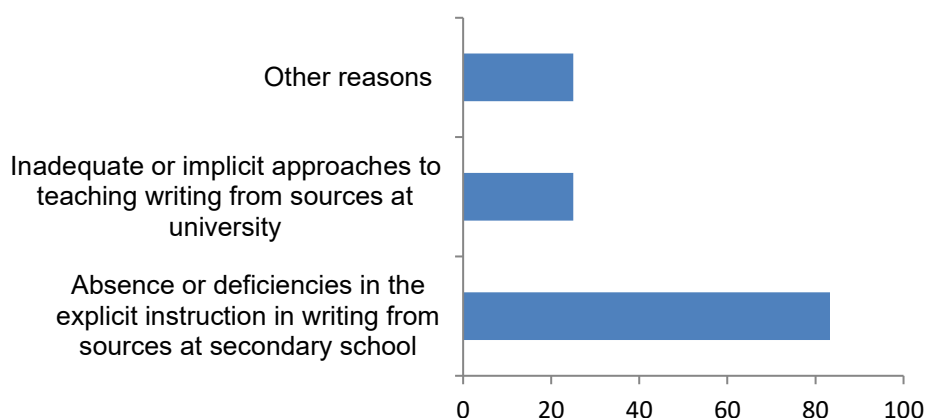
With regard to tutors' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources, most tutors (83.3%) think that the task of writing academic genres from multiple sources is difficult for students, and the rest (16.7%) believe it is very difficult. These results are compatible with previous studies which have also reported that writing from

sources is one of the most complex activities for students (Dalla Costa, 2012, 2020; Morra, 2005).

When explaining the reasons for that difficulty, as Figure 1 shows, most tutors (83.3%) consider that the task of writing academic genres from multiple sources is difficult or very difficult for students due to absence or deficiencies in the explicit instruction in writing from sources at secondary school. Tutors accounted for their answer stating that first year students are not used to this type of activity. They usually do not do it at secondary school in their native language, let alone in English. Besides, their level of English is often very low and their reading comprehension abilities are not very good either. Therefore, it is difficult for them to integrate information obtained from reading in their own writing.

Figure 1

Reasons for the difficulty of writing from multiple sources



Some tutors (25%) believe the difficulty is due to inadequate or implicit approaches to teaching writing from sources at university. Even if students receive instruction in methodology courses, they do not transfer that knowledge to language courses. A few mention other reasons such as lack of practice and lack of knowledge of reading strategies. As a result, many of those who require students to write from sources (62.5%) consider that students' abilities to write from sources are fair (rather than excellent, very good, good or bad).

In addition, most tutors (83.3%) maintain that the ability to write a paragraph from multiple sources is very important for students' academic and professional future. The rest (16.7%) considers it relatively important. Tutors justified their answer explaining that the ability to write from multiple sources is very important for students' future since they will have to work with sources not only throughout their degree programmes but also their academic

lives once they have graduated as this ability offers access to written communication in the academic community, for example, as postgraduate students or researchers.

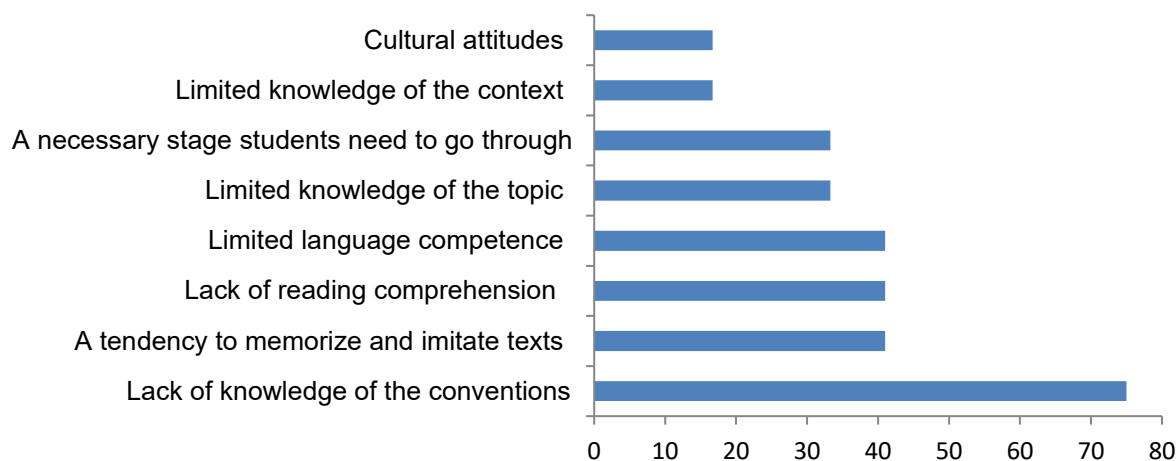
All tutors believe that students' abilities to write from multiple sources could improve by means of instruction based on a linguistic, cognitive and social approach such as the multidimensional approach, on strategies to write from sources, their conventions and the functions they serve. They justified their answer stating that students' abilities to write from multiple sources could improve by means of instruction based on such approach since it provides a comprehensive framework to help students to understand and apply the conventions and functions of academic writing from sources more effectively. Tutors consider that this approach could lead to better performance in writing tasks and promote independence from literalness, that is, avoid copy, and promote autonomy in academic literacy, in other words, foster critical elaboration and transformation of information obtained from sources into knowledge instead of its reproduction.

