

**Exploring students' EFL writing through the implementation of writing for
learning approach**

Julio Abel Sánchez

UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMÁS

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DISTANCE B. Ed. IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Bogotá D.C., 2017

**Exploring students' EFL writing through the implementation of writing for
learning approach**

Julio Abel Sánchez

Director: Manuel Ricardo Medina

UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMÁS

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DISTANCE B. Ed. IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Bogotá D.C., 2017

Note of acceptance

Tutor: _____

Jury: _____

Jury: _____

Bogotá, D.C. 2017

Acknowledgment

I want to dedicate this work first to God for blessing me, to reach as far as I have come, because you made this dream come true.

To my family, who helped and supported me throughout the process.

To my thesis director, Professor Manuel medina, who with his knowledge, experience, patience and motivation has made it possible for me finish my studies successfully.

Also, I want to thank to my all professors, who have contributed throughout my career with a grain of sand to my training.

Abstract

This document presents the result of a qualitative action research carried out with eleven students of tenth grade at a public school in Bogotá who took part in the research. This action research aimed to exploring students' EFL writing production through the implementation of writing for learning approach. The data were collected during five sessions developed following the methodology, through teacher's journal, artifacts and interviews.

Key words: teaching English language, focusing on Language, Teaching Grammar, Teaching Vocabulary, the writing skill, writing as a process, writing for Learning.

Table of content

Chapter 1 – Introduction	11
Statement of the problem	13
Research Questions	14
Justification	15
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	17
Teaching English Language	17
Focusing on the language	18
Teaching Grammar	18
Teaching Vocabulary	19
Writing Skill	20
Writing as a Process	20
Writing for Learning Approach	22
Reinforcement	23
Preparing writing	24
Activity writing	24
Related studies	24

Chapter 3 – Research Design	26
Type of research	26
Context and participants	28
My role as a teacher	29
Data analysis	29
Chapter 4 – Instructional design	31
Introduction to the pedagogical proposal	31
Description of the teaching method	32
Pedagogical objectives	33
General Objective	33
Specific Objective	33
Design of pedagogical proposal	33
Planning	34
Acting	34
Observing	34
Reflecting	35
Feedback	37

	8
Chapter 5 – Data Analysis	40
The data Gathering	42
Artifacts	42
Interviews	43
Journal	43
Systematizing information in the data analysis	44
Description analysis and interpretation of results	46
Category 1. Student writing productions started to arise	47
Sub-category 1. Students increase the size of their composition	47
Sub-category 2. Students are focused on content rather than on grammar forms.	56
Category 2. Students gained more engagement in English writing	59
Sub-category 1. Students invest more in the writing activities	60
Chapter 6 – Conclusions and pedagogical Implication	63
List of References	67
Appendixes	69

Table of Diagrams and Illustrations

Figures

Table 1. Presentation of topics 37

Table 2. Categories and sub-categories 46

Illustrations

Illustration 1. Student's writing production. Use of more words 48

Illustration 2. Student's writing production. Use of more words 48

Illustration 3. Student's writing production. Use of more words 49

Illustration 4. Student's writing production. Use of more words 49

Illustration 5. Student's writing production. Use of more words 49

Illustration 6. Student's writing production. Use of more words 49

Illustration 7. Student's writing production. Use of new words 52

Illustration 8. Student's writing production. Use of new words 52

Illustration 9. Student's writing production. Use of new words 53

Illustration 10. Observation notes 55

Illustration 11. Student's writing production. Communication of students 57

Illustration 12. Student's writing production. Communication of students	57
Illustration 13. Student's writing production. Communication of students	58
Illustration 14. Student's writing production. Student's expression	61
Illustration 15. Observation notes	62

Chapter 1

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to promote the development of writing skill through a research study related to work using the steps of writing for learning approach in tenth grade EFL students, as a methodological strategy that can improve learning environments. Harmer (2007) argues, writing is used as an aide-mémoire or practice tool to help students practice and work with language they have been studying. Thus working in the classroom using the process of writing can be seen as a valuable opportunity so students can derive their learning from significant experiences, interest, and questions related to the environment in which they live. This document is divided into six chapters:

The first chapter includes a general view of the study which contains the main question, sub questions and objectives that oriented the study.

The second chapter introduce the literature review to support this research; the key constructs are teaching English language, focusing on the language, teaching grammar, teaching vocabulary, and writing for learning approach.

The third has to do with the research design; it involves the type of research, research setting, participants, procedures and instruments.

The fourth chapter comprises the instructional design, which provides a series of activities developed in class using a process for writing.

The fifth chapter presents data collection approach and analysis, the explanation of how the data was collected and a description of the categories identified through the data analyzed. Also a description about the evolution in EFL 10th grade students' writing production while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach.

Finally the sixth chapter present the findings, conclusions and pedagogical implications and limitations of the study. As well as, the list of references, and the appendixes.

Problem statement

During my pedagogical practice I worked with a group of 11 students of 10th grade Gustavo Morales Morales School, I noticed that the students were interested in improving their writing skill in English to communicate with people from other countries, and express their feelings. During the diagnosis students expressed that they did not have opportunities for writing, had a lot of difficulties such as grammatical errors, did not know much vocabulary and did not find ideas to start writing.

Also, students argued that the writing activities developed during week had been just to fill in blanks in order to complete sentences and demonstrate that they had understood the theme. So, they had found this activities bored.

This study also emerges from a personal interest; work on writing processes, and see the changes to occur during the process in students' writing. Harmer (2007, P. 113) say "many students either think or say that they cannot, or do not want to write. This may be because they lack confidence, think it's boring or believe they have "nothing to say"." Thus as a teachers we need to engage them, from early levels, with activities which are easy and enjoyable to take part in, so that writing activities not only become a normal part of classroom life but also present opportunities for students to learn how to write and learn English.

In this sense, I said, if I give them these spaces for writing they can not only learn to write, I am going to put them to write so, they learn to write and learn English.

Research questions

How does EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students while developing writing workshop within writing for learning approach?

General objective

To determine how EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales School while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach.

Specific objectives

- To analyze EFL students' perceptions while working using the steps of writing for learning approach.

Justification

The lack of a process for writing, spaces to learn writing in English and the student's interest to improve the writing skill were the reason for conducting a research to determine how EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales, while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach.

It was expected that the spaces for writing and the process to learn writing in English that they didn't have, to help student's writing production, so it gave them benefits such as: understand more clearly a topic, to better express their own thoughts and feelings get better scores in assessments or written assignments from school, and learn English.

This study seeks to place students in situations of actual production texts and phrases, leaving aside a decontextualized concept without sense of traditional teaching, so that the written work look like social and cultural object that is used primarily as a communication medium, knowledge and organizer of thought. This look will benefit students and teachers as they can find pleasure in teaching and learning a second language.

Moreover, when students manages to achieve good levels of writing, this allows them to develop other skill such as reading, speaking and the obtainable of broad vocabulary. Also it will be of great help when they enter to the university since it is a requirement to obtain the title.

On the other hands, doing this project I have had the opportunity to reflect on my methodology in English class, also, for teaching writing in English, this research is relevant because it guides the teachers about a good way to do it, knowing that there must be certain special characteristics in the planning and execution of their classes. According to Brown (2007) children learn what they need to communicate, and their learning is not as structured as an adult, but it is more practical and functional. They learn through exemplification and experimentation with language.

Finally, the school has an average level in the “pruebas saber 11” reason why it is important to reinforce the students writing skill, so that in these tests they can better understand the questions with the grammar tenses and thus obtain better achievements.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Based on the fact that this research proposal aimed to evidence the student's writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales School EFL while they develop writing workshops with writing for learning approach, this chapter comprises the main constructs that support my research study

Teaching English Language

As Hadfield (2008, P. 7) claims, teachers of English should always be certain to be teaching the language in an understandable, clear and useful way in order to have their students learning. It should be also taken into consideration that each student is an individual and we have to approach all of them in ways which suit their needs the best. We should encourage our students and Foster their ideas.

Being more clear, Hadfield (2008, P. 7) said "Our job as teachers is to provide interesting, motivating, enjoyable, and engaging learning activities for our learners. Lessons need to have a clear aim, which the learners are aware of, so that there is a sense of purpose and cooperative atmosphere in the classroom.

Having into account the above, when we teach English we can either focus on the language or on language skills. In the best possible situation teachers are able to incorporate both approaches to their teaching methods.

Focusing on the language

In English lessons, teachers focus most on particular language features, e.g. grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or functions.

Harmer (2007, P. 200) claims "The immediate goal of this kind of language study is to increase knowledge of the language system so the longer term aim of improving productive and receptive skill can be achieved."

Thus, the main objective of this approach is getting students to learn new things about certain constructions in English, get them used to the use and by the means of repetition prevent them from making mistakes. Harmer (2007, P. 81) Said "Sometimes we will spend a lot of time on this language focus, and students will be involved in quite a few minutes of repetition."

Teaching Grammar

By teaching grammar, there are many ways to introduce grammar. Harmer (2007, P. 210) claims, Most teachers have their own favorite grammar presentation and practice activities and will often use these when they want students to study a particular piece of grammar.

Besides, Hadfield (2008, P. 21) suggest that it is important to firstly teach the form of grammatical item (conditionals etc.) that demonstrate the meaning in context and finally explain the use and practice newly learnt grammar structures.

