

Chilean and Spanish teachers' beliefs and disposition when teaching writing in the pandemic: a contrastive study*¹

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Abstract

National and international researches have shown how students and teachers face the teaching of writing. Nevertheless, the pandemic has created new needs of pedagogical research on topics like the teaching of writing in distance learning processes. The research aims to compare pedagogical experiences and practices a group of Chilean and Spanish teachers had during distance learning in the COVID-19 pandemic times. This is a qualitative study that approaches from a digital ethnographic perspective, and it is circumscribed by the socio-critical paradigm. 20 Chilean and 20 Spanish primary school teachers volunteered to participate. They all confronted distance learning after the pandemic started in March 2020. A semi structured interview was conducted to gather data. The obtained information has been processed with the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 12. The answers of the teachers indicate a general change in the pedagogical practices after the pandemic, particularly in the teaching of writing. However, on the one hand, Chilean teachers are especially concerned about the students, on the other hand Spanish teachers are about training. The need of further training in distance teaching of writing can be detected in both contexts.

Keywords

Covid 19 Pandemic – ICT – Writing – Education – Teacher training.

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1- Data availability: all the data that backups the results of this study was published in the article.

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Introduction

From the point of view of the language and literature didactics, it is usual to find studies whose main aim is to analyze the beliefs, disciplinary knowledge and the teachers' role as key aspects to detect strengths and weaknesses, in order to design action plans to improve the didactic processes (GONZÁLEZ-RIAÑO; BUISÁN; SÁNCHEZ, 2009; GOICOECHEA, 2017; RIESTRA, 2017; TAPIA, 2017; ROMERO; TRIGO, 2018; TRIGO; SANTOS-DÍAZ; JIMÉNEZ, 2021).

Despite the above, it seems that these researches are not being considered in the educational policy, as it was mentioned by Rodríguez-Hernández y González (2020). Teachers usually see the international papers as a professional requirement rather than an opportunity to improve. In fact, it seems that the educational success rests in the teacher training and classrooms practices (ROMERO OLIVA, TRIGO IBÁÑEZ, 2015), which has led into the fulfillment of further studies from the childhood education perspective (FONS; BUISÁN, 2012; RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN, 2017) to the college education (MOLINA; COLOMBO, 2021) which sustain this situation. Some of the highlighted studies cover topics such as the grammar teaching (FONTICH; CAMPS, 2015), digital literacy (DOMINGO; MARQUÈS, 2013), critical literacy (CASSANY, 2014), scaffolding to build texts (RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN; CLEMENTE, 2013) and the REVISION and feedback processes in writing (FERÁNDEZ; LUCERO; MONTANERO, 2016; JARPA *et al.*, 2019).

Nevertheless, new challenges and needs appeared since March 2020, due to the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, opening unknown and innovative fields of educative research. The teaching of writing is not the exception, and the distance learning has put the skills of the teachers and the educational systems into test worldwide (GUEVARA, 2020).

Despite the increasing number of studies that evaluate the effects of the pandemic on education, from the emotional management (GARCÍA-ARIAS, 2021), family implications (FERNÁNDEZ-RUIZ, 2021; OTERO; GUTIÉRREZ, 2021), the strengthening of the digital gap among groups (GONZÁLEZ-MARTÍN *et al.*, 2021) to the transition models from face to face to distance teaching (GARCÍA-PLANAS; TABERNA, 2020), if we approach from the teaching of writing in distance education, we still observe an environment that require further exploration. Not in vain the needs of deeper study have increased because of the pandemic, due to, as Bombini mentioned (2021, p.64), "It seems that it becomes even more crucial to fulfil the demand to include the information and communication technologies at the schools".

In the presence of the pandemic, the information and communication technologies (ICT) were used to continue with teaching labors through remote education (GARCÍA-PLANAS; TABERNA, 2020). Despite this, because of the COVID-19 the already existing inequalities became even bigger (GONZÁLEZ-MARTÍN *et al.*, 2021). In fact, as Navarro *et al.* (2021, p.7), "the pandemic multiplied the ways in which things are done in the classroom and confirmed the social gaps and difficulties to fulfil the right to education", mainly affecting students and educators in the most vulnerable contexts, such as the ones in which learners did not have internet access, proper devices, or support from their families.

Considering the above, in terms of the teaching of writing, Vega et al. (2020), describe the situation as:

[...] a change of paradigm; it transitioned from taking place in the classroom [...] using virtual tools. Language and literature educators confronted a situation in which they had to quickly learn how to use and manage the platforms, to upgrade the conventional education and so, enhancing critical thinking, reading practices, oral dexterity, and grammar skills (orthography and drafting) of the students in distance learning. (p. 202).

