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Running head: PROCESS-GENRE APPROACH TO WRITE PARAGRAPHS

The Process-Genre Approach in Paragraph Writing of Fourth-Grade EFL Learners

Héctor Mauricio ARTEAGA LARA

Research Report submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in English Language Teaching – Autonomous Learning Environments

Directed by Julio César GÓMEZ BARÓN

Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures
Universidad de La Sabana
Chía, Colombia
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Declaration

I hereby declare that my research report entitled:

The Process-Genre Approach in Paragraph Writing of Fourth-Grade EFL Learners

- is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared and specified in the text;
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Date: Tuesday, October 17th, 2017

Full Name: Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and 'A'.

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Abstract

Writing plays a significant role in language learning. Previous research has reported on the effectiveness of several approaches to develop writing skills to enhance writing competence, but little attention has been given to paragraph writing of elementary students. The present qualitative action research study used artefacts, teacher's journal, learner's journals and a focus group interview to collect data on the way the process-genre approach assisted fourth-grade EFL learners to write well-structured narrative paragraphs. Data were analysed using the grounded theory approach showing that most of the participants managed to write well-structured paragraphs in which they developed only one idea and supported it without deviating from the subject. Learners also became aware of the role of audience and the features of the narrative writing genre. The findings of the study lend support to the notion that the process-genre approach is an effective way for young learners to achieve the expected goal; hence, it could be more widely adopted in writing courses at the elementary school level.

Keywords: writing; paragraph writing; process-genre approach

Resumen

La escritura juega un papel crucial en el aprendizaje de idiomas. Estudios previos han descubierto la efectividad que diversos enfoques tienen para desarrollar habilidades de escritura con el fin de optimizar la competencia escritora de los estudiantes; sin embargo, se le ha dado poca importancia a la escritura de párrafos en estudiantes de primaria. El presente estudio de investigación-acción se valió de artefactos, diario de docente, diario de estudiantes y entrevista grupal para recolectar datos acerca de la manera en la que el enfoque de proceso y género ayudó a estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en cuarto grado de primaria a escribir párrafos narrativos bien estructurados. Los datos fueron analizados a la luz de la teoría fundamentada

revelando que la mayoría de los participantes logró escribir párrafos narrativos bien estructurados en los que desarrollaron solo una idea principal sin desviarse del tema. Estos participantes, además, lograron concientizarse sobre el rol de la audiencia (los lectores) y las características del género narrativo de escritura. Todo esto justifica la noción que el enfoque de proceso y género es un método efectivo para que los estudiantes de primaria alcancen el objetivo mencionado por lo cual podría ser adoptado por escuelas de primaria en sus cursos de escritura.

Palabras claves: Escritura, escritura de párrafos, enfoque de proceso y género.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

Writing is a communicative process, one of the four language skills along with reading, listening and speaking (Hinkel, 2006). Furthermore, it is classified as one of the *productive skills* that leads to language production, because it is one of “the processes involved in creating and expressing meaning through language” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 292). Writing as a *process* implies several stages through which it takes place; more specifically, it is “viewed as the result of complex processes of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 592). Thus, it is a skill that demands attention to the steps connected to the communicative purpose.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL, hereafter), writing must be tackled within communicative settings, given that “the contexts in which EFL writers write and learn to write shape their metacognitive knowledge about composing and using textual conventions, their conception of writing, motives for writing and, consequently, their approach to writing” (Manchón, 2009, p. 11). If students, for instance, face writing under a structure-focused approach, they might consider it as a set of rules and patterns to be followed with grammar and vocabulary as the main priorities: In this case, good writing would be primarily a matter of accuracy (Hyland, 2003b). This conventional approach is not ideal because it shows writing as a mechanical activity, and might, consequently, lead to learners’ indifference towards it.

Communication in real contexts is therefore the key point to effectively learn EFL writing.

One way to tackle writing communicatively is by means of the *process-genre approach* (Badger & White, 2000). On the one hand, the process approach is commonly known as the view that focuses on the writer’s potential skills to perform writing. Tribble (1996) defined it as “a

cycle of writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the ‘publication’ of a finished text” (p. 37); this approach is designed to bring about writing skills in learners and to strengthen them. On the other hand, genre approach focuses on the *reader* or the audience to which the text is addressed. It means the writer must select several features (e.g., vocabulary, functions, discourse, style, etc.) and consider who the reader is (e.g., friends, parents, professionals, etc.). In other words, the writer must interact with the reader by setting a *purpose* to the writing and making it understandable. It is a social activity in which both parties (writer-reader) communicate through the channel of a text. This approach is associated with the notion of genre because it focuses on the form and content of texts related to a social purpose (Tribble, 1996). The process-genre approach incorporates the salient points of the mentioned approaches and thus accounts for *writing* as a communicative process.

This study was conducted with fourth-grade EFL learners at a private school. These young native Spanish learners, aged between 9 and 10 years “show a growing level of awareness about themselves as language learners and their learning” (Nunan, 2011, p. 3), for they have started developing skills especially as readers and writers. They need to focus on paragraph writing for two reasons. Firstly, the aforementioned school considers that the learning of paragraph writing must take place in fourth grade. According to its English study plan, students work at the sentence level until third grade. This is based on the idea that “once learners can control the exponents at sentence level, they move on to paragraph-length and then full text-length exercises” (Tribble, 1996, pp. 84–85). Secondly, these learners are in the process of acquiring and developing writing skills; in this case, focusing on the paragraph may provide the opportunity to develop those skills, for its length helps learners concentrate on writing quality on

a small scale (Parks, Levernier, & Hollowell, 1981). For these two reasons, a paragraph is an appropriate means to both developing writing skills and setting the basis for text production.

Learning to write paragraphs constituted the core of this study, and the process-genre approach was the strategy selected to tackle such task. This study aimed at creating a methodology to teach step by step the process of writing, more specifically to write well-structured paragraphs informed by the process-genre approach. This approach intended to provide learners with *knowledge* at different levels (i.e., context, linguistic/language system, and writing process) as Tribble (1996) suggested. The basis of the mentioned approach were the four stages in the process approach, including prewriting, drafting, revising/editing, and publishing informed by the narrative genre; these stages allowed collaborative work for learners to enrich their skills and get feedback from different sources. Therefore, by means of the process-genre approach, this study aimed at providing fourth-grade EFL learners with the aforementioned *knowledge* to write well-structured paragraphs.

To address the challenge of writing well-structured paragraphs, fourth-grade learners' lack of linguistic knowledge and skills to write is described. Based on that, the research question and objective are addressed to orient the study throughout its development. Then the main concepts that frame the current study are developed (i.e., writing, paragraph writing, the teaching of EFL writing, and process-genre approach). Next, the problem is addressed in terms of a context and methodological approach. Finally, the study is implemented to collect data and further analysis informs the pedagogical implications.

1.2 Rationale of the study

1.2.1 Needs analysis and problem statement

To identify fourth-grade learners' needs, three instruments were designed and implemented: a writing diagnostic test based on a writing prompt used in KET Cambridge exams (Appendix A), a Likert scale survey (Appendix B), and an interview (Appendix C). The first instrument accounts for learners' linguistic knowledge and writing skills; the second one accounts for learners' attitude towards writing; and the last one analyses fourth-grade learners and their Science teacher's perspective about the teaching of English writing. These instruments were piloted in a fourth-grade class of 12 learners enrolled in a private school in Chía, Colombia. The data collection and further triangulated analysis were carried out following Hopkins (2008) and Burns (2010). The results are included within the needs analysis presented herein.

The present study attempted to meet fourth-grade learners' needs of linguistic knowledge and skills to write effectively. In this grade, learners are asked to write simple texts such as paragraphs. According to the syllabus, these learners must learn to write well-structured paragraphs. However, they usually use L1 patterns to tackle any writing task. This was evidenced in the writing diagnostic test; despite the background provided in the first three parts, the learners' general satisfactory performance on those three parts (see Appendices A and D), and the structure suggested in the instruction, they transferred patterns from Spanish language (L1) to English (L2). This is, hence, an interference problem defined as "the use of a native-language pattern or rule which leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 294). Moreover, when these learners were asked the fifth question in the interview: *what process do you follow to write a paragraph in English?* (See Appendix C), they agreed to answer that they think about what they want to say in Spanish and translate it into

English afterwards. Besides, the Science teacher claimed that learners normally write what comes to their minds without reflecting about it or revising what they have written.

Consequently, they usually talk about many ideas without following a clear structure, putting coherence at risk. The present study, for this reason, aimed at helping learners develop writing skills and strategies through the process-genre approach, and seeing the effect, if any, this has on paragraph writing.

1.2.2 Justification of problem's significance

To begin, this study might contribute to the broader academic community (teachers and students from the aforementioned school) by offering a distinct method to learn how to write paragraphs. Writing paragraphs by means of a process-genre approach might make learners aware of their active role within the academic community, and might motivate them to participate in it later (e.g., in official writing contests). This is a transcendental feature of the seemingly simple act of writing, for it raises its social dimension to the highest degree, i.e. the interaction that happens when writing is part of a social convention; the discourse community has previously agreed on the conventions and this is how “we know immediately, for example, whether a text is a recipe, a joke, or a love letter and can respond to it immediately and even construct a similar one if we need to” (Hyland, 2007, p. 150). Therefore, the implication of this study for the learning of writing goes beyond the classroom and accounts for the learner/writer's role in the academic community.

The present study was conducted with fourth-grade learners at a private school in Chía, Colombia, considering the aforementioned needs and writing shortcomings. Since those learners are asked to produce short texts as part of the curriculum, they are supposed to get strong bases for what lies ahead related to the development of their writing competence. The implementation

of this study might bring along significant breakthroughs in learners' writing performance at the school and thus contribute to tackle a general symptom mentioned by Escobar Alméciga and Evans (2014) in which "students do not attain the appropriate literacy competences in high school to function in postsecondary EFL academic contexts; therefore, universities are left with the task of mitigating the shortcomings of high school writing education" (p. 97). Given this, the present study might contribute to *prevent* the continuity of the *symptom* by tackling the problem at its source.

Finally, this study might provide teachers with clear goals, content and methods at the moment of teaching writing. The problem with the teaching of writing lies in two main aspects: teachers' writing cognitions (i.e., their beliefs with regards to teaching writing) and inexperience in the field. With regard to the former, those cognitions influence their approach to teach writing (Andrews, 2007); this is the reason why teachers must constantly reflect on their own conceptions about writing and how these meet the learners' needs. The second aspect has to do with the teachers' writing practice which often happens to be limited. The basic requirement is to make professional writing become a habit. In this case, for example, there are approaches that may bring benefits, especially those approaches "informed by genre can encourage teachers to participate in their own professional development by providing them with opportunities to reflect on their own writing experiences" (Hyland, 2007, p. 149). This study might help teachers set a methodology for that purpose by implementing the process-genre approach. This is how teachers might benefit from this study and overcome to some extent their cloudiness with respect to the teaching and the process of writing.

1.2.3 Strategy selected to address the problem

The strategy selected to address the problem was the process-genre approach, for it deals with the learning of writing as a communicative process. This approach, proposed by Badger and White (2000), highlights the aims of process and genre approaches to writing. Process approach focuses on linguistic skills as in the stages of prewriting, composing, revising/editing and publishing (Tribble, 1996). As for genre approach, writing is a linguistic product influenced by a context and purpose and follows three stages in which “first, a model of a particular genre is introduced and analysed. Learners then carry out exercises which manipulate relevant language forms and, finally, produce a short text” (Badger & White, 2000, p. 156). Genre approach comes to the fore by stating that linguistic features are not relevant *per se* within a text; instead, they are informed by a social purpose. In other words, “genre theory seeks to understand the ways individuals use language to orient to and interpret particular communicative situations” (Hyland, 2003a, p. 22). Given the features of these approaches, the intention of Badger and White (2000) was to propose their unification under the term process-genre that “sees writing as a series of stages leading from a particular situation to a text, with the teachers facilitating learners’ progress by enabling appropriate input of knowledge and skills” (Badger & White, 2000, p. 160). Hence, the process-genre approach tackles the learning of writing considering the context and the process required to write effectively.

The mentioned approach provides teachers/learners with a variety of procedures and methods to the teaching/learning of writing and responds to the needs in that matter. Since process-genre approach synthesises the strengths of both approaches, including writing skills and communicative purpose, the methods applied in the classroom convey similarly the same characteristics. In this study, the process-genre approach was implemented based on the

aforesaid four stages of prewriting, composing, revising/editing and publishing, which all together had a real purpose established by a writing genre (personal narrative). Learners were given selected samples (mentor texts) of the writing genre in which they had a reference to analyse linguistically and syntactically in the prewriting stage; this helped them activate their background knowledge, do brainstorming, choose their personal narrative (personal experience), and design a writing plan. The other three stages allowed learners to work collaboratively to achieve the goal of writing a well-elaborated paragraph. Collaborative work included peer review and peer feedback throughout the stages, and proofreading to conclude the writing process. This study investigated the process-genre approach as a strategy to help learners achieve the goal of producing a well-constructed paragraph.

1.3 Research question and objective

This study's objective was *to identify what happens to paragraph writing when the process-genre approach is used with fourth-grade EFL learners*, and the corresponding research question was *how does the use of process-genre approach help fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs?*

Specifically, the objectives were *to provide fourth-grade learners with strategies to write a personal narrative paragraph, to help them identify and use narrative features in a paragraph, and to help them assess their paragraph based on narrative models and checklists.*

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted some writing features centred on learning to write, namely, process, linguistic knowledge, skills, and communicative purpose which are essential at the moment of writing. Fourth-grade learners' linguistic knowledge and skills to write is a problematic situation that has been pointed out by the researcher in the need analysis; therefore,

this study aimed at providing these learners with these key features to write well-structured paragraphs. Additionally, focusing on a paragraph rather than longer texts gives the opportunity to work with processes and structures satisfactorily due to its relatively lower scale and density. Finally, the strategy selected to address the problem was the process-genre approach which emphasises on skills, linguistic aspects and writing genres to tackle the process of writing. The next chapter develops the core concepts brought up herein, that is, writing, paragraph writing, the teaching of EFL writing, and process-genre approach.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The present study attempted to identify the effect that process-genre approach has on the learning of paragraph writing of fourth-grade EFL learners. The focus was on paragraph writing because fourth-grade learners must work on the transition from sentence construction to paragraph composition. The needs analysis described in the previous chapter showed these learners' shortcomings related to paragraph writing, particularly, linguistic knowledge and skills to write well-structured paragraphs. The present study, therefore, aimed at building the learners' paragraph writing skills by means of the process-genre approach. Therefore, it was necessary to define the core constructs in order to set the path of the study. These concepts are writing, paragraph writing, the teaching of EFL writing, and the process-genre approach. This chapter highlights the most significant studies carried out over the last four decades in regards to writing and process/genre approaches, which constitutes the state of the art.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Writing

Writing, like all skills, requires instruction, a lot of practice and feedback to be effective and appropriate; in other words, it must be learned. Writing is commonly called a productive skill that "has a number of conventions which separate it out from speaking. Apart from differences in grammar and vocabulary, there are issues of letter, word, and text formation" (Harmer, 2001, p. 255). Writing also differs from speaking in terms of time and space: writing is characterized by its features of permanence and easy reproduction. However, a bigger difference lies in the way humans acquire the skill in their native tongue, since "spoken language, for a child, is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to

be consciously learned” (Harmer, 2004, p. 3). It is, hence, clear that writing as a productive skill demands explicit instruction and practice to be developed effectively.

There is one salient difference between native- (L1) and foreign-language (L2) writing. On the one hand, writing in one’s mother tongue, as mentioned above, must be consciously learned; however, L1 writing focuses on *learning to write*, in other words “to become better writers and to learn how to write in various genres using different registers” (Harmer, 2004, p. 34). This point of view understands writing as social interaction, and gives it a purely communicative purpose for which all its features stand. It is not just a matter of learning a set of mechanical orthographic skills, but also learning a set of cognitive and social relations (Tribble, 1996). On the other hand, L2 writing focuses mostly on *writing to learn* “where students write predominantly to augment their learning of the grammar and vocabulary of the language” (Harmer, 2004, p. 31); in other words, the most important aspect is the use of accurate grammar in the final product. That is why EFL learners’ “attention is typically focused on the product, or the text, and not on the process, or the cognitive strategies that they use while writing” (Scott, 1996, p. 31); moreover, L2 students may not feel the need of *learning to write* since they can “transfer what they know about writing from L1 to L2” (Scott, 1996, p. 31). This was evidenced in the writing diagnostic test fourth-grade learners carried out in which they generally followed L1 patterns from sentence to paragraph structure. It is, therefore, necessary to reshape EFL writing in the light of the conceptions developed herein.

One of the most genuine and essential features of writing refers to the aspect of process. Whatever purpose the writing has, and however it is written, there is a common characteristic, that is, the process defined as “the stages a writer goes through in order to produce something in its final written form” (Harmer, 2004, p. 4). The steps many authors appear to move through

coincide with four stages in the process of writing: planning/prewriting, drafting, revising/editing, and producing a final version (Harmer, 2004; Hyland, 2009; Murray, 2012; Scott, 1996; Tribble, 1996). This process does not intend to show a linear sequence of steps, instead it suggests common stages present in the act of writing which are normally revisited until the definitive version is done. Each stage adds to building writing competence since it implies a set of specific strategies, for instance, brainstorming, prioritising lists, picture prompts, mind maps, structuring, comparing, peer revision, proofreading, etc. (Murray, 2012; Tribble, 1996). The present study intended to highlight the process of writing in the context of EFL learning so that its practice goes beyond the simple transference from L1 into L2 (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Communication constitutes writing nature and gives it a genuine purpose which must be always considered. In this regard, there are two aspects that constitute the core of writing for a communicative purpose. On the one hand, writing is seen as social interaction between the *writer* and the *reader* (Byrne, 1993). The *reading-and-writing* dialogue is based on the idea that “the process of writing is a matter of elaborating text in accord with what the writer can reasonably assume that the reader knows and expects” (Hyland, 2009, p. 30). Based on this, the writer does not create meaning *per se*; the *other* (reader) is the measure to achieve that goal. On the other hand, writing is conceived as social construction “based on the idea that the ways we think and the categories and concepts we use to understand the world are ‘all language constructs generated by knowledge communities and used by them to maintain coherence’” (Hyland, 2009, p. 34). In other words, writing is a social act carried out within the structures that society has built under the notion of *genres* (Harmer, 2004). In this regard, one key concept in writing arises, that is, the *discourse community* which is “a group of people who have texts and practices in

common, whether it is a group of academics, or the readers of teenage magazines” (Hyland, 2009, p. 35). This study, consequently, intended to help fourth grade learners realise that the reader is the reason why they must make their writing clear and interesting.

2.2.2 Paragraph writing

A paragraph is the act of putting words/sentences together to communicate one topic/idea clearly and effectively (Cameron, 2001). It is commonly defined as a unit of organisation around a main idea; paragraphs then “group sentences which belong together, generally those which deal with the same topic. A new paragraph thus indicates a change in topic or sub-topic” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, pp. 382–383). Working on one idea makes a paragraph stand by itself and shapes its length. The number of sentences does not make a big difference, but it “should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly” (Oshima & Hogue, 2006, p. 2). Hence, the present study dealt with paragraph writing as an opportunity to help fourth-grade learners develop writing skills starting from communicating one idea effectively.

Paragraph structure is shaped especially by its purpose. While writing a paragraph, writers must think of the idea to be developed and the organisation of the sentences that compose the paragraph in order to convey the topic clearly and effectively (Strunk & White, 2005). Paragraphs traditionally have a general structure based on three types of sentences, i.e. *topic sentence* that states and limit the main idea of the paragraph, *supporting sentences* that develop the topic sentence and *concluding sentence* that mentions important points about the main idea to remember (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). This is a general scheme to be applied in paragraph construction in order to communicate one topic systematically and offer the reader an easy sequence to follow. However, this structure is highly influenced by the genre which gives patterns that help writers to express specific purposes (Harmer, 2004). Therefore, there are many

different types of paragraph structure based on the genre; for instance, *greeting* in which exhortation to the reader and sign off are present (Harmer, 2004). All in all, the most crucial point is that paragraph structure serves the purpose of communicating one idea cohesively and coherently.

Connected to the issue of structure, the concept of paragraph unity raises three core aspects in written texts. Firstly, a paragraph must be cohesive to shape its unity; cohesion is defined as “the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 86). There are many cohesive devices to add to paragraph unity, particularly, lexical cohesion (repetition of words; lexical set chains) and grammatical cohesion (pronoun and possessive reference; article reference; tense agreement; linkers; substitution and ellipsis) (Harmer, 2004). Secondly, coherence comes to the fore as a substantial aspect that builds unity in a paragraph. It refers to the clarity of concepts, ideas and, above all, its organisation (Murray, 2012; Richards & Schmidt, 2002). This is a central issue to take always into account when writing; it must be planned and constantly revised before the definitive version is done. Coherence is achieved “by the way in which a writer sequences information, and this brings us right back to the issue of genre and text construction... When writers stray outside text construction norms, coherence is one of the qualities that is most at risk” (Harmer, 2004, p. 25). Finally, register helps in shaping paragraph unity; it “is a word used to denote the actual language that we use in a particular situation when communicating with a particular group of people” (Harmer, 2004, p. 26). There are two key aspects when dealing with register; they are *topic vocabulary* which refers to the kind of words used after the genre is chosen and *tone* which has to do with formality and informality (Harmer, 2004). This study

attempted to bring these aspects to fourth-grade learners' attention so that they could develop sentence and paragraph structures appropriately.

