WARCRAFT III ONLINE GAME, AS AN INTERACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO STRENGTHEN THE WRITTEN STRATEGIC COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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DEDICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study, carried out by William Sanchez and Dolly Morantes investigated how the "Warcraft III" online game could strengthen the written strategic competence en the English languageof 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School in Colombia.

In the first chapter, Epistemological framework, there are theoretical constructs in which the online games are presented as a possible solution to involve and motivate the students for academic purposes; writing as a social interaction and a synthesis of the communicative competence; Nevertheless, the conceptual framework presents the antecedents, statement of the problem and the research objectives.

On the other hand, the second chapter presents the methodological framework. This research is a qualitative study with very few qualitative elements that enabled the researchers to answer the complementary principle for deficiency; the research method used in this study was Action Research. This was an integration of Kemmis and Beauty's model who examined action research in Computer Assisted in Language Learning (CALL).

Data from the participants' text chat was used to identify communication strategies used. The first findings showed that the participants used a set of compensatory strategies specified by Tarone (1980) and Faerch and Kasper (1983). The most frequently employed communication strategy was word coinage; an interlingual strategy and the least used strategy was

comprehension check. Further investigation indicated that the participants used communication strategies with less frequency the more they are exposed to the online game because they did not need them. This was due to the fact that English learners were in the process of developing the written communication competence thanks to the "Warcraft III" online game, the participants' interest for playing the online games, the frequent researchers' feedback. According to Richard-Amato (1996), even though games are often associated with fun, we should not lose sight of their pedagogical values, particularly in second language teaching. Games are effective because they provide motivation, lower students' stress, and give them a true and meaningful purpose for real communication.

(July 20th 2013)

Key words: online games, feedback, strategic competence, communication strategies, writing skill, communicative competence.

INTRODUCTION

This study called "Warcraft III online game, as an interactive alternative to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language" was originated by the growing need to contribute to the transition process from intensive English to a bilingual program at San Tarsicio School where William Sanchez, one of the researchers, is an English teacher. Considering the criteria established to choose a set of subjects to be taught in English, and the thoroughly selection of the bilingual teachers to interact constantly with the learners and the subjects. According to the institution, being bilingual means using two languages in some proportion in order to facilitate learning by students who have a native proficiency in one language and are acquiring proficiency in the other bilingual training, bilingual education.

Bilingual proficiency refers to an individual's ability in his/her two languages; in this case Spanish and English. There are four basic language abilities: listening, speaking, reading and writing. A profile of a person's bilingual proficiencies immediately takes on eight dimensions, four in each language. The four language abilities form an approximate ladder of complexity as the order already mentioned. These abilities do not work as separate skills. Rather growth in one relates to growth in another. Listening to a language enhances speaking; a wider spoken vocabulary and more accurate grammatical structure will facilitate writing skills. Listening and speaking enhance reading ability.

Taking into account the above, we as researchers decided to explore 8th grade learners'
English proficiency. To achieve this, we used three empirical methods: survey, interview and
observation.

To start with, twenty eight students from 8th grade at San Tarsicio School were surveyed
in order to know their perception related to their English language development. The results
pointed out that most of the learners prefer to be exposed to the oral – listening and speaking –
rather than the written skills –reading and writing. They also argue that they constantly interact
with their peers and teachers during the lessons of the subjects instructed in English. Moreover,
they believe they cope with the reading skill due to the fact that they are always faced to different
texts in English which are generally used for information. However, they are concerned with
their writing skill. They claimed that writing is the most difficult ability as it is more structured
than speaking. When writing, they have to use more elements to give the discourse certain level
of cohesion and coherence. In spite of the teachers' effort, they claim that writing is their
weaknesses. (See appendix 1).

After the survey, three English teachers from secondary at San Tarsicio School were
interviewed. They all agreed that the English level from this institution is very good because
some students got B1, but most of them got B2 level when they finish high school. Yet, they are
concerned with 8th grade students. They consider that the development of the oral skills is fine,
but they do not see progress in their writing skill in spite of the wide variety of activities
implemented for every lesson. They focused their English learners' problem on the syntax and

semantics; that is to say, the verb conjugation, punctuation, prepositions, conjunctions, spelling and order of speech, linking devices; for instance, they only use "and" and "but" in the statements. On the other hand, semantics is the study of meaning. It focusses on the relation between the signifiers, like words, phrases, signs, and symbols and what they stand for, their denotation. (See appendix 2).

Apart from that, the researchers made eighth grade students write a text to observe their writing condition. The results of the analysis revealed that more than one half of eighth grade students' pieces of writing had, in widespread and recurrent, different kind of inconsistences related to the English syntax and semantic. The sample taken from one of the 8th grade learner shows us some important information. (See appendix 3)

In sample 1, the learner wrote some instructions about how to open a door. In the first statement: "First yo need a things for open the dour", there is a language transfer "yo" instead of "I"; there is not relationship between the indefinite article "a" and the noun "things"; the use of the gerund (-ing) after a preposition "for open" and there is a spelling mistake with the noun "dour". In the second statement: "You need a Hand or ather put of the body", one can see that there is a syntactic feature addition, "ather" instead of "another", "put" instead of "part".

What is more, In the third statement: "and the more important esheat of kiss", the learners used a word that does not exist in English "esheat", the word "kiss" does not make sense in this context. In the fourth statement: "put the hands o other parts in the kiss", it is evident that there

was an influence of L1 "o" instead of "or"; and once more, a syntactic feature addition "other" instead of "another". In few words, there is not coherence in the last part of the sentence. In the fifth statement: "introduce the kiss in the chapa of the door", the word "kiss" might mean "keys". Again he used a word in the Spanish language "chapa".

Moreover, In the last two sentences: "And mave in the right, You did now are you expetst to open the door…", The learner made mistakes such as: spelling "mave" instead of "move", "expetst" instead of "experts"; use of wrong preposition "in" instead of "on"; the auxiliary verb "did" and the personal pronoun "you" should not have been used in this structure, the time expression "now" is in the wrong place and the indefinite article "a" was omitted.

In fact, the results of these empirical methods confirmed that eighth grade students have a low proficiency in the writing skill. Therefore, there is a contradiction among the bilingual English program set seven years ago by San Tarsicio School, its mission and vision and the present condition of the students' writing.

With reference to the school's mission, "Being bilingual in English, the students will be able to compete in a globalized world. San Tarcisio School provides students with training in foreign language (English) to perform successfully in various situations and communication contexts typical from a borderless world, while observing the teaching - learning process to strengthen comprehensive training as it is presented within the educational philosophy of the institution".

Furthermore, the vision states that "The level of the students' bilingualism, at San Tarsicio School, reaches high levels of English proficiency to understand other cultures and their relationship with them. This works by ongoing training its teachers as well as having available the technical and educational resources online according to the new demands of the twenty first century". (PEI of San Tarsicio school).

Being conscious of the learners' written inconsistencies related to the form of the English language (spelling, punctuation, cohesion and coherence), we as researchers decided to do a deeper analysis to their pieces of writing. Thus, we tried to identify some extra information that might not be visible at first sight. At the end, we found that the English learners use a set of communication strategies to get the message across (Wanden, 1986).

The same sample showed some written communication strategies used by the English learners; for instance, the learner used words such as "yo" and "chapa" as a code-switching strategy; "put" "ather" or "esheat" known as word coinage which consist on creating a non-existing L2 word based on a supposed rule; the structure "for open" is a literal translation strategy from L1 to L2. (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995); as it is evidenced in the student's piece of writing, he did not abandon the communication intent in spite of his language limitations.

As far as the problem above is concerned, there is the necessity to strengthen 8th grade students' written strategic competence that means "the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal

communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur" (Canale & Swain, 1980, pp. 1-47). This is according to the institution's mission and vision as the educational project of bilingualism, the students' needs, and the learning standards of the foreign language in Colombia (Ministerio Nacional de Colombia, 2006).

To reach its goals, San Tarsicio School should take into consideration Cassany (1994) who points out that "speaking, listening, reading and writing are the four skills that a language learner should master to communicate effectively in all situations. There is no any other way to use the language with communicative purposes" (p. 87). As English teachers, we are obligated to develop methodological and didactic proposals to maximize the communicative approach. Then, the Warcraft III Online game is proposed as an interactive alternative to strengthen teenagers' written strategic competence in the English language.

There are two international and a national antecedents that have to do, in one way or another, with this type of research study: firstly, Delwich (2006) worked with 41 college students on a project named: Massively multiplayer on-line games (henceforth, MMOs) in the new media classroom. He demonstrated that videogames enhance literacy, attention, reaction time, and higher-level thinking. He also argues that several scholars have suggested that massively multiplayer online games (MMOs) such as Everquest and Second life have educational potential. This project was carried out at Trinity University, San Antonio, TX, USA.

Secondly, Steinkuehler (2008) carried out a research project called Massively Multiplayer Online games as an educational technology: An outline for research; Educational Technology. This study was focused on those interested in online technologies for learning the knowledge and skills that constitute successful participation in Massively Multiplayer online games (MMOs). This places them among the most promising new digital technologies to date. This study was carried out at Wisconsin-Madison University, USA.

Thirdly, Schechter, Amy; Denmon, Jennifer M. (2012) worked on a Research Project named "How Do I Earn Buy-In from Digital Natives?" which involved Massive Multiplayer Online Game, learning and writing. In the final report, they pointed out that the high school students enjoyed reading and writing more when they could use technology; to support their research, they used portfolios as evidences to document the improvement in student writing by the end of the year. This study was carried out in Tampa, Florida in University of South Florida.

What is more, In Bogota, Galvis (2010) worked on a Project titled "Using Video Game-Based Instruction in an EFL Program: Understanding the Power of Video Games in Education". This project was implemented on four students in a military academy in Colombia. The results showed that students were more entertained and attentive and demonstrated more engagement and disposition towards their English classes. This study was carried out at Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

Based on the school's needs that have to do with the bilingual program, and above all, 8th grade learners' needs related to the strengthening of their writing skill, it is proposed this research project called "Warcraft III online game, as An Interactive Alternative to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English Language". The main aim of this study is to strengthen 8th grade written strategic competence in the English language, throughout the implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game. Thus, it is expected to contribute with the B1 level of the learner whose written proficiency skills might stimulate intercommunication among some cultures where English is spoken, needed for a peaceful and civilized relationship among them. Furthermore, this would also contribute to the Colombian plans related to the development of communicative competences in English as a foreign language, and support the Colombian project called "Bogota bilingue en 10 años".

Taking into account the above and the nature of this research project, it is proposed the "Warcraft III" online game which is a fantasy game populated with elves, dwarves, and other fantastic characters. Players choose their "race" and are given "quests" or tasks. In order to complete these tasks, the player is required to speak to characters controlled by the software, read texts, and speak and collaborate with other players through text chatting and messengers. This final aspect separates Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOs) from other more traditional games. By making oral or written communication among the players a central aspect to the game, it provides a unique opportunity for us teachers to make use of an already existing virtual environment that requires students to use the target language to communicate with their partners or native speakers in order to achieve a goal.

Recognizing that the social aspect of learning a language is the key to understand the potential Massively Multiplayer Online games (MMOs) in a foreign language classroom. Through this, we might understand a grammatical construction or proper use of a phrase not by translating into our native language, but by placing it within context. This context, whether we are reading or speaking, is inevitably a social one. Gee (2001) states that "the meaning of language is not some abstract propositional representation that resembles a verbal language. Rather, meaning in language is tied to people's experiences of situated action in the material and social world" (p.20). This theory has been extended to second language acquisition beginning with the environment by Dwight (2002) who points out that "Language is learned in interaction, often with more capable social members. Classroom teachers are part of this group, role models, friends, family members and significant others can also fall into this category" (p.44). Regardless of whether we are talking about first or second language acquisition, the basic principle remains consistent: language is the necessary tool for the language learner to complete tasked-based activities that require social interaction and collaboration in a "real world" environment.

This research study is based on the modification of the Law 115, 1994 by attaching the articles 20, literal g; article 21, literal m and paragraph 1 according to the Colombian Basic Standards of competences in Foreign Languages established by the Ministry of National Education. (See appendix 4).

What is more, the PEI (Chapter 4, special areas 4.1.2) at San Tarsicio School states that "to reach its learners' bilingualism, the English language is contemplated as a special subject;

thus, the communicative skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – need to be developed accurately and fluently" (p. 47). Some other subjects will be taught in English to support its learning, although they are not part of this area. (See appendix 5)

Researchers generate a question at the beginning of the study whose answer is expected to give the solution to the problem stated previously. How could the "Warcraft III" online game contribute to strengthen 8th grade students' written strategic competence in the English language? The idea of using this online game came up as a result of a survey implemented to 8th graders in order to know their preferences.

During the process of the scientific research, we as researchers followed logic and demanding series of stages and assignments of this process. One grouped systematically a set of phenomena, facts and processes that we believed might have something in common from the problem and their theoretical conception, it has been concluded that the object of this study is English teaching and learning writing process.

Moreover, and as part of the object of study, the field of study represents those aspects from which one has to intervene to reach the aim of the research and transform the reality. For this study, the field is English teaching and learning process of 8th graders at San Tarsicio School.

To reach the main aim of this study, we established the following tasks: firstly, one considered that it was necessary to make a diagnosis of the real situation related to the written strategy competence of 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School. Secondly, an appropriation of the theoretical constructors that has to do with the written strategic competence in the English language and the "Warcraft III" online game. Thirdly, identification of the antecedents, previous studies, related to Massive Multiplayer online games to learn English as a foreign language. Fourthly, draw up a task proposal to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language of 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School. Finally, implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language of 8th students at San Tarsicio School.

Also, researchers thought that there might be a limitation in the process of this project. In spite of letting the learners choose the "Warcraft III" online game as an already existing technological device, it does not imply that the whole group could be in condition to master successfully the elements which compose the video game. As a possible solution, there was an awareness stage of the game before starting off with the implementation. Final results showed that from 9 learners, three of them had never had any direct contact with the "Warcraft III" online game; however, their partners agree on doing cooperative learning during the school breaks. According to Dewey, Lewin, & Deutsh, (1930s and 40s) "it is important that students develop knowledge and social skills that could be used outside of the classroom, and in the democratic society".

This research is qualitative. Rodriguez (1996) considers that "this type of research is an interpretive process of inquiry based on different methodological traditions, including Action Research."(p. 12). Apart from this, Wallace (2010) argues that research projects of Action Research consider the research question, the collection and analysis of information, the role of the researchers, the validation of the results from instances of triangulation, and finally writing the end reports and reflections.

As Wallace (2010) argues, to conduct an action research project, teachers enter into a cycle of investigation that includes the following steps: Identify an Issue, review literature on issue and ask questions to narrow focus of issue, choose method of data collection; collect, analyze and interpret information, develop and implement and monitor action plan.

Wallace (2010) also argues that "action research is viewed as a cycle of activities rather than a one-step response to a problem" (p. 17). Then, the process might be repeated if the problem remains.

When talking about the context, we could say that San Tarsicio is a male school from calendar "B" and is located in San José of Bavaria neighborhood in northern Bogota. It is a private institution since its founding 53 years ago. It has three sections: preschool, primary section and secondary in the same physical building. There is only one course per grade which is divided into groups of 11 to 14 students to take English lessons, taught by three teachers simultaneously.

This allows for a more personalized instruction, thus, the teacher may know the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Furthermore, the school implements science subjects, physical education, arts, English systems from kindergarten to 4th grade. Besides these subjects from 4th to 8th grade, it is added the subject "Reading and writing in English". From 9th to 11th grades, learners have physical education, graphic design, and environmental science in English. (See appendix 6) The institution runs from 8:10 am till 4:00 pm. Most students come from 4 and 5 social level. The institution has 40 teachers for three sections, all have under degree in different areas of human knowledge, three are specialists in bilingual education, and four have a Master's degree in education as well.

Students from 8th grade took part in this research study. To select the group, the researchers took into consideration the following criteria: firstly, they were between 12 and 13 years old; secondly, the learners' common characteristics in their English written level as a result of the observation analysis in their pieces of writing; thirdly, the participants` interest to take part in this research project; finally, a random selection of nine students from the whole group to give them an opportunity to strengthen their weaknesses. This choice was carried out because of the time proposed by the researchers for this study. However, their age claims that the teacher appropriates and implements new tools, strategies and methods to create a more meaningful learning environment. They have a good performance in both oral communication skills (speaking and listening) and in reading, but some inconsistencies in the form of the written language.

As instruments to collect data, we used empirical methods: survey, interview, reference to sources, observation; theoretical methods (these methods are applied in the exploratory phase evidence, methods can be applied at different times, so the theory is confronted with reality; with the theoretical framework), synthesis and data analysis, induction – deduction (One can write and infer things derived from theory), from the abstract to the concrete (used in the conclusions, and the theoretical considerations); statistical methods or metheoretical: to systematize and analyze information. The data obtained through these instruments was analyzed.

With this project, we propose to demonstrate that infusing technology and the students' likes and preferences into writing might increase adolescents' achievements on the grounds that today; teenagers as well as adults use social networking sites and digital media with fervor. Integrating Massively Multiplayer online games into writing might revitalize 8th grade students' interest and strengthen their written strategic competence in the English language.

CHAPTER l: EPISTIMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The objective of this project is to strengthen the 8th grade students' written strategic competence in the English language throughout the implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game at San Tarsicio School. Therefore, this literature review begins with an overview of videogames and writing theory and the elements of a writing and videogames environment. The following sections are then focused on individual elements, including: Computer Assisted in Language Learning (CALL), Video Games: Videogames and learning, Massively Multiplayer Online Games, the core constructivist belief, consequence of the constructivist beliefs, learning by doing, problem solving, cooperation and collaboration, Massively multiplayer online game (MMOs) and social change, Warcraft III game, videogames and writing.

Furthermore, writing and its implications, why writing is important, cohesion and coherence, writing, chat and social interactions, chat and communication, chat: "written conversation" or "oral written text"?. Finally, the competences: communicative competence, communicative competence in writing skill, discourse competence, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, strategic competence and communication strategies, communication strategies in the written medium, taxonomies of communication strategies. In each of these sections, the literature review has revealed much that has been written with respect to video games in formal education.

Computer Assisted in Language Learning (CALL)

The theory of Computer Assisted in Language Learning (henceforth, CALL) is based on using the computer through which a language learning can receive and produce information in a practical and motivated form, once his/her writing skill had been developed through the knowledge and use of cognitive strategies to improve it (Hartoyo, 2008, p, 11)

In this sense, one understands that praxis and motivation are two factors that influence the achievement of the aims in any process of teaching-learning. As Cobb & Stevens (1996) demonstrated that "The computer assists and stimulate easily to the foreign language young learners in the fourth communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) even in the development of the critical thinking" (p.105).

In our case, strengthen the written strategic competence, the computer offers to the language learners a great variety of programs that includes images, graphics, vocabulary, colors, presentation styles, etc., and resources such as e-mail, messenger, chat, e-cards, word, among others. Using all this and based on instructions, topics and determined parameters, the foreign language learners "will produce" new information in our proposal, this product is like an output of the written texts.

Although, writing is considered by many writers such as Gee (2011) and Brown (2007), as the most complex skill from a language, they agree that the use of computers motivate the learners to discuss by using their writing skill, and so developing their critical thinking.

Additionally, we as researchers agree with Farrah (2010) who states that CALL integrates motivation, interest, and independent learning. In addition to this, using CALL enhances language skills especially reading and writing. Besides it provides learning at the learner's own pace and reduces anxiety. They are given an opportunity to interact with others by enhancing communication between teachers and learners and provide tools to improve the learners' language skills. Computer based communication technology also offers students an opportunity to visit countries and learn about the people, their languages and their culture.

Considering that one of the aims of this research project is to use the computer technology as a flexible tool to motivate and develop the writing discourse, it is referenced in this section the computer and the video games as a help in the foreign language learning process in spite of many obstacles to be overcame in order to enjoy the benefits of technology to the fullest education.

Video games

When talking about video games, Squire (as cited in Galvis, 2011, p.4) states that at the beginning, this current technology had not been used in neither education nor foreign language instructions but as a form of entertainment with profit and marketing interests rather than academic ones; he defines gaming as a "social practice, meaning that it occurs at the intersection of people's goals, technological affordances, and social and cultural contexts". Similarly, Mcfarlane & Kirriemuir (2004) define video games as "a type of digitally designed and pre-programmed visual platforms available for one or more players that allow for user input and the flow of digital information" (p.46). This definition lead us to think that through video games people integrate themselves and do cooperative work through computation nets. Besides that, it provides the students a great level of autonomous learning that implies the mastery of the technology and keeps the learners more active.

However, there must be not only the teacher's but the parents' awareness about the importance of the videogames in education.

Video games and learning

When implementing videogames at school, Gros (2008) states that "there must be not only a methodological, but a real change in the learning process to make it effective" (p.132). That is to say that videogames help developing and implementing several educational strategies

which activates competences that have to do with communication and above all reflection of previous experiences.

Dewey (as cited in Gros, 2008, p.134) points out "The fundamental unit of the new pedagogy relies on the idea that there is a close and necessary relationship between the real experience process and education". In other words, learning and doing cannot be isolated or independent. In this way, the students learn better when being in a direct contact with their own experiences to make them reflect about what they learn. The observation and reflection about a previous experience is called by Kolb (as cited in Gros, 2008, p.146) as "experiential learning" which allows the students use their previous knowledge as a guide for subsequent actions. Then, the pedagogical advantage of the videogames in the classroom is the guide of the teacher who has to do with the transformation of the students' experiences with the game into a reflective experience.

Over the years, gaming has evolved to create Massive Multiplayer online role playing games, like "Warcraft III", and opportunities for large gatherings. People organize themselves around this area of interest. As Gee & Hayes (2011) argue "When people organize themselves in the real world and/or via the Internet to learning something connected to a shared endeavor, interest, or passion" (p. 30) the term passionate affinity based learning arose.

Massively Multiplayer online games (MMOs)

Mcfarlene & Kerriemuir (2004) classified two types of video games: the first one was called mainstream digital games; and learning oriented games (eductainment). The first one has got advantages due to their superiority in visual content and plot content, as well as the ability to recreate fantasy, challenge players; meanwhile, the eductainment was designed to present content in an enjoyable manner, but has been criticized because of its predictability, predisposition to learning and monotony in presenting content.

Thorne, Black, & Skyes (2009) review a new type of video games referred as Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMO). They argue that "these video games are commercially designed and allow for large numbers of people to play online simultaneously, while interacting and reaching game specific objectives."(p.234). This type of online games make all sort of people gain access to interact among themselves without taking into account their social class, physical condition, race, beliefs, and above all, whose players spend significant amount of time which might be an advantage for this research project.

However, Massive Multiplayer Online Games might help us to check the effects of the constructivist learning theory.

