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**MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS
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**“ASSESSMENT OF WRITING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN OF 8TH GRADE. A CASE OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN
OTAVALO-ECUADOR”**

**A Master Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Maestría en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros: Mención Inglés**

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DEDICATION

First of all, family is the most important support that a person can have to face any difficulty or challenge. It is for this reason that this current work is dedicated to my husband and kids who have encouraged me to be perseverant and motivated during this long time of educational preparation. My kids are my inspiration to do anything in my life, to become me as their role model because they are only kids and they need to learn how to face challenges in their lives. Moreover, my brothers are the close buddies who always have been supporting my decisions in my career life, giving advice and pats on my back to say keep working harder.

Rosa Marlene Rojas Lema

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ABSTRACT

Writing is one of the skills that complement the process of learning the English language, it is one of the skills that needs to be developed in basic and high schools to provide students with more opportunities to pursue a successful educational career. Nevertheless, writing is not strongly practiced in classrooms because it is generally perceived as difficult by teachers and students and there are various aspects that might be positively or negatively related to the learning process of young English learners. Consequently, the main objective of this research project was to identify the main difficulties that children from a local school experience when they are learning to write in English and the factors associated with the school, family, and community, that affect their language writing development. The study was carried out in “Miguel Egas Cabezas” High school from Otavalo-Ecuador with 8^o grade students. This research followed a mixed sequential design with a quantitative approach followed by a qualitative appraisal. Two instruments were used, a writing assessment and a questionnaire with close and open-ended questions to allow students to expose their perspectives about positive and negative aspects that relate to their experiences of learning to write in English. Findings show low writing proficiency with low coherence. Spelling shows language interference with Spanish; capitalization shows generalized omission in proper names and after periods and lack of punctuation leads to run-on sentences. Regarding Grammar/Language use, findings show that the curriculum and teachers might be incurring in an over-use of the verb to be, that do not allow the students to incorporate other verbs in writing. From the perspective of students, those who achieved the higher scores in the assessment test may have more family support and more of the teacher’s attention in class compared to those students with lower scores, who reported searching for other sources to support their learning process as well as harder living conditions that affect their performance as learners. Based on the findings, a proposal was developed in order to establish hard basic writing skills in students who are starting to learn English. Also, these strategies may support teachers to create a fun and active writing skill teaching environment.

Keywords: writing assessment, writing strategies, parental factors, school’s factors, writing problems.

RESUMEN

La escritura es una de las habilidades que complementan el proceso de aprendizaje del idioma inglés, es una de las habilidades que deben desarrollarse en las escuelas básicas y secundarias para brindar a los estudiantes más oportunidades de seguir una carrera educativa exitosa. Sin embargo, la escritura no se practica con mucha fuerza en las aulas porque, en general, los maestros y los estudiantes la perciben como difícil y hay varios aspectos que pueden estar relacionados positiva o negativamente con el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes jóvenes de inglés. En consecuencia, el objetivo principal de este proyecto de investigación fue identificar las principales dificultades que experimentan los niños de una escuela local cuando están aprendiendo a escribir en inglés y los factores asociados con la escuela, la familia y la comunidad que afectan el desarrollo de su lenguaje escrito. El estudio se realizó en la Unidad Educativa “Miguel Egas Cabezas” de Otavalo-Ecuador con alumnos de 8º grado. Esta investigación siguió un diseño secuencial mixto con un enfoque cuantitativo seguido de una evaluación cualitativa. Se utilizaron dos instrumentos, una evaluación de la escritura y un cuestionario con preguntas cerradas y abiertas para permitir a los estudiantes exponer sus perspectivas sobre los aspectos positivos y negativos que se relacionan con sus experiencias de aprendizaje de la escritura en inglés. Los resultados muestran un bajo dominio de la escritura con poca coherencia. La ortografía muestra interferencia del idioma con el español; las mayúsculas muestran omisión generalizada en los nombres propios y después de los puntos y la falta de puntuación conduce a oraciones corridas. Con respecto al uso de gramática / lenguaje, los hallazgos muestran que el currículo y los profesores pueden estar incurriendo en un uso excesivo del verbo ser, lo que no permite que los estudiantes incorporen otros verbos en la escritura. Desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes, aquellos que obtuvieron los puntajes más altos en la prueba de evaluación pueden tener más apoyo familiar y más atención del docente en clase en comparación con aquellos estudiantes con puntajes más bajos, quienes informaron buscar otras fuentes para apoyar su proceso de aprendizaje. así como condiciones de vida más duras que afectan su desempeño como aprendices. Con base en los hallazgos, se desarrolló una propuesta con el fin de establecer habilidades básicas de escritura en los estudiantes que están comenzando a aprender inglés. Además, estas estrategias pueden ayudar a los maestros a crear un entorno de enseñanza de habilidades de escritura activo y divertido.

Palabras clave: evaluación de la escritura, estrategias de escritura, factores parentales, factores escolares, problemas de escritura.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

English is one of the most useful languages around the world, it is used in different fields such as business, communication, sightseeing, and education. Becoming it a relevant instrument that needs to be learned in the context of globalization (Crystal, D. 2003). In addition, speaking English allows people to have better opportunities to improve their economic situation, jobs, travel abroad to continue studying to be more competitive and well paid in their country, or to study a futurist and an innovative profession.

Therefore, English is the language of nowadays generation. When people talk about English, it can be generally divided into four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All these four skills are important in a language but on the other hand, writing has become more important in academic disciplines because, it is an instrument to examine the performance of students in their respective fields of study. Javid and Umer (2014) mentioned that while learning a language, students are mostly dependent on writing as an “integral skill to language learning”.

Additionally, because of the rise of foreign visitors to Ecuador during these twenty years, English has been awaked the interest of the greater group of Ecuadorian communities to speak this language. Regarding this previous phenomenon, the Ministry of Education and one of its departments, Foreign Language Administration has promoted learning English in public and private schools since 1992. An agreement signed between this Minister and The British Council (Ministerio de Educación y Cultura 1997a, 1997 and UNESCO 2004) established, the increment number of work hours to teach English in primary schools and high schools in Ecuador country, reforming the English teaching curriculum. The aim of this agreement was to grant secondary students clear foundations in the handling of English, offering students a starting point for their future development in English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Writing is one of the skills that students have to face in classrooms when students are learning the English language, it is one of the skills that need to be developed in primary schools and high schools. On the other hand, writing is not strongly practiced in classroom because of its complexity and difficulty, that becomes a challenge for teachers and students (Hossain, 2015). Writing is recognized as a significant and essential skill in the field of applied linguistic because it plays an important role in a social, cultural, professional, academic context (Outskirt, 2008). Some elements related to the school environment, teaching strategies, and family support, influence this learning process affecting positively or negatively in English learners.

For this study, the different elements related to schools, such as family and community are investigated and analyzed. In terms of school, the atmosphere created by the teacher, students, and authorities can either encourage or discourage students to be successful in a learning process. Additionally, children need family guidance, motivation, and supervision to improve their language learning. Outside school also, students can review important points of their learning with their parents' help, avoiding forgetting knowledge learned in the classroom, and make children's learning more efficient. Zhou, (2019) explains, about 20% and 10% of primary and secondary school. Students report that they have taken private foreign language classes outside of the school, motivated by themselves interest in learning English language. It motivates students, giving learners more chances to improve their reading and writing skills in the English language, in conclusion, parents might support and encourage their children to learn the target language.

Another factor that affects children's language acquisition might be the community or neighborhood where the students devote more time with their friend. It is because, a Spanish-speaking environment prevails in their learning process, then it does not help students practicing English outside of school, consequently, their learning process turns slow and it takes a long time to acquire the English language. Therefore, environments, where this study took place, may hinder students' learning, then this investigation was carried out in Miguel Egas High school, with 8^o grade students, which is located in the Miguel Egas Parish in Otavalo Ecuador.

Approaches like Cooperative or Collaborative are going to be considered for this research. It backs up the way the English language is taught in classrooms. Furthermore, with the use of

cooperative learning students can interact each other's forming groups work, small teams, pair work in order to get better class comprehension. finally, with these approaches' students have more opportunities to learn from other students who might have a high English level (Olsen, & Kagan, 1992).

The contents of this research were organized in chapters. Chapter I, a brief introduction to the English learning process in Ecuadorian schools. Some writing problems that 8° graders from "Miguel Egas Cabezas" high school face at the moment to write basic sentences or paragraphs in the English language. Moreover, there is a problem description of EFL students who have difficulties in writing. finally, this chapter is including some factors that could affect the children's learning process.

Chapter II includes the literature review and the theoretical framework with relevant information about EFL methodologies, writing approaches, and strategies to promote students to get better in writing process. Chapter III, explains the research methodology, data collection tools, the sample population and techniques to be used in order to get information. Chapter IV presents the discussion and the main findings of the investigation, which results were relevant to the elaboration of the proposal. Chapter V, a didactic guide developed to improve children's writing skills through a variety of strategies and some activities to motivate learners to acquire the English language. In conclusion, chapter VI gathers some conclusions and recommendations for teachers and students to be aware about writing skills development.

1.1. Problem description

In the Imbabura province especially in *Peguche* and *Quinchuquí* communities, students who are in an English learning process have presented some difficulties at the moment to express their ideas in a writing way. Some factors such as lack of a solid academic foundation in primary school, permissive academic evaluation system, family and community problems, low socioeconomic situation, among others might affect their learning process.

According to reports from “Miguel Egas Cabezas” High School’s administrative office, in the academic period 2018 - 2019, a high percentage of students failed English subject; mostly 8th graders showed problems in reading, speaking, listening, and in writing skills. To conclude, every year, there is a high percentage of students who are held back because of low writing skills in English.

Furthermore, a permissive academic evaluation system could be also affecting the problems encountered when students are learning English. According to the Ministry of Education’s legal book, (Marco Legal Educativo, articles 212, 213, 214), there are three more exams for students to pass the year after the final test. The first opportunity to pass, after the regular academic year ends, is *Supletorio*, explained in article 212. Teachers have 15 days after the school year ends to prepare students for a test. In order to pass this test student, have to get a 7 out of 10 points. If the students do not get the minimum score which is 7, they have to take another test. There is an extra opportunity when students fail this test, then they need to go through a second attempt to pass the year, which is the remedial test, explained in article 213. Teachers have to prepare an academic schedule for students because, it should be done by students and teachers at school. Therefore, it has to be focused on the entire year topics so they must study at home also with parents’ overseer.

After 15 days, they have to go back to school to take the *remedial* test, and pass it. Hence, the student has to get 7 out of 10 points. The requirement to approve this evaluation phase is that the student must approve at least two or more subjects in *remedial* test, on the contrary, they have to repeat the school year. The final opportunity is for students who only failed one subject in *Remedial* exam, this is call Examen de *Gracia*, article 214. To pass the *Gracia* exam students have to prepare themselves without teachers' support. The minimum score required to approve the subject is 7.

Problems in writing skills often might be the cause of students fail English exams and it could be the reason why they have to go to *Supletorio* exam. Even though, having all these opportunities at the end of the academic period also discourages students to work and study throughout the school year. Some students are usually turning their homework in late or in some

other cases learners do not hand in their assignments, in conclusion, these actions delay the teacher's work to follow the progress in students' writing skills.

In the end, students and parents use excuses and misinformation to try to get around the system and put teachers in uncomfortable situations by blaming them for lack of motivation and low scores to students who miss homework. Namely, this environment may not be supporting the teachers' job. Besides, a noticeable lack of responsibility and good study habits, consequently, it causes that students have negative behavior at school according to teachers report.

Family problems could also be another factor that is interfering with good students' academic performance in English, consequently, learners have low writing knowledge. To stress this point, there are families who do not live together because of a parent's job, additionally, many parents have gone abroad to work, therefore the students live with relatives or grandparents only. Some studies have found that when students do not have parental figures in their lives, they are encouraged to make decisions on their own without any guidance (Goldenberg, C.& Rueda, 2008). Therefore, without guidance, it is easy for a child to make mistakes and it is blurring the right decisions. Parental's guidance influence could be an important factor for kids who succeed or who do not succeed in English language acquisition at school. Furthermore, families and caregivers may not be devoting time to encourage their children to have a plan for their future after graduating from high school. Also, most of the parents do not read and write, therefore, it is a limitation to provide appropriate guidance to their children, something that might cause those kids' aspirations to get down and they only think about finishing high school or elementary school in the worst of the case, and students only aspire to start working as soon as possible to support their families. Hence, parents may only pass their limited educational aspiration to their children and, sometimes children are expected to work in the same job as their parents. Most of the students listen to their parents or mirror their parent's experiences and behaviors perpetuating a situation that generally does not appreciate the importance of education.

In addition, due to families' economic situation, and of course, because, students live a culture of selling goods only. Parents and students have several products at home, it is well known that their goods have a high level of nutrients but as a contradictory fact they do not eat their own

fruit and vegetables, and they only consume food with low nutritional value, many children do not get the necessary nutrients to have a balance in academic performance. Additionally, when families have low economic status, they cannot afford to buy nutritional food. Also, as it was mentioned before, many families grow fruits and vegetables on their plots but sometimes they prefer to sell the product because it is a source of income for their families; as a consequence, they use this money to buy cheaper and, less nutritional food. Many traditional dishes have a high content of carbohydrates such as fried potatoes and rice. As a consequence, the students have a low academic achievement in school.

In conclusion, all of the aforementioned problems may influence student's academic achievement in writing in their English classes, but they have not been approached properly. For this reason, this research project assesses writing skills among eighth-graders investigating, an exploratory-descriptive level, which might be the main difficulties and opportunities that they experience to learn to write in English.

1.2 Research Question

- What are the main difficulties that children from a rural school experience when they are learning to write in English?
- Which factors related to school, family, and community, might be associated to the English language writing development of children?

1.3. Justification

This research is important because of low academic achievements in writing skills in exams results, something that is a well-known problem in students but not frequently studied in depth. It is necessary to identify particular problems and alternative practices for teaching writing in English classes. Additionally, a few families' children environment with poor resources has little chances to achieve significant learning at school (Wigfield, 2006). As consequence, it is important to research the different factors that may affect students' low academic performance in writing in the

community of *Peguche* and *Quinchuquí*. This study could be insightful in finding and using the results to create strategies that could be applied according to the student's necessities in order to increase their writing skills.

1.4. Significance

This research could benefit the local school, families, and the community. Hence, eighth graders could receive better English learning strategies for writing from their teachers and the results could influence the improvement of writing skills in English. The school could benefit from this project because there is going to be a greater understanding of the problem regarding English learning and eventually it might achieve a reduction in the percentage of students who fail the year. This also means an optimization in the use of resources for public schools, such as “Miguel Egas Cabezas”

All in all, families could also benefit, if the results of this investigation are socialized with teachers, families and school board in order to, parents become more aware about the importance of supporting students during the learning process of their children. On the other hand, the teachers might know more about the family's difficulties at parents' home, with all of these teachers will better address students' writing experience and performance.

The community could also benefit from having better writing skills in English among people within the community because they could have more business opportunities. In general, the results of this research, will create awareness and encourage actions among the school, families, and the community.

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1. General objective

Identify the main difficulties that children from a local school experience when they are learning to write in English and the factors associated with the school, family, and community, that affect their language writing development.

1.5.2. Specific objectives

- Assess the writing performance of 8th graders, in order to select the highest and lowest performing students.
- Identify school factors related to English writing performance
- Identify the family factors that affect English writing performance.
- Identify the community factors that affect English writing performance.
- Develop strategies to improve students' writing skill.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Ecuadorian EFL curriculum

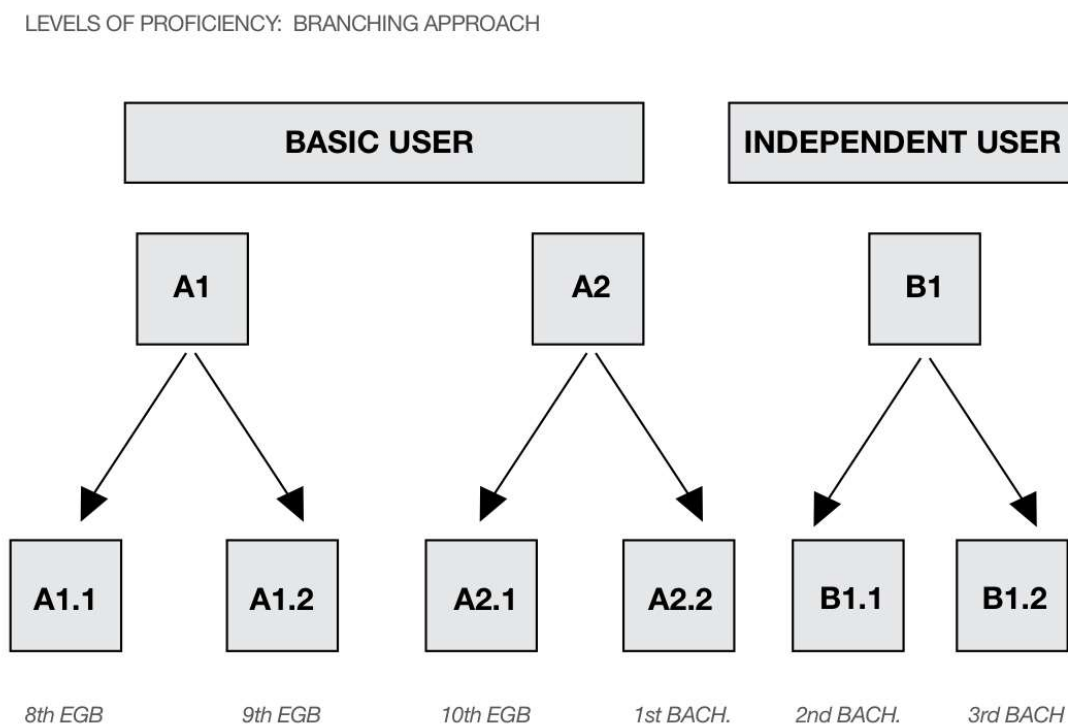
According to the Ecuadorian EFL curriculum students who complete elementary school have to be competitive in the use of English as a second language. In 2016 the new Ecuadorian curriculum was approved with significant changes, the curriculum embraces students whose mother tongue is Spanish and for whom kichwa is their first language as well, stressing the cultural relevance, regardless of learners' first mother tongue. Likewise, the foreign language pillars in the Ecuadorian curriculum are the communicative language approach, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), international standards, thinking skills, and also learner-centered approach (Coyle, 2007).

This new curriculum is based on culture communication cognitive content with the integration of curricular threads which are sort out in this way: oral communication developing speaking, listening, reading, writing skills, language through the art, communication and cultural awareness, moreover international standards are the framework of English development to guarantee a standard knowledge in EFL classrooms. Likewise, critical thinking and learning strategies are immersed in all activities, linking concepts and developing the communicative language skills.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the educational system guarantees an English level that students should have at the end of each stage and what knowledge and skills learners should develop to have adequate communication using the English language (Council of Europe, 2003). Therefore, the CEFR propounds six language proficiency phases which go from A1 a beginner stage to C2 a proficiency level for language

expertise. In conclusion, these stages proposed by CEFR helps educators to interpret the English language level easily to realize students' knowledge for each school level, as is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1. Level of proficiency for Ecuadorian educational system.



Adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, by the Council of Europe, 2003.

Source: National Curriculum Guidelines, Ministerio de Educación, (2016).

<https://educacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2014/09/01-National-Curriculum-Guidelines-EFL-Agosto-2014.pdf>

2.2 English in EFL classrooms

The English language has become the predominant tongue all over the world, playing the role of English as a foreign language (EFL), in environments where the English language is not the first tongue. Therefore, it makes that learning English becomes a complicated task for learners

who do not speak that language (Fraser, 2000). Then the development of language skills might be a challenge for teachers and students because, learners have to master the four skills without disregarding any of them in order to reach a high standard of language development.

2.3 Communicative Approach

Communicative language teaching is based on multidisciplinary perspectives which promote language ability development, creating events where learners can enhance their communicative skills (Savignon, 1997). Perhaps the major of educations systems and teachers use this approach in their classrooms due to its flexibility and the set of principles that are targeted to develop the English language in a practical way, because students can learn the target language through manipulating things.

The Ecuadorian curriculum is based on a communicative language teaching approach as well, promoting communicative competencies in learners something that is compared with grammar competencies (Richards, 2006). To clarify more these terms, it is necessary to start with grammar competencies. Namely, it belongs to the knowledge that learners have about language an aspect that accounts for the capability to create and produce sentences using the target language, in other words, students build blocks of sentences, following grammar rules and how sentences should be formed. Examples of grammar competencies have been done for years in order to students practice their ability to create and understand the grammar process in sentences because, language grammar is an important dimension part, of the English language (Richards, 2006).