Moreover, tutors believe that instruction to develop students' abilities to write academic genres from sources, i.e. integrate information obtained from reading in their own writing, should be provided mainly in Spanish courses so that students can then transfer this knowledge and skills to other courses, and also in English Language courses. Additionally, instruction should be offered in each discipline, in research methodology courses and supported by means of workshops ever since they start university.

Most tutors (75%) stated that students commit plagiarism when writing from sources. As Figure 2 reveals, most of them (75%) think that the main reason why students do so is lack of knowledge of the conventions to write from sources.

Figure 2

Reasons why students commit plagiarism



Other reasons include a tendency to memorize and imitate texts fostered by the educational system (41%), lack of reading comprehension and critical thinking (41%) and limited language competence (41%). Additional reasons are limited knowledge of the topic (33.3%), a necessary stage students need to go through to learn to write from sources (33.3%), limited knowledge of the context and purpose of the task (16.7%), and cultural attitudes (16.7%). Only one tutor considered that it may be due to dishonest behavior. Further reasons mentioned include lack of explicit instruction in each discipline. These results coincide with the findings of other authors who have identified similar factors that contribute to the use of ineffective strategies to write from sources (Angéllil-Carter, 2000; Chandrasoma et al., 2004; Ellery, 2008; Howard, 1996; Shi, 2004) and stress that this not owing to lack of honesty but to the lack of explicit instruction. This leads to a constructive approach centered on instruction in writing from sources.

In this respect, most tutors (91.7%) consider measures centered on a constructive approach based on explicit instruction in writing from sources should be implemented to raise students' awareness of the importance of avoiding plagiarism at university. These results are also in line with Pasquini's (2017) suggestion that it is necessary to provide pedagogical support to develop the ability to write from sources. Some tutors (33.3%) believe in measures centered on the academic consequences of plagiarism while others (25%) believe in measures centered on the legal consequences of plagiarism.

The following extracts illustrate tutors' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources:

I believe students do not understand the relevance of writing from sources. They do not have this tradition of writing at secondary school. This generates a false belief that it is possible to write without acknowledging sources. Students do receive explicit instruction in courses such as research methodology but they do not transfer that knowledge to other courses such as language.

Writing academic genres from multiple sources is very difficult for students. This is due to the fact that their level of English is very low. Besides, many of them are not familiar with writing academic paragraphs in their native language either. This combination of factors makes the task extremely complex and challenging for them (and us teachers). The first problem I observe is the development of reading comprehension skills. Since many students have serious problems to understand what they read, it is hard for them to move on to the next step of reelaboration/integration of ideas. As a result, the task of integrating sources is too hard to accomplish.

Those students that want to pursue postgraduate studies or do research will need to use this ability. They will need to write from sources throughout their degree programme and in

different undergraduate courses, in postgraduate courses and their professional life if they publish, for example.

I believe students' ability to write from sources could improve by means of a multidimensional approach since it is not only a matter of a linguistic but also a cognitive ability developed in a particular social context and the deficiency in its teaching and learning is, in part, due to the fact that it is considered a linguistic ability and the cognitive processes that enable students to make sense of it and understand its functions in specific contexts are disregarded.