For these reasons, paragraph writing was the nucleus of this study. Fourth-grade learners focused on paragraph unity related to a main idea considering that “a unified paragraph makes clear reading, one which digresses or drifts away from the topic, puts extra demands and sometimes thwarts him in his efforts to follow the author's thought” (Rosmawaty, 2013, p. 40). To comply with this unity, learners were asked to follow the aforementioned structure without deviating from the topic/subject (Rosmawaty, 2013). Apart from this, the genre approach informed about narratives and provided learners with models to identify and use their features in their paragraphs and to revise them based on these features.

2.2.3 The Teaching of EFL Writing

Based on the aforementioned definition of EFL writing, instructional practices must adapt to address the needs of learners as they build their writing skills. In this regard, it is important to recognise the difference between *writing to learn* and *learning to write*. The former tends to be the most common in EFL teaching considering that “writing has always been used as a means of reinforcing language that has been taught” (Harmer, 2004, p. 32). In this way, writing becomes simply a medium to learn a new language through arbitrary and artificial tasks. *Learning to write*, on the contrary, conveys a different conception of writing because it focuses on the process and necessary skills to carry out such enterprise. Thus, learning to write fosters competence, process, communication, and social interaction within the classroom “since our objective here is to help students to become better writers and to learn how to write in various genres using different registers” (Harmer, 2004, p. 34). The kind of activities here may vary between invented and real purpose tasks, especially the latter provided that “the writing task

must serve as a *prompt* to activate students' background knowledge and personal experiences" (Scott, 1996, p. 149). Based on this, the present study aimed at making of the teaching of EFL writing a *learning-to-write* experience.

Teaching EFL writing to young learners requires two main demands. On the one hand, young learners need strong motivation to learn meaningfully considering their limited attention span and "unless activities are extremely engaging they can easily get bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so" (Harmer, 2001, p. 38). In other words, simple and meaningless activities rarely have an impact on their cognitions and seldom last in their memories; that is why, teaching young learners "requires teachers who are proficient in English, have wider training in child development, and who are able to motivate young children" (Graddol, 2006, p. 89). On the other hand, these learners need rich and varied sources to learn rather than 100% attention on academic explanation, for "they often learn indirectly rather than directly – that is they take in information from all sides, learning from everything around them rather than only focusing on the precise topic they are being taught" (Harmer, 2001, p. 38). For this reason, the interaction with young learners must be active and meaningful, especially while teaching EFL writing. The present study intended to take account of these demands in order to meet the writing needs of fourth-grade learners according to their stage of development.

In this regard, there are two formal approaches that have been found to be effective when teaching young learners to write. First of all, the *emergent literacy* which is mainly used in first language or immersion contexts, for learners seem to implicitly acquire written literacy by being widely exposed to reading and text models; in other words, learners are not explicitly taught and they are expected to grasp writing features in a text (Cameron, 2001). This approach, however, is not suitable for some children who need more assistance to understand text structures. Secondly,

the *language experience approach* which focuses on learners' personal experiences to produce meaningful sentences; more specifically, learners work with their teacher at a sentence level by emphasising on several features such as word formation, spelling, grammar, punctuation, among others (Cameron, 2001). Eventually, they are encouraged to join their sentences in order to build longer compositions. These approaches are somehow related to the genre approach, for they rely on models to be analysed and further followed; however, they tend to leave process and writing strategies aside which makes such approaches limited for a wide range of learners. In this sense, the process-genre approach used in the present study synthesised all the strengths mentioned above.

2.2.4 The Process-Genre Approach

The process-genre approach is a term coined by Badger and White (2000) as a proposal to join the most common approaches to writing, process and genre, highlighting their aims and strengths. This idea was, however, foreshadowed some years earlier by Tribble (1996) who stated that “it is possible to see the emergence of effective solutions to learning and teaching problems in writing instruction which draw on the strengths of both process and genre approaches, and do not see them as incompatible” (p. 61). Notwithstanding the foregoing, this study adheres to the idea of process-genre approach proposed by Badger and White (2000). To better investigate the process-genre approach, each approach will be discussed separately.

The process approach helps the writer draw on their skills to write appropriately. On the one hand, writing is considered as a process that requires a set of skills and strategies developed by the writer. This approach “sees writing as a creative act of discovery in which the process is as important as the product to the writer. Writing is learnt, not taught, and the teacher's role is to be non-directive and facilitating” (Hyland, 2009, p. 18). Writing is essentially a masterpiece

designed by an artist called *writer*. On the other hand, process approach focuses on linguistic skills as in four stages:

Prewriting (specifying the task / planning and outlining /collecting data / making notes); *composing*; *revising* (reorganizing / shifting emphasis / focusing information and style for your readership); *editing* (checking grammar /lexis / surface features, for example punctuation, spelling, layout, quotation conventions, references). (Tribble, 1996, p. 38)

These stages are the most common in the writing process. They allow the writer to develop and apply their skills and deploy a variety of strategies to write appropriately. This approach adds to the process-genre approach with its emphasis on the writer skills to tackle writing as a process. Therefore, this study intended to help fourth-grade learners develop writing skills to write well-structured paragraphs.

Genre approach focuses on the reader who gives writing a social purpose. Writing is essentially a social activity in which both parties (writer – reader) communicate through the channel of a text. Genre approach highlights the reader’s role and “emphasizes the constraints of form and content that have to be recognized when a writer attempts to match a text to a social purpose” (Tribble, 1996, p. 46). Writing is a linguistic product influenced by the context and purpose for which is done. This approach brings to learners’ attention the variety of existent genres, which “cannot be properly understood independently of their social contexts” (Myskow & Gordon, 2010, p. 283), and sets them as the models to analyse and, further, follow. Genre approaches provide a synthesis of “language, content, and contexts, while offering teachers a means of presenting students with explicit and systematic explanations of the ways writing works to communicate” (Hyland, 2007, p. 150). This is the direct implication of such pedagogy for writing lessons; once learners get a genre model, the teacher’s task lies in guiding them to

draw on its structures and linguistic features, and consequently to think how grammar and communication become one in the writing paper. To sum up, it is worth noting that “communication always has a purpose, a context, and an intended audience, and these aspects can form the basis of both writing tasks and syllabuses” (Hyland, 2007, p. 152). In this way, genre adds to the process-genre approach with its attention centred on the reader and the social conventions that shape writing and the rich variety of texts.

The process-genre approach draws on the key features and strengths of the aforementioned approaches to writing. The rationale of this proposal states that writing requires knowledge about language, context and purpose (genre approach), skills to use language and the learner’s capacities (process approach), and input for the learner to interact (process and genre approaches) (Badger & White, 2000). This shows the need of including an approach in writing lessons informed by the mentioned approaches provided that each adds important aspects of the writing nature. Tribble (1996) argued that “while a process approach to writing instruction has many positive aspects, one of its limitations is that it does not necessarily address the needs of a learner who has to write for readers unknown to him or her” (p. 57). This is how process-genre approach becomes relevant to the teaching of writing. These authors explained the writing purpose (as in genre approach) within the stages of the writing process and they suggested three different sources of input (as in genre approach) which include not just texts, but also the teacher and learners themselves (Badger & White, 2000). The present study, therefore, intended to maintain this structure and use the proposed approach so that fourth-grade learners could benefit from the strengths of these writing approaches.

All in all, the process-genre approach aims at helping learners develop strategies and skills to tackle writing as a communicative process with specific purposes informed by genres

that social conventions have built. These approaches have been already deployed in previous studies; their conclusions constitute the state of the art presented herein.

2.3 State of the Art

Previous studies of writing have examined the effect of process and genre approaches on the improvement of writing competence both in young and adult learners. Process approach has been studied as to the benefits it brings along for writing. First of all, this approach helped participants develop and use planning and organisation strategies throughout the stages of the process which fostered their writing skills (Badiaa, 2016; Bueno Hernández, 2016; Gashout, 2014; Susser, 1994). Secondly, the use of this approach was proved to afford students the opportunity to interact with different aspects of writing such as generating and discovering ideas collaboratively, exposing them to different views, and giving and receiving immediate feedback on language to make writing more accurate and appropriate (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Rodríguez Espinosa, 2014; Storch, 2005, 2011; Yate González, Saenz, Bermeo, & Castañeda Cháves, 2013). Finally, the process approach helped participants improve their writing continuously by evaluating them several times, developing, at the same time, thinking strategies such as noticing and explaining when identifying mistakes (Alodwan & Ibnian, 2014; Bayat, 2014; Díaz Galvis, 2010) This approach, however, shows a limited view of different kinds of texts and their characteristics, leading therefore to little awareness of the variety of writing styles and little or no communicative purpose related to audience (Horowitz, 1986; Porto, 2001).

Related to genre approach, some significant studies have been carried out for several purposes. They used genre-based pedagogy using specific written genres as the basis of teaching plan for their population. The researchers agreed to conclude that genre approach can be an effective way of teaching writing to students, for it clearly assisted students to organise their

writing with a sense of audience and understand the nature of a text and the ways genres interact to fulfil social purposes (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Elshirbini, 2013; Hyland, 2003a, 2007; Yang, 2016); it also helped participants enhance their writing abilities in content, organisation, vocabulary, and language use within specific contexts and for different purposes (Ahn, 2012; Chen & Su, 2012; Firkins, Forey, & Sengupta, 2007). Finally, this genre pedagogy provided participants with useful models both for organising and assessing their writings (Lee, 2012; Setyowati & Widiati, 2014). It is clear the positive effect that genre approach has on the teaching and learning of writing; however, this approach presents a limitation in regards to the practice of varied writing strategies within a process, for they basically follow models and become aware of their characteristics to be replicated (Elshirbini, 2013).

Finally, some studies related to the process-genre approach and development of writing skills were conducted for several purposes. This approach helped participants develop strategies throughout the stages of the writing process connected to a purpose and audience; this offered them the opportunity to follow some writing steps, to analyse the text models as a guide for their own writing, and to write for a real communicative purpose (Garnica Olaya & Torres Burbano, 2015; Rusinovci, 2015; Voon Foo, 2007). The participants also improved clarity of ideas, essay structure, and features of specific genres such as descriptive texts, among others, for they had to integrate language, context knowledge and writing process addressed to a purpose, audience and social context (Babalola, 2012; Tuyen, Osman, Dan, & Ahmad, 2016); in this sense, participants developed the skill to convey their ideas especially to support the communicative purpose of the writing task (Handayani & Siregar, 2013). Participants played the role of planners, builders and reviewers of their own writings having the features of genre as a constant reference to comply with their roles successfully (Cuesta & Rincón, 2010). Participants, finally, were greatly exposed

to several language inputs which gave them wider understanding about writing genres within communicative contexts (Chang & Szanajda, 2016). These studies support the present research with their findings showing that process and genre approaches do enhance learners' writing competence related to genre and audience awareness and promote their writing skills.

In this sense, the present study intended to implement the process-genre approach with fourth-grade learners to identify its effect in their learning of paragraph writing. Even though the previous studies showed the implementation of process and genre approaches in different contexts, a search conducted in Scopus, ISI Web of Knowledge, Science Direct and Scielo databases displayed no results referred specifically to the process-genre approach used with fourth-grade learners focused on writing well-structured narrative paragraphs.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter developed the main constructs arisen from the study, i.e. writing, paragraph writing, the teaching of EFL writing, and process-genre approach. Writing, in the context of EFL, is essentially defined as a competence to be built; at the same time, it is part of a social dimension which has a communicative purpose. Paragraph writing constituted the core of this study by being the objective to achieve, more specifically, writing a well-structured paragraph with a clear organisation (coherence) in which only one idea is developed. The teaching of EFL writing must foster writing competence in learners and must follow the conception *learning to write* instead of *writing to learn*. The process-genre approach helps learners develop strategies and skills to address writing as a communicative process with specific purposes informed by genres built on social conventions. Finally, the state of the art highlighted the benefits that process, genre, and process-genre approaches have offered to the learning of writing in different contexts and environments. In the next chapter, the methodological design is explained to define

the type of study, the context, participants, researcher's role, ethical considerations and data collection instruments.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

The present study attempted to identify the effect that the process-genre approach has on the learning of paragraph writing of fourth-grade EFL students. It aimed at helping these learners develop the knowledge and necessary skills to write well-structured paragraphs. The strategy selected to achieve this goal was the process-genre approach, as mentioned in previous chapters. The implementation of this strategy was observed through the use of teacher's journal, learner's journals, artefacts, and a focus group interview which were subject of further analysis in order to answer the corresponding research question.

3.2 Type of study

This study was designed under parameters of qualitative action research. The term qualitative implies, according to Corbin and Strauss (2008), gaining understanding and developing empirical knowledge out of examination and interpretation of data. Action research refers to a "meaning construction process in which participants and researchers mutually work on solving pertinent problems in a local context" (Greenwood, 1999, p. 32). Related to learning environments, teachers explore their teaching contexts in which they feel they could do better so that they develop new alternatives; this is all carried out by means of four specific and flexible steps labelled as planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2010). These steps were evidenced especially in the implementation stage, in which the tasks were planned/designed based on the selected strategy to meet the learners' needs; then these tasks were carried out over a period of 26 hours over a span of 14 days; thereupon, the researcher observed what happened throughout the whole process aided by the instruments presented herein (teacher's journal, learner's journals, artefacts and a focus group interview at the end); finally, the researcher

analysed the collected data to reflect upon the effects the implementation had on paragraph writing of fourth-grade learners.

3.3 Context

The present study was conducted at a bilingual private school in Chía, Colombia. Its educational service goes from first step (preschool) to 11th grade (high school), emphasising on integral humanism, values, and academic excellence as the nucleus of the whole education process (Colegio ***, n.d.). This school is part of the Cambridge English Schools (Colegio ***, n.d.), which means, it must adopt the curricular standards suggested by Cambridge University to design its study plans (ESOL, n.d.).

With regard to English language lessons for the primary levels, students from second to fifth grade, the school has established nine 40-minute lessons per week distributed as follows: Language (5 lessons), Reading and Writing (2 lessons), Oral English (1 lesson), and Phonics (1 lesson). Apart from this, primary students are exposed to content subjects since the school offers Science and Maths in English. The English syllabus is based on Cambridge standards for primary (ESOL, n.d.) which are aligned with the standards suggested by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) and the Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006).

3.3.1 Participants

This study was conducted with a group of 13 learners from fourth grade: seven boys and six girls. Their ages ranged between 9 and 10 years old and all of them belong to an upper socioeconomic level. They are in the transition from A1-A2 according to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001); however, their receptive skills (listening and reading) are much more developed than their productive ones (speaking and writing) as they have been exposed to English language

since preschool. Related to writing, they use literal translation as the main strategy to produce written language. This is the method they have at hand and find it easy to follow. As a consequence, these learners commonly experience L1 interference as the basis of their lexical choice and sentence structure in the L2 writing (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Apart from this, the organisation of ideas is not clearly evidenced in their writings; as mentioned in chapter one, they normally write what comes to their mind without a specific order. For this reason, these learners needed to be exposed to a new set of strategies to work on paragraph writing developing only one idea without deviating from the topic and organising the information coherently.

3.3.2 Researcher's role

The researcher's role was to be both participant and observer at the same time. As a teacher, the researcher continued teaching without leaving out the observation process. In this type of study the researchers "collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviour, and interviewing participants" (Creswell, 2007, p. 38). In the present study, the researcher was an observer throughout its development. First, during the process the researcher reflected on the appropriateness of the strategy and selected tasks, and decided accordingly if adjustments were required. Then, after the implementation, the researcher analysed the collected data to draw pedagogical implications and conclusions.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

The present study followed the ethical considerations required to inform the direct and indirect participants (i.e., learners and their parents, respectively) about its nature, process, intention and objectives. This is "one way of demonstrating respect for the individuals involved in a research project" (McKay, as cited in Burns, 2010, p. 36). For this reason, two consent letters were sent to call upon voluntary and conscious participation (see Appendices F and G).

First of all, one letter was addressed to the school principal in order to let them know about the main aspects of the study and to obtain official permission. Secondly, one letter was addressed to the learners' parents in order to inform them about the study and obtain their consent to let their children participate.

3.4 Data collection instruments

The four following data collection instruments were designed to gather information related to the participants' production, behaviour, and their perceptions about the methodology and strategy used to write paragraphs.

3.4.1 Descriptions and justifications

3.4.1.1 Teacher's journal

Teacher's journal is meant to keep a continuous record of the activities carried out in every lesson describing what happened in class. It is based on the researcher's field notes which "consist of brief descriptions in note form of key events that occurred throughout the lesson" (Richards & Farrell, 2011, p. 95). The researcher then describes the classroom tasks with their corresponding reflections placed next to them (Burns, 2010; O'Grady, 2005). This instrument has been used in several studies related to writing (Díaz Galvis, 2010; Garnica Olaya & Torres Burbano, 2015; Rodríguez Espinosa, 2014). In this study, the descriptive/reflective teacher's journal included one entry per session (see Appendix H) describing the tasks and participant's behaviour towards them, how they added to answering the research question and further reflecting on questions related to the interpretations of what happened (Burns, 2010).

3.4.1.2 Learner's journal

Similar to the teacher's journal, the learner's journal aims at collecting information about the participant's perceptions regarding the tasks/sessions. For example, "dialogue journals, in

which students submit entries about their experiences inside and/or outside the classroom, and teachers write regular responses, usually to content rather than form, have been found to play a useful role in writing courses” (Long, 2005, p. 44). The learners’ journals “provide an interesting contrast to the field notes kept by the teacher on the same topic....these diaries are an excellent way of obtaining honest feedback” (Hopkins, 2008, p. 108). This instrument was also used in a study regarding the use of process-genre approach to writing in a blended learning environment (Garnica Olaya & Torres Burbano, 2015). In the present study, the learner’s journal intended to be reflective rather than descriptive (see Appendix I); for this reason, taking the participants’ age into consideration (9-10), the learners were given cues in every session to guide each entry with simple questions related to what they learned, clarity of topics and difficulties; besides, they were given the chance to write in this journal using Spanish or English as per their choice.

3.4.1.3 Artefacts

The term artefacts refers to classroom documents that account for learner’s written texts and exercises (Burns, 2010). It is an effective way of collecting data related to the participants’ sequential work throughout the setting of the action research. This instrument has been used in several studies related to writing (Cuesta & Rincón, 2010; Díaz Galvis, 2010; Fernández Dobao, 2012; Garnica Olaya & Torres Burbano, 2015; Rodríguez Espinosa, 2014; Storch, 2005). In this study, the artefacts were the written work and activities carried out along the implementation of the strategy (especially the paragraphs: draft, definitive version and extra paragraph). The researcher was able to get a means of “tracking student progress, and diagnosing areas for further development” (Burns, 2010, p. 92) to identify the effect the selected strategy had on the participants’ paragraph writing.

3.4.1.4 Focus group interview

Focus group interview is an instrument that allows the teacher/observer to check on students/participants' thoughts and perceptions regarding specific aspects of what has been done, in this case the research implementation. They are a very productive source of information to verify observations and reflections the teacher and students have previously made (Hopkins, 2008). This 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess, as cited in Burns, 2010) aims at asking each person/group questions about the same specific information and then comparing their responses to those questions (Burns, 2010). In this way, the researcher gets different perspectives on an issue, which gives a wider scope about it. To this end, the present focus group interview was based on semi-structured interviews, in which the interviewer has a set of topics in mind with their corresponding questions, allowing some flexibility according to how the interviewee responds (Burns, 2010).

In this study, the focus group interview was conducted at the end of the implementation process and it was carried out in Spanish in order to get clearer and more spontaneous answers from the interviewees. The participants (13 in total) were distributed into three groups according to some common characteristics they shared (e.g. similar working pace throughout the implementation and similar performance in writing the paragraph). Questions were related to several aspects of the implementation process, specifically, workshops and activities in every session, writing process, paragraph writing, objectives, difficulties, and so on (see Appendix J). At the end, the researcher compared their answers and further analysed them in relation to the collected data from the other three instruments.