While for communicative competences learners have to recognize how to use the language in different situations or how to make variations in using language, when learners can use formal or informal language. Therefore, it is also applied for writing skills, how to produce and understand different types of writing (Richards, 2006). Therefore, it makes that student open their minds for a wide range of understanding and production when they have interaction with other students and teachers.

The English language as a mighty tool allows learners to give opportunities to convey ideas and thoughts to others through different language skills (Saadian & Bagheri, 2014). Through the use of writing as one of the language skills, Nunan (1989) stated, that “learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of the macro skills for all language users regardless of whether the language in question is a first, second, or foreign language” (p.35). Therefore, for writing skills students need to have a moderate knowledge of linguistic, socio-cultural, and cognitive factors, then learners have to combine all of these factors to be able to produce pieces of communicative materials (Silva & Matsuda, 2002).

In conclusion, the use of the communicative approach in writing skills can delete factors that hinder students learning, giving them more chances to improve a skill that has been considered complicated for EFL learners. Then to help students with their writing skills it is necessary the application of communicative principles, in order for to students have active participation in the classroom rather than passive receivers (Harmer, 1991). For Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) the use of communicative language teaching in combination with the cooperative learning approach is a perfect match for students to develop their language skills.

2.4 Cooperative or collaborative approach

Cooperative learning is an approach that promotes communal activities where learners have a mutual exchange of knowledge (Kagan, 1994). Therefore, learners are responsible for their own knowledge and also for sharing and facilitating it with their classmates as well. Johnson and Johnson (1994) remarks, five cooperative learning features such as face-to-face interaction, then learners work joined to their bodies in close physical proximity that allows them to communicate with each other. Another feature that characterizes cooperative learning is when students have positive independence giving learners the responsibility to succeed in the group because, in the end, they form part of a whole group and students are responsible for that group. The third feature stresses individual accountability because each member of the group is responsible for his or her tasks. Group processing is the fourth feature in cooperative learning providing learners the capability to receive feedback to improve their language skills then every member of the group is aware of his or her metacognitive level. Finally, the social skills activities give students more

opportunities for communication and interaction, forming leaders to make decisions and solve problems in groups. In conclusion, for Richards and Rogerds (2001) students in cooperative environments are encouraged to learn by themselves throughout planning, monitoring and assessment something that is worth noting about his work “learning is something that requires students’ direct involvement participation” (p. 199).

Cooperative learning bases principles takes place in the society intervention in all aspects of students learning (Kagan, 1994). Philosophers such as Vygotsky, Piaget and Lewin back up this approach giving the community a special role in students leaning process, as a result, learners can gain important social skills and high knowledge in the subject. Finally, for McCombs (2000) multiple intelligences are effective in cooperative approach letting students to enhance their cognitive and metacognitive skills.

2.5 Content based instruction

The content-based approach (CBI) is dedicated to boosting language learning through doing something in the classroom or students' houses. It has raised its interest to be applied in EFL and ESL environments. Therefore, the lesson plan is organized around English subject content, information that students need to learn (Richards & Rogerds, 2001). The subject matter involves other subjects such as math, science, history, and so on, simultaneously. Therefore, in content-based instruction, the English language is the medium to teach another subject. thought, most of the public schools do not use English as a way to teach other subjects but English textbooks content is organized to touch topics regarding other subject matter such as social studies, science, history, physical education, and so on. Hence, it also helps students to link previous knowledge with different subject with learning English (Snow, 2001).

Content-based learning has some special characteristics that are based on the communicative approach because, content-based also involves active participation in learners (Richards & Rogerds, 2001). These principles are aimed to stress that learners acquire the English language throughout the different subject matter and English is the path. Moreover, learners can

easily acquire the target language with the real-life situation using the English language as a tool, for instance, students can learn English with daily situations like getting food, going to the restaurant, and meeting people. Brinton (2003) remarks, that content-based instruction integrates all skills in a regular lesson in the classroom. Namely, teachers can develop specific skills without disregarding other language skills of course, for example, students can work developing their writing skills with real-life situations, and at the same time, they can boost other skills like speaking or reading giving them more chances to consolidate their knowledge.

To conclude, this approach offers students more opportunities to work independently because, it is based on learner-centered rather than teachers-centered instruction. Therefore, students do not depend on teachers to control their learning, then learners take more participation in the classroom (Brinton, 2003).

2.6 Process writing approach

This approach of Process writing is focused on before starting writing activities to get the final product as a piece of writing (Hyland, 2003). "...process writing in the classroom may be constructed as a program of instruction which provides the students with a series of planned learning experiences to help them understand the nature of writing at every point" (Anthony, 2002, p.31). In this approach, students follow different stages to get a final version. Generally, four stages are identified in this process.

- Pre-writing
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing

In prewriting stage, students have to collect as much data about the topic as possible using language learning strategies such as: Brainstorming, quick write, answer to questions, and discussions. After generating enough ideas about the topic, students should sort and organize their thoughts, making an outline, preferably as a visual diagram.

Drafting is the first attempt at writing. When the students have collected enough ideas about the topic, they start the first draft paying attention to the following points:

- This step is focused on the fluency of writing.
- Students should not be preoccupied too much with accuracy.
- While drafting, the audience should be taken into consideration because having the audience in mind gives direction to the writing.
- There might be some kind of responses to the students' drafts either from other peers or from the teacher. This can be in the form of a quick oral or written initial reaction to the draft.

Revising stage is not focused on language errors. On the contrary, it is focused on general content and how well the ideas are organized. Feedback is required from classmates or from the teacher. Students review whether or not writing is transmitting meaning, effectively to the readers. Therefore, to transfer coherent content the structure of paragraphs might be affected during the revision and overall organization may be refined.

Editing takes place after students have finished reviewing their compositions, then they begin to tidying up their drafts. Students must do this by themselves or supporting their classmates (peer editing): these elements have to be considerate: Diction (choice of words), Grammar (tense, sentence, structure, prepositions), and Mechanics (punctuation)

A check-list may be considered to this effect:

- Is the choice of vocabulary appropriate?
- Are the verbs in the correct tense?
- Are the verbs correctly formed?
- Have you checked the subject-verb agreement?
- Have you used correct sentence structures?
- Are the prepositions correctly used?

- Have you checked the use of articles?

“...many good writers employ a recursive non-linear approach-writing of a draft may be interrupted by more planning, and revision may lead to reformulation, with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages” (Anthony, 2002, p315).

2.7 Product based approach

During the audio-lingualism era, the writing skill role was downplayed in EFL classes. The writing skills were considered as a kind of supporting skill in English classes. The main core was to put on sentence structures as a support for the grammar class. This product approach was applied in order to stress form and syntax (Silva, 1990). When students are involved in a writing activity, they usually write essays, short messages, or letters imitating some patterns given by teachers to monitor the process or writing. It is said that the writing process development is the outcome of an imitative input (Badger & White, 2000). It is important to mention that this process approach is based on teacher-centered learning, then the educator role is essential to give instruction and monitor students while they are writing in the target language (Brakus, 2003).

For Badger and White (2000), product approach improves students writing skills proficiency because the act of writing involves linguistic knowledge where students can get more learning from imitation. On the other hand, Myles (2002) considers that, if learners are not exposed to native writing models’ students’ errors seem to persist. Therefore, learners need as much practice as they can to be able to follow English writing patterns from native-like models in order to improve their writing whole work.

2.8 Genre approach

The word genre is derived from the French term “form” or “type” then genre term is used to classify things according to their characteristics, throughout time, this term has been used in different fields. Hence education was not a part of the use of this term considering it as an approach.

The genre approach is produced in a social context, encouraging the writing process as a product, it is, for this reason, that genre and product approach is quite similar sometimes it is interpreted as an extension of product approach, then a genre is described as a communicative event in classrooms which final product is the development of writing (Swales, 1990). The use of the genre approach means to exploit different types of writings. It is an interactive interaction among students and teachers where the educator role is predominant to scaffold learners' writing performance (Hyland, 2003). Likewise, students are able to discuss and analyze their writing compositions with their teacher or classmates until they get more confidence to be capable of creating their own writing material without a writing model.

Genre approach is used in different writing circumstances, then for Dan (2000), genre can be applied for interviews, advertisements, media, and so forth. It is for this reason that genre is associated with social functions, creating messages or any kind of text in real-life situations in order to become knowledgeable in meaningful learning. Therefore, the student's English creation can be either oral or writing material, creating a close relationship between language and social functions.

Even though the genre approach is relatively new in English classrooms, then the genre is part of language learning because, it allows to identify students' writing style, identifying the target purpose for readers (Thoreau, 2006). Hence, the genre approach embraces three aspects of writing such as writing style that means how learners' compositions were written, expressions used and how language pattern was expressed, readers and goal-oriented. Then learners can see their writing process from different perspectives actions that help students to improve their writing skills (Dirgeyasa, 2015).

2.9 Joint construction of text

This methodology has three stages to help students with their writing development. For (Emilia, 2005) these steps are oriented to grouping students in order to familiarize learners with classroom activities with regard to the writing skills, then students have to pen the whole text on their note-books rather than a short paragraph, students also learn how to take notes. For the second

stage teachers' role is essential because, they have to monitor learners giving them support at a time student starts writing because, at this stage students seemly have problems with their writing, and teachers can ask questions to encourage learners to start their writing compositions (Emilia, 2005). Finally, the third stage is focused on consultation in each group with regard to students' writing work in other words the first feedback of their draft. Then teachers reinforce students' first attempt at writing.

2.10 Independent construction of text

For this methodology, teachers do not play an important role, because students have to develop their writing skills by themselves. It means that learner plan and conducts their writing production considering aspects as a first draft, self-editing, to plan a discussion with their teacher and classmates about their draft, and finally publishing text. These writing steps provide students good feedback, self-esteem to develop their writing skills (Gibbons, 2002). Likewise, even though students work by themselves, they also need teachers' support to boost learners writing development skills.

2.11 English writing skills

English language writing has become one of the major aspects in different fields, some experts state that if English learners do not have an acceptable English writing level they do not succeed in their lives. It is recommended for learners to acquire acceptable English writing knowledge to develop activities like business, sightseen, or education. The writing skill might be considered as the one where students have enough time to perform then it means that learners have the chance to think about what they want to write (Hornby, 2005).

2.12 Writing strategies

Developing English writing skills in EFL classrooms is not an easy task for learners and teachers as well. Nevertheless, learners need to get the appropriate knowledge for writing to be

able to write letters, messages, reports, articles, and many other kinds of writing creations. It is for this reason that it is important to acquire a high level of writing performance to convey effectively a message in order for readers understand correctly what was written. Therefore, it is stressed that the only way to learn writing is writing. All in all, students need chances to develop their writing English skills at school and teachers need to demonstrate the importance and its usefulness of writing.

Sometimes, writing might be confusing for learners because they can find differences in writing requirements for each situation then students should get the knowledge to identify them and understand that the process is the same. With the help of teachers, this difficulty can be turned into a strength; teachers support is essential for learners. On the other hand, writing strategies can improve learners' writing process, generating ideas, editing information, focusing on a target audience to convey the message, and also getting more and more confidence to write in English. Therefore, teachers are in changed to provide the appropriate strategies to keep students motivated to develop these important English skills.

2.13 Writing mechanic components

Language writing subskills should be practiced by students at a time they are developing their English language. To form logical writing proficiency learners must increase writing skills and mechanics competence. Vocabulary, grammar, and paragraph organization need to be learned as well. Then good writers should use good connectors to join sentences. Additionally, to have a good writing is not only required to have excellent grammar but also it is necessary to use the correct mechanics writing components.

2.13.1 Coherence

Coherence is focused on well-connected parts in the same direction otherwise, if sentences or ideas are not well extructurated they do not make sense or it might turn complicated to understand for readers. Additionally, coherence is an important piece for formal writing in the English language then coherence is essential in any level of sentence organization or complete

arguments. What is more, learners need to consider some factors to write coherent paragraphs, for instance, a short composition should have a topic sentence because it is the main part of writing, the rest of the information is going to have ideas about the topic sentence. As well as another aspect considered for coherence is a key terms that help the reader to identify what the text is about. Finally, the defined terms are useful to clarify words providing more clarification for certain words that can be difficult for readers (Smith, 2004).

2.13.2 Cohesion

The development of cohesive devices suggests a variety of activities that help students to understand grammar construction and semantic. In other words, cohesion is one of the two faces or qualities that is presented in writing and speaking skills and the second face is coherence. Therefore, cohesion is the use of linguistic devices to join sentences, these devices can be conjunctions, reference words, lexical devices like repetitions of words collocations, lexical groups, and substitutions (Hasan, 1984). Cohesion allows to know how a text is organized using the correct links, also, it helps to join sentences in a correct way.

In cohesion, reference means the use of words to talk about real objects. Personal references, which are possessive pronoun, possessive determiner, and pronouns. Hence, demonstrative references are used to determine the time and location. Furthermore, there are proximity references like; this, that, these, those, here, then, and the. Likewise, comparative reference the use of equal, same, different, else, better, and adverbs such as; such, similarly, to signal the reference. Substitution, use other words in order to not repeat the same word. Ellipsis, is similar to substitution the words are changed for nothing. Conjunctions, it is used to connect sentences in a logical way. Finally, lexical Cohesion is not grammatically, it is necessary to select the correct vocabulary (Hasan, 1984).

2.13.4 Spelling

Spelling is an important factor that allows learners to communicate using writing skills. Furthermore, it is an essential tool that helps children in primary school to learn the alphabetic

writing system and its link with spoken language (Erion, 2009). Additionally, for English language learners, it is fundamental to acquire different knowledge about writing and spelling words in order to get well-written sentences, phrases with correct grammatical structure, and create ideas about specific writing topics. Eventually, English language beginners focus on learning grammar omitting dictation and spelling producing misspelled words also, incoherent sentences (Hyland, 2003).

For EFL learners spelling is a difficult part of writing because of the English irregular spelling system (Al-Hassan, 2011). These irregularities cause students to make mistakes when they write sentences or paragraphs adding students more time to memorize vocabulary for instance, writing incorrectly. Additionally, linguistic differences between English and learners' first language produces morphology and orthographic mistakes (Brown H., 2002). Moreover, students do not pay enough attention when they write something that originates errors also, learners unknow spelling rules such as regular and irregular verbs, how to write noun plural forms. Furthermore, spelling is words' correct organization to have sense, where letters have to be correctly organized following orthographical rule, on the contrary, it would be seen as a spelling error (Perveen, U. & Akram, F. 2014). Some common spelling errors that EFL learners commit are insertion errors, omission errors, substitution errors, and ambiguous errors.

2.13.5 Capitalization

Capitalization is an essential part of writing skills; it is fundamental to know the appropriate use of uppercase/capital letter in a sentence and other words. Additionally, capitalization has different functions in writing. Regarding to a sentence the first letter of the first word has to be capitalized. Capitalization emphasis certain group of words in a sentence such as, proper names, proper adjectives. Additionally, capitalization categorizes general words from specific words in a sentence (Pathan, 2021).

2.13.6 Punctuation

Punctuation, allows the readers to pause, take a breath to mark stress and emphasize the important part of the reading, writing or speech. Additionally, punctuation separates ideas from phrases rather than showing pauses only, the omission or misuse of punctuation may change the meaning of the words (Bethan, 2011). Moreover, punctuation has to follow several rules in order to use correctly and not change the message meaning. Furthermore, specification, and separation are two of the main objectives of punctuation (Kareem, 2014). Besides, punctuation is associated to pause, stress, intonation, rhythm and other prosodic features. Also, punctuation using is essential in sentences or paragraphs in order to recognize the link between writing and speech. Nowadays, teachers do not emphasis in punctuation teaching is for this reason learners face difficulties in the correct use of punctuation using the periods, and commas in incorrect places. The extreme use of comma in a paragraph, period omission, are common in EFL learners, it is necessary to all teacher's stress punctuation teaching since their basic levels (Awad, 2012).

2.14 Lack of motivation to write

In regard to motivation in EFL environments, it is the pillar for learners to be involved in acquiring knowledge. Then it is the internal engine that influences learners to keep working facing difficulties with enthusiasm driving their learning behavior. In conclusion, motivation is a psychological factor which affects positively or negatable in learners' attitude, because, emotions take place as willingness, responsibility, and others influence students' attitude. It is important to mention that motivation is not inherited, it should be grown by learners, teachers and environment (Brown H. D., 2007).

On the other hand, the lack of motivation is orient to have a deficient level of enthusiasm. Furthermore, the lack of motivation is understood as the absents of a positive attitude something that can be experimented by everyone in different circumstances. Therefore, this frame of mind can hinder and jeopardy the learner's performance. Contributing to the poor academic performance, something that can be interpreted as lack of interest in learning (Nakanishi, 2002).

Writing in the English language for EFL students is a tough skill that needs to be developed in the classroom with the help of teachers or tutors. This skill might cause stress and tension in learners if they are not ready to start creating their own ideas about any topic, then students need direction, support, and self-esteem to overcome difficulties (Gardner, 1985).

2.15 Parental factors that influence their children's achievement

The relationship between student's backgrounds and their academic achievements has been well-documented in various contexts in the general education literature. It is for this reason that it is possible to find information about education that is getting involve more and more in social environments these days (Baker, 2003). Therefore, parents are taking more leadership in education, influencing positively or negatively in their children and for individuals, it has become a fundamental pillar to develop and build their education (Blau & Duncan, 1967).

It is evident that there are inequalities in families and society establishing two different worlds in parental education systems (Kuznets, 1955). Affecting learners' performance in classrooms, for instance, it is possible to find structural factors such as places where students are living, provinces, cities, or towns without basic staples or minimal welfare, affecting their education. Some studies have shown that students with adequate life standards can perform much better at school in comparison with poor students (Coleman, 1966).

In fact, school supply deprivation at home is considered as a factor that is affecting learners at school because parents cannot provide basic material to be used at school by their offsprings. Likewise, this school material depravation is remarkably worst in poor families, it represents a high problem for students reducing the willingness of working as other students who can have more possibilities to strive in English classes (Sacker & Bartley, 2002).

In general, the students academic performance depend on parents role, some studies have shown that when parents or caregivers are involved in children education, their offsprings can develop well at school, students have good feelings and they are motivated to learn. Learners have more power and strength to face difficulties in their learning process (Bennett & Martin, 2002).

2.16 Lack of Reading

Reading and writing are two skills that might be studied in a separate way. Many pieces of evidence have shown that better readers are better writers and better writers are more likely to language exposure than poorer readers (Raims, 1998). Reading one of the receptive skills in the English language, then it allows learners to decode information that is presented in books, textbooks, magazines, and so on. It is a process to recognize and understand symbols, graphics. It is important to mention that reading is a complicated process that involves intellectual, emotional reactions, and physical development, therefore reading is the capability to understand written information in any language with the intention to extract the ideas and thoughts (Kumar, 2007).

Reading and writing have a close relationship between them. Therefore, reading influences writing skills (Shanahan & Lomax, 1986). Various studies have shown that people who read frequently can also reach excellent writing suggesting a close link between reading and writing, this fact can evident in English EFL classrooms (Kennedy, 1985). Moreover, learners who read constantly use several reading categorizations such as cognitive/metacognitive, logical/global, purposive/functional strategies. Then this process of learning for EFL students is considered as a transfer of new information between L1 and L2 including cultural aspects. The most common strategies used in reading skills are top-down and bottom-up which are applied in second language acquisition to improve learners' reading comprehension (Abbott, 2006).

The lack of reading then affects students' performance in writing English language (Lerner, 2000). Therefore, for Nutall (1982) there are powerful transfer habits between L1 and L2 than for him students how to have poor reading in their first mother tongue as a consequence they have poor reading comprehension in their second language he also stresses that this difficulty is a hindrance to developing the English language in EFL, hence it also affects their writing development. Finally, for McGiness (2005) when learners can decode the information from a text it is impossible to learn something, affecting their learning in other subjects, especially the English language.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research approach

The current study followed a mixed-method research paradigm as the research is categorized by the way it is designed to collect data and analyze the information. A mix-method research collects data both quantitative as well as qualitative. The data consisting of words, views, opinions, responses, and numbers or numerical information; the data produced by mixed-method research is complementary, one to another. Creswell and Clark (2007) define mix method research as a process that “involves philosophical assumptions that guide the directions of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative information in a vides a better understanding of research problems than either approach can do alone” (p.5). Mix Method Research is supported by both types of data collection along with data analysis following qualitative as well as quantitative paradigms. Both inductive and deductive approaches are employed in mix method research for data collection (Riazi & Candlin, 2014). It is a kind of research, where the investigator focuses on the qualitative paradigm during one phase and follows quantitative paradigms at the other phase of the research. According to Zohrabi (2013), mixed-method research incorporates more complementary research instruments for data collection as compared to any other single paradigm.