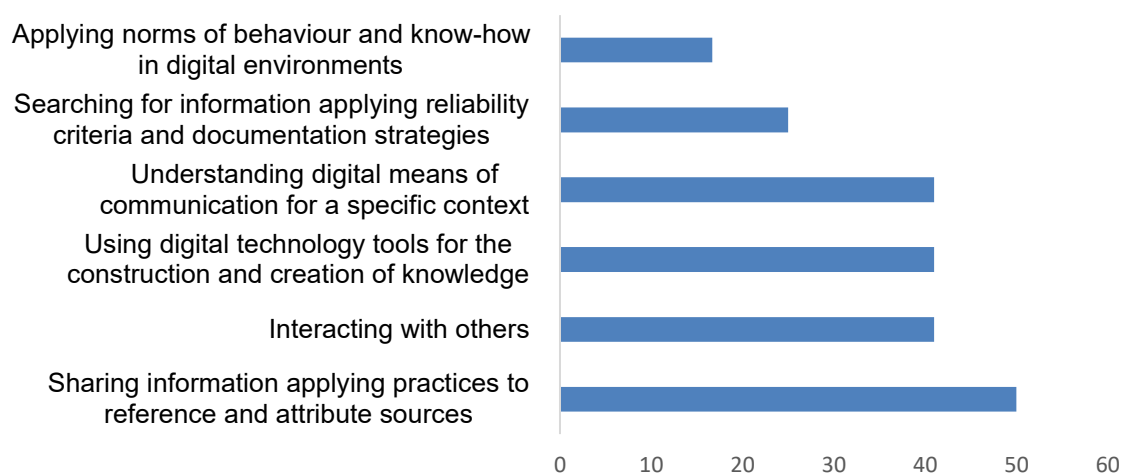
Without doubt, a multidimensional approach would help since it would require students to analyse and synthesise information instead of copying literally. This fosters critical comprehension and the ability to transform information. Besides, this approach would improve students' performance in writing tasks, promote intellectual independence, and foster greater autonomy in their academic learning.

Information about tutors' perceptions of students' digital competences

Many tutors (58.3%) expect students to use general and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing properly while some others (41.7%) do not expect students to use such abilities. Most tutors (50%) consider that the main general and/or specific digital competence related to academic writing students are expected to use is sharing information and contents by means of adequate technologies applying practices to reference and attribute sources as Figure 3 suggests.

Figure 3

General and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing



Other general and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing students are expected to use are interacting with others (41%); using digital technology tools in

collaborative processes for the construction and creation of knowledge (41%); and understanding digital means of communication suitable for a specific context (41%). Additional competences include searching for information applying reliability criteria and documentation strategies (25%) and knowing and applying norms of behaviour (netiquette) and know-how in the use of technology and in interaction in digital environments (16.7%). These competences coincide with those proposed by Gava (2012, 2021), and Vuorikari et al. (2022) in the *Framework for Digital Competences for Citizenship*.

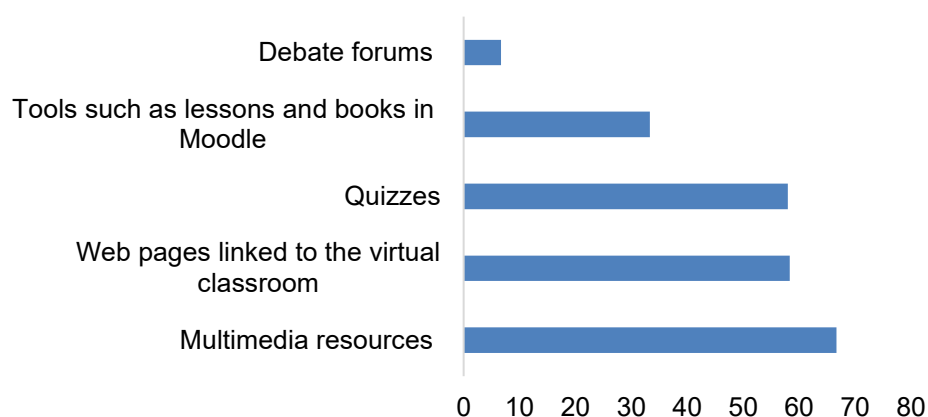
Most tutors (80%) maintain that students' abilities to use general and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing are fair and only 20% consider they are good. Many tutors (47.1%) provide explicit instruction in how to apply such digital competences while others (58.3%) do not do so. Those who do provide explicit teaching justified their answer explaining that they believe that it is necessary to model the use of digital abilities such as sharing information with adequate references, collaborating in digital environments and searching for reliable information. Tutors who do not provide explicit teaching justified their answer explaining that this is not an objective of the course; they do not have enough time and do not work with the writing skill in a digital environment. Most tutors (60%) who provide explicit instruction in digital competences think that a blended learning approach is effective for explicit instruction in such competences. They accounted for their answer explaining that students need explicit instruction guided by the teacher in face-to-face classes together with activities in the virtual learning environment to be able to acquire digital competences and language knowledge.