The core constructivist belief

The virtues of video games in the educational field usually rely on a base of explicitly constructivist beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the process of learning. In contrast to the empirical behaviorist view that knowledge about an objective reality can be only and constantly passed on from teacher to student, the fundamental purpose of the constructivist philosophy is the belief that all knowledge must be actively and subjectively constructed in the mind of each individual.

Dewey (1916) stated this belief when he described a new form of an active and constructive education instead of being a passive process of learning by absorption (p. 38). Piaget (1952) made this thinking official with his theories of *assimilation and accommodation.* The former accounted for both the act of incorporating new data into existing mental structures (or schema) and also the construction of completely new schema into which data could then be incorporated (p. 6, 410, 416). The second referred to the ways in which existing schema are modified to account for new input (p.7). Even Vygotsky (1986), who highlighted the importance of social relationships in learning, thought that "direct teaching of concepts is impossible and fruitless" (p. 150). Later, Bruner (1986) thought that each individual's perception of reality is a symbolic construct of his or her own mind (p. 95).

This core belief of constructivists such as Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner continues to let us know the work of 21st century researchers, including those exploring the

educational potential of video games. For example, Shaffer (2006b) cites Dewey, Vygotsky, and Bruner extensively in How Video games Help Children Learn, and the foundation of the theories of Schafer is Piaget's schema view of learning (p. 149). Even game designers Salen and Zimmerman (2004), who are not writing with an educational purpose in mind, base their theories on the importance of the schemas (p. 103) and cognitive frames players develop to "interpret actions and events" (p. 374). Steinkuehler (2006b) has studied similar forms of meaning-making within the cultural context of existing Massively Multiplayers online games created for commercial and entertainment purposes. MMOs created for educational purposes can harness and support these core processes.

Consequence of the constructivist beliefs

The most important consequence of this core constructivist belief is the saying of learning by doing. Dewey (1938) called for "education of, by, and for, experience" (p.29), a sentiment that affected the work of video game scholars such as Jenkins, Klopfer, Squire, & Tan (2003), who point out that "knowledge developed through game play (…) is valuable information when facing new challenges and solving problems" (p. 6). Slator et al. (2006) also finds value in "virtual role based worlds for education (…) constructed purposefully for student immersion" (p. 11). As role-playing games, Massively Multiplayers online games offer learners virtual worlds where they can learn by doing in ways that are not easy carried out in a traditional classroom.

Several constructivists take into consideration that learning is a social phenomenon. Dewey (1915) argues that cognitive development is a social process (p. 99), and later Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (Henceforth, ZPD) was based on the observation that students can accomplish more with the help of others than they can independently. Based on these theories, Shaffer (2006b) discussed the use of computer games as scaffolding to help students move toward mastery of skills in their ZPD (p.152). Massively Multiplayers online games also provide a social network to student learning.

Furthermore, various constructivists accept that individual learners will have different interests as well as different strengths and weakness. Gardner (1999), for instance, identified ten independent capacities for aptitude in individuals. In addition to being able to engage learners through multiple modalities and to allow students to rehearse more of Gardner's intelligences than a traditional classroom could, video games can also work to help players develop their weaker intelligences (Prensky, 2006, p. 95).

Learning by doing

Whereas traditional teaching and learning is a passive experience for the learner who is transmitted knowledge from the teacher, constructivist pedagogy emphasizes learning by doing, learning from experience, and problem solving in context. In order to learn by doing, a student must not simply read from a textbook or listen to a lecture. Indeed, the student has to engage authentic (or real-world) problems in their authentic context. Dewey (1915, 1938) considered

that schoolwork was remote and isolated compared to real-world activities, and he also considered that students should be given responsibility for their own problem solving. Bruner (1966) also considered that traditional schooling should be removed from meaningful life in society, and urged that educators should consider learning in a situated cultural context.

Nowadays, modern video game researchers have considered that video and computer games could help provide such a context for learning. Prensky (2001a, 2005a, 2006) emphasized the importance of game contexts (including characters), suggested that game aims should be useful to students, he wrote about five levels of learning by doing in games, and predicted that future educational games will be more realistic, experiential, and immersive while including better storytelling and characters. Like Prensky, Gee (2003, 2004) discussed ways in which video games can provide a context for learning by fostering active and critical thinking while players engage with a domain of learning as a complex system rather than isolated facts.

Though Prensky (2001a, 2006) and Gee (2003, 2004, 2005) pointed out many existing video games that effectively provide a context for learning in the ways they discussed, few of their examples included some MMOs.

Problem Solving

The process of asking questions and finding out answers naturally encourages students to make new connections in their minds, the essence of building schema in the constructivist

philosophy. Dewey (1916) sought this kind of problem solving in his method of education. Jonassen (2003) believed that "solving problems can (…) be the most meaningful kind of learning activity" (p. 20), especially during intentional learning, and he showed samples in web publishing and virtual travel. Open-ended video games are another natural choice of technology to provide students with opportunities for problem solving that grows from their own goals and interests and has a potentially infinite number of resolutions (Shaffer, 2006b; Squire & Jenkins, 2004).

Cooperation and collaboration

For supporting social negotiation of meaning, one of the objectives of a constructivist learning environment is to promote cooperation and collaboration among students, as opposed to isolating students and placing obstacles between them. According to Dixon- Krauss (1996), cooperation and collaboration are the backbone of Vygotsky's theory of social teaching and learning. What is more, Prensky (2001, 2004a, 2004b) saw the potential of video and computer games to provide support for cooperation and collaboration, and he considered interaction among players more important than their interaction with the computer running the game. Gee (2003) also found value in games as a framework for cooperative and collaborative learning in what he called affinity groups; moreover, Shaffer (2004) sought that collaborative learning in games can be competitive as well as cooperative.

When Gee (2003) talked about multiplayer games, including MMOs such as *Everquest*, he wrote about learning as a social process that happens in the game (p. 169). However Aldrich (2004, 2005) dismissed MMOs as an ineffective format because of the logistical issues related to getting students in the same virtual place at the same time, the games' unreliability in creating genuine role-playing.

Massively multiplayer online game (MMOs) and social change

Massively multiplayer online games are a particularly powerful genre of games for effecting positive social change. Steinkuehler and Williams (2006) sought that MMOs "function as one novel form of a new 'third place' for informal sociability" (p. 2). Such games are playful, accessible, and accommodating neutral grounds (and social levelers) where conversation is the main activity and where regulars find a home away from home (p. 8-17). Steinkuehler and Williams noted that participation in MMOs "affects participants' social capital in terms of both broad but week social networks (…) and deep but narrow social networks" (p. 3). They found that MMOs can also serve as "a window into new worlds of people and ideas" (p. 22) and that players have the ability to "explore, construct, and resist" dominant culture (p. 13). In terms of formal education it is even more important that in MMOs it is common for teenagers to mentor "adults twice their age and education in how to lead" (p. 20) and that "large percentages of MMOGamers play online with 'real life' romantic partners, family members, co-works, and friends" (p. 15).

Warcraft III

Recognizing the social aspect of learning a language is the key to understanding the potential of Massively Multiplayer Online Game (MMOs) in a foreign language classroom. Through this, we might understand a grammatical construction or proper use of a phrase not by translating into our native language, but by placing it within context. This context, whether we are reading or speaking, is inevitably a social one. Gee (2011) states that "the meaning of language is not some abstract propositional representation that resembles a verbal language. Rather, meaning in language is tied to people's experiences of situated action in the material and social world" (pp. 14-15). This theory has been extended to second language acquisition beginning with the environment by Dwight Atkinson, who points out that "Language is learned in interaction, often with more capable social members. Classroom teachers are part of this group, role models, friends, family members and significant others can also fall into this category." Regardless of whether we are talking about first or second language acquisition, the basic principle remains consistent: language is the necessary tool for the language learner to complete tasked-based activities that require social interaction and collaboration in a "real world" environment.

Taking into account the above and the nature of our research project, it is proposed the "Warcraft III" online game which is a high fantasy real-time strategy video game released by Blizzard Entertainment on July 3, 2002 in U.S.A. It contains four playable races: Humans and Orcs. Warcraft III's single-player campaign is told through all four of the game's races in a

progressive manner. Multiplayer mode allows for play against other players, via the internet, instead of playing against computer-controlled characters as is done in the single-player custom game mode.

Gameplay

Warcraft III takes place on a map of varying size, such as large plains and fields, with terrain features like rivers, mountains, seas, or cliffs. In Campaign mode, the map is initially covered with the Black Mask, an impenetrable covering. The Mask is removed from explored areas, but are no longer within sight range of an allied unit or building are instead covered with the war; though terrain remains visible, changes such as enemy troop movements and building construction are unseen. During a game, players must establish settlements to gain resources, defend against other players, and train units to explore the map and attack computer controlled enemies. There are three main managed resources in Warcraft III: gold, harvested wood, and food. The first two are required to construct units and buildings, while food restricts the maximum number of units the player may control at one time.

What is more, Warcraft III introduces creeps, computer controlled units that are hostile to all players. Creeps guard key areas such as gold mines or neutral buildings and, when killed, provide experience points, gold, and special items to a player's hero. Furthermore, the game introduces a day/night cycle to the series. Besides having advantages or disadvantages for

certain races, at night most creeps fall asleep, making nighttime scouting safer; however, the visibility on the playing field for most units is also reduced. Other minor changes to the gameplay were due to the three-dimensional terrain. For instance, units on a cliff have an attack bonus when attacking units at lower elevations.

In Warcraft III, the Night Elves and the Undead are playable races. Additionally, each race has a unique set of units, structures, technologies, and base-building methodology.

Besides that, Warcraft III has powerful new units called heroes. For each enemy unit killed, a hero will gain experience points (awarded for the completion of quests, overcoming obstacles and opponents, and for successful role-playing), which allow the hero to level-up to a maximum level of 10. Progressing up a level increases the heroes` attributes and also allows the hero to gain new magic options (bringing role-playing video game elements to the series). Certain hero abilities can apply beneficial real time strategies to allied units. All heroes can equip items to increase skills, defense, and other abilities. At level six, the hero can obtain an "ultimate" skill that is more powerful than the three other curses that the hero possesses. Heroes can also utilize the various natural resources found throughout the map, such as controllable non-player characters, and markets in which the hero can purchase usable items. Often, hero units become the deciding factor in determining a winner.

Campaign

Warcraft III's campaign mode is broken up into five campaigns, each featuring a different race which the player controls (2 Orc campaigns, 1 Human, 1 Undead, and 1 Night Elf). Each campaign is itself divided into chapters. In the game, players are not directed to mission briefings in which plot exposition occurs and objectives are announced; Also, Warcraft III uses a system of "seamless quest"(without interruption a journey towards a goal). Some plot development happens in an occasional cinematic, but most occurs in-game with a sequence in a video game over which the player has no or only limited control, breaking up the gameplay and used to advance the plot, strengthen the main character's development, introduce characters, and provide background information, atmosphere, dialogue, and clues. Objectives, known as quests, are revealed to the player during the progress of the map. Main quests are those that the player must complete to proceed to the next chapter, but there are also optional quests which are not initially revealed, but can be discovered and completed alongside the main objectives.

Through each race's campaign, the player retains control of one or more heroes, which slowly grow in experience as the levels progress. This experience is carried over to subsequent missions, allowing the hero to grow throughout the course of the campaign.

While different in terms of storyline and precise gameplay, all of the different races' campaigns are structured similarly. Each begins with a level involving simple mechanics to

introduce the player to the race and the basic elements of their hero and units. After one or two such levels the player's first "building mission" occurs, requiring them to build and maintain a base while competing with one or more enemy forces. The only campaign that breaks this pattern is the Night Elf campaign, whose first mission involves building a limited base. The last level of each race's campaign is an "epic battle" which means that the player has to strike down a large number of enemy foes and finally destroy their main base.

Multiplayer

While campaign games can have many different objectives, the sole objective in multiplayer games is to destroy all the buildings of the opposition. In default lively crowd matches, players can pick their own heroes, and losing one will not end the game.

To make the game precede more quickly, by default the map is covered in fog of war instead of the Black Mask. Warcraft III allows for single and multiplayer replays to be recorded and viewed, allowing a game to be played at slower and faster speeds and viewed from the perspective of all players.

This game also uses the Battle.net multiplayer network. Players can create free accounts in regional "gateways," which helps reduce a time interval between the stimulation and response;

these are Azeroth (U.S. East), Lordaeron (U.S. West), Northrend (Europe), and Kalimdor (Asia).Unlike previous Battle-enabled games, Warcraft III introduced anonymous matchmaking (the process of matching two or more people together), automatically pairing players for games based on their skill level and game type preferences, preventing players from cheating and inflating their records artificially. If players want to play with a friend in ranked matches, Warcraft III offers "Arranged Team Games", where a team joins a lobby and Battle.net will search for another team; as with anonymous matchmaking, the enemy team is not known beforehand. Players can also host custom games, using maps either created in the Warcraft III World Editor, or the default multiplayer scenarios. The game also offers Friends Lists and Channels for chatting, where players can create custom. Warcraft III also allows players to band together to form "clans", which can participate in tournaments or offer a recreational aspect to Warcraft III. Global scores and standings in matchmaking games are kept on a "latter". These rankings can be checked online without the need of the game.

Chat

Meeting new people in real-life is intimidating enough. Thankfully, chatting in Warcraft III is easier and more casual than anything the player would encounter in the real world. Usually, in-game chat is text-based. A player will see other people's public conversations only if s/he is allowed to do so; otherwise, players can create their own custom chat channels. The obvious advantage of a custom channel is privacy; only people in that channel will be able to read the

conversation going on there. Players can also moderate these channels, meaning that they can invite, remove, mute, or moderate chat in their channel if they want.

Setting

Warcraft III takes place in the fictional world of Azeroth. Several years before the events of the games, a demon army known as the Burning Legion intent on Azeroth's destruction corrupted a race called the Orcs, and sent them through a portal to attack Azeroth. After many years of fighting, the Orcs were defeated by a coalition of humans, dwarves and elves known as the Alliance; the surviving combatants were herded into internment camps, where they seemed to lose their lust for battle. With no common enemy, a period of peace followed, but the Alliance began to fracture.

Video games and writing

Video games make ¨BIG thinkers´´ it can help students think deeper and abstractly about anything else. Now, in school we can see how students socialize about Warcraft III after and before each intervention.

Video Games are not just sitting the computer, create characters and play. It is about trial and error and figuring out all these things and making a good game. One of the ideas is to work

in team working collaboration, and have different expertise, and built something with the team work on developing the written skill.

Writing and its implications

The averages of the people believe that a good reader might be a good writer. However, there are a few characteristics which differentiate the spoken and the written discourses. At first glance, it seems the first is less structured than the written one. Halliday (as cited in Nunan, 2000, p. 87) states that "The oral speech transcriptions are not less structured than the written", this make us think that in the first, one doesn't have the opportunity to check the clauses levels, but in the way they are linked. With respect to this, Hammond (as cited in Nunan, 2000, p.95) states in her researches that people who did well in their oral discourse did not perform accurately in their written one. She concluded that it was because they had been working in the oral but very little in the written. That is to say, one needs more exposure to the written skills in order to develop them successfully.

It is observed marked characteristics between the skillful writers are observed compared to those who just start in the world of writing. The first ones take their time by organizing assignments and concern more about its content. They are more careful in writing as a resourceful activity in which checking of their drafts becomes a routine to change their thoughts and, thus, make a critical reflection of what they are doing. On the other side, to the less skillful, it takes them less time to plan their texts and generally they feel confused when starting; besides,

they focus on the mechanical of the writing and do not concern too much in correcting what they have written.

In fact, Writing has been seen as a complex process and it's been considered as the last skill to be developed. Brown (2000) argues that in the past "The teachers just focused on the learners' final product, it was supposed that the texts had to have certain standards such as; well use of the grammar and vocabulary and be structured in such way that the audience consider conventional" (p.45). Unfortunately, that policy is still ruling in those institutes where the learners just have models to be followed, besides some mechanical considerations like the punctuation and spelling. What it is pretended to obtain here is an evaluation, but a meaningful communication with other people.

As illustrated above does not have anything bad, but the learners should be considered the language creators and start off an intrinsic motivation to transform their thoughts into words, polish their ideas and give them an organization with cohesion and coherence. To make it possible, the competent writers do not write their final products in the first try, but follow the long and hard process of planning, writing drafts, checking, giving feedbacks and rewrite until obtain the final product.

The successful final product from a written text has to be the result among the existing relation of the process of pre-writing, draft, revision and edition, then, there must be a thin balance between the process and the product.

Why writing is important

Most contexts of life (school, the workplace, and the community) call for some level of writing skill, and each context makes overlapping, but not identical, demands. Proficient writers can adapt their writing flexibly to the context in which it takes place.

In the school setting, writing plays two distinct but complementary roles. First, it is a skill that draws on the use of strategies (such as planning, evaluating, and revising text) to accomplish a variety of goals, such as writing a report or expressing an opinion with the support of evidence. Second, writing is a means of extending and deepening students' knowledge; it acts as a tool for learning subject matter (Keys, 2000; Shanahan, 2004; Sperling & Freedman, 2001). Because these roles are closely linked, Reading Next recommended that language arts teachers use content-area texts to teach reading and writing skills and those content-area teachers provide instruction and practice in discipline-specific reading and writing.

Cohesion and coherence

The cohesion and coherence are terms used in text linguistics and discourse analysis of written texts.

To start off with cohesion, Halliday & Hans (as cited in Bublitz, 2011, p.25) developed the concept of cohesion as "a semantic one" due to the fact that it refers "to relations of meaning

that exist within the text" and "enable one part of the text to function as the context for another". It means that cohesion has to do with lexical level, grammar and the connection; that is, the resources to "link" the different parts of a text, which is defined by Halliday & Hans (as cited in Bublitz, 2011, p.98) as semantic unit, the parts of which are linked together by explicit cohesive ties, like phrases, sentences and paragraphs. In other words, cohesion is the glue that holds a piece of writing together; sentence to sentence and from paragraph to paragraph clarifying for readers the relationship among ideas in a piece of writing.

On the other hand, Witte & Lester (1981, p.67) note that several students of written discourse – among them (Grimes, 1975), (Van Dijk, 1986), (Enkvist,1978), and (Beaugrande, 1980) – distinguish cohesion and coherence. They limit cohesion to "explicit mechanisms in the text," while "coherence conditions allow a text to be understood in a real-world setting". Van Dijk (1986) argues that "coherence is a semantic property of discourse formed through the interpretation of each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences, with "interpretation" implying interaction between the text and the reader"(p.78). That means that coherence is a clearly pragmatic notion. It concerns logical thinking and depends on one's knowledge about the given world. What's more, coherence might be relatively meaningful or not, incoherent or coherent from a reader to another depending on each individual. Van Dijk (1986, p.87) has proposed the notion of macrostructures to characterize these aspects. He states that the macrostructures show the local structure of a discourse, that is the structure of the sentences and the relationship between cohesion and coherence.

It is difficult to separate these two concepts. However, to understand better, it is important to establish clearly a difference between form and content; superficial structure and deep structure, statement and proposition. A text is a semantic unit when it has two structures: content and form or expression. The first is a process of the thought and has the ideas or proposition logical organization. It is the deep structure. The second is the linguistic expression of the thought previously organized. For that linguistic expression, one uses sentences which are the superficial structure.

Writing, chat and social interactions

Olson (1995) argues that written language by catching and communicating words with precision and separating them from the context of production, affords the opportunity to think in a more abstract and decontextualized way. Writing give the opportunity to the participant's to develop cognitive skills and social interaction among them.

Moreover, Vygotsky (1901) pointed out that human activities take place in a cultural setting and cannot be understood apart from these settings. Social interactions do not simply influence cognitive development; social interactions build our "cognitive structures and thinking processes ¨ in this point of the writing learning process, teachers give the opportunity to create, explore, and adapt other points of view generating student's positives reactions in their learning process.

On the other hand, writing in the Chat offers different types of thinking, because the participants use different symbol systems and afford various types of interaction. The use of any video game online has effects on cognition that can be subtle and most of the time occurs without awareness but in this study, the first step researchers used before the implementation was the awareness; it showed how the affordances of technology realized depends on conditions such as instructions, background knowledge, and use of the tool.

Also the writing chat enhances opportunity for collaborative writing. It may be defined as the joint production or the coauthoring of a text by two or more writers. Thus collaborative writing is distinguished from the researchers feedback activities that are often manifest as part of the process approach to writing instruction since the first time when participants agreed to play in groups of threes, and follow step by step.

In addition, Mackey & Gass, (2006)pointed out when learners work in small groups, they engage in negotiations of meaning with the goal of making their output comprehensible and more target-like. These negotiations are said to facilitate L2 learning because learners connect their ideas in context in the chat communication. Ortega (2007) have focused mainly on oral interaction, the same type of interaction, may occur in other modalities, such as writing.

Chat and communication

Crystal (1997) said the core feature of traditional face-to-face interaction, the conversational *turn*. Turn-taking is so fundamental to conversation that most people are not conscious of its significance as a means of enabling interactions to be successful. It happened in the chat group when the participants explore the way to interact and produce words, sentences and connect their ideas and communication strategies.

The participants used well organize writing production after some interventions leading understand the communication purpose among their allies.

Chat: "written conversation" or "oral written text"?

Taras (as cited in Lisowska , 2006, p. 164) states that some linguists have defined chat by taking into account the type of transmission of the information; that is to say, those varieties of communication that belong to the verbal communication system. The differences cover: The type of the transmission of the information (oral/written), the type of contact (direct/indirect), the environment (contact face to face, letter, telephone, Internet) and interaction (formal/informal).

When talking about virtual conversation, Lisowska (2006) argues that chat has characteristics such as: It is verbal, written, indirect, through internet and informal; then, the following definitions were given by some linguistics.

"Chat is the expression that, in Internet, describes the used service to communicate oneself in a real time with other people, using the keyboard as a means to introduce the messages through a dialogue (…)" (Lárazo, 2001, p. 66).

"(…) a written conversation, in real time, eventually with a large number of people, simultaneously and through Web" (Araujo e Sá, 2003, p. 46).

"(…) the virtual conversation through Internet, colloquially know as chat (…) is an oral conversation on a written support (…)" (Yus, 2001, p. 79).

"(…) virtual conversation maintained by writing and in real time among the participants who are connected simultaneously to a channel or a meeting point (…)" (Llisterri, 2002, p. 62).

However, the classification of chat in the oral or written discourse presents difficulties. The doubts about this classification are reflected in different terms related to discursive nature of chat, and in which the transmission channel of the information are stressed: written conversation (Garnacho, 2000, p.77), written/oral text (Yus, 2001, p. 90), or written file (Araujo e Sa, 2003, p. 45).