A mixed sequential design, while implements the combination of quantitative and qualitative data, it leads to a deeper understanding of trends and number of students. The most important purpose to implement a sequential design is to use the qualitative results to support quantitative first finding to its explanation and interpretation. This model is very helpful at the moment to treat any unusual or confusing result. The qualitative approach makes use of variety of instruments including interviews, conversations that allow getting real information from the population chosen. As a result, the present method guaranteed complementary information with

regard to the research study. Quantitative data was used to determine which written errors were the most persistent among students to later suggest writing strategies to overcome students' weaknesses in writing.

Figure 2 Methodology diagram.



Quantitative data → Quantitative analysis → Qualitative data → Mixed interpretation

Source: Adapted from Hernandez et al (2014).

The scope of this research is descriptive, as it aims to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. This research focused on “what” instead of “how” or “why” the low performance in English writing happens among students. To analyze deficiencies in writing it is necessary not to focus on how learning takes place in general but rather on what factor affect it to contribute for a more in-depth analysis and comprehension of individual learners and their experiences.

The qualitative approach was used to determine students' perceptions and feelings of their writing skills, whereas the quantitative approach was used to determine students' writing skills to identify weaknesses at the moment to write in English based on a questionnaire, which children answered questions regarding different writing aspects. The results helped to stablish students writing difficulties so that, look for active, adequate, and useful writing strategies to encourage teachers to apply in their teaching process.

3.2. Population and sample

The selected group for this research project were students from Unidad Educativa Intercultural Bilingue “Miguel Egas Cabezas”. The age group was from 12 to 13 years old students. 8° A and B groups participated in the assessment of writing skills. Furthermore, the same students were considered to apply the qualitative instrument.

The whole population was considered, there was need to select a sample because the researcher was strongly interested in this group. Therefore, the researcher got information to generalize the results to the whole eight graders group. Because of the reduce number of students all of the group are participated. The surveys were applied to the 8° graders at “Miguel Egas Cabezas” High School in the 2020-2021 school year which population is detailed in the table below.

Table 1.

List of 8° A and B grade students of English class

Classes	8° Graders	
Gender	8° “A”	8° “B”
Male	16	17
Female	18	14
Total	34	31

Source: Miguel Egas High School registrar’s office

3.4 Tools and techniques to collect data

This work designed and used two instruments, a test of writing assessment (see appendix 1) and a questionnaire with close and open-ended questions (see appendix 2). In the research plan phase, it was planned to select two different group off students to perform in depth interviews and focus groups with their parents. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and its social distancing restrictions made it impossible to implement the qualitative part as planned, so the in-depth interview and the focus groups were replaced by open ended questions. Included in the

questionnaire. These instruments were validated and evaluated by two English professors, who are experts in the area (see validation sheet in each appendix).

3.4.1 Writing Assessment

An assessment test was designed for 8th-grade students. Participants had to write “Your little biography”, where students had to include basic information such as; their full name, age, the place where they were born, favorite day, hair color, eyes color if they have any pet, favorite food, and favorite sport. In addition, this assessment was applied to students in order to obtain information about participants writing weaknesses in basic paragraphs. Additionally, this assessment contributes to realizing in detail when students commit common errors when they write basic paragraphs, messages, and text to their friends. At the same time, the assessment test analyses mainly focused on capitalization, punctuation, language use (grammar) spelling, and coherence important factors for correct writing.

3.4.2 Questionnaire with close and open-ended questions

The items included in this questionnaire were designed according to the mistakes that students had in previous writing assessment. There were four close-ended questions were translated into Spanish to obtain an easier answer from participants. In addition, the questions were focused in four relevant aspects considered in English writing: the correct capitalization, punctuation, grammar/ language use, and spelling; the measuring scale was based on the Likert scale with three options to choose: always, sometimes, and never.

In the same questionnaire, it was incorporated an open-ended question to allow participants to freely describe their positive and negative experiences regarding to writing problem at home, at school, and in the community. This information was processed as qualitative information, analyzing and establishing trend responses. This information served to identify the difficulties that students face when they write basic paragraphs in English in a broader context, to grasp their perspective the conditions at school, at home and in their communities that support or prevent them

in their learning process. In order to clarify how to complete the survey, the teacher explained to student the instructions that participants had to consider to fill up the questionnaire.

3.5. Ethical considerations

All the participants were about the study where they took part, it was explained how their responses could support and information process to Miguel Egas High School's authorities about the research applied in the institution. Informant's private information in confidential and has been keep anonymous; besides, their participation was voluntary. Parents attended to the high school with their child and signed up the permission. Furthermore, parents waited for their children to went back home together.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Findings

This study took place at public Elementary Institution in Otavalo. Its name is Unidad Educativa Intercultural Bilingue “Miguel Egas Cabezas”. This a small community institution with 600 students in total, and three English teachers. It is important to remark on the authorities and student’s willingness to carry out this investigation. Additionally, they provided all the facilities in order to gather the information to apply the research instruments.

4.1.2 Writing Assessment

The quantitative instrument was applied to 50 students 4 questionnaires were not considered from a total because this four information misunderstood the instructions and wrote their “Little Biography” in Spanish. Therefore, the results suggest that the whole group (46 students) scored 4.91 over 10 points. Figure N°3 displays the average of each part of the writing assessment such as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar/language use, and coherence. It is a summary of the assessment applied to 8° graders during the first school year quarter in their classroom. Previous school board authorities and parents’ acceptance. Even though, students were not attending their regular classes due to the pandemic. They were organized into groups of 10 to maintain the social distance among them. Instructions were provided in the Spanish language to avoid students’ misunderstandings and get more acquire data.

4.1.3 General results of ‘Writing assessments’

Figure 3 shows in charts the general results in writing according to the level of performance of 8^o graders in English writing. The column in yellow shows the number of students and the orange column shows the percentage of this number of students. In general terms, the graphs show that a “limited” level in writing has the higher percentage of students.

Figure 3. General data

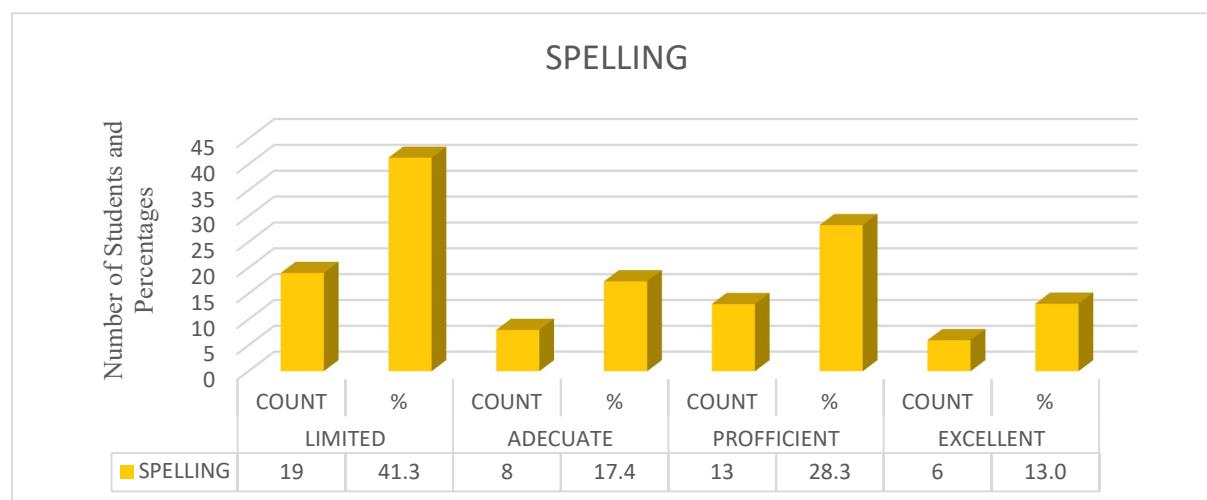


Source: Own authorship

4.1.4. Spelling

Regarding spelling mistakes results show that 19 students representing 41.3% got limited scores which means that students had more than five spelling mistakes in the paragraph. Furthermore, 8 students that represent the 17.4% got an adequate score they had more than five spelling mistakes. On the other hand, 13 students that represent 28.3% got a proficient score they had more than two spelling mistakes. Finally, only six students which represent 13% got an excellent score, they do not have any mistakes in their paragraphs.

Figure 4. Spelling data

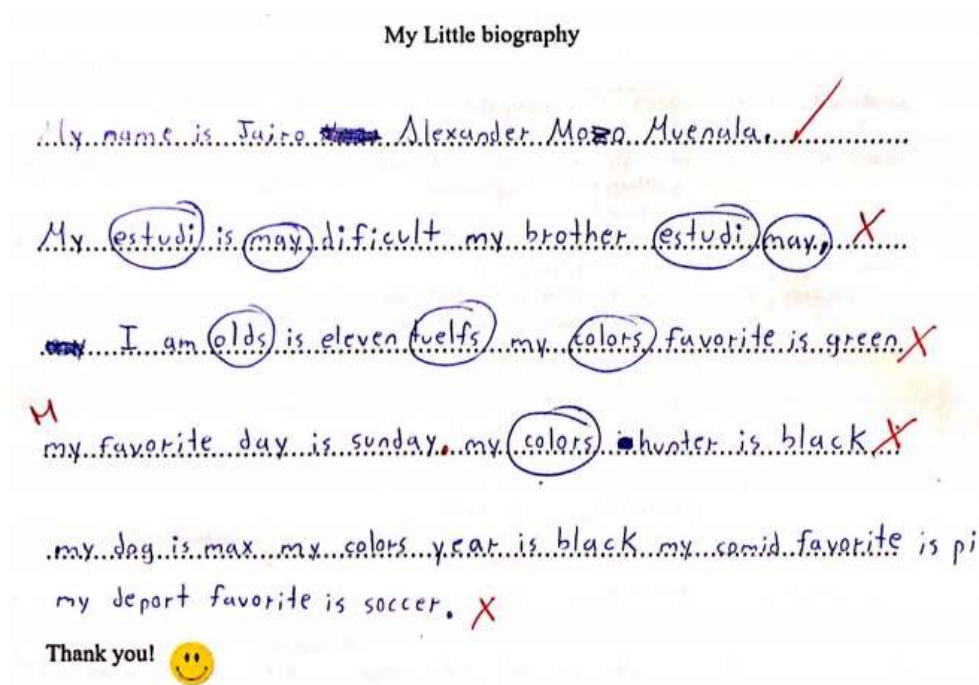


Source: Own authorship

Figure 4 shows students' spelling mistakes in little biography. In the second line in the paragraph, the student misspelled the verb 'study' the participant wrote 'estudi'. Likewise, the student misspelled the possessive pronoun 'my' the participant wrote 'may' in the same sentence. Moreover, in the third line student misspelled the adjective 'old' he wrote 'olds', also, the participant rather than writing the noun 'twelve' he wrote 'tuelfs' in the same sentence. Other students follow the same pattern of mistakes namely it is known as language interference (Ellis, 2008). For instance, in another case figure 5; in line 1 the student misspelled the possessive pronoun 'my' it was written 'may'. In addition, the noun 'name' was written 'nemi', the personal

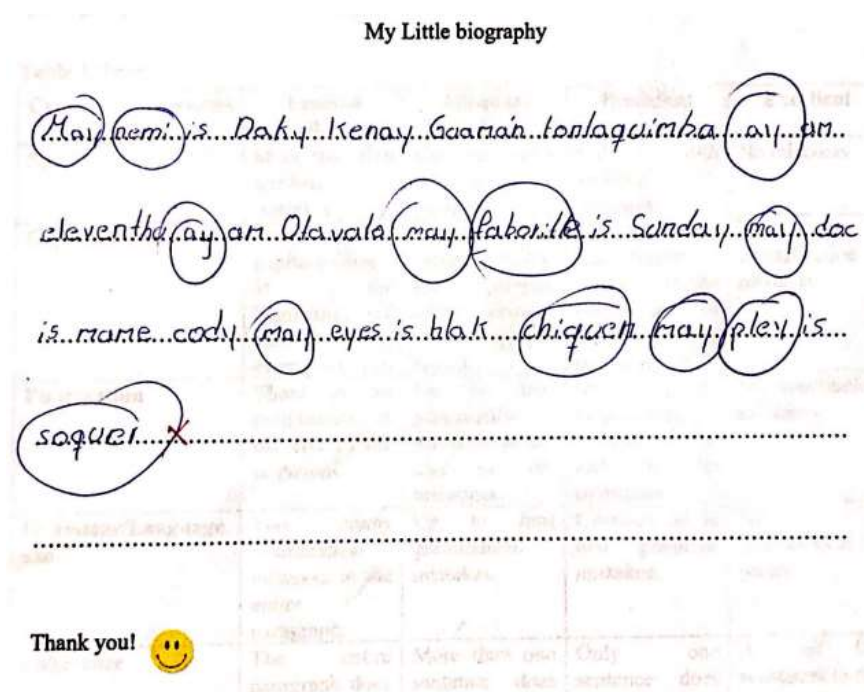
pronoun 'I' is written 'ay'. To pinpoint that all of these mistakes are in the same line. In the second line student misspelled the possessive pronoun 'my' it is written 'may' the adjective 'favorite' was written 'faborite'. Finally, in the third line the student misspelled the possessive pronoun 'my' it was written 'may' instead of writing the noun 'chicken' student wrote 'chiquen', the verb 'play' was written 'pley', and the noun 'soccer' was written 'soquer'.

Figure 5. Spelling problems



Source: Own authorship

Figure 6. Spelling problems

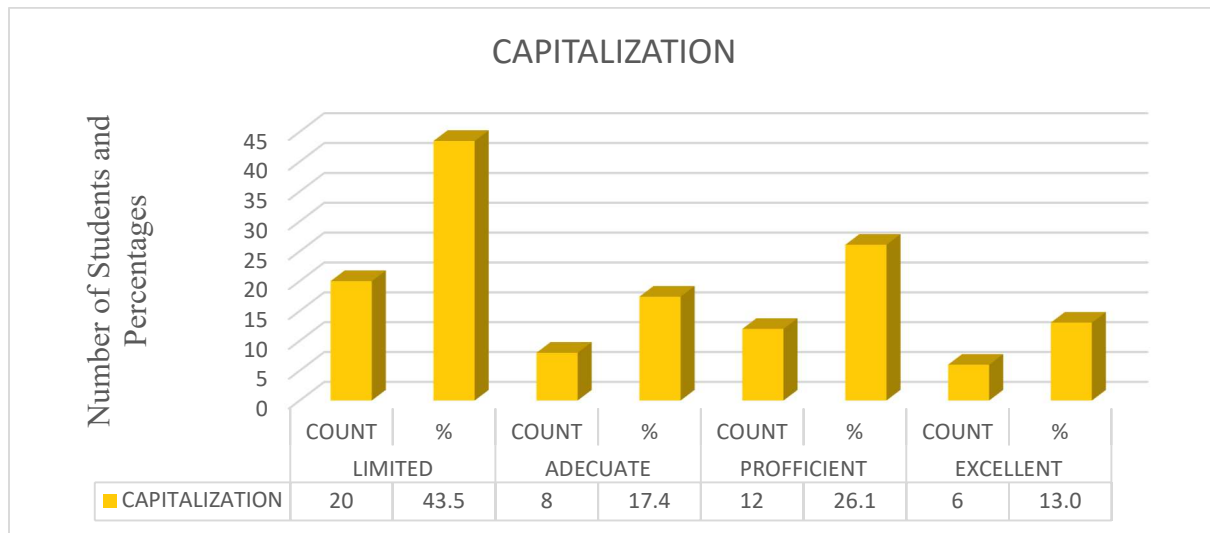


Source: Own authorship

4.1.5 Capitalization

According to figure 7. Capitalization data estimated, that 20 students got limited scores, it means that 43.5% of them did not capitalize the words at the beginning of each sentence or proper name. Furthermore, 8 students got adequate scores, which means that 17.4 % of pupils did not capitalize most of the words at the beginning of the sentence neither proper names nor the first subject pronoun "I". In addition, 12 students got proficient scores which represents 26.1% who had only two mistakes at the moment they capitalize at the beginning of the sentence, also for proper names. Finally, 6 students got excellent score which represents 13%. These students did not have any capitalization mistake in their sentences.

Figure 7. Capitalization data



Source: Own authorship

Based on figure 8. Capitalization problems show that students forgot to capitalize words at the beginning of the sentence either proper names. Additionally, the student wrote the first personal pronoun 'I' with lower case 'i' at the beginning of the sentence and in the middle of the sentence. As well as, the student wrote the possessive pronoun 'My' with lower case 'my' at the beginning of the sentence and after a period in the entire paragraph. After that, in figure 9. The student had many mistakes capitalizing the possessive pronoun (My). The student wrote the pronoun 'my' with lower case at the beginning of the sentence. Capitalization is applied in proper nouns, the first letter of the first word in a paragraph or sentence has to be capitalized (Kirkman, 2006)

Figure 8. Capitalization problems

My Little biography

My name is Jimmy Saul Pavón Usón. I like to play fife. 20. I am 12 years
 old. I was born in January. I am live in the base. I like day is Friday. X
 my hair is black. X. I am have a dog. X. my eyes is brown. X. my eat favorite
 is tallarin. X. my favorite sport is run in box and skateboarding. X

.....

Thank you! 😊

Source: Own authorship

Figure 9. Capitalization problems

My Little biography

My name is Jhon Erick Velásquez Tambora. my
 twelve my 24 de May del 2008. my
 favorite day is Monday. my hair is
 black. my eyes is brown. my
 favorite fut.

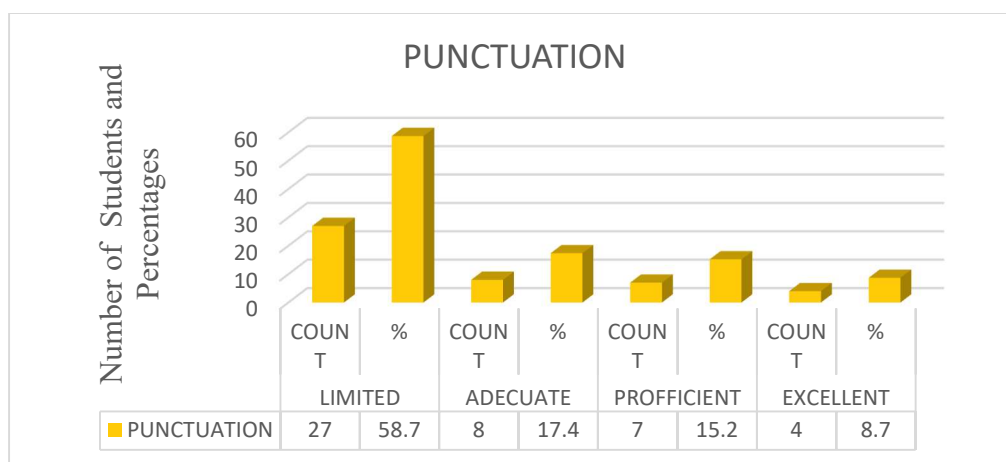
Thank you! 😊

Source: Own authorship

4.1.6. Punctuation

As stated in figure 10 which represents punctuation data. 27 students got limited scores then with regard to punctuation, it means 58.7% of the students who totally forgot the use of punctuation at the end of the sentence. On the other hand, 8 students got adequate scores, it represents 17.4% of the participants, they had three or four punctuation mistakes at the end of the sentences. Moreover, 7 students got proficient scores, it represents 15.2% who had two punctuation mistakes at the end of the sentences. Finally, 4 students got excellent scores in punctuation, it means that 8.7% of the students used punctuation correctly at the end of the sentence.