Most tutors (83.3%) state that digital competences to write from multiple sources are very important for the students' academic and professional future. They justified their answer maintaining that students need to learn how to select and evaluate reliable information and how to use it in their own writing following the conventions. They also need to learn how to collaborate in digital environments and to apply reference and attribution practices. These are essential abilities in academic and professional contexts.

As demonstrated in Figure 4, the digital resources and functions of the virtual classroom that teachers use so that students carry out tasks that require writing from sources are multimedia resources (66.7%), web pages linked to the virtual classroom (58.3%), quizzes (58%), and tools such as lessons and books in Moodle (33.3%) and debate forums (6.7%).

Figure 4

Digital resources and functions of the virtual classroom used for writing from sources



Other resources mentioned are digital texts, plagiarism detection systems, Google Drive for the writing process, Word's comments function for peer and tutor feedback, and writing assignments through tasks in the virtual classroom. Almost all tutors (91.7%) believe that the use of such resources and functions of the virtual classroom could promote writing from sources.

The following extracts illustrate tutors' perceptions of students' digital competences:

In the case of first year students and considering the experience acquired during the two years of remote teaching due to the pandemic, I have observed that students need explicit instruction on the part of the teacher in face-to-face classes to be able to develop learning strategies, digital competences and language knowledge. B-learning may combine the best of face-to-face and online teaching offering students opportunities to practice. This may enhance their learning and prepare them for the challenges of the digital academic and professional world.

Digital competences are very important to write from multiple sources because they allow students to search for, evaluate and select reliable information, collaborate in digital environments and apply reference and attribution practices accurately. These skills are essential in academic and contexts, where the ability to manage and use digital information is vital for research, communication and knowledge production.

Teachers', translators' and licentiate's jobs imply working with academic texts. Therefore, it is imperative that, in a context where there are both face-to-face and virtual modes, future professionals acquire competences for writing on paper and in digital environments at the same time. At university, we must guarantee the integration of digital competences, one of the eight key competences every citizen should acquire according to the recommendation of the European Commission.

When addressing reading and writing, what I observe in this Chair is that both skills take place on the basis of work with handbooks. That is, the virtual classroom is employed as a repository of materials and to carry out activities with a grammatical approach. For that reason, there seems to be no relationship between digital competences and writing from sources yet, so this project is going to be interesting.

In general, the results of tutors' survey coincide with those reported by Dalla Costa (2020), who carried out a survey of 57 teachers representative of all the degree programmes and languages offered at the School of Languages UNC.

As regards the teaching of academic writing in the context of the study carried out by Dalla Costa (2020), the surveyed teachers also expressed that paragraphs are among the texts which are most often required. Most teachers also provide explicit instruction in academic genres, too. Similarly, as regards their perceptions of students' writing skills, most teachers considered these fair or good.

Concerning teachers' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching in Dalla Costa's (2020) investigation, most of the teachers also reported they expect students to use strategies to write from sources and their conventions in academic writing tasks. However, even if many teachers provide explicit instruction in such strategies, others do not do so for similar reasons as those expressed in the present study: it is not inherent in their courses or they assume students already know how to write from sources.

In relation to tutors' attitudes to instruction based on the linguistic, cognitive and social approach promoted by the multidimensional approach, like most teachers in this study, most teachers interviewed by Dalla Costa (2020) provide explicit instruction following approaches different from the multidimensional approach (e.g. genre).

As to teachers' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources, most teachers in Dalla Costa's (2020) study believe the task of writing academic genres from sources is difficult for students, too. They justify their answer with similar reasons to those reported in the present paper: absence or deficiency in the explicit teaching of academic writing from sources at secondary school. Furthermore, most tutors also regard it as a very important ability for their students' academic and professional future. In fact, all the teachers express that such ability could improve by means of explicit instruction in strategies to write from sources, their conventions and functions and that this could lead to better performance in the task, promote independence from literalness and foster autonomy in academic literacy. Likewise, most teachers manifest this instruction should be provided in all courses since the first years of the degree programmes. On the other hand, most of the teachers also state that students use the ineffective strategy of copy when writing from sources, and most declare that the main reason is lack of knowledge of

the conventions. To change this reality, measures centered on a constructive approach based on explicit instruction in writing from sources should be taken.