Therefore the use of grammatical explanation must be approached with care, we as teachers must to use the most effective ways to teach grammar for students learn almost instantly how to write well-formed sentences.

Teaching vocabulary

Vocabulary is the knowledge of new words and its meaning. Harmer (2007, P. 229) said, "When teaching vocabulary explain meaning is a major part of the teacher's art, students need to see words in context to see how they are used." Besides, Hadfield (2008, P. 46) claims that "it is also necessary to expose students to idioms, collocations and register in order to explain the meaning and use of certain vocabulary in the explicit way.

In addition, these authors suggest some strategies for teaching the new vocabulary: Hadfield (2008, P. 48) teaching new vocabulary, teachers should firstly help students to record new words, e.g. by creating cards. Subsequently, it is vital to remember the words which can be facilitated by some word games. As a next stage students have to use the words in practice for better remembering and finally to avoid forgetting newly acquired words it is essential to revise vocabulary in regular intervals.

Harmer (2007, Ps. 229-239) New vocabulary can be demonstrated by teacher using pictures, face play, gestures etc. There are many ways how vocabulary can be taught but it should be always engaging and interesting for students.

Consequently we can prepare for them cross-words, word maps or some games that might be fun for them. A good example of a game can be suggested, Pictionary, when student have to draw the meaning of the words on the board or Snap, when students are to match pictures with words.

Therefore having into count the above, the main objectives when vocabulary is being teaching is to provide clear explanation of the meaning and its use.

The writing skill

Writing is considered as one of the four skill that need to be developed throughout student's schooling. Banat (2007) pointed out that this skill is invaluable for helping students communicate and understand how the parts of language go together. Besides Shastri (2010, P. 85) claims that he skill of writing involves teaching of spelling, vocabulary, sentences structures and grammar, punctuation, proper layout , coherence, cohesion and the organization of content clearly and effectively.

Moreover, Orwing (1992:2) said: "It is a productive skill that is more complicated than it seem at first, and often seem to be most difficult of the skills since it has a number of micro skills such as: using orthography correctly, spelling and punctuation conventions, using vocabulary in a correct way and using the appropriate style. Therefore, we as a teachers have to be conscious that this skill needs knowledge and proficiency in many areas.

Writing as a process

Tribble, (1996, p. 160. Cited in Developing teachers.com) defines the "process approach" as "an approach to the teaching of writing which stresses the

creativity of the individual writer, and which pays attention to the development of good writing practices rather than the imitation of models.

Thus, the process approach takes a stance that language teaching should be more concerned more with what students wants to say. The student's interaction or purpose becomes of paramount importance, also students are seen to have a role as initiator, not a mere responder or a mimicker of other people's intentions and expressions. Kirby and Liner (1988, P.189) point out that the process writing approach helps teachers to understand what writers go through while they are writing, so, teachers can help them bring those "mind texts" to the page.

In Zamel's (1983. Cited in Marva A. Barnett, University of Virginia) study, better second language writers treated writing as a process, investigating and explaining their ideas before worrying about grammatical accuracy.

In Min's (2007. P 42) study "Process writing is learning how to write by writing." The writing instruction focused on the process of creating writing rather than the end product. The basic premise of the process writing is that all students can write and the focus here is on creating quality content and learning the genres of writing.

Brown, H, D. (2007), stated the main features of the process approach as follows:

- Focus on the process of writing to leads to the final written product.
- Help students writers to understand their composing process.
- Help them to build repertoires of strategies for prewriting, drafting, and rewriting.
- Give the students time to write and rewrite.
- Place central importance on the process of revision.
- Let students discover what they want to say as they write.
- Give students feedback throughout the composing process (not just on the final product) as they attempt their expression closer and closer to intention.
- Encourage feedback from both the instructor and peers.
- Include individual conferences between teacher and student during the process of composition.

On other hand, research and studies conducted in the writing field showed that the process approach to writing includes a number of steps. Lindsay, C with Knight, P (2006, Ps. 85, 86) point out that we can break down the writing process into three stages:

- Preparation – think about the reader; consider why we are writing; think about the content; decide the appropriate layout and stile.
- Draft – put our ideas together in a draft form. This is probably all we need for thinks like shopping list and memos, but for longer texts we need to do more work.
- Editing and rewriting – we will probably need to rewrite several times so that the text is coherent, clear, and has few or no mistakes.

Taking into account the above breaking down the task as a whole into its constituent parts. Writing can seem greatly less daunting and more manageable to EFL students.

Writing for Learning Approach

As Harmer (2007, P. 112) claims, this a kind of writing is used as an aide-memoire or practice tool to help students practice and work with language they have been studying. We might, for example, ask a class to write five sentences using a given structure, or using five of the new words or phrases they have been learning.

Thus, during the writing activities, students write mainly to spread their learning of grammar and vocabulary of the language.

Harmer (2004) divides writing for learning into three steps: Reinforcement writing, preparation writing and activity writing.

Reinforcement writing

Writing has always been used as a means of reinforcing language that has been taught. In this simplest form, teachers often ask students to write sentences using recently learnt grammar. Also the same kind of sentence writing can be used to get students to practice or research new vocabulary.

Reinforcement writing need not be confined to sentences writing, however. Students can also be asked to write paragraphs or longer compositions to practice certain recently focused on aspects of language or paragraph and text construction. Students might be asked to write a story about something that happened to them. As a good way of having they practice past tenses. They could be asked to write a description of someone they know because this is a good way of getting them to use the character and physical description vocabulary they have been studying.

We can see the aim of these activities is to give students opportunities to remember new language better. Just the act of writing sentences makes them think about the new grammar or vocabulary in a more considered way than if we asked them to provide instant spoken examples.

Preparation writing

When learning second language sometimes it is more useful to use writing as preparation for some other activities. Harmer suggests using preparation writing for example when students are asked to prepare discussion. Thus Harmer (2004) said "Writing sentences gives the students time to think up ideas rather than having to come up with instant fluent opinions, something that many, especially at lower level, find difficult and awkward."

Another technique that Harmer suggests to use is for students to talk in groups to prepare their arguments. It is effective for students to make notes which they can use during their discussion. Here we can state that this is a good way how to teach writing in mixed ability classes. Preparation writing can be a vital help for weaker or shy students who are not so confident to speak immediately.

Activity writing

According to harmer (2004) writing can be used as an integral part of a large activity where the focus is on something else such as language practice, acting out, or speaking.

The writing activities of my project focused on the writing skill. Students were asked to write: a piece of paper, a poster, or a brochure. Then I took these to be analyzed.

Related Studies

Sandra Dolores Ruiz Niño (2013) implemented a program to help third grade students' writing skill. She put it into practice with a group of students who

regularly do not have a writing process to learn to write. I see it reflected with my studio when she adopted a writing process in which the participants developed different writings with topics that they were interested to explore. The data were collected through field notes, artifacts, and audio recordings. The results showed that the process of writing approach helped students to improve their writing skill.

Developed and implemented a plan to improving the writing skill of at-risk students. The participants were fifteen seventh grade who demonstrated weak writing skill.

I see this study reflected in mine, when students were guiding through the phases of the writing process, in my study they were guided through the steps of writing-for-learning approach.

Murray (2003) argues that writing is an unfinished process that requires us to consider that in our classrooms, students and teachers work with language in action. That is to say, we are looking for the correct word, negotiating meanings of sentences for expressing our thoughts and communicating with others constantly.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of the study is to determine how EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales School while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach. This chapter deals with the methodology, design and procedures of the study.

Type of research

On the one hand, this research focused on qualitative research paradigm, that according to Dörnyei (2007, p. 37) claims that qualitative research works with a wide range of data including recorded interviews, various types of texts (for example, field notes, journal and diary entries, documents) and images (photos or videos).

Dörnyei (2007, p. 37) argues that the common objective of qualitative research is to make sense of a set of (cultural or personal) meanings in the observed phenomena. Therefore, it is necessary that the data pick up rich and complex details.

Also Dörnyei (2007, p. 39) claims qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feeling of individuals. Merriam (2009, p. 5) it is interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. Thus, the main objective of qualitative research is to examine the participants' views of the situation being studied.

. On the other hands, as a teacher researcher this study focused on principles and procedures of action research that according to Burns (2010, p. 2) it is related to the ideas of “reflective practice” and “teacher as researcher”. Moreover Burns (2010) highlights the concept of reflective teaching. She argues that it enables teachers to complement the work of educational research, involve themselves in curriculum development and school change, and take a leading role in their own professional development

Thus, in action research, teachers become investigators of their personal context and take an area they could be done better, expose to it to questioning, and then develop new ideas and alternatives. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2006, p. 297) argues, action research is a type of research typically conducted by practitioner-researchers for the purpose of enacting immediate changes in an educational setting.

Thus, having noticed that there are many action research design models, the model to conduct this study was devised by Kemmis and McTaggart, who according to Burns are the major authors in this field (1988, p. 7, cited in burns 2010). The stages established were: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

To start I gave some activities to 10th grade students to developed. During the time students were developing the activities, their participation and performance were observed. On the next step, the results were analyzed to see students' perceptions and experiences. Finally, having in count the obtain results new activities were proposed. Thus, planning the next cycle of improvement or change in

the action research spiral, Cresswell (2012, p.112 cited in Hartwing, Kay Ann 2014) that are flexible and allow the data to guide the research findings.