Working methods have been applied to try to solve the problems found. Navarro *et al.* (2021) analyses the thoughts gathered in a web seminar, where the scientific research and the classroom experience in primary and secondary education of different countries were considered. The conclusions show the pandemic caused the reading and writing processes to take place in the students' homes, and as consequence, including the families in these actions. This made the relationship between families and teachers to become closer, because they had to support each other, giving birth to a new duty for the educators: to explain the families how to support the students in the reading and writing processes, and avoid assessments and activities that could not be done from the learners' houses.

That is how a new idea arose: reading and writing in social and sanitary emergency times. They must be considered as instruments to develop personal purposes and transform realities, working from important and significant topics for the students, fostering an innovative environment that allows to break the school routines and increase the students' interest in these activities (VEGA-CÓRDOVA *et al.*, 2020; NAVARRO MACERA *et al.*, 2021).

Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that it is not possible to do everything that was done in face-to-face classes in the online format, because that would simplify the ICT (BOMBINI, 2021). That is why teleteaching should not consist of just digitalizing the physical classroom elements and use them to distant teach. The teaching and learning experience has to be reformulated completely and to put the main focus on peer interaction, integrating the families in the assignments, to form a creative bond between educators and learners, and also on cognitive challenges that can motivate the students to learn (TRUJILLO, 2014; GARCÍA-PLANAS; TABERNA TORRES, 2020).

Considering the above, we consider the universities to have a commitment to approach the society from a research perspective to achieve progress together. In that way, we confront the situation from a constructive view, taking it as an opportunity to reflect and innovate pedagogically speaking.

As consequence, the main objective of this study is to compare pedagogical experiences and practices a group of Chilean and Spanish teachers had during online teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic. Three specific objectives are generated from this:

1. To identify the principal interests that make Chilean and Spanish teachers act during teleteaching.
2. To describe the main methodological changes that Chilean and Spanish educators had to implement to foster spaces to learn writing remotely.

3. To identify the dominant difficulties and needs Chilean and Spanish teachers had confronted to teach writing from distance teaching.

Methodology

This research emerges from a bigger project called “Characterization of disciplinary and didactics competencies of primary school teachers to teach writing: revision and feedback stage”, of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (PUCV). This project was developed during the 2020-2021. This has allowed to talk to the participants about how their *modus docendi* has changed since March 2020 under COVID-19 pandemic, especially in regards to the teaching of writing.

This stage of the study is qualitative (GUBA; LINCOLN, 2012) and has been addressed from a digital ethnographic perspective (PINK *et al.*, 2019), establishing a two steps design. The first step covers the design and validation of the interview. The validation was done from a psychometric perspective by experts (MCMILLAN; SCHUMACHER, 2005; BERNAL *et al.*, 2020). The second step consists of the application and analysis of the semi structured interviews (KVALE, 2011).

Participants

40 teachers that work in primary schools participated, 20 of them are Chilean from the Valparaíso region, and the other 20 are Spanish from Andalucía. Educators that were actually teaching during 2019-2020 were chosen. All the subjects had to distance teach since the pandemic started. To generate a complete and truthful picture, teachers of different age, years of experience, academic background and from different working places were included –Table 1–.

Table 1 – Teachers’ profile.

Informant	Age	Experience	Academic background	Educational Center
SPA_1	60	38	Teacher and Psychopedagogue	P
SPA_2	52	23	General Primary Education Diploma	SC
SPA_3	42	18	Teacher: Foreign Language (English)	P
SPA_4	52	18	Secondary School Diploma	P
SPA_5	53	28	Major in Pedagogy. Teaching diploma	P
SPA_6	38	14	Teaching Diploma	P
SPA_7	41	16	Teaching Diploma and Psychopedagogue	P
SPA_8	49	27	Teaching Diploma	SC
SPA_9	43	17	Primary Education Degree: English as a foreign language	P
SPA_10	37	13	Teaching Diploma	SC
SPA_11	64	35	Social sciences and pre-school teacher	SC
SPA_12	54	31	Teaching Diploma	P

SPA_13	54	19	Teaching Diploma	P
SPA_14	57	35	General Primary School Diploma	P
SPA_15	27	2	Primary Education Degree	P
SPA_16	65	43	Spanish and French Language and Literature Diploma	P
SPA_17	60	25	Major in History. Primary School	P
SPA_18	55	33	General Primary Education Diploma	P
SPA_19	47	5,5	Master's Degree	P
SPA_20	59	30	English Language Teaching Diploma	P
CHI_1	31	3	Primary School Teacher: mention natural sciences	SC
CHI_2	46	23	College Graduated and Master	SC
CHI_3	45	5	Primary School Teacher: mention in first basic cycle and history and geography	Pr
CHI_4	32	11	Language and Literature Teacher. Master's in production and comprehension of texts	SC
CHI_5	38	8	Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_6	38	9	General Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_7	43	16	General Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_8	40	16	College Graduated	P
CHI_9	41	22	Master's Degree	SC
CHI_10	48	10	College Graduated	P
CHI_11	32	8	General Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_12	42	16	General Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_13	45	14	Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_14	43	12	Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_15	34	6	Master's in education	Pr
CHI_16	35	8	General Primary Education Teacher	P
CHI_17	27	4	Primary Education Teacher: mention in natural sciences	Pr
CHI_18	53	23	University	P
CHI_19	25	2,5	Major in Education. Primary Education Teacher	SC
CHI_20	28	2,5	Primary Education Teacher	SC