Finally, about tutors' perceptions of students' digital competences, many tutors in the present study expect students to use general and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing properly. Most tutors consider that the main digital competence related to academic writing students are expected to use is sharing information and contents by means of adequate technologies applying practices to reference and attribute sources. As explained above, these competences coincide with those proposed by Gava (2012, 2021), and Vuorikari et al. (2022). Most tutors regard students' abilities to use general and/or specific digital competences related to academic writing as fair, as suggested by Rentería Macías (2021), so many provide explicit instruction in how to apply such digital capabilities. Most tutors believe that a blended learning approach is effective for explicit instruction in such competences. Moreover, most of them acknowledge that digital competences to write from multiple sources are very important for the students' academic and professional future. The digital resources and functions of the virtual classroom that teachers use so that students carry out tasks that require writing from sources are multimedia resources, web pages linked to the virtual classroom, quizzes, and tools such as lessons and books in Moodle and debate forums. These resources are in line with those recommended by Viera (2023) and Jimbo Román (2023). Almost all tutors believe that the use of such resources and functions of the virtual classroom could promote writing from sources, which is in line with the results reported by Gava (2021), Har and Konhnke (2021), Morejón et al. (2022) and Jimbo Román (2023).

Results of the analysis of the interview administered to the Heads of the Chair

The Heads of the Chair agree with the tutors surveyed that teaching academic writing should start with paragraphs since they are the building blocks of genres. However, they suggest that, maybe, summary response tasks could be required before paragraph writing assignments, so students keep records of the reading and audiovisual materials that will serve as the basis for such assignments, take a stance on those topics and start working with sources in a more systematic way, that is, becoming aware of the effective strategies to carry out the task and their corresponding conventions. The Heads of the Chair believe that students could be allowed to prepare a bank of quotes to be used for assignments and tests.

Furthermore, the Heads of the Chair coincide that all tutors provide explicit instruction in paragraph writing since this is established by the course syllabus. After instruction, in their view, it could be said that most students' abilities can be considered good. However, they point out that there is a contradiction since, even though 58% of the tutors express that

they provide instruction in writing from sources, this is not done explicitly according to the course syllabus. Although students write on the basis of texts they read, it is taken for granted that they know how to do so, that is, that they can quote, paraphrase or summarise instead of copying. This finding indicates that the instruction provided, which could not be considered explicit in a strict sense, may not be enough. In the area of English, the Heads point out that each subject should be responsible for teaching how to write from sources; in other words, we should teach how to write academic texts in every discipline rather than assuming students will learn to write from sources in English and/or Spanish Language courses and will be able to transfer that knowledge automatically to other courses that have their own specificity, lexis and content.

Besides, the Heads of the Chair believe that tutors mostly use a linguistic and cognitive approach to the teaching of writing. Nevertheless, its social dimension is not completely addressed. The interviewees agree on applying a linguistic, cognitive and social approach such as the multidimensional one to the teaching of writing from sources and consider that it would be very effective for this course. Particularly, they emphasise the teaching of writing as a situated social practice. A blended learning methodology could also be implemented, combining face-to-face classes with materials and tasks in the virtual classroom to enhance academic literacy and make the most of the time available.

The Heads of the Chair maintain that tutors' belief that students' abilities to write from sources are fair could be precisely due to the fact that it is taken for granted that they already have those abilities and have developed them in previous schooling and other courses such as Spanish Language and Research Methodology. They express that, even though strategies to write from sources are part of the content of those courses, it should be taken into account that, as in any process of teaching and learning, there is a difference between declarative and procedural knowledge, i.e., learning strategies to write from sources and their conventions is not tantamount to understanding their functions and putting them into practice in one's text, which requires other types of knowledge, such as conditional knowledge, and skills. In this sense, the Head Teachers concur that the fact that explicit instruction in a strict sense is not provided is due to the fact that it is not part of the objectives or content of the course syllabus. This, in turn, is related to the language competence of students who must first learn the basics, such as paragraph structure, to the time available, and to the assumption that it is the role of other courses.

