Approaching Writing Skills in Third Graders Through Graphic Organizers

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Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Énfasis e Humanidades: Español e Inglés

Sample Acceptance Page

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RESUMEN ANALÍTICO EN EDUCACIÓN - RAE

1. Información General	
Tipo de documento	Trabajo de Grado
Acceso al documento	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Biblioteca Central
Titulo del documento	Approaching Writing Skills in Third Graders Through Graphic Organizers (Acercamiento a las habilidades de escritura en estudiantes de tercer grado a través de gráficos organizadores)
Autor(es)	Panche Arias, Wendy Jineth
Director	Francisco Pérez Gómez
Publicación	Bogotá. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, 2016. 80 p.
Unidad Patrocinante	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional
Palabras Claves	GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS, WRITING SKILLS. (GRÁFICOS ORGANIZADORES, HABILIDADES DE ESCRITURA)

2. Descripción
Trabajo de grado de carácter cualitativo que propone una estrategia de acercamiento hacia las habilidades de escritura en lengua inglesa en un grupo de estudiantes de tercer grado de un colegio público de Bogotá.

3. Fuentes
Ausubel, D. (1968). *Educational Phycology: A cognitive view.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.   Bromley, Modlo, & Irwin. (1995). *Graphic Organizers: Visual strategies for active learning.* New York: Scholastic.   Ellis. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.   Hyland. (2013). *Teaching and Researching Writing.* New York: Routledge.   Nation, I. (1990). *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary.* New York: Heinle and Heinle.   Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know.* New York: Newbury House.   Richards. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today.* United States: Cambridge University Press.   White, & Arndt. (1996). *Process Writing.* England: Longman.   Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2006). *Doing Action Research.* London: Oxford: University Press.

4. Contenidos
En el capítulo 1 se realiza la descripción, caracterización y diagnóstico de la población del presente estudio. Así mismo, se presenta la delimitación del estudio, la pregunta de investigación que es: ¿Cuál es el posible impacto de los gráficos organizadores en el acercamiento de las habilidades de escritura en estudiantes de tercer grado?   En el capítulo 2 se presenta el estado del arte. Además, se presentan los cuatro constructos que componen la presente investigación: Habilidades de escritura, La enseñanza de la escritura, Gráficos organizadores y Los Gráficos organizadores para mejorar las habilidades de escritura.

En el capítulo 3 se da a conocer el diseño pedagógico y la metodología que se empleó en el estudio.

En el capítulo 4 se presenta la intervención e implementación pedagógica realizadas. En el primer caso, se presentan los dos enfoques que se desarrollaron durante la investigación, su definición y su pertinencia en el estudio. Uno de ellos es el enfoque a base de tareas y, el segundo, el enfoque de los textos.

En el capítulo 5 se presentan los datos recolectados y su posterior análisis. Adicionalmente, se proponen cinco categorías de análisis que son explicadas detalladamente a través de los datos recolectados.

En el capítulo 6 se presentan las conclusiones que emergieron como resultado del proceso investigativo y pedagógico que se llevó a cabo.

Finalmente, en el capítulo 7 se presentan las recomendaciones que la investigadora sugiere para futuros estudios que desarrollen temas afines al presente trabajo de grado.

5. Metodología

En el presente trabajo de grado es un estudio de carácter cualitativo. Dicho estudio se desarrolló bajo el enfoque de investigación- acción en el que la investigadora se desenvolvió como docente y, a su vez, como investigadora. Respecto el proceso que se llevó a cabo, se realizó un diagnóstico a través de cuestionarios, entrevistas y diarios de campo. En la siguiente fase, se implementó la propuesta de los gráficos organizadores y la escritura. En las sesiones se desarrollaron las siguientes etapas: Input, Práctica y producción escrita. Al final del proceso, la investigadora trianguló los datos recolectados y desarrolló cada una de las categorías, dando como resultado un análisis de la intervención pedagógica realizada.

6. Conclusiones

En las conclusiones la investigadora determinó que las estudiantes desarrollaron un proceso significativo de acercamiento a la escritura en lengua inglesa a través de los gráficos organizadores que motivaron y posibilitaron este proceso. Además los temas trabajados durante las sesiones promovieron y motivaron el proceso de escritura en las estudiantes ya que se relacionaron con sus experiencias previas. Por otro lado, los gráficos organizadores permitieron a las estudiantes desarrollar habilidades organizacionales y estructurales con la cual se llevó a cabo un proceso significativo de escritura.

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Fecha de elaboración del Resumen:	27	05	2016

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SPECIAL LIST

1. ABSTRACT

The present study is an Action Research project that intends to analyze the impact of using graphic organizers as tools to approach writing skills in students of third grade at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño School in Bogota. To carry out this objective, the researcher implemented Task –Based Approach and Text- Based Approach during the sessions. Data gathered implementation included students' artifacts and questionnaires, a teacher's interview and the researcher's journal.

Findings pointed out that the use of graphic organizers approached writing skills in the students. Also, GO promoted organizational and structural skills. Additionally, the results indicated that writing process developed metacognitive and self- regulation processes in the students. Finally, writing skills allowed students to develop a meaningful editing process.

Key words: *Graphic Organizers (GO), writing skills, writing process and Tasks.*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Characterization

The present characterization intends to introduce relevant aspects concerning internal and external context factors of Liceo Femenino School, and to characterize 304 population of afternoon shift in relation to their cognitive, socioaffective, cultural and linguistic characteristics.

Local context

Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño is a public school located in the borders of San José and Restrepo neighborhood at 18 locality, Rafael Uribe Uribe at the south of Bogota city. This zone is recognized as residential, industrial and commercial. In the sector, there are different businesses and places such as footgear, banks, restaurants, clothing stores, markets, churches. Also, there are some known schools around such as Maria Montesori, Gustavo Restrepo and other public and private schools. In addition, the school is situated in front of Caracas Avenue, a popular street where Transmilenio buses circulate, and near to Primero de Mayo Avenue, another important street in the city that facilitates students' mobilization.

Institution characteristics

The school has only one seat located on Caracas Avenue N° 23-24 south at San Jose neighborhood. It is composed of a female population of 6130 students, and it offers the formal education levels:

kindergarten, elementary and high school that study in three academic shifts: morning, afternoon and night. In addition, the institution offers other academic services such as ICFES preparation to students of eleventh grade on Saturdays. Referring to primary level, there are about 2340 students; 40 or 35 in each classroom (Monroy, 2010).

With respect to the school's educational project (PEI), there is a slogan in the PEI that says: "Liceísta, reflexiva y autónoma, transformadora de la sociedad con perspectivas científicas y tecnológicas." (Liceo Mercedes Nariño, n.d) According to this vision, the school aims at educating autonomous women that reflect about their own reality and change it through scientific and technological perspectives.

In relation to the physical seat, the institution is organized in two zones. The first one corresponds to the high school level, meaning from 6 to 11 and the second to the primary level from 1 to 5 grade. Moreover, it is important to mention that the school has a special classroom in which the English language is learnt. In the case of primary level, it is named: "Laboratorio de Lenguas" In this place, students can find technological materials they can use to learn the English language. In the smart board the teacher plays videos and songs. Moreover, there are recordings to play songs and audios. Finally, this space has nine work tables.

Population characteristics

304 grade is composed of 41 students. According to the questionnaire (Annex 1) answered by the course, 27 % of the class are 9 years and 73% are 8. Also, students belong to second and third social-economical strata. Furthermore, questionnaires' results point out that pupils live in different neighborhoods located in Soacha, Ciudad Bolivar, Bosa and Rafael Uribe Uribe (Annex

1). In relation to the English class, the course studies the subject one hour per week on Mondays at the last hour. In this class, students do interactive activities with some videos, and speaking activities among them.

In order to characterize, to diagnose and to analyze population, the researcher used three instruments: the first one, a questionnaire students answered (Annex 1); the second, an interview teacher replied (Annex 2) and; finally, the field notes the researcher took to observe the class (Annex 3).

Regarding the cognitive processes students did, field notes evidenced that pupils developed different activities in which they learnt through *discrimination* when they saw images and colors with the purpose to identify vocabulary and sentences (Field note 3, line 10). In this case, there was a significant learning process because students learnt through visual input. Also, *memory* was another cognitive strategy to learn because they repeated what the teacher said in the class to memorize it. This is the case of commands such as greetings and questions teacher practiced and students answered the same commands (Field note 3, line 40) (Field note 1, line 1). In some cases this process turned mechanical because students did not understand the meaning of words they pronounced in class. Another relevant element was the *attention* students had to learn. In this sense, students paid attention to the teacher instructions and to the videos she played and tried to *imitate* them (Field note 2, line 10). However, they had a problem when a partner was talking because they got distracted easily and did not care about it.

In the socioaffective section, questionnaires (Annex 1) point out that 55% of students live with their parents: mother, father and siblings; 37 % live only with their father or their mother; and the last 8 % do not live with their parents, so they live with their grandparents, uncles or aunts.

Relations with them are good because they answered in the questionnaire that they liked to spend free time with their parents and their families.

With reference to classroom's relations and students' behaviors in the classroom, field notes show that pupils are respectful and discipline persons that share among them when the teacher is conducting the class. However, in some moments the class gets distracted and does not pay attention to activities that involve listening skills.

In relation to the cultural aspect, students share among them a good part of time in the school. There is a special day called "English day" where students present performances, dancing, singing and other cultural activities related to the English language. This event is presented once peer year and all graders participate in it.

In the linguistic part, field notes indicate that pupils know and manage their mother tongue. In the case of the English language, students do not have enough knowledge of it. The reason is they are starting their process of learning the English language. As a result, their vocabulary is limited, and their speaking production is restricted because they repeat words and sentences. Another condition the population has is that students are not in a bilingual context, so it is necessary to mention that they only study 1 hour of English and one hour of French, per week, so time to learn a language is not enough.

DIAGNOSIS

In order to explain the diagnosis, three sections will be developed. Firstly, the general results of each skill in the data collection done in the observations, field notes, and the interview done by the teacher; secondly, the description of difficulties and necessities which the population has based on the diagnosis; and finally the delimitation of the problem this research focuses on.

Data collection results

Data collection is based on the instruments mentioned before: teacher's interview, field notes the researcher did and questionnaires students answered. According to this, the researcher evaluated the processes of writing, speaking, listening and reading in students that are presented as follows.

According to the field notes (Field note 1, line 1; line Field note 3, line 15), listening skill is practiced in the majority of time during the class. For this reason, it is the main ability the teacher focuses on because students receive the input she gives them through instructions and greetings. A numerous part of pupils show a positive reception when the teacher speaks in English because they understand the majority of instructions she says. An example of this are instructions teacher says to them, that imply movement activities such as *sit down* or *stand up*. Some of the students do not understand these instructions at the beginning so, they imitate what their partners do (Field note, 2, line 15). In some occasions, teacher says instructions or scolding in Spanish, so this is a problem because there are simple instructions teacher can say in English and students could understand. From this problem derives translation, that it is present in the classroom when the teacher and students translate instructions into Spanish. (Field note 1, line 10 and 35).

In relation to speaking skill, Field Notes evidenced that the majority of activities were focused on the development of this skill (Interview, line 10). Also, knowledge students had, was related to the topics they had studied. As a result, students managed some words related to greetings, feelings and colors (Field note 1, line 20) (Field note 4, line 30). However, this skill was limited because the students used the language to communicate repetitive answers teacher asked to them so, this process was mechanical and, in some cases, students did not understand the real meaning of what the teacher said (Field note 2, line 5). Moreover, collaborative work was a methodology

in which the teacher developed this skill, so there were conversational activities in which students worked in pairs, but speaking was controlled by the teacher because she told them what to say (Field note 2, line 25). In a different way, students produced some words to some questions like "How are you?" "What is your name?" and "What color is that?" in which there were different answers like "happy, super, sad, so so, red, blue, green, (Field note, 2, line 35) (Field note 3, line 5) (Field note 4, line 10) so it is important for them to know more vocabulary in order to speak.

On the other hand, writing skills had not been practiced during English classes according to the interview the teacher did. Students had not practiced writing skills yet because they worked on the oral part most of the time. Also, students knew some words because they copied short sentences from the board with special colors, so this strategy enabled them to remember them (Interview, line 9). In a general point of view, writing was an imitation process for students because they did not use vocabulary they have learned from other activities. Additionally, these words were isolated, meaning, words were presented individually, as units, and not with a communicate function or with other words (Field note 1, Line 8).

Finally, field notes indicated that in the reading section, students had better results in this skill when texts were composed of pictures or images that support them (Field Note 1, Line 5) so images stimulated and motivated students to read. Also, students did not pronounce words they read correctly (Field note 1, line 50), and this was because the English language has a different correspondence between graphemes and phonemes, and they got confused with some words that are similar to Spanish language such as *black* with *blanco*. Another point to make is that students had not read paragraphs or texts in the class. Pupils read words or short sentences and they did not explore other texts.

Students' difficulties and necessities

According to the previous diagnosis, there were aspects to improve in the four skills, so in this section, necessities and difficulties will be described.

One of the difficulties students had was that they did not have enough vocabulary to produce a sentence by themselves. Words they knew were limited for them and it was necessary to create meaningful activities in which they could learn some vocabulary and their use in a context or real situations. Also, another requirement students had was that they did not receive enough oral and visual input, so they needed to be exposed to different resources to develop the same topic or idea in which they could receive a significant part of input in order to acquire new vocabulary and to use it in real situations.