Source: Research Data. P: Public; Pr: Private; SC: Subsidiary School

Instrument

To collect data, a semistructured interview was designed based on previous studies about alphabetization, and educator's teaching practices and beliefs (GONZÁLEZ; BUISÁN; SÁNCHEZ, 2009; FONS; BUISÁN, 2012; RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN; CLEMENTE, 2013; FONTICH; CAMPS, 2015; RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN, 2017). Due to the fact that at the moment of creating the instrument there were no studies focused on the effects the pandemic has on education, the questions were generated in this study. The development and validation process is in Maraver, Jarpa y Trigo (2022).

The contents of the interview were validated by a committee of experts in Language and Literature Didactics from the following Spanish and Chilean universities: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Cádiz University, Málaga University, Granada University, Valladolid, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and Andrés Bello University. The experts stated that the instrument was coherent, the questions were clearly stated, and the dimensions were relevant for the objectives. (CERVONE; PERVIN, 2008). These aspects allowed to achieve a Kappa number of 0.836.

After the validation of the interview contents, a pilot test was conducted in context, proving that the instrument was feasible in regards to its length (60 minutes long) and easy to comprehend nature. Sometimes, due to the qualitative nature of the research, it was necessary to adapt the instrument or the group of questions throughout the interview. In doing so, the reliability and validation criterias suggested by Kvale (2021) were achieved.

The interview had 58 questions divided in 8 dimensions: presentation; disciplinary knowledge and beliefs; teachers' writing experience and beliefs; teachers' planning writing; didactic strategies and classroom organization; writing processes; feedback and evaluation of writing; writing in the pandemic.

The current paper only covers the analysis of the last dimension, which is writing in the pandemic. The analysis focuses on the following questions:

- How the pandemic affected in general terms your teaching methods as well as in teaching writing particularly?
- Do you have enough training in the communication and communication technologies to face distance teaching?
- What resources have you discovered to provide feedback to your students during the pandemic?
- What difficulties have you found while working on writing during tele-teaching?
- What collaborations would you ask the universities to make in regards to initial and further teacher training in order to confront these situations?

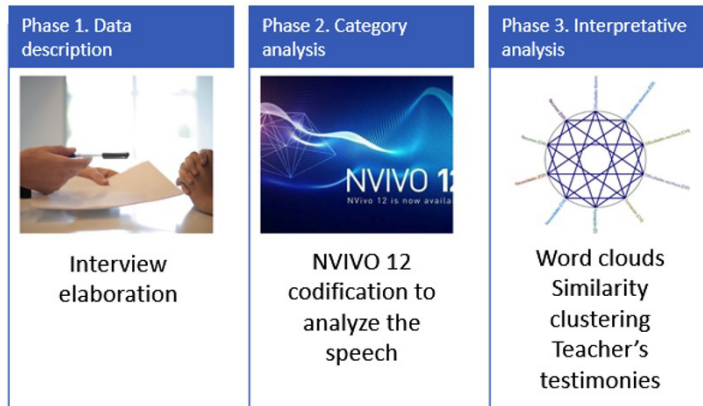
Procedure

The participation in this study was voluntary. The teachers from each studied region were contacted by the institutional e-mails of their corresponding Primary Schools. The email stated the purpose of the study, and then the teacher's voluntary collaboration was asked. Once the educators showed interest in the research, a selection was made to make sure the gathered data was from teachers with different profiles and backgrounds. The participants signed an informed consent following the lines of the PUCV bioethics committee responsible of the project.

The interviews were conducted online through Google Meet as a consequence of the pandemic, following the indications of Pink *et al.* (2019). Later, they were transcribed, and analysis criteria were established. In the "writing in pandemic" dimension 5 were delimited: teaching difficulties; writing difficulties; implemented means; technological training and arisen needs. This helped as a starting point to analyze the data with NVivo

12, which has allowed to generate word clouds considering frequency criteria and establishment of correlations between the information nodes. In this way, the research follows the guidelines of Cambra (2003) by establishing 3 phases –Figure 1–.