In our point of view, the best concept in this field is from Crystal (2002) with "Netspeak"; but, he uses this word for all communicative situations of Internet. He says that the communication in the electrical means should not be perceived as a written language close to speaking nor oral language transmitted through the writing, he also underlined that "(…) the netspeak is not equal neither speaking nor writing, but shows properties from both, thus, incorporating itself for selection and adaptation (…)" (Crystal, 2002, p.62).

Nevertheless, Crystal accepts that groups of chat are getting away from the written discourse (Crystal, 2002, p. 61). Yus (2001) agrees with Crystal and points out that "(…) the most essential feature of the virtual conversation is the oral quality of the written texts that Internet users exchange among themselves (…)" (Yus, 2001, p. 98).

To show that chat is more similar to the oral discourse rather than the written, Lisowska (2006, p. 165) analyzed Crystal's chart (2002, pp. 57-58) with seven principal criteria from the oral language as well as seven from the written one.

At the end of the analysis, Lisowska (2006) concluded that the oral language has more affirmative answers when applying them to the language of chats. These characteristics are related to: time- limited, spontaneous, flexible structure, socially interactive; although, most of them are applied differently or with some restrictions; for instance, time- limited has to do with the fact that "(…) the messages get accumulated in the screen and, when there is a great number of users connected in the same channel, these messages disappear fast in the upper part of it without being read (…)" (Yus, 2001, 96). Spontaneity is not the same as spoken language due to the time lags between the production and the reception of the message. In terms of social interaction, this is constrained by the lack of prosody and nonverbal features.

On the other hand, the criteria of the written language applied to chats are not so numerous: limitation in space and visual decontextualization.

Lisowska (2006, p. 166) argues that chat and oral speech have more common features than those presented by Crystal (2002): She considers that chat is produced without effort (as a reaction to a stimulus); it happens in real time, the vocabulary used is limited. Furthermore, it has the form of a dialogue in which some meta-communicative expressions, ellipsis and anacoluthon are frequently used.

Finally, Lisowska (2006) concluded that chat is closer to the oral speech rather than the written language, in spite of having the communication in written. However, it does not mean that we have to perceive chat neither as an oral speech, nor as a written language. She points out "it is a new variety of discourse which appeared in the development of our civilization and integrates the features of the oral and written discourse" (p. 166).

Communicative Competence

The term Communicative Competence was proposed by Hymes (1972) who points out "communicative competence enables learners to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts" (Brown, 2000, p. 246). His work clearly established a change of emphasis among linguists, away from the study of language as a system in isolation, a focus seen in Chomsky's work (1965), towards the study of language as communication. Hymes's (1972) conceptualization of communicative competence has been developed by researchers such as Canale and Swain (1980), Bachman (1990) and Celce-Murcia

(1995), who attempted to define the specific components of the construct of communicative competence.

In their article on communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) includes four competences as part of it: grammar competence (knowledge of what is grammatically correct in a language); sociolinguistic competence (knowledge of what is socially acceptable in a language); strategic competence (knowledge of how to use communication strategies to handle breakdowns in communication) and discourse competence (knowledge of achieving coherence and cohesion in a spoken or written text). Pragmatic competence is essentially included in this model under sociolinguistic competence, which Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30) described as "sociocultural rules of use". Nevertheless, it was not until Bachman that pragmatic competence came to be regarded as one of the main components of communicative competence.

After Canale and Swain (1980), Bachman (1990) proposed a more comprehensive model of communication competence. He stressed the importance of describing "the processes by which various components interact with each other and with the context in which language use occurs" (Bachman, 1990, p. 81). He argued the fact that earlier theories on language proficiency, principally the frameworks constructed by Lado (1961) and Carroll (1968), apparently failed to take into account the distinction between linguistic knowledge and the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), pointing out that it was difficult to see whether the knowledge components were understood in their theories as simply manifested in the language

skills in different modalities or whether they are fundamentally different in quality (Bachman, 1990).

Bachman (1990) used a different terminology for the object of description "communicative language ability," (which is abbreviated as CLA); he developed three central components for CLA that are essential to define one's competence in communicative language use: language competence, strategic competence, and physiological mechanisms. The first component he termed as language competence consists of two parts: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. The organizational competence is further divided into grammatical competence and textual competence. Bachman's grammatical competence is in agreement with Canale and Swain's grammatical competence, which comprises abilities to control the formal structure of language. The second one, textual competence, pertains to the knowledge of conventions for cohesion and coherence and rhetorical organization. It contains agreements for language use in conversations, involving starting, maintaining, and closing conversations. Bachman`s textual competence is said to have both the part of Canale and Swain's discourse competence and the part of their strategic competence.

The other element in language competence is Bachman's pragmatic competence; it mainly focuses on the relationship between what we say in our communicative acts and what functions we intend to perform through our utterances. This concerns the speech force of an utterance, or "the knowledge of pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions" (Bachman 1990, p. 90) which he embodies as elocutionary competence under the pragmatic competence. Elocutionary competence enables a speaker or a writer to use his/her

language to serve a variety of functions and a hearer or reader to interpret the speech force of an utterance or discourse required on him/her. Nonetheless, one needs more than elocutionary competence to successfully execute an act to intend a certain communicative function; s/he needs knowledge of appropriateness based on the language use context in which s/he finds themselves when engaging in a communicative exchange. This is called sociolinguistic competence by Bachman and this is the other component for his pragmatic competence. To be more exact, Bachman discusses four abilities belonging to sociolinguistic competence: ability to be sensitive to regional and social language varieties, ability to produce and interpret utterances based on genuineness of language use, or what Pawley and Syder (1983) refer to as a native-line way of communication and ability to understand cultural reference and figures of speech (Bachman, 1990, pp. 95-98). In his framework, sociolinguistic competence and elocutionary competence are put together to form a speaker`s and writer`s pragmatic competence, which composes, along with grammatical competence, his/her language competence.

Celce-Murcia (1995) split up communicative competence into linguistic, sociocultural, strategic, discourse and actional competencies. Analyzing these components, they start with discourse competence, which concerns the selection and sequencing of sentences to achieve a unified spoken or written text. This competence is placed in a position where linguistic, sociocultural and actional competencies shape discourse competence, which also shapes each of the three components.

Linguistic competence involves the basic elements of communication, such as sentence patterns, morphological inflections, phonological and orthographic systems, as well as lexical resources. Sociocultural competence refers to the speaker's knowledge of how to express appropriate message within the social and cultural context of communication in which they are produced. Actional competence involves the understanding of the speakers' communicative intent by performing and interpreting speech act sets. Finally, these four components are influenced by the last one, strategic competence, which is concerned with the knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them. This model provides a clear picture of the interrelationship among all the components. However, with reference to the function they assign to strategic competence. Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2006a) argues that this competence ought to be placed at the same level as the rest of the competencies, due to the fact that its goal is that of building discourse competence while allowing communicative ability to develop in a parallel way to the other components. This fact therefore has been considered in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor's (2006a) current model of communicative competence whose main aim is to show how the four language skills serve to build discourse competence for communicative purposes, while also highlights the importance of the intercultural component given the increasing recognition that is nowadays associated to cultural aspects.

Communicative Competence in writing skill

In this construct of communicative competence, the skill of writing plays a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of communicative competence. It is the main purpose of this section,

therefore, to show where the writing skill fits into the proposed communicative competence framework presented by Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2006a). More exactly, it is described how the different components influence the development of this particular skill in order to increase learners' overall communicative ability in the L2.

Discourse competence

The communicative competence framework has at its heart the writing skill due to it is the manifestation of producing written discourse and a way of manifesting the rest of the components as well. Discourse competence enables writers to use discourse characteristics to achieve a well-formed written text given a communicative goal and context in which it has to be written (Celce-Murcia, Dorneyei, and Thurrell 1995). These discourse characteristics involve cohesion (e.g., reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical chains), coherence (and it markers) as well as formal schemata or knowledge of the structure of written genres (Scarcella and Oxford 1992). Thus, if writers are asked to create a coherent written text, they need to plan the discourse features to be used and then relate them to a given communicative purpose and context. Therefore, during the process of making a coherent written text, it is expected that writers play an active role, because they have to use their knowledge of how to produce linguistically and pragmatically accurate sentences given particular sociocultural norms together with their ability to use strategies to allow effective communication. That is to say, they must activate their knowledge of the other components of the proposed framework, namely, linguistic, pragmatic and strategic competencies, which are describe in turn below.

Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is a concept that includes basic features of written communication such as vocabulary, grammar rules, and conventions in mechanics. Concerning to lexical resources, writers have to know basic words meanings and how these meanings, for example, could differ depending on context (kern 2000). To use words, writers also need to be familiar with knowledge of the grammatical system. Then, they also need to pay attention to form to learn the grammar rules underlying the syntactic relations and the structure of clauses as well. Moreover, writers' knowledge of the mechanics is essential in writing due to the fact that faulty punctuation or spelling mistakes or errors could result in an illegible written text (Olshtain 2001). As acknowledged by Silva and Brice (2004) and Johns, research on L2 writers' text continues to control in the literature on writing. In fact, Johns advocates the contextualized teaching of these bottom-up features and discuss the benefits of using corpus linguistics to teach both grammar and vocabulary.

The mastery of linguistic competence is significant to the efficacy of writing a text because it helps writers make grammatically well-formed sentences accurately. That is to say, this competence is intrinsically related to discourse competence since difficulties in linguistic-related aspects, namely, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics, could create problems when trying to produce a cohesive text.

Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence includes an understanding of the illocutionary force of an utterance in harmony with the situational and participant variables within which the utterance takes place, also politeness issues such as degrees of formality. This competence, as pointed out by Martínez-Flor, Usó-Juan, and Alcón (2006a), plays a dominant role in spoken communication, in which characteristics of the situational context are evidences to the illocutionary force of the utterance (i.e., its intended meaning). Nevertheless, writing has limitations in this respect because the contextual clues are not explicit and, consequently, the writer has to rely on a set of strategies to express the intended meaning of a written text. Following Kern (2000; 70-71), these written indications to meaning include: text layout and graphic devices (such as punctuation and italics, among many other means), syntactic devices (cleft constructions), and linguistic devices (such as the choice of verbs or adverbs), as well as awareness of the physical location in which the text appears. According to Kern (2000) readers' response to the word "coffee" will be different if it appears on a roadside sign or on a menu.

Strategic Competence

Strategic Competence, the management of language by language learners to achieve communicative aims, is the essential element in communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980) argue that it relies on "verbal and nonverbal communication strategies…to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient

competence" (p. 30). Similarly, Yule and Tarone (1990) state it as "an ability to select an effective means of performing a communicative act that enables the listener/reader to identify the intended referent" (p. 181). In a later study, Canale (1983) modifies the definition to include both the "compensatory characteristics of communication strategies and the enhancement characteristics of production strategies" (as cited in Nakatani, 2005, p. 77).

Bachman (1990) looks strategic competence as a capacity that put language competence into real communication context. Paribakht (1985) suggests that strategic competence is best understood as the skills of a learner to access various solutions to learning and communication problems. These include "both production strategies (oral and written) used to solve lexical, syntactic, and sociolinguistic problems in communicating a message, and reception strategies (aural and written) used to solve similar problems in receiving the message" (p. 142).

Communication Strategies

Wanden (1986) said that "Communicative strategies are techniques that learners use when there is a gap between their knowledge of the target language and their communicative intent" (p.34). After having analyzed 8th graders pieces of writing, the researchers observed that language learners use transferring, word coinage, literal translation, code switching and some more strategies to get the message across.

Communication Strategies in the Written Medium

The idea of communication strategy in writing has not got an appropriate agreement. Very few studies have directly touched upon the concept of CSs in writing, but CSs have gotten some attention under some other names such as error analysis, writing strategy, dictionary use, etc. For example, there are often indications in the literature for distinguishing three error categories, known more specifically as 'slips', 'errors' and 'attempts'. The last one of these are where students have not got any real idea how to structure what they want to say, and are described by typically being correctable neither by the language learner himself/herself (as slips are) nor by the learners' peers (as errors are). They are beyond the learner and the competence of their peers and can be correctable only by a teacher. They are only errors arising from use of CSs (in the traditionally central meaning of this term), under another name (Edge 1989, cited in Keyvani 2000).

Another research area that touches upon written CSs is writing strategy research. Here, though, strategies of the CS type are lost in the general classification system used for writing behaviors or strategies by individual researchers, and are usually dominated by other terms and concepts. These classifications at present remain often rather general. In the well-known Flower and Hayes (1981) model of the writing process, CSs may occur in any of the three main categories of processing – either in 'planning', 'translating' (which in this scheme means turning thought into written form) or 'reviewing'. When planning, for example, one could see ahead to how one would express what one plans to mean, decide one's linguistic resources are not up to

the task, and change the intended message accordingly (with some 'avoidance'). When 'translating' (i.e. actually writing draft text) one could solve problems of linguistic expression e.g. by paraphrasing or, through word processing, using an online dictionary, or maybe leave a gap and later on, when revising, one could stop and question someone which might be the same appeal to authority that is a prominent CSs.

We could contrast the lack of discussion of written CSs in relation to such models with the lively discussion in the oral CSs literature. Oral CSs were first interpreted in terms of a model of speaking by Færch and Kasper (1983) and subsequently the speaking models of Levelt (1989) and others that have been invoked (e.g. by Poulisse 1990).

In a study done by Whalen and Ménard (1995) on L2 writing strategies, we find several references to what are in point of fact CSs (e.g. circumlocution, dictionary use). However, they are not named as CSs or distinguished in terms of their function.

Furthermore, a good case in point is a study done by Ambrose (1998), which deals with communication strategies used in the writing of answers in Biology by ESL first year BSc students of the University of Botswana. The researcher examined the four macro strategies used by the subjects: risk taking, risk avoidance, L2 based strategies and semantic simplification. The results showed that while many ESL students preferred to use L2 based strategies such as circumlocution, generalization and paraphrase, these strategies did not help the students in their performance to a whole extent because of the restrictive nature of scientific genre which requires

the use of specific and precise registers for a given writing task. The study also showed that those students who were tending to take risks by exploiting their resource expansion strategies, irrespective of the correctness of their grammatical constructions, did better while those students who opted for semantic simplification and risk avoidance performed far less well. The study also concluded that the overall writing proficiency of the L2 learners could be greatly enhanced if TEFL practitioners paid greater attention to those tasks and activities that enhance their strategic competence.

Taxonomies of Communication Strategies

Ever since the article of Selinker's (1972) on interlanguage introduced the concept of second language communication strategies, several researchers have classified these strategies in various ways. Váradi (1973) and Tarone (1977) introduced a classification of communication strategies that were used in subsequent research. Tarone (1977) described her taxonomy as a system that provides the best tool to make sense of the behavior of the subjects in communicative situations. The author pointed out the absence of generality of her taxonomy. Nevertheless, other researchers have adapted Tarone's (1977) typology and introduced other strategies (Paribakht 1985).

This fact has promoted the existence of a confusing number of different strategies of ambiguous validity. Bialystok (1990) thinks that the diversity of taxonomies proposed in the

literature differ primarily in terminology and overall categorizing principles rather than in the substance of specific strategies.

The following represents taxonomy of communication strategies based on the above stated conceptualizations and mainly developed out of Tarone's (1977) classification, there are communication strategies including transfer (for example, language switch and literal translation), paraphrase (for example, word coinage, approximation, and circumlocution), appeal for mime, assistance, avoidance (for example, message abandonment and topic avoidance). These strategies look like Faérch and Kasper's (1994) framework, but the emphasis is that both the addressor and receiver actively make use of the communication strategies to assist each other when they face problems.

Tarone's framework supports the frameworks suggested by Paribakht (1985) and Labarca and Khanji (1986). Myriad studies (for example, Bialystok, 1983) have employed Faérch and Kasper's (1984) psycholinguistic framework. to support these two established frameworks, Clennel (1995) introduced a discourse perspective of communication strategies which, is based on strategies of Faerch and Kasper's (1984) notion of advance planning, though known for their psychological problem-solving view of communication strategies, Faerch and Kasper believe that advanced language learners can predict a communication problem before it occurs and resort to related communication strategies for smooth and fluent communication.

The first systematic analysis to clarify the concept of communication strategies was conducted by Varadi (1980), who defined CSs as means which a learner uses to convey his message when linguistic resources fail to do so. Consequently, CSs refer to a conscious attempt to communicate the learner's thought when the interlanguage structures are inadequate to convey that thought. To Faerch and Kasper (1983), CSs refer to the employed techniques when one fails to explicitly express oneself. While some strategies could be utilized at a higher frequency and others are hardly used.

Dornyei (1995) put forward two branches of CSs which massively differ from one another: avoidance and compensation. The first one refers to the tendency of the learner no to use certain linguistic elements due to phonological, syntactic, or lexical constraints. It could also be related to the topic of discussion (Brown, 2000). Topic avoidance may be the most frequent means that students have ever employed. For instance, when asked a specific question, the student who does not know the answer will just keep silent about it, hence, although useful for day to day interaction, the avoidance strategy may not be the best way for EFL students to learn a foreign language.

On the other hand, the compensatory strategies involve compensation for missing knowledge. According to Dornyei's (1995) classification, there are eleven types of compensatory strategies with varying degrees of application, for example, circumlocution, word coinage, prefabricated patterns, appealing for help and stalling, time-gaining strategies, etc. To Tarone (1980), CSs refers to the mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations

where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared. The central concept is the joint negation of meaning.

Tarone's typology comprises several categories including a) avoidance which is divided into topic avoidance and message abandonment; b) paraphrase, including approximation, word coinage, and circumlocution and c) transfer encompassing literal translation. Language switch, appeal for assistance, and mime.

On the other hand, in the late 1980s, some researchers at Nijmegen University (Kellerman et al. 1987) criticized the existing typologies of communication strategies as mainly product-oriented, since these tended to show strategy types with isolated examples, rather than represent how these typologies could be applied to cohesive speech or writing. They believed that these typologies were merely descriptive since they focused only on the linguistic product.

The Nijmegen University Group found two major deficits in product-oriented taxonomies of communication strategies. These deficits were: a failure to distinguish the psychological process from the linguistic product, as well as to consider the linguistic and non-linguistic constraints that influence the choice of a particular strategy.

For the above-mentioned reasons, this group of researchers proposed an alternative taxonomy of communication strategies, which is based on the assumption that identifying the cognitive processes which motivate the choice of a strategy as well as taking into account the

factors involved in such selection is essential: 1) Conceptual archistrategy (manipulating the target concept to make it expressible through available linguistic resources) a) Analytic Strategies (specifying characteristic features of the concept (e.g. circumlocution) and b) Holistic Strategies (using a different concept which shares characteristics with the target item (e.g. approximation); 2) Linguistic/Code archistrategy (manipulating the speakers' linguistic knowledge) a) Morphological creativity (creating a new word by applying L2 morphological rules to an L2 word (e.g. grammatical word coinage) and b) Transfer (from another language)

Poulisse (1993) criticizes the above quoted typology by arguing that the distinction between conceptual and linguistic strategies does not refer to different processes involved in the production of these strategies. According to Poulisse, both conceptual strategies of the holistic type and the linguistic strategy of transfer refer to the same process, namely that of substitution, regardless of whether the word being replaced belongs to a same or a different language.

Apart from this, Poulisse (1993) points to great differences in the processes underlying analytic and holistic conceptual strategies. In the author's view, analytic strategies (e.g. circumlocution) require the planning and execution of new messages, which involves creating new syntactic plans, and selecting new lexical items from the mental lexicon. On the other hand, holistic strategies (e.g. approximation) require the addition or replacement of some of the conceptual features in the concept which the speaker is about to produce. Bearing this difference in mind, and considering the processes involved in the use of linguistic transfer strategies,

Poulisse (1993) states that holistic strategies seem to be more similar to linguistic transfer strategies than to conceptual analytic ones.

Poulisse (1993) presents an alternative typology of communication strategies. This taxonomy fulfills all the criteria, which, in his opinion, any theory of communication strategies use should meet. These criteria are the following:

It should allow one to define CSs use and to operationalize the distinction between strategic and nonstrategic language use; it should capture the differences between the CSs types that have been distinguished in a theoretically satisfying manner; and it should enable one to explain empirical findings that have been obtained to date and to predict future findings.

The typology of communication strategies suggested by Poulisse (1993) is as follows: a) Substitution (substitution of one lexical item for another, whether it be an L1 for L2 item); b) Substitution plus type (substitutions which require phonological and/or morphological adaptation before they are articulated e.g. foreignizing, morphological creativity) and c) Reconceptualization (a change in the preverbal message which involves more than a single chunk, (e.g. paraphrase).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this conceptual framework is to profile and set our research through the revision of the analysis built along the theoretical framework, together with some other research projects in this field, and the possibilities, limitation and scope. In the first stage, one points out a set of research studies that have to do with the study object from knowledge perspectives, with questions and their own methods, to establish nearby and distances with the actual research states. In the second stage, we proposed the research problem that summarizes the analysis of the topics to take into account and the questions asked in the object of the research and in the third stage, the justification that explains why this project is carried out, and the possible contributions to carry out future research projects. The set of the objectives tell us the purpose of this research project.

Antecedents

The four studies reported in this revision of antecedents have as a central objected one or more MMO games. Each study presents a review of the general subject of the investigation, sources and concepts, the methodology used and findings.

Delwich's research (2006) called Massively Multiplayer online games (MMOs) in the new media classroom: Educational Technology and Society, looked for explaining the educational potential of working with online games to be a question about the usefulness of

virtual environments as learning spaces, generating social commitment in the student activities both in the virtual environment with the objectives and content of course, in addition to developing some recommendations for application and use of these environments within curricula and courses for application in teaching and institutional environments.

Throughout the case study, one collected the experiences of two college courses whose objectives were as transverse axis critical teaching methods to investigate online game environments functional learning. The first course of qualitative ethnography online games, 36 college students had an Everquest gaming experience for doing ethnography within the virtual environment of the game. A second course on game, in which 15 students of communication attended, made emphasis on exploring issues both cyber-culture, as in creating applications that could be put to be shared to other participants of Second Life. It is described by Gonzales & Cols (2009) as "a virtual platform where the player has an opportunity to live in a parallel life, in which he can be and do whatever s/he wants by means of social interactions to integrate herself/himself to communities, share experiences, (…) among some other activities" (p.24). The data has stories and experiences, verbal and written reports from those attending the courses, especially ethnographic writings generated in the first year.

A set of findings from the analyzed data were stated: students reported learning and ethnographic research generated according to the course objectives and a discussion of their own experiences in motivational terms of engagement with the activity of interaction. Delwich (2006) made some categories of importance when choosing a MMO game as a learning environment:

the game must be accessible; that is, its basic mechanics should be dominated quickly and easily, social interaction is crucial and virtual environments are characterized as safe learning spaces; though it is possible to move away from simply disconnecting aversive events, generating confidence boosting learning of certain content.