In addition, speaking skill needed to be developed in a natural classroom, meaning, a space in which students can use the English language in real situations and to real purposes through communicative activities and not as a formality of the English class. Moreover, language should not have repetition and memorization. For this reason, the class could have different activities such as games or conversational activities in which they have fun and feel interested to participate.

In the reading part students had seen words as isolated units that were not connected among them. In this sense, it emerged the necessity to have a meaningful learning process of reading in which children understand that words are not isolated units; pupils needed to understand the function words have in texts because this aspect could help them to comprehend the English language better and to promote their interest in it.

Also, it is necessary to create a space in which activities are not monotonous and offer them a variety of possibilities to explore a topic through different activities such as games, videos, conversations or texts. These activities must be near to their context and reality.

Finally, as a conclusion, the population had many necessities to solve in future research projects in all the abilities. However, the current research focused on writing skills because this skill did not had any apparition in the classes.

Delimitation of the problem

To identify the problems the population had in writing skills, the researcher applied a test (Annex 4) that assessed students' abilities in writing. In this test, students had a model text, so the idea of the activity was to create their own production according to the model text. Finally, the researcher contrasted the productions of the students with the standards proposed by the Minister of Education (2006). The results pointed out the following difficulties:

In a general way, students could understand the content of the model text, so it was not difficult for them to adapt the model text. However, the results indicated that *students did not have enough knowledge of vocabulary to produce a piece of text.* This difficulty reflected that the fourth standard that says: "*Escribo información personal en formatos sencillos*" (2006) was not developed completely. Furthermore, there were other factors such as *mother tongue interference*: some students wrote some words in Spanish language, so students used them when they did not know how to write the word. Also, students did *not establish a difference* between phonemes and graphemes. They got confused when they wrote the phonemes because they wrote pronunciation. Moreover, students had some *interferences with the mother tongue syntax*. As a result, organization was similar to Spanish (Such as the case of adjectives and nouns). Finally, some

students show that they do not know the basic structures of the English language. This is the sixth standard proposed in the first cycle: "*Demuestro conocimiento de las estructuras básicas del inglés*" (2006), so this was another difficulty students had during the test with the use of the verb *To be* and the organization of the words in English language.

As it was presented, most of the standards of writing had not been developed in the population, because vocabulary students knew was limited and, most importantly, they did not use it in a real and meaningful way.

Finally, the present project focused on writing skills and the way in which students could develop them to acquire vocabulary. Also, it is important to mention that in classes the four skills were developed, so the project aimed to create integral classes, in which writing skills were the protagonists, but the other abilities were developed at the same time.

To achieve this purpose of the development of writing skills, this project proposed the following research question and objectives:

Research Question

What is the possible effect of using graphic organizers (GOs) on the approaching of writing skills in students of third grade?

General Objective

To analyze the impact that graphic organizers might have on the development of writing skills in English language in students of third grade at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño**.**

Specific objectives

- To identify the factors that influence students' process of writing in the English language**.**

- To promote a meaningful process of writing in English in a population of EFL students of third grade.

- To determine students' attitudes towards their own process of writing in English.

- To analyze the effect that tasks might have on the development of writing skills.

- To enhance a meaningful vocabulary learning process.

Justification

According to Lo & Hyland (2007) for the development of writing skills it is necessary for teachers to give a variety of opportunities and possibilities to students in which they can acquire the language and to express themselves. This idea is one of the goals this project points out because students need to find a meaningful way in which they can learn and promote their writing skills. As a way to develop students' writing production, the researcher chose Graphic organizers as a strategy to enhance writing skills. Graphic organizers (GOs) have been a good strategy in other studies because GOs enable students to organize information and their ideas of a text in a visual and verbal way. For this reason, it results in a meaningful process for children

(Chang, 2006). On the other hand, the function of GOS is not only to abstract information from texts; but also to develop thinking skills students will use in their future. Finally, another reason to develop this project is that elaborated studies have not investigated deeply how graphic organizers could be an effective tool to develop writing skills in EFL students.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will present previous studies and theories that support the current project. According to the research question and the general objective proposed, in the project there are two important constructs: writing skills and graphic organizers that are presented as follows.

State of Art

In the following section, different studies related to the use of Graphic organizers and writing skills as a way to develop students' production abilities will be presented.

In the first research done by Reyes (2011) the objective was to analyze how graphic organizers (GOs) improved reading and writing skills through the comprehension of descriptive texts, and how students reconstruct them. The population of this study was a group of sixth grade students in a school in Bogota that was in second grade of Basic English level. To collect data, researcher used pre-graphic and post-graphic organizers, and pre-focus and post-focus groups." (Reyes, 2011, 10). In the findings, researcher identified the way in which students made connections between each concept, and they established two main categories: the first one related to previous knowledge students had in their lives. The second category refers to the knowledge construction, it means, the operation students did to reconstruct knowledge that was presented in the texts they read. Also, students could improve their reading and writing skills because they produced mind maps and also short pieces of texts in which they rewrote the text proposed in class. This research is pertinent to the present research, because it shows that it is possible to apply GOs for the development of reading and writing skills to children.

In addition, the study showed students' process in these activities, so it is useful to understand their cognitive processes and how their minds work.

The second study was carried out by Echeverry and McNulty (2010). This action research project was focused on the reading comprehension skills and the use of different strategies such as graphic organizers, pre-reading activities and post reading activities among eighth grade students of a public school in Envigado, Antioquia. Instruments used by researchers were journals, a checklist, a feedback card for students to evaluate their perceptions and worksheets. In the findings, investigators discovered that the majority of students had a positive perception towards reading activities; also, with respect to previous knowledge students had an important role when students read and organized their mind; and the use of graphic organizers was a helpful strategy for students to organize their knowledge about readings, and they liked them. This study is useful for the present research because it mentions an important part that teachers forget in some occasions: feelings and perceptions students had when they do activities in class. Also, it shows the possible types of graphic organizers that are useful in EFL students to comprehend a text.

To continue with the international studies, a third study was developed by Rutai (2013) in Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of the research was to examine the impact graphic organizers had on the enhancement of reading comprehension in a group of elementary FL. Participants of the study were students of fifth grade of a private school. Instruments used by the researcher were pretests and post-test given to the course and an opinion questionnaire, researcher wanted to see students' process before and after the implementation of graphic organizers. In the results researcher found that post-test revealed that students had higher scores in reading comprehension activities than pretests. Also, students' ability to comprehend texts, in literal and reorganizational way, increased in a significant way with the use of graphic organizers and their abstraction and, finally, students' perception of doing graphic organizers was positive. This research is relevant to

the present study because it shows motivation students have to develop these types of activities and positive results in comprehension students' abilities.

Finally, the research elaborated by Gorjian, Khoshakhlagh, & Bavizade (2015) was a case of comparison study developed in Taiwan. The intention of the study was to compare two groups. The first one that used graphic organizers and the second one that used true/false questions and traditional activities. In this way, researchers analyzed the performances of each group and determined what groups were more effective in reading comprehension.

The population of this study was a group of 50 students of an institution in Ahwaz from 13 and 16 years. Also, instruments used were a pretest and a posttest reading for the two groups. In the findings, researchers concluded that the group that used graphic organizers had better results than the group of traditional class. This is because they managed visual and verbal elements to abstract information. Also, graphic organizers were the most effective way to abstract information for texts than traditional methods.

Last study is appropriate for the current study because it demonstrates how useful graphic organizers are in order to develop comprehension ability and to abstract information. This can be a first step to develop writing skills with children by themselves.

As it was seen, the previous studies show that GOs have been implemented as a tool to improve reading skills more than writing skills. Furthermore, GOs have not been implemented enough in primary levels, so this is one of the reasons why this project will analyze their possible impact in this population. However, there are some studies related to writing skills in primary level that are presented as follows.

The first one was developed by Montaña & Mora (2009). The objective of this project consisted on the improvement of reading and writing skills in students of fourth grade at Instituto Pedagógico Nacional. The researchers implemented the direct observation and questionnaires to

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characterize and to diagnose the population. Next, the researchers identified the problem and decided to create some strategies based on communicative learning and tasks they called "telegraphic strategy". The idea was that students took into account the previous knowledge they had learnt through imitation and memory to produce a creative writing production. The results point out that students had a positive attitude towards these type of activities and the importance that cartoons and visual tools have for them to produce a text.

The second study was elaborated by Valbuena, Salas, & Bedoya (2010). The participants of this study were students of third grade at Liceo Femenino School. The idea of this project was to find strategies that allow students solve the confusion between graphemes and phonemes they had in writing skills. To diagnose population researchers used participant observation, academic guides and surveys. The researchers proposed the scaffolding in order to create dynamic activities in which students could feel interested and have the necessity to write. Also, these productions had a communicative intention into the classroom. The results point out that students could write words in English correctly, so they could solved the difficulties students had in spelling and syntax in English language and, moreover, they had a positive attitude towards English class.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the following section the two constructs that support the present project will be presented.

Writing skills

Writing has been defined as one of the most complex and effortful skills because it involves physical and mental activities whose purpose is to express and impress a particular public (Nunan, 2003). From that point of view, Hyland (2013) argues that writing skills are an expressive, cognitive, and situated process writer applies to create texts.

Also, in a social and cultural perspective, writing skills are considered as a necessity. Nowadays, our globalized society requires competent professionals that manage writing abilities to communicate between countries or businesses in an effective way.

Taking into consideration the previous discussion, this project conceives of writing as an individual, social, and cultural process whose purpose is to communicate. According to this, writing skills need to be practiced since elementary grades.

The following part will focus on the development of writing skills in EFL classroom and factors that influence it.

Teaching writing skills in EFL classroom

In a pedagogical perspective, writing skills have been considered as a *process* in which teacher promotes and facilitates writing students' production in order to achieve pupils' communication.

To achieve this objective, Krashen (1984) proposes that it is necessary to conceive writing skills are acquired and not learned, meaning, that writing would not be a mechanical activity students do. Moreover, Krashen (1984) argues that writing is a process that students acquire by reading, practicing and improving their pieces of texts. According to this, the classroom could be a space where students can practice writing skills in an integrated way and not as a set of separated sentences that are not connected among them (Foad & Jamal, 2012).

Another important aspect is teachers' role in this process and how they can achieve students' production of writing. In this way, Hyland (2013) theory proposes the role of the teacher as a guide, meaning, as a person that orients students in their process of writing. Also, it is necessary to mention that writing skills involve a process so, some theorists propose different models to develop writing skills at schools. In this sense, the researcher took two models that are presented in *figure 1*:
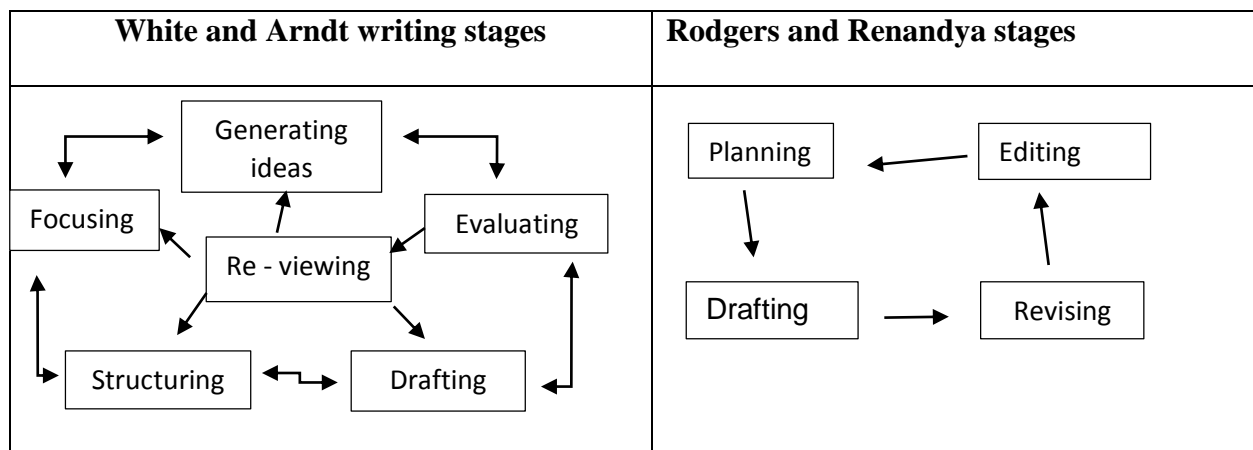
White and Arndt writing stages	Rodgers and Renandya stages

Figure 1

As it is seen, in the first model proposed by White & Arndt (1996) there are six stages that are not lineal. It starts with the generation of ideas, focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating and re-viewing. However, these stages are reciprocal, so the writer can return to the previous stage because all of them are connected and the writer uses in different moments. The second model proposed by Richards & Renandya, (2002) results simpler than the first one. In opposition, the second model proposes a lineal sequence of four stages that starts with *planning, drafting, revising and editing*. It is necessary to mention that this model is circular, so the writer does not finish his process in the last stage, it starts again as a spiral.