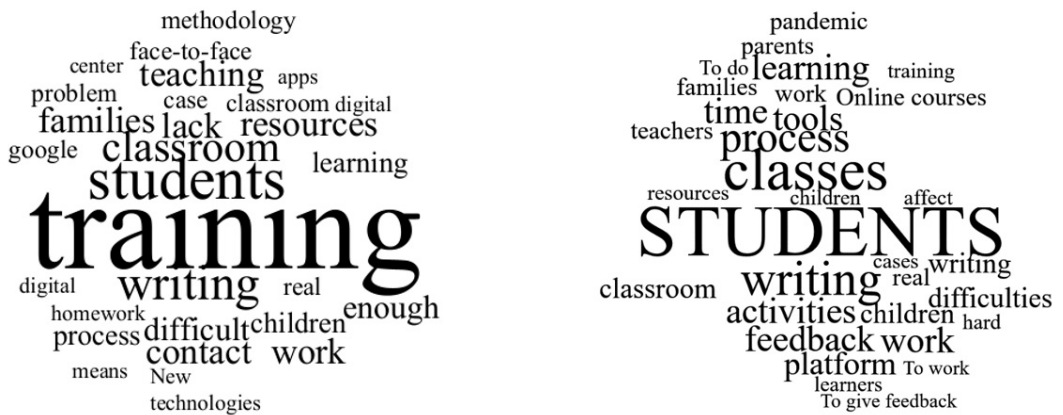
Figure 1- Research phases. Following the guidelines of Cambra (2003)



Results

The results are organized according to the specific objectives. The first describes the interests that determined the teachers' procedure throughout distance teaching. It is so the educators' answers backup the idea that the pandemic changed the pedagogical practices in general, especially in the teaching of writing. If we want to observe the perspective of the participants according to each country, a first approximation of the data can be seen in the word clouds in figure 2. A global perspective is condensed in them, where the participants' concerns and interests can be appreciated.

Figure 2- Global vision of the teachers' focus of interest from both countries.



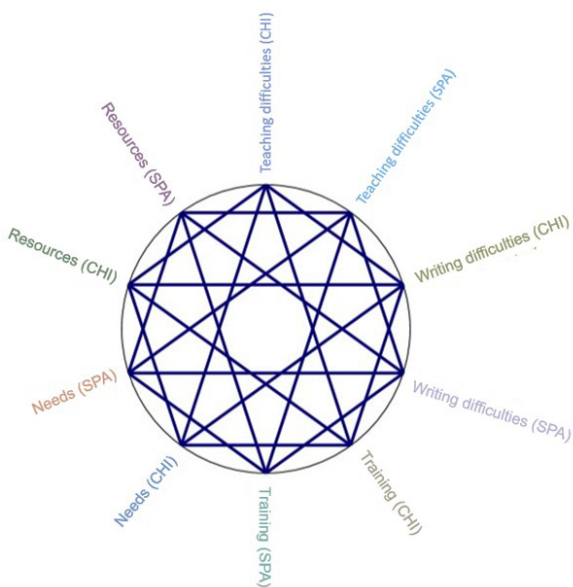
Source: Research data

The most recurrent concern for the Spanish teachers is the lack of training, followed by their students, digital apps, and the lack of resources to work on writing. On second place, the educators pay attention to the learners' families, to the methodologies applied in classes, and finally, the vision of the educational centers.

On the other hand, Chilean teachers are mainly concerned about their students and the development of writing processes throughout the lessons. Besides this, the Chilean educators seem to be preoccupied with the ways to be present during the activities, how to give feedback through online platforms, and finally, they mention the families, parents, and the school staff as key actors.

To work on the specific objectives 2 and 3 a cluster analysis was performed by coding similarity –Figure 3–. In order to do this, the Jaccard coefficient with a maximum value of 1 was taken as reference. The scrutiny of the data shows in every case a strong relation among the codes because they all reach the value of 1, which allows to relate these categories to the objectives.

Figure 3 – Cluster Analysis by coding similarity



Source: Research data

This reasoning allowed to raise five categories. Two of them tackle the second objective. These are related to the implemented resources and the educators' technological training during the teaching of writing in remote classrooms. Additionally, it was possible to identify three categories for the specific objective 3: the general difficulties to teach; teaching of writing particularly; and the needs the teachers had.

Category 1: implemented means

In Chile –Table 2–, we observe that the resources used are mostly WhatsApp, Classroom, Google Forms, Wordwall, Kahoot and Liveworksheets.

Table 2– The most implemented resources by Chilean teachers

Recurso	Nº docentes	Uso
WhatsApp	5/20	To give feedback on assignments (FA)
Classroom	4/20	FA
Google Forms	4/20	Forms
Kahoot	3/20	Quiz games
Liveworksheet	3/20	Interactive chips
Worldwall	3/20	To play
Videos con explicaciones	3/20	FA
Zoom	3/20	To have classes and FA in small groups
Padlet	2/20	To give immediate feedback
Correo electrónico	1/20	To exchange information and FA
Google Meet	1/20	Online classes
Twinkle	1/20	To store didactic resources
Documentos de Google	1/20	FA
Word	1/20	FA
Llamada de teléfono	1/20	FA
Genial.ly	1/20	Presentations and interactive games
PowerPoint	1/20	Presentations
Boom Cards	1/20	Self assessment activities
Nearpod	1/20	To create interactive contents
Lirmi	1/20	The students can load their activities, receive FA or use videos
Quizziz	1/20	Quiz games

Source: Research data

In the Spanish side –Table 3–, the used of technological resources has been less continuous. The most used apps have been Google Classroom, e-mails and Liveworksheets.