Finally, the author makes some recommendations for those who want to teach the contents of their lessons using MMO tools: firstly, to warn students about the addictive potential of the game, and secondly, it is pertinent to evaluate several online game options before choosing one, taking into account that it is accessible having a simple learning curve, it should have an attractive theme to students and finally, integrate semiotic domains gradually, building bridges between the game and the contents of the course; that is , gradually lead the "introduction" to the mechanics, language and social component of the game in parallel with the "background theoretical objectives".

The reported research considers knowledge as socially constructed, and the game as a situation of interaction with their own practices and languages, as well as considering that learning depends largely on the groups that relate an individual. The most relevant to this investigation is to assume that these spaces have their own items to internalize, but this consideration does not deepen, it is secondary to the priority objectives and teaching curriculum issues.

On the other hand, Steinkuehler (2008) carried out a research project titled Massively Multiplayer Online games as an educational technology: An outline for research; Educational Technology. This study was focused on those interested in online technologies for learning the knowledge and skills that constitute successful participation in Massively Multiplayer online games (MMOs). This places them among the most promising new digital technologies to date. This study was carried out at Wisconsin-Madison University, USA.

Steinkuehler´s team presents their research in three stages. The aims of this study are: see the form of cognition and learning that makes a successful MMOs, provide data to potential cognitive processes centered learning beyond the critical consume center in the production, and design a good learning atmosphere to include video games in the instruction through the institution's policies and the design of extra activities in the educational content to learn by means of practices.

In the first stage, one used the cognitive ethnographic techniques. It is defined as a description of a culture from its cognition, bases and consequences (Hutchings 1995 in Steinkuehler, 2006), to find out the phenomena why is a video game successful? About three years of participant observation, thousands of interviews and hundreds of hours of transcriptions of the video games happened naturally, they had as a product a complex ethnographic description. The findings showed how online video games negotiate complex forms of cognition, using collaborative problems solving, literacy –reading and writing- practices that involved high specialized language in the online form scientist habits of mind, as rational hypothesis models,

forms of computational literacy as understanding of coding models or computational successful learning mechanism as reciprocal and practical learning that leads the intelligence culture evidenced in the necessity of maintained knowledge as an ability to communicate.

In the second stage, Steinkuehler (2008) makes a review of some other empirical researchers which are connected with elements such as: resolution of problems, digital literacy practices, and computational literacy which were obtained from the first stage. To answer the question about educative potential of the MMOs, they found five important aspects in the successful MMOs, and identified if these aspects are present or not in the traditional classrooms. In this stage, one focused on three topics found in the first stage, seeking support with empirical evidence from other research these initial findings from joint problem solving, digital literacy practices and computer literacy, highlighting certain elements in conjunction with other research and making confrontation with empirical data, without addressing the other indexes found so far in the report.

A third stage, without starting from the date of the report in 2008, the purpose is to design extra-class activities based on the findings and in the context of understanding that provided the two previous stages of the research, in order to integrate them into the context of school education and school activities.

Finally, Steinkuehler reflects on the report on the last phase of research affirming their commitment to develop activities that should form part of institutional logics, although attention

to the possibilities of online video game to be a bridge between different communities, with potential effects on the understanding traditional schools, and highlight the importance of empirical findings to understand and act on it.

As another international Antecedent at Benito Middle School in Tampa Florida worked in a project called How Do I Earn Buy-In from Digital Natives? This study was carried out by Amy Schechter and Denmon who were doctoral students at the University of South Florida in the English education in 2012.

The research was developed with sixth- and seventh-grade language arts and its main goal was to integrate technology, innovation and students skills in the English Language Learner (ELL) process. Students are being turned off from learning and turned on to electronics (Schmidt & Vandewater, 2008). If a student lacks motivation or focus, they do not put forth their maximum effort (House, 2007, Moos & Marroquin, 2010).

The research suggested that infusing technology into the curriculum will increase student motivation and achievement (Gee & Hayes, 2011), by integrating social networking sites and digital media into the curriculum would revitalize students interest and motivation in reading. This is because of, today, teenagers and some adults use this popular technology with fervor.

Action Research Trial and error was one way to hone the craft of teaching. After doing much reading and reflecting on the benefits of using technology in the classroom, they decided

that they needed to put their ideas into practice. Using four separate classrooms, sixth, seventh, ninth, and tenth grades respectively, they set out to explore the impact that utilizing more technology in the classroom would have on student motivation and achievement.

Students also have the opportunity to select favorite songs, television shows, and films that they believe their character would enjoy. Thomas (all names are pseudonyms), a tenth grader, thought that Hamlet would listen to emo music because of Hamlet's depression, whereas Lauren, a sixth grader, believed that Stanley from Holes would enjoy traditional folk songs of Latvia. These students' choices indicated that they understood a great deal about what was happening in the characters' lives and family histories. In every case, students took from their own lives and melded their background knowledge with the literature.

They had wonderful success. As a conclusion researchers found that students reported that they enjoyed reading and writing more when they could use technology, and class portfolios documented the dramatic improvement in student writing by the end of the year.

What is more, in Bogota, La Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas worked on a Project entitled Using Video Game-Based Instruction in an EFL Program: Understanding the Power of Video Games in Education coordinated by Galvis (2011).

This action-research study examined the perceptions of four students in a Military Academy in Colombia undergoing the process of using a mainstream video game in their EFL

classes instead of classic forms of instruction. The video game used served to approach EFL by means of language exploratory activities designed according to the context present in the video game and the course linguistic objectives. This study was conducted on the grounds that computer technology offers the possibility of enhancing EFL instruction by means of simulating and augmenting the target language context. The researcher's belief is that videogames offer a learning environment closely related to students' experiences and preferences.

Results from this study suggest that students were more entertained and attentive and demonstrated more engagement and disposition towards their English classes. Students also learned about matters related to the target language and culture, and were not only circumscribed to linguistic ones. Similarly, results from this study shed some light on the importance of offering access to technology to students before they advance to higher education that support video-gaming practices in the classroom.

Galvis (2011) concluded that it is a better way of teaching English. However, from the results, he also concluded that not all of the students thought that the use of video games as an innovative form of language instructions because successful language learners do not perceive the use of video games as necessarily better for learning language.

Statement of the problem

One of the policies of every school is to contribute towards the development of its learners' communicative competences of the English language according to the rules dictated by The Ministry of Education; the demands of science and technology in todays globalized world, the families and the students' needs. The fundamental purposes are encapsulated in four skills: to enable each student to be a successful academic learner, a confident individual and a group worker, a responsible citizen and an effective professional and contributor. The English linguistic competences might ensure that all students in every institution develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. The result of their graduates' attributes and capabilities can be used by educational institutions as a model to check whether the strategies for any individual child or young person sufficiently reflect the purposes of it.

Taking into account the above, San Tarsicio male school is in the transition process from intensive English to a bilingual program. To achieve this, the school established some criteria to choose a set of subjects to be taught in English. The main criteria was the need to find new contexts to expose the learners to an English environment, without risking the achievement of the objectives of these areas, this was called, by the board of directors, as a friendly bilingualism approach. The second criteria were the selection of bilingual teachers to interact with the learners and the subject.

Next, two charts are presented with a summarized information about the transition carried out in the bilingual program of the school. Chart 1 presents in detail the seven subjects in which English is used as instructional subject. Chart 2 presents the amount of hours (5.320) that the students have been exposed to the target language from kinder garden to 11th grade (See appendices 6 and 7).

With this intensity, the students should have high level of proficiency in the four communicative skills. However, there is a scientific problem in this study because of the contradiction between the actual situation of the object and a desirable condition. That is to say, the eighth grade students' written production and the normativity.

To validate the problem, we triangulated three empirical methods to collect data: survey to 28 students from 8th grade, interview to three English teachers in high school, and observation of the students' written production.

The survey showed that most of the English learners perceive that their oral skills, including reading, are in the process of being developed appropriately; so, they prefer using them more often than writing. They argue that writing is more structured than speaking. Then, when writing a text, they have to use more accurately the parts of speech to give the written discourse a good level of cohesion and coherence. They are also conscious that in their pieces of writing, one finds spelling mistakes or there are some grammar elements missing which make the text, most of the times, incomprehensible for the reader.

On the other hand, the analysis of the interview revealed that the English level of the school is very good, but there is a concern about eight grade students' written production. The teachers focused the problem on the syntax and semantic; to be precise, there are inconsistencies in the English grammatical structure of sentences and the meaning of the vocabulary symbols arranged with that structure.

The observation, to the eighth grade students' pieces of writing, confirmed the syntax and semantic insufficiencies already mentioned in the previous two instruments. They have to do with the inaccurate use of the gerund "ing", prepositions, misspelling, syntactic feature addition, lack of articles and adverbs, use of wrong words. Most of these pieces of writing require the reader to make a mental effort to infer the content.

In spite of such inconsistencies, the learners' written texts evidenced a set of communication strategies. These are techniques that the language learners use when there is a gap between their knowledge of the target language and their communicative intent. (Wanden,1986). It is well known that the strategic competence is one of the four competence areas which make up the communicative competence.

Concerned to solve the problem mentioned previously, there is a necessity to strengthen the written strategic competence of 8th grade students from basic secondary at San Tarsicio School; according to the institution's mission and vision, the students' needs, and according to the learning standards of the foreign language in Colombia.

Justification

Taking into account the problem stated previously and the international, Colombian and local literature developed by well-known institutions and expert researchers who have constantly been concerned about the education as a process of permanent social, cultural and personal construction of individuals whose general, linguistic and professional competences allow them to interact with each other in their everyday life, we decided to carry out this research project.

To start with, we would like to cite some relevant words from The Education Cuban model "the educational institutions have been given the duty to prepare useful, creative and productive citizen capable to transform the life conditions and at the same time, to themselves which demands that the pedagogic praxis was based scientifically". For this reason, it is a must to make a conscious reflection about what we have already done, what we are doing and what we should do for the near future to make the necessary changes to reach the international, national and institutional aims. Then, the resources, the personnel, instructions and assessment practices have an important role in the teaching and learning English process.

Hymes (1972) developed a valuable model to assist the identification and labeling of components of linguistic interaction that was driven by his view that, in order to speak a language correctly, one needs not only to learn its vocabulary and grammar, but also the context in which words are used.

Moreover, Hymes (1972) points out that "there are several components of communication which he called SPEAKING: setting, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms of interaction and interpretation, and genre" (p.34). This makes teachers consider to select, adapt, implement and evaluate thoroughly different strategies and integral activities to strengthen or develop successfully the oral and written skills to be linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and sociolinguistic competent, without making the common mistake that communication occurs only through oral speech.

Actually, there is a necessity that comes from the internal academic activities at San Tarsicio School. This is related to the weaknesses of the English writing skill which is relevant to complete the English learning process that the students should carry out in the transitional change from intensive English to a Bilingual Program. These drawbacks have affected the normal development of the students' language proficiency.

When a considerable percentage of the students do not reach the general and specific English linguistic aims, it is time to stop and start off making a critical reflection about what we have been doing for so long, perhaps the problem is not in the students' cognitive process, but in the way to present a meaningful interest of developing the linguistic skills. Then a thoroughly and consciously revision of it might give the researchers a light about the possible causes of the problem. This is due to the fact that consciously or unconsciously, few teachers focus their attention in the oral skill but very little in the written one; this might be because the written skill is more structured and needs to be taught and learnt as a process.

The objective is to strengthen the 8th grade written strategic competence in the English language, throughout the implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game. It is expected to contribute with the development of a balanced bilingual learner whose oral and written proficiency skills might stimulate an intercultural rapprochement among countries, needed for a peaceful and civilized relationship among cultures. Furthermore, this also contributes with the Colombian plans that have to do with the development of communicative competences in English as a foreign language, and support the Colombian project called "Bogota bilingue en 10 años".

It is really important to carry out a project like this; otherwise, there would not be guarantee of obtaining an appropriate and successful bilingual balance as proposed in the Colombian standards established by the Educational Minister, and the school's mission and vision. If research projects like these are not carried out in our context, the problem will remain by widening the gap between the Colombian social classes as well as the cultural and cognitive distance that separate the developed countries, and those which are in the developing process.

Research objectives

Main objective

To strengthen the 8th grade written strategic competence in the English language throughout the implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game.

Specific objectives

- To diagnose the real situation that has to do with the written strategic competence in the English language of 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School.

- To appropriate theoretical constructs about the written strategic competence in the English language and the "Warcraft III" online game.

- To identify the antecedents about a Massive multiplayer online game to learn English as a foreign language.

- To draw up a task proposal to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language of 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School.

- To implement the "Warcraft III" online game, to strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language of 8th students at San Tarsicio School.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Methodology

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the type of research and the research method. It begins with an overview of the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and ends up with the Action Research method and the role of the researchers.

Types of research

This research is a qualitative study (Creswell, 2002, p. 36). According to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p 56) qualitative research studies involve a continuous interaction between data collection and data analysis. For this reason, we began analyzing data following the survey, the interview and observation to begin identifying patterns, and to facilitate subsequent data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Qualitative analysis is a form of intellectual procedure. There is no single way to accomplish qualitative research, due to the fact that data analysis is a process of making meaning. It is a creative process, not a mechanical one (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Similarly, a qualitative study capitalizes on ordinary ways of making sense (Stake, 1995). Stake reminds qualitative researchers that, "there is no particular moment when data analysis begins. Analysis," he explains, "essentially means taking something apart" (p. 71), which in this case, not only means understanding the ways administrators use and make sense of building-level data, but also identifying and defining the patterns that emerged from that meaning making

process. Qualitative data analysis, then, gives meaning to first impressions and final compilations.

In this study, the qualitative data is used, but with very few quantitative elements, in view of the above, it was necessary to implement two investigative dimensions, one qualitative and in a very simple proportion quantitative that enabled us to answer the complementary principle for deficiency. This is because the thematic, the participants and the relatively little scale in which it was searched made it more pertinent the qualitative paradigm, thus, the final analysis was lastly done in this field to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the descriptive findings.

Research Method

Action research is ideal for our study because of the overall purpose of action research which within the field of education is the idea that we as teachers function within the role of action researchers are looking at what we ourselves are or should be doing in our classrooms/schools.

A common form of action research is when we study our own classroom problems and issues, and reflect upon our own practice. This is practical action research in which we can strengthen students' learning and our own professional performance. Action research also encourages change in the school; fosters a concise approach to education, empowers individuals through collaboration on projects, positions us and other educators as learners who seek to

narrow the gap between practice and our vision of education, encourages educators to reflect on our practices and promotes a process of testing new ideas. The method is adapted and changed by us in response to our objectives (Creswell, 2002).

There are different models of action research. Lewin (1940) & Kemmis (1985) presented the loop of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, a continual process. Usher (1989) pointed out that "Both reflection and action have to identify the requirements of research as a consistent and persistent practice" (p. 34). Stringer (1999) presented his model of research, looking, thinking and acting, as a spiral model.

However, Beatty (2003) examined action research in CALL, the language learning with computer programs that is the subject of the research reported in this thesis, and presented a different explanation. He saw three stages in this methodology, planning, acting and reflecting. In the stage of planning, the teacher/researcher identifies some problems and plans to explore ways to solve these problems. In the acting stage, the researcher implements a change, and then records reactions to it. They may use measurements such as questionnaires results, learners' logs and notes, and the discussions of results must be shared. In the stage of reflecting, Beatty (2003) pointed out that a "certain openness to unexpected results is also encouraged in action research" (p. 191). The following figures show different models of action research:
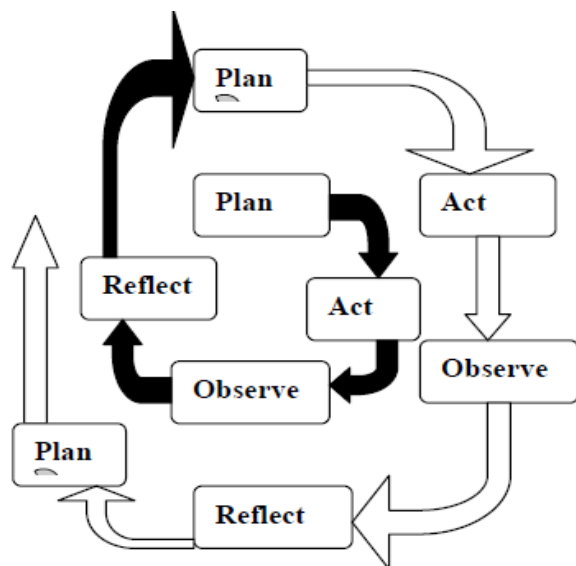
Figure 3:3 Kemmis's model (1985) of Action Research
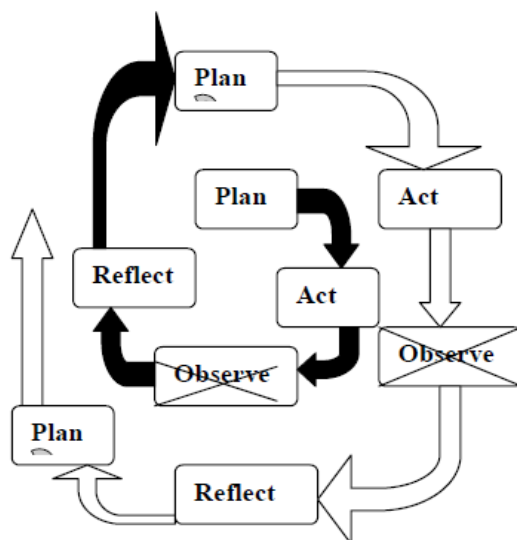
Figure 3:4 Beatty's model (2003) of Action Research

In his study, Lee (2008) combines Beatty's model of action research as applied in CALL with Kemmis's model (1985), but with the step "observation" in the cycle. So in our study, we

also followed Lee's model as a guide to the project reported in our thesis. The following figure shows the model of action research used for this study.
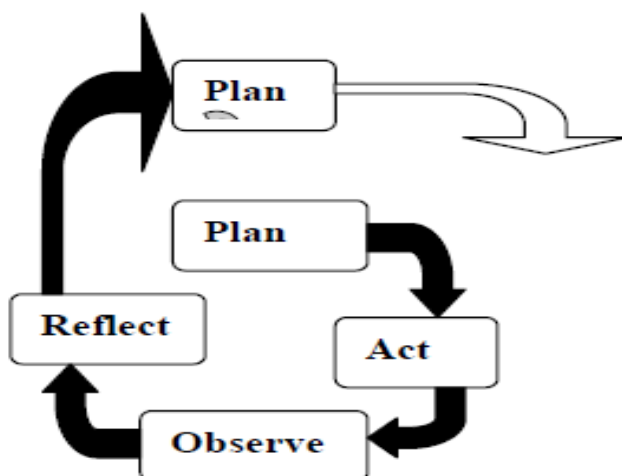
Figure 3:5 Lee's model (2008) of Action Research

Usher (1989, p.43) claims that teachers and students must be involved in action research for educational improvement because this is what we as practitioners do in our daily practice. In this research, the teachers were the researchers and participant observers, the board of director of the school, the learners and their parents knew the purpose of using software to help the students from eight graders to strengthen their written strategic competence through a Massively Multiplayer online game – "Warcraft III" and they were aware of the researchers' purpose. This was explained to them at the beginning when their cooperation in the research was sought.

Action research has been studied and discussed by researchers, such as Cohen & Manion, Nunan, McNiff (2003), Beatty (2003) and recently by Wallace (2008), presented its key features which inform the researchers how to undertake it and what to notice. The features stated by McNiff (2003, p.56) were: a) a commitment to educational improvement; b) a special kind of

research question; c) putting the "I" at the center of the research; d) action that is informed, committed and intentional; e) systematic monitoring to generate valid data; f) authentic descriptions of the action; g) explaining the action; h) new ways of presenting research; i) self-reflective writing, often in the form of diaries and logs; j) validating action research claims; k) making the action research public; and l) sharing ideas and findings with other people.

Beatty's model (2003, p.13) proposed the following features which differ somewhat from those of McNiff (2003, p.56). The features of his action learning model are a) conceptualization, b) implementation and c) interpretation. Conceptualization includes delineating teaching/learning processes, identifying inputs and outcomes. Implementation consists of measuring outcomes, identifying and analyzing, as well as comparison. Interpretation involves judging effectiveness and cost benefits and determining action. Beatty's three-stage model was applied in this research, which proceeded in the way shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The process of action research used in this research

Conceptualization
Delineate teaching/learning process: We observed that students use a set of written communication strategies when there is a gap between their knowledge of the target language and their communication intent and we thought that these strategies could be strengthen with the help of a Massively Multiplayer online game "Warcraft III". Students used the keyboard and the tools that the program has: maps that could be provided by the game or custom built by players, town control, unit control, and communication such as the chat At the end of using this program, we provided feedback on the students' pieces of writing.

Identify inputs: We used a Massively Multiplayer online game "Warcraft III" which contains a set of devices that allows the players to decide the option of the game, interact with the members of the team in a written way though the chat and receive the teachers' feedback.

Identify outcomes: We hoped to see much greater and constant written interaction in English among themselves, more effective use of the strategic competence with the software, and determine the kind of communication strategies they used the most to get the message across.

Implementation

Measure outcomes: during the lessons, we grouped the learners in groups of three assigned them computers with the program installed and connected online. At the same time, we were participant observers, paying attention to the students' use of the program through field notes. After using it, the evidence "pieces of written interaction" were collected as data to be analyzed by us.

Identify comparison: Students increased their use of computer videogames with a specific purpose and the English language. They used computer software to write in English which was different from the traditional classroom. Their learning behavior in the writing skill was different from that in the traditional classroom.

Analyze comparison: We analyzed the advantages and drawbacks of the changes. Students could distinguish the differences between learning by computer software and the real teacher. They could also judge the importance of using the written communicative skills.

Interpretation

Judge effectiveness: We presented the results and judged what communicative strategies have been strengthened with this research. This stage of the action research model refers to the analysis and interpretation of the data which is provided in previous chapter of this study.

Judge cost benefit: We have to manage the changes and findings. Our judgment of the effectiveness and cost benefit of the action research experiment constitute this part of the action research model and are provided in this research project in the recommendations that are provided in the final chapter.

Determine action: Recommendations for action emerged from the action research process and these are given in the final chapter of this thesis.

Context

The location of our action research study was at San Tarsicio School. This is a male school from calendar "B" and is located in San José of Bavaria neighborhood in northern Bogota. It is a private institution since its founding 53 years ago. It has three sections: preschool, primary section and secondary in the same physical building. There is only one course per grade which is divided into groups of 11 to 14 students to take English lessons, taught by three teachers simultaneously.