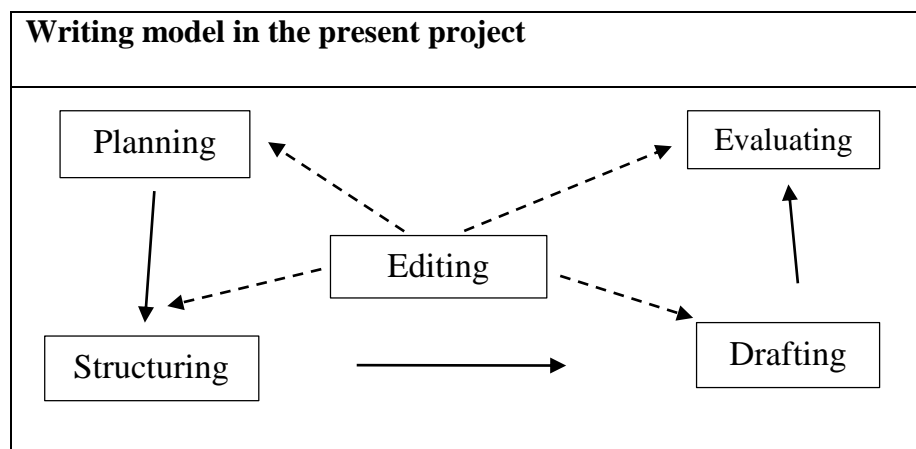According to these models, the current project proposes the following model:

Writing model in the present project

Figure 2

Figure 2 presents a sequential model that is divided in four lineal stages: *planning, structuring, drafting,* and *evaluating.* In addition, there is a parallel stage that is present in each step: *editing*. The objective is to make students aware of the importance of each part of the process and check other aspects such as grammar, coherent and punctuation, so teacher will play an important role in this aspect.

The following part will focus on a tool the researcher can use to promote writing skills.

Graphic Organizers

Respect to this tool, Bromley, Modlo & Irwin (1995) say that a graphic organizer is a *"visual representation of knowledge."* Meaning, it is a visual way to represent information and to structure it. Also, Sajam and Rajan (2013) say that a graphic organizer consists of a schemata, diagrams and tools that connect thinking-skill verb. This representation is materialized by a sequence of cages and circles that are connected by narrows. In addition, the main function of graphic organizers is to structure and organize information through mind maps.

Graphic organizers as a tool to improve writing skills

In the educational area, graphic organizers have been used as a tool to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through the representation and organization of ideas in a visual way. In this sense, it is necessary to mention that GOs privileged visual-spacial intelligence according to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences in the students (Chang, 2006).

Also, GOs are a strategy to achieve students' written production because GOs enable students to categorize information that is presented in texts and to develop logic, imagination and creativity (Campos, 2005). In relation to writing processes, GOs have an important role in the

stages of *structuring*, *planning* and *focusing* because they allow students to organize ideas and to make them clear in a structured way (Bromley, Modlo, & Irwin, 1995).

Finally, one of the most important goals of the current project was to explore the way in which graphic organizers are a bridge to connect writing skills and students' ideas in order to produce texts.

CHAPTER 3

PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology

This section includes the following methodological aspects: the research approach, the research design, the instruments the project used to collect data, ethical considerations, the researcher's role, and validity of the study.

Research Approach

This study was developed upon the Action Research (AR) paradigm. According to Burns (2010) AR is defined as an approach in which the teacher researches about his own profession. For this reason, it is a "*self-reflexive, critical and systematic approach to explore teaching contexts*" (Burns, 2010). In this way, AR is mainly characterized because it connects theory and practice and improves educational practice (Mertler, 2009). Furthermore, AR is composed, at least, by four stages: Planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2010). Each stage represents an essential part of research process and they are cyclical.

The current research was an AR project because the researcher performed two functions: as a teacher and as a researcher. Also, each part of the AR stages was developed. Firstly, data collected taken in the classroom of third grade and the diagnosis (Reflection). Secondly, the design of a strategy to overcome the writing necessity through the use of graphic organizers (Planning). Thirdly, the intervention developed (Action) and the analysis of the previous process. Also, the intention of the project was to analyze the impact GOs had in the enhancement of writing skills in the classroom and to know students' opinions about

their process of writing. To achieve this objective, the researcher chose the following instruments: artifacts, logs and questionnaires.

Instruments to collect data

The first instrument chosen to collect data were artifacts. In a general definition, artifacts are the results students have about their process (Amos, 2002). This instrument is necessary in this project because students worked with GOs that are visual materials, so artifacts were the way to evidence the students' processes and they were a source of information to analyze for the researcher. Also, the artifacts allowed students to develop a meaningful writing process.

The second one was an interview the researcher did to the teacher who was accompanying the process of students and the researcher. In this project, it was necessary to know different perceptions and points of view about students' processes of writing and the development they had to triangulate. For this reason, the researcher applied a semi structured interview because there are two advantages: Firstly, it focused on specific questions the researcher could use. Secondly, the researcher had the possibility to be flexible during the questions and adding one spontaneously (Nunan, 1992).

The third instrument were questionnaires. As it was mentioned, one of the objectives pointed out that it was important to take into consideration students' opinions towards their own process of writing and towards the project. In this sense, questionnaires were a way to get information from a large population because they enabled to standardize results. Furthermore, through the use of questionnaires, pupils could express their ideas and perceptions about the project and how they felt towards them. (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005).

Finally, the fourth instrument researcher used were journals. According to the paradigm of AR, one of the elements the researcher has to take into account in her process is her own reflection about her role as a teacher and as a researcher. The journal is an instrument that allows the researcher to reflect and to be critical in a systematic and organized form (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001), for that reason journal was an appropriate instrument in the present project.

Ethical Issues

According to Bryman (2008), the proposal of ethical considerations is to ensure participants' protection of any emotional, physical, mental, and financial damage. In this way, this project applied 4 aspects according to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2007): Firstly, informant consent. In this case, approbation parents did through a consent letter for their daughters to participate in the present project (Annex 5). Secondly, participants' anonymity and confidentiality to protect their identities. In this sense, the researcher referred to students by flower names. And thirdly, the acceptance of the research setting school did to develop the project.

Another aspect that concerns the research is researcher's role that, as it was mentioned, follows Action Research paradigm so, according to Burns (2010) the researcher has two functions: as a teacher, that proposed and taught; and as a researcher that analyzed the learning process students had.

Validity of the study

Validity is an essential part of a research. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) validity is an indicator that gives veracity to the research through the use of certain instruments that are collected. In this way, it is important to take into account that the researcher should take into account *"honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved"* (Cohen, Manion &

Morrison, 2007, 133) to present a pertinent information to analyze to readers. In order to achieve

validity, this study adopted the triangulation technique. The triangulation is an effective way to

demonstrate validity because it contrasts two or more data collection resources in order to get a

verity result. For this study, the researcher used this technique to analyze data collection that

came from different instruments.

CHAPTER 4

PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The current section will describe the following aspects: first, the timeline in which the implementation of the project developed; second an example of a lesson plan that applied in the project and, finally, the approach the researcher used in the project.

Approaches

To begin with the pedagogical implementation, it is necessary to focus on the approaches the researcher will apply to achieve the objective mentioned. In this way, the project focused on two approaches: The Task-Based Approach and the Text- based approach.

Task- Based Approach

The first approach the present project took into account is the task- based approach. This approach has been defined as series of tasks that allow students to explore the language through authentic, functional and communicative activities with meaningful purposes (Nunan D. , 2004). In addition, Willis, (1996) argues that the one of the main objectives of TBA is that students obtain a result . According to this, tasks allow students not only to learn a language, also to learn how to use it in real contexts with communicative purposes. To achieve this objective, it is necessary that the teacher adjusts the series of tasks according to the necessities students have (Willis & Willis, 2006).

There are different models of tasks theorists have proposed (Nunan D, 2004) (Ellis, The Methodology of Task-Based Teaching, 2006) (Ruixue, 2006). However,the present project will take some elements of the model proposed by Willis (1996) and adapted to this project.

Willis (1996) stages	Stages in the present project
1- PRETASK Pretask: Introduction to the topic and task. 2- TASK - Task: Students do the task in small groups or in pairs. - Planning: Students prepare a report to present about their own process during the task - Report: students talk about their experience during the task. 3- LANGUAGE FOCUS (POST –TASK): - Analyzis: Students analyze their own process of learning. - Practice: Students repeat the activity and improve it according to the previous feedback they received.	1- PRETASKS Introduction to the general and specific topic. 2- TASK Task: Students will do the task individually (Graphic organizer and writing production). 3- POST-TASK - Analyzis: Students analyze and correct their own process of writing. - Practice: Students correct their productions.

Figure 3

As it is seen in *Figure 3*, the first model of TBA proposes three main categories that are divided in six subcategories: firstly, the introduction of the topic through the pre-task; secondly, *task*, in which students develop the task and a metacognition process when they report and reflect about their own process. Finally, the Language Focus or post-task in which students analyze and correct their mistakes during the task and practice again. The second model has been adjusted to the main objective of the present project that is to promote writing skills in the students. It has the same three stages, but the first category has been denominated as pre- tasks. During this phase students will be familiarized with the topic, and also, they will receive the input to acquire vocabulary, useful structures and communicative expressions to use in the final production the

end. In the second phase called task, students will do their writing tasks individually. Finally, the last stage denominated post-task is connected with the step of *editing* presented in the writing model so, students will correct their own writing productions in these subcategories. Another important aspect to mention is that these stages will be developed in a long-term period of time.

Text-based approach

The second approach this project took was Text Based-Approach that focuses on the "*text*". One of the objectives of this approach is to present words, phrases and sentences as *texts* and not as isolated words that are not meaningful. According to Richards (2006) text-based approach focuses on the function texts of have in the classroom and how to incorporate them in order to produce another text, so texts are seen as "*structured sequences of language that are used in specific contexts in specific ways" (*Richards, 2006, 36*)* In this way, words are not isolated units, but words compose a meaningful unity in a called "text" that belongs from a particular context.

Also, this approach focuses on the value and functionality texts have in relation to their content (Scott, 2005), so the intention in this project was that students learned that a text has a function and a communicative purpose, in that sense, they recognized that their productions were meaningful. Furthermore, through this approach students learned how structuring a text and the elements that compose it. As a result, students produced their own productions according to knowledge students had learned in the previous classes.

In a general way, the last two approaches guided the development of the present project. Also, approaches responded to the main objective of the project that was to develop writing skills in a meaningful environment. In the next part, the chronogram is presented.

Timeline

In relation to the pedagogical intervention, the project was organized in 3 unities that were developed in 13 weeks. The unities are presented in the following table:

Unity	Topic	Activities	Time	Pragmatic function	Use of language
1. Describing my pet	General topic: The animals. Particular topic: My pet.	Conversations, reading, drawing writing individual, and GOs activities.	Week 1 to week 4	Description and communication.	Grammar: verb to be, simple present. Vocabulary: Parts of the body, colors, numbers, verb
2. Knowing a family member	General topic: The family Particular topic: a family member.	Reading activities, conversations, GOs activities and writing productions.	Week 5 to week 8	Description and communication.	Grammar: verb to be, simple present. Vocabulary: Parts of the body, adjectives and professions.
3. My best friend	General topic: Friendship Particular topic: My best friend.	Reading activities, GOs activities, writing productions and conversational activities.	Week 8 to 15.	Description and communication.	Vocabulary: adjectives, parts of the body, school supplies, professions. Grammar: Verb to be, present simple prepositions of place.

Figure 4

Figure 4 illustrates the four modules in which the project is divided. The first module was developed from the first week to the fourth week. This unity is called: "Describing my pet". Activities consists on conversations, drawing, reading and writing activities. In the second module called "A family member" students will do grouping and individually activities. Also, they will work with videos, workshops and writing productions which will span from week 5 to

week 8. The third module named "My best friend" will develop from week 8 to week 15 through conversational, reading, writing and physical activities about this topic. Each unity had the same structure to develop as follows:

1- Introduction to the general topic.

2- Activities about the general topic and introduction to the particular topic.

3- Workshops.

4- GOs Workshop.

5- Final production on the particular topic.

6- Editing process

GENERAL TOPIC

⬇
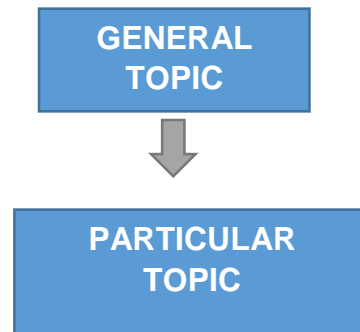
PARTICULAR TOPIC

In the first moment, the general topic was presented to students through warm- up activities; in a second phase, the researcher developed some activities to know and to reinforce the topic and to introduce the particular topic that emerges from the general one with vocabulary and sentences; in a third moment, the students developed some workshops about this particular topic, so they will practice writing production; in a fourth moment, the researcher will introduce and explain how to use the GO to pupils and they structured their writing production about the particular topic ; in the fifth moment, at the last stage students produced their writing texts according to the graphic organizers they already had done and the topic they learnt; finally, students edited their own writing productions based on the teacher's feedback.

In order to exemplify one of the previous modules, the following lesson plan shows the way in which second topic Body parts were developed:

Profile		

Name of the lesson plan: Knowing some animals
Subject: English   **Grade:** Third
Institution: Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño   **N° of students:** 42
Vocabulary: Body, eyes, face,

Objectives		

- The student will be familiarized with the vocabulary of the topic.
- The students will produce a piece of text about a member of her family.
- The student will identify the

Opening		
Teacher greets students.	Whole class	1 minute

Pre – activities		
Activity 1 Warming-up activity	Whole class	15 minutes
Teacher will play a short video of Goldilocks and the three bears.	Whole class	20 minutes
Activity 2 Follow up activities Students will develop a workshop about the story, so they will describe each character of the story and their role in the family.	Whole class	25 minutes

While activities		
Activity 3 Teacher will show a short presentation about the Simpsons family. Before this she will ask them: - Do you know this program? - Do you like it? - Who is your favorite character? - How is the father of this family? - How is the daughter? Then she will do a matching activity with each character of the Simpsons family. *Activity 4*	Each student Whole class	30 minutes 10 minutes

Students will choose a character of this family. Then they will do a matching activity and they will describe a member of them.		
Post- activities		
Activity 1 Students will choose a member of their family. Then they will write the characteristics of them in the Graphic Organizer. *Activity 2* Students will write a paragraph of their family members based on the Go they developed previously.	Groups Individual work	1 hour 1 hour
Closure		
Teacher will finish the class and ask students if they like GO or not and why.	Whole class	5 minutes
Assessment:		
Final compositions of students.		
Resources:		
Videos, cards, pictures, papers.		