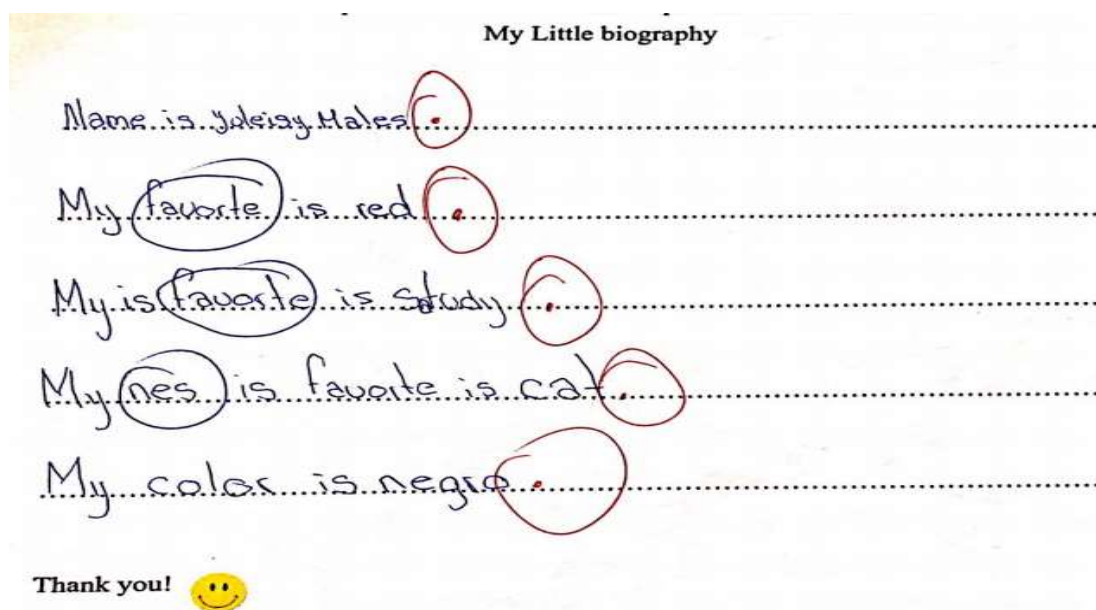
Figure 10. Punctuation data



Source: Own authorship

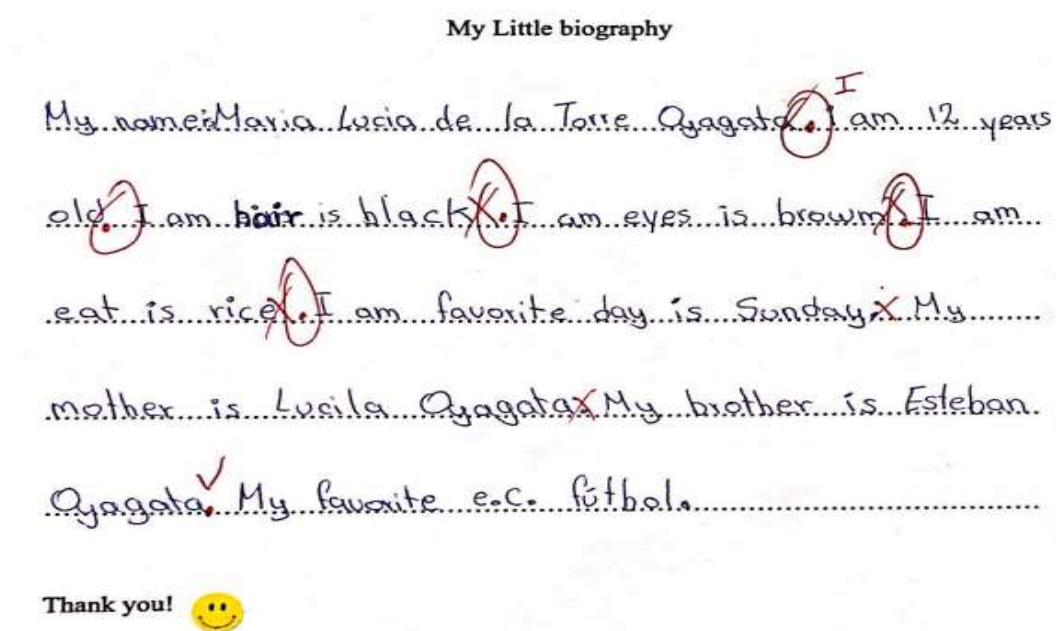
As shown in figure 11 in regard to punctuation mistakes. Students did not use period (.) At the end of the sentence. This is a repetitive pattern of what is happening in each sentence. Similarly, figure 12 shows how students did not use punctuation at the end of the sentence. Furthermore, students show their weaknesses in omission punctuation at the end of the sentence.

Figure 11. Punctuation problems



Source: Own authorship

Figure 12. Punctuation problems

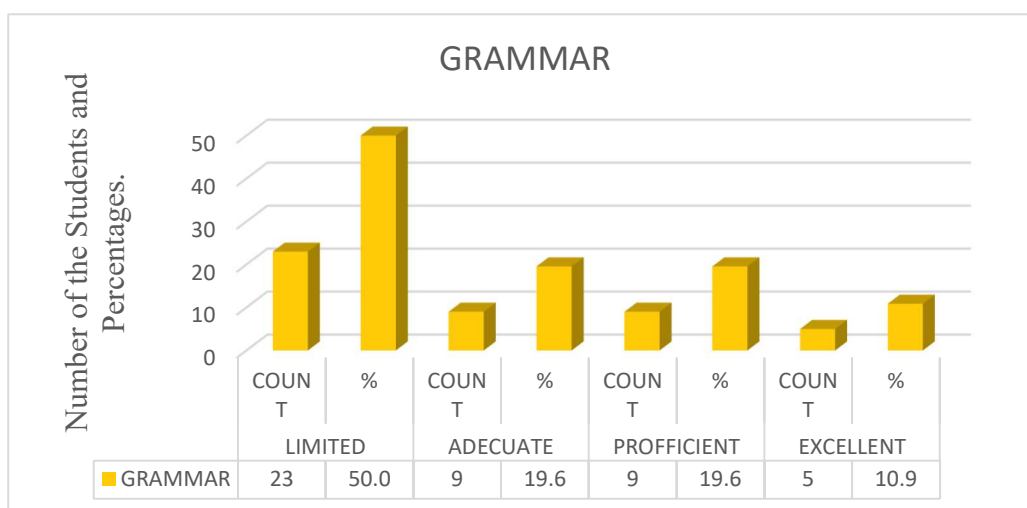


Source: Own authorship

4.1.7. Grammar / language use

Based on figure 13, in grammar / language use data there were 23 students who got limited scores, which means that 50% of them had too many grammatical mistakes in the entire paragraph. Subsequently, 9 students got adequate scores, it represents 19.6%. Students had 4 grammatical mistakes in the entire paragraph. Meanwhile, 9 students got proficient scores which means 19.6% of the population who had two grammar mistakes in their paragraph. Finally, 5 students got excellent scores, representing 10.9 % of the participants who do not have any grammatical mistakes in their paragraphs.

Figure 13. Grammar / language use data

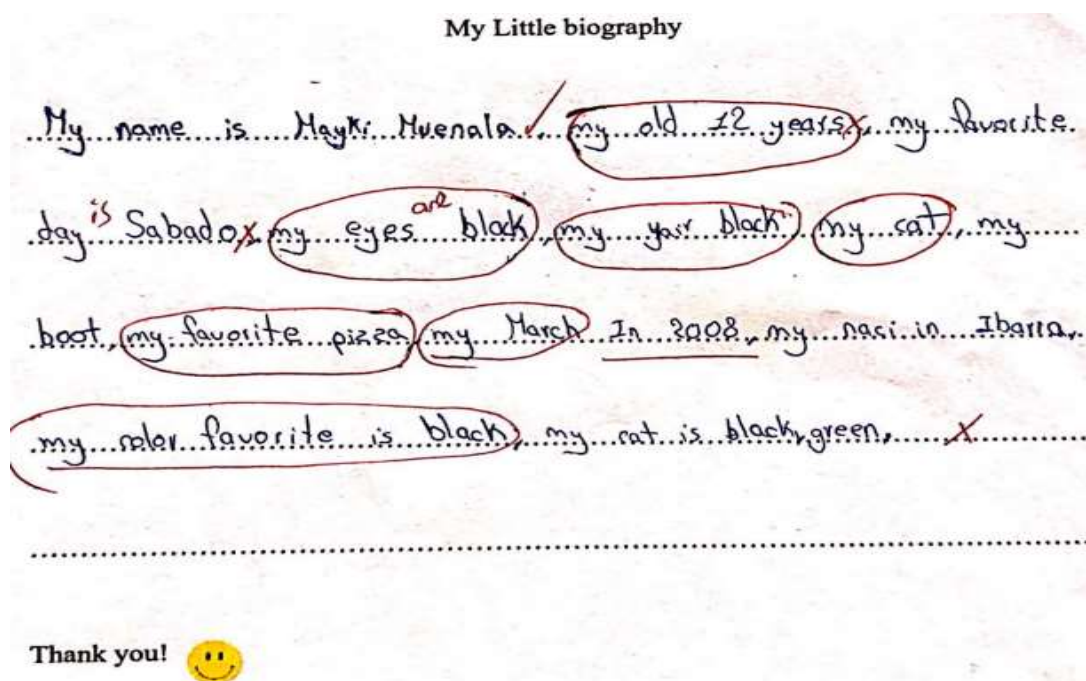


Source: Own authorship

According to a writing sample in figure 14 for grammar/language use problems, the student was not able to use the correct grammatical structure such as subject, verb, and complement. Because, in the sentence the student wrote 'my old 12 years' instead of 'I am 12 years old'. Following, the student did not use the verb to be in the sentence 'My eyes are brown' the student

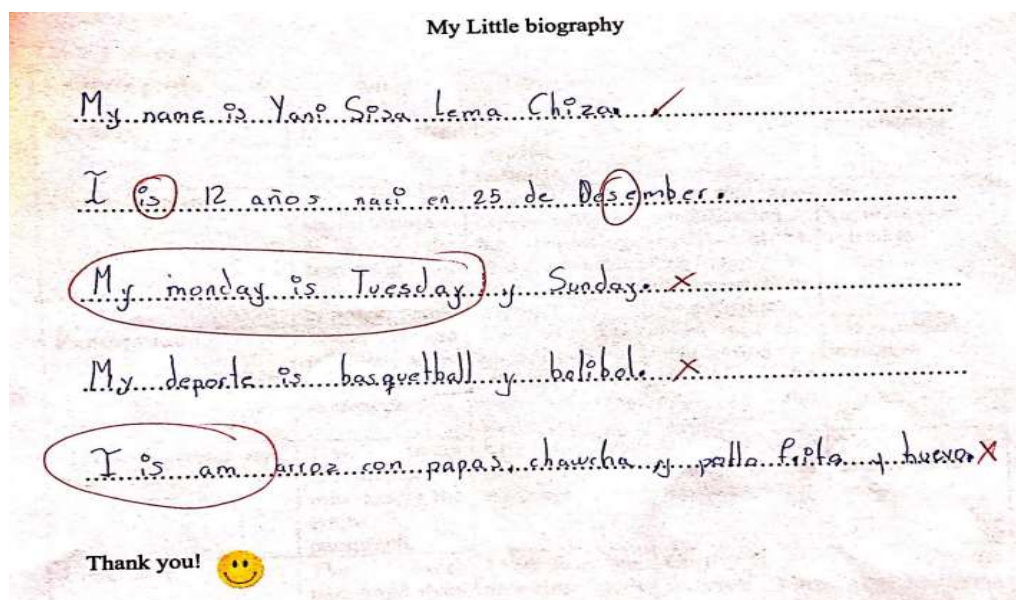
wrote 'my eyes black'. For the third sentence case, the same grammar/language use mistake is repeated. The sentence does not follow the simple present tense structure, the student wrote 'my your black' the structure is not correct, it does not have a subject, verb, either complement in the correct order then it turned difficult to understand. To conclude, the last sentence is not well organized, it does not have the correct grammatical structure. In addition, in figure 15 for grammar/language use problems, the student wrote 'I is 12 años' the participant did not use the correct form of the verb to be 'I am 12 years old'. Additionally, in the third sentence the subject was not written correctly for instance, the student wrote 'My Monday is Tuesday'. Finally, in the last sentence the student wrote two forms of the verb to be in one sentence 'I is am' students over-use the verb to be. In addition, grammar deficient comprehension interfere learners communicate their ideas effectively through writing (Patterson, 2001).

Figure 14. Grammar / language use problems



Source: Own authorship

Figure 15. Grammar problems / language use

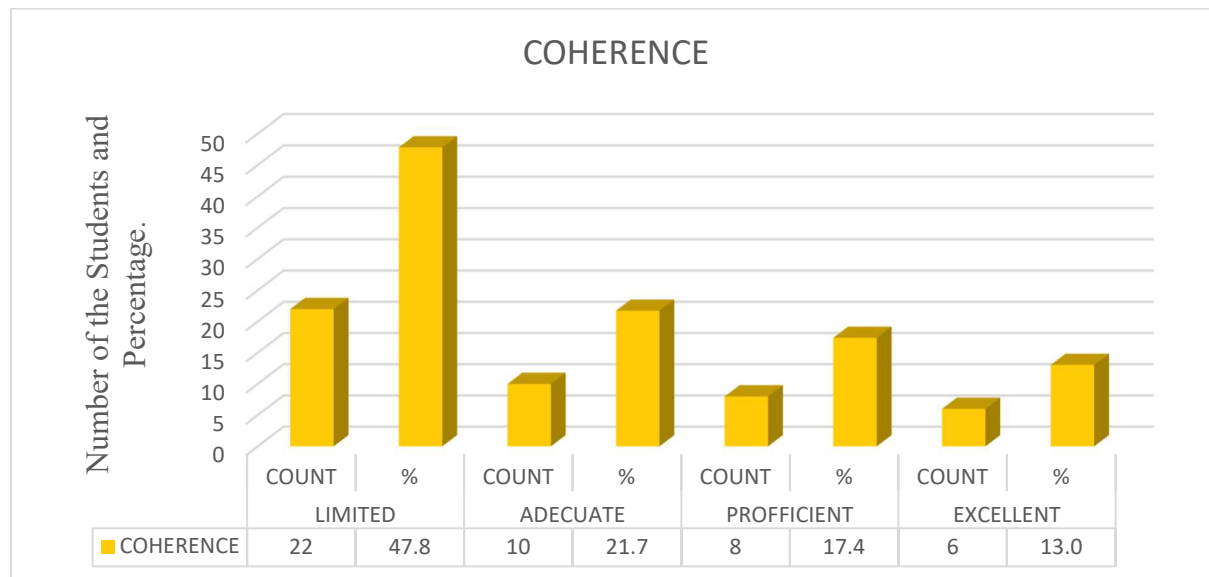


Source: Own authorship

4.1.8. Coherence

In coherence data, it is evident that 27 students got limited scores that represent 47.8%. Students' sentences lack of sense. Therefore, sentences are not clear neither logic. Meanwhile, 10 students got adequate score, which means 21.7%. Participants wrote more than two sentences without meaning for readers, most of the sentences were not clear and logical. Furthermore, 8 students got a proficient score, which represent 17.40%. Moreover, participants wrote only one clear and logical sentence over five. At last, 6 students who represent 13% got an excellent score, all their sentences were written clearly and logically in the paragraph.

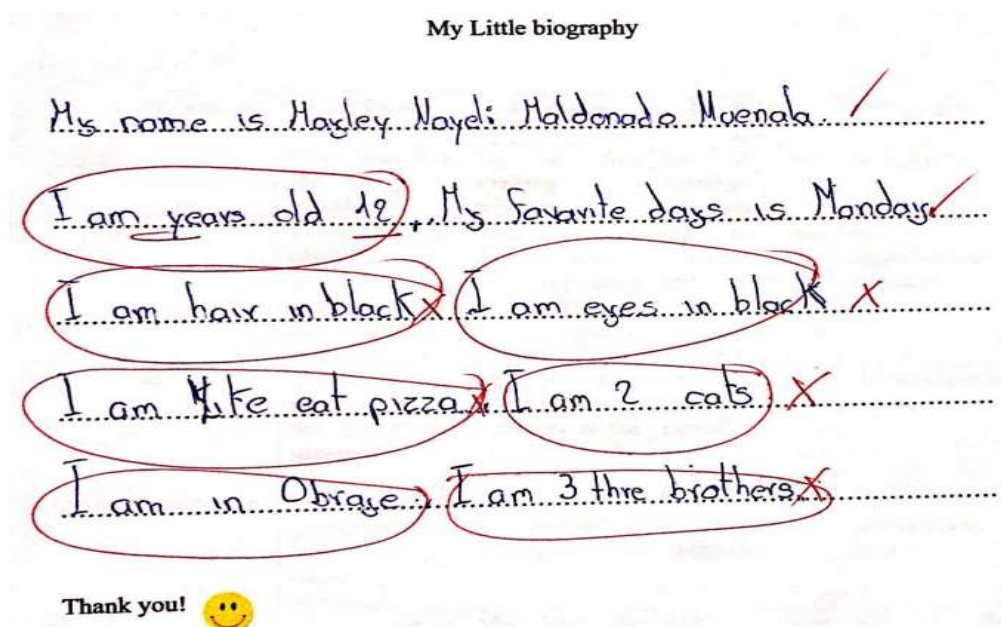
Figure 16. Coherence data



Source: Own authorship

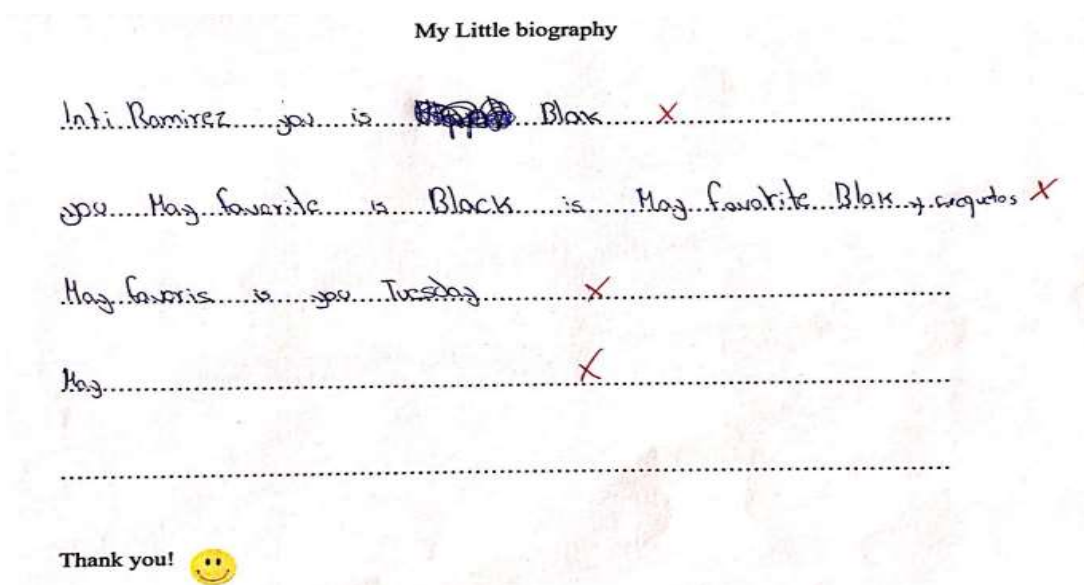
Conforming to figure 17. For coherence problems, the student wrote the entire paragraph without coherence. It was not possible to understand the meaning of the sentences. The student wrote 'I am years old 12' instead of 'I am 12 years old'. Furthermore, the participant wrote ' I am hair black' instead of ' My hair is black' or 'I have black hair'. Moreover, the student wrote 'I am eyes in black' instead of 'My eyes are black'. Finally, the student wrote sentences that are not easy to understand, as reported by figure 18. For coherence problems. The student wrote sentences without coherence such as 'Inty Ramirez you is black' which does not make sense, it is difficult to understand. In the second sentence case study, the student wrote 'you my favorite is black' it is not understandable. To conclude, in this sentence the participant wrote 'May favoris is you black', therefore, it does not have coherence so that it is difficult to understand.

Figure 17. Coherence problems



Source: Own authorship

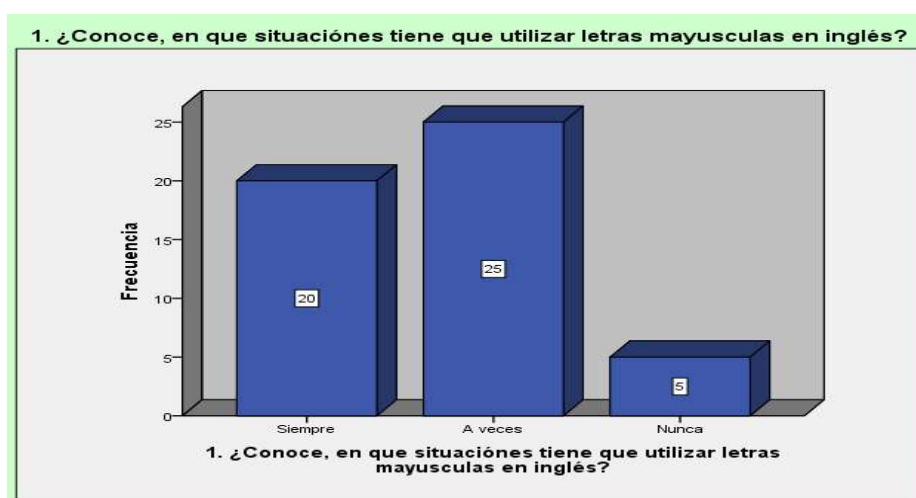
Figure 18. Coherence problems



Source: Own authorship

Figure 19, reports “Capitalization use” 20 students which represents 40% of the total mentioned that they always know when to capitalize words in a sentence in an English paragraph. Additionally, 25 students, who represent 50% said they sometimes know when to capitalize words in a sentence in English. Finally, 5 students who represent 10% students stated that they never know when to capitalize words at the moment to write in English. Comparing these results with the writing assessment, even students mention they know to use capital letters, they do not use correctly at the moment to write.