This allows for a more personalized instruction and the teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Furthermore, the institutional implements science subjects, physical education, arts, English systems from kindergarten to 4th grade. Besides these subjects from 4th to 8th grade, it is added the subject "Reading and writing in English". In 9th, 10th and 11th grades, physical education, graphic design, social studies and environmental sciences in English. The

institution runs from 8:10 am until 4:00 pm. Most students come from 4 and 5 social level. The institution has 40 teachers for three sections all have under degree in different areas of human knowledge, three are specialists in bilingual education, and four have a Master's degree.

In terms of physical resources, the school has a LCD television in each classroom. There are three English classrooms each equipped with a video beamer and laptop for the teacher and Wi-Fi connectivity with high speed that allows the use of laptops, Ipods, Ipads and smart phones which students sometimes bring from home to work. The institution has 40 laptops and two video-beams that can be used by students or teachers for their classes. The Physics lab is equipped with a video beamer and a PC fixed. The institution also has two computer rooms - one for preschool and primary school and one for high school with 45 computers each connected online. There are also two whiteboard (touch - screen) and two video cameras.

The institution designed a syllabus taking into account the needs of students and the demands of the XXI century. Teachers are free to use the methodology that they find functional, but are asked to speak in English among themselves and with students constantly in and out of the classroom in order to create a bilingual environment. Each grade has general objectives for the year, plus 12 modules to be covered in the four terms. In each of them, we designed a series of communicative activities that strengthen discourse, linguistic, sociocultural, actional and strategic competences (Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1995). According to Hymes (1972) "these communicative competences enable learners to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts" (p.56)

Population

The teachers themselves were the researchers, and one of them, William Sánchez is employed At San Tarsicio School. He is an English teacher in secondary and has a specialization in bilingual education. He has taught English in this institution for twenty years now and knows the students' English ability very well. Dolly Morantes is also an English teacher in secondary and has a B.A in teaching English as a foreign language. She has 7 years of experience in professional colleges.

The participants were selected based on their willingness to participate and on their level of proficiency in the written English language. According to the San Tarsicio school proficiency regulation, all students who do not have B1 certificates as proof of their language proficiency have to sit for a PET "proficiency English Test" referred as the B1 level according to the Common European Framework for foreign languages. Students are tested by an external institution; The British Council, on the four language skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Students from 8th grade took part in this research study. To select the group, the researchers took into consideration the following criteria: firstly, they were between 12 and 13 years old; secondly, the learners' common characteristics in their English written level as a result of the observation analysis in their pieces of writing; thirdly, the participants` interest to take part in this research project; finally, a random selection of nine students from the whole group to give

them an opportunity to strengthen their weaknesses. This choice was carried out because of the time proposed by the researchers for this study. However, their age claims that the teacher appropriates and implements new tools, strategies and methods to create a more meaningful learning environment. They have a good performance in both oral communication skills (speaking and listening) and in reading. However, they present some inconsistencies in the writing skill.

Procedure and Instruments

The phases of our action research study are listed below with explanations of these phases given thoroughly following.

Phases

Seeking permission

In the first stage, as expected of an action research project, we sought permission from the principal of the San Tarsicio School (See appendix 8) and the children's parents (See appendix 9) prior to beginning this research. At the beginning of every year at School we have parent/teacher opening day. We explained in person to each parent the purpose of the study and that his/her permission for their child to participate would be appreciated and potentially extremely beneficial to their child. This approach helped the parents better understand where we

were coming from and the true benign effects of the study. The letter of consent was delivered and signed by each parent. Once we received permission from those parents to perform our study, we began to implement our action research project.

Data collection in action research may be through unstructured (or semi-structured) documents, surveys, interviews and observations (Creswell, 2003) which were the sources of data gathered in the present study.

To start off with the study, the researchers studied the documents collected from the school file related to the curriculum established during the last 10 years in the transition process from intensive English to a bilingual program. The purpose was to identify the subject in which English is used as instructional subject, and the intensity of hours the students are exposed to the target language from kinder garden to 11th grade.

Student Self-Efficacy and oral preference Survey

The following step was the surveys; the purpose of the first survey was to know the students perception related to their strengths and weaknesses in the English language. The second survey was implemented to know the sort of Massively Multiplayer online game the learners agree on using for this research**.** Bell (1993) pointed out that "a survey can be considered good only if it is designed specifically to suit the aims of research and the nature of the respondents" (p. 67).

The work of Aquino, Wideman & Dunn (2006) was used as aid in designing a survey appropriate for this research study. The survey consists of both quantitative and qualitative questions and statements such as: In the following communication skills in English, which makes us much easier in and out of class is (listening, speaking, reading and writing), Why some skill (speaking, listening, reading and writing) are more difficult than the other?, How would you like to strengthen or improve that skill that hinders you? The inclusion both quantitative and qualitative statements give more information, and deeper results may be ascertained from posing questions in different formats.

The survey was first presented to a set of English teachers to be analyzed. Their comments and suggestions aided in changes made to it. After the final revision, the pilot survey was given first to a similar group of students from 8th grades at the same school. The pilot study audience was similar in gender (male) and number (9). This was therefore representative of a similar group to the actual study group.

Interview to secondary English teachers

However, a new instrument was needed to capture the particular themes that emerged from the problem stated. Interviews were then conducted with three English teachers from secondary and the participants (9 students from 8th grade) of the project. While surveys provide important data, there is a need to look more deeply at rationales behind the responses to the

survey, to further understand what was said and why, This is especially valuable so wrong conclusions will not be drawn from the results of the survey.

The interview guide contained many specific questions listed in a semi-structured order because the researchers wanted to ask everyone.

Merriam (2001, p.78) further suggested that the researcher should be neutral with regard to the respondent's knowledge; that is, regardless of how opposite to the interviewer's beliefs or values the respondent's position might be, it is crucial to avoid arguing, debating, or otherwise letting personal views be known; thus, there is not any opportunity for arguing and debating between the interviewer and the interviewee, and in the questions.

The questions used in the questionnaire gathered opinions from the secondary English teachers regarding their perceptions of 8th grade students' strengths and weaknesses in their English language and the second interview had questions used to gather opinions from the students regarding their perception of the program.

After having analyzed the survey that has to do with learners' preferences, we concluded that most of the 8th grade students preferred "Warcraft III" as a Massively Multiplayer online game to be used in this research project.

Student awareness of the "Warcraft III" online game

Next, it was necessary to do a student's awareness of the software. The purpose was to identify the students' level of mastery of the "Warcraft III" online game. Out of 9 participants of this study, 6 had already played successfully the online game, but 3 of them had never heard about this program. Since the learners were interested in taking part of the project, every two experienced students took an inexperienced one to teach him how to play such online game. During recess and for two weeks, the students gathered in the computer rooms to rehearse until they all reached the same level.   They then took part in a 90 minute orientation. This involved a thoroughly introduction to the features of the game, followed by a practice session.

Implementation of the ""Warcraft III" online game

In the second stage, the learners undertook three gaming sessions held one week apart. Thanks to the schools' consent, the participants accessed the MMORPG "Warcraft III" using the PC of the institution. Each session lasted approximately 45 minutes. However, the length of the sessions varied somewhat due to the late arrival in the game of two learners during the first session. The researchers monitored the learners' gameplay and interaction as observers. At the conclusion of each session, the researcher recorded the participants' text chat (students' writing pieces). The day after the first session, all of the participants took part in individual interviews where they provided additional feedback. (See appendix 10).

The observation was used as a fourth empirical method. In the observation the researchers analyzed the participants' text chat emerged during the foreign language generated discourse between the players engaged in the game (e.g. language students who "talked" to each other while playing the game)

When conducting a participant observation, the researcher became a participant to gain access to the field and to persons. In the process, the observation becomes more concrete and concentrated on the essential aspects of the research question. General description occurs at the beginning then more lines of vision are developed before a narrowing of the processes and essential problems to the research question, and at the end the focus is on finding further evidence and examples (Flick, 2002).

In the process of observing, Creswell (2002, p.98) begins with the selection of the site that can help the researcher to best understand the central phenomenon. The researcher enters the site and conducts multiple observations over time to obtain the best understanding of the site and the individuals. We as researchers design some means for recording notes during an observation. The observer recognizes the objects and records field notes describing the object and reflecting on insights, hunches, and theme that emerged during the observation. A decision is made as to what will be recorded.

Participant observation was one of the methods used in this study, and it was used by the researcher to observe and record impression and reflection on the discourse analysis of participants' text chat transcripts of the "Warcraft III" online game they were using.

By gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, the researchers are more likely to get a clear understanding of the phenomenon under study and to be able to clarify and to confirm the conclusions that are drawn. This ideal scenario, sometimes mixed data sources, and/or triangulation across data sources, leads to greater clarity, and sometimes to contradictions and new layers of complexity.

To end up the first cycle of this action research study, learner responses to a post-study survey was also the project of analysis. We conducted individual logs lasting approximately 10 minutes. In the logs, the participants were invited to provide feedback on their experiences. To ensure anonymity during the data write up, all participants and their interlocutors were provided with aliases. (See appendix 12).

The variety of sources, already mentioned previously, enabled us to obtain a broad perspective on the data. The collection of multiple types of data supported triangulation, and further provided access to a richer set of sources than could be obtained through other means. Moreover, the analysis of multiple sources enabled us to identify significant patterns and themes while facilitating a holistic analysis.

Data analysis

In order to answer the research question, How could the "Warcraft III" online game contribute to strengthen the 8th grade students' written strategic competence in the English language?, defined in advance, this study utilizes content analysis. In content analysis, the goal is to reduce the material into relevant categories (Flick, 2002). This usually refers to analyzing texts, and is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings. The core meanings found through content analysis are often called "patterns" or "themes" (Patton, 2003).

There are two ways of using content analysis. The first is to pre-determine categories, where each characteristic of interest is typically formalized as a "coding category" (Hardy, 2004). These categories are applied to qualitative data for extracting sub categories that belong to that category. Another approach to content analysis is thematic analysis, where the coding scheme is based on categories designed to capture the dominant theme present in a text. In this case, we begin with the learners' text chat and allow the themes to emerge. Ultimately content analysis designs different coding schemes for different research questions applied to different types of text. In this research, predetermined categories were applied in the analysis of the students' pieces of writing, and thematic analysis was applied to the researcher's field notes.

The primary source of data is transcripts of learner text chat collected during the in-game interaction. On completion of the three game sessions, we undertook repeated readings of the

chat logs. In order to provide a broader perspective on the data, our observation was recorded in field notes.

During this process, significant patterns and themes emerged. A set of compensatory strategies were discovered by us. These were categorized on the basis of classifications provided by Faerch & Kasper (1983 p. 89). Then, we made a classification between non-cooperative and cooperative strategies. Furthermore, non-cooperative strategies were sub-classified with regard to the source learners draw on in trying to solve problems. Thus, we distinguished the following subgroups of non-cooperative strategies: strategies based on the first and/or third language (L1/L3) exclusively (code switching, foreignizing, literal translation, use of all-purpose word, strategies based on the first, third or second language (L1/L3 and L2) simultaneously (inter-/intralingual strategies) and strategies based on the second language (L2) exclusively (word coinage). Also, we found a set of cooperative strategies (Negotiation-clarification request, negotiation-response confirmation, negotiation-response rejection and comprehension check)

Once we identified the compensatory strategies that come from the classification of the strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), each strategy was coded for the source on which the learner drew and the subtype. The classification of compensatory strategies is illustrated by examples from the corpus.

Table 2: Components of the strategic competence

Strategy type
Non-cooperative strategies **a) L1/L3 based strategies- the learners draws resources on a language other than the L2.** 1) Code switching. The learner uses a form in the non-L2 language. This strategy involves usingL1 or L3 for an expression without translating it. 　Example: L: I need to do my ejercito 2) Foreignizing. The learner uses a non-L2 form but adapts it to make it appear like a L2 form. 　Example: L: yes, suarez and their team are inpart of right 3) Literal translation. The learner translates an L1/L2 form. 　Example: L: pepil make the all base and then we traslade to another place for make the second base 4) Use of All Purpose Word. Extending and general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking. 　Example: L: pepis team is in the right-3   **b) L1/L3 and L2 based strategies** 1) Inter-intralingual strategies. The learner generalizes an IL rule, but the generalization is influenced by the properties of the corresponding L1 structure. 　Example: L: villa you have my tesure of my recolection vs the wolfs **c) L2 based strategies. The learner makes use of alternative L2 forms**. 1) Word coinage. The learner replaces an L2 item with an item made up from L2 form. 　Example: L: Valenzuela we wonna atack torres **d) Cooperative strategies** 1) Negotiation-clarification request. 　Example: L: What are you talking about? 2) Negotiation-Response confirmation. 　Example: L: Okay lets go villa 3) Negotiation-Response rejection.

Example: L: no villa wait

4) Comprehension check.
Example: L: pepi now i have all the buildings but not the units i am creating ok

Results and discussion

After analyzing the learners' text chats, we realized that all samples contained compensatory strategies. The presence of each type of compensatory strategies in the corpus is shown in Table 3.

Almost all compensatory strategies used by the learners in the corpus were non-cooperative strategies. Only four times did the learners try to achieve the communicative goal by cooperative strategies, by asking a partner for clarification, negotiating confirmation, rejecting to take any decision and checking for understanding.

More than one third of non-cooperative strategies were based on L1, the learners' mother tongue (Spanish). All-purpose word was the most frequent subtype of L1 based strategy. When faced to a problem, when learners did not know the specific word, then they use a general word to fill the vocabulary gaps. About one fourth of L1 based strategies were foreignizing when the learners utilize an L1 word or phrase by morphologically adjusting it to an L2 word. Moreover, code switching was the third frequency in the use of L1/L3 based strategies. There were only

four uses of literal translation. In all instances in our corpus the mother tongue lexical item was adjusted to L2 morphology.

Strategies that were based on L1 and L2 (mother tongue and target language) simultaneously were not much present. Only in one circumstance the learner tried to achieve the communicative goal by generalizing the IL rule under the influence of the corresponding L1 structure (Chuly RM: villa you have my tesure of my recolection vs the <u>wolfs</u>). A little more than one-third of compensatory strategies in the corpus were based on the target language: the learners used their IL system to cope with communicative problems in 37 times with the word coinage strategy in L2 based strategies. In most of the word coinages in the corpus were non-existing L2 words by overgeneralization.

On the other hand, almost one third of the cooperative strategies were based. Negotiation-response confirmation was the frequent and the others are not much present in the corpus. There were only two uses of each negotiation clarification request and negotiation response rejection, and just one comprehension check.

Table 3: Distribution of the types of compensatory strategies in the sample

Strategy type	Number of uses	(%)
Non-cooperative strategies	81	(78,64)
L1/L3 based strategies	43	(41,74)
Code switching	6	(5,82)
Foreignizing	11	(10,67)
Literal translation	4	(3,88)
Use of All Purpose Word	22	(21,35)
L1/L3 and L2 based strategies	1	(0,97)
Inter-intralingual strategies	1	(0,97)
L2 based strategies	37	(35,92)
Word coinage	37	(35,92)
Cooperative strategies	22	(21,35)
Negotiation-clarification request	2	(1,94)
Negotiation-Response confirmation	17	(16,50)
Negotiation-Response rejection	2	(1,94)
Comprehension check	1	(0,97)
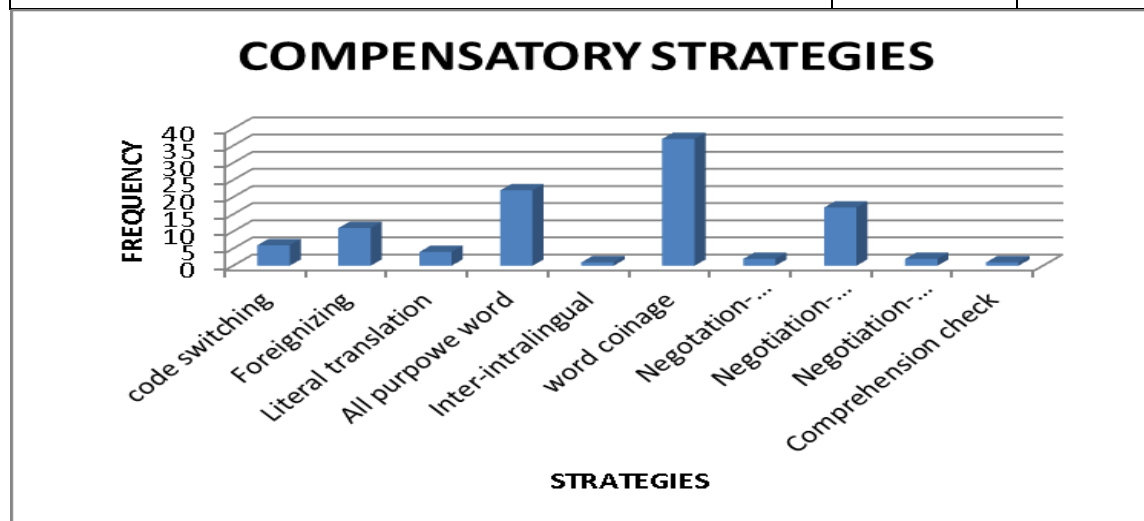
About half of compensatory strategies were used during the first intervention. There were nine types of compensatory strategies used by nine learners from eight grade at San Tarsicio School (table 4). These are all-purpose words, word coinage, foreignizing, literal translation from L1, Code switching, negotiation clarification requests, negotiation response confirmation, negotiation response rejection and comprehension checks. Most of these strategies are not equally distributed in the use of learners IL. More than one half of the compensatory belong to word-coinage, negotiation response confirmation was the second in frequency, all-purpose word was third in frequency. There were six uses of foreignizing, three of literal translation and code switching, two of negotiation clarification request and one use of negotiation response rejection and comprehension checks.

A high percentage of word-coinage can be explained by young learners' unsufficient target language knowledge and the fact that the learners in our corpus created a nonexisting L2 word based on a supposed rule. Word-coinage mainly involved large stretches of written discourse (e.g., Valenzuela I wiil go to yor village now; yeah ypu are very good and you have a good strategy). Anyhow, word-coinage did not affect the communication.

Negotiating-Response confirmation seems to be an important compensatory strategy in young learners. In their interaction, learners confirmed they understood any suggestion or command from their partners by using written expressions. (e.g., Chuly: okay so go , losGrove22: yes, suarez and their team are inpart of right).

All-purpose words were used eleven times (e.g., <u>Hi</u> start <u>creating people</u>, Tellez <u>also</u> <u>make wood</u>). Learners extended a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking.

Foreignizing was in fourth position. This was also another compensatory strategy in young learners' interlanguage. Some examples of the use of foreignizing in our corpus provided evidence for learners' creativity in IL use. (e.g., pepil make the all base and then we <u>traslade</u> to another place for make the second base; yes, suarez and their team are <u>inpart</u> of right). What is more, literal translation was ranked in the fifth position. Learners translated literally a lexical item, and idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2. (e.g., <u>good why chuly and you</u> <u>Eduardo you have heros??;</u> pepil make the all base and then we traslade to another place <u>for</u> <u>make</u> the second base).

Code switching was used by the learners in which they used a L1 (Spanish) word by adjusting it to L2 (English) morphologically. (e.g., I need to do my ejercito; Chuly RM: but we need more <u>orcos</u> and <u>madrigueras</u>).

Negotiation clarification request (e.g., "What are you talking about?", "chuly: what he said and who strategy") shows that English learners use another written strategy to confirm what was not understood when someone is interacting with them, thus, they avoid breakdown in communication.

Negotiation response rejection and comprehension check were used only once each. (e.g., Stc30: no because we don't have a good defence for this base wait for them and then i go, Stc30: pepi now i have all the buildings but not the units i am creating ok)

The analysis of the use of compensatory strategies leads us to the conclusion that learners at this stage rely primarily on the creation of non-existing words, use oral speech expression to confirm understanding, use a general word when there is absence of a specific term, and their mother tongue when trying to solve communication problems.

Table 4: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learning interlanguage in the first intervention

CATEGORIES	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	Total	(%)
All-purpose words	4	4	3	11	(10,67)
Word-coinage	9	3	5	17	(16,50)
Foreignizing	2	1	3	6	(5,82)
Literal translation from L1		2	1	3	(2,91)
Code switching to L1 or L3	1	2		3	(2,91)
Negotiation-Clarification requests	1	1		2	(1,94)
Negotiation-Response confirmation	2	3	7	12	(11,65)
Negotiation-Response rejection			1	1	(0,97)
Comprehension checks			1	1	(0,97)
Total	19	16	21	56	(54,36)

FIRST INTERVENTION

DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES
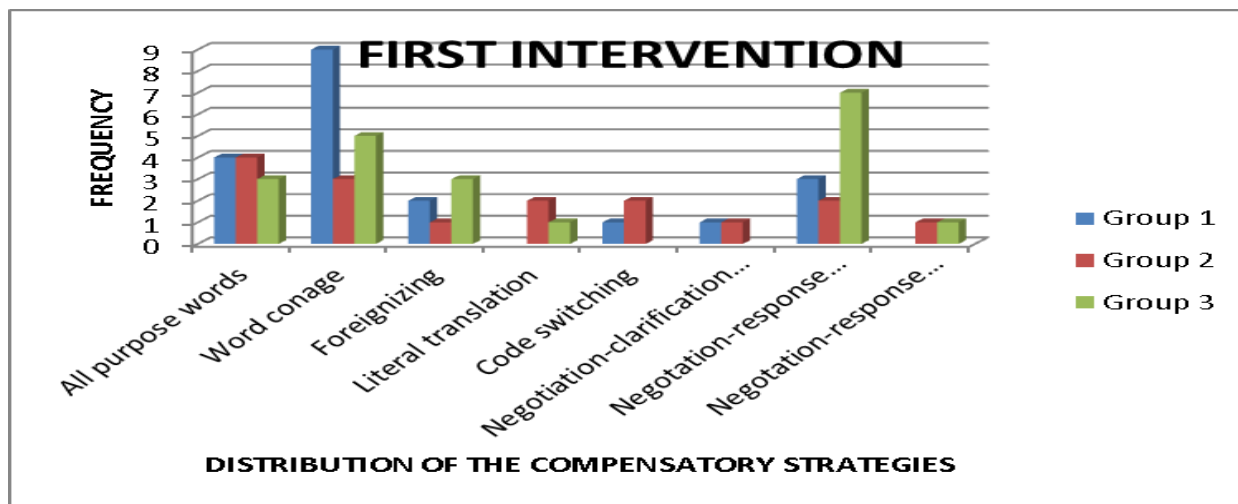
In the second intervention, learners used wider repertoire of compensatory strategies (Table 5). The strategies were not equally distributed. Some were quite frequent, for example; Word coinage and All-purpose words. On the other hand some strategies were rather rare. (Literal translation, Negotiation-Response confirmation, Negotiation-Response rejection).