Context and participants

This research project was developed with tenth grade students of a public school in Bogotá. The school is located in the Prado Veraniego neighborhood, and the students and their families belong to social strata 1 and 2. It is a state-run, co-educational school. It offers grades from preschool to eleventh grade in morning and afternoon shift. The school's PEI has an emphasis in communication as a human's foundation.

The participants with which the research was developed were 11 students, 7 girls and 5 boys, who were between fourteen and sixteen years old. Who are currently studying at the Gustavo Morales Morales state school. This group were volunteer students for Saturdays' English classes.

According to an interview with students, they wanted to learn to write in English as a mean to communicate with foreign people, and get good grades in the test "pruebas saber".

My role as a research

As a teacher researcher my role in this study is an observer and participant. Thus, Merriam (2015. Pg. 144)) the researcher is a member of the group being studied and conceals his or her observer role from the group so as not to disrupt the nature activity of the group. Moreover, Burns (2010) a teacher becomes an “investigator or “explorer” of his or her personal teaching context, while at the same time being one of the participants in it.

Also, my role is very active and reflective, taking into account that this is a qualitative research that includes the action research as a way to observe, analyze, describe, act, and reflect about what happening in the classroom. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler (2006, p. 290) the practitioner takes an active part in the research.

Data analysis

Taking into account the range of this study, its question, objectives and theoretical support, the criteria to analyze the data for this study is based on the content analysis approach.

Content analysis is a method used to analyze text data, it focuses on the characteristic of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text. Thus, Bryman (2015. Pg. 283) content analysis is an approach to analysis of documents and texts (which may consist of words and images and may be printed or online, written or spoken) that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in systematic and replicable

manner, furthermore, content analysis is highly flexible method, it can be applied to a wide variety of different kinds of unstructured textual information.

Taking into account the above, this approach was used to analyze the impact in students' writing productions while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach.

On the other hand, the tools used to collected data was a teacher journal, interviews, and students' artifacts. All of them became a great tool to analyze the impact in 10th grade students' writing production using writing-for-learning approach. Also allowed the analysis of their insights after each activity about their perception and feeling about their writing progress.

Chapter 4

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the pedagogical proposal components, then, it includes its pedagogical objectives, pedagogical strategies, and also, this chapter presents the practical steps for writing-for-learning approach followed by the researcher and research participants on which the instructional design was built.

Introduction to the pedagogical proposal

The idea of design this pedagogical proposal emanated from the need to offer the 10th grade students spaces in which they have the opportunity to practice writing skill in a foreign language.

The pedagogical proposal was designed on the bases of the steps of writing-for-learning approach, which were taken into account in every single writing section. The themes of the program were chosen from the curriculum of 10th grade in order to design an appropriate pedagogical proposal for students' level and abilities.

Also, in order to help students to get more ideas to write, the classroom was decorated in each lesson. (Mall visit, Love and friendship day, Halloween party,

Christmas day, and free theme). Thus, Harmer (2007) argues, this is particularly useful for those who need a mix of visual and kinesthetic activity.

Description of the teaching method

The teaching method is based upon writing-for-learning approach. Harmer (2004) proposes three steps: reinforcement writing, Preparation writing and activity writing.

Reinforcement writing: In this step students learn new grammar, also, while they decorate the classroom learnt new vocabulary, then they were asked to write sentences about the topic using the recently learnt grammar and vocabulary.

Preparation writing: In this step according to Harmer (2004) students prepare their writing for another activity. Thus, students worked in groups, shared their writings in order to arrange their ideas. Also, for the two lessons students were shown examples of texts (brochure, posters) this helped students see how typical texts are constructed, also helped them construct appropriate texts on their own.

Activity writing: Harmer (2004) argues, that in this step students can practices another English skill. But in this study the focus was the writing skill, so, as a last activity students wrote a creative paper. (See Appendix C).

Consequently, taking into account the benefits of follow the steps of writing-for-learning approach as a tool to developing writing skill in EFL tenth grade, I proposed the pedagogical objectives.

Pedagogical Objectives

General Objective

To promote the writing practice in grade tenth students of Gustavo Morales Morales School through writing activities that were designed following the steps of writing-for-learning approach.

Specific Objectives

- ✓ To enhance the English writing practice of tenth grade students through activities designed following the steps of writing-for-learning approach.
- ✓ To foster the development of English writing activities to tenth grade students that allow them express and communicate ideas in regards to topics chosen by students and the teacher.

Design of the pedagogical proposal

The design followed the steps for writing-for-learning approach suggested by Jeremy Harmer. Additionally, in each lesson was made a visual and kinaesthetic activity. It was an important aid which helped students to get ideas to do their writes.

Moreover, this proposal follows the four phases of inquiry that an action research conducts. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, p. 7 cited in burns 2010) are: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

Planning

According to Burns (2010) in this phase you identify a problem or issue and develop a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. Thus, having into count that 10th grade students during the week do not have a writing process and spaces to learn writing in English, I have designed writing workshops based on the steps of writing-for-learning approach and provided spaces in order students learn to write in English.

Acting

In this phase the plan was putting into action and tools to get data for the corresponding analysis were implemented, Thus, Burns (2010) the plan is a carefully considered one which involves some deliberate interventions into your teaching situation that you put into action over an agreed period of time.

Observing

This phase involves researcher's observation, thus, Burns (2010) argues, it is a data collection phase where you use "open-eyed" and "open minded" tools to collect information about what is happening.

From the first class, while students developed writing activities were observed students' attitudes such as (if they take part in activities, if they like English, if they participate in class).

Reflecting

Burns (2010) defined this stage as the time the researcher reflects on, evaluate and describe the effects of the action in order to make sense of what has happened and to understand the issue you have explored more clearly. Thus, during all the process, I wrote a journal to keep memories. It helped me to analyze the effect using writing-for-learning approach to improve 10th grade students' writing skill.

The writing workshops

My pedagogical proposal was developed within the practice, the sections were seven, and two of them were dedicated to the knowledge of the group and to the organization of the proposal and only in five sections could be made the implementation as such.

Taking into account that the practice was with 10th grade students, I selected five subject from the 10th grade curriculum, to be connected with the writing topics,

The topics for writing workshops were selected by students. They make part of students' everyday life, also correspond to events or celebrations of the Colombian cultural context that has trajectory for Colombian and especially for students' interest as well. Moreover, the topics were used as content which students were require to write about them. Thus, Moham, (1986, P. 14. cited in Hyland. 2003)

typically this involves a set of themes or topics of interest that establish a coherence and purpose for the course or that set out the sequence of key areas of subjects matter that students will address. Hyland. K. (2003, P. 14) students will have some personal knowledge of these themes and will be able to write meaningfully about them.

Writing Topics	Communicative objectives	Writing Activities	Resources
Mall Visit Writing Things you can and can't do in shops	To express permission and prohibition.	Reinforcement writing Grammar and vocabulary Preparation writing Visit to the mall, students report Writing activity Write a composition	Board Things to decorate the classroom
Love and friendship day.	To express feelings, and wishes through their own writings.	Reinforcement writing Grammar and vocabulary Preparation writing Messages: Love and friendship. Writing activity Poster	Board Love and friendship posters. Things to decorate the classroom special paper Frost glue
Planning a Halloween party	To express plans for the future.	Cooperative Writing Grammar and vocabulary Peer-writing Listen thinks and ideas. Activity writing Brochure	Board Decoration Brochure Special paper Colored pencils
The best Christmas day in my life	To express past time memories.	Reinforcement writing Grammar and vocabulary. Reading, about Christmas memories.	Board

		Preparation Writing. Mapping Activity writing Write a composition.	Text Worksheet
What I want for 2016	To express attitudes, activities and possessions students want for the coming year.	Reinforcement writing Grammar and vocabulary Preparation writing Chart with ideas Activity writing Write a composition.	Board Copies.

Table 1. Presentation of topics.

Feedback

Providing feedback is one of the most important task for English teachers. Gabrielatos, C. (2002) Feedback need to be limited to the over corrections of errors and the provision of comments or grades by the teacher. During feedback, students are invited to identity their good qualities and deficiencies of their writing performance.

In order to make optimal use of the feedback stage, teachers need to be aware of three basic aspects:

- *Who provides comments/corrections'*
- *What is the focus of the feedback?*
- *How is feedback given?*

The comments do not necessarily have to be the teachers. Actually, involve students actively in this process through trying pinpoint good qualities and deficiencies in their own or peers writing texts and propose improvements.

Peer feedback means that students receive feedback on their writings from their peers. Hyland (2003, P. 198) say “peer response is said to provide a means of both improving writer’ draft and developing reader’s understanding of good writing”. Leki, 1990 & Zhang, 1995 (cited in Hyland 2003) stated that through peer feedback students not only have a chance to see how readers understand their ideas and what they need to improve, but also gain the skill necessary to revise their own writing.

However, Hyland (2003, P. 199) added that “despite the potential advantages, peer evaluation has been more welcome by teachers than students who tend to prefer teacher feedback, and whose sense of security about their writing seems to derive solely from their teachers’ comments’.

Writing is a complex skill, it requires the treatment of a large number of elements. It is appropriate that feedback focus on a limited number of elements. Giving students feedback on a large number of elements can only confuse them. What is more, limiting feedback to specific elements of writing is consistent with the view of feedback as part of the learning cycle. , Harmer (2007, P. 120) suggest that one way of avoiding the "over- correction" problem is for teachers to tell their students that for a particular piece of work they are only going to correct mistakes of punctuation, or only spelling or only grammar, etc. This has two advantages: it makes students concentrate on that particular aspect, and it cuts down on the correction.