3.4.2 Validation and piloting

The aforementioned instruments went through a process of validation and piloting. These instruments were presented to the tutor of Research course and colleagues at Universidad de La Sabana to get their feedback and obtain further validation. Based on this, some aspects were modified such as language and instructions since they were not as clear for children; in addition, some questions for the focus group interview were modified because their possible answers were not likely to provide useful information related to the research question. Prior to the implementation, the learner's journal was piloted in regular English lessons with fourth-grade students (same participants). These learners became familiar with its dynamic so when the implementation started, they were already used to writing journal entries. This piloting aimed at testing the effectiveness of the instruments prior to the main implementation and deciding on the kind of modifications that were required to make them clearer and more appropriate.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented several aspects related to the methodological design. First of all, it defined action research as the type of study, whose main feature lies in *context* and emphasis on particular *problem-solving situations*; in this type of study the researcher's role is that of a participant-observer. Then the context and participants' description were presented as fourth-grade young learners of a private bilingual school in Chía, Colombia. These A1-A2 learners present some writing shortcomings mainly related to negative transfer and lack of coherence. Thereupon, ethical considerations were discussed in order to provide the necessary formalities to obtain approval and voluntary participation from the school and the learners' parents respectively. Finally, the four data collection instruments were described in terms of appropriate relationship with the research question. These instruments were validated and piloted in

accordance with the action research requirements. The next chapter focuses on pedagogical intervention and implementation to define the visions of language, learning, and curriculum behind it; further, the instructional design is explained as to the lesson planning development and its further implementation.

Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter aspects related to the methodological design were discussed, specifically, the type of study, participants, ethical considerations, and data collection instruments, among others. The present chapter discusses the visions of language, learning, classroom, and curriculum that support the pedagogical approach used in the implementation process. Apart from this, the structure of the lesson plans used throughout this implementation is presented with corresponding samples to provide a clear idea of how all the working sessions were carried out.

4.2 Visions of language, learning, classroom, and curriculum

4.2.1 Vision of language

Language is defined in a simple way as “any particular system of human communication” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 283). There are no standard definitions of language, but it can be viewed from particular perspectives to decipher its fundamental concepts and subsequently turn them into pedagogical precepts (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Those concepts help teachers understand clearly what language is, i.e. language as system (Harmer, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Tudor, 2001), language as doing things or discourse, language as culture and ideology, and language as self-expression (Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Tudor, 2001).

The present study focused on language as discourse and language as self-expression in an attempt to foster communication through writing. Fourth-grade learners were to write a 150-word narrative paragraph telling a personal experience. To this end, language was the means of expressing their first-hand experiences; in other words, they used language from a functional perspective (discourse) and, more specifically, from a self-expression perspective.

Language as discourse refers to the speaking or writing that “relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, pp. 7–8). This view is more related to the social aspect of language which goes beyond the Chomskyan idea of a complex system to be learned (grammar, syntax, phonology, etc.) in order to develop *competence* as the basis of *performance* (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In this *social* context, language is used to perform specific functions and when learning a language, students are exposed to authentic language and authentic tasks with the objective of using the language for communicative purposes which can be transferred to real situations beyond the classroom. The present study attempted to get learners involved into the use of written narrative genre; to this end, they worked on the conventions and features of such texts to express the values and purposes embedded in the mentioned genre (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

Language as self-expression is strongly connected to the view of language as discourse. Apart from the aforementioned features, language as self-expression involves personal and affective aspects (Tudor, 2001); language is used as a means of expressing personal situations. This does not mean the language system is taken away; as a matter of fact, it is required and must be learned to be able to express ideas/feelings successfully. The difference lies in the pedagogical implications, considering the language system is presented by means of specific functions, communication and the act of self-expressing. Thus, language teaching sets its goals based on what the learner has to do with language and what they wish to express (Tudor, 2001). In the present study, learners used written language to express their first-hand experiences in a narrative paragraph. Expressive writing, according to Briton (as cited in Hudelson, 1989), should be the first kind of writing to be developed since it focuses on individual experiences and personal feelings, which is something learners already know. In the present study, as already

mentioned, the participants/learners focused on the processual construction of personal narratives whose audience were their peers and whose main aim was not related to grammar (language as a system), which does not mean it was not considered; instead, the main aim had to do with self-expressing and bringing their experiences to paper in a structured way (paragraph) by means of a writing process. Self-expression is therefore a key element in language learning as it gives students a sense of meaningfulness in this pursuit (Tudor, 2001).

4.2.2 Vision of learning

The vision of language plays a fundamental role to shape the vision of learning. Learning a language means raising language awareness defined as “a mental attribute which develops through paying motivated attention to language in use, and which enables language learners to gradually gain insights into how languages work” (Bolitho, Carter, Hughes, Ivanič, Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2003). Communication is the way through which this language awareness takes place so that learners develop the ability to use language effectively (Tudor, 2001). In the present study, the participants were 9-10-year-old children who are commonly active learners according to Piaget stages of cognitive development (Cameron, 2001), for which the study focused on learning from a constructivist view with scaffolding and collaborative learning present. According to the constructivist theory, learning is actively constructed by the learners and “knowing is an adaptive process, which organises the individual’s experiential world.... learners do not just take in and store up given information, but they make and test tentative interpretations of new experiences until a satisfactory structure emerges” (Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2005, p. 18). This view was supported by the student-centred interaction patterns promoted in the implementation of the study (e.g. Student-Students more than Student-Teacher interaction) and,

closely connected to these patterns, the seating arrangement established in the classroom (i.e., spots or small groups).

4.2.3 Vision of classroom

Based on constructivism, collaborative and communicative learning, the classroom environment plays a fundamental role to allow this kind of learning to happen. The classroom is not just a physical space where students meet to learn a language, but also a social and pedagogical reality where communication takes place (Tudor, 2001). In other words, the classroom is the moment and the space where “the patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication and the types of social relationships occur” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 74) and where “everyone learns a great deal about everyone else” (Senior, 2006, p. 113). The reality of classroom can be viewed from different perspectives, namely, classroom as learning environment, the communicative classroom, a school of autonomy, learning communities and socialisation (Senior, 2006; Tudor, 2001; Walters & Frei, 2007). The present study focused on the vision of classroom as a communicative reality to foster autonomy.

As mentioned above, the classroom supported the constructivist and collaborative views of learning in order to foster communication. For this reason, learners were sitting in small groups (classroom spots), which helped the teacher disappear strategically to highlight the presence of peers. This set the path for collaborative work to happen in a constructivist environment. Collaborating was not just a matter of sharing a workload or coming to a consensus, but also allowing learners to develop, compare and understand multiple perspectives on an issue in an attempt to justify their thinking and decisions (Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2005). The mentioned classrooms spots assured scaffolding provided by peers in the collaborative

process of interaction (Walqui, 2006), especially when sharing strategies and peer revising their work, which consequently promoted detachment from teacher in the pursuit of autonomy.

Fostering students' autonomy is an ultimate learning/teaching objective, since autonomy is regarded as the capacity to take control over one's own learning process (Benson, 2006). Learners are human beings who bring along a variety of knowledge and experiences to the classroom; in this case, autonomy includes building consciously a personal array of strategies to have at hand when facing problem-solving situations in learning environments (Tudor, 2001). Working in small groups supported this view, for learners got the opportunity to see how their peers, especially successful learners, used learning and writing strategies such as note taking, organisation of ideas, error correction, dictionary use, among others (Richards & Lockhart, 1996).

4.2.4 Vision of curriculum

Curriculum is defined as an overall plan for a course or a programme containing its educational purpose in terms of aims or goals, its content and sequence in which it will be delivered, its teaching procedures and activities (methodology), as well as the assessment and evaluation (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Curriculums are normally designed following specific visions of language, learning and teaching as well as the specific contexts where they are to be developed, e.g. culture, population among others (Brumfit, 1984). In this regard, Tomlinson (2010) stated that teaching and curriculum should be mainly designed to provide students with "learning opportunities that will help them to develop educationally in the sense that they become more mature, more critically astute, more creative, more constructive, more collaborative, more capable, and more confident as a result of the course" (p. 96).

The curriculum is not simply a matter of describing the ways in which activities are taught (i.e. methodology). It goes beyond the mere methodological description, considering it provides the framework for teaching/learning activities in a structural way (Brumfit, 1984). The present study was supported on the vision of curriculum which is designed to “encourage learners to explore ways of knowing, to interpret knowledge, and to engage in dialogue” (Brumfit, 1984, p. 8). To this end, all the aforesaid aspects were considered, that is, aim (paragraph writing), content (narratives), sequence (the stages of the process-genre approach), methodology (constructivism and collaborative learning), assessment (self- and peer-assessment based on rubrics and checklists) and evaluation (learner’s and teacher’s journals).

4.3 Instructional design

4.3.1 Lesson planning

The lesson plans in the pedagogical implementation were carried out following established stages, specifically, warm-up, presentation, guided and free practice, self-assessment and self-reflection as evidenced in the session 4 sample (see Appendix K). These lesson plans promoted interaction patterns based on learner-centred pedagogy and collaborative work. As mentioned before, the classroom was organised in three spots (small groups) where learners were randomly placed every week; for these reasons, the interaction patterns were often referred as *Ss – Ss / S – Ss* (i.e., group work and from individual to group work respectively) and the group work or group sharing normally took place among the students within a same spot.

Each session was carried out during several lessons at the school where the study/implementation took place. Each session had a corresponding workshop designed as a whole unit (see session 4 workshop, Appendix L) which had common characteristics such as name/topic of the session; general and specific objectives; an image synthesising the topic;

written instructions for each activity which learners in each group had to read and follow; a self-assessment worksheet with *I can* statements and examples to provide; and the learner's journal related to the corresponding session and, ultimately, to the course in general (the implementation). Learners got familiar with the workshops and worked on them as a learning routine moving from individual to pair or group work, helping each other when necessary and sharing and comparing their work to achieve the goal of every task.

4.3.2 Implementation

The pedagogical implementation of the present study consisted of six sessions, four hours each and an introductory session as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1.

Implementation stages

| General Aim: By the end of the course, learners will have written a 150-word narrative paragraph including topic sentence, three supporting ideas and a concluding sentence about either a funny, scary, embarrassing or memorable experience in their lives. | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Session | Topic | Aim | Duration |
| Intro Session | The writing course | To acquaint learners with the course objective, to choose the personal experience to write, and to pilot the learner's journal | 2 hours |
| Session 1 | Prewriting 1 | To identify the structure and the language used in a narrative paragraph | 4 hours |
| Session 2 | Prewriting 2 | To use three strategies to plan the writing of a personal experience in a narrative paragraph | 4 hours |
| Session 3 | Drafting & Revising | To write the first draft of the narrative paragraph following the structure previously established. To self- and peer-revise the drafts focusing on language and structure | 4 hours |
| Session 4 | Editing & Publishing | To write the final version of the narrative paragraph based on prior edition. | 4 hours |
| Session 5 | Assessment & Feedback | To socialise the narrative paragraphs and to provide written peer and teacher's feedback. | 4 hours |
| Session 6 | Putting it all together | To write another narrative paragraph following the process to write in less time. | 4 hours |

Each session was planned based on the stages of the process-genre approach to writing:

prewriting, drafting, revising/editing and publishing. The genre approach was visibly present in

the prewriting stage through the identification of language patterns and structure in mentor texts (i.e., narrative paragraph models) and throughout the writing process when considering the audience and the language required as criteria to write and revise the paragraphs. In the prewriting 2, learners worked on three strategies to plan their writing, specifically, brainstorming, mind mapping and story map. In session 3, learners worked on writing the draft of their paragraphs based on the planning made in session 2 and incorporated the six traits of narrative writing (ideas, organisation, voice, word choice, sentence fluency and conventions). Subsequently, learners revised their own drafts based on a writing checklist (see Appendix M) and then they peer-revised them following the previous checklist to further assess them following a rubric (see Appendix N) focused on language and structure (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence). In session 4, learners focused on editing their paragraphs considering grammar, spelling, capitalisation, punctuation and structure in order to write the definitive version. In session 5, learners focused on sharing their paragraphs with the class and receiving written feedback from their peers and from the teacher. In the last session learners were asked to write another narrative paragraph based on a picture following the process to write in a period of 40 minutes. This last session was originally designed for a period of four hours in which learners could revisit aspects related to the writing process, narrative features and paragraph structure; they were originally given 60 minutes to write the paragraph so that they could also self-revise and edit it. However, this session was interrupted by end-of-year activities in the school which made the researcher reduce the time planned to 40 minutes; therefore, learners could not work on the aforesaid pre- and post-writing activities according to the original lesson plan.

At the end of every session, data was collected both from a teacher's and learner's journals. The artefacts (the paragraphs) were collected in the corresponding sessions and at the end, after session 6, learners were interviewed in small groups to collect their final perception on the course. This course/implementation, which was named "Best Story Ever", took place from September 8th till November 16th, 2016 (see Appendix O).

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the visions of language, learning, classroom and curriculum supporting the pedagogical implementation of the present study. Language is regarded as the means of doing things (discourse or functional perspective) and as self-expression, in this case, through writing. Learning is a constructivist and collaborative process which can take place in a communicative space called classroom where the promotion of autonomy is the ultimate goal. Curriculum is the wider support to the mentioned visions, for it provides the general framework that allows learning to happen with specific goals, assessment and evaluation processes. Finally, the description of the lesson plans and the stages of the pedagogical implementation were presented based on the process-genre approach. In the next chapter, the collected data will be analysed in the light of triangulation through the grounded theory approach.

Chapter 5: Results and Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described the instructional design, more specifically the lesson plans and the pedagogical implementation of the present study as well as the visions of language, learning, classroom and curriculum that supported the mentioned instructional design. Language was seen from a functional perspective which is learned in a constructivist way, in this case, in a classroom environment where autonomy is promoted. The present chapter examines the qualitative data management and analysis carried out by the researcher, which in turn led him to identify codes, categories and a core category that ultimately explained how the process-genre approach helped fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs.

5.2 Data management procedures

This study followed a general qualitative procedure, as seen in Figure 1 (Creswell, 2014, p. 247), blended with the grounded theory whose purpose lies in building theory from analysis of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This process helped the researcher analyse qualitatively data collected from artefacts, learner's journals, teacher's journal and a focus group interview. To this end, the researcher gathered and organised the mentioned data in a MS Excel matrix in order to set the pathway for coding based on the steps of the grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2014).

5.2.1 Validation

The validation of findings was an on-going process given throughout the steps of the general qualitative procedure as seen in Figure 1. First of all, the researcher presented the aforementioned matrix with the initial and final codes and categories in the Research course at Universidad de La Sabana in order to get feedback from peers and the tutor.

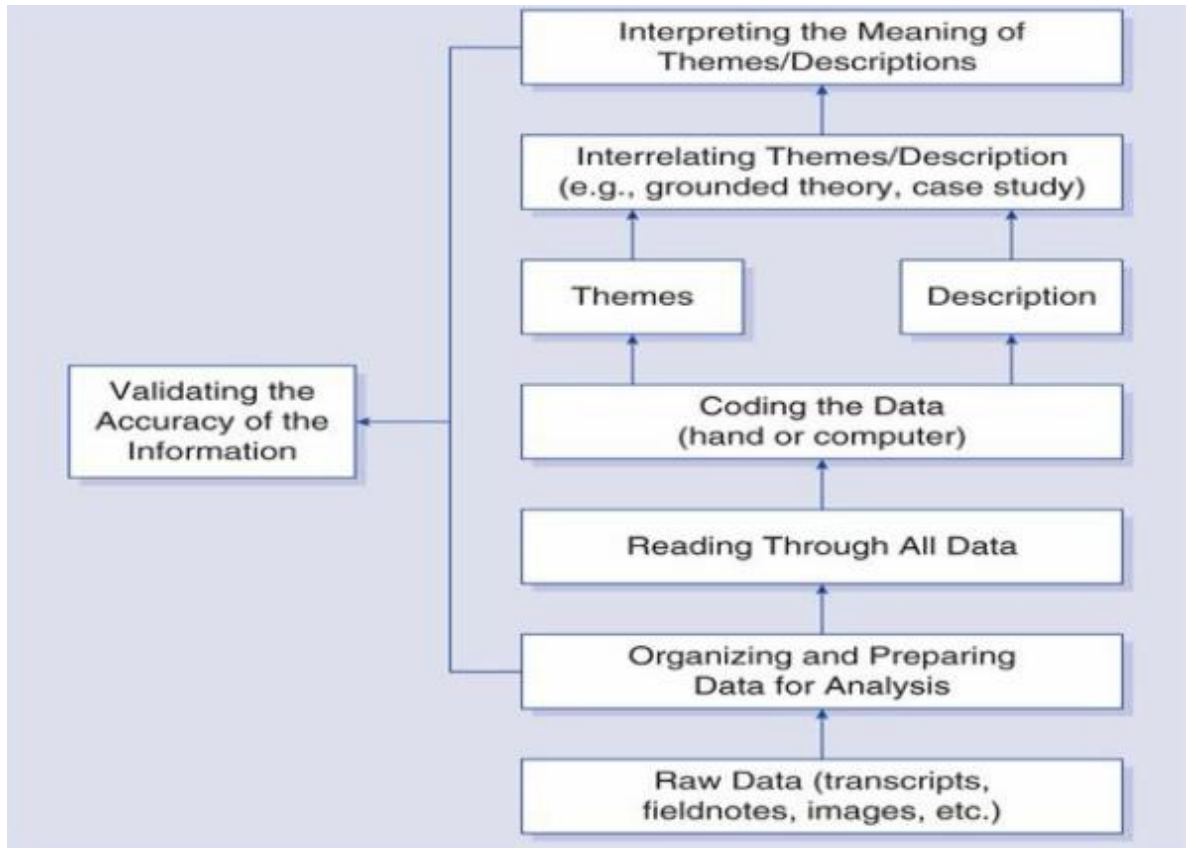


Figure 1. Data analysis in qualitative research.

This peer and tutor revision helped the researcher ensure more objectivity throughout the process of data analysis, especially in the stage of data coding and definition of categories. Secondly, data were triangulated by examining evidence from teacher’s journal, learner’s journals, a focus group interview and artefacts, and using this evidence to build justification for categories and theory (Creswell, 2014).

5.2.2 Data analysis methodology

The data analysis was carried out following the stages of the grounded theory method. As mentioned above, the grounded theory refers to a method that builds “theoretical constructs derived from qualitative analysis of data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1). The focus of this method lies mainly in *coding* the collected data by identifying and giving name to small pieces or *segments* defined as “text that is comprehensible by itself and contains one idea, episode, or

piece of relevant information” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 370). Coding includes three main systematic stages, that is, open, axial, and selective coding which facilitate the process of generating categories of information (open coding), positioning them in theoretical models (axial coding), and finally interconnecting them (selective coding) in order to answer a research question (Creswell, 2014). In the present study, this coding process was carried out by organising the collected data from the instruments (teacher’s journal, learner’s journals, a focus group interview, and artefacts) in a matrix designed in MS Excel; identifying segments to be analysed and coded; triangulating the data to integrate codes into categories; and, finally, interconnecting categories to determine the core category which “explains or conveys theoretically what the research is all about” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 104), in other words, which answers the research question, in this case, how the process-genre approach helps fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs.

5.3 Categories

Based on the aforesaid coding process over the collected data from the teacher’s journal, learner’s journals and the focus group interview, two categories, four subcategories and one core category were developed. The artefacts (i.e., the participants’ narrative paragraphs) served as evidence to support these categories.

5.3.1 Overall category mapping

The coding process was carried out in three stages as mentioned above (i.e., open, axial and selective coding). The collected data from the teacher’s journal, learner’s journals and focus group interview were divided into *segments* which were given names (codes) in the open coding stage as shown in the examples provided in Figure 2.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Learners' awareness of writing process | Learners revising and correcting their own writing | Learners revising and correcting others' writing | Learners identifying writing mistakes | Learners drafting and revising their writings | Draft isn't a final version | Learners' conception planning is easy | Learners' awareness of audience (genre approach) | Learners' understanding of personal narrative features | Narrative paragraphs with feelings | Learners' awareness of writing genre | Learners' assimilation of narrative features |
| Verbs in past easy to identify | Writing process to write paragraphs | Peer-revising is delicate and difficult | Correcting mistakes to write paragraphs | Learners' awareness of writing mistakes | Correcting grammar useful to write paragraphs | Writing models to write well | Getting ideas is easy | Organising ideas is difficult | Difficulty to develop ideas | Difficulties with sentence fluency | Learners' awareness of their writing shortcomings |
| Correcting grammar is difficult | Correcting capitalisation is easy | Correcting writing mistakes is difficult | Correcting punctuation is difficult | Language mistakes easy to identify | Rationale of writing process | Narrative features to draft | Using verbs in past is difficult | Planning and drafting disconnected | Connection planning and drafting | Learners' good pace to write the paragraph | Learners' reflection on the task |
| Writing to learn new vocabulary | Appropriate time workshop | Brainstorming as planning strategy | Difficulty to use questions to plan | Learners' perception on planning strategies to write | Learners using planning strategies to write | Learners' understanding of the journal | Learners clarifying doubts | Learners' different performance level | Learners' good pace to work on the tasks | Learners writing their reflections | Task achievement |
| Planning to write better | Mind map to get ideas | Learners' conception revising is beneficial | Learners' conception peer-revising is beneficial | Extensive practice on workshops | Peer-assessment steps | Difficulties with paragraph structure | Difficulties with topic and concluding sentences | Difficulties with topic sentence | Difficulties to develop supporting ideas | Difficulties to organise ideas in structure | Planning to structure the paragraph |
| Good attitude towards experience to write | Learners' good attitude on group work | Learners enjoy correcting mistakes | Negative attitude due to external factors | Learners' good attitude towards the audience (genre approach) | Learners' good attitude towards the audience (genre approach) | Editing to structure paragraph | Learners' awareness of paragraph writing criteria | Learners' awareness and use of paragraph structure | Learners comparing paragraph structure in different models | Using paragraph structure regardless of limited time to write | Process-genre approach to paragraph structure |
| Learners' positive attitude towards writing revision | Learners' good attitude towards correcting mistakes | Learners' good attitude towards peer-assessment | Learners' good attitude towards paragraph writing | Learners' good attitude towards workshops | Learners' good attitude towards workshops | Awareness parts of paragraph structure | Clear ideas important to paragraph structure | Structure important to paragraph writing | Learners' use of paragraph structure | Paragraph structure is easy | Organising and sequencing ideas in paragraph structure |

Figure 2. Sample taken from the open coding stage.