Table 3– The most implemented resources by Spanish teachers.

Resource	N° teachers	Use
Gogle Classroom	7/20	FA
Gmail	2/20	To Exchange information and FA
Liveworksheets	2/20	Interactive chips
Google Docs	1/20	To leave comments with a variety of colors and to write collaboratively
ClassDojo	1/20	FA through voice messages
Blog de aula	1/20	To share resources
YouTube channel	1/20	To create didactic videos
Actividades autocorregibles (alum.)	1/20	Self assessment activities
Canvas	1/20	To create didactic resources and presentations
Genial.ly	1/20	Presentations and interactive games
Vocaroo	1/20	FA
Documentos compartidos	1/20	To share documents
Site	1/20	Storing tool
FlipGrid	1/20	To upload a video and to debate the proposed topic
Odilo	1/20	Digital library
Jeopardylabs	1/20	To create online games
Bamboozle	1/20	Quiz games
Kahoot	1/20	Quiz games
Mentimeter	1/20	To get the students participating through questions
Scribd	1/20	To share documents

Source: Research data

Most teachers use the electronic resources to give feedback on homework or as a way for the students to hand their assignments in. There are almost no online classes or tools that facilitate interaction between the educators and learners. These results seem to show an attempt to keep the methodologies applied in face-to-face classes through the use of technology.

Category 2: technological training

The teachers had deficient training regarding tele-teaching, which fostered a process of self-study. Almost all educators state they did not have training to distance teach at the beginning of the pandemic, so they had to take courses and apply what was learnt at the same time. The Table 4 shows the product of this category according to country.

Table 4– Technological training

Level of technological training	Chilean teachers	Spanish teachers
Specialized Training	5	8
Self-study	5	4
Basic Training	4	4
No Training	6	4

Source: research data

In the case of the Chilean teachers, only five state to have the required training to distance teach. Other five indicate that even though they were not prepared at the start of this period, they have been studying and learning from their own practice and work team. Another 4 educators affirm to only have basic instruction in technological tools, and it is not enough to teach remotely. The rest of the Chilean participants say they do not have the necessary instruction to carry this process. These results are synthesized in some of their opinions:

Well, I am not very good at technology. In fact, it was very difficult for me, and it still is. I only use Power Point. There are other colleagues who know more about it. They are like our monitors because the ICT are difficult for us. (CHI_3).

Oh, I love YouTube, YouTube has been my..., the tutorials on YouTube have been... I do not know... one screen here and the other one there and then I pause the video and I do it. I learn by doing it. (CHI_2).

Concerning the Spanish teachers, eight out of twenty state to have the enough training to teach online. Four of them indicate that at the beginning of the pandemic they had difficulties, but they adapted to the circumstances and now they feel prepared. Other four teachers declare to have basic instruction, but they feel it could be improved and they should delve in aspects such as resources for distance teaching. The rest of the educators say not to have training to tele-teach.

Well, that was... a nightmare, that was a nightmare. First, because of the way it came, almost in the middle of the second trimester, or almost at the end of the second trimester. We were not ready to just go home... because no one told us that on the 14th of July we had to go home. No one prepared us for that, so it was very very complicated. I still feel I need to learn because I do not know how to work on writing from distance. (INF_ESP_13).

I felt so overwhelmed at first. It was extremely hard to take my lessons to the online format, but I have adapted little by little, finding out more about resources I have learnt new ways to teach writing, to give feedback, to help put a text together... so now I think I am ready for whatever comes. (INF_ESP_17).

Regarding the specific objective 3, this is covered in the categories 3, 4 and 5, by identifying two thematic areas. On the one hand, the general problems when teaching as well as the specific struggles when it comes to teaching writing. On the other hand, the arisen needs in the online environments.

Category 3: teaching difficulties

Some of the biggest problems have been the digital gap and the endless technical problems to access the virtual classrooms; the lack of technological resources in the families sum up with the insufficient knowledge to manipulate these tools –Table 5–.

Table 5– Teaching difficulties

Chilean teachers	Spanish teachers
Internet access and technical problems. Lack of technological resources in the families. Low coordination between the teachers and the families to teach remotely. Educative gap and little commitment of the families. Simplified contents. Change of methodologies. To incorporate socio-emotional strategies. Increase in the working hours. Rise in violence upon minors.	Increase use of technologies. Problems to correct and give feedback. Difficulties to support students with special educational needs. Change of methodologies. Simplified contents. Low demand. Low motivation from the students. Immigrant students' problems to access food.