Also, there are procedures which are more suitable for feedback on vocabulary and grammar mistakes, and others which are more effective for the treatment of problems in other areas (e.g. style, organization, coverage, relevance).

The feedback procedures on vocabulary and grammar mistakes outlined below have been adapted from tribble (1996) and white & Arndt (1991),

- Correct error directly (i.e. cross out incorrect part and write correct version).
- Underline, indicate types and refer learners to a reference book (e.g. grammar book, or grammar section in the course book).
- Underline the error and indicate the type on the margin.
- Underline the error.
- Indicate the type of error(s).
- The teacher needs to familiarize learners with the coding system that will be used.
- Indicate the number of errors in each line on the margin.

Moreover, According to (Brown, 2007) one of the characteristics of an effective teacher is the ability to observe students as they perform. Moreover, (Brown 2007) said, “in your evaluation of students writing, the most instructive evaluative feedback you can give is your comments.”

Having into count the above, in each lesson the evaluation was carried out during the whole class. All the time students were given feedback on the grammar and vocabulary. Also, to prevent students had unmotivated, the over-correction on their piece of writing was avoided. Instead the feedback were given by comments.

Chapter 5

Data Analysis

First, it is important to remark that the results obtained in this exercise cannot be taken as absolute, since not all the writing workshops planned were applied due to difficulties at the school to have the research group available. For this reason it was not possible to have a longer space of pedagogical implementation.

Taking into count that the main objective of this qualitative research project is to determine how EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales School while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach, I followed the steps of content analysis to interpret the data gathered from the implementation. According to Smith (2000) may be applied to phenomena that are less artificial and more reflective of an individuals' constructs and contextual organization of experience. (p.134).

Bryman (2004, p. 392)) states that content analysis is “probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents as the students` artifacts in this particular study. Moreover, that it “comprises a searching-out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed.”

Being more specific, Bryman (2004. P.542) defines qualitative content analysis as "An approach to documents that emphasizes the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts. There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data and on recognizing the significance for

understanding the meaning of the context in which an item being analyzed (and the categories derived from it) appeared".

As a matter of contextualizing the conditions in which data was gathered, I have to remind that the pedagogical intervention for this research project was conducted in five sections. In each section students developed some writing workshops or tasks following the stages of writing for learning approach: reinforcement of writing, preparation writing and activity writing, discussed widely in the Literature review.

Writing-for-learning approach is aimed to Reinforcement of writing: students reinforce language that has been taught, and write sentences using recently learnt grammar. Preparation writing: Students prepare their writing for some other activities. Activity writing: Students write a creative writing. Moreover, the classroom was decorated in each section in order to help them to find ideas for their writings and keep them motivated.

When preparing my lesson plans, I included three basic stages: opening, developing and closing. During opening stage as a warm up and awake the students' interest towards the class, teacher and students decorated the classroom (Love and friendship day, shopping center, Halloween party, Christmas day and free theme.). These elements were used as a visual and kinaesthetic stimuli to help students engage in the writing workshops. Thus, harmer (2007, P. 16) claims that all students respond to various stimuli (such as pictures, sounds, music, movement, etc.), some

students are influenced by visual stimuli and are therefore likely to remember things better if they see them. Kinaesthetic activity is especially effective for other learners, who seem to learn best when they are involved in some kind of physical activity, such as moving around, or rearranging things with their hands.

After creating a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom, I explained the grammar and the new vocabulary for the theme. For the developing stage students were asked to write sentences using the new grammar and the new vocabulary. They moved around the classroom, the decoration helped them to get ideas to start writing the sentences, also in this stage students were engaged to participate actively in the creating of their writing, and always were guided by the teacher to follow a procedure to obtain the writing product. After, students worked in pairs or groups and shared their writings. Finally, on the closing stage students wrote a creative paper (brochure, poster).

Data collection

The instruments used during the implementation stage of this research project were the students' artifacts, interviews and a journal.

1. **Artifacts:** These are student's documents or productions which allow observation of different characteristics and details of a process observed. This instrument allowed me to see how the students wrote along the development of the project. Besides, artifacts allowed me to observe and analyze, through the different writings, how the students constructed meaning and expressed what they thoughts and felt along the writing process. As , Merrian (1998) argues "document" is a term used to

define all written, visual, or physical material which may be used to enrich the study being developed.

2. **Interview:** according to Dörnyei (2007, p. 134) is the most often used method in qualitative inquiries. It is regularly applied in a variety of applied linguistic contexts for diverse purposes. Moreover, in action research, interviews are used in order to understand the perspectives of students or teachers.

I applied unstructured interviews during and at the end of each section. These interviews were a kind of conversation so the initial questions might generate other questions. Besides, it is important to take into account that basically the interviews included some general questions to the students in order to determine how the students felt and how they addressed the writing workshop. Thus, Dörnyei (2007, ps. 135,136) the intention is to create a relaxed atmosphere in which the respondents may reveal more than He/she would in formal contexts.

3. **Journal:** This instrument for data collection was used in all sections by the researcher. According to Dörnyei (2007) are diaries kept by researchers themselves during the course of a research project. Thus, notes were taken in each section, to carry a register about what happened in the classroom; (e.g. students use the dictionary to enrich vocabulary, interact with their classmates about the task).

Moreover, it helped me to reflect on the learners' improvements, behaviors and needs. Thus, Nunan (1992, p. 115) the reflections on "thoughts, feeling, motives,

reasoning processes and mental states to determine the ways in which these processes determine his or her behavior”, led to improve future interventional procedures and sessions.

Systematizing information in the data analysis

The analysis and interpretation are required to bring order and understanding to the lots of information that are gathered during the research process. The analysis for this research study followed the steps on the content analysis that according to Smith (2000, p. 319)) are: eliciting, coding, units establishment and categorization, which will be explained in further paragraphs.

Step1: Eliciting:

In this step all the specific material to determine how EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students from Gustavo Morales Morales School while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach were collected (students' artifacts, interviews and journals), moreover, the interviews were transcribed. Thus, Smith (2000, p. 319) said “with the material elicited specifically for research purpose, the researcher has greater control over the source of the information, the amount and kind of information obtained.”

Step 2: coding system

This step is related to determine what material should be included to be analyzed for then be classified into categories. Thus, smith (2000, p. 320) the coding system is the heart of the content analytic method. It specifies the information to be obtained from the material to be analyzed.

Moreover, in this step the data are organized and classified, the coding allows summarizing and synthesizing what is happening in the data, in other words, when linking data collection and interpreting the data, coding becomes the basis for developing the analysis.

Step 3: Units establishment

This step focused in the selection of specific segment of the context unit in the writing material that is placed in a category. Smith (2000, p. 320) a coding unit may be a designated portion or segment of the text, or it may be a designated aspect of the text, such as themes or characters.

Step 4: Categorization

Categories provide the structure for grouping units. Formulating categories, is the heart of content analysis.

Berelson (1962, p. 147, cited in: Content Analysis: A methodology for Structuring and Analyzing Written Material.) emphasized the importance of this step. "Content analysis stand or falls by its categories. Particular studies have been

productive to the extent that categories were clearly formulated and well adapted to the problem and to the content.”

After having done all the steps, I arrived to some findings that respond to the research question and objective formulated at the beginning of the research process. The table No 2 Summarizes the categories established in the analysis and which will be explain below.

How does EFL writing skill evolve in 10th grade students while developing writing workshop within writing for learning approach?	
Final Categories	Sub-categories
1. Students' writing production started to increase.	1.1 Students increase the size of their composition. 1.2 students are focused on content rather than on grammar forms.
2. Students gained more engagement in English writing.	2.1 Students invest more in the writing activities.

Table 2. Categories and Sub-categories

Description analysis and interpretation of results

Taking into consideration the implementation and the data collected from it, the analysis led to the emergence of two categories: 1. Student's writing production started to increase, 2. Students gained more language engagement in English writing. Let's take a look at how those categories are understood and what they represent for this study.

Category 1. Student's writing production started to increase.

This category gives account of the increase that were evidenced in the writing process of the students during the pedagogical implementation of five writing workshops.

With practice students' writing production were growing in each writing section, moreover, students tried to express ideas although there were still grammatical errors in their writings. Thus, Barnett, M. University of Virginia, points out, both teacher and students profit from treating writing as a process and a means of communication. When students realize that teachers read their writing to understand what they are trying to say rather than to judge their grammar and usage, they write more, which is perhaps the best way to refine one's writing; and they eventually take more care with what they write because it means more to them.

This increase in students' writing production is expressed in several ways that were grouped into the next subcategories.

Sub-category 1: Students increase the size of their composition.

Through students' artifacts analysis it was evidenced that in each class grew the size of their compositions.

During writing process the students had the opportunity to learn new grammar structures and vocabulary. Every workshop required students to look up for dictionary definitions.

As in every session, at the beginning of every writing workshop, students were explained new grammar and vocabulary according to the topic on which they were going to write, thus, students were enriching their compositions. Barnett, M. Prewriting activities help students start their papers: they involve students with a composition topic, let them realize what might be included in their papers, help them work out rhetorical problems, or review or provide useful vocabulary. Rohman (107) views prewriting as an invention device and argues that students must learn the “structures of thinking that lead to writing”. Chastain (1988, P. 254) emphasizes the importance of prewriting activities in motivating students to write.

These following excerpts show how this growth occurred (See Appendix students’ artifacts).