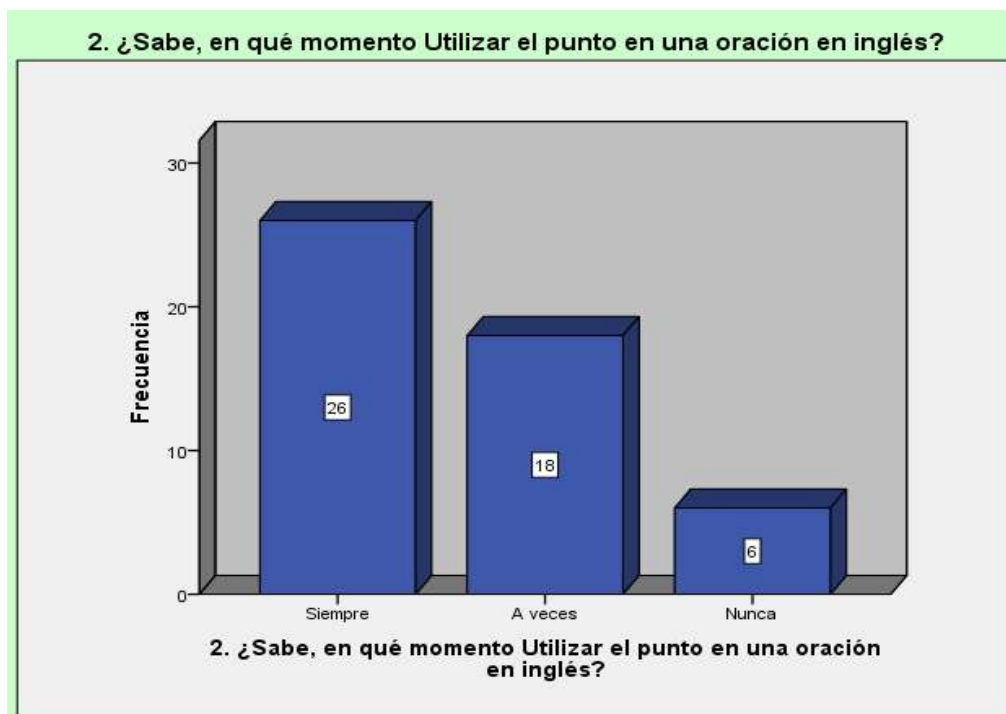
Figure 19. Capitalization use



Source: Own authorship

Regarding to punctuation use, students said they know how to use punctuation appropriately figure 18 shows that 26 responders that represent 52,0% stated that they always know when to use punctuation correctly. Additionally, 18 participants representing 36,0% said that they sometimes know when to use punctuation in a paragraph. Finally, 6 students representing 12,0% stated that they do not know when to use punctuation in their writing exercises. However, students writing assessment shows participants' low knowledge in the correct use of punctuation specially at the end of the sentence.

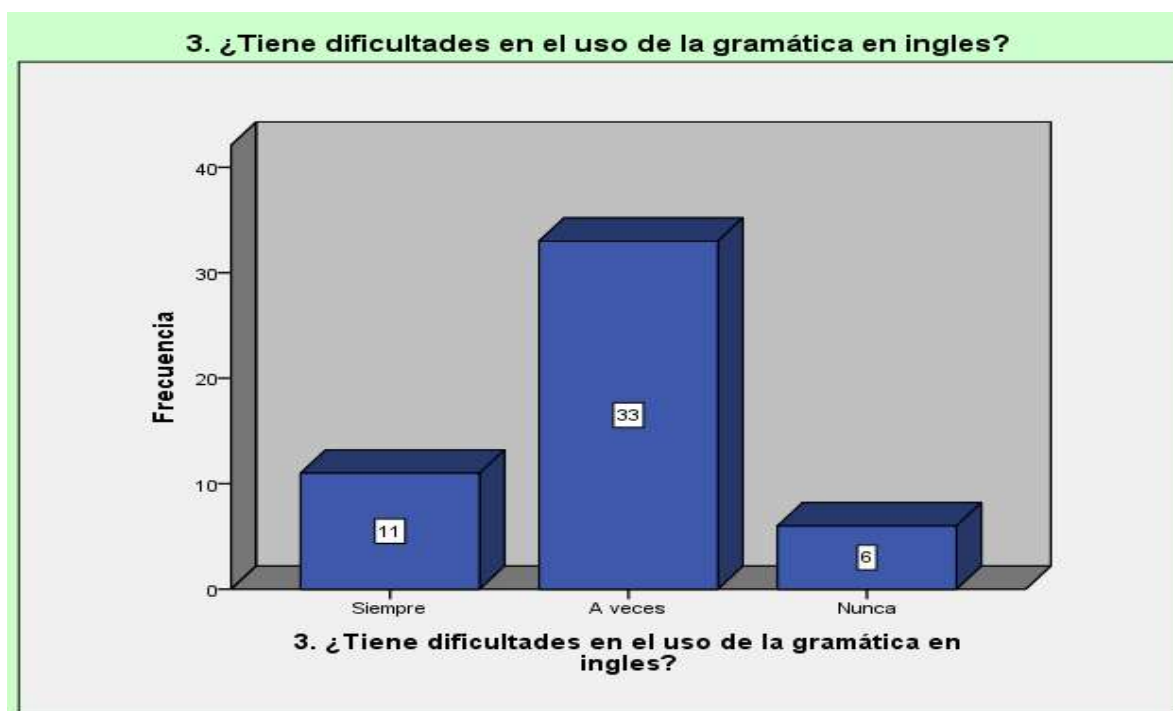
Figure 20. Punctuation use



Source: Own authorship

Figure 20 shows how students perceive their grammar/ language use. 11 responders representing 22,0% mentioned that they always have problems in English grammar. Furthermore, 33 students which represent 66,0% stated that they sometimes have English grammar difficulties. Finally, 6 students representing 12,0% said that they do not have any problem in grammar use. On the other hand, participants' writing assessment displays many struggles at a time to use basic structures.

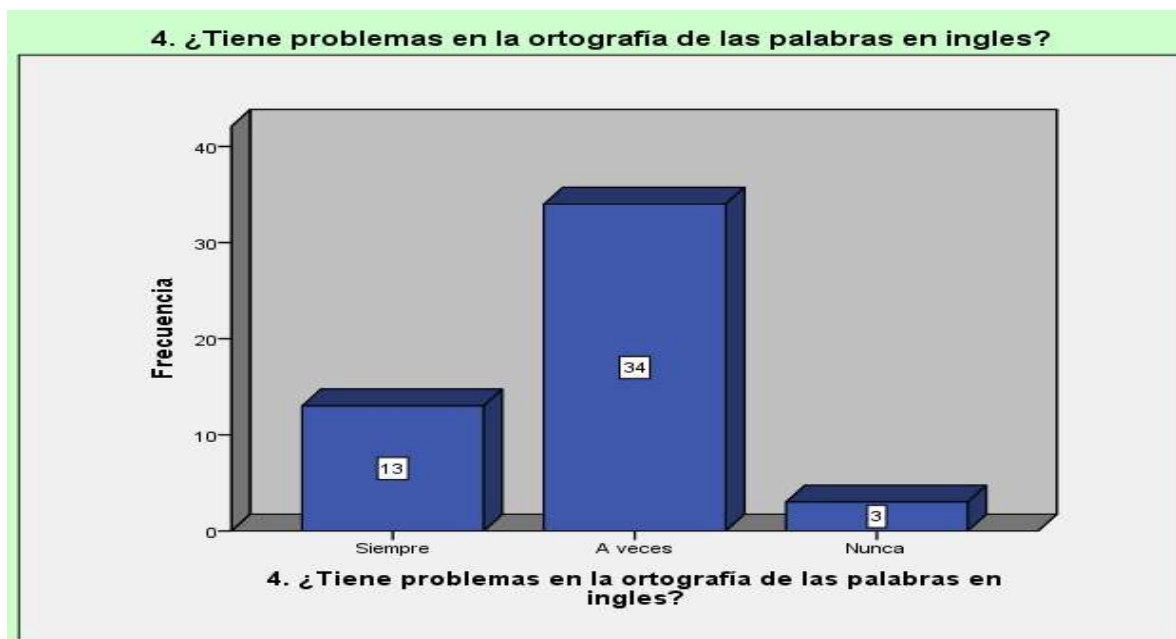
Figure 21. Grammar/ language use.



Source: Own authorship

Regarding question fourth as is shown in figure 21 students have problems in spelling. 13 participants that represent 26,0% said that they always face spelling problems while they are writing in English. Moreover, 34 students which represent 68,0% stated that they sometimes faced spelling problems when they have to write a paragraph in the English language. Finally, 3 students representing 6,0% said that they do not have spelling problems in English writing. It is important to point out when 68,0% of participants stated that they sometimes faced spelling difficulties on the contrary, students' writing assessment show a high percent of misspellings in their sentences.

Figure 22. Spelling use



Source: Own authorship

In summary, spelling shows language interference. That occurs when L1 interferes in the L2 learning process children use their L1 words, sounds, in L2 spoken and written production. Additionally, this interference could be consciously or unconsciously, positive or negative for instance learners experiment struggles at the moment to spell words correctly in the language that they are learning (Figueredo, 2006). Capitalization shows the first-person omission in most of the sentences, students did not capitalize the first letter at the beginning of the sentence neither after the period. Students do not capitalize proper names as well. Capitalization is essential in writing skills, it helps to differentiate between proper names and common ones (Kirkman, 2006). Punctuation shows problems students omitted to use a period at the end of the sentence consequently, it causes run-on sentences. Punctuation shows readers where a sentence starts and finishes (Shaw, 1986). Regarding Grammar/Language use shows that the curriculum and teachers are incurring in a over-use of the verb to be that do not allow the students to incorporate other verbs in writing. Additionally, interference errors which are caused by L1 ‘my color favorite is black’ it is following Spanish structure ‘mi color favorito es negro’ (Richards, 1974). Coherence

shows sentences without meaning, parts of the sentences are not used in the correct way, the reader does not understand what the writer wrote. Coherence in a text makes the message easy to understand for readers (Hyland, 2006).

4.3.2 Factors that positively relate to writing skills development

Table 2.

Students' performance positive factors

	Students with higher scores	Students with lower scores
Family factors	Half of this group of students responded they have support from siblings, brothers, sisters or somebody at home. Besides they count on computers and internet to search for things they need clarification.	The great majority of students answer that they find support on electronic devices, dictionaries, books, student guides and only a few responded they have support from other person at home.
School factors	They say they receive great support from the school teacher: " <i>la licenciada de inglés me ayuda en todo</i> " (Informant No. 11. Written interview, March, 11, 2021).	Their answers are more varied. They find support in teachers but also in dictionaries and books: " <i>La maestra, la biblioteca, los compañeros</i> " (Informant No. 31. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).
Community Factors	Three of the students do not answer, the students who answer say that they do not receive any help from the community. " <i>yo puedo aprender más porque me ayudan las personas</i> "	Some of them refer to a communitarian public center and to foreign people: " <i>en mi comunidad me ayuda el centro comunitario y los gringuitos</i> "

	<p><i>que conozco</i>” (informant No.12. Written interview, March, 11, 2021).</p> <p>, “<i>en mi comunidad con mis amigos puedo escribir en inglés</i>” (Informant No. 16. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p>	<p>(Informant N. 21. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p>
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4.3.3 Factors that negatively relate to writing skills development

Table 3

Students’ performance negative factors

	Students with higher scores	Students with lower scores
Family factors	<p>Two out of ten do not respond. Some responses relate to a disturbing or noisy environment or when nobody is there to help with homework: “<i>mis hermanas estan molestando. El ruido de la calle</i>” (Informant No. 9. Written interview, March, 11, 2021).</p> <p>“<i>lo que no me deja escribir porque estoy solo y no puedo</i>” (Informant No. 16. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p>	<p>They identify distractions at home, such as video games, and noisy environment. But what is notorious were two responses related to hard family conditions, such as parents lacking of time and not enough food at home: “<i>que casi siempre estan ocupados que estan muy desgastados</i>” (Informant No. 30. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p> <p>“<i>no tenemos dinero para comer y no puedo concentrarme</i>” (Informant No. 40. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).</p>
School factors	<p>The majority describe a disturbing study environment in the classroom</p>	<p>Two did not respond the question. They identified diverse factors also</p>

	<p>that prevent them from paying attention: “<i>mis compañeros son muy molestos</i>” (Informant No. 38. Written interview, March, 15, 2021). “<i>no me deja escribir porque estoy haciendo una prueba</i>” (Informant No. 16. Written interview, March, 12, 2021). Some students also reported problems of shyness: “<i>no me gusta preguntar</i>” (Informant No. 43. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).</p> <p>o “<i>soy tímido</i>” (Informant No. 47. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).</p>	<p>related to the classroom environment but they see themselves as not paying enough attention to the subject: “<i>me distraigo muy rápido</i>” (Informant No. 30. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p> <p>. “<i>no presto mucha atención a veces</i>” (Informant No. 37. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).</p> <p>. One described lack of material and the necessity to translate to understand English: “<i>me falta un cuaderno de solo inglés y traducir en español para poder entender</i>” (Informant No. 21. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p>
Community Factors	<p>Half of the students did not answer to this question. Probably it was hard for them to identify community factors that interfere with their learning process. One said that there are no people around to help “<i>algunos de mis vecinos no saben inglés</i>” (Informant No. 9. Written interview, March, 11, 2021), or lack of time due to communitarian activities of members “<i>hay muchas mingas y no dejan hacer tarea</i>”</p>	<p>Two did not answer the question. They refer to several problems one of them was the absence of people around to talk in English to: “<i>donde yo vivo nadie sabe el idioma inglés por eso no se tanto</i>” (Informant No. 21. Written interview, March, 12, 2021).</p> <p>They also refer to other activities they have to perform, such as sports or playing with friends “<i>los juegos entre amigos, salidas a las áreas verdes, salir a hacer</i></p>

	Informant No. 11. Written interview, March, 11, 2021).	<i>deporte</i> ". (Informant No. 31. Written interview, March, 15, 2021).
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Source: Own authorship

In general, there are many differences between students who got higher scores in their writing assessment and students who got lower scores. Family factors, students with higher scores mentioned that they have support from their siblings, brothers' sisters, or somebody in their house. Additionally, these children said that they have access to the internet on computers. This group of students shows high performance in English writing. On the other hand, students who got lower scores mentioned that they look for information in dictionaries, electronic devices, and a few responses that they have family support at home. Consequently, these children face many difficulties at the time to write sentences or paragraphs in English.

In regard to school factors, students who got higher scores in writing assessment mentioned that they receive great support from the school teacher. However, the students who got lower scores said that they find support in teachers but they require extra information which is found in dictionaries, books, and sometimes ask for help from their friends. Students with lower scores require more teacher's attention and motivation to get better in their English writing performance.

Community factors, children who got higher scores in writing assessment mentioned that they do not receive any help from the community but they said that there are other people who help them in the English learning process. Therefore, students who got lower scores said that they receive help from the communitarian public centers and foreign people.

Students' responses about negative factors related to their writing skills development; Students who got higher scores mentioned negative family factors. They said that the noise environment affects their performance additionally, parents neither sibling are not at home to help them with homework. On the contrary, students who got lower scores mentioned that video games

and noisy environment avoid their better performance in English writing. Two students mentioned their hard-living condition, parents do not have time also, they do not have food to eat, negative factors that affect learner's performance.

Regarding school factors, most of the students who got higher scores described a disturbing study environment in the classroom that prevent them from paying attention. Other ones mentioned their shyness at the moment to ask the teacher. Otherwise, students who got lower scores mentioned that they distract easily, and do not pay attention to class, also they mentioned the lack of materials and the necessity to teacher translate classes into Spanish.

Related to community factors, half of the children who got higher scores did not answer the question. Probably, it was hard to identify community factors, other students said that their neighbors do not speak English also they have many community works. Students with lower scores mentioned several problems. One of them, the absence of people around to talk in English. Also, they mentioned their activities such as sports or playing with friends.

It is clear that higher score students have more help from their parents, brothers, siblings, also, from their teachers at school. Furthermore, they count on technology devices and the internet where they can find information making it easier for them the language learning process. On the contrary, students with lower scores face huge difficulties at home because their parents have to go out to work, they stay alone at home they spend time playing on cellphones or watching TV. In school they distract easily, teachers do not pay them attention. Even though they have a communitarian center and foreign people's help, is not enough to increase their learning performance due to the difficulties that these children have. Moreover, it is evidently in lower scores children self-esteem, due to their difficult situation at home, and lack of attention from teachers.

CHAPTER V

ACADEMIC PROPOSAL

5.1 Title

“Let’s Write Without Barriers”

Didactic Guide of Active Strategies to Develop Writing in EFL Classroom

5.2 Rationale

Writing is one of the productive skills in the English learning process, which allows people to communicate with each other without speaking; such as writing emails, text messages, letters, and short messages. Likewise, productive skills like speaking and writing are defined as a way to express and convey thoughts, and feelings, to other people (Jaramillo & Medina, 2011). It is for this reason that, EFL students have to consider several writing factors in order to get well organized, written, and comprehensible final product. Some other characteristics which differentiate between spoken and written language are orthography, vocabulary, permanence, distance, production time, complexity, and formality (Brown, 1994). Even though, writing does not need an expontaneous production as speaking it takes a long time to internalize the different rules. Therefore, writing sentences “gives the students time to think up idea rather than having to come up with instant fluent opinions, something that many, especially, at lower level, find difficult and awkward” (Harmer, 2004).

Another important fact that hinders students’ good writing performance is their self-steam. For EFL learner’s motivation in learning context plays an important role that allow them to get better performance (Ramage, 1990). To help students facing this limitations EFL learners require motivational strategies which encourage them to create self-confident learning environment

among students. There are two different kinds of strategies that could be applied with this purpose. Direct strategies, focus on compensation strategies, memory, and cognitive. On the other hand, indirect strategies, guide language without directly involving the target language. Both strategies consist of affective, social strategies, and metacognitive. Moreover, there are different strategies, all of them help and join each other in increasing learners' language skills (Oxford, 1990).

Bearing in mind, all of these facts' learners from Unidad Educativa "Miguel Egas Cabezas" elementary school level 8°, the writing classes turn out arduous because of the students' still-limited knowledge of the language. Some other factors which affect this English learning process are the environment where they live, family, and school. Findings reveals that they do not have enough support from their family because most of the parents are working out. Furthermore, in their community environment there is no chances to practice English. However, there are some students who mentioned about the *Centros Comunitarios* where they go to receive support from volunteers to do their homework in different subjects. Additionally, the students mentioned that in the school some of their classmates are noisy which avoiding concentration. Additionally, lack of efficient information about how to capitalize sentences, the correct way to use punctuation, lack of vocabulary for instance misspelling, weak grammar /language use affect students writing performance.

The findings have shown students' mechanical components weaknesses at a time the learners write basic paragraphs. Furthermore, it shown the necessity of motivational strategies to increase students' self-esteem. With all of these in mind, this present study tends to implement ways to improve the learners writing skills. Providing some strategies to teachers in order to boost the way they address writing difficulties. The following teachers' guide is based on teachers' live experiences which helped to decrease common writing mistakes in EFL learners. Finally, this didactic guide was designed to support teachers given them active and useful tools which are explained step by step with clear and understandable information. The strategies are focus on language mechanical components which are challenging for EFL beginners. Furthermore, a motivational strategy which help learners to get better English writing performance.

5.3 Theoretical framework

Writing skill is another way to interact with people using letters, mechanical components, and grammar. In particular, this productive skill requires to language learners recognize every single writing rule and use them correctly. Opposite to speaking skill where people communicate face to face, express ideas using gestures, words, and having direct interaction it makes easier than write; writing is used by writers to transmit, and express their ideas. Therefore, it has to have a comprehensible and clear message in order for the other person gets the correct information. Because of its complexity, writing is considered one of the most difficult skills in terms of L2 language acquisition. English learners have to face many difficulties in their classrooms at a time to recognize the correct uses of different writing elements (Brown, 1994).