Word coinage was the most frequent compensatory strategy. The high presence of word-coinage can be explained by learner's the belief to write a new English word without any meaning has validity in the writing report or chat, but it is no true. That is why researchers take into account the importance of feedback the participant's written communication strategies after analyzing each piece of writing. In addition word-coinage seems to be an important communication strategy in learners' interlanguage, Some examples of the use of word-coinage in our research provide evidence of learner creativity in IL use(D= ey people create every the 3 heros ,D =chuly: hye lets go to explore the map,D=so sorety Eduardo-3). Researchers found

fewer compensatory strategies with the intervention of the three groups because learners have more time in the development of those activities.

The use of literal translation (chuly: why your hero die???-3) in learner IL proves hypothesis formation to be a part of Foreign Language Learners (FLL): a part of IL improvement. Moreover, code switching and Foreignizing strategies were the second in frequency. The great use of those strategies in learners IL seems to indicate that B1 learners, besides drawing resource on IL (by literal translation,for example)try to solve to reach the goal by means of communicative resources   they already possess in their IL. To solve a problem, some learners used a construction that was well-formed according to their IL system.

At B1 level, Inter/intralingual transfer, Negotiation-response confirmation, Negotiation-response rejections were less present than the others. Interlingua transfer occurred when learners consider L2 structure formally similar to their L1. i.e. (Chuly RM: villa you have my tesure of my recolection vs the wolfs).

The use of Inter/intralingual transfer is another evidence of hypothesis making process as a step in the target language learning process. Negotiation is use in a dialogue among each group, it intended to reach an understanding, resolve point of difference, or gain advantage in outcome of dialogue, to produce an agreement upon courses of action . We found Negotiation-response confirmation (Chuly RM: Okay lets go villa), Negotiation-response rejection (Chuly RM: no villa wait) learners use them to have better communication responses.

The distribution of compensatory strategies in B1 learners IL shows that learners equally use strategies that might contribute to the learning process (Word-coinage, all-purpose words, literal translation, inter-intralingua transfer, word coinage) and strategies that enable additional practice of IL (Code switching, Negotiation-response confirmation, Negotiation-response) .It is also necessary to refer that B1 level students almost equally rely on L1 and L2.

Table 5: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learning interlanguage in the second intervention

CATEGORIES	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	Total	(%)
All-purpose words	1		4	5	(4,85)
Word-coinage	10	1	4	15	(14,56)
Inter/intralingual transfer			1	1	(0,97)
Foreignizing			2	2	(1,94)
Literal translation			1	1	(0,97)
Code switching to L1 or L3		1	2	3	(2,91)
Negotiation-Response confirmation			1	1	(0,97)
Negotiation-Response rejection			1	1	(0,97)
Total	11	2	16	29	(28,15)
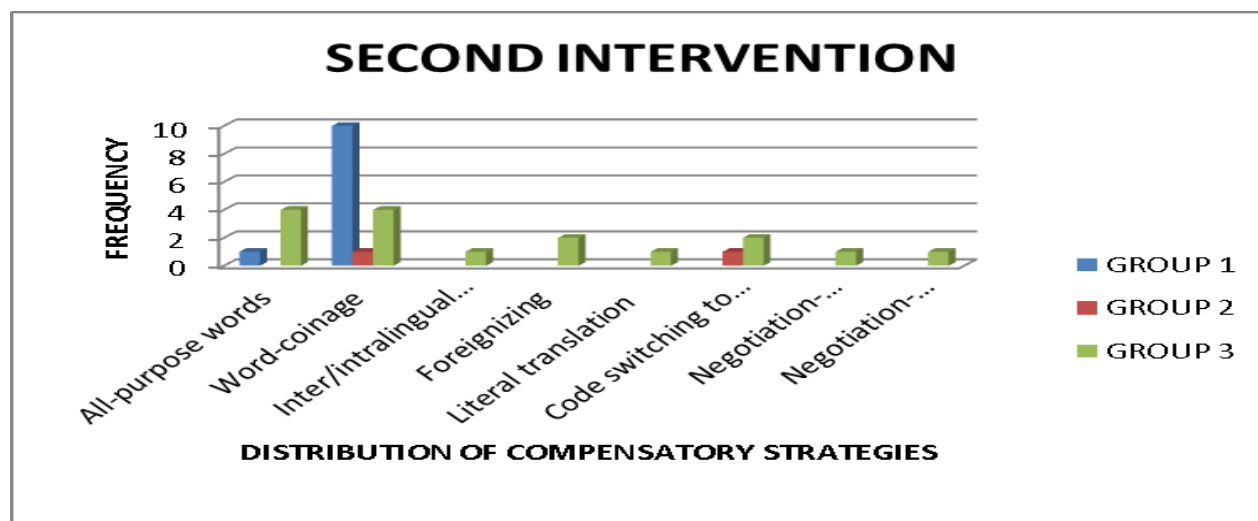
During the third intervention (Table 6), some strategies were somehow frequent for example all-purpose words at the same level it covered about six percent of the strategy used. (JDVO: Lets create people and an army,Ftc123: tello why you put you bace in my bace,),followed by word-coinage use in group one (Ftc123: Valenzuela we wonna atack torres,Gordis99: thak yo tellez); those communicative strategies less frequently used were literal translation e.g.Ftc123: tello why youput you bace in my bace Juan suarez: pepi I will go to the gold mine you can stay there for protect the people), code-switching to L1(Chulyvanpersie: okay we have a good ejercito so we are going to explore the zone).

On the other side, some strategies were rather rare (negotiation request (JDVO: ok lets go,pepi1200: ok understood and you suarez what is your plan, Ola q me cuenta: yes why,Chulyvanpersie: okay we have a good ejercito so we are going to explore the zone). This table showed that the compensatory strategies are used less often in the three groups; but the

group 1 makes use of the most frequently. It evidences the implicit use of strategies without stopping their writing.

Table 6: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learning interlanguage in the third intervention

CATEGORIES	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	Total	(%)
All-purpose words	2	2	2	6	(5,82)
Word-coinage	5			5	(4,85)
Literal translation	1	1	1	3	(2,91)
Code switching to L1 or L3			1	1	(0,97)
Negotiation-Response confirmation	1	1	2	4	(3,88)
Total	9	4	6	19	(18,44)
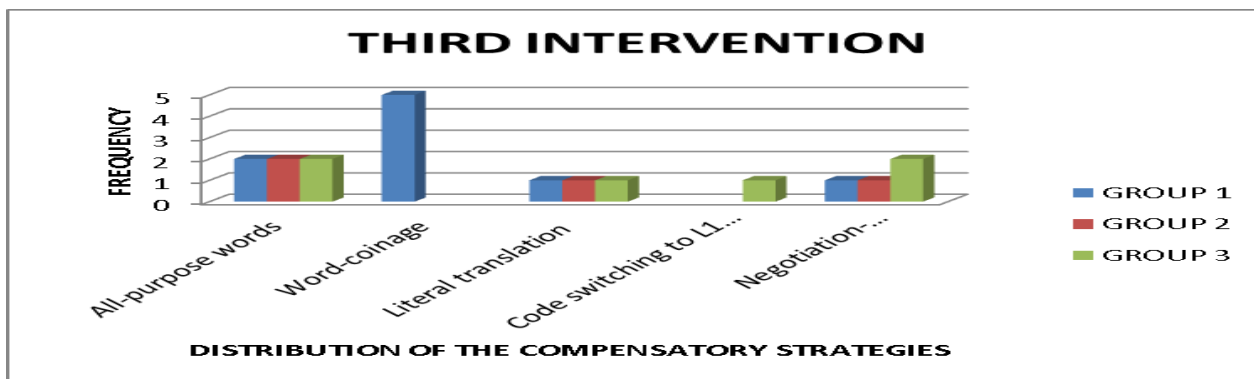
At the end of the first cycle, the participants were surveyed to know their perception related to Warcraft III online game, how they overcame obstacles when doing the written interaction in English and their proposal to continue working with the video game.(See appendix 11)

The results of the survey showed that most of the students agreed on the idea that their written English skill was strengthened, especially in the lexical and grammar items. When they faced inconveniences with the target language, they created words or simply took words from Spanish to avoid the message breakdown and keep on expressing what they pretended to communicate.

On the other hand, participants said that forty five minutes was not enough; so, they asked for more time to play the video game and interact with the allies through the chat and strengthen the writing strategic competence.

All in all, we as researchers decided to give them 90 minutes to play; thus, it was expected that this time might allow them to use some more communication strategies in their text chat to strengthen them. Besides that, each intervention had to be accompanied with a log in which the learners registered their experience after each game.

Conclusion of the first cycle

After having thoroughly analyzed the tables of the first cycle (kemmis, 1986), we reached the conclusion that the number of frequencies of the communication strategies decreased considerable en the last two interventions in relation to the first one. One of the main reasons might be that the time provided, forty five minutes for each session, could not be enough; then,

our hypothesis is: if the students had more time to play Warcraft III on line game, the number of the communication strategies would increase.

To verify this hypothesis, we decided to plan a second cycle; then, act, observe and reflect as it is suggested in the action research method (Beatty, 2005).

Second Cycle

As a following up the action research process, we implemented the second cycle. In order to reach the main aim set at the beginning of this study, the participants were given the necessary conditions to perform successfully in their group discussion. This allowed them to get use of the communication strategies to keep on interacting during the whole sessions.

After having analyzed the students chat interaction, the results showed that the length of the dialogue was considerably longer than those of the first cycle; however, the number of the strategies was reduced and their frequency of use was almost the same as from those of the first cycle (table 7). (See appendix 13).

The previous fact was notorious in strategy types; that is to say, the non-cooperative strategies and cooperative strategies.

In the non-cooperative strategies, the participants used more frequently all-purpose word; following the order of frequency word coinage was ranked in the second position, then code switching and literal translation; finally, fillers.

In terms of cooperative strategies, the learners used firstly Negation response confirmation six times and appeal for help occurred only once.

Table 7: Distribution of the types of compensatory strategies in the sample

Strategy type	Number of uses	(%)
Non-cooperative strategies	47	(47,03)
a) L1/L3 based strategies	35	(64,81)
I. Code switching	7	(12,96)
II. Literal translation	7	(12,96)
III. Use of All Purpose Word	15	(27,77)
IV. Fillers	5	(9,25)
V. Non-linguistic means	1	(1,85)
b) L2 based strategies	12	(22,22)
I. Word coinage	12	(22,22)
Cooperative strategies	7	(12,96)
I. Negotiation-Response confirmation	6	(11,11)
II. Appeal for help	1	(1,85)

Starting off the second cycle, the English learners did not use a considerable number of strategic competences as it was expected (table 8).

In the first place, we observed that Word coinage was the strategy used the most frequently by the participants followed by all-purpose word and non-linguistic means. The number of frequencies was almost half less in relation to the first competence.

What is more, Negotiation response confirmation was ranked in the fourth position. This cooperative strategy was evidence that all types of messages (questions, advice) were understood by their interlocutors; then there was a real communication among them.

Besides, they made less use of non-linguistic means. This communication strategy was used as a sound imitation in this context. The evidence shows that the learner wants to call the attention of the other members of the team. We also observed that there was a clear interference from L1 to L2. Literal translation appeared because the English learners translated literally a structure. Code switching, negation clarification request and fillers have a low frequency use.

In brief, more a third of compensatory strategies were non-cooperative strategies, however, cooperative strategies had a meaningful representation in this intervention.

Table 8: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learning interlanguage in the first intervention of the second cycle

CATEGORIES	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	Total	(%)
All-purpose words	4	1		5	(9,25)
Word-coinage	2	1	4	8	(14,81)
Non-linguistic means		4		4	(7,40)
Literal translation from L1	1			1	(1,85)
Code switching to L1 or L3	1			1	(1,85)
Negotiation-Clarification requests	1			1	(1,85)
Negotiation-Response confirmation			2	2	(3,70)
Fillers	1			1	(1,85)
Total	10	6	6	22	(40,74)
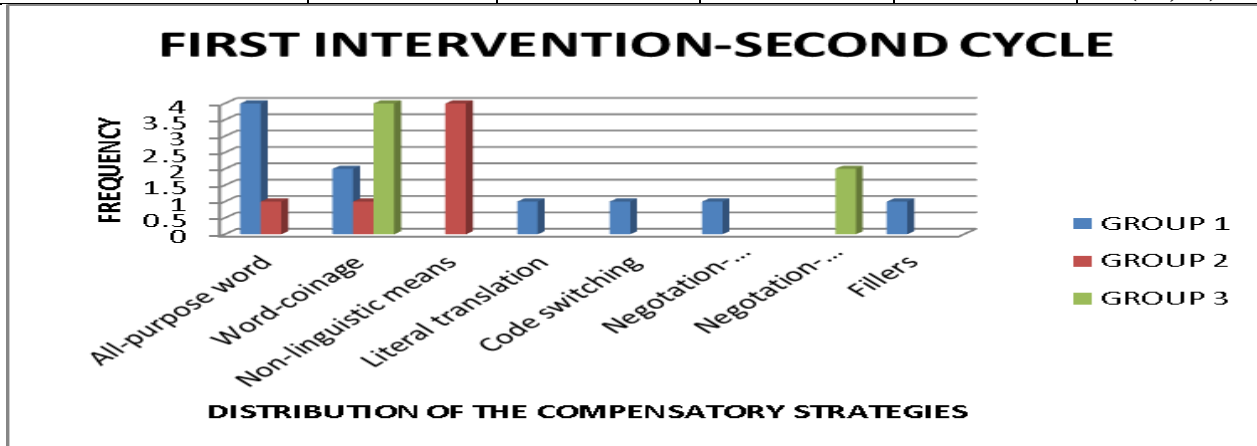
In the last intervention of the second cycle, we realized that all-purpose word strategy increased in the written discourses of the three teams (Table 9). Alternatively, literal translation and code switching were ranked second; then negotiation-Response confirmation strategy was in the third position. Furthermore, fillers as a new communication strategy (help people structure their ideas) was used by some participants; this was placed in the fourth place.

Lesser but not less significant number of communication strategies appeared in the table. Appeal for help, and the Use of non-linguistic means where ranked in the last position. Each one of them had a low frequency use.

To conclude, those interventions reconfirmed how important the time is for the learners' interaction in which they used different types of communication strategies, but their frequency which decreasy.

Table 9: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learning interlanguage in the second intervention

CATEGORIES	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	Total	(%)
All-purpose words	4	5	1	10	(18,51)
Word-coinage	2	1	1	4	(7,40)
Literal translation from L1	3		3	6	(11.11)
Code switching to L1 or L3	3	1	2	6	(11,11)
Negotiation-Response confirmation	3	1	1	5	(9,25)
Appeal for help	1			1	(1,85)
Filler	3		1	4	(7,40)
Use of non-linguistic means	1			1	(1,85)
Total	20	8	9	37	(68,51)

SECOND INTERVENTION-SECOND CYCLE

DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES
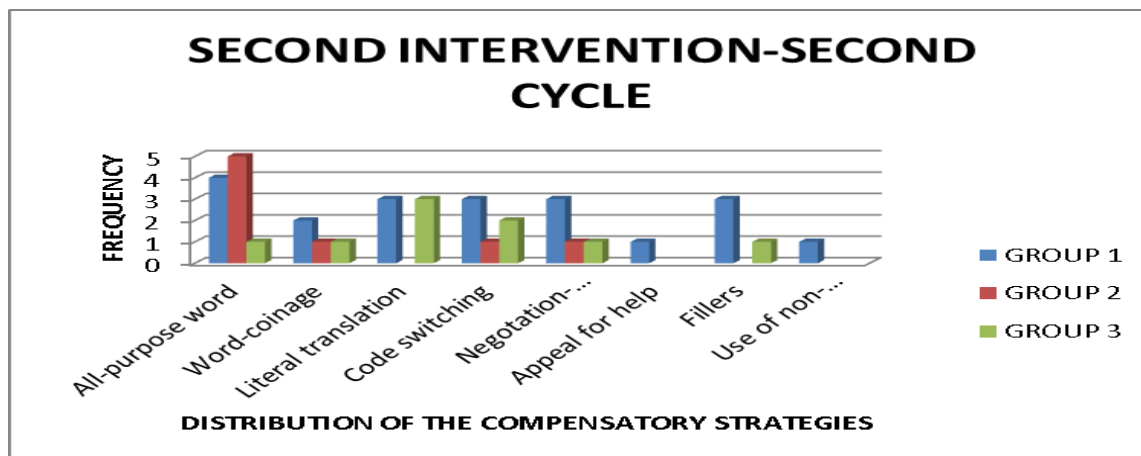
Students' logs

As proposed in the planning stage before stating the second cycle, the learners fulfill a log in which they registered their experience after each intervention. This was a personal reflection related to: internal written communication among allies, possible inconvenient when using English to interact and the time provided and shunting used when writing.

In general, Most of the students considered that the communication among allies in the second cycle was really good. They also said that they were attentive to the chat tool in order to read their allies comments or write them something. Here we show some quotes taken from their log: learners said "we had to create words to keep on interacting with our allies", "The communication was permanent and fluid", "While interacting, we understood each other's suggestions", "Chatting helped them to strengthen their writing", " There was team work which helped us to cooperative working", "this was more fluid than the ones from the first

cycle". "From time to time, some allies did not participate as it was expected", "the mission provided by the game demanded us to communicate". Two participants said "there were moments when the communication broke down, but we overcame this obstacle when our leader asked us to calm down", "at the beginning it was tough, but it became easier once we understood how to help each other".

Some inconvenients they found in the communication was related to their unconformity with their vocabulary level: "The lacking of specific vocabulary was not an obstacle in the communication which was considered as the first priority to reach our aims". "There spelling mistakes due to we need to communicate our plans. This is because the speed of the game forces us to write fast", "In spite of having problems with certain vocabulary, I was sure that my allies understood me because they followed my advice and answered my questions".

In relation to the time, learners said "I created a word, used Spanish and some others", "The time was more than enough (2 hours and 15 minutes)"."It is considered that the time give was good"," Some students did not use any shunt because they consider that their English level is more than enough to express their thoughts". "We created words and used key words (all-purpose words) when necessary". These comments gave the answer to our proposal established at the end of the first cycle.

Conclusion of the second cycle

As a conclusion of the second cycle (kemmis, 1986), we consider that the time is not a determinant factor to make the participants increase the communicative strategies. This is because the number of frequencies remained almost as at the end of the first cycle. Nevertheless, a detailed observation of the students' text chat revealed that the statements and the written dialogues, besides being longer, are more accurate and fluent; that is, the reader does not need to guess the content of the written dialogue. The text is comprehensible because the content and function words are integrated constantly from the beginning of the discourse.

The above, make us consider that the learners are in the process of developing the written communicative competence. There might be many reasons, but we consider that the integration of many elements like the Warcraft III online game, the learners' interest for playing the game and the frequent researchers' feedback were a decisive factor in the process of strengthening and/or developing the English learners' written communicative competence.

Beyond the use of English and the written strategic competence

The main objective of this study is to strengthen 8th grade's written strategic competence in the English language throughout the implementation of the "Warcraft III" online game. To reach this objective, the participants were grouped in threes and taken to the computer room to play the Warcraft III online game initially 45, then 90 minutes once a week. Each participant had

his own online PC with the game installed. They all agreed on just using the online game chat to interact with their allies. The implementation of the online game lasted six months and was split into two cycles as the necessity of this study.

At the end of each session, the students' text chats were collected by the researchers and taken to the classroom to be projected on a big screen. Each word, sentence and situation was thoroughly analyzed by the English learners and the researchers as a whole group. It is important to mention that the students identified the grammar mistakes by themselves, errors or any other inconsistencies presented in these pieces. During every analysis, the participants took notes of any aspect they considered relevant. One of the researchers' roles was to guide the learners to identify by themselves the inconsistencies in their written discourse; however, we just explained some forms of the English language that may be new or confusing to the participants.

Lastly, we as researchers contrasted three participants' text chats – six statements from each student – which were taken at random from three different moments: at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the process. Pseudonyms were used to protect their identity: JDVO, gordis(99), ftc123 (svilla). This analysis was done from two concepts: firstly, the language used directly from the text; that is to say, something visible, palpable and portable, consisting of various bits of linguistic meaning- words, clauses, prosodic feature, etc. We are interested in the way the parts of the text relate to each other to constitute a unit of meaning. Secondly, the development of the participants' communicative competence though the "Warcraft III" online game.

Discourse analysis

As Fine (1988) points out "part of one's cultural knowledge is an awareness of how genres of discourse are analyzed"(pp. 29-53). In the diagnostic stage (first sample), most of DJVO's statements were imperative that primarily contained a proper name followed by the base form of any verb and an object; for the second sample, the statements were longer than in the first sample (See table 9). He passed from three to eight and nine words. He used interjections or exclamation markers before starting a simple or a compound statement. They were more structured, thus the reader could understand easily. In the last sample, DJVO's statements kept the number of words and started off his discourse with a prepositional phrase followed by a simple sentence and finish with another prepositional phrase. With this text, DJVO gave instructions which might be easily understood by anyone. In his last statement, the learner used a simple statement accompanied of phrasal verbs, object pronouns and a time expression.

On the other hand, gordis(99) started with simple sentences and imperatives. These statements had four and two words. However, in the second sample, he tried to write more structured affirmative and interrogative sentences by asking for information and placing the adjective accurately. At the end of the process, his statements were composed by a simple sentence, good use of punctuation (,) and, once more, asking for information with well-structured questions.

Furthermore, ftc123 started the process with a four words simple sentence as well. But the second sample showed that his sentences became longer containing two independent clauses joined by coordinators (and / or). In his last intervention, ftc123 wrote well-structured yes/no questions; furthermore, in another sentence, he gave a command as well as two independent clauses joined by a coordinator.

In the diagnose sample, the statements were composed by one, two, three or four content words, but very few function ones; this might be considered as a precarious form of written communication among them. This fact made the reader infer what the participants' intention was or what they really wanted to communicate. Meanwhile, the samples taken in the middle show how important and effective the researchers' intervention was when giving the participants feedback at the end of each session because the English learners began to integrate many elements of the syntax.

Finally, the last text chats showed that the statements and the written dialogues, besides being longer, are more accurate and fluent; that is, the reader does not need to guess the content of the written dialogue. The text is comprehensible enough because the content and function words are integrated constantly from the beginning of the discourse.

In sum, the written texts chats of these three participants- DJVO, gordis (99) and ftc123 (svilla)- showed progress which goes from imperative sentences to more accurate simple and

compound structures. This might be the result of the scaffolding approach followed by the researchers (table 10).