Source: research data

The internet access in Chile has been an impediment to supervise the online classes. All participants refer to this reality

[...] The coordination thing is the most difficult. You start explaining somethings to the kids and then they said, “I have problems”, “I cannot enter the class”, “my phone is not working” [...] To help them improve their writing was very difficult under those conditions. (ESP_2).

The internet access in Chile has been an impediment to supervise the online classes. All participants refer to this reality:

Last year was... a disaster, because all my students live in not regulated homes, where the internet only works every now and then and for short periods of time, plus not all of them have access to it. (CHI_6).

That is how the educative gaps became bigger in relation to each family context and situation. More structured and accommodated families have been able to support their children’s education, while it has been more difficult for less fortunate ones to help through the process.

Most teachers state the families should oversee the student's commitment with the school and the online format. Considering the above, we can find committed and non-committed families:

In those kinds of students, where the parents were present... they did not have to be all day every weekday, they just had to have the cellphone at that time and big things were accomplished. For example: There was a boy who at the beginning of the year did not know how much is $4+4$, and now, at the end of the year I asked him how much was 23×4 and he answered without even calculating it. So, last year I cried when he did that because a boy who knew nothing accomplished things... (CHI_5).

Besides these circumstances, the educators also said they had to change the methodologies, and they prioritized and simplified the contents, focusing more on emotional education, and, on many occasions, leaving writing composition aside. The learning of the students in that regard has been considerably inferior compared to face-to-face learning:

I believe that from 100% of the learning that could have been done, uhm... only a 10% was fulfilled, not more. (CHI_3)

In terms of the teaching profession, the pandemic also affected the working hours. In these periods of tele-teaching, it has been especially complicated to discriminate between the personal life and the working time:

So, the fact that we are in a pandemic has caused they are not 36 hours, but many more, up to almost 40-50 hours. (CHI_2)

I had so much anxiety that I draw a line because I had no time to delimitate my life from the school. I felt so guilty about not being able to do my job and reach the families. [...] I got the last phone call from the head parent at 10:00 p.m. and then I said: this cannot be. I am not a 24-hour teacher. Then I changed my phone's chip and said: I need to establish some communication channels. (ESP_5).

Lastly, the Chilean teachers mention some cases of child abuse in their students' houses, while in Spain they indicate economic issues that lead to problems to get food in some families, this alongside the fact that they do not know the students' situation during the distance learning, cause the educators to worry.

I am terrified of the pandemic and leaving my children because my students told me many times of the problems in their families, things so serious that we had to inform the authorities and everything. So, I wonder how my kids are, how my little babies are. (CHI_4).

The ones who worry me the most are the immigrants, who usually have informal jobs and you do not know if they are actually working or if they have food to eat... (ESP_5).

For all these reasons, the teachers prefer in-person classes, and state the need to have physical, visual, and emotional contact with the young students. They also mention that tele-teaching impeded to give immediate oral feedback, losing clarity and effectiveness in the teaching-learning process as well as in the collaborative work and in the development of social skills.

The Spanish teachers admit there has been an increase of the use of technology as a consequence of the pandemic. They also had to change their work methodology due to the circumstances. The standards were lowered, and few new contents were introduced, prioritizing what was already acquired.

Additionally, correcting homework in the online format got complicated. To do this, it was necessary to call on the families. Moreover, the educators state that supporting students with special educational needs became harder.

It is highlighted that only two teachers stated that the circumstances did not affect much their teaching, because all the rest indicated they confronted complex and difficult situations.

When it comes to Chile, it is also mentioned an increase of the use of technology, but the interviewees put their focus on the lack of resources and connectivity issues. In general, the teachers bring out that the teaching and learning process gets more convoluted through the screen, due to the trouble of establishing affective relationships between teachers and students. Moreover, this reality makes difficult to assess assignments, mainly related to emotional and motivational support.

It affects the body language which I use a lot in face-to-face classes to motivate and support my kids' feelings to produce better texts. (CHI_6).

The applicants also bring up the absence of the students' motivation in teleteaching. Besides this, the class requirement level was lowered, and the actors only work with the objectives. On the other hand, some teachers mention the key role the families have in this teaching and learning process in online classes. Is that so teachers had to change their methodologies.

Category 4: writing difficulties

The development of writing skills has been especially complex, and it has not been a priority either. The table 6 summarizes the main issues Spanish and Chilean teachers have experienced.

Table 6 – writing difficulties

Chilean teachers	Spanish teachers
Problems in giving feedback on texts. Students' lack of motivation to write.	Problems to give feedback digitally. Inconstant processes.
Problems to monitor and follow the writing process. Low attention span to write.	Few or inexistant cooperative work or interaction between the students.