This research embraces the micro components of writing such as producing graphemes and orthographic patterns of English. In order to get an efficient writing rate of speed to suit the purpose, producing acceptable core of words and using correct word order pattern, using acceptable grammatical systems such as tense, and subject-verb agreement to express a particular meaning in different grammatical form (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, Brown also stated that, writing skill has some other subskills like; spelling correctly, use correct layouts, use the correct vocabulary, use the correct grammar, and use paragraphs correctly. Hence, writing skills must be introduced in every stage of writing composition. It will help students to use writing more-effectively by using and follow those skills of writing. Moreover, it is necessary to point out the important correlation between students' motivation and their writing performance, learners achieve their writing goals positively based on motivation (Hyland, 2003).

This current study might benefit “Miguel Egas Cabezas” high school English teachers to motivate students to feel enthusiastic in this process making this learning more enjoyable and effective, avoiding learners' anxiety about writing in English. Furthermore, improve their writing performance using specific techniques, or strategies to mitigate self-steam, common writing errors such spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar/ language use, and coherence.

5.3.1 Spelling

English spelling is considered a complicated goal to achieve in terms of writing for EFL learners. Due to, its complex syllable structure which influences the pronunciation of vowels “inconsistent grapheme-phoneme relationships” (Russak, 2015). Furthermore, it is necessary to take into consideration the influence of the native language in target language learners, called Interlingual Inference where learners commit errors when the native language has similar factors including grammar, lexis, semantics, phonology, and morphology to the target language. Moreover, learners got confused when the target language has similar features to their native language, using structures and rules from their native language (Krashen, 1981). Likewise, intralingual error is one of the negative factors that interfere with language learners' positive advance, it happens when the learners did not have enough knowledge about the language such as word definition, use it in a sentence and more factors can be seen in figure 21(Kaweera, 2013).

Figure 23. Spelling Wheel



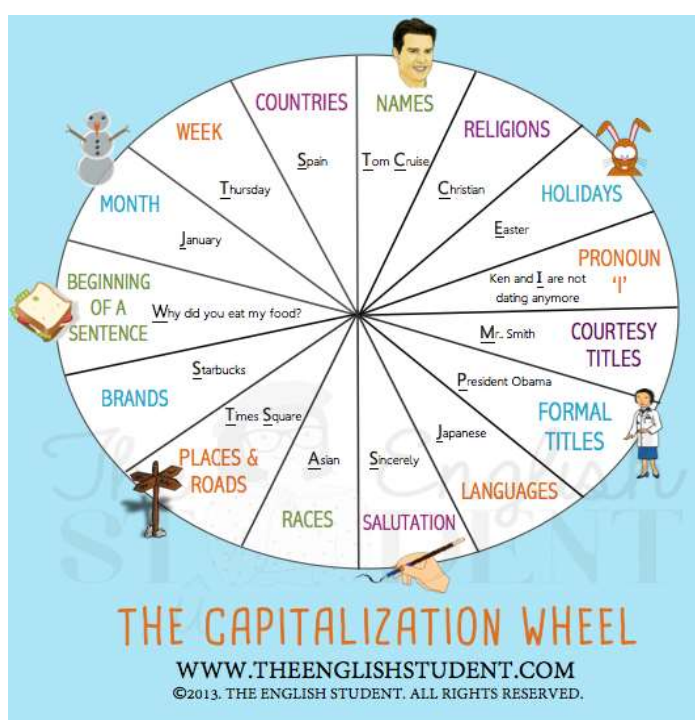
Source: Visual Education, (2018)

5.3.2 Capitalization use

There are many rules to capitalize in English that a language learner has to learn in order to have well written paragraphs, or sentences in English. Consequently, teachers have to have enough knowledge to introduce them to learners correctly. One of them mentioned; the first letter

of the first word in a paragraph or a complete sentence has to be capitalized it makes easy to recognize that the sentence or paragraph are starting. Capitalization, allows to divide proper names from common names, specific people, places or things will generally capitalized. Moreover, the first personal pronoun in English has to be capitalized no matter where it goes. “Capitalization makes communication clear, effective and impressive by giving the text a standard and distinctive appearance” (Siddiqui, 2015) Beside, proper nouns include: names of mountains, continents, countries, cities, name’s of rivers, name’s of buildings, street names, nationalities and language, time periods and events as it is illustrated in figure 21. Nevertheless, there are some exceptions that should taking into account. It is not capitalized needed after comma, semicolon, and colon, because they do not show the end of the sentence.

Figure 24. Capitalization Wheel



Source: The English Student, (2013)

5.3.3 Punctuation use

Punctuation errors occur with misusing or omitting one of the following signs. Regarding to punctuation use, this research is going to focus in a period use. Period is used at the end of declarative, and imperative sentences. Furthermore, it is used to finish an idea, and signpost of completed content (Razzak, and Al-Hassan, 1986). The following figure illustrates punctuation different uses in an English paragraph composition.

Figure 25. The Semantic Implication and the Prosodic Association of Punctuation.

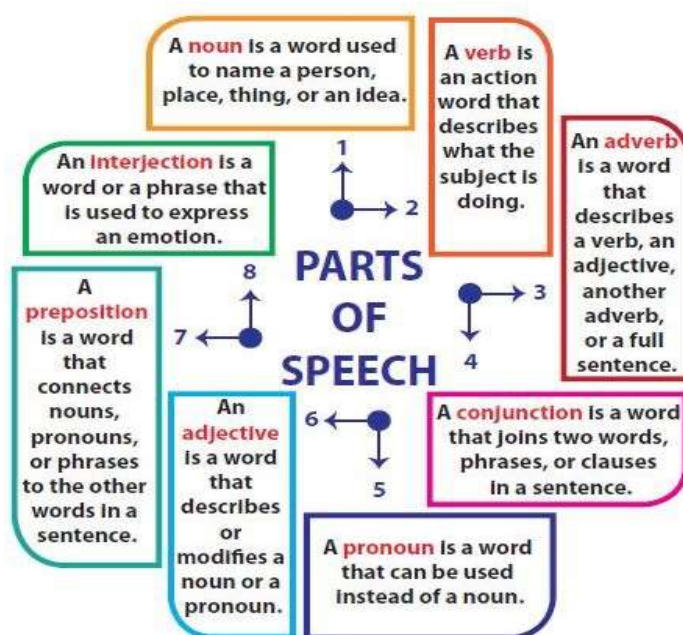
<p>Punctuation Quotation marks single or double.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: borders, stratification, and 'arrest' of content: used for quoted, foreign, or notable words or language. • Prosodic Association: change in tone, hyperarticulation.
<p>Apostrophe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: an omission of sound letters, suspension. • Prosodic Association: Cipping, syncopation, apocopation.
<p>Hyphen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: a connection of parts, linkage of content. • Prosodic Association: controlled articulation, even pitch.
<p>Question mark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: inquisition, interrogation, and questioning. • Prosodic Association: change in pitch, rising tone.
<p>Exclamation mark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: emphasis and emotions. • Prosodic Association: articulatory tension, higher pitch, louder volume.
<p>Full stop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: a finished idea, a signpost of completed content. • Prosodic Association: brief stop in sound production.
<p>Comma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: juncture, a small mental break in reading. • Prosodic Association: pause, change in pitch.
<p>Semicolon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: juncture, a larger mental break in reading. • Prosodic Association: pause, change in pitch.
<p>Colon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: juncture, an explanation or example follows. • Prosodic Association: pause, change in pitch.
<p>Ellipsis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic implication: silence, absence, break in discourse. • Prosodic Association: slower speed, waning volume, break induced by interruption.

Taken from (Muller, 2011).

5.3.4 Grammar/language use

Grammar is one important aspect in learning English, especially in writing and speaking skills (Brown, 1980). Learning English, could be more efficient if students master grammar it will help learners to understand the meaning of the sentence. Grammar, is a sentence structure or patterns which are written using different tenses. In grammar learners can determine the grammatical form which shows the meaning of the sentence or paragraph. Hence, learners can recognize the different part of speech in writing drills as it is shown in figure 24. It is not easy to reach a high grammar skill performance, due to learners L1 different grammar pattern so that students got confused when write sentences grammatically. Grammar is a complex system which need to be explained sequentially one part in terms of another. In addition, English language learners have to understand grammar structures and parts of speech to express their ideas freely, and correctly in written sentences or paragraphs (Patterson, 2001).

Figure 26. Parts of the Speech



Source: Teaching Resources, (2021)

5.3.5 Coherence

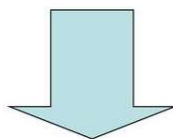
Coherence is important in writing skill for language learners, coherence imply expressing clear and understandable ideas in a text (Castro, 2004). The concept of coherence was not definite so that teachers face complications teaching and evaluating students (Bublitz, 2011). Consequently, students have some writing problems, especially producing coherent sentences in a short paragraph as is shown in figure 25 (Lee, 2002).

Figure 27. Coherence

Coherence

- **Example of an incoherent text**

He worked hard but earned little money and died very poor at the age of 35. Two years later his father took him to play at concerts in the great cities of Europe



Does it make sense?

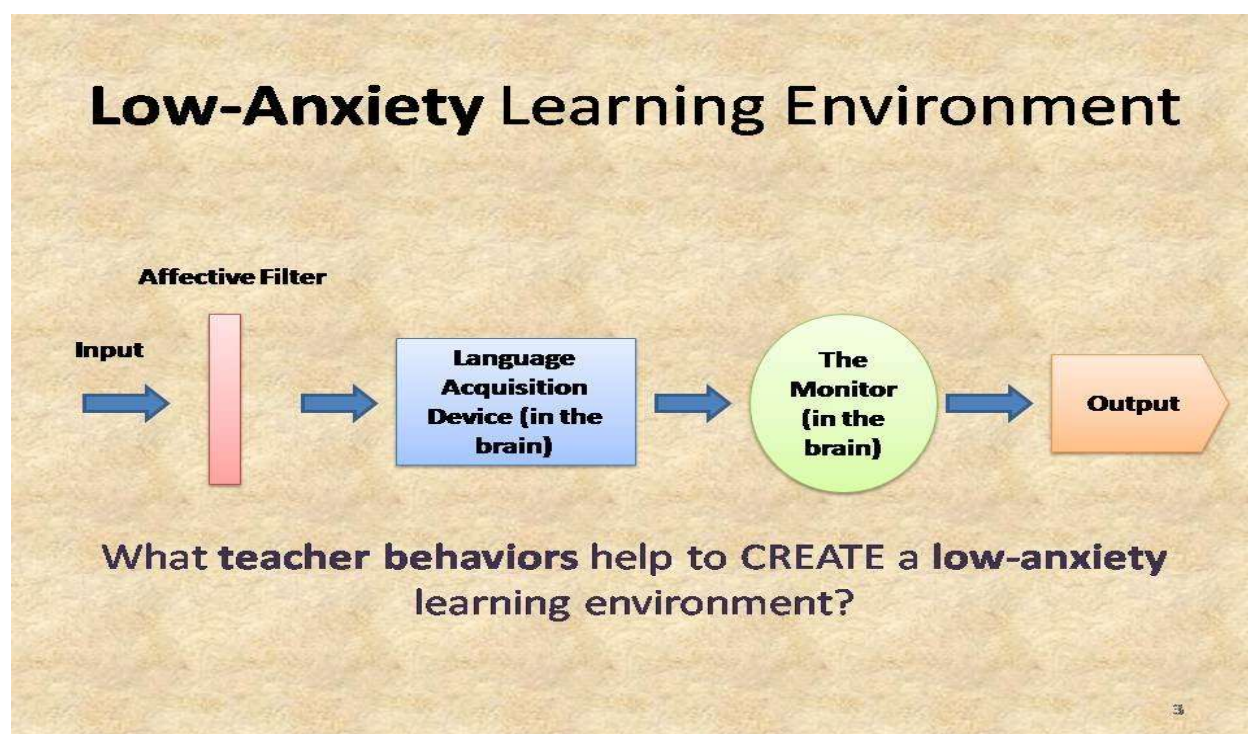
Source: Price Rudolph, (2016)

5.3.6 Motivation

Motivation is one of the main parts of an English classroom that encourages learners to do something to reach a goal, to get this goal requires perseverance, energy, and other factors. In the EFL classroom, teachers are encharged to come up with different motivation strategies every day. As the teacher is fundamental to keep in mind how necessary is the motivation for EFL learners (Littlewood, 1987). Additionally, motivating EFL learners to become an important factor in a classroom in order to achieve successfully teachers' and learners' goals. In the EFL classroom is

fundamental to create a friendly atmosphere where students have opportunities to talk and write without limitations, where classmates or teachers do not laugh or criticize mistakes. In order to motivate students, teachers have to demonstrate enthusiasm for teaching instead of being formal in that way, teachers should break the barriers between students. Consequently, students reduce their anxiety, affective filter, and increasing learning mode (Krashen, 1981).

Figure 28. Low-Anxiety



Source: Smith Jerry, (2015)

5.4 Writing strategies

The adequate use of writing strategies enhances learner's language mechanisms. Bearing in mind that the writing skill is a productive one it should have coherent and cohesion, to convey

an effective message to the receptor. Due to its complexity, it is necessary to develop effective strategies to correct common writing mistakes in English language learners. Recognizing the different concepts of writing components such as, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar/language use, and coherence help teachers take the better strategy in order to increase students better writing performance.

5.4.1 Spelling

5.4.2 Crossword puzzles strategy

Crossword puzzles is an active strategy designed to increase spelling, definitions, vocabulary knowledge, practicing the skill, less threatening. Therefore, this strategy is focused in long term and short-term memory, strengthening learners spelling words. Additionally, this sort of activities is well welcoming by different age students, this game is composed of letters organized in grid format. The goal is to find out the hidden words in the puzzle, the words may be placed across, down, diagonally, and backwards. This word searching strategy provides language learners strategic thinking, reinforce spelling proficiency, expanding vocabulary, and advancing logical. Furthermore, this activity affords creative outlet for solving problem and competition. This kind of games could be made on specific websites, or apps to make easier teachers' job (Weisskirch, 2006).

5.4.3 Spelling bee strategy

This activity is considered as a contest, challenging students' ability to spell words between several participants. The students have to pronounce a word spelling letter by letter in the correct order as it is written. Even though, students are learning the words or the vocabulary they have to develop a high performance in pronunciation and the definition of words as well. In addition, spelling bee increases children vocabulary, allowing students get better at reading and writing. Moreover, spelling bee motivates students to learn words in depth its origin and etymology (Maguire, 2006).

5.5. Capitalization

5.5.1 Jeopardy Strategy

Reaching capitalization knowledge for EFL learners requires a lot of effort from learners and teachers. Teachers have to look for specific strategies to teach learners how to capitalize correctly in English sentences and paragraphs. Jeopardy is one of the strategies that can help the learners to recognize when they have to capitalize words. Using Jeopardy in writing class students have the opportunity to put into practice their knowledge about capitalization in English. Jeopardy is designed not only to test students it can help them more about different topics (Ingram, Guide to "Jeopardy-Styled", 2007)

5.5.2 Jigsaw strategy

In this activity students focus on collaborative learning (Hedeen, 2003). Working in small groups. Jigsaw activity is intended to correct capitalization mistakes in English writing skills. Furthermore, this activity is an efficient way to encourage learners to realize when they need to place capital letters in a sentence. Additionally, there is a wide variety of jigsaw activities but the most remarkable one is when students have to organize the words of sentences taking into consideration that at the beginning of the sentences the first letter of the first word has to be capitalized, as well as, proper names and the first personal pronoun.

5.5.3 Punctuation

5.6 Dictation

In order to increase students' punctuation knowledge, the dictation strategy is considered to be used in the classroom. Dictation has a variety of benefits for EFL learners especially for writing skills, dictation is applied with any level of language learners, depending on the text used. It does not require exhausting preparation or materials. There are many ways to manage students

for applying dictation strategy in the classroom, students work in small groups with each person in the group dictating a section of the text to the rest of the group. This encourages the learners to pay attention and listen to each other. Additionally, the student who is assigned to read has to focus on clear pronunciation. Teachers dictate a text without punctuation later on ask the students to work in groups to punctuate the text in correct way.

5.6.1 Grammar/language use

5.6.2 Mini book strategy

Grammar/language use, for EFL learners, internalizing, organize, and use different grammar structures, and tenses turn challenging, especially when they have to write sentences or paragraphs. Mini book strategy fit perfectly for EFL writing beginners, students can make their own mini-book using different materials such as; colored papers, white papers, old cereal boxes. Students can make vocabulary books on themes, e.g. My family book where learners can write different sentences using the verb to be to introduce their family. Furthermore, learners can describe pictures and write the description using the correct tense and grammar structure. Learners can work individually, and in groups.

5.7 Motivational Strategies

5.7.1 Classroom settings strategy

How to rearrange the classroom to motivate EFL learners? In order to motivate students, set classroom in different strategic ways encourage learners to focus on classes. It is important to considerate these aspects:

- Eye's contact is important, teachers-students, students-teachers. The person who is speaking requires learner's attention.
- Students have to be seated at comfortable distance from each other not so far. All students have to be organized in groups; nobody can stay out of the group.

- Think in advance how you can move or change the partners or groups easily.

5.7.2 Pair and Team Work strategy

Teachers have to be skillful and resourceful to motivate students to participate in a team work. Collaboration and communication, are the best factors to motivate students to learn, the positive benefits are evident at their presentations, learners help each other while working on different types of tasks like; drawing pictures, interviews, writing dialogues, making comments about them, play roles. Each student participates and do activities according to their skills, and abilities, one student is good in expressing ideas verbally, other one in drawing, a third one is good at role play and imitation.

5.8 Objectives

5.8.1 General objectives

Provide active strategies to improve learners' writing performance.

5.8.2 Writing objectives

- To boost students' knowledge about specific writing skill.
- To provide writing skills template for teachers.
- To apply different writing strategies to encourage students to do better sentences or paragraph in English.

5.9 Beneficiaries

In order to develop nowadays situation of English writing in 8° graders, teachers should be prepared in teaching methods and approaches properly. The teachers should be able to adapt different teaching strategies, techniques, to let learners write independently. Also, the teachers should design innovative writing strategies for the class so that they get more involved in learning process. As teachers it is important to be sure that the students are enjoying their writing tasks in the classroom offering rewards, making groups, providing enough tools to learners reach the goal which is write correctly.

The present guide was designed to be used by teachers from Unidad Educativa Intercultural Bilingue “Miguel Egas Cabezas”. This present guide has plenty of pedagogical, methodological, and didactic information about different writing skills to work with 8° graders. Therefore, teachers need to have a wide knowledge and information about writing skills such as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar/language use, and coherence to make the English writing teaching process fruitful. Applying these strategies frequently during the school year, children will be able to write accurately basic sentences and paragraphs in English. Teaching how to write correctly to 8° graders are beneficial for their future levels, learners will not fail in writing test especially they will not fail the year due to writing skill. Using these strategies learners will avoid misspelling, capitalization, and punctuation omission.