Table 10: contrastive analysis

Samples of the Intervention	Grammar	Number of words
First participants' text chat	JDVO: Tello ateck suarez Subject + imperative (verb + object) JDVO: TELLO HELP ME (Subject + imperative (verb + object pronoun)	Three Three
	gordis: I will go there structure: (subject pronoun + auxiliary verb (spot decision-will) + preposition of place) gordis: valenzuel help (Noun + imperative	Four Two
	ftc123: Valenzuela I will help you (subject + subject personal + auxiliary verb (spot decision-will) + main verb + object pronoun) ftc123: help pepi atackk me (imperative + subject + verb + object pronoun)	Five Four
Middle participants' text chat	JDVO: Hey dudes lets create a Hero and investigate everythinkj (interjection + noun + imperative (let+ object pronoun + verb) indefinite article + noun + linking word + verb + pronoun) JDVO: ok So you have to follow me now (exclamation + conjunction + subject pronoun + modal verb + main verb + object pronoun + adverb-time expression)	Nine eight
	Gordis99: hello mr we need to attack (exclamation + noun + subject pronoun + main verb + verb Gordis99: where are mercenari campaments (Adverb + verb + adjective + noun)	Six Four
	ftc123: I have my hero (subject pronoun + main verb + possessive adjective + object) ftc123: Valenzuela go to my base and attack togeather a villa or villegas (Noun + verb (command) + possessive adjective + object + conjunction + verb + adverb + code switching + noun + conjunction + noun)	Four twelve
	JDVO: Up the screen it says allies in Spanish there.	Nine

Final participants' text chat	(adjective + definite article + noun + subjective pronoun + main verb + noun + preposition + noun + adverb of place) JDVO: Iam gonna look for them later. (subject pronoun + future (auxiliary verb-be + verb-contraction-main verb + object pronoun + exclamation	seven
	gordis99: I agree, how can I sen ya money guys? (subject pronoun + verb, adverb + modal verb + subject pronoun + verb + pronoun & determiner + noun + noun + question mark)	Nine
	gordis99: why is the map getting enlightened (adverb + auxiliary verb (be) + definite article + noun + main verb + gerund + adjective)	six
	Svilla: Valenzuela are you going to attack (noun + auxiliary verb + subject pronoun + verb + gerund + main verb)	Six
	Svilla: nooo wait, somebody send my a wisp and I suppone (negative exclamation + imperative, pronoun + verb + possessive adjective + definite article + noun + conjunction + subject pronoun + verb)	Ten

As it was at the beginning of this study, we decided to go beyond the use of English and after analyzing deeply the text chats, we realized that the participants used some communication strategies when using English to chat. Wanden (1986) said that "Communicative strategies are techniques that learners use when there is a gap between their knowledge of the target language and their communicative intent". But, these strategies were used less frequently by the learners as the project was in progress. In his study, Lam (2010) indicated that "learners at different proficiency level employ communication strategies at varying degrees. If participants are fully equipped with linguistic resources, they make less use of compensation strategy than those who have less linguistic access." (pp. 11-30). Then, we concluded that the participants were in the process of reaching the written communicative competence.

We believe that there might be many reasons of the phenomena above, but we consider that the researchers' feedback played an important role in the process. Besides that, the young learners' interest for the online game allowed them to strengthen and/or develop the written communicative competence.

Development of the eighth grade English learners' communicative competence

We strongly agree with Chomsky (1965, as cited in Johnson, 2008, pp. 91-93) who points out that "there is no limit to the number of possible sentences that can be generated from the grammar and lexicon of a language. However, stringing together a random group of sentences that may be grammatically allowable does not result in discourse". The learners' sentences might be accurate, but this analysis indicated us how effective these statements were in the communication. Then, a fraction of the last text chat was used to observe thoroughly the participants' interaction.

While moving on one of the campaigns of the "Warcraft III" online game, group 1 integrated by (JDVO, gordis(99) and fct123 (svilla) started off communicating through the chat tool. In their interaction, we analyzed their discourse and found the following: the dialogue begins with the participant "gordis99" who used a confirmation response as a communication strategy; this was followed by an information question (gordis99: I agree, how can I sen ya money guys?). Immediately, JDVO noticed that there was a message coming from somebody, but he did not get it, so he apologizes (Iam sorry) and uses a repetition request (what); then

"gordis99" realized that JDVO was asking for repetition, and paraphrased the question (gordis99: How can I seen resources to you guys). After having understood the question, "JDVO" gave "gordis99" directions (JDVO: Up the screen it says alies in spanish there). Finally, "gordis" thanked "JDVO" for giving him the information he had been asking for. (Table 11)

Another sample was taken from the same group1. "ftc123(svilla)" advices his allies to take an action (Svilla: we have to attack first to pepis team); "gordis99" got "ftc123Svilla"'s intention and asked him for information (gordis99: Where are they); it seems that nobody knows where their enemies were because "JDVO" let his allies know his plans (JDVO: Iam gonna look for them later); suddenly, "gordis99" notices that something was happening on the screen and asked for information (gordis99:Why is the map getting enlightened), there was somebody who read the previous question, understood and answered it. (JDVO: I lost, Im sorry); that is, JDVO had lost something perhaps one of his heroes or a territory, but he immediately apologizes "the mistake" and gave advice to "gordis99" (JDVO: Castro remember to improve the level of your hero). Gordis99 reported his level (gordis99:Im lvl 2).

In sum, In spite of the few grammar mistakes, in these two samples, the communication competence showed up all of a sudden. (Table 11)

Table 11: Learners' interaction

DIALOGUE
gordis99: I agree, how can I sen ya money guys?
JDVO: Iam sorry what
gordis99: How can I seen resources to you guys
JDVO: Up the screen it says alies in spanish there
gordis99: Thanks
Svilla: we have to attack first to pepis team
gordis99: Where are they
JDVO: Iam gonna look for them later
gordis99:Why is the map getting enlightened
JDVO: I lost, Im sorry
JDVO: Castro remember to improve the level of your hero
gordis99:Im lvl 2
gordis99: Valeo, need help on the attack?
gordis99:do you need help attacking?
JDVO: No, later. We can atack later.
JDVO: Be careful with you base, and be ready for everything
gordis99:I am
gordis99:guys, i think we should attack someone to earn more gold
Svilla: yes
JDVO: Yes may be Villegas
gordis99:I vote for pepi
Svilla: I vote villegas
Svilla: wait
JDVO: NOW W
JDVO: Gooood people good. Don't you worry
JDVO: NOOO CASTRO DON YOU GO

Diagram of the findings

SECOND
CYCLE

repeats

then

then

Non-cooperative
strategies:
* Code switching
* Word coinage

Cooperative trategies:
*Comprehension check
*Negotiation-response
confirmation

CONTENT
ANALYSIS
Transcript of the
students' text chat

example

example

to

First cycle

There were

SUB-CATEGORIES

DATA
ANALYSIS

are

Non-cooperative
and cooperative
strategies (Faerch
& Kasper, 1983)

to

to

repeated readings
the chat logs,
observation recorded
in researchers' field
notes

Classification

RELEVANT CATEGORIES
EMERGED (Flick, 2002)
Discovery a set of compensatory
strategies

Emmerded
patterns

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In general terms, we concluded that the methodological proposal implemented in this project played an important role in the field of strengthening the written strategic and communicative competences in the English language of 8th grade students at San Tarsicio School. This was due to the fact that the diagnosis revealed that most of the students had insufficiencies in the form of the language, but used some communications strategies to get the message across. Furthermore, the theoretical constructors of the three categories, online games, writing and competences, and the antecedents made us believe that the learners could strengthen competences. What is more, the interaction of the "Warcraft III" Online game, the students' interest for playing the game, the permanent feedback of the researchers and the analysis of data were a determinant factor to be in the process of developing or strengthening the learners' written communicative competence.

The research question

How could Warcraft III online game strengthen the written strategic competence in the English language of eighth grade students at San Tarsicio School? From the very beginning, this study showed that the participants came up with a great deal of communication strategies to overcome their written communication problems in different contexts. However, the more the learners had access to the online game, the frequencies of the communication strategies decreased considerably instead of strengthening them. At the end, the results of this study

showed that the feedback given to the participants' text chat played a crucial role in the process of strengthening the participants' written communication competence. The evidence can be shown when the researchers compared and contrasted three participants' texts chats taken from different moments of this study: at the beginning, in the middle and at the end.

Scaffolding was an alternative to support our participants in learning and using accurately forms of written language.

Initially, students worked independently, with a partner, or within small groups during the phases of the process depending on teacher requirements. Using the scaffolding approach with the writing process was a straightforward way to give feedback on grammar for all participants within the classroom.

By analyzing the text chats, discussing appropriate or useful language, doing practice exercises and using structured outlines, all in collaboration with us researchers and peers, especially those with greater expertise; students built bridges between reading and writing which they could not normally build on their own. In theory, we believe that students who are "scoffolded" in this way move from being dependent on the teacher's words to being independent and able to use their own words.

As Bodrova & Leong (1998) argues that "scaffolding allows the teacher to help students transition from assisted tasks to independent performances". It was a step-by-step process that

provided the learner with sufficient guidance until the process was learned, and then gradually removed the supports in order to transfer the responsibility for completing the task to the student until they became capable of completing the activity independently and successfully.

Engagement and Motivation

One of the fundamental properties of an effective constructivist learning environment is that it engages and motivates students who come to school with higher expectations of engagement (Carstens and Beck, 2005). However, Warcradt III offered a solution to involve and motivate students for academic purposes.

Intentional Learning

"Warcraft III" online game has value for intentional learning beyond the initial elements of engagement and motivation. These are the incidental learning that takes place in many good games and put these strategies to use for the purpose of intentional learning in formal educational environments. According to Dewey (1926) "it is not enough just to introduce play and games… everything depends upon the way in which they are employed" (p. 196). In his wake, Aldrich (2005) warns against what he calls motivatism, a philosophy of learning "that suggests if a learner is sufficiently motivated, he or she will pick up everything needed on his or her own" (p. 82).

Socialization

Online game playing is often a deeply social experience. The Warcraft III online game was a well-designed game that provided a learning environment and facilitated socially negotiated learning. Squire (2003) asserted that gaming is a fundamentally social phenomenon and that video games generate rich social interactions.

Students preferred to play the game with others. The "Warcraft II" online game let the participants interact with each other in every session. This allowed the players to move on from the situation of the individual game, at home, to the space of the social activity (Squire, 2002).

Gee (2003) argues that all knowledge communities function as semiotic domains that give meaning to the social practices that exist within them. Through active participation, the "Warcraft III" players learnt to experience the world of the game in new ways and they affiliated with others who understood community practices and concerns. Gradually, the participants developed problem solving strategies, most of which were applicable in communication.

Of course, Warcraft III online game intrigued because social interaction, cooperation, and knowledge sharing was central to the participants' enjoyment. Hertz (2002) observes that these networked games "fully leverage technology to facilitate 'edge' activities -- the interaction that happens through and around games as players critique, rebuild, and add on to them, teaching each other in the process." (p. 173). This stands in marked contrast to dominant pedagogical

approaches. Learning is often viewed as a highly individualized activity that stops at the classroom's door. Even today, many teachers discourage students from collaborating on homework assignments, viewing such behavior as "cheating."

Gaming in the classroom

The current generation of English learners is growing up in an increasingly technologically advanced world. In a generation where traditional learning methods are becoming obsolete, teachers of English would need to shift their paradigms to accept modern teaching methods which revolved around technology itself.

Most parents and educators often complain that kids nowadays are spending too much time playing video games. They feel that video games are not relevant to a kid's academic progress and that time is better spent doing something more productive. These opinions stemmed from the fact that adults are simply reluctant to accept the emergence of new technologies and unwilling to break out of the traditional "safe-zones" based on theories and methods which worked well over the years. Parents and educators alike needed to be informed on the potential of video games enhancing language acquisition and to be taught how to use this tool effectively. Once they learn to see through their child's eyes, they will finally break the stigma which plagued video games for years. Then, English teachers should cautiously proceed to learn how video games function and see their applicability before incorporating these virtual environments into the classroom.

Importance of the online game selection

First of all, Game accessibility is crucial to learning. The Warcraft III online game was the result of a survey to the participants of this project. The researchers ensured that key issues included accessibility, genre, and extensibility. This was because of all virtual environments are not created equal; thus, all games do not appeal to all students. In his project, Squire (2005) found that 25% of students who played an imposed online game in school "complained that the game was too hard, complicated, and uninteresting, and they elected to withdraw from the gaming unit and participate in reading groups instead" (p. 2). In addition, choosing the appropriate online game was an effective instructional medium even for those students that considered themselves barely gamers

Importance of the awareness stage

On the other hand, the learners' awareness was also an important stage as a starting point of this study. The beginners did not invest huge amounts of time trying to understand game dynamics. The other way around, the participants became completely familiar with the computer controls and tools of the game creating a more usable environment. This allowed the students to spend less time making connections between in-game occurrences and specific theoretical concepts.

Students' logs

According to Fogarty (1994) logs are academic diaries that focus on the learners' assignments in their classrooms. The logs are useful instruments to collect qualitative data, because they allow the participants synthetize their thoughts, through them, the learners record their experiences to articulate them with their learning.

The participants' logs confirmed that the communication among allies in the second cycle was really good. They interacted constantly by means of the chat reading or writing their allies some suggestions, asking/answering questions or just asking for help accurately. This tool made them feel confident and comfortable when writing a text. Furthermore, every mission of the Warcraft III forced them to communicate among themselves in spite of the few obstacles related to vocabulary, spelling and/or grammar mistakes.

Undoubtedly, the integration of the Warcraft III online game, the learners' engagement and motivation, their interest for learning, and above all, the researchers' feedback to the participants' text chats as part of the scaffolding were the successful elements needed to strengthen written communicative competence of eighth grade students at San Tarsicio School.

Recommendations for future studies

This study accomplishes within the personal formation process as a researcher. This allowed us to compile theoretical and empirical frameworks to deal with concerns about those elements which are part of our professional interest. Besides that, it was used to learn the ways to proceed in a deeply complex field like the qualitative research.

This project and its inquiries do not end up here. One requires research that gathers different types of approximation to data analysis, maybe combining the researcher as a participant observer and participant as a player in different hierarchy and situations. This let wide opened paths to make longitudinal exploration that take into account all the levels of action that the Warcraft II online game has. What is more, it requires a research to include interaction between advanced English levels on one side, intermediate levels on the other and just beginners as populations for different research studies. This is just a timid view to an unexplored field, where there is a lot to do and know.

Limitations

This study highlights the challenges of studying learners' written productions and especially of identifying qualitative strengths in it following an intervention.

The first idea, the researchers had at the beginning of this study, was to have two or three sessions a week in the computer rooms of the school to get enough students' text chats. Unfortunately, the primary and high school's schedules showed us that we only could have sessions of 45 minutes once a week in the secondary computer room.

After having faced the limitation above, we sought another alternative to carry out this study. Since most students come from 4th and 5th social level whose access to Internet from home was not an obstacle to be interconnected among the participants, the researchers came up with a new proposal to make extensive the Online game to the students' houses to keep on playing the "Warcraft III" Online game. Thus, this would provide some more information about the students' written interaction through their text chat.

However, the participants' parents and the board of directors of the school did not agree with the proposal above. They said that their children would spend huge amount of time trying to accomplish with the missions of the online game. At the end, they felt that this might affect the students' academic performance in other school subjects.

Nevertheless, the hypothesis set up at the end of the first cycle needed to be verified by us. It was necessary to talk to the principal of the school and the teacher who instructed the preceding lesson in the secondary computer room.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that we focused on a small number of able learners here; the results may be different with learners of other levels in different contexts.

Pedagogical implications

This study showed some pedagogical implications in the field of implementing online games and foreign language teaching for high school education.

We considered how to encourage the acceptance of online game based learning among students. Firstly, we as researchers had to learn and understand the "Warcraft III" Online game dynamics, became familiar with the computer controls and the tools of the game for creating a more usable environment. Secondly, we paid a detailed attention to gaming narratives, story structure, characters, and graphic design to involve and motivate the students in the effective constructivism learning environment.

Thirdly, Online gaming oftentimes does not match the assessment criteria in most of national testing. We as English teachers considered how students, parents, and school boards would criticize or accept the notion of playing games in formal educational settings.

The researchers have a proper balance between the formal and the informal modes of education; then, a proper balance was created between theory and practice in the virtual world, and a proper balance was also designed between learning content and context in Online game.

In order to provide scaffolding experiences to learners, we employed our individual experience as English teachers and the knowledge of the game to act as game masters in the virtual world; so we supported and adequate responses provided simultaneously in the virtual world. Finally, participants joined the games during several sessions and testing stages in order to get their feedback.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO

DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

ENCUESTA PARA LOS ALUMNOS DEL OCTAVO GRADO

FECHA: 13.-.9..... de 2012

Datos del Alumno

Apellidos: Torres

Nombres: Andrés

EDAD: 14 años

SEXO: Femenino___ Masculino___

El Departamento de Inglés del Colegio, te ha seleccionado para responder esta encuesta, y así, conocer tu percepción con respecto a tus fortalezas y aspectos que, consideras, están en proceso de mejorar en inglés.

Te pedimos que respondas con mucho cuidado y con base a tu experiencia, pensamiento y sentimiento. Sólo nos interesa saber la verdad y tu opinión sincera. No hay respuestas correctas buenas ni malas. Tus respuestas personales en esta encuesta NO van a influir en tus notas en el colegio.

Muchas gracias!

A continuación se presentan una serie de enunciados relacionados con el aprendizaje del inglés que pueden ser importantes para tu buen desempeño académico, laboral y profesional. Contesta a cada una de las preguntas según la siguiente escala:

1= nada; 2= 3- bastante; 4 = mucho

- Marca con una equis (X) tu respuesta frente a cada habilidad.

				1	2	3	4
1	De las siguientes habilidades comunicativas en inglés, la que más se me facilita dentro y fuera de clase es…	A	Hablar				X
		B	Escuchar				X
		C	Leer			X	
		D	Escribir	X			

				1	2	3	4
2	De las siguientes habilidades comunicativas en inglés, la que más disfruto dentro y fuera de clase es…	A	Hablar				X
		B	Escuchar				X
		C	Leer		X		
		D	Escribir	X			

				1	2	3	4
	De las siguientes habilidades comunicativas en inglés, la que más	A	Hablar				X
		B	Escuchar			X	

3	frecuentemente utilizo es…	C	Leer	X	
		D	Escribir	X	

		A	Hablar		X	
4	De las siguientes habilidades comunicativas en inglés, la que es más importante desarrollar es…	B	Escuchar			
		C	Leer		X	
		D	Escribir	X		

		A	Hablar		X	
5	De las siguientes habilidades comunicativas en inglés, la más difícil desarrollar es…	B	Escuchar		X	
		C	Leer		X	
		D	Escribir	X		

Teniendo en cuenta las respuestas anteriores, en la siguiente página, responde UNICAMENTE la habilidad que más se te dificulta

HABILIDADES COMUNICATIVAS ORALES

Utiliza la siguiente escala:

1= NUNCA; 2= ALGUNAS VECES; 3 = SIEMPRE

- Marca con una equis (X) tu respuesta frente a cada enunciado.

			1	2	3
HABLAR	6	Sé comunicarme a la hora de llevar a cabo tareas simples y cotidianas que requieren intercambios sencillos y directos de información sobre cuestiones que me son conocidas o habituales.			X
	7	Cuando hablo en clase, mis compañeros comprenden lo que digo ya que interactúan haciéndome preguntas.			X
	8	Participo en clase dando opiniones sobre los temas que me son familiares.			X
	9	Interactúo dentro y fuera del salón de clase con mis compañeros y profesores de inglés.	X		

ESCUCHAR	10	Comprendo las instrucciones que da el profesor dentro y fuera del salón de clase.			X
	11	Comprendo a mis compañeros cuando interactúo con ellos.			X
	12	Comprendo grabaciones que traen los textos guías.		X	
	13	Comprendo un 70% videos o películas en inglés.		X	

HABILIDADES COMUNICATIVAS ESCRITAS

LEER	14	Utilizo mis propias estrategias (leer primero el título, ver fotos, predecir, escanear para información específica, obtener información general) para comprender textos.		X	
	15	Utilizo estrategias sugeridas y utilizadas por el docente durante la clase.		X	
	16	Combino mis propias estrategias y las sugeridas por el profesor.			

	17	Empleo las estrategias que trae el texto guia.		X	

ESCRIBIR	18	Obtengo buenos resultados cualitativos (observaciones) y cuantitativos (nota numérica) en mis escritos hechos para inglés.		X	
	19	En los escritos utilizo apropiadamente el vocabulario y la gramática del inglés.	X		
	20	Cuando escribo, hay secuencia entre las frases, oraciones y los párrafos del documento.		X	
	21	Me considero un buen escritor y redacto algunos textos por iniciativa propia porque soy consciente de que organizo bien las ideas expuestas en ellos.	X		

Responde las siguientes preguntas.

22	¿Por qué es importante saber hablar, escuchar, leer y escribir en inglés?
	R/ porque me permite entender lo que otras personas me quieren decir.

23	¿Por qué alguna habilidad (hablar, escuchar, leer y escribir) es más difícil que las otras?
	R/ porque no la practica. Me cuesta escribir

24	¿Cómo te gustaría fortalecer o mejorar aquella habilidad que se te dificulta?
	R/ Me gustaría mejorar la escritura con más gramatica y vocabulario

APPENDIX 2

**COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS
ENTREVISTAS**

ENTREVISTA LINA MARIA NEMES

Buenos días, por favor conteste las siguientes preguntas:

Preguntas: ¿Cuál es su nombre? ¿Qué cargo tiene?

Respuesta: Mi nombre es **LINA MARIA NEME**, soy docente del departamento de inglés del colegio San Tarsicio, yo enseño en los grados sexto, séptimo, octavo, noveno y once.

Pregunta: ¿Cómo considera usted el nivel de inglés del Colegio San Tarsicio?

Respuesta: Yo considero que (eeee) en el colegio tenemos un muy buen nivel de inglés dadas las circunstancias, y la y las carencias con las que contamos a pesar de eso (eh) nuestros estudiantes, la mayoría de los estudiantes se graduaron con un nivel de inglés alto la mayoría con un nivel B2.

Pregunta: ¿Qué habilidad se dificulta a los estudiantes y en especial a los de octavo grado?

Respuesta: (Eeeh!) de las habilidades que se les dificulta a nuestros estudiantes especialmente es la habilidad de escritura, es una habilidad muy muy especializada, y les cuesta trabajo. Eeeh! Dentro de los aspectos que, que he notado que nuestros estudiantes tienen carencias esta eeh! La parte de la sintaxis, los estudiantes tienen problemas de gramática, al conjugar el verbo eeeh, eeeh! abecés se olvidan de conjugar los verbos o la conjugación no corresponde a la persona gramatical que están empleando en una oración. Nooo, aplican los signos de puntuación apropiadamente, aparte de la comas, de las comas cuando son para ser listas y el punto final, (jeje) de (a..a..) aparte de esos no utilizan los, los signos de puntuación de en otra manera que no sea de esa.