The colour-coding technique was used with the codes in order to find relation among them and classify them into groups according to their pattern of relationship. This technique helped the researcher work on the axial coding stage in which initial categories and subcategories emerged from the grouped codes as seen in Figure 3.

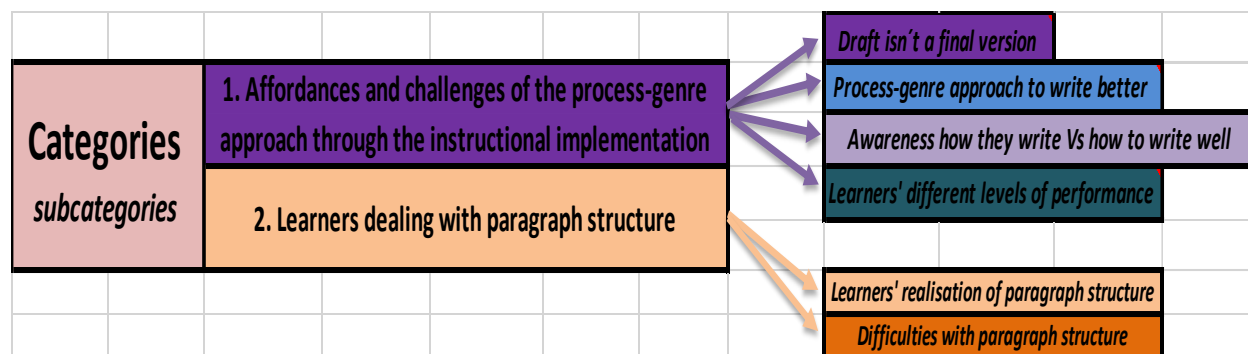


Figure 3. Initial categories and subcategories.

Finally, these categories and subcategories were revisited and refined in the selective coding stage in an attempt to condense the essence of the data in a clear and systematic way. Some subcategories were integrated, and categories were renamed and interconnected based on further analysis of codes and peer-revision in the Research course in Universidad de La Sabana (January,2017), giving way to the core category (Figure 4) which ultimately explained how the process-genre approach helps fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs.

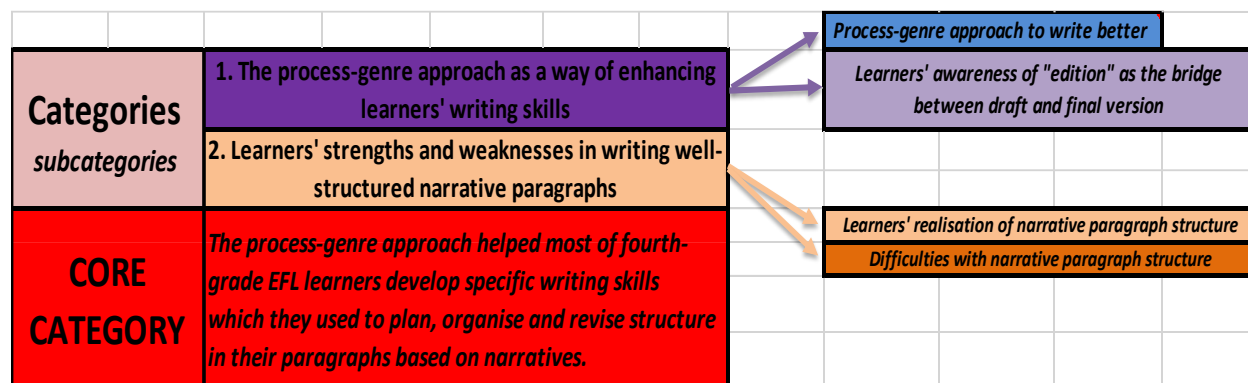


Figure 4. Final categories, subcategories and core category.

5.3.2 Discussion of categories

5.3.2.1 The process-genre approach as a way of enhancing learner's writing skills

The implementation of the process-genre approach to write well-structured paragraphs provided fourth-grade EFL learners with opportunities to enhance their writing skills in the stages of the mentioned approach: prewriting (analysing writing samples of personal narratives,

and planning their writing), drafting, revising/editing (based on checklists from writing models of personal narratives) and finally publishing. This was the first time, participants were exposed to such writing approach which, based on the collected data, proved to be an effective way of helping them foster their skills to use the written language (Badger & White, 2000).

5.3.2.1.1 Process-genre approach to write better

Participants realised their writing skills improved throughout the implementation of the process-genre approach by following a process to write, by following models of personal narratives and by using writing strategies to write their own narrative paragraphs.

First of all, participants became aware that there is a process to write which should be considered when writing in general, especially academic writing. Since the beginning of the implementation, they reflected on a possible writing process model as shown in Excerpts 1-3.


Session No. INTRO
 Date: September 8th / 2016.

Reflect upon this session and write your comments:

Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session
 the writing process
 the texts.
 and the importance of writing

What did you learn about the *writing process*?
 that are some steps that are important to follow.

Excerpt 1. Learner's journal, Participant 7, Sep 8th, 2016

| The Process-Genre Approach in Paragraph Writing of Fourth-Grade EFL Learners | | BEST STORY EVER The Writing Process | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Group No. <u>3</u> | | | |
| Session No. <u>intro</u> | | | |
| Date: <u>September 8th / 2016</u> | | | |
| Guidelines: After discussing with your group, <u>decide</u> together <u>which process you all follow</u> to write texts (for example: summaries, presentations, stories, etc.) | | | |
| 1. We think the story in our mind in Spanish or in English. | | 2. We do a draft in English. | |
|  | | | |
| 3. Then we read and correct the draft and use a dictionary to understand the words. | | 4. Write the text in the final version and then we finished. | |

Excerpt 2. Taken from workshop intro session, Sep 8th, 2016

"This session made learners reflect on the way they write and realise there is always a process to do it. Each group reflected on the process they normally follow to write and agreed on a possible model"

Excerpt 3. Teacher's journal, Sep 8th, 2016

Participants worked on writing their personal narrative paragraph following the process-genre approach which, in the end, helped them raise consciousness on the need of following a process when pursuing good writing products (Badger & White, 2000; Tribble, 1996). Simultaneously, they managed to compare how they used to write and the way this process helped them write at present; for instance, they used to write their ideas as they came without

following a specific structure, but after the process they would consider organisation patterns to write (e.g. main idea – supporting ideas) and, above all, they would revise and edit their writing.

This perception was evidenced in Excerpt 4.

Interviewer: How do you think the writing process can help you write better?

P4: *“This can help us, say, like not to write a paragraph and leave it untouched; we have to follow a process to make it better with good writing”*

P13: *“If we follow the process step by step, we can have better results because we will get clear what we must write”*

Interviewer: Do you perceive any change in your writing after the writing course? (How was it before and now?)

P8: *“As for me, this, ehhhh, my writing has changed because, say, when I am writing a paragraph either in English or Spanish I think ‘Oh, the spelling!’ then I go and check it again”*

Excerpt 4. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016

This excerpt shows how participants could reflect on the benefits of following a process to write, in this case the process-genre approach bringing about positive changes in their writing performance, for this process gave them time and tools to plan, write, assess, revise, edit and evaluate their written work.


Secondly, participants became aware of the fact that there are features and readers to be considered when writing a specific genre (Byrne, 1993; Hyland, 2009), in this case, personal narratives. They were exposed to narrative features and structure in the prewriting stage of the process-genre approach; most of them identified these features/structure and attempted to use

them as a model in specific exercises (see Excerpts 5-7) and later in their paragraphs (draft – definitive version).

The Process-Genre Approach
in Paragraph Writing of
Fourth-Grade EFL Learners

BEST STORY EVER
Running Dictation Paragraph

Vacation Surprise
Jasmine Wright



Verbs
Main Subject
Sequence Words
Adjectives

I used to feel that nothing exciting would ever happen to me, but I don't feel that way anymore. While I was visiting my grandmother in Florida, something amazing finally happened. It was the second day of our vacation. My grandmother and I got to the beach early. I dropped my bag and towel and ran into the water. Suddenly I noticed something huge moving toward me. At first, I thought it was a shark. I was afraid and quickly backed out of the water. Then, I saw that it was a bottle-nosed dolphin. It wasn't afraid of the swimmers. In fact, it returned every day for two weeks. A reporter heard about the dolphin and interviewed me. A picture of the dolphin and me appeared in the newspaper. I will never forget that amazing vacation!

Main Topic
Ideas About the Topic
Conclusions

Taken from *Grammar and writing handbook, Grade 4*. Macmillan/McGraw-Hill

Excerpt 5. Taken from Participant 3, workshop session 1, Sep 15th, 2016

GUIDELINES:

1. Read the following *Topic and Concluding Sentences*. Write the best three *Supporting Ideas* to complete the paragraph.

The Perfect Summer Ending

Last summer, I went to Camp Wilderness. I go to the same camp every year, but last summer was different...

I went to the forest I saw a bear The bear saw me
 And I ran to the camp And the bear was very
 happy to get me. I very sad And the children went
 to one mountain I like hit and I felt The door
 And I went to the mountain to the children
 in the mountain The next day went to the camp
 And very happy in the camp

...Meeting my goal was the perfect end to the summer.

2. Read the following *Supporting Ideas*. Write the best *Topic and Concluding Sentences* to complete the paragraph.

Misty and Me

One day I shop I cats in china I went to
 my house I shop the food of the cat

...Cats like to have a warm, private place to have their kittens. So my dad and I made a bed out of a large basket and an old baby blanket. We put it in my closet and left the door open a little. After that, we left to do an errand. When we got back, we couldn't find Misty! I was very worried. I looked all over the house. Then I searched the garage, but she was nowhere to be found. I was in the yard when I spotted her. She just appeared from the woods behind our house. In her mouth she was carrying a tiny new kitten! She had had her kittens outside...

when I thought more about I wasn't to surprise misty had
 always been very independent

Excerpt 6. Taken from Participant 2, workshop session 1, Sep 15th, 2016

Nickname: FELICITY FOR NOW Session No. 1 Date: _____

GUIDELINES:
 1. Read the following *Topic and Concluding Sentences*. Write the best three *Supporting Ideas* to complete the paragraph.

The Perfect Summer Ending

Last summer, I went to Camp Wilderness. I go to the same camp every year, but last summer was different...

I eat outside in a boat
I cross the lake swimming
I make new friends

...Meeting my goal was the perfect end to the summer.

2. Read the following *Supporting Ideas*. Write the best *Topic and Concluding Sentences* to complete the paragraph.

Misty and Me

I love me, cat misty

...Cats like to have a warm, private place to have their kittens. So my dad and I made a bed out of a large basket and an old baby blanket. We put it in my closet and left the door open a little. After that, we left to do an errand. When we got back, we couldn't find Misty! I was very worried. I looked all over the house. Then I searched the garage, but she was nowhere to be found. I was in the yard when I spotted her. She just appeared from the woods behind our house. In her mouth she was carrying a tiny new kitten! She had had her kittens outside...

I never forget that day

Excerpt 7. Taken from Participant 9, workshop session 1, Sep 15th, 2016

The Excerpt 5 shows how the participant used colours to identify features of narratives and also to identify parts of the paragraph as *main topic*, *ideas about the topic* and *conclusion*.

The Excerpt 6 is evidence of the practice participants did in regards to the use of parts of the paragraph, in which they had to complete missing parts in a given paragraph. Although not all the participants worked at the same level, as shown in Excerpt 7 that did not put much effort in using narrative features/structures, most of them succeeded in such enterprise as evidenced in Excerpts 8-11.

[Participants] they easily identified the main features of narrative paragraphs. Regarding language features of personal narratives (personal pronoun I/we, past verbs, adjectives to express emotions and time-order words), they expressed it was clear and easy to identify. This session helped learners focus on narrative models to follow when writing their own paragraphs. This fosters their writing skills considering they might look for model texts and try to identify their features when attempting to write any type of text.

Excerpt 8. Teacher's journal, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

The Process-Genre Approach
In Paragraph Writing of
Fourth-Grade EFL Learners

BEST STORY EVER
Learner's Journal

Nickname: slad post Session No. 7 Date: september 15/2016

Reflect upon this session and write your comments:

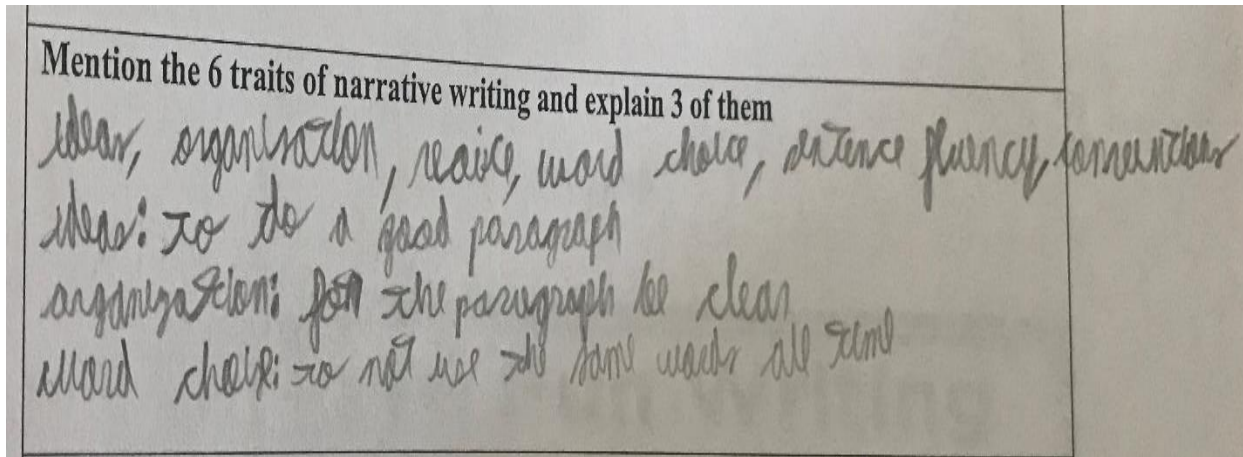
Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session

- ± learn to identify objectives very well
- ± learn to identify ideas to create a paragraph
- ± learn to identify language, this help me to identify other paragraphs

Excerpt 9. Learner's journal, Participant 1, Sep 15th, 2016

Learners devoted time to understand and practise the use of the six traits of narrative writing. Some of them were easier to follow, namely, ideas, organisation and voice, considering they worked on the examples appropriately and could transfer them to the draft writing. The other traits were more difficult for them to follow; however, they managed to use them in general terms.

Excerpt 10. Teacher's journal, Oct 6th & 7th, 2016

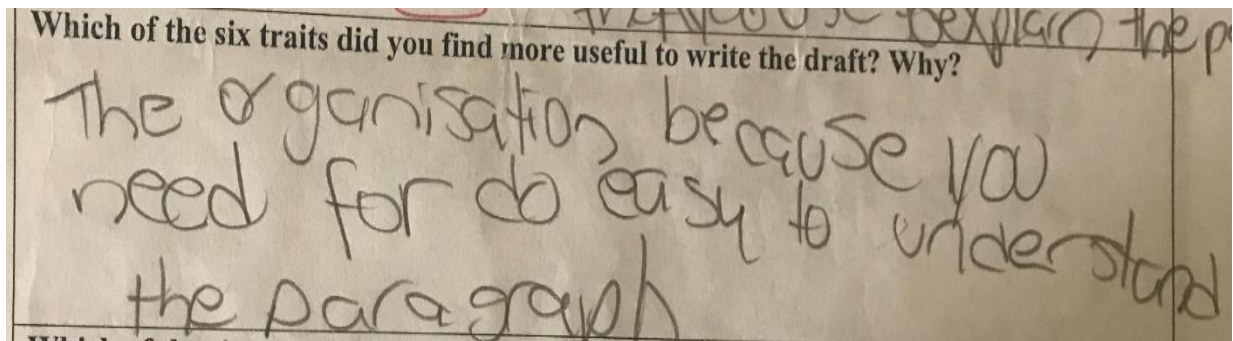


Excerpt 11. Learner's journal, Participant 1, Oct 6th & 7th, 2016

Participants, apart from learning about paragraph structure and narrative features (evidenced in the previous Excerpts), realised the importance of considering the reader as the measure of clarity and accuracy when writing (Hyland, 2009); in other words, they became aware of the reader as the social dimension of writing (Excerpts 12-14).

Learners were particularly amazed by the fact that their peers (the audience) were attentively reading the final version of their paragraphs. They liked that their peers were giving them feedback and assessing their writing. Besides, they enjoyed reading their peers' stories and deciding whether they met the established criteria, namely, clear ideas, organisation (paragraph structure) voice and conventions.

Excerpt 12. Teacher's journal, Nov 3rd, 4th & 11th, 2016



Excerpt 13. Learner's journal, Participant 3, Oct 6th & 7th, 2016

Interviewer: How did you find the writing course workshops? Explain

S6: *“As for me, the workshops help me write good stories so that people do not get bored when reading them”*

Interviewer: How do you think the writing process can help you write better?

S1: *“I think this can help me write better because when we write a paragraph it has to be very well-written for people to understand it; so when we write well and understandable, we learn that we can write better than we already do”*

Excerpt 14. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016

This aspect gave participants a sense of purpose for writing well, for using clear language and structure and for making their narrative paragraph a serious and, at the same time, entertaining evidence of their personal experience; all these aspects carry along an ultimate social function instead of being a mere academic endeavour (Hyland, 2007; Tribble, 1996).

Finally, participants used a variety of writing strategies to work on their personal narrative paragraphs throughout the stages of the process-genre approach. Some of the mentioned strategies were colour-coding, in the prewriting stage, to identify and classify narrative features/structure as seen in previous Excerpt 5; brainstorming, “wh- questions” to guide brainstorming and mind mapping in the planning stage (prewriting); story map to organise their ideas into a structure (bridge between prewriting and drafting) as shown in Excerpt 15; peer-correction based on writing checklist (see Appendix M) and colour-coding to identify writing mistakes in the revising/editing stage; and finally, self-edition based on peer-assessment following a writing rubric (see Appendix N) in the publishing stage.

Learners practised the use of the three strategies, i.e. brainstorming, mind mapping and sequencing through story map. It was good to use wh- questions in the mind map to guide the brainstorming. They could easily write ideas first for the example of a picture (they had to tell a short story based on that picture), then they added more details to each idea and finally organised those in the story map (beginning-middle-end). They replicated this exercise on their personal experience to plan their paragraph. Some learners' ideas were more elaborated than the others', but everyone did it anyway.

Excerpt 15. Teacher's journal, Sep 22nd & 23rd, 2016

Participants found these strategies useful to achieve the course objective (i.e., 150-word narrative paragraph about a personal experience). In general, they agreed the strategies were clear and easy to use in the present written task as well as further written assignments. Not just did they use the strategies, but they also reflected on the benefits they brought along. All this is illustrated in Excerpts 16-18.

Learner's Journal

Nickname: Isa Session No. 2 Date: Sept 23/16

| |
|---|
| <p>Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session</p> <p>Brainstorming Mind Map Map Story</p> |
| <p>Mention 3 benefits of Planning to write</p> <p>That I know to plan my paragraph right. That I know best the topic of my paragraph. And I know to write best a paragraph</p> |
| <p>Which planning strategy did you find more useful? Why?</p> <p>To do map story because you can organise right the story</p> |

Excerpt 16. Learner's journal, Participant 3, Sep 22nd & 23rd, 2016

Activity 5. Reflecting on my learning process
Reflect upon the main aspects of this session and write your comments. This way you can identify your strengths and weaknesses during the present course.

Learner's Journal

Nickname: chechaza Session No. 2 Date: 9/23/2016

| |
|---|
| <p>Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session</p> <p>the strategies : brainstorming - mind mapping - story map.</p> |
| <p>Mention 3 benefits of Planning to write</p> <p>were happened - who it happenet - why it happened.</p> |
| <p>Which planning strategy did you find more useful? Why?</p> <p>the brains forming because with out this we cant have ideasto do mid mapping and story map.</p> |

Excerpt 17. Learner's journal, Participant 12, Sep 22nd & 23rd, 2016

Interviewer: What was the easiest for you when writing the paragraph? Why?