Excerpt 1: Messages about love and friendship day. **Excerpt 2**

<i>I love you</i> <i>I need you love</i> <i>I love you forever</i> <i>I miss you</i> <i>By: Alejandro Buitrago.</i>	<i>LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP DAY</i> <i>He is mi love</i> <i>He is mi All</i> <i>You are in my heart</i> <i>I will wait you</i> <i>By: Kelly Medina</i>
---	--

Illustration 1. Student's writing production. Use of more words. Illustration 2. Student's writing production. Use of more words

Excerpt 3 taken from workshop “Planning a Halloween party” **Excerpt 4**

10th grade students are going to have a Halloween party this Saturday

Would you like to come?

People are going to wear different disguises

We are going to make pizza

There will be soda and lemonade to drink

There will be a disguises contest

By: Alejandro buitrago

I am goint to wear a wig the color blue

I am goint to wear false eyelashes

I am goint to wear artificial nails very long

I will dance with my classmates

By: Kelly Medina

Illustration 3. Student's writing production. Use of more words. Illustration 4. Student's writing production. Use of more words

Excerpt 5 written about the best Christmas day. **Excerpt 6**

The best chrismast day in my life.

In 2007 remember I had 7 years

My mother gave to me a bicycle that night I ate rice with chicken and I drank coke

I also danced with my sister and my cousins and my friends also my friends dance very well but me too

By: Alejandro Buitrago

My best Chrismas day

My mother gave me a quitar

My father came to visit a me

We ate that day ajiaco, rice with milk, buñuelos

I danced 5.00 a.m.

I drank gaseosa coke

I wore jeans, jacket, boots, blouse of color white.

By: Kelly Medina

Illustration 5. Student's writing production. Use of more words. Illustration 6. Student's writing production. Use of more words

We can see in Alexandro's composition about Love and Friendship day of the first section. The student incorporate grammar patterns to reinforce language that has been taught (simple present), also, he incorporate words learned during this workshop.

In the composition about Planning a Halloween party, we can see that besides the student reinforced language that has been taught (structure for future will and going to), he used connectors to write compound sentences, such as, this (this Saturday), and (and soda), also adjectives as, different (different disguises).

In the composition of the last section about My best Christmas day, besides the student reinforced grammar and vocabulary learned during the writing workshop (he incorporate structure for simple past), he used "that" to link two sentences (that night) and also gave extra information about how dance his friends (My friends dance very well).

The following excerpt is proof of the perceptions of the students in front of the writing workshops that supports this category:

Students giving their perceptions when asking them about the writing workshops.

“He aprendido a organizar las oraciones mejor escribiendo cosas de la vida real cosas que uno hace a diario.”

Interview to students after activity. Student 1.

❖ *“Profe si uno sigue los pasos o reglas que el profe nos enseña para formar oraciones es más fácil.”*

Interview to students doing the activity. Student 2.

- ❖ *“Mucho vocabulario profesor yo he aprendido y con este vocabulario yo puedo escribir más oraciones.”*

Interview to students at the end of the section. Student 3.

- ❖ *“Profe se me dificulto al comienzo el Will y el going to pero ya lo estoy entendiendo mejor ya escribo mejores oraciones.”*

Interview to students during the writing activity. Students 4.

- ❖ *“todo ese vocabulario que se aprende me ayuda para comenzar a escribir.”*

Interview to students after writing activity. Student 5.

- ❖ *“Es como más fácil escribir cuando vamos trabajando por secciones”.*

Student 6.

Students used new vocabulary in their writings.

In some ways, the ability to write depend upon having an adequate vocabulary even than does the ability to read. Once students have learned to decipher words, they may be able to read, write and pronounce many words that are unfamiliar to them. Also they may be able to determine meaning the context in which words is used. Shawna. B. (2000) argue, during the writing process, although, a student does not have the luxury of examining the context in which a word is used; he or she is creating the context. Therefore, the writer must be able to spontaneously recall words that are known not only by sight, but are understood well enough to use correctly. Mayher and Brause (1986. Cited in Vocabulary's Influence on successful writing) have stated that writing is dependent upon the ability to draw upon words to describe an event.

Therefore, while students improved the vocabulary can enhance their writing skill, also, improvement in vocabulary will result in improved writing skill only if the teachers are able to create a classroom that take writing seriously.

The following excerpts show how students used a new vocabulary in their writing productions, as it is shown with the words highlighted.

Excerpt 7

<i>Happy Day</i>	
<i>Thanks for you friendship.</i>	
<i>I carry you in my Heart.</i>	
<i>I love you so much. Happy Day.</i>	
<i>I miss you.</i>	
<i>You are very special for my heart.</i>	
<i>ALL THE LOVE</i>	<i>By: Saray Arias</i>

Illustration 7. Student's writing production. Use of new vocabulary.

Excerpt 8

<i>Planning a Halloween Party</i>	
<i>There will be candys</i>	
<i>All are going to wear disguises</i>	
<i>I am going to wear gloves, mask, glasses, cap, shoes y hat</i>	
<i>There will be beer for drink</i>	
<i>By: Saray Arias</i>	

Illustration 8. Student's writing production. Use of new vocabulary.

Excerpt 9

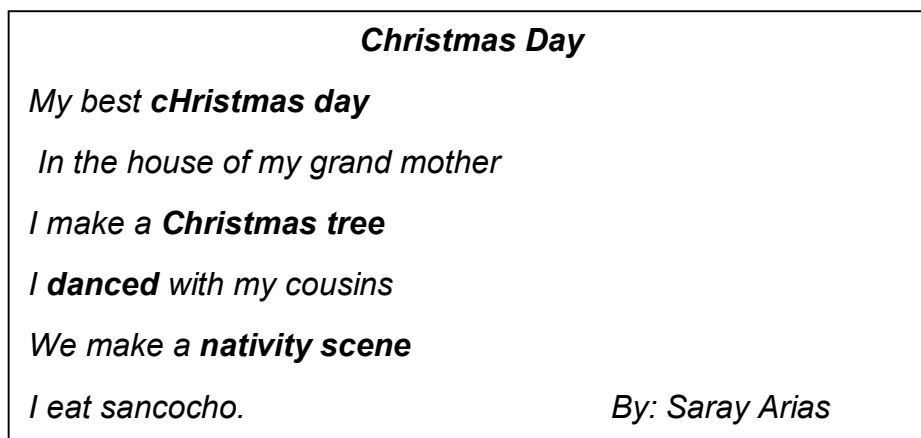


Illustration 9. Student's writing production. Use of new vocabulary.

During the development of the workshops; love and friendship day and Halloween party, in addition to teach new vocabulary, and reinforce it with the classroom decoration, I also used text (poster, brochure) with my students to give them models for writing. So we analyze the text as a starting point and observe the component parts as the general organization, style and registration.

We can see in excerpt 14, 15, and 16 that in each text the student used new words that in everyday life she does not use, but during the writing workshops she used them because, before the writing occurs there was a pre teaching of vocabulary.

Students' perception when they were asked about the activities in class

- ❖ *“Claro profesor. Es que cuando decoramos o tocamos manipulamos cosas el vocabulario se nos queda mejor como más fácil de aprender y nos da más ideas para escribir.”*

Interview to students doing the activity. Student 3.

- ❖ *“Si profe, se aprende nuevo vocabulario como más fácil porque esta uno viendo las cosas y escribiendo al mismo tiempo.”*

Interview to students at the end of the section. Student 7.

- ❖ *“Claro profe uno aprende más cuando ustedes lo ponen a uno a hacer actividades de escritura donde uno ve las cosas las repite en inglés y las escribe.”*

Interview to students at the end of the section. Students 2.

The following excerpt (see appendix B) shows notes I wrote on 24th October 2015 in my journal. There my opinion about my observation in one section demonstrate as highly motivated students are interested in looking for new vocabulary that later they will use to write the sentences they were asked.

I saw that the students were taking the dictionary, they asked each other, they were consulting at the cell phone, and they came and asked me "Teacher how I say this?"

As a funny note, I saw some students were consulting the cell phone. Thinking that they were playing or chatting, I got closer and told them that cannot do that during the class. They said: “No profe estamos buscando vocabulario para hacer las oraciones.” And they showed me the cell phone, and it was true.

Excerpt 10 (See appendix B). *Teacher journal reflections*

24th October 2015

Sara is a student who is always looking for more vocabulary, she research in her cell phone, asks her classmates and the teacher, also she is always asking how to say this or that.

Some students look for more vocabulary apart from the one taught by the teacher, and they very excited communicate it to the teacher.

Illustration 10. Observation notes.

Moreover, emerged another thing that was how students gained more language engagement and how they began to enjoy writing. For this, a second category arises that explains how this phenomenon occurred.

Sub-category 2: students are focused on content rather than on grammar forms.

This sub-category gives account how through the writing students express their ideas although there are still grammar errors. In Zamel's (1983. Cited in Barnett, M. Writing as a process) study, better second language writers treated writing as a process, investigating and explaining their ideas before worrying about grammatical accuracy; the less skilled writers were overly concerned about following and outline and about having grammar and vocabulary from the beginning.

Moreover, Costas. G. (2002) argues, in order to help EFL learners become more effective writers, we need to make a crucial distinction between language accuracy and writing skills. That is, a learner may be able to write sentences which are satisfactory for his/her level in terms of grammar, syntax and vocabulary and still be unable to produce an effective text.