In the previous lesson plan, the general topic of the module parts of the family. The objective was to start the sessions with the general topic and progress to the particular one, a member of their family. In this part of the process GOs were focused on the topic of the member. In this way, teacher gave them input about how to write a text and organize their students' ideas with a model text to, finally, produce a paragraph by themselves. So this is a general look at the structure of one of the lesson plans. As it was mentioned, this lesson plan was meant to be

developed in 5 weeks and it corresponds to the second module, so for this reason there are some

activities that are longer than others. Therefore, the purpose is to have a sequential process in

which topics are articulated.

CHAPTER 5

DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter aims to display the process of data collection the researcher developed and the analysis she did.

CATEGORIES

Before starting the categories, it is necessary to mention some considerations the researcher took into account to develop the process of data collection. First, questionnaires students answered were collected at the end of the second phase to evidence pupils' opinions during the process. Second, the artifacts and the journals were collected during the whole process of implementation with the purpose of showing students' progress. Furthermore, the researcher selected specific artifacts and extracts intending to include all the elements found in the study. Finally, the teacher's interview was collected during the third phase of the project. After the data collection stage, the researcher tabulated, triangulated and organized the information in a map (*Figure 4*). As a result, the following categories emerged.
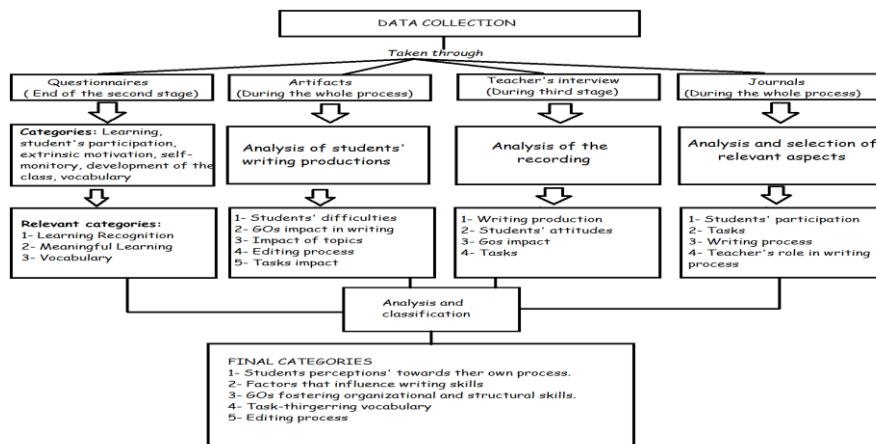

Figure 5

5.1.1 STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THEIR OWN PROCESS OF WRITING

The first category focuses on students' opinions towards their own process of writing. One objective of the current project aims to know students' impressions and the opinions they gave to their writing process and how they felt during the sessions. As a result of the questionnaires done by the researcher, three sub categories emerged.

Learning Recognition

An important aspect students expressed was that they have learnt during the English classes. Based on Krashen's principles (1988), this is called "learnt system", a final product of an instructional process in which the student is conscious about a particular knowledge he or she has learnt. Furthermore, the student follows his or her own learning process.

Supporting the previous ideas, researchers have defined these elements as part of a metacognitive process (Azevedo, 2005) (Brown, 1987) (Borkowski, 1992). According to Winne (1996), in the last phase of the metacognition cycle, the student monitors, reflects and assesses his or her own learning process. Taking into account these conceptions, the following students answered the question: *¿Cómo te han parecido las clases de inglés?* And *¿Por qué?*

Sunflower: *"Muy buenas. Porque podemos aprender a hablar muy bien y también a pasar al frente y decir en inglés"*

Holly: *"Muy buenas, porque uno ya sabe escribir en inglés y uno puede entender lo que escribe"*

As the previous extracts show, the students recognized and reflected about the knowledge they have learnt in the English language. In Sunflower's case, the student emphasized on the speaking skill she learnt. Also, when the student said: *"pasar al frente y decir en inglés"* it is seen that she reflected about the use of speaking skill, not as an individual activity, but as an interactive and communicative activity in which she communicated to her partners, so this is a part of the

34

metacognition process because the student recognized the importance of learning and using the speaking skill in a foreign language. Moreover, in *Holly's* case, the student recognized that she has learnt to write in the English language. Most importantly, the student mentioned that she *understands* her own writing productions. In these two aspects it is seen that the student has developed a *self-monitoring process* (Dunlosky, Hertzog, Kennedy, & Thiede, 2005) because she has observed her progress in writing skills, and especially, she is conscious about it.

Also, it is necessary to mention that while *Sunflower* emphasized on the writing process, *Holly* emphasized on speaking skills. This is because the learning process is not equal for the students, and according to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1993), each person has different ways to learn. In this case, *Holly* focused on visual activities and *Sunflower* on auditory activities. In this way, the teacher's role is to create different activities through different sources that allow students to explore and learn a foreign language in different ways (Armstrong, 1994).

Meaningful Learning

According to Ausubel (1968) meaningful learning (ML) refers to the capacity students have to embrace and relate new knowledge with previous structures, to learn meaningfully. Following this idea, Rogoff (1990) argues that it is important to consider a "situated meaning" learning process. In other words, the use of out-of-school-contexts in the classroom because they stimulate authentic, meaningful and useful knowledge acquisition in communicational skills.

To achieve ML, Ausubel (1968) points out three aspects to take into account: First, well organized relevant knowledge structures; second, emotional commitment; and third, conceptual clear subject matter. As a result of these elements, students will have a meaningful learning process in the school.

One objective of the project was to propose topics that call students' attention and attraction to write. To aim at this objective, the researcher chose three topics: The family, the pet and the best friend. In the question : *¿Qué es lo que más te gusta escribir en inglés?*", two students answered:

Iris: "Todo lo de mi familia"

Mandrake: "Los sentimientos como la felicidad"

As it is seen in the previous extracts, these students expressed they liked to write about feelings or the family topics. In *Iris'* answer, the student mentioned she enjoyed writing about her family while in *Mandrake*'s answer, the student gave more importance to the feelings. Considering Ausubel theory (1968), it is evident that emotional and daily topics promote students' motivation to write and to communicate their ideas in English. The reason is that students activated their previous experiences and knowledge about their families and emotional situations. This is an elemental factor Dewey (1938) recognizes as a part of meaningful learning, when the student relates and produces knowledge through his or her own experiences with the world.

Furthermore, these ideas show the necessity of proposing meaningful topics in the classrooms (Odell, 1993). Students start to assign a value to people and to the reality. For this reason, through these activities, students can discover their own ideas and thoughts about the world that is presented to them and to configure their own vision (MEN, 2012).

Vocabulary Learning

According to Ghazal (2007), vocabulary is a group of words that label objects, actions and ideas to achieve a pragmatic function. Learning vocabulary in a foreign language is a crucial element to develop, not only the four skills of a language, but to communicate ideas to the others. From this vision, some scientists argue that it is important to create strategies to encourage

students to learn vocabulary and to be conscious about the importance of it (Hatch & Brown, 1995) (Nation, 1990) (Flohr, 2008).

Taking into consideration students' opinions, learning vocabulary was a factor that influenced students' perception towards the English language. This is evident when students answered the question "*¿Qué es lo que más te gusta escribir en inglés?*" two students answered:

> Daisy: "so so, happy, fat, small y pretty"

> Lotus: "Porque aprendo mucho. Yo ya sé escribir muchas palabras en inglés"

In this extracts, there are two types of answers that refer to vocabulary learning. In the first case, *Daisy* expressed two important aspects. First, she mentioned specific words she most likes to write in English, meaning, she has given importance to these words and she enjoys writing them. Second, the student knows the meaning of these words, so she has internalized these words during her writing process. In the second case, *Lotus* is conscious about her own process and she recognizes she has learnt "many" words in the English language. Based on Oxford theories (1990), this is called "self-directed" that is a factor that happens when students are independent and gradually gain confidence, involvement and profiency to apply and use the vocabulary they learn. Moreover, the student is learning the importance of learning vocabulary and she is conscious about the necessity to learn it.

Finally, in the category *thriggering vocabulary task* the reader will find the tasks' role during this process, and the influence they had on the development of vocabulary in the students.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WRITING SKILLS

This category intends to describe and analyze the factors that affected students' writing process. To carry out the analysis, the researcher took some artifacts and the journals to evidence students' development in writing skills. Consequently, three sub-categories appeared. The first

and second refer to students' difficulties during the process and the third one to a positive aspect which was found.

Interferences

Interferences have been one of the main problematic issues EFL students face during their learning process. Some researchers define "interference" as an automatic transfer, meaning, as 'errors'[1] that happen during the learner's process of a foreign language that can be trace by the mother tongue or a second language (Ellis,1997) (Lott, 1983) (Dulay, Burth, & Krashen, 1982).

In this case, the phenomenon is caused because, most of the time, students are exposed to their mother tongue and they do not have enough practice of the English language (Solano, Gonzales, Ochoa, Quiñonez, & Castillo, 2014) . As a result, they do not establish the differences between the Spanish and the English language. Different theorists have studied and classified the types of interferences (Bhela, 1999) (Alonso, 1997) (Berthold, Mangubhai, & Batorowicz, 1997) (Ellis, 1997).

Syntactical interferences: It refers to the structure of grammar, words organization and tenses students transfer from their mother tongue to a foreign language (Kaweera, 2013). In the analysis, the researcher identified this type of interference:

Years old 37, is lovely No is mad, is happy the super

Sunflower's production

Salad, fruit and ice-crem

*Lavender's production*

Mi granny has 77 years.

Clover's production

In the previous extracts, students produced a syntactical interference. In the *Sunflower's* case, the student transfered the structure of the

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[1] Ellis (1997) defines an 'error' as a gap in the learner's knowledge, meaning, that the learner does not have enough knowledge of a foreign or a second language.

Spanish structure of tacit subject in the phrase "*no is mad*" meaning, she is not mad. It is clear that she did not use the English structure of subject+ verb+ adjective. Also, in *Clover's* production, the student wrote "*my granny has 77 years*" meaning that her granny "*is*" 77 old. In linguistic, this is called a "calque", meaning, a word that is transferred as literal from a language to another. In this case, the word does not have the same meaning in English so, meaning changed and the student did not know that age is expressed through the verb *To be*. Finally, *Lavender's* production reflected a common syntactical error most of the students make. The phrase *pronoun + adjective* that is transferred from the Spanish language with *salad fruit* instead of *fruit salad* .

Lexical and spelling interferences: It relates to the borrowing words and sounds learners transfer from their mother tongue to a second or a foreign language (James, C & Klein, 1994). As a result, it is common that learners present orthographical, spelling, false cognates, and morphologycal difficulties (Alonso, 1997). Taking students' writing productions, the following lexical and spelling interferences were identified:
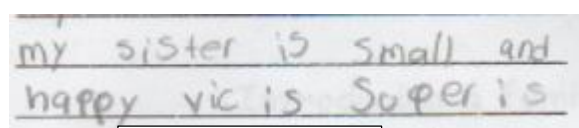
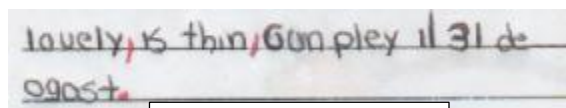*Iris' production*
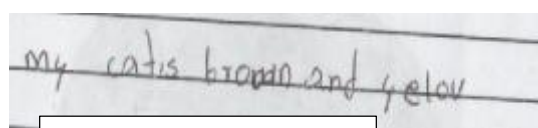
*Freesia's production*
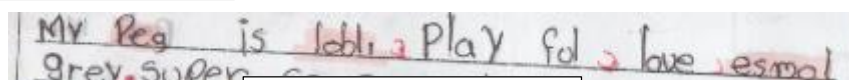
Rose's production

The previous extracts show students' errors in spelling words. In *Iris'* production, the student wrote "*vic*" instead of *big.* In *Rose*'s case, the student wrote 'ped', 'lobli', and 'esmol' instead of *pet*, *lovely* and *small,* and *Freesia's* wrote 'yelou' instead of *yellow.* As it is seen, this was the most common difficulty students presented. The reason is that students transfered Spanish

graphemes and phonemes to the English language. As a result, students do not follow English rules of phonology. (James, C & Klein, 1994) .