Pregunta: por favor, explique puntualmente los aspectos de la habilidad en los que se encuentra la dificultad.

Respuesta: (Eeeh!) A nosos, a nuestros estudiantes así como a la mayoría de nosotros cuando aprendió inglés, nos cuesta trabajo aprender las preposiciones, las conjunciones, los conectores, eeeh! Se sienten cómodos con el uso de "y" y "pero" ambas y no están interesados en utilizar ningún otro porque piensan que eeh! Esos. eeh! Suplen todas sus necesidades.

Eeeh! También presentan problemas en lo que respecta de las reglas ortográficas, eeem! ¡no respetan las reglas ortográficas! Solo se conforman con la, …con escribir lo más parecido posible a laa estructura correcta.... (eeeh) y no (oo) no a como realmente se se debe escribir. Esto es en relación eeeh! Nuestros estudiantes de grado octavo que son los que eeeh! Presentan mayormente estos, estos problemas.

(Amm!!) Otra de los problemas que presentan estos estudiantes es la incapacidad no total pero en incapacidad de profundizar en las ideas que ellos exponen, muchos tienen muy buenas ideas pero no son capaces de argumentarlas, de dar soporte a sus ideas y en si elaborar un, un párrafo de una manera coherente, de hilar un párrafo de una manera ordenada, de expresar una idea eeh! Completa y luego desarrollarla a través de un párrafo de una manera coherente, eso les cuesta muchísimo trabajo a nuestros estudiantes.

Esas son las que considero yo son las mayores carencias de nuestros estudiantes.

APPENDIX 3

OBSERVACION

Felipe Tellez

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
8TH GRADE 2013

1

Write any of the following compositions according to the following rubric. Choose only one of them; if your favorite is not in the list, then add it in the pointed line.

1. A magazine is running a competition to find the best explanation on **how to** ...
* use a video cassette recorder.
* take a perfect picture with a digital camera
* withdraw cash from an ATM (automatic teller machine)
* download a picture onto a computer.
* open a door.
* put on a jacket.
* ride a bicycle.
* yours ....

2. A email friend of yours wants to visit you. Write him/her explaining **how to**...
* reach your house from the airport.
* rent a car.
* book a room in a hotel.
* yours...

HOW TO... open the dar

Hi: I'm Felipe Tellez and I will teach how open the door

First yo need a Things for open the door

you need a Hand or uther put of the body the

door and the more imporort esheat ot Kiss

then I will teach you

step-one

put the hands o other parts in the Kiss

intruduce the Kiss in the chapa of the door

and move in the right

you did now are you expetst to open the doors

FINDINGS

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
8TH GRADE 2013

TRANSCRIPTION

HOW TO…apen the dar………(1)……….

"Hi I'm Felipe Tellez and I will teach how apen the daor
First yo need a things for open the dour
You need a Hand or ather put of the body the
Door and the more important **esheat** of **kiss**
Then I will teach you
Step-one
Put the hands <u>o</u> other parts in the **kiss**
Introduce the kiss in the <u>chapa</u> of the door
And **mave in** the right
You did now are you expetst to open the doors ……"

APPENDIX 4

UNIVERSIDAD LIBRE
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
MAESTRÍA EN EDUCACIÓN CON ÉNFASIS EN DIDÁCTICA DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS
(INGLÉS)

MARCO LEGAL

The modification of the Law 115, 1994 by attaching the articles 20, literal g; article 21, literal m and paragraph 1 according to the Colombian Basic Standards of competences in Foreign Languages established by the Ministry of National Education. El Congreso de Colombia DECRETA: Artículo 4°. Adiciónese al artículo 20 de la Ley 115 de 1994 el siguiente literal:

g) Desarrollar destrezas orales y escritas que permitan comunicarse en el idioma inglés como lengua extranjera.

Artículo 5°. Modifíquese el literal m) e inclúyanse los siguientes parágrafos en el artículo 21 de la Ley 115 de 1994:

m) El desarrollo de habilidades de conversación, lectura y escritura al menos en un idioma extranjero, privilegiando la enseñanza del idioma inglés.

Parágrafo 1°. Para efectos de la enseñanza del idioma inglés se desarrollarán habilidades de conversación, lectura y escritura de acuerdo a los Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras, trazados por el Ministerio de Educación Nacional para el idioma inglés.

APPENDIX 5

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

4. CAPITULO - PLAN DE ESTUDIOS.	4.1.2. Áreas especiales.
De acuerdo con la reglamentación vigente y la autonomía institucional, las siguientes son las áreas del Colegio San Tarsicio.	• Orientación Profesional: En 10º y 11º se dictará la materia de Medio Ambiente que se dicta en Inglés y desarrolla la clase virtual en convenio con la Universidad de Lund, que permite la obtención del título de Master Juvenil En Estrategia de Prevención Ambiental. Se profundiza en esta clase, en los problemas ambientales y sus posibles soluciones como un énfasis importante a tener en cuenta en cualquier actividad profesional futura del estudiante. • La Lengua Extranjera: Por su importancia en la Visión del Colegio para la formación del mundo moderno y de acuerdo con la intensidad horaria, el reglamento del Colegio dispone el Inglés como área especial en lo referente a las competencias comunicativas fundamentales consideradas en cada grado como pre requisito para acceder al siguiente grado, con el fin de alcanzar el bilingüismo en sus estudiantes. Será requisito de Grado como Bachiller, obtener el Nivel B1 en los exámenes oficiales de Cambridge. 52 Se dictarán otras materias en Inglés para apoyar su aprendizaje, aunque no hagan parte de ésta área, tales como Ciencias Naturales, Artes, Sistemas, Educación Física y Recreación. Son materias del área: Inglés Todos los cursos Reading and writing De 4º a 8º - con valor del 10%.

APPENDIX 6

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

Tabla 1. **Materias con inglés como medio de instrucción**

Materia	Fecha de inicio	Grados	Años académicos cursados	Intensidad horaria semanal	Observaciones
Medio Ambiente	ene-02	10º-11º	7	1	Inició por vinculación como docente de medio ambiente de un ex alumno bilingüe en el 2002.
Reading and Writing (R&W)	ene-03	4º-7º	6	1	Surgió de la identificación de deficiencias en estas dos habilidades por parte de los estudiantes al presentar los Exámenes oficiales de Cambridge.
Inglés a través de la Ciencia	ene-05	1º-5º	4	2	Coincidió el interés del colegio en el desarrollo del bilingüismo con la experiencia de una docente en clases de ciencias en inglés y su interés en el área.
	nov-07	K-T	1	2	Surgió para aumentar la exposición de los estudiantes de preescolar al inglés.
Educación Física	ene-06	K-9º	3	2	Se hizo cambio parcial de docentes. Debido a que ya tenían un buen nivel de bilingüismo, se acordó con ellos capacitación en inglés. Hasta 9º por grado de inglés de los docentes.
Recreación dirigida (incluye ajedrez)	ene-06	K-5º	3	1	Clase a cargo de los profesores de educación física, dirigida exclusivamente a preescolar y primaria.
Sistemas	feb-07	K-5º	2	1	Inicialmente preescolar y primaria, para lo cual se contrató un nuevo docente bilingüe.
	nov-07	6º-9º	1	2	Hasta 9º por grado de inglés del docente.
Artes	ene-08	1º-5º	1	2	Al retirarse la docente anterior, se seleccionó una docente bilingüe para artes en primaria.
	ago-08	6º-9º	0	2	Primer bimestre cursado en inglés, por retiro de docente anterior. Se inició con los grados 6º a 9º por ser primer año de la docente con la clase en inglés.

APPENDIX 7

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

Tabla 2**. Intensidad horaria semanal de exposición al inglés-año escolar 2008**

Grado	Inglés	Medio Ambiente	R&W	Inglés a través de la ciencia	Educación física	Recreación	Sistemas	Artes	Total horas semana	% inglés	Total clases semana
K	4	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	10	27%	37
T	4	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	10	27%	37
1°	5	0	0	2	2	1	1	2	13	35%	37
2°	5	0	0	2	2	1	1	2	13	35%	37
3°	5	0	0	2	2	1	1	2	13	35%	37
4°	5	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	14	38%	37
5°	5	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	14	38%	37
6°	5	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	12	32%	37
7°	5	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	12	32%	37
8°	5	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	11	30%	37
9°	5	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	11	30%	37
10°	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	8	22%	37
11°	6	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	9	24%	37

APPENDIX 8

**COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS**

Bogotá, Agosto 28 de 2012

Doctor
Juan Antonio Rodríguez
Rector del colegio San Tarsicio

Respetado Doctor,

Me pongo en contacto con usted para para comunicarle mi interés en realizar durante 2012-2013 una investigación en el marco de mi Tesis de Maestría que inicialmente se titularía "el juego en línea "Warcraft III" como una alternativa interactiva para fortalecer la competencia estratégica escrita en inglés de los adolescentes".

El objetivo central de la Tesis de Maestría es el fortalecimiento de la competencia estratégica escrita de los estudiantes del grado octavo del colegio San Tarsicio. Con este estudio se pretende contribuir con el proceso enseñanza - aprendizaje de las lenguas extranjeras (inglés).

La información parcial y final que se obtenga será compartida oportunamente con la institución. Además, los resultados de este estudio serán incorporados en el producto final de mi tesis, en las presentaciones orales y podrían ser publicados en revistas profesionales.

Por todo ello, solicito su autorización para desarrollar este estudio y me gustaría contar con su colaboración, así como con la del resto de la comunidad educativa, para el desarrollo de esta investigación, en lo que pudiese resultar necesario.

Sin otro particular, le saluda atentamente,

William Ariel Sánchez
 Profesor de Inglés

APPENDIX 9

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

Permiso de padres para la participación de su hijo en un proyecto de investigación para el fortalecimiento de la habilidad escritora

Estimado(s) padres o tutor:

Por este medio deseamos solicitarles su permiso para que su hijo ……………………………………….… forme parte de un proyecto de investigación para la implementación de un material software de videojuegos multiusuarios en línea que permita el fortalecimiento de la competencia estratégica escrita.

Estamos intentando determinar el éxito de programas virtuales como los videojuegos con estudiantes del grado octavo ya que tienen la experticia para el manejo del mismo lo cual puede ser de gran ayuda para alcanzar lo objetivo del proyecto.

La participación de su hijo en el proyecto es voluntaria. Su decisión de participar no afectará la relación de usted ni de su hijo con el colegio de ninguna manera. Es importante saber que si decide participar en el proyecto de investigación, pueden retirarse luego en cualquier momento sin consecuencias.

Le enviamos esta carta para que usted lea y decida si su hijo puede participar.

¿Por qué se llevará a cabo esta investigación?

Esta investigación podrá ayudarnos a medir la eficacia de los programas de clase videojuegos para fortalecer la competencia estratégica escrita en inglés a los estudiantes del grado octavo del Colegio San Tarsicio.

¿Qué procedimientos están implicados?

Entre algunos estudiantes que devuelvan firmadas las hojas de permiso, el estudio se aplicará una encuesta al grupo octavo y algunos talleres en la clase de inglés. Esto ocurrirá en el año escolar 2012-2013.

Durante los talleres, los estudiantes serán filmados o fotografiados como evidencia de la implementación de los videojuegos en línea para fortalecer la competencia comunicativa escrita. Esto no será todos los días para así no intervenir con el desarrollo de las otras habilidades comunicativas.

¿Qué sobre la privacidad de su hijo?

No se divulgará ninguna información sobre su hijo a cualquier persona fuera del proceso de la investigación. Los nombres de los estudiantes no serán requeridos para tomar parte del proyecto. El personal de investigación mantendrá la información de su hijo confidencial y no se revelará su nombre en cualquier material o documento.

Por ejemplo, cuando los resultados de la investigación se publiquen o se discutan en conferencias, no hay información incluida que puede revelar la identidad de su hijo de ninguna manera. Los expedientes de la escuela de su hijo no estarán disponibles para el investigador por nombre del estudiante.

Cualquier video, transcripción o resumen escrito de la información personal serán almacenados en un cajón de archivo del departamento de inglés. También, no se atará nombres personales a la información recogida. Toda información seguirá siendo anónima y no visible a otros estudiantes.

¿Puede su hijo retirarse del estudio?

Usted y su hijo pueden elegir estar en este estudio o no. Si su hijo se ofrece voluntariamente a estar en este estudio, él puede retirarse en cualquier momento sin consecuencia alguna. Los investigadores pueden remover a su hijo del proyecto si su comportamiento es destructivo o si demuestra incomodidad con algún personal.

Permiso para que su hijo participe en una entrevista del grupo

Si usted acuerda permitir que su hijo participe en esta investigación, por favor firme y escriba en letra de molde su nombre en la línea proporcionada para el "padre o tutor" y ponga la fecha en que usted firme.

Haga por favor que su hijo devuelve la hoja firmada al colegio.

FIRMA DEL PADRE O TUTOR: Acuerdo permitir que mi hijo participe en este proyecto. Entiendo que mi hijo puede elegir el no participar en el proyecto o la entrevista del grupo después de que haya concedido este permiso. Entiendo que mi hijo volverá una copia de esta página de la firma a la escuela en _____, 2012. _____
Nombre impreso del padre o tutor _____ Firma y fecha del padre o del tutor.

Recordatorio: *Devuelva por favor esta forma al colegio de su hijo no más tarde del* _____, *2012*. **Gracias**
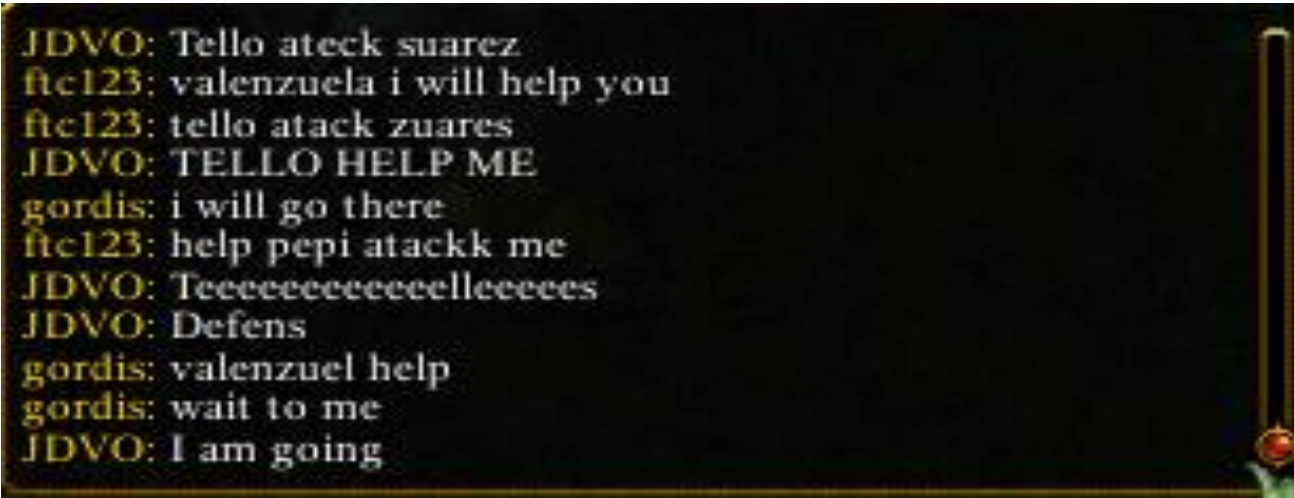
APPENDIX 10

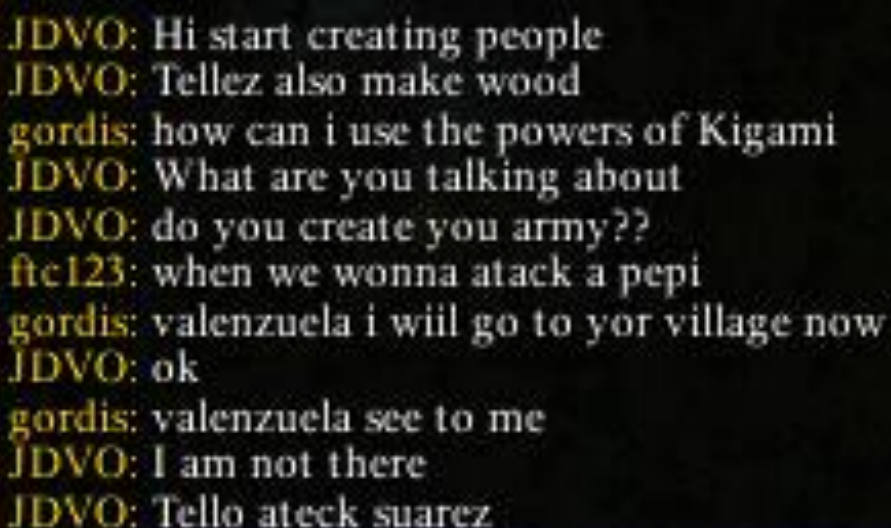**UNIVERSIDAD LIBRE**

FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN

MAESTRÍA EN EDUCACIÓN CON ÉNFASIS EN DIDÁCTICA DE LAS LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS (INGLÉS)
FIRST CYCLE – FIRST PIECES – GROUP 1
NAME(S) …**JDVO = Valenzuela; gordis = Tello; ftc123 = Tellez**… DATE ………April 19th 2013…

WARCRAFT III- STUDENTS' WRITTEN INTERACTION-FORMAT

```
JDVO: Tello ateck suarez
ftc123: valenzuela i will help you
ftc123: tello atack zuares
JDVO: TELLO HELP ME
gordis: i will go there
ftc123: help pepi atackk me
JDVO: Teeeeeeeeeeeelleeeees
JDVO: Defens
gordis: valenzuel help
gordis: wait to me
JDVO: I am going
```

```
JDVO: Hi start creating people
JDVO: Tellez also make wood
gordis: how can i use the powers of Kigami
JDVO: What are you talking about
JDVO: do you create you army??
ftc123: when we wonna atack a pepi
gordis: valenzuela i wiil go to yor village now
JDVO: ok
gordis: valenzuela see to me
JDVO: I am not there
JDVO: Tello ateck suarez
```

APPENDIX 11

APPENDIX 11

COLEGIO SAN TARSICIO
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

ENCUESTA PARA LOS ALUMNOS DEL OCTAVO GRADO SOBRE EL
VIDEO JUEGO EN LINEA "WARCRAFT III"

Responda las siguientes preguntas.

	¿Cómo le ha parecido el juego en línea "Warcraft III" y en que le ha contribuido para aprender inglés?
1	R/ me ha parecido muy chevere, interactiva y diferente. Mi ingles se ha fortalecido porque he aprendido mas vocabulario y gramaticca.

	Cuando interactuó con sus compañeros a través de chat, Se le pudo presentar algún tipo de obstáculo para comunicarse, ¿Qué hizo para que sus ideas no quedaran inconclusas y sus compañeros las pudieran entender?
2	R A veces no sabia la palabra en ingles y pues la escribia en español pero esto no fue obstaculo para parar la comunicacion y seguia escribiendo lo que queria expresar.

	¿Qué opinión tiene sobre el tiempo empleado para jugar "Warcraft III"?
3	R/ el tiempo se nos acababa cuando queriamos escribir mas e interactuar con mis aliados y las conversaciones quedaban inconclusas. Solicitamos más tiempo.

APPENDIX 12

UNIVERSIDAD LIBRE
FACULTA DE EDUCACIÓN
MAESTRÍA EN EDUCACIÓN CON ÉNFASIS EN DIDÁCTICA DE LAS LENGUAS
EXTRANJERAS (INGLÉS)

FORMATO DEL LOG PARA EL JUEGO EN LINEA ¨ WARCRAFT lll¨
SEGUNDO CICLO
FECHA…………………………………..

El propósito de este formato es para que los estudiantes lleven una bitácora sobre su práctica de interacción escrita y los obstáculos encontrados.

ITEM	REFLEXION
LA COMUNICACIÓN CON SUS COMPAÑEROS DE GRUPO	
INCONVENIENTES (GRAMATICA, VOCABULARIO ETC)USO DEL INGLÉS ESCRITO PARA COMUNICARSE	
TIEMPO DE JUEGO Y MANIOBRAS UTILIZADAS EN EL MOMENTO DE ESCRIBIR. **EJEMPLO: INVENTO UNA PALABRA, UTILIZO ESPAÑOL ENTRE OTRAS**	

	REFLEXION
CON SUS GRUPO	La comunicación fue exitosa, fue muy interesante saber la forma en la cual nosotros teníamos que usar cualquier recurso para tener buenas opciones de ganar. Nos inventamos palabras con tal de no cortar la comunicación
ES USO DEL PARA E	Nosotros fuimos inteligentes al no tratarnos en palabras propias como prioridad la comunicación y la forma en la cual nos apoyamos
O Y DAS EN CRIBIR. O UNA SPAÑOL	Maniobras básicas y tácticas de ataque y defensa si hubo algunas palabras inventadas o uso del español mías.

N SUS UPO	... cuales a los demos ... y pedir ... usando estrategias, ... personales, y ... exóticos y lograr la victoria
... O DEL RA	No tuve ... porque la mayoría de el vocabulario del juego y ... algunas palabras ... la cual ... para que ... de que mis compañeros ...
Y AS EN ER JNA AÑOL	... aprox 2 horas para realizar las estrategias y ... las diferentes palabras que había aprendido ... estrategias útiles que se ... algún ... el problema pero generalmente se utilizaba el Español

APPENDIX 13

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SECOND CYCLE – <u>SECOND PIECES</u> – GROUP 1
NAME(S) …**JDVO = Valenzuela; gordis = Tello; ftc123 = Tellez**…
WARCRAFT III- STUDENTS' WRITTEN INTERACTION-FORMAT

Mensajes

⭕ Enviar a jugador: JDVO

🔵 Enviar a los aliados
⭕ Enviar a los observadores
⭕ Enviar a todo el mundo

Historial del chat

JDVO: I lost,Im sorry
JDVO: CAstro remember to improve the level of your hero!
Kordi99:   Im lvl 2
Kordi99:   Vale, need help on the attack?
Kordi99:   Do you need help attacking?
JDVO: No, later. We can atack later.
JDVO: Be careful with you base, and be ready for everything
Kordi99:   I am
Kordi99:   Guys, i think we should attack someone to earn more gold
svilla: yes

Puedes silenciar los mensajes de otros jugadores escribiendo
/silenciar seguido por el nombre del jugador en el cuadro de edición
del chat (p. ej. /silenciar Arthas)

Aceptar

Inventario

NOVEMBER
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