Students have a clear idea what they want to express nevertheless many grammatical and verbs errors were found in the students' artifacts. Following the first step of writing for learning approaches grammar was reinforced in each class. Harmer (2007). In a deductive approach, students are given explanations or grammar rules, for example, and then, based on these explanations or rules, they make phrases and sentences using the new language.

The following excerpts show how students communicate effectively, although they had difficulties in the use of grammar and verbs (See the excerpts in Appendix Students' artifacts).

Excerpt 11. *“Taken from workshop “Love and friendship day”*

I always'll be next to you
I ve love life
You always'll be in my life
In my special moments always'll be there.
By: David Beltran

Illustration 11. Student's writing production. Communication of students.

The grammatical theme for this day was the future will. Students were asked to write messages related with love and friendship day. We can see in the excerpt the messages really have to do with love and friendship day. Although the student used incorrectly the auxiliary will to express feelings, for example in the sentences: "I always'll be next to you.", and "In my special moments always'll be there." the auxiliary will was placed between the adverb of frequency and the main verb, instead of being placed before the adverb of frequency. Despite of his grammatical errors, the student express ideas on love which are comprehensible and have concrete message.

Excerpt 12. *Taken from workshop “The best Christmas day”*

My best chritsmas day
I all night danced
I ate natilla, sancocho.
This day brought my mother a Christmas tree
My family and I all night drank beers
By: Kimberly D. Leon.

Illustration 12. Student's writing production. Communication of students.

The grammatical theme for this day was the Simple Past. Students were asked to write sentences related with his/her best Christmas day.

As we can see again in this excerpt the sentences really have to do with memoirs about the best Christmas day, although there are grammar errors. The verb in past tense was not written after the pronoun in the sentence: "I all night danced." it was written at the end of the sentence, and in the sentence: "This day brought my mother a Christmas tree, the verb was written before the pronoun. The student used incorrect the Simple Past to write memoirs. Nevertheless, the student expressed the traditions, and cultural customs using common vocabulary.

Excerpt 13. *Taken from workshop "what I want for 2016"*

What I want for 2016		
What to be (attitudes)	what to do (activities)	what to get/have (possessions)
I would like to be a dancer.	I would like to do listen to music.	I would like to get a new phone
I would like to become a doctor.	I would like to do watch movies	I would like to get a new car.
	I would like to do meet the president	I would like to get a new house
By: Dayana Gutierrez		

Illustration 13. Student's writing production. Communication of students.

The theme for this section was the use of *would like*, so, the students were asked to write sentences to express plans in terms of (attitudes, activities, and possessions) for the coming year.

We see in this excerpt that despite there are grammar errors, the communicative function is what really matters to the student.

Category 2: Students gained more engagement in English writing.

According to Sharan, S. (2008) defines engagement in three ways: Behavioral engagement draws on the idea of participation; it includes involvement in academic and on-task behavior. Emotional engagement is related to student attitudes and student interest and values, cognitive engagement is related to motivational goals and self-regulated learning. Thus, Fredricks, Blument, & Paris, (2004. Cited in Sharan, S. 2008) argues that engagement is thus a much broader concept than “motivation to learn” although the two overlap to some degree.

Also, engagement overlaps with students’ interest, attachment to the school, achievement motivation, self-regulated learning, engagement to learning or the investment of energy in learning in general.

Newman and colleagues (1992. Cited in Sharan, S. 2008) argues that engagement is the psychological investment of students and the effort directed towards the learning, understanding, mastery of the knowledge, skills or trades that the academic work is proposed.

Through this experience I found that the emotional engagement was the most evident in the students’ work. During the developing of the project students responded enthusiastically to writing, but they focused more on their ideas and less on their grammatical component. So, the enthusiastic way how students responded to the project suggests allowing students to write about topics of interest and relevance to them.

Therefore, engagement in learning is a cognitive-affective condition in which students want to learn.

Sub-category 1: Students invest more in the writing activities.

The topics of the program were connected with students' lives, so it was very interesting for me to see that students made spontaneous attempts to relate all the topics to their lives.

This finding was backed up by the interviews. One of the students talked about her need to express her own feelings.

Kelly: *"cuando escribia los mensajes de amor y amistad, yo queria expresar todo lo que siento por my novio y el vocabulario y la decoracion me ayudaron a inspirar".*

Also, this students during the writing task about love and friendship day, asked all the time to her friends and the teacher: *"como puedo decir tal cosa, como me queda mejor este mensaje etc."*

Another student said that his memories had helped him write on the topic My best christmas day.

Cristian: *"Cuando recorde esa navidad tan chevere que pase en la casa de mi abuelita, de ver ese arbol de navidad tan grande, las luces , toda mi familia, mucha comida y regalos, me acorde de todo y esto me ayudo para expresar todos esos recuerdos en mi escrito."*

Moreover, most of the students mentioned that they linked the writing task: what I want for 2016 where students express attitudes, activities, and possessions they want for the coming year. They explained that they could link it with the Life Project. This is a subject where they have some goals for when they leave the school.

Excerpt 14. *Taken from workshop “What I want for 2016”*

<i>What i want for 2016</i>		
<i>What to be</i>	<i>What to do</i>	<i>What to get/have</i>
<i>(Attitudes)</i>	<i>(Activities)</i>	<i>(Possessions)</i>
<i>I would like to be the best student.</i>	<i>I would like to go to the gym</i>	<i>I would like to get a new apartment</i>
	<i>I would like to play instrument</i>	<i>I would like to get a new phone</i>
	<i>I would like to learn about animals</i>	
<i>By: Kelly Medina</i>		

Illustration 14. Student's writing production. Student's expression.

We can see in this excerpt how through the writing task the student expressed goals that want to achieve.

Alvaro is a student who was very engaged in this activity. Besides he did his writing task, he linked this activity with his dreams, so, he wrote about them, and also he wanted to come to the front of the class to read it, but before he asked me to help to organize the sentences.

The following excerpt shows a few notes I wrote on 19th October 2015 in my journal. It illustrates opinion about my observation in one section and also demonstrated how the students worked more actively.

Excerpt 15: (See appendix B). *Teacher journal reflections about the writing workshop love and friendship day.*

19th September 2015

For this writing workshop students brought items to decorate the classroom.

During the stage reinforcement writing, students asked many questions like: Teacher what grammatical structure is better to say? "Te amare por siempre", "tu eres mi todo." Also they were very active looking for vocabulary in the dictionary in the cellular phones, and also, they asked to each other the meaning of some words related to the love and the friendship day. During the stage preparation writing, students were very excited writing their messages, also they asked me many questions like: Teacher How is it better to write? "I am happy to meet you", "There is nothing like your friendship".

Something wonderful on the stage writing activity was when students agreed to share the messages and choose the best three and decorate them.

Illustration 15. Observation notes.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and pedagogical Implications

The study was an action research project, and, as such, I was more interested in examining how evolve the students' writing production while developing writing workshops within writing for learning approach.

As it was said in the data analysis, in each section the students' writing was improved progressively, thus, they were incorporating new grammatical structures and new vocabulary that they learned during the writing workshops. Also students became aware of the third person, used connectors and adjectives among other language elements. As a researcher, I also saw that the increment in students' writing was also due to the fact that in each writing workshop they wrote about topics that were of their interest.

During the developing of the project students responded enthusiastically to writing, buy they focused more on their ideas and less on their grammatical component. So, the enthusiastic way how students responded to the project suggests allowing students to write about topics of interest and relevance to them.

In each writing workshop students used new vocabulary in their writings, because before they wrote, they were taught new vocabulary taking into account the topic on which to write, also they consulted more vocabulary in the dictionary and their cell phones.

Moreover, this study showed benefits in term of increased language engagement. During the writing workshops student were excited doing their writings, also, they

were always asking the teacher questions about grammar and vocabulary, and showing their writing to the teacher to get feedback.

Based on the findings, it was possible to conclude that it was a great strategy that allowed students to improve their writing in the EFL classroom because it stimulated the interest of students toward the development of the writing skill.

These recommendations, I could provide out of this experience: it is important to motivate our students through our proposals, finding a connection between our classes and students' needs and interests based on their contexts. Also, teachers need to incorporate diversity of syllabuses which enriches diversity in the subject. Besides that, socialization of these practices through writing process makes students feel proud of their abilities when they write.

Implications

The finding of this study have a number of important implications for future practice. During the development of this proposal the journal was used as a tool for data collection. Which at the end at the time I was doing the data analysis, it ends up being an observation of the writing, it was not very complete, I felt myself again reading the students' artifacts. For this reason, this research could be carried out and collect more specific data if we use instead a voice or video recording to corroborate the students' process.

I developed this study in this way to get good results where students read just short simple texts as posters, brochure and advertisement. However, authors recommend that writing could be handled with reading. Both have a similar process,

and they share common ideas and knowledge, and allow students to acquire bases to enrich their vocabulary. Moreover, it would be good not only incorporate reading comprehension but also critical reading, thus, students could write about their critical reading. Graham, 200; Krashen, (1989 cited in alharbi, F. 2015) research shows how reading instructions also can improve students' writing skill.

Through this experience, group work and negotiation were of great importance in orienting of the classes. Students expressed that they learnt better when constructing ideas with others. They also learnt to accept ideas that they do not share. Besides that, students had the chance to share and complement each other's knowledge. In addition, some students who knew more English than their partners could teach them and they learnt from each other.