Interference between two foreign languages: Finally, the last interference is related to learners' confusion between two foreign languages so learners transfer words or structures from a foreign language to the other. In this case, the students were learning English and French at the same time with the same intensity, so they are bilingual simultaneous learners (Ortiginosa, 2010). Therefore, three students had these results:
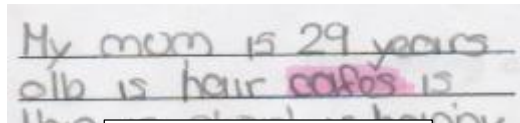

Orchid's production
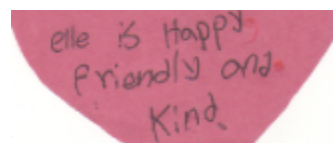
Iris' production

The previous extracts show two interferences from the French language. In this *Orchid's* case the student wrote the French pronoun 'il' which means *He* in English language. While in *Iris'* case, the student wrote the French word *elle* that means *she* in English language. It is evident that the students have seen these words in their French classes and they got confused between these foreign languages. Finally, *Orchid* wrote the pronoun "il" instead of the article "le", so she did not know the correct use of these article in French language. As it is seen, these students did not know these words in English or in French language. According to Buitrago, Ramirez, & Rios (2011) this phenomenon is caused because students do not have enough knowledge of any of these languages, as a result, they do not establish the differences between them. In this case, the students compensated these 'errors' writing these words in the French language.

Shortage of vocabulary

Another important element in students' writing production was the lack of vocabulary they presented. As it was seen in the previous categories, students recognized they have learnt some vocabulary. However, students' writing production reflected their shortage of vocabulary during the process. Respect to this aspect, Alonso (1997) argues that another difficulty students present during writing process is the 'incomplete knowledge of vocabulary'. As a result of this, students opted to write the Spanish words they did not know in English language:

Dahlia's production

Marigold's production

As the previous extracts show, these students produced pieces of texts with Spanish and words because they did not know how to write these words in the English language. With respect to this aspect Chomsky (1986) arguments that this is not an error, but it is an interference. The reason is that the learner tries to imitate or transfers his knowledge to the second language, so he does connections between the code he knows and the new one. According to Alonso (1997) this is called 'substitution', meaning, a replacement students do when they do not know enough vocabulary, so they substituted the English words with the Spanish counterpart.

Topics to write

This final subcategory refers to the impact topics had in the students and how they affected their writing process. As it was mentioned in the *students' perceptions* category, the topics proposed during the sessions were decisive to promote students writing production because they were attracted for them.

Different researchers have recognized that choosing attractive topics for students is fundamental in the development of writing process (Pennebaker, 1997) (Graves, 1985) (Hyland, 2013). In this way, the teacher has to propose topics that allow students' to explore and communicate their own ideas through a piece of text (Graves, 1985). Taking into account these conceptions, the researcher evidenced this:

> Journal # *09*   Date: *November 9/2016*   Lines: *58-67*   Annex: *9*
>
> *Students started to work on the writing production exercise […] then more y more students came and asked to me. S5: "¿Profe cómo digo que mi mamá trabaja en una fábrica?" S13: "¿Profe cómo se escribe que mi hermanita tiene un chupo?" S20: "¿Profe, cómo digo que mi papá es muy buen papá?" […]*

In the previous extract of the researcher's journal, the students were producing a descriptive text about the topic "a family member". As it is seen, the students came to the teacher and asked her about the translation of some sentences they wanted to write. There are two relevant aspects to consider in these actions. Firstly, this topic activated students' previous experiences with their families and they transformed into ideas to communicate in a piece of text. Second, this topic promoted students' motivation to write in a foreign language because they were interested in coming to the teacher and asked her about the words they did not know in English language.

Respect to writing skills development, it is evident that these topics, that are related to students' experiences and lives, allow students to produce more sentences, so if students have interesting topics, the extension of the text will increase.

GOs FOSTERING ORGANIZATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL SKILLS

This category focuses on the impact that GOs had on the development of writing skills and the contribution they had to promote structuring and organizational skills. In order to develop this analysis, the researcher selected some artifacts to evidence students' organization.

Writing, as a productive skill, challenges students to cultivate organizational and structural skills (Lowenstein, 2015). In this way, different authors have recognized organization as a crucial aspect in writing skills because the writer can systematize the content and his or her ideas in a text (Hacker & Sommers, 2011) (Hyland, 2013) (Aslam, 2003). Moreover, organization contributes to find new contents and to develop aspects such as coherence and cohesion (Hacker & Sommers, 2011).

Respect to structural skills, White & Arndt (1996) define structuring as a part of writing process in which the writer organizes the *form* in which the text is presented. For this reason, structuring is a part of organization.

Taking into consideration the previous ideas, it is important that teachers create useful strategies that allow students to apply structural and organizational skills (Aslam, 2003). In the current project, the researcher implemented GOs with the purpose to develop these skills. The result is seen as follows:
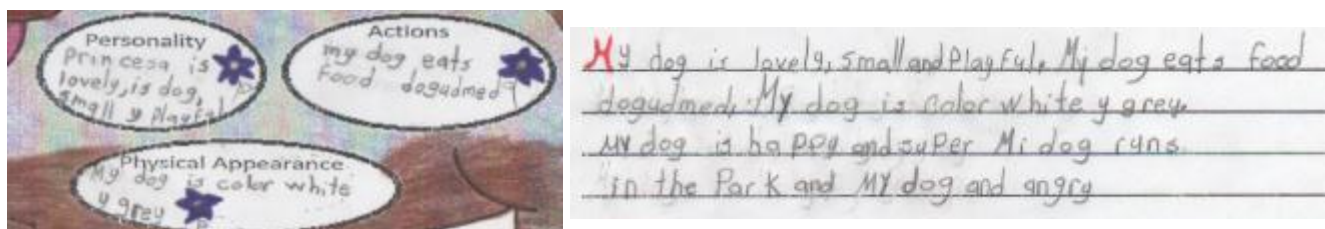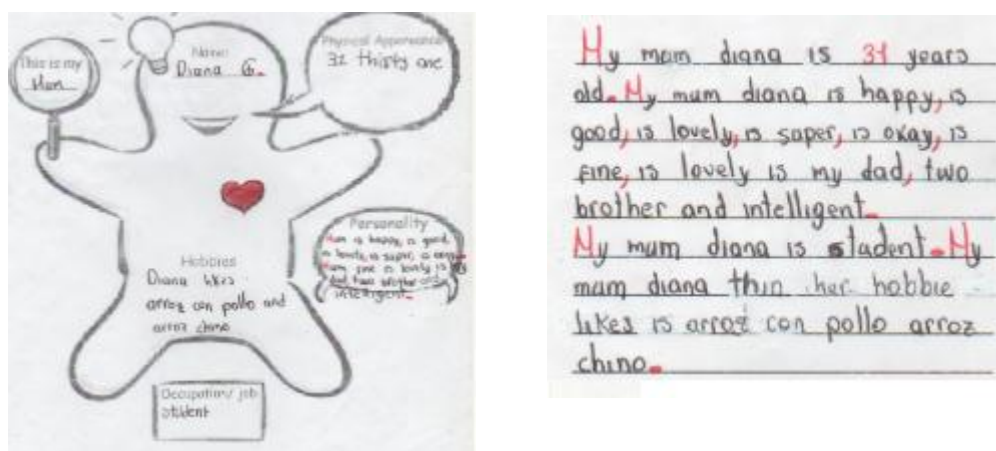

Daisy's GO and writing production

In the previous production done by *Daisy (*Annex, 11), the student implemented the GO as a structuring of her final production. As it is seen, in a first moment the student wrote three aspects proposed in the GO through short sentences: the personality, the actions and the physical appearance of her pet. There are two important aspects to analyze. Firstly, the GO helped student to transfer the ideas she had in mind about her dog, to English words and, secondly, she could structure these sentences in the GO.

Also, in a second moment, the student passed these ideas to a piece of text. During this process, the student organized her text based on the GO structured, so GO enhanced her structural skills in writing skills. It is important to mention that, in this moment, the student added extra information about her dog that was not in the GO. According to Carrell schemata's theory (1983), this is because when the student read her production, she activated her previous knowledge that she had learnt in previous activities and added the information to the text.

Furthermore, another student structured her writing production in the GO:

Mimosa's GO and writing production

In comparison to Daisy's production, Mimosa's production (Annex ?) shows that the student used GO as a tool to structure her writing production. In this case, the student transferred the information she had on the GO and passed to a text, so it shows that the student developed a writing process by herself, meaning, without any instruction. In Bandura's words (1991), this is a fundamental part of *self- regulation process* because the student is getting independent and she is controlling her own writing process.

**TASK-THRIGGERING VOCABULARY**

This category intends to describe and analyze the contribution tasks did to the acquisition of vocabulary. To carry out, the researcher took some extracts of the teacher's interview and the students' artifacts to evidence the role tasks had in the development of vocabulary learning.

Different studies have recognized tasks as an effective way to acquire new vocabulary (Nunan, 1989) (Wenden, 1987) (Flavell, 1979). However, it is important to consider that these tasks achieve specific purposes with the vocabulary (Yongqi Gu, 2003), so there are tasks that focus on vocabulary pronunciation or writing new vocabulary. For this project, tasks focus on learning vocabulary not as isolated words, but learning words with communicative functions and uses in writing production (Flohr, 2008) (Ellis, 2006). In this way, it is necessary to create tasks that present words in specific and meaningful contexts.
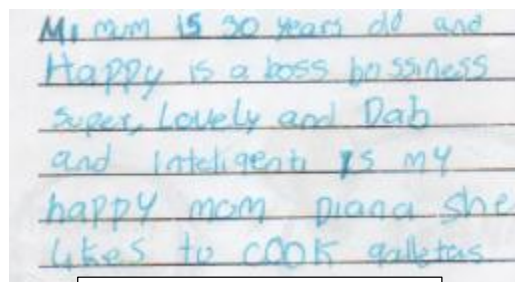
Based on the previous ideas, the current project proposed different tasks taking into account the Text-Based Approach, with the purpose of giving input of vocabulary to students and the use these words have in a text. The results are presented as follows:

Task (input activity)
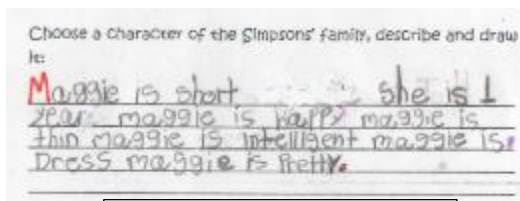
Task (Practicing writing)

Narcisus' production

As it is evidenced, the previous extracts show some types of tasks students developed in the unity *"A family member"*. Firstly, in the input task, the students did a matching activity that connected images with sentences using the Simpsons family. The intention was to introduce some common activities most on the families do, through visual supporting. Also, in the practicing writing task, the students wrote a short description about a member of *The Simpsons' family*. In this activity, the students practiced the previous vocabulary and grammar knowledge they have learnt in the previous unity "My pet". Through this activity, the students practiced writing skills, and mostly, they could expand their vocabulary knowledge using new words in a text and with communicative purposes.

Respect to writing skills, it is seen that in Narcissus' production, the student used some words she learnt during tasks input phase such as "*lovely*" and "*cook galletas"*. Also, the student employed some basic grammar structures such as *subject - verb- complement* in the sentence *"my mum is 30 years old"*. In this way, each activity had an important role during writing production because the student could acquire new vocabulary and useful grammar structures she implemented in her text.

Also, the teacher, who was accompanying this process, expressed her opinion about the effect tasks had in the vocabulary acquisition.

> *Teacher's interview   Lines: 18- 35   (Annex 9)*
>
> *Han adquirido vocabulario, ya manejan un poco más de vocabulario […] Ya por lo menos saben que es happy y lo escriben como lo deben escribir y sin embargo, a veces checkean en el cuaderno o miran en las fotocopias, se ayudan para escribirlo correctamente.*

In this extract, the teacher mentioned the progress students have in relation to vocabulary learning. Firstly, she recognized that students have acquired more vocabulary and they do not commit spelling errors. Secondly, the teacher said that students used the tasks sheets to correct

their own errors. Furthermore, this is related to *self- regulation* theory (Bandura, 1991), because students began to control and to be independent towards their writing process and they found the ways to write the words correctly through the tasks they did.

Finally, these evidences demonstrated that tasks have an important role, not only in knowledge acquisition, but in the development of self- regulation attitudes that promoted students' independency and control over their own writing process.

EDITING PROCESS

The last category focuses on the editing process students did during the process and the impact it had on the development of writing skills. To develop this category, the researched analyzed some students' artifacts in which editing process was applied.

Editing has been defined as a part of writing process in which the writer corrects his or her own grammar errors in the drafting production: spelling, punctuation, incorrect words and fragment sentences (Caswell & Mahler, 2004). As it was mentioned before, writing is a cognitive and complex process that requires constant adjustments and changes. In this way, it is necessary to create pedagogical strategies that allow students to correct and to be conscious about their own editing writing process (Hull, 1987).

Furthermore, teachers have to start this process with students since they are in elementary grades, and not only in advanced levels because they will acquire the habit to edit their productions by themselves and this process will be meaningful for them (Gilbert & Graham, 2010).