S7: "The easiest for me was working on the mind maps because they helped me get more ideas to write"

Excerpt 18. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016

The previous findings showed how the process-genre approach helped participants write better in accordance with the writing process, the narrative features and structure and the strategies used throughout the implementation of the mentioned approach. They expressed they went back to their paragraphs and further worked on them considering the reader as the reason to make their writing clear and interesting.

5.3.2.1.2 *Learners' awareness of "edition" as the bridge between draft and definitive version*

Strongly connected to the previous findings, participants became aware of the usefulness of the writing process, especially in the stage of revision/edition, which they found meaningful and enjoyable, when they got to compare their writings to good narrative models and corrected them based on a narrative writing checklist. This validated the effectiveness of using comparison of standards in scaffolding writing practices by means of models. This stage made participants realise that a draft is not a definitive version and that they normally submit their written assignments with the characteristics of a draft instead of a final version.

On the one hand, participants became aware of their own writing limitations related to language and the processes they follow. They agreed that they often made mistakes when writing and that they needed to pay more attention to them while writing and after doing it as evidenced in Excerpts 19-20.

"Learners claimed to be aware of the capital importance editing has in the writing process. They accepted they normally do not do it and understood that many of the writing tasks they submit on a regular basis meet the characteristics of a draft rather than a final version..."

Finally, learners claimed to be learning a lot about accurate English writing while correcting their paragraphs. They had to review grammar, spelling, capitalisation and punctuation rules, they exchanged information, shared their knowledge with each other and clarified some doubts in this regard by interacting with the teacher"

Excerpt 19. Teacher's journal, Oct 20th, 21st & 24th, 2016

Interviewer: *What was the most difficult for you when writing the paragraph? Why?*

S7: *“The most difficult part for me was to move from the draft to the final version because I had several mistakes; however, the process we followed helped me with that”*

Interviewer: *Do you perceive any change in your writing after the writing course? (How was it before and now?)*

S6: *“I did not use to include punctuation and did not use to consider capital letters at the beginning of a new sentence or in proper nouns; however, this process to write helped me check what was incorrect”*

S7: *“This process to write helped me a lot because sometimes I did not use capital letters and made mistakes with some words, and I kept on repeating the same mistakes; then this process to write helped me find those mistakes in the draft and corrected in the final version, including capital letters, punctuation, etc.”*

S8: *“I, ehhhh, when I write a long text, I do not pay attention to mistakes because I am focused on complying with the required length of the text, but now I know how to correct it”*

Excerpt 20. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016

The process-genre approach in the stage of revising/editing helped participants develop and enhance the skill of *correcting* writing which requires language awareness (e.g. grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalisation) in order to do it (Bolitho et al., 2003; Harmer, 2004).

On the other hand, participants agreed on the usefulness of writing correction based on a personal narrative checklist and became aware of the role this aspect plays within the writing process in order to self- and peer-correct (Harmer, 2004). To this end, they used several strategies such as colour-coding to identify mistakes (Excerpt 21), self/peer correction based on narrative checklist (Excerpt 22) and peer-assessment based on a writing rubric.

Activity 3. Correcting texts

- a. Read the following texts. Underline the mistakes with colours and write the correction next to them.

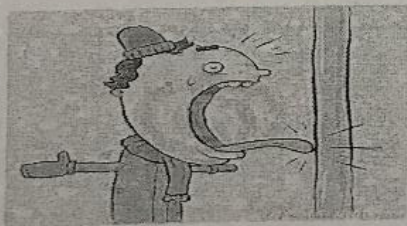
Grammar = Red Spelling = Blue Capitalisation = Orange Punctuation = Green

Text 1

My mom helpt me But it did not work She send me to the haspatal and I Stay on the First Day I ate sooup and on the Secont Day I ate more Sooup and on the last Day I ate pizza and I leave

Text 2

When I was stuck because I got my tugh on a frosen stick and my mom came and calls the police. They put hot water on me and it was so hot it burned my tugh. I learned my lesson. Then my little sister was going to puther tugh on a stick and I whet runing and tell her don't do it because they will put hot water on you. She says she won't do that any more.



Taken from *Grammar and writing handbook, Grade 4*. Pearson, 2004.

- b. Compare your corrections in your group.

Excerpt 21. Taken from Participant 13, workshop session 4, Oct 20th, 21st & 24th, 2016

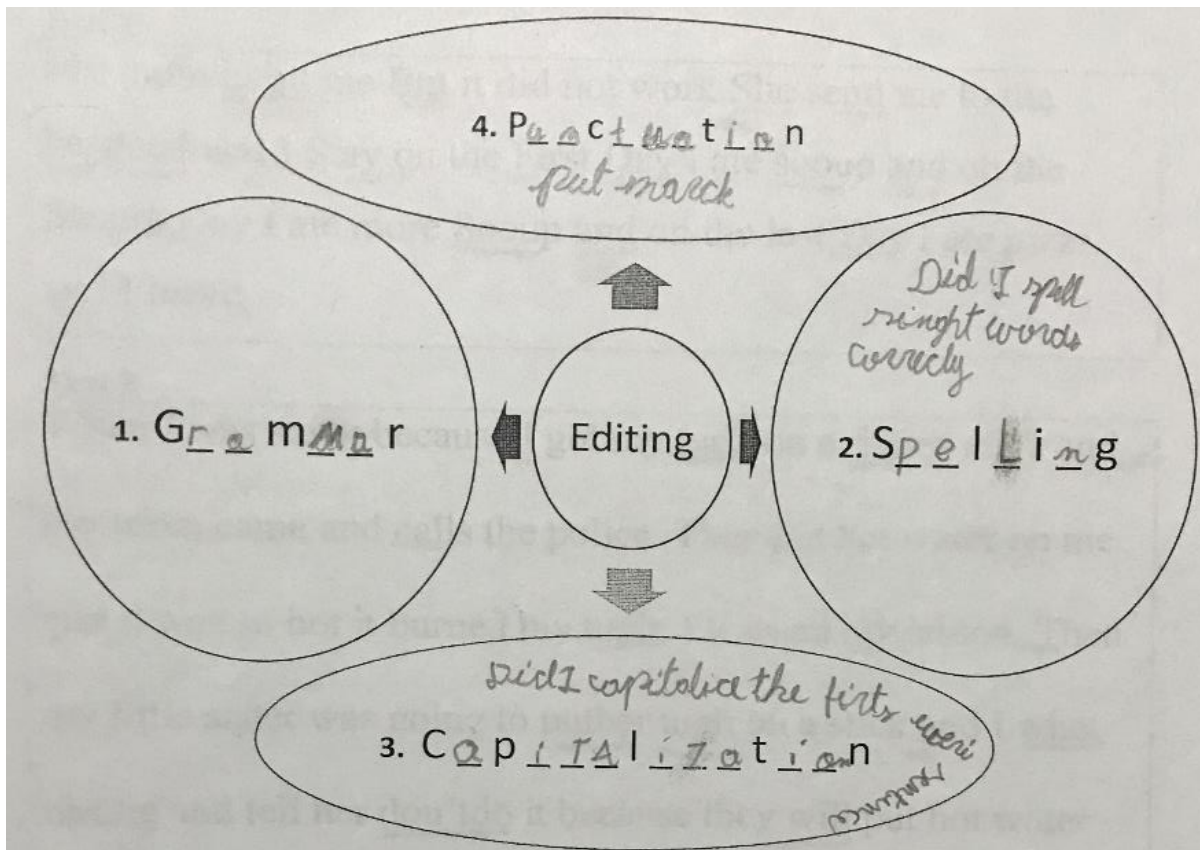
WRITING CHECKLIST

Tick (✓) Yes or No accordingly

| Item | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| The draft includes a good title connected to the <i>Topic</i> | ✓ | |
| The draft includes a clear <i>Beginning (Topic Sentence)</i> | ✓ | |
| The draft includes more than 3 <i>Supporting Ideas</i> connected to the <i>Topic</i> | ✓ | |
| The draft includes a clear <i>End (Concluding Sentence)</i> | ✓ | |
| The draft describes <i>My Experience and My Feelings</i> clearly | ✓ | |
| The draft is written in <i>Past</i> (main verbs in past) | ✓ | |
| The draft includes <i>time-order words</i> that show a clear sequence of events | ✓ | |
| The sentences are fluent and clear when you read them aloud | ✓ | |
| All words are clear/easy to understand | ✓ | |
| All words are correctly written (spelling) | | ✓ |
| The draft contains 150 words or more | ✓ | |

Excerpt 22. Taken from Participant 5, workshop session 3, Oct 6th & 7th, 2016

Participants devoted a great deal of time correcting their and others' writings, using the strategies previously mentioned, and they expressed they enjoyed doing this. It required knowledge about the language, for which they claimed to be learning more about English. Based on that knowledge, it was necessary to establish criteria to correct writing related to grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalisation (Excerpt 23).



b. Based on the previous information, write some RULES for each category:

| Category | Rules |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>grammar</i> | <i>when the sentence are in past the verb is pas</i> |
| 2. <i>spelling</i> | <i>complete words</i> |
| 3. <i>capitalisation</i> | <i>put capital letter in the name of days, month etc</i> |
| 4. <i>punctuation</i> | <i>put a period in the finally sentence</i> |

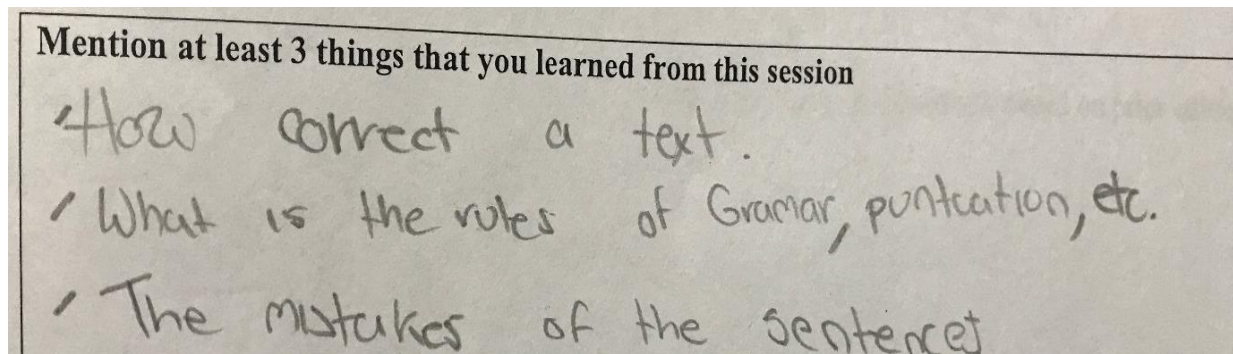
c. Finally, compare your answers with your partners' and complement them if necessary.

Excerpt 23. Taken from Participant 5, workshop session 4, Oct 20th, 21st & 24th, 2016

They were exposed to some input in this regard at the beginning of the revising/editing stage in the process-genre approach and they were also asked to pay attention, when correcting, whether the paragraph structure was present and clear (i.e., topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence). Evidence related to these aspects is illustrated in Excerpts 24-26.

Related to revising, learners saw and experienced how beneficial it was. They indeed found mistakes and aspects to improve when self-revising; furthermore, when peer-revising they witnessed there were more things to improve even when they had already self-revised. These two aspects enriched their perspective about writing and fostered their skills to do it following a process

Excerpt 24. Teacher's journal, Oct 6th & 7th, 2016



Excerpt 25. Learner's journal, Participant 4, Oct 20th, 21st & 24th, 2016

Interviewer: *How do you think the writing process can help you write better?*

S8: *“Well, in this process you write something, that is a draft, and then throughout this process you continue revising spelling and other aspects”*

Interviewer: *What was the most difficult for you when writing the paragraph? Why?*

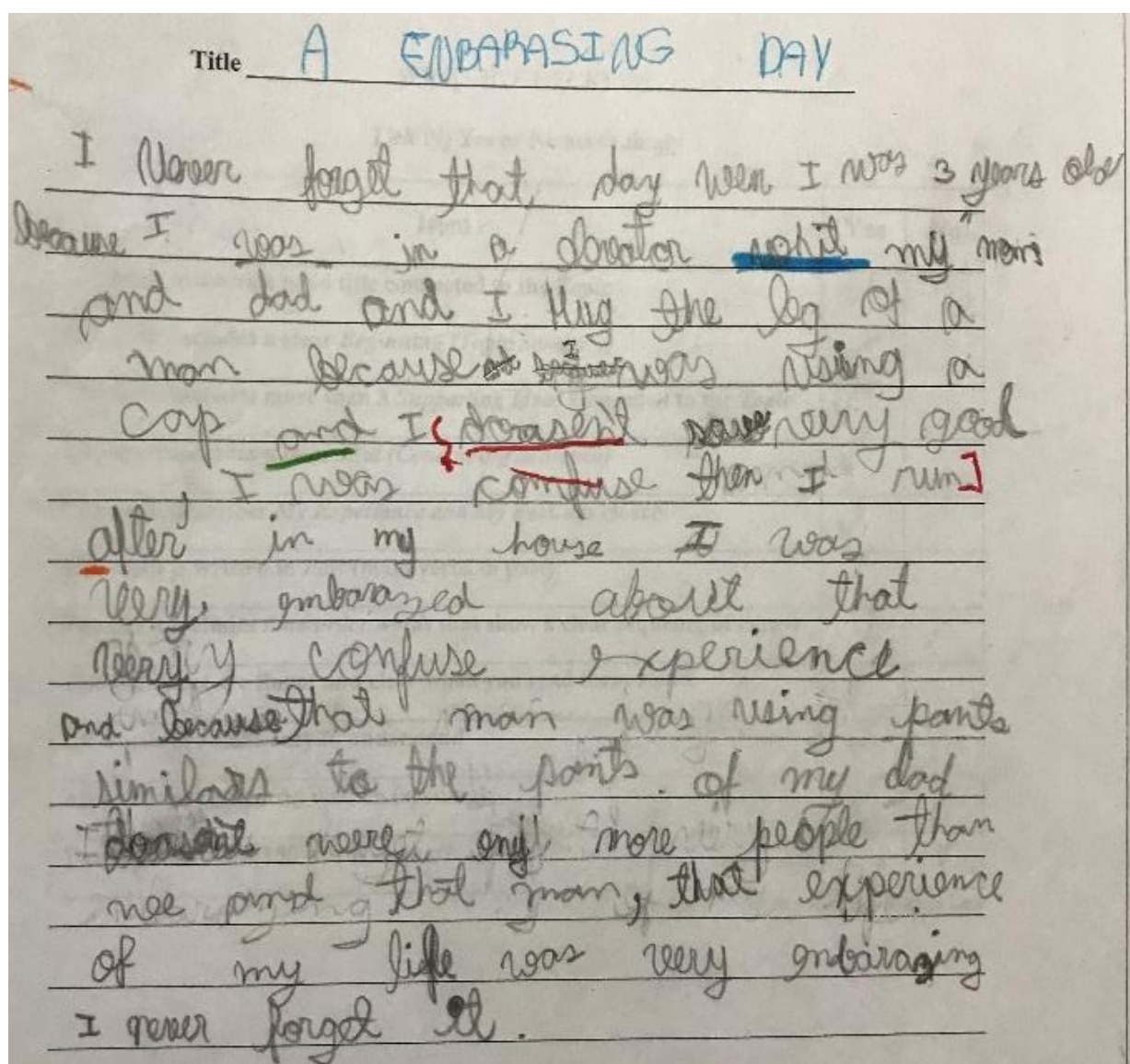
S1: *“When you make mistakes in the draft, the most difficult is to see where the mistakes are; we had to check very well and if we skipped something, then the paragraph would not be as good. That was difficult, but it was possible to do with some concentration”*

S2: *“For me the most difficult was correcting my writing. The draft was very useful because a classmate checked mine and I had a lot of mistakes; then I corrected those mistakes for the final version”*

Excerpt 26. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016.

All participants expressed writing correction was useful and entertaining; however, some of them did not work on this aspect as thoroughly as the others did (Excerpt 27), for they simply

underlined few words more as a way of complying with the task. Although, there was significant improvement from the paragraph drafts to the final versions as presented in Table 2, some of them were looking almost the same, which means some participants were not as committed to the edition task and considered their paragraphs were already edited with the first revision. This has to do with the fact that generally learners in our Colombian context are not used to revising and editing when writing and they wait until their teacher tells them what and how to correct their writing.



Excerpt 27. Edition of the paragraph draft (artefact), Participant 9

Table 2.

Tally sheet based on rubric for paragraph assessment

| <i>Number of paragraphs that meet the mentioned criterion</i> | Draft version | | | Final version | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Excellent | Good | Poor | Excellent | Good | Poor |
| Topic sentence | 4 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 3 |
| Supporting ideas | 4 | 9 | 0 | 8 | 5 | 0 |
| Concluding sentence | 0 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| Organisation & cohesion | 3 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 4 |
| Conventions | 0 | 2 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 6 |

The previous findings showed the participants' perception on writing correction and their general good attitude to do it. They realised editing is strictly necessary to improve a draft version and submit a well-written and well-structured text. Findings also showed that some participants did not put much effort in editing their paragraphs compromising their quality in the final version due to either their lack of interest to revise and edit or their writing habit of submitting papers without processual work that implies revision/edition.

5.3.2.2 Learners' strengths and weaknesses in writing well-structured narrative paragraphs

Participants used the process-genre approach to write a 150-word narrative paragraph about a personal experience. It was the first time they were to use such approach and the first time they were asked to write a structured paragraph (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence). To this end, they followed the steps of the process-genre approach, namely, prewriting (analysing narratives and planning their paragraphs), drafting, revising/editing (based on narratives checklist) and publishing. Three artefacts were the result of this process (i.e. paragraph draft, final version and extra version which was written in a shorter period of time) and they were assessed by means of a rubric focused especially on paragraph

structure, cohesion and conventions as shown in Table 3. These artefacts, therefore, supported the findings related to learners' strengths and weaknesses in writing well-structured narrative paragraphs by using the process-genre approach.

Table 3.

Rubric for paragraph assessment.

| CATEGORY | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Topic Sentence | Begins the paragraph with a topic sentence that expresses the main idea according to the task requirement | Begins the paragraph with a topic sentence that vaguely expresses the main idea according to the task requirement | Does not begin the paragraph with a topic sentence |
| Supporting Ideas | Writes at least 3 details that support coherently the main idea | Writes details that vaguely support the main idea | Does not write details that support the main idea |
| Concluding Sentence | Concludes the paragraph with a sentence strongly connected to the main idea | Concludes the paragraph with a sentence vaguely connected to the main idea | Does not conclude the paragraph with a sentence connected to the main idea |
| Organisation & Cohesion | Uses order words such as <i>first, then, after, finally</i> to organise the writing and make it flow smoothly | Inconsistently uses order words such as <i>first, then, after, finally</i> to organise the writing | Does not use any order words to organise the writing and make it flow smoothly |
| Conventions | Very good spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalisation | Few mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalisation | Too many mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalisation |

This rubric was designed by the researcher for the purpose of assessing the participants' paragraphs according to the main requirements of paragraph structure (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence), coherence and cohesion, and correction of mistakes, along a continuum with column 3 rating as excellent achievement and column 1 as poor.