I recommend that you keep the idea of consulting students about their interests and from those interests take out the topics of writing work. Also, provide students with enough opportunities to express their ideas, opinions and reactions using topics of interest for students.

Limitations

The findings in this study are subject to at least two limitations. First, the limitations of time affected the research. The project was developed only in 5 sections. Second, the time limit also affected the sample size of this study since only five students' writing were explored. More reliable results would probably have been achieved if the study had been implemented for a long time and with a larger sample.

List of References

Barnett, M. Writing as a Process. University of Virginia.
http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw/courses/advanced/methods_docs/pdf_doc/wbf_collection/0001_0050/0009_Barnett_writing.PDF

Brown, D. (2007). Teaching by Principles. An Interactive Approach to Language

Bryman, A. (2004). Social research methods (2nd Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2015) Social Research Methods. Oxford University Press.

Burns, A. (2010). Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching. A guide for Practitioners. Routledge.

Costas Gabrielatos (2002) EFL Writing: Product and Process,

<http://www.gabrielatos.com/EFLWriting.htm>

Dönryei, Z. (2007). Research Methods in Applied Linguistics. Oxford University Press.

Elbow, P. (1994). Writing for learning--not just for demonstrating learning. University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1-4. National Teaching and Learning Forum
<http://www.ntlf.com/html/lib/bib/writing.htm>

Fahad Alharbi (2015) Writing for Learning to Improve Students' comprehension at the College Level, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n5p222>: Canadian Center of Science and Education.

Harmer, J. (2004). *How to Teach Writing*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. Print.

Harmer, J. (2007). *How to Teach English*. Pearson.

Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge University Press.

Kirby, D. & Liner, T. (1988). *Inside out, Developmental strategies for Teaching Writing*. Boynton. Cook Publishers, Inc.

Lodico, M, Spaulding, D & Voegtle, K. (2006). *Methods in educational research*. United States of America: First Edition, Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative Research: A guide to design and implementation*. Fourth edition. United State of America. Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitaive research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

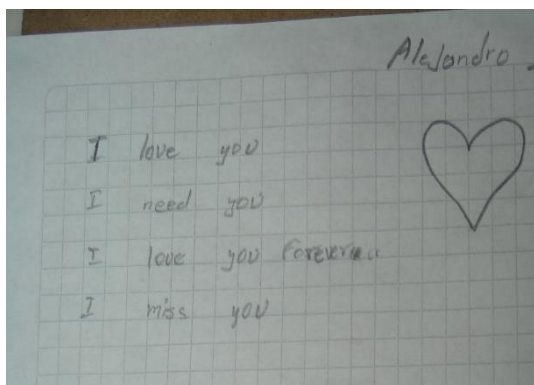
Pedagogy. San Francisco state University. Third Edition. Pearson Logman.

Sharan, S. (2008). *Organizing School for Productive Learning*. ISBN: 978-1-4020-8394-5 (Print) 978-1-4020-8395-2 (Online).

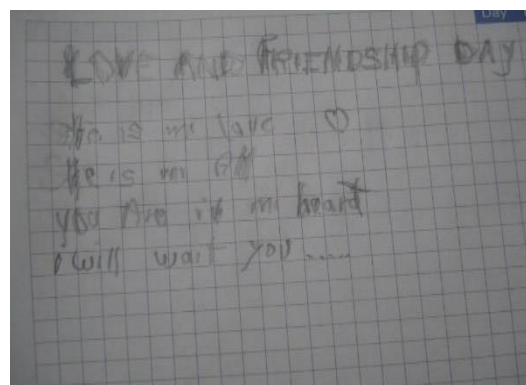
Shawna, B. (2000). *Vocabulary's Influence on Successful Writing*.
www.ericdigests.org/2001-3/inluence.htm