Undoubtedly, the interviewees stress, providing explicit instruction in academic genres from sources at secondary school and ever since the first years at university could contribute to improving students' abilities to write from sources, above all, taking into account that, as most tutors state, this is a very important ability for their academic and

professional future. The Head Teachers believe that instruction based on a linguistic, cognitive and social approach such as the multidimensional approach, on strategies to write from sources, their conventions and functions could improve students' performance in writing tasks, promote independence from literalness and foster autonomy in academic literacy and should be provided in all courses and from the first years in the degree programmes offered by this faculty. This is feasible to a greater or lesser extent depending on the course, time available and tutors' willingness to devote it to such instruction. It could be possible to work in a blended learning environment, as suggested before, to make the most of time and resources. In a parallel manner, the interviewees suggest, a writing workshop coordinated with the rest of the courses could serve this purpose, too.

The Head Teachers agree that the main reasons why students use the ineffective strategy of copy are lack of knowledge of the conventions to write from sources, tendency to memorize and imitate texts fostered by the education system, lack of reading comprehension and critical thinking and limited language competence. They do not believe this is due to dishonest behavior but is related to a necessary stage students need to go through to acquire effective strategies to write from sources. However, this does not mean plagiarism should be accepted since it is vital to create awareness that it is not suitable for this context. The Head Teachers concur with the tutors that, to prevent students from committing plagiarism, measures centered on a constructive approach based on explicit instruction in strategies to write from sources should be taken instead of measures centered on the academic and legal consequences of plagiarism. Definitely, it could be avoided with an approach centered not only on conventions but also on their functions instead of an approach that punishes plagiarism. Furthermore, these measures should be agreed on at an institutional level since this, in the long run, could contribute to academic quality.

As regards digital competences, the Head Teachers point out that it is interesting that most tutors acknowledge that the main competences students are expected to apply in relation to academic writing are sharing information and contents by means of suitable digital technologies applying practices of reference and attribution. However, explicit instruction in such practices is not provided until the fourth year in the Language courses offered in this institution according to the course syllabi. The Head Teachers recognise that students are expected to apply these and other competences, for instance, interacting with others; using digital tools and technologies in collaborative processes for the construction and creation of knowledge; and understanding the digital means of communication suitable for a specific context. There are additional competences that should also be required such as knowing and applying the norms of behaviour (netiquette) and know-how in the use of technologies while interacting in digital environments, and searching for information

applying reliability criteria and documentation strategies. They believe these competences would be vital since, in the digital academic and professional contexts that prevail nowadays, the need to interact with norms that guarantee mutual respect is as imminent as the need to use strategies to select reliable information. Again, the Head Teachers consider that, just as all tutors should teach how to write the genres students are expected to produce in their course or discipline, they should also foster the development of specific digital competences in relation to academic writing since they go hand in hand. That is, it is very difficult to do without them in the current context in which writing on paper without using technology is not very common.

The Head Teachers agree that blended learning environments would be very effective for explicit instruction both in academic writing from sources and in digital competences applied to that ability. This approach should be adopted since it would allow teachers to make the most of the time and resources available, above all, taking into account that digital competences to write from sources are vital for students' academic and professional future. The Head Teachers also believe that distance learning, that is, an asynchronous virtual environment for students to advance at their own pace with teacher scaffolding could also foster the acquisition of digital competences in relation to academic writing and students' autonomy.

Finally, the Head Teachers consider that the appreciation that students' abilities to apply general digital competences or specific ones related to academic writing are fair is mainly due to the lack of explicit instruction and systematic practice. In this context, the contradiction that tutors recognise that, in academic writing tasks, it is expected that students evidence an adequate use of digital competences related to academic writing, but 58% of them do not provide explicit instruction to develop such competences is due to the fact that it is not inherent in the course; that is, it is not part of the objectives or contents of the syllabus. In fact, the Head Teachers maintain that the syllabus should be revised to include such competences in its different sections, in particular, in contents and activities. Apart from using multimedia resources, web pages linked to the classroom, and quizzes, teachers should use digital texts, debate forums about writing topics before assigning tasks, Google Drive for feedback on the writing process and group work, Word's comments function to offer peer and teacher feedback, and submission of tasks through the virtual classroom. Plagiarism detection systems could also be introduced to raise awareness of the adequate use of sources. The use of such resources and tools could certainly enhance writing from sources in the context of this course and potentially others.

These extracts illustrate Head Teachers' perceptions:

We focus on making reference to texts they read on the different topics but we do not teach how to cite in an appropriate manner.

The appreciation that abilities are fair may be due to an unfounded expectation. The art of writing must be developed with explicit instruction and we should not think that another level has already taught it. Why should that be so? We should start from scratch and build on from there.