5.3.2.2.1 *Learners' realisation of narrative paragraph structure*

Participants became aware of the narrative paragraph structure (i.e. topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence) which is intertwined with the narrative features and cohesive devices (e.g. time-order words such as *first, then...*). They worked on these aspects

since the beginning of the implementation, more specifically in the prewriting stage as illustrated in the abovementioned Excerpts 5-7 and in the following Excerpts 28-31.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>What did you learn about the <u>writing process</u>?</p> <p>I learn that the language is very important to write a paragraph</p> | |
| <p>What did you learn about <u>paragraph writing</u>?</p> <p>that I need very clear ideas</p> | |
| <p>What did you learn about <u>narrative paragraphs</u>?</p> <p>that I need to learn very well the structure and the language to do a paragraph</p> | |
| <p>Which activities did you find easy? Why?</p> <p>The language because it things that we do all the time, identify things in texts</p> | |
| <p>Which activities did you find difficult? Why?</p> <p>the structure because I only pay more attention to the language</p> | |

Excerpt 28. Learner's journal, Participant 1, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the structure - language - Narrative paragraph. | |
| <p>What did you learn about the <i>writing process</i>?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that there are times - verbs - and Ideas. | |
| <p>What did you learn about <i>paragraph writing</i>?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that is important to write. - have main Ideas - and is to learn to write. | |
| <p>What did you learn about <i>narrative paragraphs</i>?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that the parts and the - sequence are important like structure and language. | |
| <p>Which activities did you find easy? Why?</p> <p>the verbs because are easy to identify in a narrative paragraph.</p> | |
| <p>Which activities did you find difficult? Why?</p> <p>the main topic is a little difficult because have alot of writing.</p> | |

Excerpt 29. Learner's journal, Participant 7, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session</p> <p>conclusion sentences topic sentences Ideas supporting</p> | |
| <p>What did you learn about the <u>writing process</u>?</p> <p>that have main subject, main verb, Adjective and sequence word.</p> | |
| <p>What did you learn about <u>paragraph writing</u>?</p> <p>that have concluding sentences, topic sentences, Ideas supporting.</p> | |
| <p>What did you learn about <u>narrative paragraphs</u>?</p> <p>I identify main subject, main verb, Adjective, and sequence word.</p> | |
| <p>Which activities did you find easy? Why?</p> <p>In which you need to write the supporting ideas in the text, because its easy for me write this that read all and write only the main topic and conclusion sentences</p> | |
| <p>Which activities did you find difficult? Why?</p> <p>In which you write the conclusion and topic because it's easy write the supporting ideas.</p> | |

Excerpt 30. Learner's journal, Participant 8, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

"Though identifying the structure was not as easy for them, when they were given cues to write either topic sentences, supporting ideas or concluding sentences, they succeeded and got clear that there is a structure to write, in this case, paragraphs"

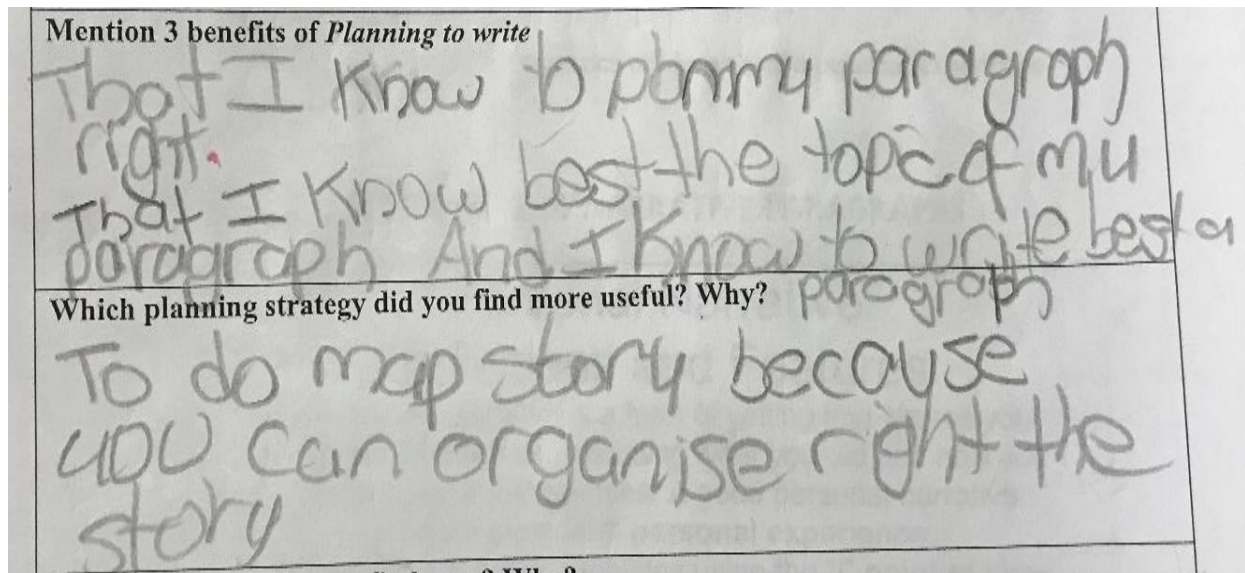
Excerpt 31. Teacher's journal, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

In this regard, the process-genre approach provided participants with opportunities to identify such paragraph structure, to understand how it works and to use it in exercises, which

they attempted to replicate in their own paragraphs. To this end, they used the aforesaid strategies provided by the process-genre approach from the prewriting to the publishing stages (Excerpts 32-33) which made most of their paragraphs look well-structured regardless of language mistakes present in those paragraphs (artefacts: draft, definitive version, extra paragraphs). Some of these artefacts (Excerpt 34) serve as evidence to demonstrate the previous statement.

“The use of the process-genre approach in the stage of planning gave learners the opportunity to get ideas and put them together into a sequence. This was an opportunity to apply previous knowledge related to paragraph structure (beginning/topic sentence – middle/supporting ideas – end/concluding sentence)”

Excerpt 32. Teacher’s journal, Sep 22nd & 23rd, 2016



Excerpt 33. Learner’s journal, Participant 3, Sep 22nd & 23rd, 2016

| P1 | Researcher's comments |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">when I went usa</p> <p>the day I went to usa was the best day of my life... first I went to miami, I feel very happy and I was so scare because I didnt know how talk english, but yes, that was my dream when I have 7 years old. 5 or 7 days later I went to orlando and I felt very good because I went to a lot of parts like universal, that was fantastic because in that park I saw a lot of funny things. I felt exiting because I saw the actors of the movie "Transformers" and at that time I like that movie a lot, but, that was not the best, the best was when I went to disney in orlando and I saw jmicky mouse!, that was my dream at that time, because in that time, I all time saw the program micky mouse and also I saw minnie and all them. then, 5 of 8 day later, I went to new york and I saw and went to the famous empire state, and I learn that in the empire state was recorted the movie "king kong". finally I learn a lot of things and I comeback to bogota.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT</p> <p>Excellent structure. Includes a good topic sentence. Supporting ideas are connected to the main idea. Weak concluding sentence for it does not refer to the main topic. There are several errors mainly related to capitalisation.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">When I went to U.S.A</p> <p>The day I went to U.S.A was the best treat of my life... first I went to miami, I felt very happy and I was so scare because I didn't know how talk english at that time, but yes, that was my dream when I had 7 years old. 5 or 7 days later I went to Orlando and I felt very good because I went to a lot of parts like universal, that was fantastic because in that park I saw the actors of the movie "Transformers" and at that time I like that movie a lot. I saw a lot of funny things. But, that was not the best, the best was when I went to Disney in Orlando and I saw jMicky Mouse! that was my dream at that time, because in that time, I all time saw the program Micky Mouse and also I saw minnie and all of them. Then, 5 or 8 days later, I went to the famous Empire State, and I learn that in the Empire State was recorted the movie "King Kong". Finally I learn a lot of things and I comeback to Bogota.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION</p> <p>Excellent structure. Includes a good topic sentence. Supporting ideas are connected to the main idea. Weak concluding sentence for it does not refer to the main topic. Corrected most of the errors related to capitalisation.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Scare Story</p> <p>The day I were alone in my house at night was the bad day of my life... I was in my room listen some music, and I felt that someone was walking, but in the last floor, so I went to the last floor and nothing was there but, the windows was moving, I get closer to the window and a hand fall down, I get scared but also curous, so I open the window and I discover that was a very weird thing, I looks like a very big spider, but I get close to that thing and also I touch it, but were like a rock, that thing not move. Then I went to my room and I sleep, but when I woke up, I was in a room with weird animals and I get scare but a lot; there was a door, I open the door and I discover that my family was doing to me a joke. We laught a lot of time and then we start to talk how they do the joke.</p> | <p>SESSION 6, EXTRA PARAGRAPH</p> <p>Excelent structure with a clear topic sentence, supporting ideas for the main idea and a connected concluding sentence. Although some errors related to the use of past verbs are present, the participant shows a very good use of language.</p> |

Excerpt 34. Artefacts: draft, final version and extra paragraph, Participant 1

In these three paragraphs the structure (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence) is evident, even in the draft version. This participant has a very good command of English language, as commented by the researcher, in spite of the mistakes made in the three versions and this fact helped the participant succeed in writing well-structured paragraphs. In the

draft and final version, the concluding sentence was weak, for it did not clearly refer to the main topic affecting somehow text coherence, nor did it fulfil its objective of wrapping the topic up or summarising it; nevertheless, it is clear that the participant attempted to do so, which shows awareness of the paragraph structure. This was the case of most of the participants who attempted to write their paragraphs following the mentioned structure, making them look well-structured in spite of the weaknesses present (e.g. grammar, spelling, punctuation, coherence). The Excerpts 35-37 illustrate this aspect.

| P2 | Researcher's comments |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">The holiday in USA</p> <p>I went to united states. I went to 4 parks the first park was universal had attractions to legends the hulk, harry potter, transformers the more dangerous was the rock my mom and my brother went to first line and was very excited the universal park the 2 park was tampa I very afraid the most afraid was upand down, the chitah was the more fast on united states are animals are more atractions very funny the more atraction was the train and you so a animals the 3 park was sea word I went to 1 atraction because this day was the match of Colombia-Argentina the 4 park was magic kingdom had the castle of disney was very fantastic and the atractions was the mountain space and the tobogans and mickey mouse in the castle. I went to outlets I shop jackets balls and shoes was very enthusiastic the malls is very carefully had funny places. The hotels was very fantastics the pools had forms to guitars to balls to pianos and more hotels of disney and was the more holiday in my life and I come to bogota very happy And my mum say we are going in the other year went to usa And my dad my mum had very happy holidays</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT Structure and paragraph cohesion are affected by poor punctuation. Topic sentence is broken by a period. Supporting ideas are referred to the topic sentence and are sequenced by numbers (4 parks). There's additional info (hotels and shopping) which is not related to the main topic (4 parks visited in USA). Concluding sentence is not clear due to lack of punctuation marks and is weak for it does not refer strongly to the main topic. There are a lot of errors related to grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalisation.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">My Experience in USA</p> <p>When I went to United States I went to 4 parks The first park is universal had attractions to legends: The Hulk, Harry Potter, Transformers the more dangerous was the rock my mom and my brother went to the first line and was very excited the universal park. The 2 park was Tampa I very afraid the most afraid was up and down, the chitah was the more fast of United States are animals, are more atractions very funny. The more atraction was the train you can saw the animals. The 3 park was Sea world I went to 1 atraction because this day was the match of colombia-argentina They park was magic kingdom had the castle of disney was very fantastic and the atrations was the space mountain and the slites and mickey Mouse in the castle. I went to outlets I shop jackets, shoes and more was very enthusiastic the malls was very carefully had funny places The hotels was very fantastics the pools has forms of guitars, pianos, balls, and more hotels of disney and was the more holidays in my life. I come to Bogota very happy my mum we are going to USa the other years. My dad my mums had very happy holidays.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION Structure and cohesion look better. Topic sentence is clearer. Supporting ideas are referred to the topic sentence and are sequenced by numbers (4 parks). Punctuation marks were added to improve the paragraph structure and cohesion. There's additional info (hotels and shopping) which is not related to the main topic (4 parks visited in USA). Concluding sentence is a bit clearer, but remains weak for it does not refer strongly to the main topic. Most of the punctuation and capitalisation errors were corrected. Most of grammar and spelling errors were not corrected.</p> |

Excerpt 35. Artefacts: draft and final version, Participant 2

| P6 | Researcher's Comments |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">the scared shadow</p> <p>In 2° grade, all was normal, but all changed in the class room. One day of year 2013, all changed, because pass things paranormal, in the class room, was a shadow that scared my friends and me, like... a glass move and all of my friends screamed and run, was super scared. The shadow was chasing us and my friends looking for clues to discovered the shadow, my friends and my scared all the time, in the classroom were run and screamed, was the class room haunted, History: the shadow was a farmer that lived with they family, but the family died, the farmer had grudges in the herd and he died..., now the spirit of the farmer are run and scared the people. why in this classroom?... Because he died in that part, ok, in the classroom, and he want to scared people, it was the year hunted</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT</p> <p>There is a topic sentence and there are supporting ideas that back the main idea. There is no concluding sentence. There are many errors related to grammar, spelling and punctuation. Some sentences are not fluent enough to provide cohesion to the paragraph</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">The Scared Shadow</p> <p>In 2° grade all was normal, but all changed in the classroom. One day of year 2013, all changed because paranormal things happen in the classroom. There was a shadow that scared my friends and me, like... a glass moved all people screamed and ran, there was super scared. The shadow was chasing us and my friends looking for clues to discover the shadow. My friends and me ran and screamed all the time. The classroom was hunted.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">History</p> <p>Many years ago there was a farmer that live with his family, but a man killed the family, the farmer stayed alone and had grudges in the heart and he died... now the spirit of the farmer is running and frightening people. Why in this classroom? Because he died in that part to take revenge to the people. For this reason it was the hunted year because I felt scared.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION</p> <p>There is a topic sentence and there are supporting ideas that back the main idea. Concluding sentence is now very clear and connected to the main idea. Almost all the errors were corrected: Grammar and verbs in past were fixed, spelling errors were modified and punctuation was added/modified in such a way that the sentences and the paragraph in general look much more organised and cohesive.</p> |

Excerpt 36. Artefacts: draft and final version, Participant 6

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">The scarriest dream</p> <p>This dream is one of the most rare in my life. I walk in a park, didn't was persons, I saw a persons, didn't saw her face, when I saw the face didn't are a zombie, I laught there apocalipsis zombie and is the very big mistake because the zombies is attracted with the sound. I ran and I enter to a house and saw a fet of a zombie and I very scarry. I scare in silence and I find a note that say you was the salvation and a direction to went a camp, I run to this direction I saw people I have food I say and we say tank you. I wake up and the next day tall my friends my dream.</p> | <p>SESSION 6, EXTRA PARAGRAPH</p> <p>The paragraph looks organised with a good structure. There is a topic sentence with its supporting ideas. There is a concluding sentence related to the main idea. There are spelling and grammar errors, but they do not cloud the transmission of the message.</p> |
|--|---|

Excerpt 37. Artefacts: extra paragraph, Participant 10

It is worth noting that participants had to write the extra paragraph in 40 minutes due to external factors related to end-of-year school activities. For this reason, they did not get enough time to plan their paragraph, let alone to revise and edit it effectively. In this sense, participants' realisation of narrative paragraph structure was evident, for most of them managed to include the topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence connected to personal narrative features such as first person, narration in past, expressing feelings and personal experiences, among others (Excerpt 38). This aspect reveals that the process-genre approach provided them with the necessary tools and steps to produce acceptable pieces of writing in the future.

“Learners had to face an unplanned situation in which they recognised the importance of having strategies clear in their minds and at hand when writing. Their production was clouded by the school ambience and the immediacy; however, under these circumstances, most of the learners managed to stick to what they had learned regarding paragraph structure”

Excerpt 38. Teacher's journal, Nov 15th, 2016

Finally, the genre made the writing and assimilation of structure easier, for participants had to write about a topic they knew very well, that is, their own experience. The process-genre approach then provided them with tools to organise their ideas about their experience so that they could fit into a well-structured narrative paragraph (Excerpt 39 shows evidence about this). Therefore, genre constitutes a cornerstone in the process of writing, moreover in learning to write, for this aspect situates the writer on the right path according to the reader's characteristics and contextualises the writing in accordance with the objective it wants to achieve.

Interviewer: *What was the easiest for you when writing the paragraph? Why?*

S2: *“The easiest for me was to remember my experience and then what I imagined and felt in that experience. The structure was also easy for me”*

S1: *“Yes, for example when you gave us an image and asked us to write a paragraph about it, it was more difficult because we had not experienced that. That is why, in the paragraph about our experience we could write more ideas”*

Interviewer: *Do you perceive any change in your writing after the writing course? (How was it before and now?)*

S1: *“When I had to write a paragraph or a text, I used to write the first things that came to my mind, but now, with this process, I organise each idea, each part, what comes in the first part, in the first lines; it is more difficult, but it makes it better”*

S3: *“I used to write what it came to my mind, but now with this process I can organise my ideas more appropriately”*

Excerpt 39. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016

The previous findings showed the participants’ realisation and use of narrative paragraph structure as the main strength of the process-genre approach in relation to the objective of the present study, i.e. to identify what happens to paragraph writing when this approach is used with fourth-grade EFL learners. Most of the participants managed to include the narrative paragraph structure in their writings in spite of limitations related to language and coherence.

5.3.2.2.2 *Difficulties with narrative paragraph structure*

At the beginning of the implementation, some participants were having difficulties related to parts of the paragraph as seen in Excerpt 40. The terminology was perhaps ambiguous. It was after they were exposed to narrative paragraph models that they grasped the nature of the parts of paragraph structure.

Some of them expressed to have still some doubts about the structure, especially topic sentence and supporting ideas. They were getting confused with the word topic and related it to the paragraph title.

By the end, however, they could find relation between topic and the kind of experience they will write about (i.e. funny, scary, embarrassing or memorable).

Excerpt 40. Teacher's journal, Sep 12th & 15th, 2016

The main difficulty, however, had to do with some participants' attitude towards continuously working on organising and editing their paragraph. They had to develop ideas to further sequence them into organisation patterns (paragraph structure) and, simultaneously, had to pay attention to language aspects such as grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalisation. Since the nature of the process-genre approach lies in constantly revising one's own writing compared to specific models in an attempt to improve it again and again until the final version is done, some of these young participants must have found this lengthy process as "endless" and, therefore, meaningless. They lost interest and decided to comply with the task submission without putting much effort in the process. This difficulty was evidenced in some of their perceptions as well as some of their artefacts shown in Excerpts 41-44.

Interviewer: How did you find the writing course workshops? Explain

S4: *"Some of them were a bit lengthy, but still we learned a lot"*

S11: *"It was fun, but a bit lengthy"*

Interviewer: What was the most difficult for you when writing the paragraph? Why?

S10: *"I think writing the paragraph was tough because, for example, you wrote something, but then you had to do something else, then you had to refine, then it happened that words were not enough; thus, refining and writing the topic sentence and ideas turned to be very difficult"*

Excerpt 41. Translated from Focus Group Interview, Nov 16th, 2016.

| P10 | Researcher's comments |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">The accident</p> <p>This was a normal day, bad is a day sad and scarry... there was a beutiful day, I played with my friend in a handsdrail in a moment Juanjo is fall and coul'n'd not brathe, the teacher put in a stretcher and went to the nursery I went to the class of math, I Thing that he were paralytic. I see the clock and the seconds were minuts and the minuts were hours and the hours were days, 1 hour later the mum of Juanjo went to the doctor, her were good bad have backage, three weeks later we crash the head and put 4 steches !AHH JUANJO! The next day didn't went to the school and have a tread blue.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT</p> <p>There is a topic sentence. The few supporting ideas vaguely back the main idea. There is no concluding sentence. The paragraph is not clearly organised and at some point deviates from the main topic. There are many grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">The accident</p> <p>This was a normal day, but is a sad and scarry day... there was a beautiful and fun day, I played with my friend in a handsdrail in a moment Juanjo is fall and coul'n'd not braithe, a teacher put in a stretcher and went to the nursery I went to class of math, I thing that he were paralytic, I see the clock and the minuts are hours the hours are days, 1 hour later, I go to class of arts, Juan are walk with he mum, are good, but have backage, three weeks later we crash the head and put 4 streches !AHH JUANJOj, the next day didn't went to the school and have tread blue.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION</p> <p>There are not significant changes in this version compared to the draft.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">The scarriest dream</p> <p>This dream is one of the most rare in my life. I walk in a park, didn't was persons, I saw a persons, didn't saw her face, when I saw the face didn't are a zombie, I laught there apocalipsis zombie and is the very big mistake because the zombies is attracted with the sound. I ran and I enter to a house and saw a fet of a zombie and I very scarry. I scare in silence and I find a note that say you was the salvation and a direction to went a camp, I run to this direction I saw people I have food I say and we say tank you. I wake up and the next day tall my friends my dream.</p> | <p>SESSION 6, EXTRA PARAGRAPH</p> <p>The paragraph looks organised with a good structure. There is a topic sentence with its supporting ideas. There is a concluding sentence related to the main idea. There are spelling and grammar errors, but they do not cloud the transmission of the message.</p> |

Excerpt 42. Artefacts: draft, final version and extra paragraph, Participant 10

| P11 | Researcher's comments |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Picilago</p> <p>The happiest day of my life was when I go to picilago. I go to the zoo of picilago I see fishes, chiguiros, cocodriles, ostrics, etc... I enter to the slides only I dont enter to the megaslide because in that moment I has 125 cm and I nedded 130 cm. ah in that moment I has 9 years old, my sisters, my mom and my dad go to. it was awesome I loved.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT There is a topic sentence. The few supporting ideas are limited to mentioning some aspects of the experience. The concluding sentence is very vague. The paragraph in general is very short and does not provide a deep view on the experience according to the task objective. There are very few errors.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Picilago</p> <p>The happiest day of my life was when I go to picilago. That day I go whit my family, that day was awesome. I went to the zoo of picilago is very big and I saw cocodriles, ostrics, fishes, etc. and I enter to the slides only I don't enter to the megaslide because I haved 125 cm and I nedded 130 cm to enter to megaslide.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION There are not significant changes compared to the draft version. On the contrary, some parts at the end were omitted and became a setback</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">a scare day</p> <p>When I go to house I saw a zombie. I enter to my room I ran in circles and I saw a ear because the zombie was in the door later I ran to saw the window and was a lot of zombies later I saw that was a joke that do my friends that day I do a joke that I was a ghost and my friends was scares was awesome.</p> | <p>SESSION 6, EXTRA PARAGRAPH There is no clear topic sentence nor a concluding one. The body of the paragraph is limited to mention some information; the paragraph lacks expressiveness. There are few errors related to grammar and punctuation.</p> |

Excerpt 43. Artefacts: draft, final version and extra paragraph, Participant 11

| P13 | Researcher's comments |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">the scariest night mare</p> <p>I went to slepp I is wreid a nightmare. 4 years ago I was in the startroom waching TV when a sound of glass bracken, I go to my bedroom and a rat toy attack me. I run in all my house, stairs, studio, kitchen, staff room, my dad's room, uncles room, invitates room, balcony, etc. I was allong in my house and I run like 5 minutes, heart beat speed up and I were very dry. when I go out I am alone, I go to my garden, then to the park and I get out of the Joint I was very scaried because I could get lost. I were in the street Running to anywhere I cant go. where I were runing I feel down to a river. My mum get me up, I was very scaried. today is a silly thing.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, DRAFT</p> <p>There is no topic sentence. The main idea is given by the title. The supporting ideas are somehow organised, but there are many grammar, spelling and punctuation errors that make some sentences flaw. The concluding sentence is very vague and not appropriate.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">the scariest nightmare</p> <p>4 years ago I went to slepp I had a nightmare. I was in the startroom waching TV when a sound of glass broken, I go to my bedroom and a rat toy attack me. I run in all my house, stairs, studio, kitchen, staff room, my dad's room, uncles room, invitates room, balcony, etc. I was allong in my house and universe. I run like 5 minutes, my heart beat speed up and I were very dry. When I went out I am allone, I went to my garden, then to the park and I get out of my joint, I was very scaried because I could get lost. I were in the street running to any were I can go. Where I were running I felt down to a river. My mum get me up, I was very scaried. today is a silly thing.</p> | <p>MAIN PARAGRAPH, FINAL VERSION</p> <p>There are not significant changes in this version compared to the draft.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">the paranormal night</p> <p>One night I saw a pair of hands flying and I get scaried, I run to my mum I dint found my mum I scaried more and more, the hands follow me, I dosent understand anythin and the hands here grey and the (muñeca) has bones it has like all cut the hand in here said. My mum get up of my dream. I was very scaried.</p> | <p>SESSION 6, EXTRA PARAGRAPH</p> <p>This text is very limited, for it simply mentions some aspects about the topic. There is no topic sentence. The body of the text is very short and it looks very simple. There is a concluding sentence somehow related to the topic. There are very serious errors related to grammar, spelling and punctuation that make the text confusing. The text does not meet the criteria to be considered as a paragraph according to the task objective.</p> |

Excerpt 44. Artefacts: draft, final version and extra paragraph, Participant 13

These artefacts show that there was not much effort to improve, especially from the draft to the final version. In the case of Excerpt 42, the participant did not make significant changes in

the final version compared to the draft; however, the extra paragraph which was written in 40 minutes looks much better with respect to coherence and structure. This fact adds to the aforesaid statement related to the length of the process to write the paragraph.