5.10 Impacts

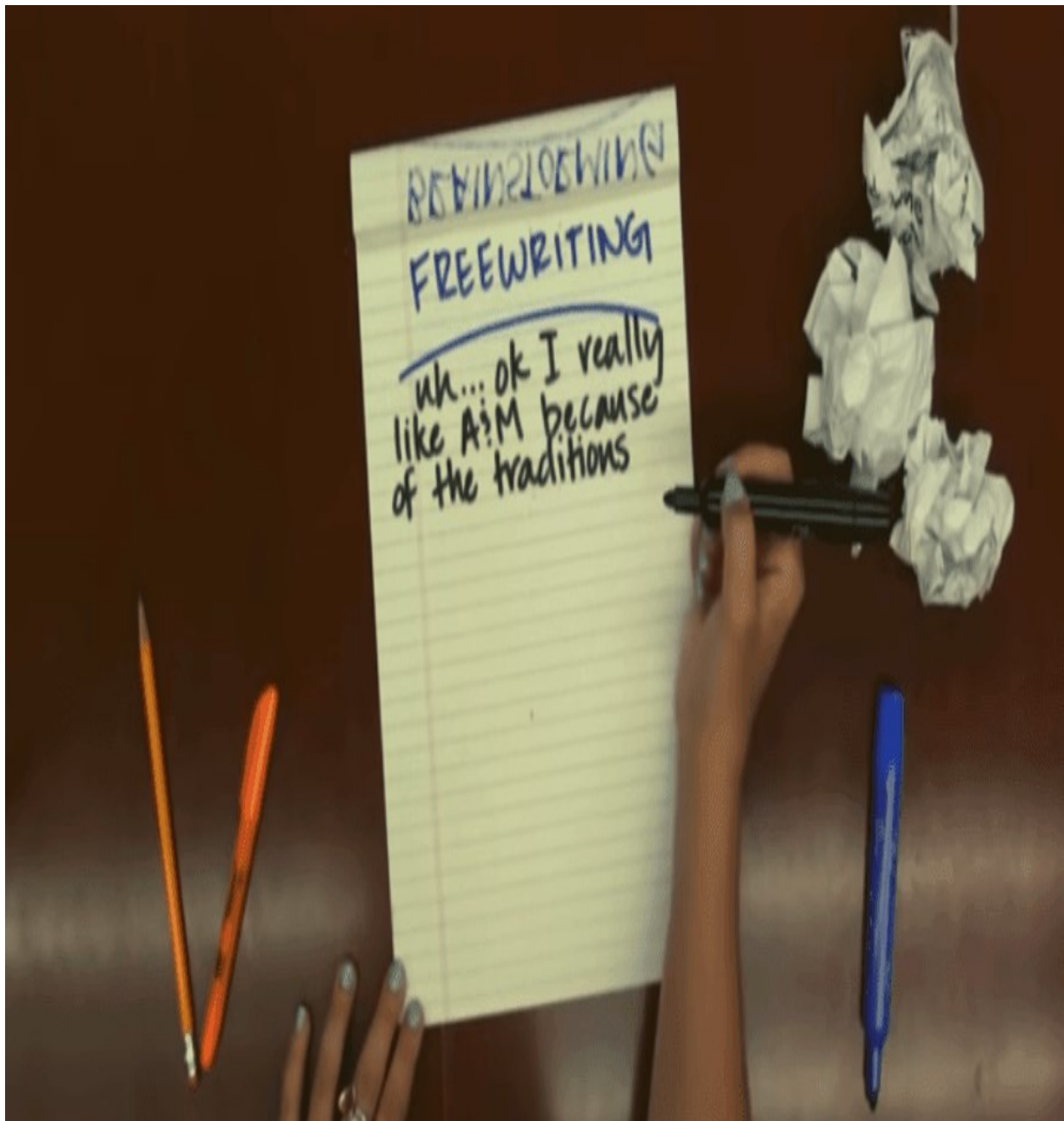
Well written in English language is considered as high-level preparation, it is required at a time to write basic sentences, paragraphs or academic essays. Stablish strong knowledges about writing skills to students who are starting to learn English will bring positive consequences in terms of language acquisition. After learners internalize and put in practice the different skills that writing has, they will feel confident and motivated to write in English. Learners can write without spelling errors; they will capitalize correctly following the rules given like capitalize the first letter of the first word in a sentence or paragraph in order to recognize that the sentence finishes. Also, punctuation will be used correctly in English sentences and paragraph. Regarding to grammar/

language use, parts of speech will be recognized and applying in a correct way in English sentences or paragraphs. Finally, learners write English sentences or paragraph with coherence.

5.11 Development

“Let’s Write Without Barriers”

Writing active strategies focus on writing skills



By: Rosa Marlene Rojas

Introduction

“Let’s write without barriers” is a group of strategies chosen after research studies about writing difficulties that 8^o graders from a public-school face at a time to write basic sentences, and paragraphs in English. Most of the students miss knowledge about basic writing skills before to write wherefore they got low writing production. Therefore, this guide is focused in each writing skills that students have to consider before to write basic sentences and paragraphs in English.

Objectives

General objectives

Implement specific writing strategies for teachers and students to develop students’ writing skills.

Specific objectives

- To provide students plenty opportunity to practice different writing skills.
- To encourage students, to apply different writing skills in a correct way.
- To determine the specific writing skill that students need to write in English correctly.
- To provide teachers specific writing tools.

CROSSWORD PUZZLES SEARCHING STRATEGY

This present strategy helps learners recognize words and letters in English, improving their memory, focusing before learning, increasing correct spelling vocabulary words, helping with overall mental acuity.

Crossword, word searching, puzzles

Aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to write correctly the parts of the house avoiding misspelling.

Target vocabulary: dining room, bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, living room, garden, downstairs, balcony, upstairs, hall, attic, study, chimney.

School level: 8° graders

Group work: pair work

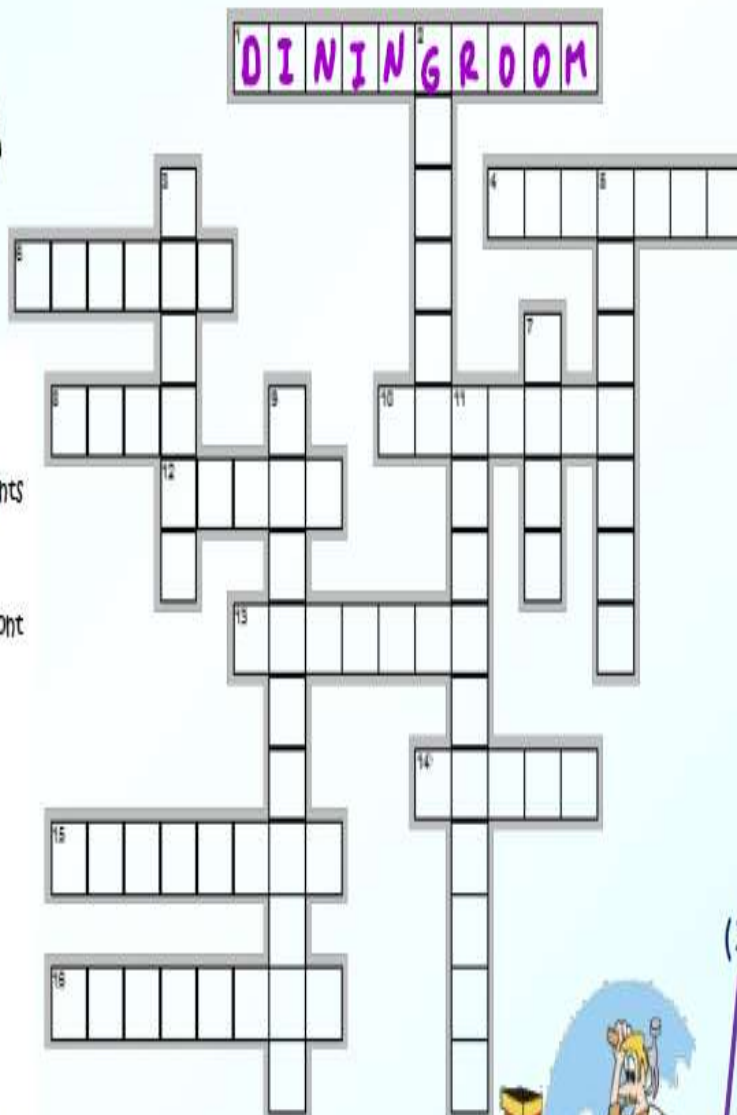
Activity time: 15 minutes

Material: hard copies per each partner, and pencils.



PARTS OF THE HOUSE

DINING ROOM

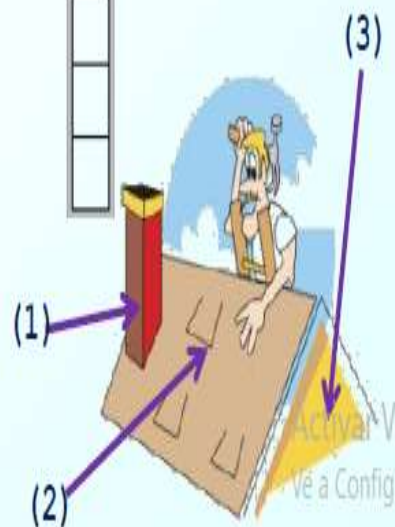


ACROSS

- 1- The room where people eat meals.
- 4- The part of a flat where you can have plants and flowers.
- 6- The green space around a house.
- 8- The part of the house just behind the front door.
- 10- The room where you sleep.
- 12- See picture (3)
- 13- You cook in this room.
- 14- The room where you work or study.
- 15- The upper floor of a house.
- 16- You wash your hands or have a bath here.

DOWN

- 2- You leave the car here.
- 3- A room below the ground in a house to store wine or other things.
- 5- See picture (1)
- 7- It covers the house (See picture (2))
- 9- You and your family watch TV in this room.
- 11- The lower floor of a house.



SPELLING BEE STRATEGY

Spelling bee is a contest which helps students write descriptively such as; organize their thinking, search for and communicate details, define people place and things, write with clarity and purpose. Furthermore, spelling bee develop English usage correctly.

Variety of topics will be applied for different English language learners

Aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to write and pronounce the parts of the body using the correct spelling.

Target vocabulary: head, shoulder, eyes, nose, elbow, eyebrows, eyelashes, knees, toes, fingers, foot, ears, hair, chest, stomach, lips, tongue, belly, back, mouth, tooth, hand, legs, hips, face.

School level: 8^o graders

Group work: small groups





Activity time: 40 minutes





Material: cards with parts of the body pictures and words, each card has to be numbering.

Steps of Using Spelling Bee

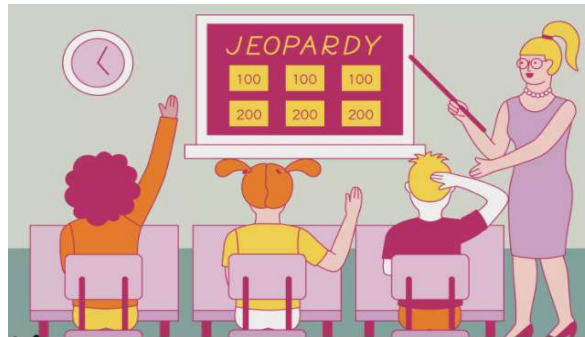
1. A day before the treatment started, the teacher prepared the words and wrote each down on a piece of card. Each card was numbered.

2. Teacher divide the class in small groups. Before the game starts, the students are given about 10 minutes to study together the lesson that they had just learnt from the teacher. Discuss the meaning of the vocabulary together.
3. The teacher acts as both the pronouncer and judge in this treatment. Spelling bee is conducted orally. The students are expected to spell the words correctly and precisely. They are allowed to ask the word given to them to be said repeatedly by the teacher to help them compare it with other words that may have the same pronunciation but different spelling.
4. A student representative from each group is called up to the front of the class. Each student selected a number from the word cards. Each student is given turns to spell out the words from the chosen cards. The teacher reads the word out loud as much as two times.
5. The word must be pronounced by the student once before it is spelled and once before it is spelled and once more afterwards, for example “shoulder...s-h-o-u-l-d-e-r.... shoulder”
6. If the student requests for the definition of the word to be provided, the teacher had to respond to it, e.g. “the word is “shoulder” and its definition is part of the body; the upper joint of the human arm and the part of the body between this and the neck”
7. The students are not allowed to play again if they misspelling a given word or catch getting hints (whispers) from their groups of the spelling of the words. If they are found to do so, the group is expelled the game.
8. The group which gets the highest score from the game is the winner.

 EYEBROW	 NOSE	 EYE	 EAR
5	7	9	3

 HAIR	 TONGUE	 LEG	 MOUTH
1	8	10	4

JEOPARDY STRATEGY



English language learners reach positive goals internalizing, recognizing the capital letters used in English sentences and paragraphs. Furthermore, teachers can provide feedback at the moment and prevent further mistakes on the same concept. It could be applied on line based or making your own jeopardy board with classroom materials.

Capitalization, and different topics.

Lesson aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to recognize and use capitalization correctly in English sentences and paragraph.

Target vocabulary: Capitalization rules

School level: 8^o graders

Group work: three or more teams

Activity time: 40 minutes

Material: Jeopardy board.

Jeopardy components:

First of all, design your jeopardy activity dividing the cardboard into five columns. Write down five questions or sentences about the chosen topic. Put scores using numbers from 100 to 500 in an upward way, repeat the same pattern in each column. Afterwards, set up questions or sentences according to the topic and put the questions back of each score. Finally, set up the answer sheet.

Instructions to play: jeopardy will be played in teams. Each team must select a captain who will be in charge of the buzzer.

1. There are six categories, under each column are five clues about capitalization,
2. The first team choose the category and a point value.
3. The teacher set a time limit for answering question.
4. If the student or team is correct, they are awarded the point value of the question.
5. Continue until all questions or instructions have been done.
6. The team with most points wins.

Capitalize	Rules	Capitalize	Rules	Capitalize
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400
500	500	500	500	500

Team 1
 0
 + -

Team 2
 0
 + -

Team 3
 0
 + -

Activar Windows
Ve a Configuración para activar Windows.

luis and i play soccer.	You never capitalize "I"	My brother is alberto.	You do capitalize special events, holidays or days of the week.	Imbabura province is beautiful.
juan, wilmer, and i are friends.	You do not have to capitalize the names of governments groups, institutions or organizations.	"miguel egas"high school is in quinchuqui.	You do not capitalize nationalities.	english language is interesting.
i was born in november.	You should always capitalize the first word of the sentence.	my favorite day is saturday.	You capitalize every subject you have in school.	ñusta is my sister.

mathematics class is on wednesday and friday.	You always capitalize directions like east, south, north and west.	i live in ibarra.	You never capitalize relatives' titles. Example: mom, dad.	i am 17 years old.
they are oscar, ricardo, and carlos.	We never capitalize the names of islands, mountains, and bodies of water.	christmas is in december.	We do not capitalize words like store, hotel or high school unless they have a name of a particular building or organization.	inty and i are in galápagos.

JIGSAW STRATEGY

Capitalization in English requires as many cooperation opportunities in the classroom, so that, Jigsaw is one of the strategies where collaborative learning is important. Talk about cooperative learning implies promote social competencies and teamwork. Jigsaw, creates student independence, cooperation, focuses on the training task, not through the grading system. For EFL beginners, learning capitalization through jigsaw has a positive impact on students in order to students avoid capitalization omission.

Jigsaw activity: teamwork.

Lesson aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to capitalize people's name, first personal pronoun, months of the year, days of the week, first letter of the sentence.

Target vocabulary: people's name, first personal pronoun, months of the year, days of the week, and the first letter of the sentence.

School level: 8° graders

Group work: teamwork

Activity time: 40 minutes

Material: hard copies per each partner, and pencils.

Steps:

1. Sentences have to be written without capitalization. (The number of sentences might be optional)
2. Cut out the words in the sentences and put them in a bag. (Each sentence has to go in different bags)
3. Divide the class into small groups, hand out three small bags for each group.

- Students have to unscramble the sentences, afterwards they have to write down the sentences on their notebook, correcting miss capitalization.
- Finally, when students finish it, they should pass on the bags to the group nearby them.



i	am	crístian	ruiz.
---	----	----------	-------



i	am	from	ecuador.
---	----	------	----------



i	was	born	in november.
---	-----	------	--------------



i	like	to eat	apples.
---	------	--------	---------



my	favorite	days are	monday and saturday.
----	----------	----------	----------------------

DICTIONARY STRATEGY

Punctuation is another important skill in writing for EFL learners, most of the English language learners have struggles when they have to write paragraphs or sentences in English using punctuation correctly. Some of the learners omit basic punctuation such as: the use of period at the end on the sentence, question mark for questions, exclamation point and comma.

Pop-Up activity

Aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to identify and properly use common punctuation marks.

Target vocabulary: according to the topic and English level.

School level: 8^o graders

Group work: team activity.

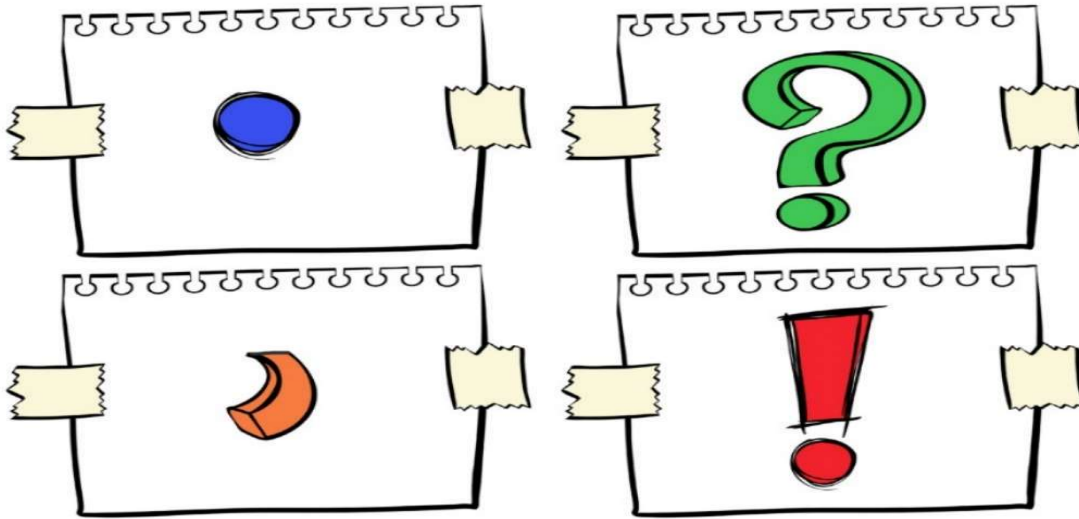
Activity time: 30 minutes

Material: set of punctuation flashcards attached to a craft stick.

Process:

- 1.- The set of punctuation flashcards have to be prepared by the teacher for each team. (Period, question mark, comma, and exclamation point)
- 2.- Teacher, read the sentences or paragraph load. It is important to read using clear pauses and the correct inflections to guidance learner identify which card is correct. (What a beautiful flower! What is your name? My brother is a doctor. I like to eat bananas, french fries, and hamburguers.)
- 3.- Learners pop up the card with the correct punctuation mark by holding it up.

4.- After identifying the correct punctuation, teacher assigns one student to dictate the sentences or paragraphs. The students have to write them correctly using the appropriate punctuation.



MINI BOOK STRATEGY



Mini book strategy offers a variety of options to be applied in EFL process in order to get better understanding. Teaching grammar for EFL requires to use efficient strategies such as mini books. Learners can work individually or in small groups, they can make their mini books easily using affordable materials.

Mini book

Aim: at the end of this lesson students will be able to define parts of speech and give examples.

Target vocabulary: parts of speech.

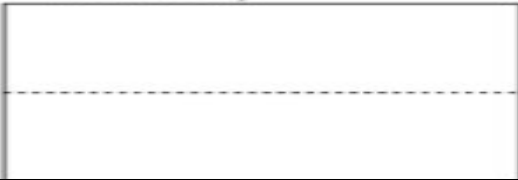
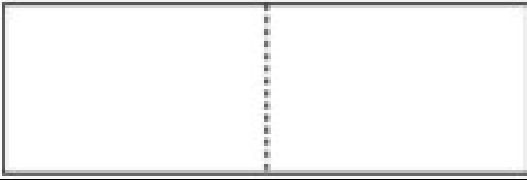
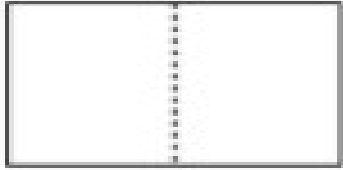
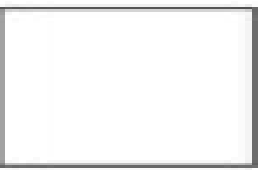

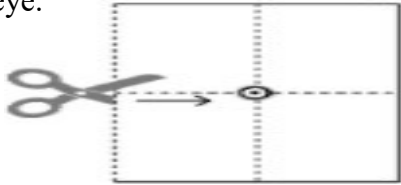
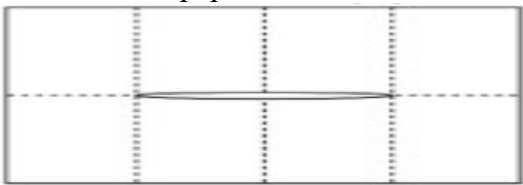
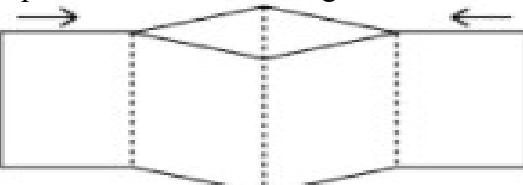
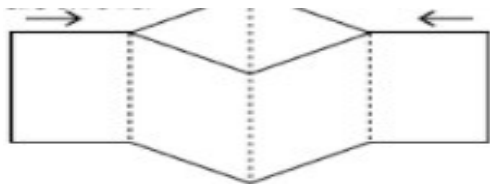
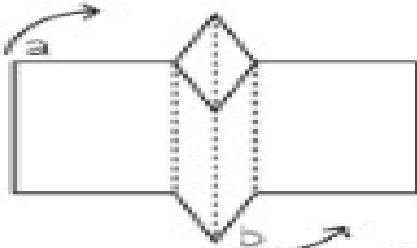

School level: 8^o graders

Group work: individually activity.