Appendix A: students' artifacts of their writing process

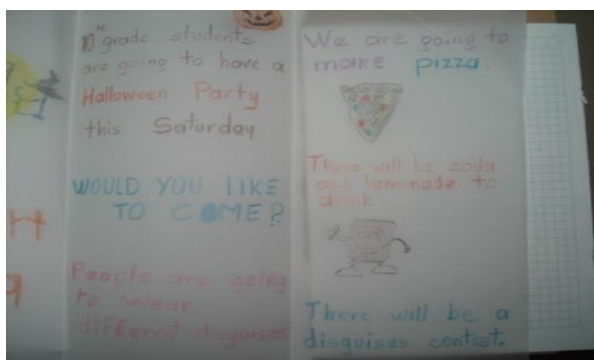
Excerpt 1



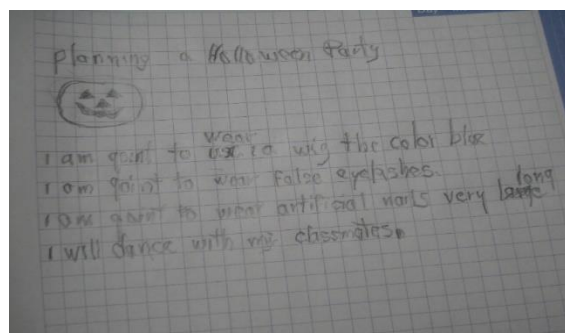
Excerpt 2



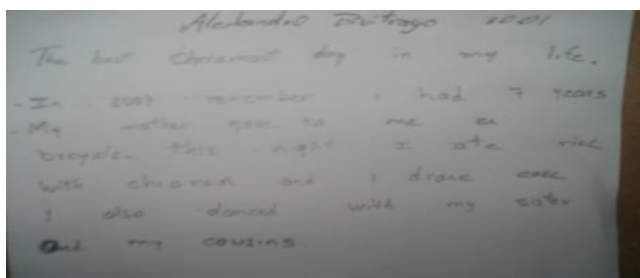
Excerpt 3



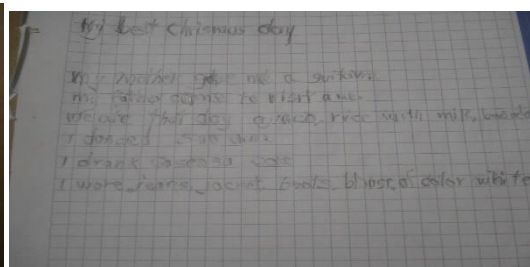
Excerpt 4



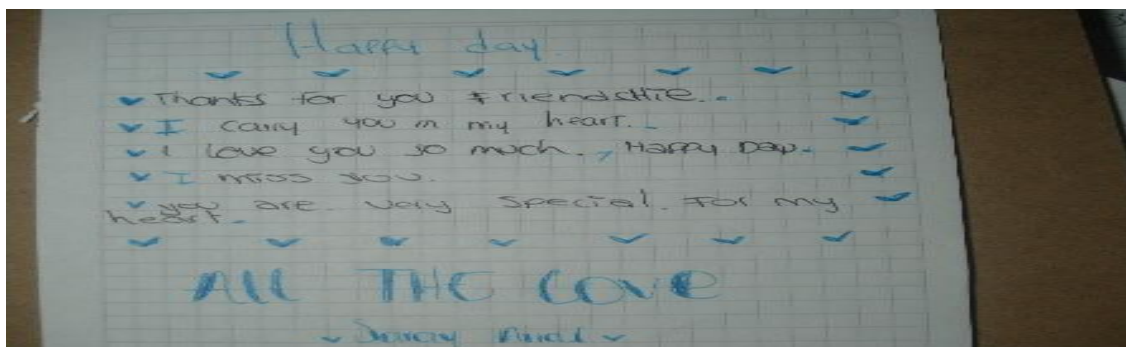
Excerpt 5



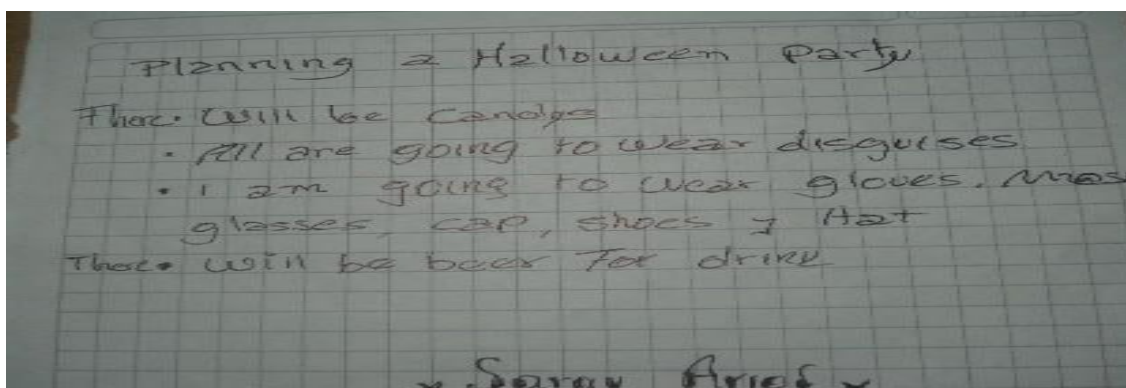
Excerpt 6



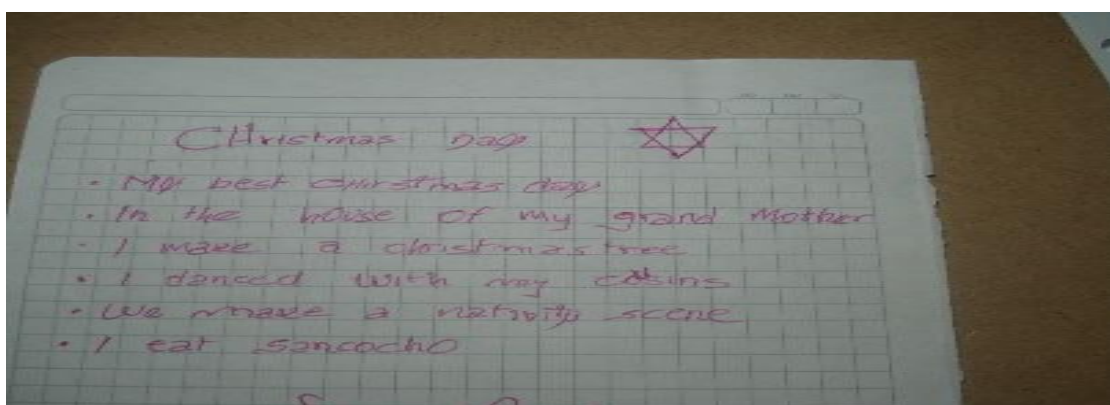
Excerpt 7



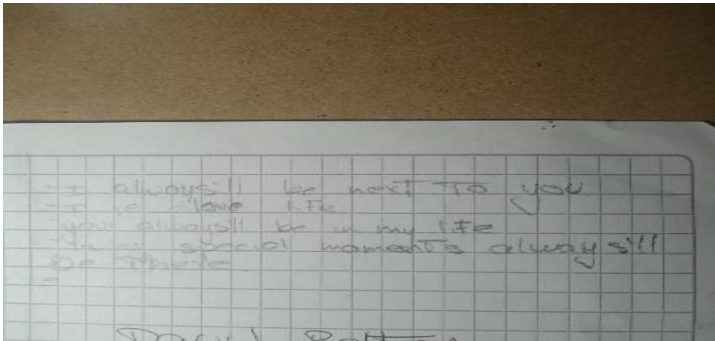
Excerpt 8



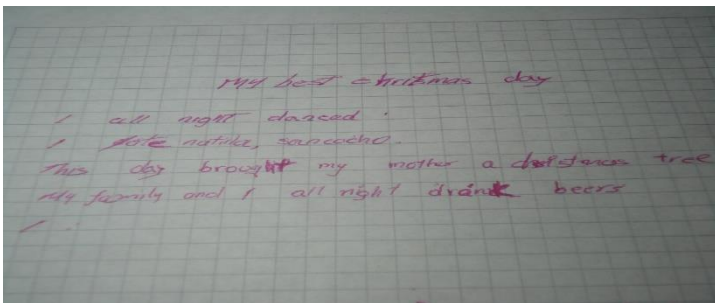
Excerpt 9



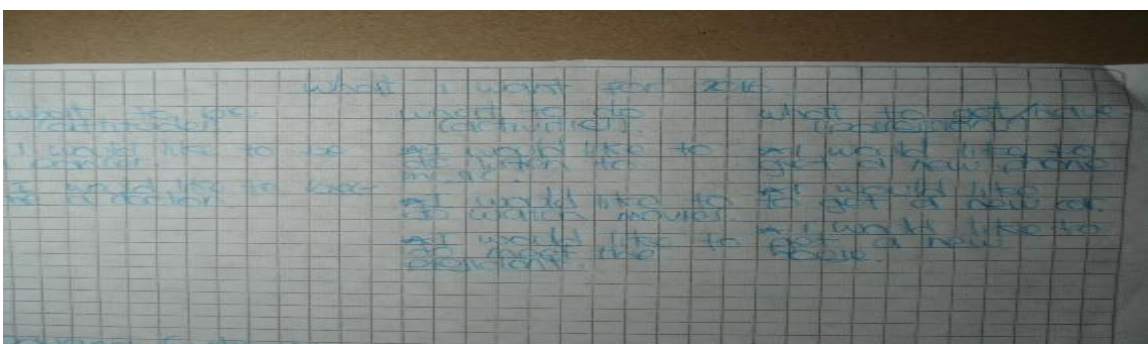
Excerpt 11



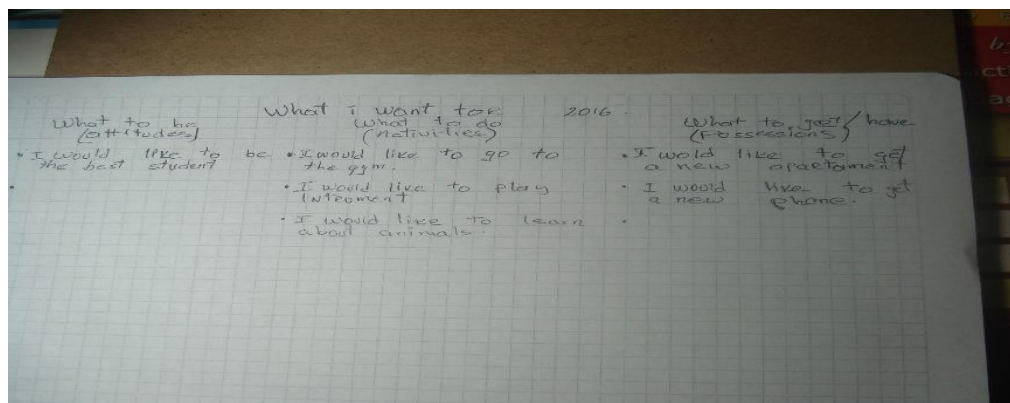
Excerpt 12



Excerpt 13

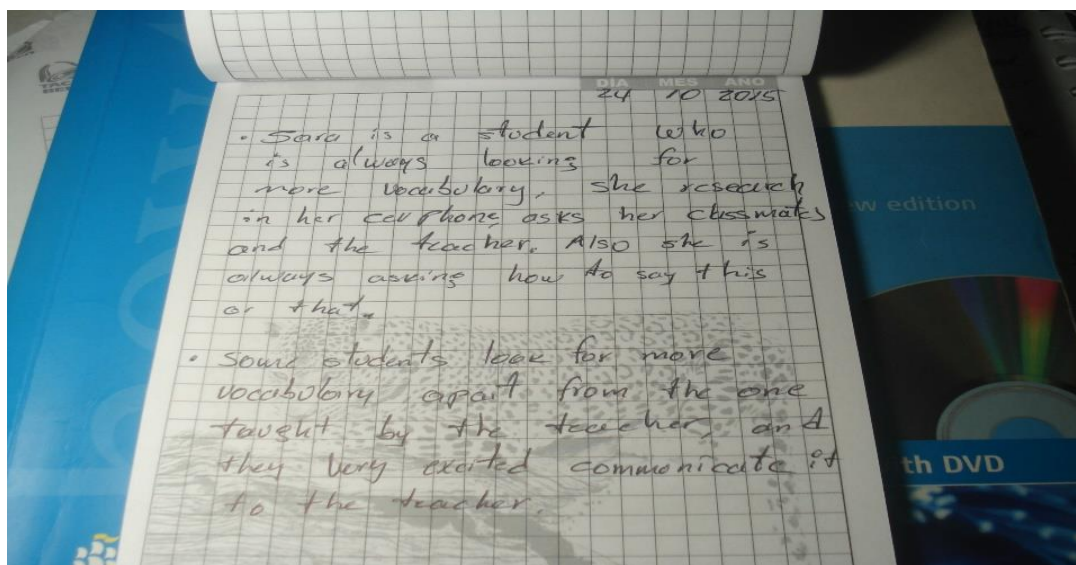


Excerpt 14

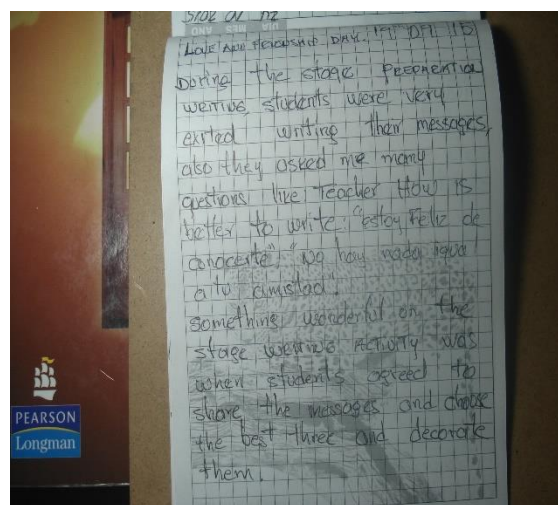
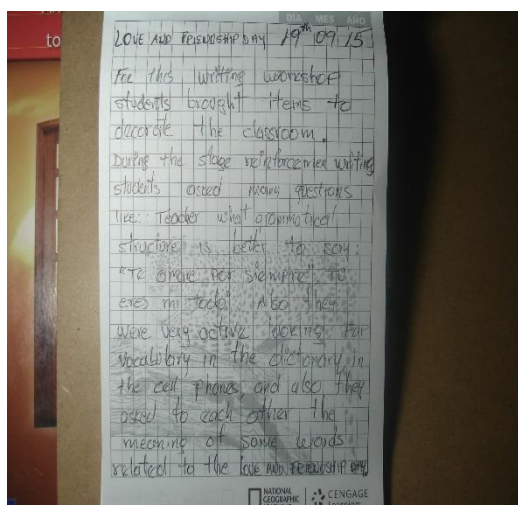


Appendix B

Excerpt 10



Excerpt 15



Appendix C