Finally, lack of punctuation happened to play a key role in some of the participants' paragraphs (Excerpt 42). As mentioned above, paragraph structure was evident in most of the paragraphs; however, lack of punctuation somehow clouded this and affected text cohesion and coherence. Participants were not sufficiently exposed to instruction and practice about the use of punctuation, for the implementation was strongly focused on making participants aware of structure and narrative features; besides, the language to be used in the paragraphs emphasised more on grammar and spelling. For this reason, participants were not fully aware of the key role punctuation plays in writing clearly and cohesively.

The previous findings, thus, accounted for the difficulties participants faced related to paragraph structure. There were some misunderstandings at the beginning in relation to terminology. However, the main difficulty lied in the attitude from some participants who found the whole process lengthy; they appeared to put little effort in the pursuit of improving their paragraphs. Finally, punctuation was weak in general terms and this fact somehow affected some of the participants' paragraphs in terms of cohesion and coherence.

5.3.3 Core category

The analysis of the collected data allowed the researcher to start coding and categorising to condense the essence of the mentioned data. Thereupon, the researcher integrated those categories giving way to the core category which answered the research question. Hence, to the question "*how does the use of process-genre approach help fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs?*" the analysed data provided evidence to state that *the process-*

genre approach helped most of fourth-grade EFL learners develop specific writing skills which they used to plan, organise and revise structure in their paragraphs based on narratives. The implementation of the process-genre approach helped these participants understand and follow a process to write, in which a set of strategies were used, and narrative features were identified and considered as models to both write the paragraphs and constantly revise them. Participants developed writing skills such as audience awareness, use of mentor texts (narratives), colour-coding, development and organisation of ideas and error-correction (self/peer-correction). These skills, first, helped them become aware of the narrative paragraph structure (i.e., topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence) and use it in their own paragraphs. Secondly, the mentioned skills helped them put their ideas and narrative features/structure together; more specifically, the reference to mentor texts and the audience awareness helped them organise their ideas in the suggested structure with the characteristics of personal narratives (first person, personal experience narrated in past, conveying emotions and feelings). Finally, the error-correction skill helped most of the participants revise their and others' paragraphs several times in order to correct (based on a narrative checklist and rubric) language mistakes and unclear structure prior to submission of the final version. All these aspects are the result of working under the conception of learning to write instead of writing to learn as explained in chapter 2. In this way, the present study made fourth-grade students focus on learning the necessary skills and aspects required to improve the quality and structure of their paragraph writing.

5.4 Conclusion

The present chapter highlighted the results of the data analysis process which was carried out following a general qualitative procedure blended with the grounded theory method. This procedure led the researcher to organise the collected data, divide them into segments to be

further coded (open coding), group the codes into categories and subcategories (axial coding) and integrate them to draw the core category which answered the present research question. The results showed that the process-genre approach helped fourth-grade EFL learners develop specific skills to plan, organise and revise paragraph structure based on narratives. These participants became aware of the writing process considering the narrative genre and the audience which ultimately gave them a purpose to write, revise and improve their paragraphs in terms of language, genre and structure. Finally, the participants realised there is a paragraph structure whose purpose lies in making it clear and understandable for the reader and attempted to replicate that structure in their own paragraphs. The next chapter focuses on interpretation and significance of results, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

6.1 Introduction

The present study aimed at identifying what happens to paragraph writing when the process-genre approach is used with fourth-grade EFL learners. Based on the results presented in the previous chapter, it is evident that the process-genre approach helped most of these participants write well-structured paragraphs, for they realised there is a process to write in which they can use a set of strategies to achieve the writing goal. They also realised there are genres, in this case narratives, with specific characteristics that must be considered when planning, revising and correcting their writing; apart from this, they acknowledged the importance of the audience which gave an ultimate purpose to their writings. Finally, they realised there is a structure that helps paragraphs be clearer for the reader. This chapter focuses on the significance and pedagogical implications of the mentioned results.

6.2 Comparison of results with previous studies' results

First of all, participants became aware of the writing process with prewriting, drafting, revising/editing and publishing (Badger & White, 2000) in which the narrative genre transversally played a significant role as mentor text to identify language features and structure and as criterion to revise, edit and assess participants' paragraphs. In this regard, the present study validated previous studies which showed that the features of a given genre provide a strong sense of direction and purpose to the writing throughout the stages of the writing process (Cuesta & Rincón, 2010), serving both as models for instruction and tools for assessment (Lee, 2012) and providing explanations of the way language works in social contexts (Setyowati & Widiati, 2014). At the same time, these participants became aware of the audience/reader as the main purpose for their writing (Hyland, 2003a, 2007) and the motivation to constantly correct and

improve their paragraphs so that they were clear and interesting for their peers (the audience). Previous studies also evidenced this core aspect more related to writing genres in which participants feel more committed to a purposeful writing with a sense of audience (Elshirbini, 2013; Tuyen et al., 2016; Voon Foo, 2007) for whom they make efforts to communicate clear and interesting ideas in their writings (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Handayani & Siregar, 2013).

Secondly, participants benefited from a set of writing strategies throughout the stages of the process-genre approach which they used to analyse narratives, plan their paragraphs, organise their ideas into the paragraph structure (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence), revise for identifying language and structure problems based on narrative samples and a narrative checklist, correct mistakes related to language and structure based on same narrative tools and, subsequently, publish their final version. Correspondingly, previous studies accounted for the benefits process-genre approach brings along related to the development and use of writing strategies in the course of the process to write (Badiaa, 2016; Garnica Olaya & Torres Burbano, 2015; Gashout, 2014; Rusinovci, 2015; Susser, 1994; Voon Foo, 2007). Some of these strategies were collaborative writing (Fernández Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2005, 2011), planning strategies, organisation of ideas and peer-feedback (Bueno Hernández, 2016), varied organisation patterns according to different purposes (Ahn, 2012), constant revision, correction and evaluation (Alodwan & Ibnian, 2014; Bayat, 2014) and peer-edition in which high achiever participants promoted zones of proximal development by providing linguistic scaffolding to empower low achievers; consequently, this led to use thinking strategies such as noticing and explaining when identifying written mistakes (Díaz Galvis, 2010).

Finally, participants realised there is a paragraph structure which has a linguistic as well as social purpose (i.e., to make a paragraph the clearest possible for the audience); in other

words, coherent and cohesive (Harmer, 2004). Likewise, previous studies highlighted the usefulness of the writing process to help learners build well-written (grammatical cohesion) and well-structured paragraphs in an attempt to make them comprehensible for the purpose of the corresponding tasks (Bueno Hernández, 2016; Rodríguez Espinosa, 2014).

6.3 Significance of the results

First of all, this study demonstrated to contribute to the broader academic community, for it engaged most of the participants in the active role of writing for communicative purposes. In this case, participants became aware of the audience and the features of genre (narratives) through a writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising/editing and publishing). This is a core aspect that gives a sense of transcendence to writing and helps learners become writers beyond the classroom, writers who perceive writing as a means of social communication and a writer-reader dialogue (Byrne, 1993; Hyland, 2007; Tribble, 1996), writers who use writing as a tool to participate in social academic contexts and not as a mere academic task to learn language (Harmer, 2004; Scott, 1996). These young participants made efforts to write well-structured narrative paragraphs with the purpose of making their experiences clear and entertaining for the reader. This audience and writing genre awareness implicitly made them realise they are part of a discourse community and will help them consider the *reader* when writing (Hyland, 2009).

Secondly, participants developed a set of writing strategies that can be further used in their academic writing in English as well as in other fields such as L1, other subjects, and general non-academic writing (e.g. letters, speeches, etc.). The stages of the process-genre approach *per se* offer strategies such as brainstorming, prioritising lists, picture prompts, mind maps, structuring, comparing, peer revision, proofreading, among others in an attempt to develop writing competence in learners (Murray, 2012; Tribble, 1996). Participants in this study mainly

developed strategies such as audience awareness, use of mentor texts (narratives), development and organisation of ideas and error-correction (self/peer-correction) to realise, for example, that a draft is not a final version and that they usually submit their written assignments with the characteristics of draft instead of a final version. The mentioned strategies can be easily transferred to other contexts and fields, as mentioned above, in order to enhance participants' writing competence (learning to write) instead of simply building linguistic competence through writing (writing to learn) (Harmer, 2004; Scott, 1996).

Finally, participants realised that paragraphs have a structure (topic sentence, supporting ideas and concluding sentence) which serves text cohesion and coherence (Harmer, 2004). This aspect helped fourth-grade participants view their writing syntactically and maybe preparing them to consider text structure in further writing even using different genres or working on longer compositions. Since paragraphs aim at developing one main idea clearly (Oshima & Hogue, 2006), most of these young participants were engaged in conveying effectively their main idea related to their personal experiences (Strunk & White, 2005). Therefore, working on structure and development of ideas in elementary school enhances writing competence on learners and does not leave universities with the task of mitigating the shortcomings of school writing (Escobar Alméjiga & Evans, 2014).

6.4 Pedagogical challenges and recommendations

Related to the use of the process-genre approach the challenge lies in helping learners realise its application on personal and academic writing in shorter periods of time. In the present study, this approach took approximately 26 hours over a span of 14 days to be implemented and some participants found it dense. It is recommended that learners are asked to reflect on how they can use the stages of this approach in regular writing and in practical ways (e.g. asking

somebody to check an email they are typing before they send it). Regarding paragraph writing, the challenge lies in helping young learners become aware of the use of punctuation in texts and the crucial role it plays in coherence and cohesion. The participants of this study showed that they do not pay much attention to punctuation, nor were they highly aware of how to use it accurately. They were exposed to some input and writing models in this regard; however, they were more focused on spelling and grammar when writing, revising and editing. It is thus recommended to expose learners to enough practice of exercises on punctuation and make them realise with clear examples how lack or inaccurate use of punctuation compromise text coherence and cohesiveness.

6.5 Research limitations on the present study

The main constraint of the study was related to time, for it was limited to effectively cover input, instruction, practice and production in the six sessions of the implementation of the process-genre approach. Each session was planned to last approximately four hours, but some (e.g. sessions 3 and 4 on revision and edition) took more time than expected because participants required extra time to assimilate and practise correction; for this reason, other sessions had to be shortened. The different levels of performance of the participants added to prolonging these sessions and shortening others; some participants' slow pace to work was a real obstacle.

Apart from this, the school schedule and unplanned end-of-year activities affected the pace of the implementation sessions. As mentioned in chapter four, the last session was almost cancelled due to several unplanned school rehearsals of the closing ceremony; at some point, the participants were asked to use the 40 minutes of their break to write the extra paragraph planned for this session and they were a bit indisposed because of this.

There were, finally, some difficulties related to some participants' attitude towards the whole process, which they considered was very lengthy, and the need of more instruction and practice on punctuation, for this was taken for granted and it happened to somehow affect some of the paragraphs' cohesiveness and coherence.

6.6 Further research

On the one hand, the researcher recommends conducting studies in which the process-genre approach can be used in a shorter period of time for achieving specific writing goals at a paragraph or longer composition levels; for example, describing a picture, a person or a place. This suggestion has to do with the fact that not always do learners have the possibility to spend a great deal of time following a process to write in such a detailed way. The idea is to find ways of using simple and quick writing strategies in every stage of the process-genre approach and see whether participants interiorise the method to use it regularly. On the other hand, in the present study little attention was given to punctuation which, in the end, affected the paragraphs' cohesiveness and coherence. Therefore, it is recommended to analyse the key role that punctuation plays in text cohesion/coherence and effective instruction and practice for young learners in this regard.

6.7 Conclusion

The present study aimed at identifying what happens to paragraph writing when the process-genre approach is used with fourth-grade EFL learners. The results showed that these participants became aware of the audience and writing genre (narratives) within a process to write (prewriting, drafting, revising/editing and publishing); they also developed writing strategies throughout the stages of the mentioned process; and lastly, they realised there is a paragraph structure in which one main idea is developed (topic sentence, supporting ideas and

concluding sentence) and serves clarity and understanding for the reader. These results are significant, for participants implicitly acknowledged their role in the discourse community as active writers; apart from this, the writing strategies developed throughout the process can be transferred to other fields of knowledge; finally, realisation and use of paragraph structure may have set the path to prepare learners to face challenges with longer texts in regards to syntax. Based on the aforementioned aspects, the process-genre approach becomes a relevant option to be considered by elementary schools in their writing courses.

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Appendix A

Initial learners' needs instrument

WRITING DIAGNOSTIC TEST

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Dear students,

- *Thanks for your valuable participation.*
- *The present diagnostic test has an academic purpose.*
- *Objective: to recognise your ability to write.*
- *Your name and the information gathered will be kept confidential.*
- *It will take about 30 minutes to complete.*
- *Please take your time, and do your best.*

1. Match the following verbs (present – past)

| | |
|-------|----------|
| Play | Was/were |
| Swim | Rode |
| Be | Climbed |
| Meet | Played |
| Feel | Slept |
| Buy | Felt |
| Go | Swam |
| Spend | Went |
| Ride | Met |
| Sleep | Bought |
| Climb | Spent |

2. Unscramble the following words (they refer to places in the city and the countryside). There is one example.

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| laml: <u>mall</u> | hsloipta _____ |
| kale _____ | ntiamuon _____ |
| kpra _____ | eusmmu _____ |
| fram _____ | tuatrsarne _____ |
| cbaeh _____ | tfesor _____ |

3. Unscramble the following sentences

- went / week / to / I / beach. / Last / the

- with / I / friends. / basketball / new / played / my

- wonderful / my / I / a / with / spent / family. / time

4. You are just back home after 2 weeks on holidays. Write an email to your best friend; tell him/her about your vacations. You can use the vocabulary provided in exercises 1-2-3. Your email must be an 80 word paragraph and it must include:

- **Greeting**
- **What happened in your holidays**
- **Plan to meet him/her soon**
- **Farewell**

A large rounded rectangular box with a green border, containing 15 horizontal lines for writing an email. The box is empty and ready for the student to write their response.

Appendix B

Initial learners' needs instrument

SURVEY ON ENGLISH WRITING

Dear students,

- *Thanks for your valuable participation.*
- *The present survey has an academic purpose.*
- *Objective: to know your opinion about English writing.*
- *The information gathered will be confidential.*
- *It will take about 5 minutes to complete it.*
- *Please try to answer consciously and feel free to express your opinion.*

Please tick the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

| STATEMENTS | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>Neutral</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly disagree</u> |
|--|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 1. I prefer speaking more than writing in English. | | | | | |
| 2. Writing is important especially to get good marks and pass the exams. | | | | | |
| 3. I just need good vocabulary and correct spelling to write a text. | | | | | |
| 4. When I write, I make a lot of mistakes; that is why I am not good at writing. | | | | | |
| 5. English writing classes motivate me to write more. | | | | | |
| 6. Writing tasks are boring. | | | | | |

Appendix C

Initial learners' needs instrument

INTERVIEW ABOUT THE TEACHING OF WRITING

The objective of this audiotape-recorded interview is to collect information related to the interpretation and self-reflection made by fourth-grade learners and their Science teacher (interviewees) in regards to writing classes and writing itself.

The questions will be posed as follows:

Science Teacher

1. How often do you ask your fourth-grade students to write short texts in English?
2. What are the main purposes of writing in your Science class?
3. What do you normally assess in your fourth-grade students' writings?
4. What are the most relevant shortcomings that you find in their compositions?
5. What do you consider these students should develop in terms of writing skills?

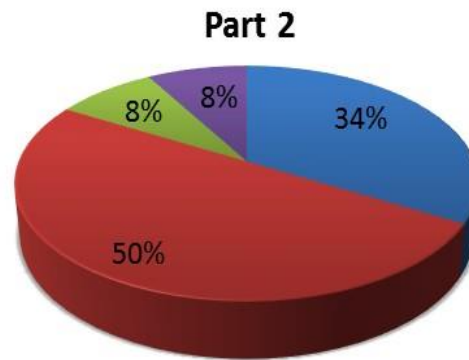
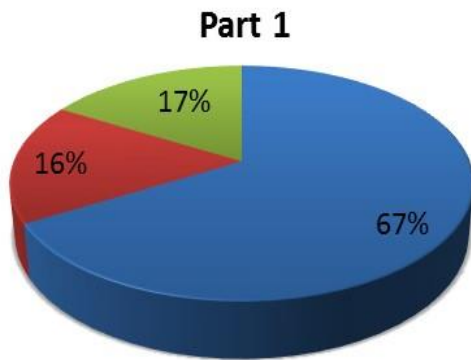
Fourth-grade students

1. How often do you have to write short texts in English class?
“¿Con qué frecuencia tienes que escribir textos cortos en las clases de inglés?”
2. How does your English teacher explain how to write texts?
“¿Cómo explica el profesor de inglés la forma adecuada de escribir?”
3. Can you give some examples of writing tasks your teacher assigns to you?
“¿Puedes darme algunos ejemplos de tareas en las que debes escribir textos?”
4. When you have to write a paragraph in English, what is the most difficult part?
“¿Cuando tienes que escribir un párrafo en inglés, qué es lo más difícil para ti?”
5. What process do you follow to write a paragraph in English?
“¿Qué pasos sigues para escribir un párrafo en inglés?”