In relation to editing strategies, some authors suggest checklists, pnemo techniques and neon revisions (Campbell, 2007) (Coker, Kristen, & Ritchey, 2015) (Fiderer, 1993) . The purpose is to create conventions that reference students' errors with pedagogical purposes. According to this, the present project adapted the neon strategy that consists on marking students' errors with colors. It is necessary to clarify that these strategy was applied during the third phase of the current project, based on the frequent errors students did and evidenced by the researcher during the first and second phase. These errors are marked as the pyramid (Figure 5) shows:
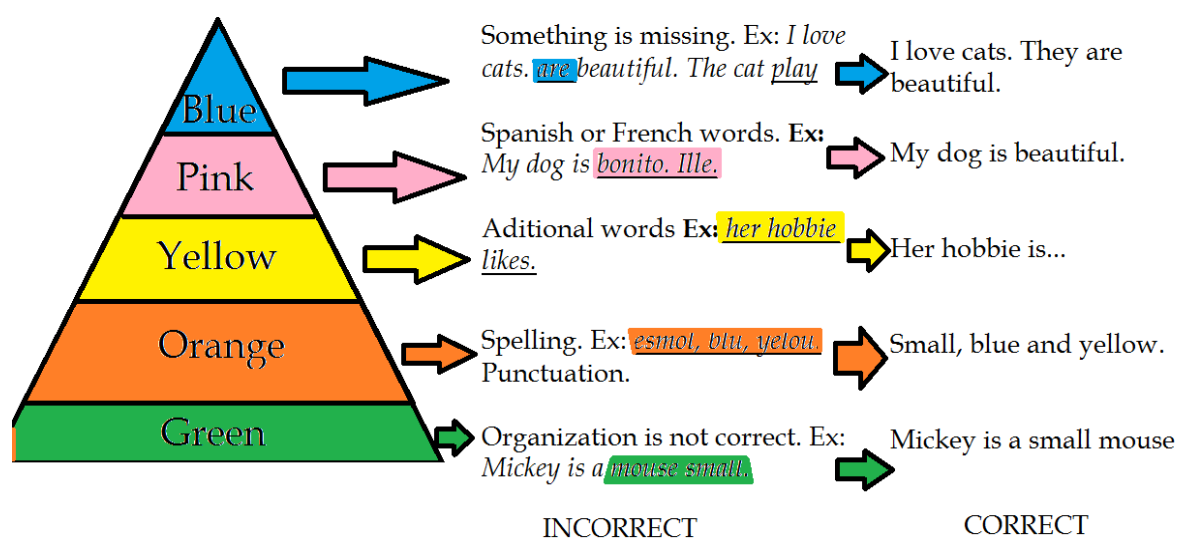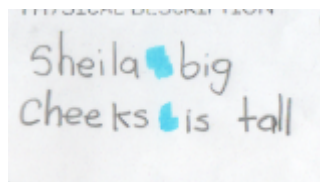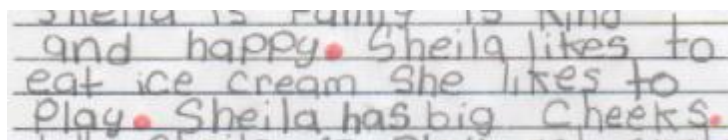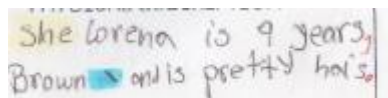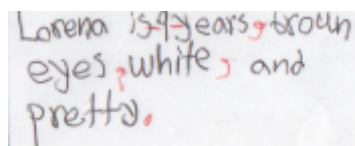

Figure 6
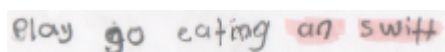
The previous pyramid indicates five errors students should correct. First, the blue one indicated missing words students forget such as pronouns, verbs, complements, etc. Secondly, the pink one indicates the Spanish and French words students used in their writing productions. Thirdly, the yellow one indicated additional or redundant words students used in their texts such as *My friend she likes*. The orange color indicated spelling errors such as *esmol, blu, priti*, etc. Finally, the green one indicated syntactical errors such as *dog big*, *hair curly*, *game funny*, etc. The results of this strategy are presented as follows:

Daisy's production

Iris' production

Azalea's production

Lavender's production

The previous extracts show the editing process students did to their own writing productions. In Daisy's case, the student added the verb has to connect the sentence "Sheila has big cheeks", so she learnt that verbs connect pronouns and adjectives. In Iris' case, the student deleted the word "she" that resulted redundant in her writing production, so she learnt that it is not necessary to write two pronouns in the same sentence. Also, in Azalea's production, the student corrected spelling errors in the words "and swim" it is seen that this student does not know the use of gerunds, but she learnt how to write the verb 'swim' and the conjunction "and". In Lavender's case, the student changed the organization of the words salad fruit to fruit salad, so she learnt that adjectives in English are first and then the pronouns.

As it is seen, these students developed a self- editing process. According to Caswell & Mahler (2004), self- editing teaches students to be objective towards their own writing productions, so students learnt that writing is not a simple process, but it requires a constant editing process. Also, students had the opportunity to learn, not only how to write words correctly, but they acquired a habit to edit their own texts and to take control over them. In this way, students took part of their own process and they became independent and autonomous (Fiderer, 1993), an important element of self- regulation process.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study intended to show the impact that GOs and tasks have on the approaching of writing skills in a population that is starting their learning process in a foreign language. Taking into account the previous analysis and findings, the following conclusions are presented.

To start, through this project, it was possible to achieve the main objective of approaching writing skills in a population that did not have previous knowledge about English language. The strategy of using visual materials, allowed students to explore and to apply each step of the writing process in a meaningful way.

Also, the implementation of Graphic Organizers enabled students' development of writing process. This is because GOs approached students to structural and organizational skills they used in their productions, so this visual strategy was a useful tool students implemented to create their writing productions.

Respect to the topics to write, it is clear that daily topics have an important role in the writing process. Choosing topics related to students' lives and situations activates previous knowledge and promotes motivation to communicate, not only in writing, but in speaking. Also, writing about these topics allows students to construct their own vision towards their world.

In relation to tasks, it is evident that these determines the achievement of writing process. Each Task has a specific purpose. In writing skills, tasks should aim at: First, knowing more vocabulary students will use in their future productions. Second, developing grammar and syntactic aspects. Third, enabling students to practice and to produce their first drafts to receive previous feedback to correct.

Moreover, using tasks with visual supporting allowed students to comprehend and to learn new vocabulary. As it was seen, visual supporting motivated and promoted students' participation in English classes. Finally, this vocabulary was implemented in pupils' writing productions so they could internalize these words and understand the meaning and their use in communicative purposes.

In another side, editing resulted an essential part of writing skill. It was evident, this process enabled students to correct and to improve interferences, grammar, syntactical and spelling aspects. In this way, the strategy of using colors as conventions created by the researcher allowed students to develop a meaningful self- editing process in which they could correct their own errors. Finally, this study shows that editing is a process that has to start from elementary grades and with few but useful conventions that aim at improving students' difficulties.

Additionally, this project shows that interferences play an important role on the foreign language learning process. This is because these 'errors' show the complexity of learning a new code and the cognitive processes of accommodation students developed. Also, through interferences, students created some strategies to supply the gaps they had such as using their mother tongue, or using the foreign language.

In relation to students' attitudes, it was seen that the tasks, exercises and writing activities allowed students to develop a self – regulated process, in which they started to be independent and to take the control over their own writing process. The reason is that students learnt that writing is an individual process that has the intention to communicate their own ideas. As it was seen. This is related to the school's slogan that proposes students' autonomy and independence.

To continue with students attitudes, it was seen that writing activities, also, promoted metacognitive processes in the students. As it was seen, the students reflected about their own writing process and recognized its importance and value for their lives. Simultaneously, writing skills developed other cognitive processes such as self-monitoring. According to the school's slogan, reflection is an important part of their education.

In relation to the pedagogical issue, it is evident that teachers have a wide spectrum of possibilities to teach writing skills. This project shows that it is important to innovate and to find new ways to develop each step of writing process with visual materials and taking into account students' interests and experiences with the purpose to motivate them and to develop communicative skills.

Finally, this research shows that it is possible to approach and to develop a meaningful writing process in 1 year, and in a population that is starting their learning process of a foreign language. As it was seen, writing is a structured and organized process that requires enough time to be developed, but the population level is not an impediment to teach and apply writing skills. As a result, teachers should find new ways to teach writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Developing writing processes in the students is an arduous work that requires dedication, time, discipline and motivation. For this reason, this chapter aims to give some recommendations for future researches that will work these skills.

Firstly, writing is a process that demands organized and structured activities that lead students to produce their own pieces of texts so, it is recommendable to use creative activities that take students' interests and experiences with the purpose to communicate meaningful ideas.

Secondly, writing is a slow process that requires enough time and organization. For this reason, researchers should prepare a schedule, taking into account the time schools offer to develop the projects. Also, the sequence of activities have to be connected and to point out to the main objective of writing.

Thirdly, it is advisable to give opportunities for students to practice writing skills and to develop and improve specific aspects such as vocabulary, syntax organization, grammar and modeling texts.

Fourthly, writing with children requires didactic and playful activities that take students likes. In this way, the activities propose by the researcher should include visual elements that support the information that is presented in the activities or tasks. This motivates students to participate and to do these activities.

Fifthly, if the researches implement Graphic organizers, it is suggested to use few and clear words that students understand in the charts, and respond to the purpose of the researcher. Also, if the population is a group of children, it is desirable to create shapes of animals, people or concepts related to the topics that they work.

7.1 Limitations

During this process, the researcher was confronted to different limitations that are mentioned as follows.

To start, there was not enough time to develop the project as it was proposed. This is because the school had only one hour of English peer week, so it was not possible to develop an intensive writing process. Also, the school programmed extra-curricular activities that affected some sessions the researcher had prepared. As a result, some activities were moved and developed in little time.

Furthermore, the number of students affected the accompaniment the researcher did to the students during the process. In the sessions the researcher was attentive to the questions students had. However, it was difficult to attend 10 students at the same time, so not all the students received the same accompaniment the researcher wanted.

7.2 Possible Impact

Based on the analysis and the findings, it is evident that Graphic organizers are a useful strategy to approach writing skills in EF learners and beginners. In this way, this project opens the possibility to explore students' cognitive and productive processes in writing skills, and the role GOs have on it.

To start, it was seen that through this project it was possible to change the perception of teaching writing, so the first short – term impact, these Graphic Organizers would have, is that they can be used for other future populations at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño School, as pedagogical materials to approach communicative skills and, also, to develop structural and organizational skills in students that are in elementary grades.

In relation to the long- term impacts, it is possible to use GOs in different populations, so future researches could analyze the impact GOs might have on the improvement of writing skills in students of advanced grades and the different uses they do to the GO. Furthermore, GO offers the opportunity to explore the development and implementation of structural and organizational skills students do, not only in the school, but in their lives.

In another side, GOs resulted a useful strategy to motivate and promote pupils' writing processes, so future studies could analyze the impact that Graphic Organizers would have on the development or approaching of other skills such as speaking or listening in elementary or advance groups, and the processes and the uses future researchers will do with them.

Finally, this research asks about the new ways of teaching writing skills as a process with communicative purposes to EFL children beginners. In this way, a long -term impact could be the work future researchers do creating new strategies and methodologies to teach these communicative skills, meaningfully through innovate materials, which allow students to interact and to take their interests.

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ANNEX 1

The following questionnaire was answered by students on March 23.

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

Facultad de Humanidades- Departamento de Lenguas

CUESTIONARIO

Apreciada estudiante: La siguiente encuesta tiene como finalidad el contribuir con un proyecto de investigación que se realizará en el espacio de inglés. La información recolectada será confidencial, por lo que no es necesario que escribas tu nombre.

1- ¿Cuántos años tienes? _____
2- ¿En qué barrio vives?_____
3- ¿Con quién(es) vives en tu casa?

_____
_____

4- ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta hacer en tu tiempo libre?

_____
_____

5- ¿Te gusta la clase de inglés? Si ___ No ___ ¿por qué?

_____
_____

6- ¿Qué tipo de actividades realizan en la clase de inglés?
   □ Lecturas □ Juegos □ Actividades de habla □ Escritos □ Videos
   Otras: _____

7- ¿Qué actividades de las que se realizan en la clase de inglés te gustan más?

   □ Lecturas □ Juegos □ Actividades de habla □ Escritos □ Videos

   Otras: _____

8- ¿Qué actividades no te gustan de la clase de inglés?

   □ Lecturas □ Juegos □ Actividades de habla □ Escritos □ Videos

   Otras: _____

9-¿Qué otras actividades te gustaría que se realizaran en la clase de inglés?