Reality shows that we believe students manage and know a lot about technology as an academic resource. Actually, that is not so. Students are underprepared and, sometimes, make the wrong use of available technology due to lack of knowledge. They need to be duly trained to use technology and develop digital competences.

Generally, the results of the interviews with the two Head Teachers of English Language I also coincide with those reported by Dalla Costa (2020), who interviewed eight Head Teachers of the following courses: Spanish Language, English Language I, Culture and Civilization of English Speaking Peoples, Research Methodology, Teaching Methodology, Linguistics and English Literature. The interviews to those teachers demonstrate that they agree that, among the genres that are most often required in degree programmes in EFL at the Faculty of Languages, UNC, they should include those that require writing from sources, and that the responsibility to develop this skill should be shared by all teachers ever since the first years at university. Moreover, they all concur that an approach based on the social dimension of writing, such as the genre approach, which shares features with the multidimensional approach, is effective. Most of the interviewed Head Teachers also agree that students' skills to write from sources are not good enough due to the lack of time for instruction and practice. All the interviewed teachers also converge that the contradiction that it is expected that students use strategies to write from sources but, sometimes, these are not taught explicitly is due to the fact that teachers believe it is not their responsibility to provide such instruction, they lack time and/or devote it to other tasks. Likewise, they consider that providing such instruction at secondary school and/or at the beginning of university, and in every course could reduce the difficulty of the task. Half of those interviewed also agree that it is possible to provide instruction in academic genres, strategies to write from sources, their conventions and functions in every course since the first year of the degree programmes offered at the Faculty of Languages while the other half believes a writing workshop could serve this function, too. Similarly, teachers express that one of the main causes of the use of copy is the lack of knowledge of the conventions. Those interviewed also recommend avoiding the use of such strategy by means of instruction, practice and institutional measures. Half of the teachers agree with

adopting a constructive approach based on explicit instruction while the rest propose taking into account the academic and legal consequences of plagiarism, too.

Conclusion

The analysis of the surveys administered to English Language I teachers and the interviews with the Heads of the Chair of the same course in which students write academic paragraphs from sources has provided valuable information about the teaching of academic writing in the context of this study by means of tutors' attitudes to strategies to write from sources and their teaching; to instruction based on the linguistic, cognitive and social approach promoted by the multidimensional approach; tutors' perceptions of students' abilities to write academic genres from sources; and of students' digital competences in the academic community they are immersed in. The results of the analysis will enable us to design blended learning environments using ICT tools and resources for a multidimensional approach to writing from sources.

Future lines of research will focus on evaluating the effect of the multidimensional approach on students' performance in writing from sources in a blended learning environment and on tutors' and students' attitudes to it. The findings of this study could contribute to improving the teaching of academic writing in other undergraduate and graduate courses and be applied to literacy courses in other languages and levels of the education system.

To conclude, we believe that the multidimensional approach to the teaching of writing from multiple sources in hybrid environments offers an effective tool to promote autonomy in academic literacy and has important implications for English Language Teaching. Students need to acquire strategies to write from multiple sources and digital competences to avoid reproducing texts and transform information into knowledge in an autonomous manner. This becomes particularly relevant in the context of post-pandemic higher education where we urgently need to discuss the future of academic literacy in times of AI.

References

- Angélie-Carter, S. (2000). *Stolen language? Plagiarism in writing*. Pearson Education.
- Asinsten, G., Espiro, M. S., & Asinsten, J. (2012). *Construyendo la clase virtual: métodos, estrategias y recursos tecnológicos para buenas prácticas docentes*. Novedades Educativas.
- Bereiter, C., & Scardamalia, M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Chandrasoma, R., Thompson, C., & Pennycook, A. (2004). Beyond plagiarism: transgressive intertextuality. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 3, 171-193.