Source: Research data

The teachers have been reluctant to digital writing, and they have prioritized speaking tasks such as recordings (videos or audios) of the students presenting the activities:

The teaching of writing has been too difficult on these times. First of all, writing is not in the prioritized objectives, and it is demanded that we have to work with these objectives. It is true they are part of what the kids need to know. We have worked on writing anyway... yes, but not as I wanted. We have worked on it without the proper process. It has not been important.... It has not been of my taste. (CHI_6).

I am a paper person, as long as I can manage the paper, my students... Even if I send activities through the computer, currently in the early childhood... (ESP_2)

In the case of the teachers who have worked on writing, almost all of them adopted handwriting as the standard. Then the students sent pictures of their texts, which in many times were hard to check and give feedback because of the low quality of the pictures or the students' writings were illegible. The most used platform to send those pictures was Google Classroom, followed by Gmail and WhatsApp. Liveworksheets, Padlet and Kahoot have also been used:

We used Classroom, the Classroom Platform. They upload the pictures of the texts, I correct them and send them back. (ESP_5)

From the research there were found three main resources used to provide feedback on the students' writing productions: Through the Classroom platform observation; by returning the photography with the corresponding corrections; and with video calls or audios with suggestions.

Regarding the text checking, the participants state that it is unfavorable under the pandemic circumstances because peer evaluation and collaborative work processes are lost, which interfere with the peer revision of the texts.

Teachers in Spain find many obstacles to work on writing. First, the most mentioned issues are related to give feedback to the students by using technology and to the lack of digital resources of the learners:

The resources the families have, the spirit of the students, the perseverance in which the homework is hand in... Everything has been complex because there is no synchronous interaction. Days go by, students need to understand the written or oral comments we make in Class Dojo... Sometimes the kids use their parents' cellphones. They do not have their own computer nor tablet. That makes teaching harder. (ESP_2).

Secondly, the applicants state the key and important role the families have in the teaching and learning process of the students during the teleteaching period. In some cases, there is little interest from the families and insufficient coordination to arrange the class schedule. The delivery of the homework has not been constant either.

It is very complicated to correct the mistakes under these circumstances. All things considered, the responsibility lies with the parents. Many of them do not have the tools or skills to teach the students properly. (ESP_17)

Additionally, the cooperative work and the interaction among the students have been reduced in this period. The students' mood and low motivation have been impediments as well. On top of this, there is the impediment to work on calligraphy and the little to none writing habits the learners have.

In other words, to support the students and check their progress have been near to impossible according to the testimonies of the interviewed teachers. Furthermore, the mentioned difficulties are bigger in the first years of scholarship and with students who are just starting to learn how to read and write. In fact, two of the interviewees state that it has not been possible to work on writing.

In terms of the obstacles to practice writing while teleteaching in Chile, a considerable number of educators indicate that the biggest difficulty has been in giving feedback. The most mentioned reasons are the complexity to do it online and the time constraints.

As a teacher it is very hard to provide feedback on written activities in class. Even though activities are done and sent through email to be checked, writing is more than just a product and it deserves to be taught, even when the date is written in class, but it is too difficult to look over the students' texts through a camera in online classes. (CHI_1)

The interviewees also highlight the difficulties to monitor and supervise writing and to get the students interacting at the moment of checking what was produced in teleteaching. When it comes to motivation, some teachers state the students are not motivated to write, and practicing on it has even generated frustration and discomfort among the students and parents or tutors:

That grade presents major difficulties to work on their writing or activities related with it. This generates discomfort and considerable frustration in the students, which can be seen through their cameras and how the parents feel about the situation. (CHI_19)

Besides the lack of motivation, the learners also have an inconvenient struggle to focus:

The attention spans are even shorter online; To transmit to the students the importance of writing as a process: They are complacent with creating a final product. (ESP_15).

Many teachers have also mentioned that the obstacles to work with students from lower grades have become even bigger, because they still do not have a complete notion of their spatial concepts nor good calligraphy. Other students do not even develop their reading nor writing skills. On the other hand, students from higher grades have a better understanding of the importance of writing to communicate ideas.

Lastly, it is important to mention the significance of the teacher training in writing, which becomes even more important in this context:

The Good thing is that I was very well prepared in the didactic processes of writing: planning-writing-revising. I have applied that process in the Moodle platform and I have also been able to correct texts, recognize errors and successes and leave comments in the students' writings thanks to it. (CHI_2).

Category 5: arisen needs

In this teleteaching period a series of needs to teach and learn effectively have arisen. The table 7 presents the Spanish and Chilean teachers demands.