□ Lecturas   □ Juegos □ Escritos   □ Actividades de habla

Otras: _____

Gracias por tu colaboración

ANNEX 2

LINE	INTERVIEW
1	R: ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva enseñando la clase de inglés en la institución?
2	T: 8 años.
3	R: ¿Cómo ve el desempeño de las estudiantes del grado 304 en la clase de inglés?
4	T: Hasta ahora las tomo, ellas vienen de segundo, yo sólo manejo cuarto y quinto, y pues,
5	bueno, son unas niñas que se preocupan, pilas, están pendientes, he visto un buen
6	desempeño.
7	R: ¿En qué habilidad se desenvuelven mejor las estudiantes y por qué?
8	T: Pues, no he podido revisarles en todas las habilidades, la verdad. Sé que en la parte de
9	escritura lo hacen muy bien porque copian directamente del tablero y tratan de hacerlo bien.
10	Sé que en la parte oral les gusta, y tratan de desenvolverse y me parece que esa es una de
11	las fortalezas y es un poco que colabora mucho, la parte del desarrollo integral, se les puede
12	reforzar bastante y todas las habilidades, yo creería que todas las habilidades se les puede
13	dar.
14	R: Sí, y ¿Qué habilidades se les dificulta más o que se pueda mejorar más?
15	T: Es que yo pienso que todas las habilidades se les pueda mejorar, se les puede explotar.
16	Es decir, que yo diga tienen problema en esta como en algunos salones, no. Es muy
17	específico, es decir, el tiempo que he tenido con ellas ha sido muy poco y lo poco que he
18	visto me parece que el desarrollo integral si se puede dar, de diferentes habilidades.
19	R: Es decir que si uno quiere focalizar en cualquiera, se podría.
20	T: Sí, se podría. En el proyecto se podría en cualquiera. Sobre todo que traten de hablar, de
21	expresarse, sí, esa es la idea, es lo opcional, aunque aquí se trata de no dejar ninguna
22	habilidad desocupada.
23	R: ¿Cómo se presenta la interacción en la clase de inglés en las estudiantes, es buena?
24	T: Es buena, a mi con ellas me gusta harto porque de por sí ellas son muy proactivas
25	entonces como les gusta tratan de prestar la atención y hacer lo mejor que puedan.
26	R: la enseñanza cooperativa?
27	T: Sí, más que cooperativa, colaborativa. En la parte colaborativa de la interdependencia
28	positiva de lo que yo puedo hacer, a otra le puede ayudar y la responsabilidad individual
29	de si yo trabajo con alguien más, o si yo llevo las cosas, eso nos va a colaborar a las dos.
30	Por ejemplo yo le puedo enseñar a ella. Esa parte de ellas lo tienen muy bien desarrollado.
31	R: ¿Qué actividades realizan en la clase de inglés? De todas o la profe focaliza más Habla,
32	escucha, escritura y lectura?
33	T: No, yo creo que hay de todo. Sumercé ha visto que ahí escuchan canciones, practican
34	pronunciación, la parte de escritura, la parte de Reading. Yo pensaría que todas son
35	trabajadas en clase. Pues esa es la idea en las clases que hemos tenido.
36	R: Y qué actividades creen que disfrutan más las niñas?

37	T: Les gusta mucho cuando tiene que ver con la parte de multimedia, la parte del tablero
38	inteligente, desde que puedan interactuar en esa parte de mirar si se puede escribir de wao
39	de ver que se pueden escribir los colores como son. Esa es una ventaja que pueden escuchar
40	a otra persona hablando inglés, a los muñecos, eso les gusta mucho.
41	R: y los juegos que hacen
42	T: Sí, la parte total physical response, la parte del role play de yo pregunto y ella me
43	responde, esa parte yo creo, sí, también les gusta harto.
44	R: Listo, muchas gracias.
45	

ANNEX 3

FIELD NOTES

Field Note Nº 1

Date: _February 23th_____ **Time:** __4:15 - 6

LINE	Activities, attitudes, interactions Students	Comments and questions (Observer)
5 10 15 20 25 30	The class is developed in the lab. T: "Hello class". S: "Hello teacher". T: "Stand up". Some S do not understand and do not obey, other S stand up and the rest of the class do the same. Then, they return to their tables. T: "How are you?" S: 'Happy, angry, so so'. T repeats what S say. T: "we were working on feelings. Show me your notebook". Some S show their notebooks to the T. Others do not understand. T sees the notebooks. T: "After that we're going to see what we saw last class." Some S speak. T shows a picture on the board of two people in a dialogue. T: "Write down the information. Copien el título." S copy the title. Some of them do not have the previous notes. S: 'Profe cierto que…' S speak but they copy the title. T: "Ok, finish?" T sees the notebooks. T: "Ayy pero escríbame la fecha." (Some S speak). T: "Ok, if I say hello you say" S: "Hello teacher!" T: "No teacher" S: Hello. (The idea was to complete a dialogue that was drawn on the board) S: "Profe, toca dibujarlo?" T: "también." (S speak and do the picture) T: "finish?" T walks around the classroom. S color the drawing. (they share their colors and pencils) S1: "Profe ya casi termino". T: "Tienen 20 minutos para acabar el dibujo." Some S are talking. T: "Listo, ya puedo cambiar?" S: "Síii" S: "Noooo." T: "Mamita, quickly." T: "voy a cambiar porque están muy demoradas." S: 'Ella me arregló todos los del colegio…' T: "Ok, Hello" (she points out a cloud in the picture) T: "How are you?" S: "Hello, how are you." S repeat. T: "After that you're going to write… Do you remember the faces? After these questions I'm going to paste it. Recuerdan que les dije que trajeran colbón?" S: "Yes." T: (in a table) "Hello." S: "Hello" (They speak and decorate the piece of paper that T gave them) T continues with the repetition of some commands. T is preparing a video on the board. T: "Notebooks into your bag." S: "Osea que guarde su cuaderno en la maleta." T: "And sit down here." (some of them do not obey) T: "guarden las cositas en la maleta." S are in front of	Some Mechanical instructions or commands are easy to understand for a part of students, so they imitated what their partners did. Teacher could say these instructions in English, but translation is present in this moment, so students won't do the effort to understand. Students prefer to answer easy commands like yes or no in Spanish, so this can be an obstacle to develop speaking skill because they do not acquire a custom to do it and a necessity to use the language in real situations and this is because teacher does not create a space of conversation. Perhaps, students can understand these easy commands such as finish, so this could be develop with input. In this case there is a translation situation, but this is a sight that students can understand what the teacher says.

35	the board (They are in silence) T: "you're going to watch a video. You're going to listen."	Greeting is mechanical for girls because they repeat the same conversation at the beginning of each class, for this reason greetings are a custom.
35	T plays a video of a dinosaur and two children that do the greetings and ask their names.	
40	T: "If my name is Sandra your name is…" S4: "Linda." T: "Ok, so my name is Sandra" S7: "My name is Linda." T: "Repeat what's your name." S: "What's your name." T: (slowly) "What's your name." S: "What's your name?" T: "My name is …" (S speak and some of them tell their names) S6: "My name is Isabella." T: "Hablen un poco más duro." T: "What is your name?" S: "es que ella…" T: "No las estoy escuchando princesas, you can say your name, I'm…" S7: "I'm María." T: "What's your name?"	In this part of the class students were very interested in the video, so the characters, the colors, and the actions called their attention.
45	T tells them to organize two files and the idea is that each couple will ask each other their names. T: "This file is number one and this number two, so number one, What's your name?" (File 1) "S: What's your name?" (File number 2) "S: My name is…" T: "Ok, now this part, what's your name?" S repeat.	This activity was very meaningful because students could understand the intention of the video and they started to produce some sentences about themselves, so imitation and discrimination is a very good way to learn for them.
50	T: "Ok, now sit down." They go to their tables and outside the classroom. The class finishes.	
55		Students understood this instruction, and they did the activity with their partners, collaborative learning is present to reinforce the learning process, so it is possible to create activities like these.
	Resources: Smart Board.	

ANNEX 4

PRUEBA DE DIAGNÓSTICO DE ESCRITURA

NAME: _____

1. **Complete the following conversation:**

Teacher: Hello class

Students: _____

Teacher: _____

Students: _____

Teacher: _____

2. **Introduce yourself based on the following example:**

My name is Peppa Pig. I am 5 years old. I live in the United States.
My parents are Mama Pig and papa Pig. I am a very happy pig.

My name is …

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. **What is your favorite color? Why?**

_____

_____

The following consent letter was given to the parents of the participants of this study to consent their participation in this project.

CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Estimado Padre y/o acudiente de familia.

De manera atenta me presento. Mi nombre es Wendy Panche, actualmente soy estudiante de octavo semestre del programa de Lenguas Español e Inglés de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, quien inicia su proyecto de investigación con las estudiantes del grado 304 del colegio Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño.

Por esta razón, me es necesaria la participación de las estudiantes del grado 304 y, por ende, de su hija quien lo está cursando. Cabe aclarar que el presente proyecto de investigación que da inicio este semestre tiene el aval tanto de la institución educativa y sus directivas como de la Universidad de la cual hago parte.

El proyecto tiene como objetivo identificar las fortalezas y dificultades de las estudiantes que presenta el grupo, para más adelante mejorar los procesos de aprendizaje de sus habilidades de habla, escucha, lectura y escritura en el área de inglés. Para dicho fin, las niñas participarán resolviendo cuestionarios, entrevistas, y en algunos casos se requerirá material fotográfico y grabaciones de video.

Así pues y teniendo en cuenta que toda la información recolectada será tratada con total confidencialidad (no se revelará nombres ni ningún dato personal durante la investigación) y únicamente será empleada con fines educativos, me permito pedir su autorización para que su hija participe en el proyecto que dará inicio este semestre. Es importante agregar que la participación es voluntaria y en cualquier momento la niña o usted, como representante de ella, pueden retractarse de su decisión y abstenerse de seguir haciendo parte del proyecto, cuando lo crean conveniente.

Si usted está de acuerdo y desea que su hija participe en nuestro proyecto, por favor complete la siguiente información; de lo contrario haga caso omiso a esta carta.

Datos de contacto:
Wendy Jineth Panche Arias
Wendyp902@hotmail.com

CONSENTIMIENTO DE PARTICIPACIÓN

Yo _____, identificado con la cédula de ciudadanía _____ de _____, autorizo a mi hija _____ estudiante del curso _____ del colegio _____ a participar en el proyecto de investigación de Wendy Jineth Panche Arias, estudiante de VIII semestre de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Firma

_____

C.C _____
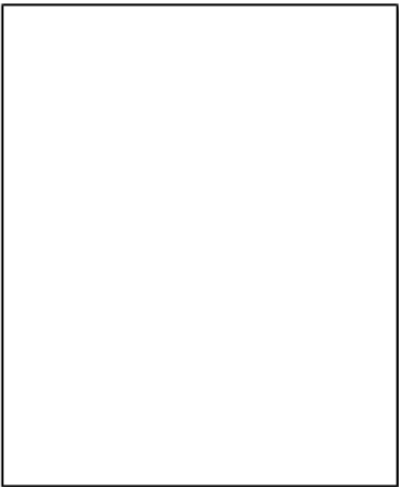
Name _____   Date _____

Introducing a family member

_____

This is my
_____

Name:
_____

Physical Appereance

Hobbies

Personality

Occupation/ job
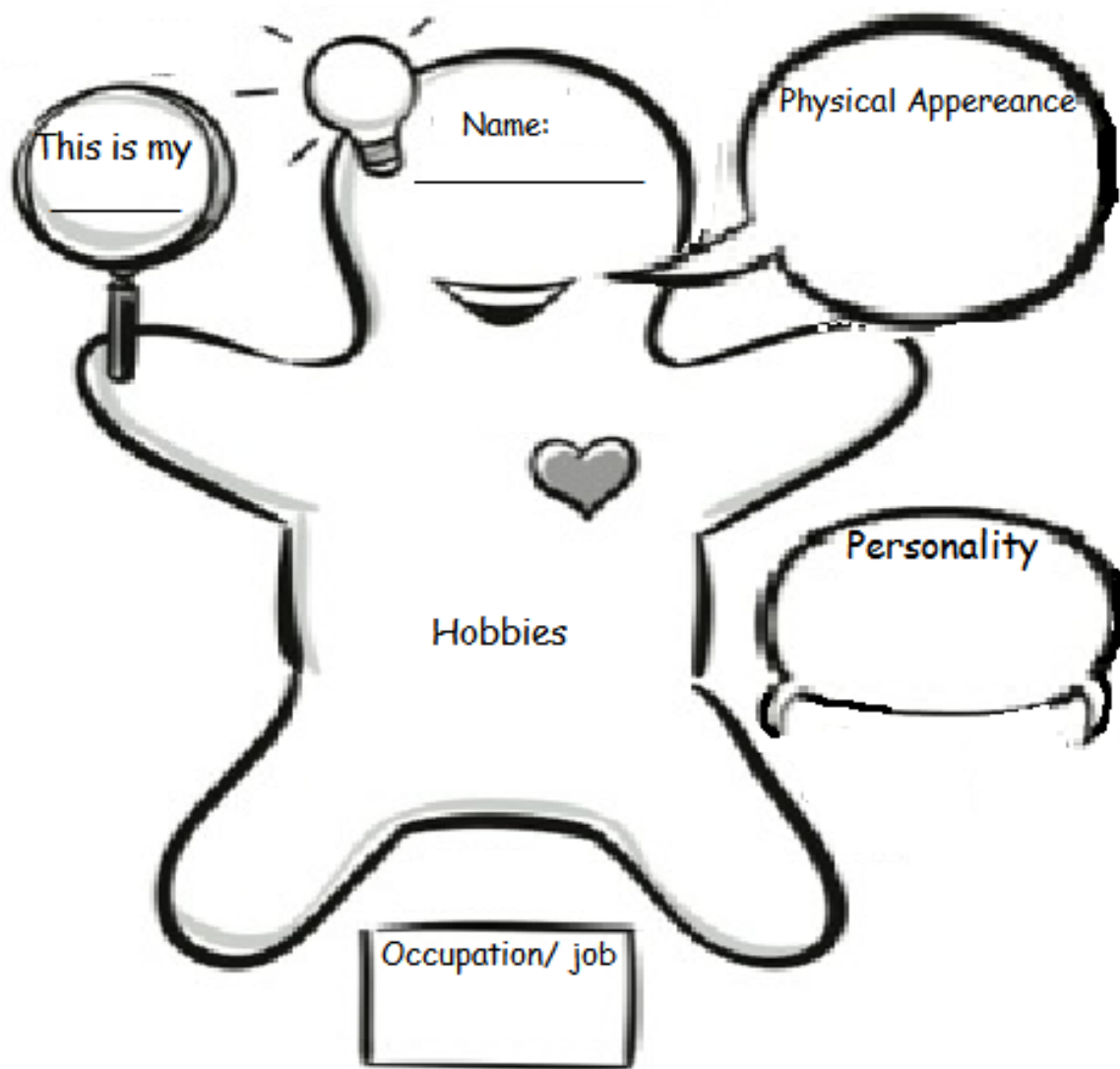
KNOWING A FAMILY MEMBER

Name: _____

Let me introduce my: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ANNEX 8

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional
Proyecto de Aula
Journal Nº 01