- Dalla Costa, N. (2012). *Towards enhancing EFL academic literacy: The effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing*. [Tesis de Maestría], Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Dalla Costa, N. (2020). *El ensayo argumentativo a partir de fuentes múltiples: la enseñanza basada en el género y un análisis contextual para promover la autonomía en la alfabetización académica en ILE*. [Tesis de Doctorado], Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2011). *Research methods in Applied Linguistics*. OUP.
- Ellery, K. (2008). Undergraduate plagiarism: A pedagogical perspective. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(5), 507-516.
- Gava, Y. (2012). *The collaborative construction of knowledge through online forums and blogging in an EFL undergraduate class*. [Tesis de Maestría], Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Gava, Y. (2021). *Estrategias de aprendizaje de la traducción especializada en cursos de posgrado a distancia: desde un análisis multifacético hacia un modelo multidimensional*. [Tesis de Doctorado], Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Har, T. K., & Kohnke, L. M. A. (2021). Argumentative Writing at the Tertiary Level: Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of a Hybrid Approach. In A. Hirvela, & D. Belcher (Eds.), *Argumentative Writing in a Second Language: Perspectives on Research and Pedagogy* (pp. 223-239). University of Michigan Press.
- Hatch, E., & Lazaraton, A. (1991). *The research manual. Research and statistics for Applied Linguistics*. Heinle and Heinle.
- Howard, R. (1996). Plagiarisms, authorships and the academic death penalty. *College English*, 57, 788-806.
- Jimbo Román, M. (2023). Impacto de la Educación Híbrida en el Desarrollo de Habilidades Comunicativas en la Enseñanza del Lenguaje Superior. *Sage Sphere of technology, Sciences, Discoveries and Societies*, available at: <https://sagespherejournal.com/index.php/SSTSDS/article/view/30>
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research. Methodology and design*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Makovskaya, L. & Radjabzade, S. (2022). Source Use by EFL Undergraduate Students: Challenges and Success in Process-based Writing. *Language Related Research*, 3, 3, 255-283.
- Morejón, O., Leal, Y., & Padrón, A. (2022). Aprendizajes híbridos en la formación de profesores de Inglés. *Mendive. Revista de Educación*, available at: http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1815-76962022000100105 .

- Morra, A. (2003). EFL learners: Summarising strategies in academic settings. In E. Paulson, M. Laine, S. Biggs & T. Bullock (Eds.), *College reading research and practice* (pp. 137-144). The International Reading Association.
- Morra, A. (2005). *Procesos y estrategias en la producción de síntesis escritas en inglés*. [Tesis de Doctorado], Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Morra, A. (2007). Selecting, structuring and integrating content from reading to generate new texts. *X Latin American ESP Colloquium*, Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto, Argentina.
- Moth-Smith, J., Tomas, Z., & Kostka, I. (2020). *Teaching effective source use*. University of Michigan Press.
- Pasquini, M. (2017). *La atribución de fuentes en la escritura académica de alumnos de grado: Relevamiento de estrategias*. [Tesis de Maestría inédito] Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba.
- Rentería Macías, H. (2021). Digital Competences of University Students in Ecuador. *Polo del Conocimiento*, 63, 6, 788-807.
- Shi, L. (2004). Textual borrowing in second language writing. *Written Communication*, 21, 171-200.
- Viera, V. (2023). Implementación de la enseñanza híbrida como derivación del COVID-19. *Revista Tecnológica-Educativa Docentes 2.0*, available at: https://ve.scielo.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2665-02662022000100005.
- Vuorikari, R., Kluzer, S., & Punie, Y. (2022). *DigComp 2.2. The Digital Competence framework for citizens: with new examples of knowledge, skills and attitudes*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Wilder, N., Weßels, D., Gröpler, J., Klein, A. & Mundorf, M. (2021). Who is responsible for integrity in the age of artificial intelligence? An analysis using the example of academic writing. *Proceedings from the European Conference on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism*.

Natalia Verónica Dalla Costa es profesora de inglés y licenciada en Lengua y Literatura Inglesas. Tiene una maestría en Lingüística Aplicada y un doctorado en Ciencias del Lenguaje. Se desempeña como profesora titular de la asignatura Lengua Inglesa I y IV y como profesora adjunta de Lengua Inglesa II en la Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Imparte cursos de posgrado en lectura y escritura en lenguas extranjeras, redacción de tesis y discurso argumentativo, y realiza investigaciones sobre la escritura a partir de múltiples fuentes y el uso de tecnologías digitales en la escritura académica.

María Victoria Sánchez es profesora de inglés y licenciada en Lengua y Literatura Inglesas. Posee un cargo de profesora adjunta en la materia Lengua Inglesa IV en la Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Realiza investigaciones sobre la escritura a partir de múltiples fuentes y el uso de tecnologías digitales en la escritura académica.

Natalia Andrea Bersano es especialista en Didáctica de Lenguas Extranjeras, profesora de posgrado, profesora adjunta en la asignatura Lengua Inglesa I en la Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba y profesora de inglés para Fines Específicos en la misma institución. Investiga sobre la escritura a partir de fuentes y el uso de tecnologías digitales en la escritura académica.