Appendix D

Writing Diagnostic Test: Statistics for Analysis

- *The percentage corresponds to the number of students who took the test, being 12 = 100%*
- *These pie charts show some colours related to the students' answers as indicated below each chart.*
- *Part 1 was about matching 11 verbs in present tense with their correspondent in past.*
- *Part 2 was about unscrambling 9 words which referred to places in the city and the countryside.*
- *Part 3 was about unscrambling 3 sentences which referred to vacation activities.*
- *These three parts were intended to provide students with some background to write an email about their last vacations.*

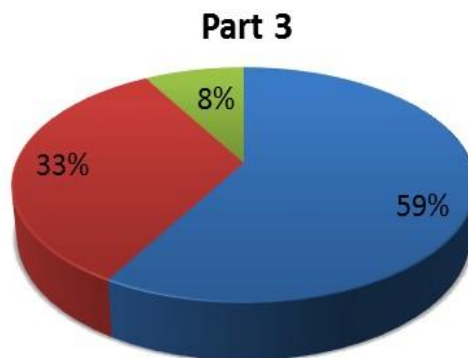


Number of questions answered by % students

■ 11 out of 11 ■ 10 out of 11 ■ 9 out of 11

Number of questions answered by % students

■ 9 out of 9 ■ 8 out of 9 ■ 7 out of 9 ■ 6 out of 9



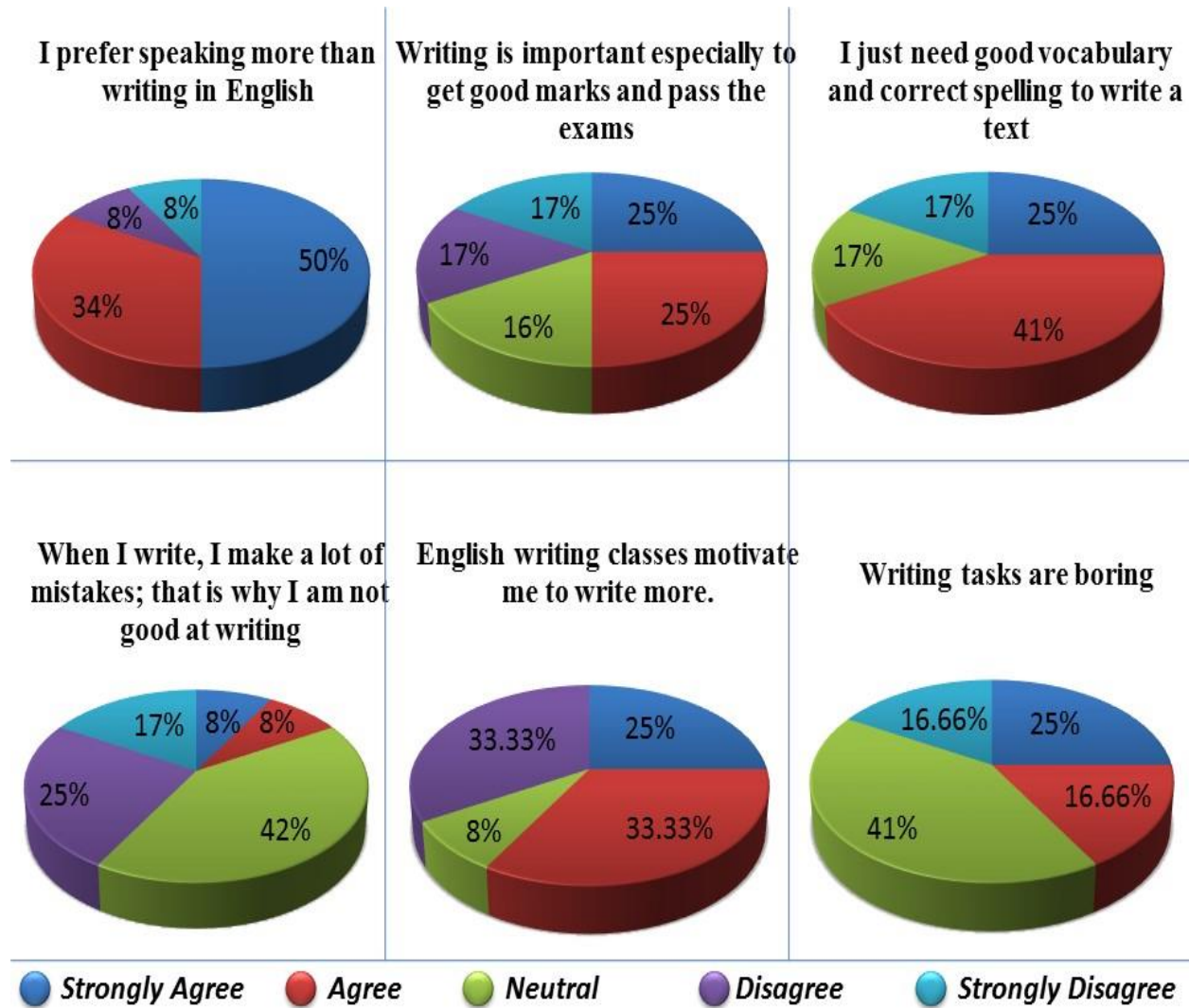
Number of questions answered by % students

■ 3 out of 3 ■ 2 out of 3 ■ 1 out of 3

Appendix E

Survey on English Writing: Statistics for Analysis

- *The percentage corresponds to the number of surveyed students, being 12 = 100%*
- *These pie charts show some colours related to the students' answers as indicated below*



Appendix F**Consent Letter for School**

Chía, septiembre 6 de 2016
Señora Rectora:
Colegio ***
La Ciudad

Apreciada Señora,

Actualmente estoy realizando la maestría Didáctica del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo (Master in English Language Teaching – Autonomous Learning Environments) en la Universidad de La Sabana. Esta maestría requiere llevar a cabo un proyecto de investigación-acción dentro del contexto educativo con el fin de optimizar la práctica pedagógica del inglés como lengua extranjera. Mi proyecto se titula “The Process-Genre Approach in Paragraph Writing of Fourth-Grade EFL Learners” y está dirigido a los estudiantes de grado cuarto de este colegio.

El objetivo de esta investigación es evidenciar el efecto que tiene la implementación del enfoque de proceso y género en el aprendizaje de escritura de párrafos bien estructurados y elaborados en inglés. Por medio de este estudio se pretende, también, fomentar en los estudiantes el uso de estrategias y procesos para escribir efectivamente y, además, incrementar la motivación para escribir.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi proyecto de investigación, que se llevará a cabo dentro de las actividades académicas de Reading and Writing en el cuarto periodo académico del año 2016. Esto implica recolectar datos por medio de diarios, entrevista a estudiantes, talleres escritos, así como emplear y publicar apartes que ellos escriban en dichos instrumentos para analizar los resultados. A los participantes, sin embargo, se les garantizará mantener su identidad en el anonimato, así como estricta confidencialidad con la información que se recolecte.

Agradezco de antemano su valioso aporte para llevar a buen término mi investigación.

Atentamente,

Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara
Docente de Inglés

Doy mi consentimiento,

Dra. N. J. G
Rectora del Colegio ***

Appendix G

Consent Letter for Parents

Chía, 12 de septiembre de 2016

SEÑORES
PADRES DE FAMILIA
ESTUDIANTES GRADO 4
Colegio ***
La Ciudad

Apreciados Padres:

Reciban un cordial saludo.

Por medio de la presente deseamos informarles que el profesor Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara, docente de Inglés de primaria, se encuentra realizando la maestría Didáctica del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo (Master in English Language Teaching – Autonomous Learning Environments) en la Universidad de La Sabana. Esta maestría requiere llevar a cabo un proyecto de investigación-acción dentro del contexto educativo con el fin de optimizar la práctica pedagógica del inglés como lengua extranjera. El proyecto se titula “The Process-Genre Approach in Paragraph Writing of Fourth-Grade EFL Learners” y está dirigido a los estudiantes de grado cuarto.

El objetivo de esta investigación es evidenciar el efecto que tiene la implementación del enfoque de proceso y género en el aprendizaje de escritura de párrafos bien elaborados/estructurados en inglés. Por medio de este estudio se pretende, también, fomentar en los estudiantes el uso de estrategias y procesos para escribir efectivamente y, además, incrementar la motivación para escribir.

Por lo anterior, les comentamos que la metodología implica recolectar datos por medio de diarios, entrevista a estudiantes, talleres escritos, así como emplear y publicar apartes que ellos escriban en dichos instrumentos para analizar los resultados. A los niños, sin embargo, se les garantizará mantener su identidad en el anonimato, así como estricta confidencialidad con la información que se recolecte.

Agradecemos el tiempo destinado a la presente comunicación y la firma del consentimiento para que los niños participen en esta actividad de corte académico.

Se despiden de ustedes atentamente,

N. J. G.
Directora

M. N.
Coordinadora

Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara
Docente

Yo..... doy mi consentimiento para que mi hijo
(a)..... participe en esta actividad de corte académico.

PADRE

MADRE

Appendix H

Teacher's Journal

Adapted from the *post-lesson self-evaluation guidelines for teaching practices, Universidad de La Sabana.*

| Date: | Session No. | Observer's name: |
|---|-------------|------------------|
| Session Overview | | |
| Session Objective | | |
| Subsidiary aims: | | |
| What went well? Why? Give evidence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the lesson pace ➤ the activities carried out ➤ the students' production ➤ class atmosphere | | |
| What didn't go so well? Why? Give evidence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the lesson pace ➤ the activities carried out ➤ the students' production ➤ the class atmosphere | | |
| How did the session foster learners' writing skills? Give evidence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the lesson pace ➤ the students' production | | |
| How did the session add to answering the Research Question? Give evidence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the students' production | | |

Appendix I**Learner's Journal** (Sample from session 3)

Reflect upon the main aspects of this session and write your comments. This way you can identify your strengths and weaknesses during the present course.

Nickname: _____ **Session No.** ____ **Date:** _____

Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session

Mention the 6 traits of narrative writing and explain 3 of them

Which of the six traits did you find more useful to write the draft? Why?

Which of the six traits did you find easy to use? Why?

Which of the six traits did you find difficult to use? Why?

Appendix J

| Questions for the focus group interview | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| How does the use of process-genre approach help fourth-grade EFL learners write well-structured paragraphs? | | | | |
| Instrument | Constructs | | | |
| | Writing | Paragraph writing | Teaching FL writing | Process-genre approach |
| Focus group interview | 2. How do you think the writing process can help you write better? | 3. What was the most difficult for you when writing the paragraph? Why? | 1. How did you find the writing course workshops? Explain | 5. Do you perceive any change in your writing after the writing course? (How was it before and now?) |
| | | 4. What was the easiest for you when writing the paragraph? Why? | | |

Appendix K

Session 4 Lesson Plan

| Session No. 4 | Date: Oct 20 th & Oct 21 st , 2016 | Length: 4 hours | Teacher: Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>Aim: By the end of the lesson, learner will have written the final version of the narrative paragraph based on prior edition.</p> <p>Subsidiary aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will correct mistakes in sample texts. • Learners will edit the drafts written in session 3. • Learners will write the final version of their personal narrative paragraphs. <p>Materials: Session 3 workshop (draft & peer-revision); video "Editing writing for kids"; video "Publishing for kids"; Session 4 Workshop.</p> | | | |
| Stage | Aim | Procedure Teacher and student activity | Time and interaction |
| Warm up | To get learners acquainted with error correction | Learners will get two wrong sentences and will correct them individually (activity 1, Appendix L). Then, they will share their corrections with their group. Finally, they will be guided to make the connection with this activity and the main aim of the session. | 10 mins S ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss |
| Presentation | To get learners familiar with the editing and publishing process | Learners will watch the videos "Editing writing for kids" and "Publishing for kids" and will individually complete the mind map about them (activity 2, Appendix L). Then, they will share their answers in their groups. At the end, the class will socialise what they understood about editing and publishing. | 20 mins S ↔ Ss Ss ↔ Ss |
| Guided Practice | To guide learners to correct mistakes in texts | Learners will get some samples of short texts with mistakes related to grammar, spelling, capitalisation and punctuation (activity 3, Appendix L). Following the examples given on the videos, learners individually will correct/edit those texts. At the end, they will compare their corrections in their groups. | 30 mins Ss ↔ T S ↔ Ss |
| Free Practice | To get learners edit their drafts in order to write the final version of their paragraphs | Learners will go over their drafts and peer-revisions made in session 3. Based on their partners' comments and based on the previous work, learners in pairs will edit together their drafts. At the end, they individually will write the final version of their paragraphs considering the corrections they made. Learners will publish their paragraphs in a separate sheet including cover page (activity 4, Appendix L). | 60 mins S ↔ S Ss ↔ T |
| Self- Assessment | To check for learner's understanding of the main topics of the session | Learners will individually answer to a self-assessment worksheet (activity 5, Appendix L) that accounts for their achievements in regards to the session aim. This includes "I can" statements and specific questions about writing a draft. | 20 mins Ss ↔ T |
| Self-Reflection | To reflect upon the session through the learner's journal | Learners will reflect upon this session and will write about it in the session 4 learner's journal (activity 6, Appendix L). | 20 mins Ss ↔ T |

Appendix L

The Process-Genre Approach
in Paragraph Writing of
Fourth-Grade EFL Learners

BEST STORY EVER
Session 4 Workshop
“My Final Version”

Nickname: _____ Date: _____

General Objective:

To write the final version of the narrative paragraph based on prior edition.

Specific Objectives:

- To correct mistakes in sample texts.
- To edit the drafts written in session 3.
- To write the final version of the personal narrative paragraphs.



Taken from www.pinterest.com

Activity 1. Correcting sentences

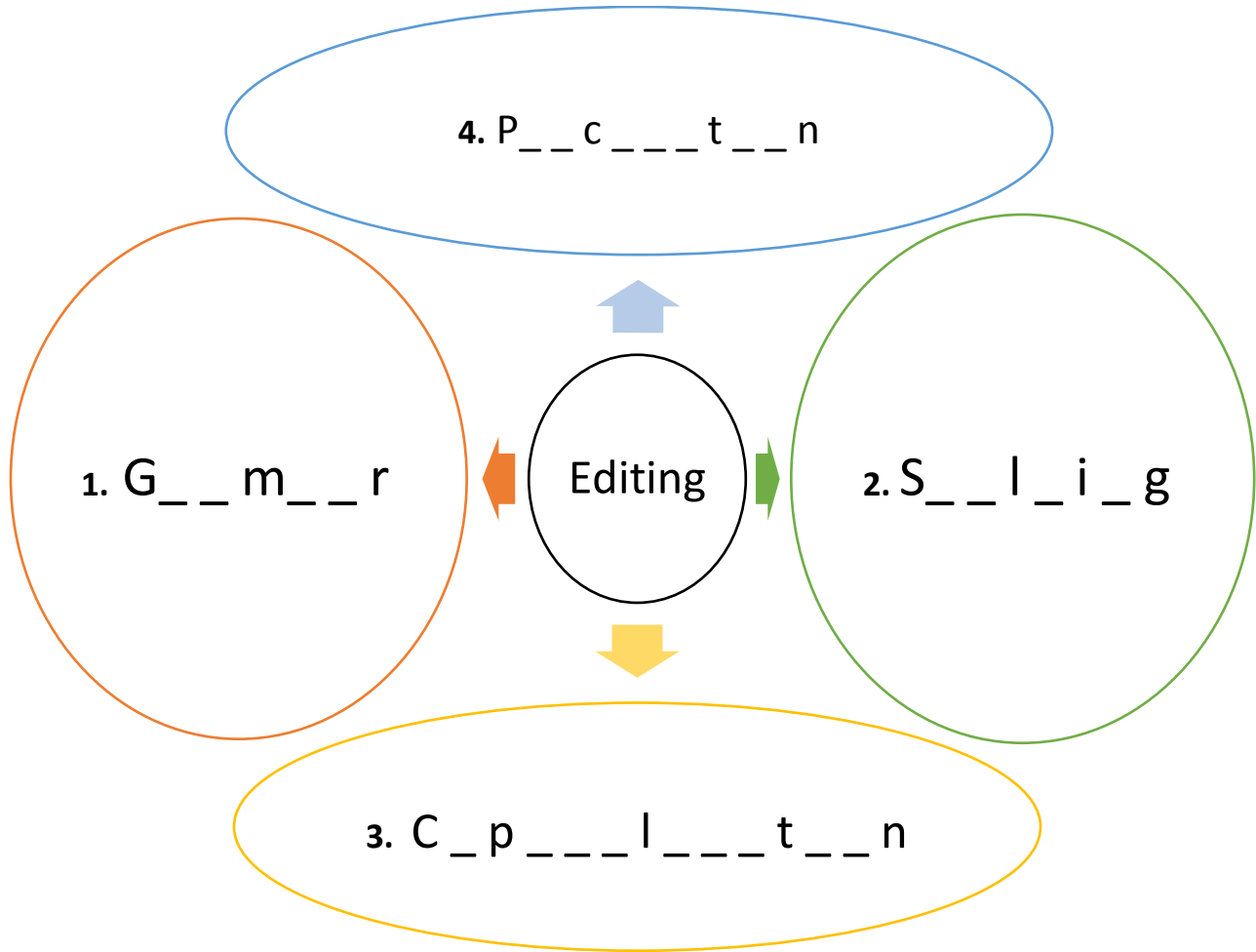
Find and circle 7 mistakes in every sentence. Correct them individually. At the end, share the corrections with your group.

1. i live in bogota. She is a beutiful city; With many place to go.

2. My freind has 10 years old and i have 10 too. last sunday we play tennis.

Activity 2. Editing and Publishing

- a. Watch the videos “Editing writing for kids” & “Publishing for kids”. Complete the following mind map and write some examples for each category.



- b. Based on the previous information, write some RULES for each category:

| Category | Rules |
|----------|-------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |

- c. Finally, compare your answers with your partners’ and complement them if necessary.

Activity 3. Correcting texts

- a. Read the following texts. Underline the mistakes with colours and write the correction next to them.

Grammar = Red **Spelling = Blue** **Capitalisation = Orange** **Punctuation = Green**

Text 1

My mom helpt me But it did not work She send me to the haspetal and I Stay on the First Day I ate soup and on the Secont Day I ate more Sooup and on the last Day I ate pizza and I leave

Text 2

When I was stuck because I got my tugh on a frosen stick and my mom came and calls the police. They put hot water on me and it was so hot it burned my tugh. I learned my lesson. Then my little sister was going to puther tugh on a stick and I whet runing and tell her don'tdo it because they will put hot water on you. She saysshe won't do that any more.



Taken from (McGraw-Hill Education, n.d.)

- b. Compare your corrections in your group.

Activity 5. Assessing my achievements

Nickname: _____ **Session No.** ____ **Date:** _____

Read the statements about the topics studied in this session, give some examples and answer:



| Statement | Yes / Not Yet / Sometimes |
|---|---------------------------|
| I can identify <i>grammar</i> mistakes in a text <i>Some examples are...</i> | |
| I can identify <i>spelling</i> mistakes in a text <i>Some examples are...</i> | |
| I can identify <i>punctuation</i> mistakes in a text <i>Some examples are...</i> | |
| I can identify <i>Capitalisation</i> mistakes in a text <i>Some examples are...</i> | |
| I can follow a process to <i>publish</i> a text <i>How do you do it?</i> | |

Activity 6. Reflecting on my learning process

Reflect upon the main aspects of this session and write your comments. This way you can identify your strengths and weaknesses during the present course.

Learner's Journal

Nickname: _____ **Session No.** ____ **Date:** _____

Mention at least 3 things that you learned from this session

Mention the 4 categories we need to correct when *Editing* a text

Which of the 4 categories did you find more useful to *Edit* your paragraph? Why?

Which of the 4 categories did you find easy to correct in the text? Why?

Which of the 4 categories did you find difficult to correct in the text? Why?

Appendix M

Writing Checklist

Tick (✓) Yes or No accordingly

| Item | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| The draft includes a good title connected to the <i>Topic</i> | | |
| The draft includes a clear <i>Beginning (Topic Sentence)</i> | | |
| The draft includes more than 3 <i>Supporting Ideas</i> connected to the <i>Topic</i> | | |
| The draft includes a clear <i>End (Concluding Sentence)</i> | | |
| The draft describes <i>My Experience and My Feelings</i> clearly | | |
| The draft is written in <i>Past</i> (main verbs in past) | | |
| The draft includes <i>time-order words</i> that show a clear sequence of events | | |
| The sentences are fluent and clear when you read them aloud | | |
| All words are clear/easy to understand | | |
| All words are correctly written (spelling) | | |
| The draft contains 150 words or more | | |

Designed by Héctor Mauricio Arteaga Lara.

Appendix N

Writing Rubric

| CATEGORY | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Ideas | Tells an entertaining story about a personal experience. | Tells about a personal experience. | Tells about a personal experience but deviates from the main topic. | Does not share a personal experience. |
| Organisation | Includes a strong beginning (Topic Sentence), middle (Supporting Ideas) and end (Concluding Sentence). | Presents details in the correct order. | Includes events told out of order. | Tells events out of order and is confusing. |
| Voice | Always uses the first person and clearly expresses feelings. | Makes an effort to express feelings. | Expresses few personal feelings. | Does not express feelings or connect with readers. |
| Word Choice | Uses a variety of words in a natural way. | Uses appropriate words, but constantly repeats them. | Does not use descriptive words or uses same words all the time. | Uses words not related to the purpose. |
| Sentence Fluency | Uses a variety of sentences connected to one another. | Uses a variety of complete sentences. | Uses only simple sentences. | Uses many incomplete sentences. |
| Conventions | Is free or almost free of errors. | Has minor errors that do not confuse the reader. | Makes frequent errors that confuse the reader. | Makes serious and repeated errors. |

Adapted from (McGraw-Hill Education, n.d.)

Appendix O

Implementation timeline

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Introductory Session | Date: Sep 8 th , 2016 | Length: 2 hours |
| Session No. 1 | Date: Sep 12 th & Sep 15 th , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |
| Session No. 2 | Date: Sep 22 nd & Sep 23 rd , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |
| Session No. 3 | Date: Oct 6 th & Oct 7 th , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |
| Session No. 4 | Date: Oct 20 th - 21 st & 24 th , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |
| Session No. 5 | Date: Nov 3 rd & 4 th , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |
| Session No. 6* | Date: Nov 10 th & 11 th , 2016 | Length: 4 hours |

*This session took place on November 15th, 2016 and lasted for around one hour due to limitations with time, as mentioned in chapter 4, and the focus group interview was carried out on November 16th, 2016.