Table 7– Needs to confront tele-teaching

Spanish teachers	Chilean teachers
Training in ICT and tele-teaching. Training done in working hours by teachers who are currently teaching (To be more realistic and practic). General digital teacher training (what, how and when). Involvement of the universities. Training in language and writing. Digital programs to detect mistakes. Videogames to write and read aloud. Better efficiency in digital platforms. More teachers at the schools.	Training in ICT and tele-teaching. Training in the online teaching of writing and feedback. Training in innovative methodologies. Learning resources with games in digital environments. Technological devices for the students. Tools and training to interact with the families. Tools to support the students socioemotionally.

Source: research data.

The answers allow to see an imminent need for training in the use of ICT to confront teleteaching. Both countries demand resources to work more effectively on reading and writing in ludic ways and that permit online feedback.

Nevertheless, the Spanish teachers seem to be more critic about their labor conditions. They demand a practical and realistic training, which takes place at the schools during their working hours and with more involvement of the institutions: universities, permanent training centers and schools. Besides this, they also point out it is necessary to have more teacher personnel to attend the students' needs properly.

On the other hand, one of the main concerns of the Chilean teachers is the emotional well-being of the students. Additionally, they demand more training to work with the families, because this has been a key element to succeed in the teaching and learning process in online environments, especially with the youngest students.

Conclusions

A contrastive vision about how Chilean and Spanish primary school teachers have confronted the difficulties of teaching writing online during the COVID-19 pandemic has been shown through all this research. The analysis of the teachers' testimonies has allowed

to note that even though there is a considerable need to further train the educators in ICT and class methodologies, it seems the teachers have not been able to overcome changing their ways to teach. These results match with the vision of Bombini (2021) who stated that if teleteaching is proposed and applied without the support of the institutions nor an adequate instruction, there could be a failure when trying to take what is done in face-to-face classes to online means without the proper adequations and the required didactic transposition. In fact, with the provided testimonies, it does not seem to be progress in the ways to support in the writing process (RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN; CLEMENTE, 2013) nor giving feedback focus more on motivation and emotional well-being (FERNÁNDEZ; LUCERO; MONTANERO, 2016) rather than on the discipline itself (JARPA *et al.*, 2019).

In addition, we aimed to inquire the differences found in both contexts. It seems both situations are quite similar on the surface, nevertheless, a deeper analysis allows to see that Chilean teachers are more preoccupied about the consequences of not having presential classes to the emotional dimension of the learners (GARCÍA-ARIAS, 2021), while most of the concerns of the Spanish teachers are about claiming for their labor conditions, because they feel helpless by the institutions and the lack of personnel to distance teach properly.

However, in both contexts there is a physical and emotional exhaustion, as the pandemic caused overstraining which they were not prepared for: The working hours are not clearly stated nor differentiated from the free time. It is not always possible to work with the students due to the lack of resources or collaboration from the families. Therefore, the learnings have been reduced to the bare essentials. These results match with the findings of Guevara (2020) in the Mexican context. On top of this, there is also a feeling of not been able to reach the learners since the families are not prepared to support in the learning process. This matter is also highlighted in the work of Otero-Mayer, Gutierrez-de-Rozas and González Benito (2021).

When it comes to the digital resources used to work on writing, it can be stated that they are limited in both contexts. The Pandemic showed that schools do not use ICT regularly, as consequence, teachers had to catch up and put themselves into a difficult self-study process about the use of these technological tools (TRUJILLO, 2014). Nevertheless, in most cases this process did not take place, making the use of digital resources strictly to store data, digital records, send e-mails, and in some cases to use platforms that allow teachers and students interact. These results do not coincide with Vega-Córdova et al. (2020p. 201) who highlight Kahoot, Genial.ly and Padlet as “alternatives for the teacher to innovate and motivate the students to work collaboratively, giving them resources for them to become an ‘Autonomous information processor’”.

Domingo and Marqués (2013) refer to the frustration, insecurity, and bitterness the teachers feel due to the precarious and limited training they have in the use of technologies, and because of the lack of support the institutions provide in key moments. This situation could lead to the teachers inaction, matter that affects working on writing properly, since as it is stated by Molina and Colombo (2021), “Write to learn” requires the educators to situate the “literacy practices” in the center of the classroom activities, since only then the students will get the complete significance, and so, they will be able to participate critically in the building of their own knowledge.

We consider, as Vega *et al.* (2020) that teachers nowadays need to adopt a main role in the pedagogical change, taking the opportunities to self-train in the use of technological resources and innovative methodologies, either for intrinsic or extrinsic situations. Nevertheless, without the help of the educative institutions to generate learning spaces, this change will only be a dream. This makes us think of a prospective line of this research that would start with working with the public administrations by transmitting the finding of this research, making the opportunities to improve more evident, contributing to the development of a coherent and sustainable training program for teachers and families. Without the efforts of all the actors involved it will be difficult to improve in this matter.

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