Activity time: 40 minutes

Material: bond paper, color pens to decorate.

Steps:

<p>1.- Fold in half lengthwise (horizontally)</p> 	<p>2.- Fold in half again.</p> 
<p>3.- Fold in half again</p> 	<p>4.- Fold in half again.</p> 
<p>5.-Unfold the paper.</p> 	<p>6.- Fold in half vertical y. Cut the paper until you reach, the center. (Marked with a bullseye).</p> 
<p>7.-Unfold. There should be a slit in the middle of the paper.</p> 	<p>8.- Fold it lengthwise with the slit on top. Slide the two ends together.</p> 
<p>9.- Keep pushing the ends together until the slit closes.</p> 	<p>10.- Fold the left end toward the slit. Fold the opposite side of the slit toward the right end.</p> 
<p>11.- You have a mini-book.</p> 	

Once, students finish to make their mini-book start, they write the topic on the cover. Parts of speech mini-book, it can be decorated with pictures or colors.

ADVERBS

Describe or modify verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

How:

Where:

When:

How Much:

How Often:

VERBS

Action Verbs: Tell what a noun is doing

Linking Verbs: describe a noun's state of being

Helping Verbs: modify the main verb

ADJECTIVES

Describes or modifies a noun

Types of Adjectives:

NOUNS & PRONOUNS

Noun: A person, place, thing, or idea

Pronoun: A word that takes the place of a noun

PREPOSITIONS

Connects a noun or pronoun to another word in a sentence

...of Time:

...of Place:

...of Movement:

CONJUNCTIONS

Joins words, phrases, or sentences

Coordinate:

Subordinate:

INTERJECTIONS

Words or phrases used to exclaim, protest, or command

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ADVERBS

Describe or modify verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

How: ...sings loudly

Where: ...look everywhere

When: ...already left

How Much: ...almost won

How Often: ...always talks

VERBS

Action Verbs: Tell what a noun is doing

Linking Verbs: describe a noun's state of being

Helping Verbs: modify the main verb

Ty felt happy.

Ty felt the water.

can, could, may, might, must, should, would, will

ADJECTIVES

Describes or modifies a noun

Types of Adjectives:

Size, Shape, Age, Number, Opinion, Color, Pattern, Proper Adjective, Material, Purpose

I wore blue suede shoes.

NOUNS & PRONOUNS

Noun: A person, place, thing, or idea

Pronoun: A word that takes the place of a noun

I, you, he, she, it, me, him, her, we, you, they, us, them

Kim wore a blue jacket to school.

PREPOSITIONS

Connects a noun or pronoun to another word in a sentence

...of Time: I ate popcorn during the movie.

...of Place: Dante looked under the bed.

...of Movement: Jerry swam across the pool.

CONJUNCTIONS

Joins words, phrases, or sentences

Coordinate: FANBOYS for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so

Subordinate: after, although, as, because, before, even if, if, once, since...

INTERJECTIONS

Words or phrases used to exclaim, protest, or command

Aha, Aww, Bravo, Eh, Eww, Hmm, Hooray, Mmm, Oops, Ouch, Phew, Ugh, Um, Whew, Wee, Whoa, Whoops, Yikes

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Name: _____

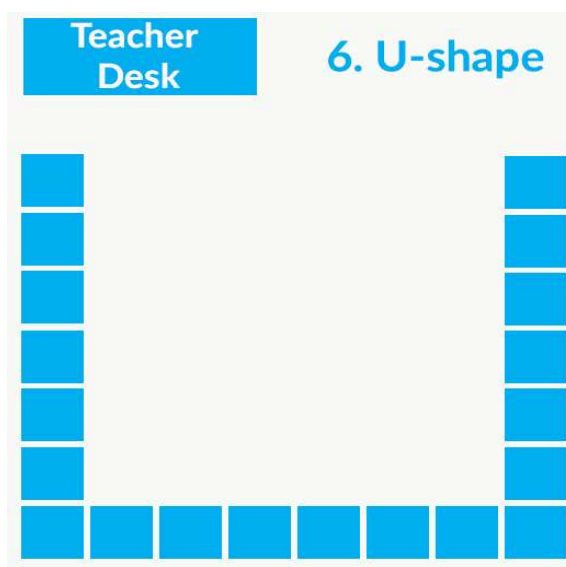
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CLASSROOM SETTING STRATEGY

Motivate EFL learners is one of the aspects that teachers have to manage in the classroom. Teachers should recognize student's effort and congratulate it, which shows that the teachers care about learners' progress promoting learner's self-confidence and motivate them to try even harder. Teachers should present meaningful and appropriate task clearly, that motivates and encourage students in their language learning. Create a relaxing and pleasant climate in the classroom motivate students to feel confident so that their performance turns better. Setting the classroom frequently motivates learners to learn more. Teachers can arrange groups seated around a small table or in a U-shape with a hollow center. Students in a semicircle on a chair with arm-rests and no desks, or students seated around three sides of a large table.

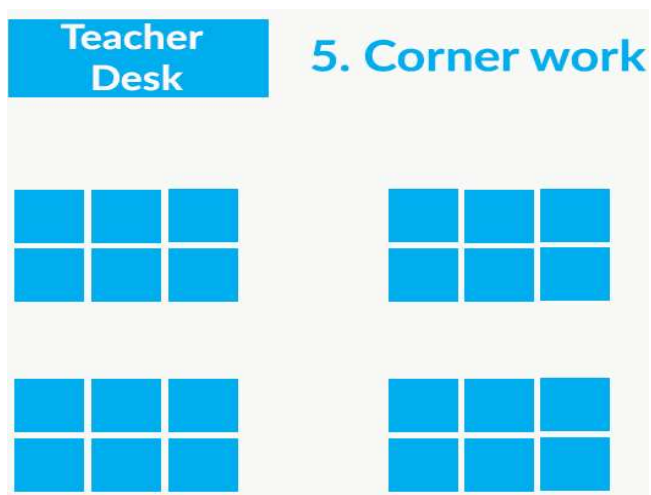
U-shape

This classroom arrangement motivates learner's discussion and makes it easy for the teacher to observe students and give one-on-one help.



Corner work

Divide learners into small groups assign different tasks to each corner such as video questions, crossword riddle, a quiz, a whiteboard exercise. Students can shuffle and go to every corner and do every assignment, learners feel motivated because they are able to participate in all groups.



PAIR AND TEAMWORK STRATEGY

Teamwork increases EFL learner motivation there are a wide variety of teamwork activities that teachers can use such as role-plays, interviews, information gap, games, surveys, debates, pair work, drama, learn by teaching. Teamwork is one option to motivate students to interact with each other, have more opportunities to practice English, understand and remember new information better. Teamwork could be challenging for teachers with big groups, teachers can use a quiet signal to keep classroom control, it could be a clap, raised hand. Set strong and clear rules about classroom behavior from the beginning. All members of the team have to have a role, as task control, secretary, spokesperson. Give to learners a candy or extra point to motivate them to continue doing a great job. Pair fits well for dialogue practice, vocabulary, drills, and grammar review. Groups of 5 fit for solving problems activities, groups of 4 could be good for introductions and social interactions, and groups of 3 for discussions.

Conclusion:

These strategies were designed to increase students writing performance, focus on the most important writing skills giving more opportunities to improve the English language in the classroom. Therefore, teachers can design their lesson plans applying these strategies, without forgetting class arrangement and other activities to motivate learners. Furthermore, these strategies are designed to work with EFL beginners in order to students acquire basic writing knowledge which can be useful to them for coming levels.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

The main objective of this research project was to identify the main difficulties that children from a local school experience when they are learning to write in English and the factors associated with the school, family, and community, that affect their language writing development. The findings show writing deficiencies in 8^o graders from Unidad Educativa “Miguel Egas Cabezas” at the moment to write basic paragraphs in English. Furthermore, students’ specific weaknesses in writing were identified. One of the difficulties that students show when writing basic paragraphs in English is spelling. Students, misspelled words such as possessive adjectives. These kinds of mistakes are named language interference. Moreover, capitalization is another weakness that students showed, students omit capitalization in the first letter at the beginning of the sentence, proper names, the first personal pronoun ‘I’ ‘i’, months of the year, and days of the week. Regarding punctuation, students forgot to add periods at the end of the sentences. Additionally, in Grammar/Language use, findings show that the curriculum and teachers might be incurring in an over-use of the verb to be that do not allow the students to incorporate other verbs in writing. Besides, in grammar students do not use the correct sentence structures, subject + verb + complement. Finally, students write sentences without coherence making these sentences difficult to understand. It is evidently the strong necessity that students develop regarding writing skills strategies that could encourage them to improve their writing performance.

Qualitative data, based on children’s responses to open-ended questions, shows family factors that are related to children's English writing learning process, in most of the cases students’ families do not have enough resources to provide their children with computers, internet, and books. Furthermore, because of their jobs parents have to leave alone their children. Consequently, parents do not have enough time neither resource to support their children in this important

learning process. It affects negatively student's writing performance at school. The responses also illustrate how students perceive classroom noisy environments as affecting their concentration, which shows that teachers do not pay enough attention in creating a good learning environment. Furthermore, students' shyness does not allow learners to have a good communication with teachers, students prefer to keep quiet instead of asking for clarification. Teachers should pay more attention and motivate students to feel free to ask any requirement. Finally, some children get easily distracted and do not pay attention to class because of classroom setting, teachers come up to the class and stand in front of the students to deliver the lesson. The classroom setting is always in the same way, in lines formation.

Regarding community factors, it was found that the near environment does not encourage children to learn English, because nobody knows English language in their towns neither how to develop its skills especially writing. Nevertheless, it was stated by some students there were a few students who admitted that they are supported by foreign native speaking volunteers who devoted short time to develop their writing skill. Finally, students prefer to participate in social activities such as mingle meeting, soccer games, and so on, instead of practicing English language.

6.2 Recommendation

It is recommended to teachers use the proposed writing skills strategies with EFL students in their first levels in order to prepare students to not having further complications in English writing skills in the for coming levels. Furthermore, these strategies are separated into writing skills in order to teachers take one specific strategy to improve the skills where the students show more problems. Additionally, these strategies are designed to be applied in groups to create a good learning environment where students can support each other's maximizing their writing skill knowledge. Moreover, it is important to remark in teachers to teach the correct use of the writing skills such as, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and coherence in English sentences and paragraphs. Finally, teachers should devote more time teaching writing skills and supporting students giving the correct feedback and motivate them during their writing process.

Parents' role is a main factor to encourage learners. Therefore, it is suggested that parents provide enough time to converse with their outsprings, checking school activities especially with English language which has become one of the most complicated subjects for learners because it is a new language that is not spoken in their environment. Hence, parents should go often to the school in order to ask students' progress. Additionally, parents should provide at least with basic school supplies to motivate students in their learning process. Finally, parents should encourage students to attend to communitarian centers in order to get tutoring with native speaking volunteers.

For further research with regard this topic it is recommended to continue searching more writing strategies to apply in other different levels. Maybe, new researchers can find more hinders that difficult the writing learning process. It is for this reason; this research could be the base for more investigations to solve students writing problems and motivate them to write.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Tema de la tesis: “Assessment of Writing Strategies to Improve English Language Development in Children of 8th grade.”

Objetivos: La presente evaluación está diseñada para obtener datos de forma objetiva del tipo de dificultades que tienen los estudiantes de 8° A y B en la destreza de Escritura (Writing) en el proceso de Enseñanza-Aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés.

Instrucciones

1.- Write your little biography

Querido o querida estudiante: escriba en 5 líneas algo sobre usted en inglés, comience con su nombre completo y cuéntenos un poquito sobre usted, puede ser su edad, lugar donde nació, su día favorito, el color de su cabello, si tiene mascotas, el color de sus ojos, cuál es su comida favorita o deporte. Recuerde escribir las palabras correctamente.

My Little biography

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you! 😊

Table 2 examples of correct writing and common errors.

Convention	Correct writing	Errors
Spelling	Words correctly spelled	Inconsistent in words (“bor”) (“wedeneday”)
Capitalization	Begins all sentences with uppercase letters	Irregular use of uppercase where not required and even in middle of words. (“luiS”) not capitalized
Punctuation	Correct ending punctuation in every sentence.	No period at the end of the sentence or misplaced periods. (“My name is luiS Iam 12 years old”).
Grammar/language use	Simple present tense sentences are grammatically correct.	Inconsistent use of simple present tense (“my eyes is brown”) Inconsistents between singular and plural. (“
Coherence /cohesion	The short paragraph’s ideas follow one another logically.	The short paragraph’s ideas do not follow one another logically. My name is Luis. I is brown.

DATA INSTRUMENTS VALIDATION

Theme: “Assessment of Writing Strategies to Improve English Language Development in

Children of 8th grade. A case of a Public School in Otavalo-Ecuador.”

General objective: obtener datos de forma objetiva del tipo de dificultades que tienen los estudiantes de 8° A y B en la destreza de Escritura (Writing) en el proceso Enseñanza-Aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés. Los estudiantes escribirán un párrafo de cuatro líneas de su información personal

Author: Rosa Marlene Rojas Lema

Judge: Sandra Guevara

Degree: Masters

Academic tutor: PhD Lorena Toro

Data instrument collection:

Interview

Use a check mark

Scale:

Nothing	Low	Middle	High
1	2	3	4

Evaluation parameters	Criteria	1	2	3	4
Belonging	Does the questionnaire have a logical relation with the thesis objective?				X
Importance	What is the instrument level importance with related to the investigation?				X
Organization	Is there a logical organization with the questions display?				X
Writing organization	Are the question clear and concise?				X

Validated by (Name and surname) Sandra Guevara

ID: 1002503520 Signature: Sandra Guevara

APPENDIX 2: Cuestionario dirigido a estudiantes.

Tema de la tesis: Assessment of Writing Strategies to Improve English Language Development in Children of 8th grade. A case of a Public School in Otavalo-Ecuador.

Objetivo: Identificar desde la percepción de los estudiantes cuales son las dificultades y los factores que afectan su aprendizaje de escritura en inglés. De los resultados del writing assesment se trabajará con un grupo que tiene mayor puntaje y un grupo que tiene menor puntaje seleccionado anteriormente de los estudiantes de 8° A y B.

Instrucciones: Queridos estudiantes responder las preguntas honestamente. Sus respuestas son de suma importancia para mejorar las estrategias de enseñanza de la escritura en Ingles. En total son 5 preguntas.

Cuestionario

Encierre en un círculo la respuesta.

1. ¿Conoce, en qué situaciones tiene que utilizar letras mayúsculas en Inglés?

1.-Siempre

2.-A veces

3.-Nunca

2.- ¿Sabe, en qué momento utilizar el punto en una oración en Inglés?

1.-Siempre

2.-A veces

3.-Nunca

3.- ¿Tiene dificultades en el uso de gramática en Inglés?

1.-Siempre

2.-A veces

3.-Nunca

4.- ¿Tiene problema en la ortografía de las palabras en Inglés?

1.-Siempre

2.-A veces

3.-Nunca

5.- Escribe en el cuadro lo que te ayuda y no te ayuda a aprender a escribir en Inglés.

	 Lo que me ayuda a escribir en Inglés.	 Lo que no me deja escribir en Inglés.
En mi casa 
En mi escuela 
En mi comunidad 

DATA INSTRUMENTS VALIDATION

Theme: “Assessment of Writing Strategies to Improve English Language Development in

Children of 8th grade. A case of a Public School in Otavalo-Ecuador.”

General objective: Identify, from students’ perception what difficulties and factors affect their writing in English learning process. Of writing assessment’s results students are going to be divided into two groups, students who got the highest and students who got the lowest score.

Author: Rosa Marlene Rojas Lema

Judge: Sandra Guevara

Degree: Masters

Academic tutor: PhD Lorena Toro

Data instrument collection:

Interview

Use a check mark

Scale:

Nothing	Low	Middle	High
1	2	3	4

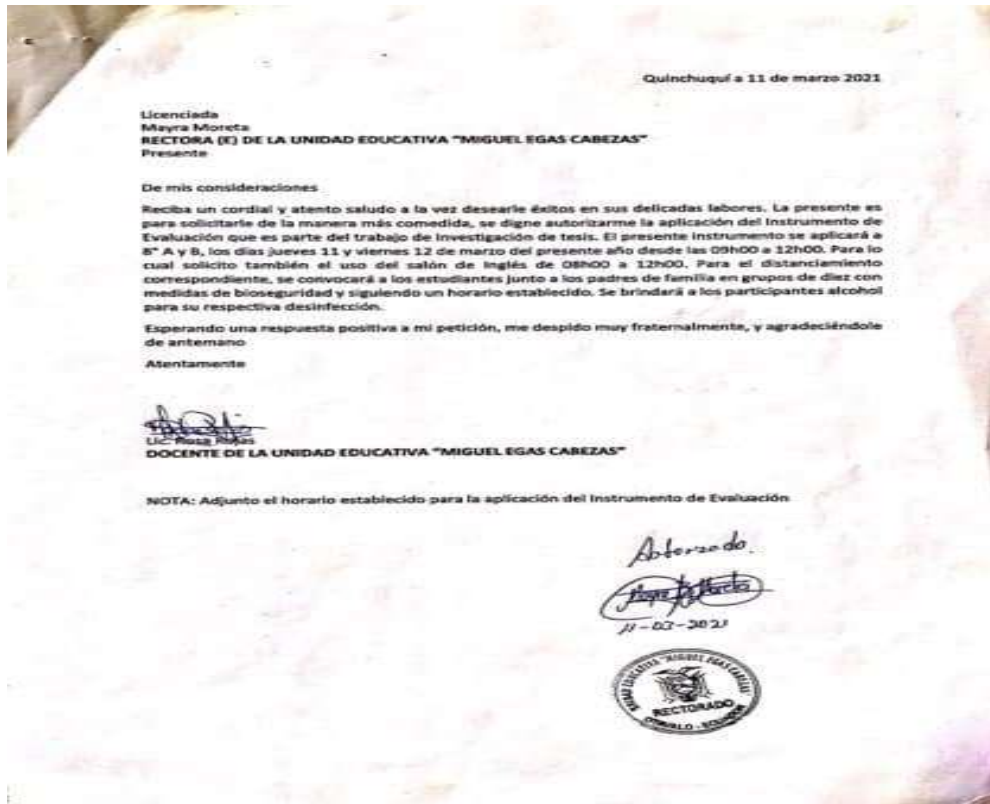
Evaluation parameters	Criteria	1	2	3	4
Belonging	Does the questionnaire have a logical relation with the thesis objective?				X
Importance	What is the instrument level importance with related to the investigation?				X
Organization	Is there a logical organization with the questions display?				X
Writing organization	Are the question clear and concise?				X

Validated by (Name and surname) Sandra Guevara

ID: 1002503520

Signature: Sandra Guevara

Appendix 3



HORARIO DE APLICACIÓN DEL INSTRUMENTO DE EVALUACIÓN

Jueves 11 de Marzo 2021

Grupo	Hora	N°	Nómina	Firma de consentimiento del representante
1	9:00 - 10:00	1	Añorran Santellan Daky Joel	 105052414-2 ✓
		2	Cabascango Cabascango Yandi Runaky	 1001830254 ✓
		3	Cabascango Celapi Shaila Naykary	
		4	Cabascango Flores Marley Natubiky	 100242275-4 ✓
		5	Chavez Morillo Dagny Belen	 04061527-3 ✓
		6	Corrales Chiguano Jhoanna Alexandra	
		7	Cuasapud Anguaya Katherine Lorena	JASCINA ✓
		8	De la Torre Lema Lenin David	✓
		9	De la Torre Oyagata María Lucia	 19072592-4 ✓
		10	De la Torre Perugachi Tahir Analía	
2	10:00-11:00	1	Espinoza Cuchiguango Jhonatan Javier	 100253758-9 ✓
		2	Fichamba Lema Jose Luis	
		3	Flores Cachiguango Alex Efraim	
		4	Flores Conejo Joselin Maricela	
		5	Flores Morales Jeralin Jandel	
		6	Flores Ortiz Merishen Mabel	
		7	Flores Perugachi Kaya Selena	Retirado
		8	Fuerez Matango Blanca Estrella	 100233272-4 ✓
		9	Fuerez Perugachi Katherine Ibeth	 ✓
		10	Gil Fung Valentina Sofia	Retirado