Teacher: Wendy Panche **Nº of students:** 41

Course: 304 **School:** Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño

Date: November 3th, 2015 **Classroom:** English Lab **Time:** 1:45 to 2:15

Observer: Wendy Panche

CONVENTIONS			
T: Teacher	**S:** Student	**Sa:** All students	**O:** Observer

Descriptive	Interpretative	Analytical
The class started when the students arrived to the classroom. T: "Ok, please come here and sit down. Quickly" Some S arrived and sat down. T: "Ok, that group that is arriving, Daisy's group, please come".	Students understood these simple instructions. However, there are students that got distracted so easily.	It is necessary to create strategies to involve the whole class in the activities. Or to organize the classroom with the students that are not paying attention.
The S came and T showed them a presentation about The Simpsons family. T: "So for today we are going to talk about the Simpsons family"		
S3: "Ay es March" T: "Yes, so March is the…" S5: "mother" T: "Yes, she is the mother" T:"Ok, what colors do you see in March?" Most of the students arose their hands. S20:"Yellow" S25:	Students felt motivated with this type of activities. They enjoyed talking about cartoons. Students have internalized the names of colors. So they do the	Mass Media is an effective visual support to motivate students to participate and also, to modeling writing texts because students activated their previous knowledge

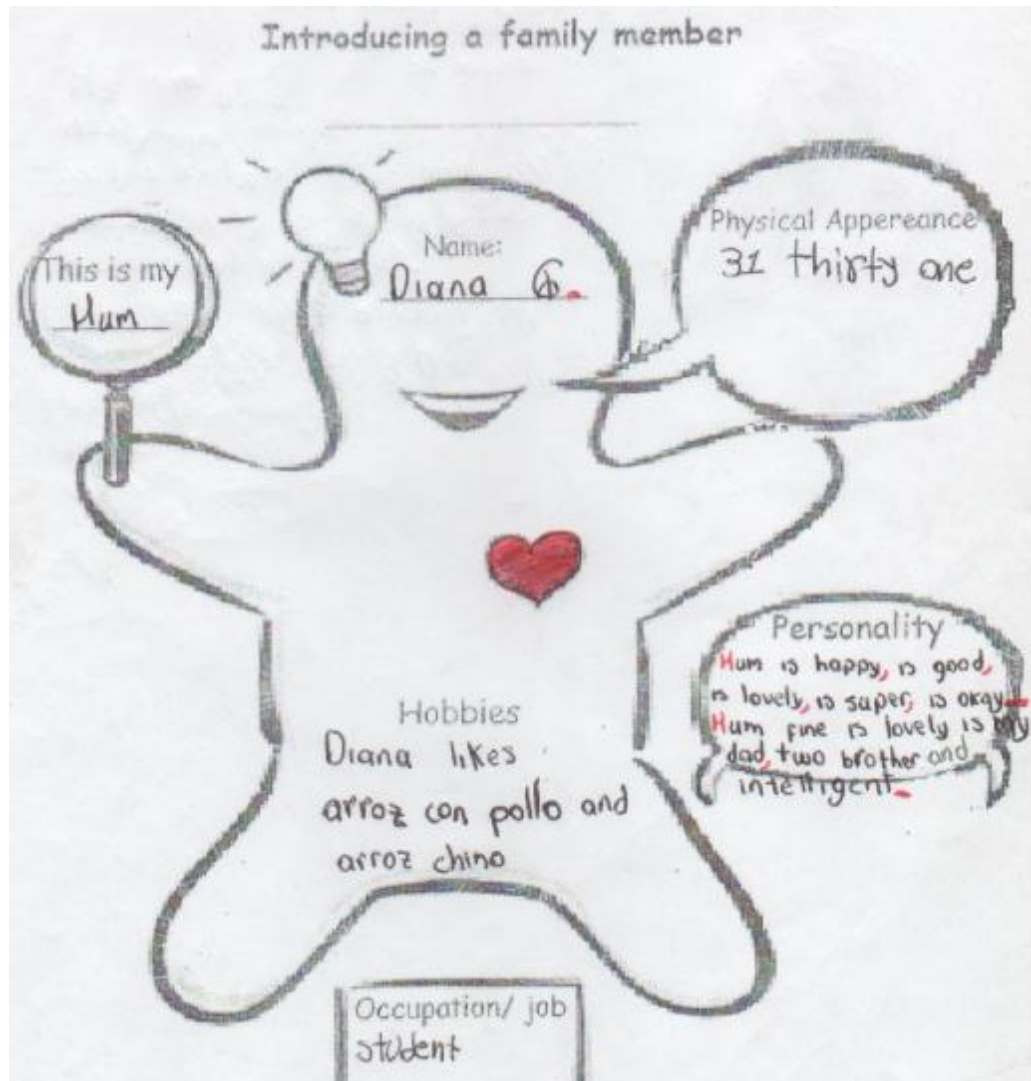|		
"blue" S32: "Green". S11: "white" T: "Yes, ok so Marge is tall, pretty, yellow…" T does movements to explain each adjective. S13: "osea que es alta" S41: "bonita"…	differences between the graphemes and the sounds.	about it and use them to understand English language.
T: "Yes, but do not translate" T passes to the other slide. S13: "Ay yes March y Maggie" T: " Yes, Marge is a lovely, dedicated and funny mom" S14: "cariñosa"	It was a useful strategy that the teacher used non-verbal communication to explain these adjectives. But students employed translation as a way to confirm the meaning of these words.	Teaching a language that it is unknown for the students results complicated. However, visual supporting and nonverbal communication results useful because it challenge the teacher to find new ways to teach these words.
T continued presenting them the description of Marge. Students paid attention to the presentation.		Translation is a difficulty students have. They do not know these words in English, so they prefer to use their mother tongue as a resource to see if they understood.
T:"Ok, so now it is time to work. So, we are going to do this Graphic organizer, so as you see, you are going to write about a family member. So for example I'm going to write my mum. So I write her name, Pepita is my mum. So there are 4 categories to complete. The first one is about her physical appearance, so she is tall, fat" S32: "osea si es alta, gorda" T: "Yes" Then T explained the other categories of personality, hobbies and profession. Students did some questions about some words. T: "Ok, so go. You have 20 minutes to do the activity" S went to their tables.	Students understood these instructions. But some of them, again, used the translation to communicate with the teacher.	It is necessary to find new strategies in which students ask these words using the foreign language, or different materials that they can use.
Students started to work on the writing production exercise. T		

passed to the tables to see what the students were doing. Some S showed her the productions. A S came to the teacher and asked, S17: "Profe cómo digo que mi hermano es un bebé?" T: "is a Baby" then more y more students came and asked to me. S5: "¿Profe cómo digo que mi mamá trabaja en una fábrica?" S13: "¿Profe cómo se escribe que mi hermanita tiene un chupo?" S20: "¿Profe, cómo digo que mi papá es muy buen papá?"	Students started to show their interest in writing and, moreover, in the ideas they wanted to communicate about their family member. It was a little complicated to attend all the students at the same time and with different questions.	These topics allowed students to activate their wish to communicate, meaning, to write about their reality and their lives and to express. Teacher should create more useful strategies to attend the questions students have and to internalize them.
T wrote some words in the board. S35: "Profe cómo es que se decía bonito?" T pointed out to the board.	Creating the list was a good strategy because it allow students to know more words that they used.	
T: "Ok, time is over" S10: "Noooo profe" S31: "Noo profe un momento" S22: "Profe cómo es que se dice que mi papá es serio?" T: "No, give your sheets". T received students' productions. T:"Ok, so clean the classroom and organize the tables" S organized the classroom and they went.	Writing is a process that requires time. However some students did not take advantage of the time and, as a result, their writing production was too short.	It is complicated to supervise the whole group. However, teacher should identify those students that are not interest or get distracted easily.
	Resources: Smart Board Worksheets Pencils	

ANNEX 9

Line	Interview
1 2 3	W: Buenas tardes profe. Usted ha estado acompañando el proceso con las niñas desde el año pasado, entonces tengo varias preguntas para hacerle, entonces la primera es: Cómo le han parecido las clases que la practicante ha implementado, si han sido buenas, regulares..
4 5 6	T: Pues han sido innovadoras por el proceso que quiere llevar con ellas, sobre todo los instrumentos que utiliza, las guías que utiliza, me han llamado la atención
7 8 9	W: Y hablando de las estudiantes, la profe cómo las ha visto, es decir, ellas si han respondido bien a las actividades propuestas o no.
10 11 12	T: Pues en lo que yo puedo ver, ellas han respondido, pero ahí si bien o mal, ahí si no sé, porque eso ya lo maneja ya usted.
13 14	W: La profe ha considerado que las niñas han aprendido algo nuevo respecto a lo que ya sabían antes.
15 16 17 18	T: Han adquirido vocabulario, ya manejan un poco más de vocabulario que se les dificulta a veces el entender que deben hacer y siempre están pidiendo la traducción, pero eso es como general.
19 20 21	W: Sí, eso es una dificultad. Y cómo le han parecido las actividades que se han propuesto con los materiales, las TIC y demás.
22 23 24	T: A mi me ha gustado mucho la interactividad. De pronto la parte que siempre hay que manejarles es la disciplina, de sentarlas, osea más de que yo la tenga que sentar es que ellas se autoregulen y sepan qué deben hacer y cómo lo deben hacer, es más eso.
25 26 27	W: Y hablando de los aspectos mejorados, considera la profe que se han fortalecido más algunos procesos que otros.
28 29 30	T: A mi me parece que ha sido como igual, osea yo he visto que las niñas escuchan, entienden, intentan leer, y escriben, entonces es como un desarrollo integral por no darle más relevancia más a una que a la otra.
31 32	W: Y bueno, en cuanto a la escritura, cómo ve la profe esta habilidad?
33 34 35 36	T: Pues ya por lo menos no escriben como pronuncian, que era algo que sucedía. Ya por lo menos saben que es happy y lo escriben como lo deben escribir y sin embargo, a veces checkean en el cuaderno o miran en las fotocopias, se ayudan para escribirlo correctamente.
37 38	W: Finalmente, cómo ha visto el proceso de escritura de las estudiantes, si han mejorado
39 40	T: Sí, adquieren más habilidades , ganan más independencia. Siempre vamos a tener el factor en contra que es el tiempo y la cantidad de niñas, pero ellas ya están un poquito más

41	independientes, ya ellas intentan hacerlo a su manera y tienen en cuenta los instrumentos
42	que se les han dado para seguir enriqueciendo el vocabulario.
43	
44	W: Para terminar, qué aspectos se deberían mejorar
45	
46	T: depronto, ay están trabajando la parte escrita, de pronto trabajar más la parte oral de que
47	ellas traten de leer lo que escriben y que se escuchen ellas mismas, trabajar un poco más con
48	el listening, con el speaking, pensaría yo. esa parte sería muy buena si se tiene el tiempo.
49	W: Gracias profe

Introducing a family member

This is my Hum

Name: Diana G.

Physical Appereance 31 thirty one

Hobbies
Diana likes arroz con pollo and arroz chino

Personality
Hum is happy, is good, is lovely, is super, is okay. Hum fine is lovely is my dad, two brother and intelligent.

Occupation/ job
student

My mam diana is 31 years old. My mum diana is happy, is good, is lovely, is super, is okay, is fine, is lovely is my dad, two brother and intelligent.
My mum diana is student. My mum diana thin her hobbie likes is arroz con pollo arroz chino.

ANNEX 11

NAME Edna sofia caicedo Fernandez

Color:

Red: the introduction of the pet.

Green: The personality.

Yellow: the physical appearance.

Blue: The actions.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER 2

Personality
Princesa is lovely, is dog, small y playful

Actions
my dog eats food dogudmed

Topic
Princesa

Physical Appearance
My dog is color white y grey

GRADE:
304

NAME:
Edna sofia caicedo Fernandez

My pet is a Princesa

My dog is lovely, small and Playful. My dog eats food dogudmed. My dog is color white y grey. My dog is happy and super Mi dog runs. in the Park and My dog and angry

CUESTIONARIO N° 2

Apreciada estudiante. De manera atenta, te solicito que respondas el siguiente cuestionario de manera sincera, ya que es importante para mí conocer tu opinión acerca de las clases que hemos tenido.

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA
NACIONAL

1- ¿Cómo te han parecido las clases de inglés?

____ Muy buenas ____ Buenas ____ Regulares ____ No muy buenas

¿Por qué?

_____

_____

2- ¿Cuáles son las actividades que más te han gustado?

____ Lectura ____ Escritura ____ Conversaciones ____ Juegos ¿Otra? _____

¿Por qué? _____

_____

_____

3- ¿Cuáles actividades no te han gustado?

____ Lectura ____ Escritura ____ Conversaciones ____ Juegos Otra? _____

¿Por qué?

_____

_____

4- ¿Qué aspectos crees que se deberían mejorar en las próximas clases?

_____

_____

5- ¿Sientes que has aprendido a escribir en inglés? Sí___ No ___
6- ¿Te gusta escribir en inglés? Sí ____ No _____

¿Por qué?

_____

_____

7- ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta escribir en inglés?

_____

_____