

The impact of dialogue journals on students' writing

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Trabajo para optar al título de M.A in English Didactics

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to measure the impact of dialogue journals on student's writing. To achieve that goal, seventh graders between twelve and fourteen years old at San Rafael School in Valencia, Córdoba learners were monitored in an EFL setting in order to determine how their writing abilities improved. Several strategies were implemented in class through writing activities led by a dialogue journal. This study was implemented at different stages: the diagnosis stage based on data collected from three instruments; the action stage carried out through a series of class workshops; and the evaluation stage also based on three data-collection instruments. The findings reported the usefulness of dialogue journals in the EFL classroom as a means to improve writing performance, vocabulary, and attitude of the participants. At the end, dialogue journals demonstrated to be an efficient tool for learners to strengthen writing, learn vocabulary and increase confidence while writing.

Keywords: Dialogue journals, writing activities, ELF setting, writing performance, vocabulary, attitude.

1 Introduction

In this action research study about the impact of Dialogue Journals on Students' writing, the participants were monitored, surveyed, and closely observed in an EFL setting at a public school in the department of Cordoba, Colombia. The purpose was to measure the impact of dialogue journals on student's writing considering that, as stated by Harmer (2004: v) "Being able to write is a vital skill for speakers of a foreign language as much as for everyone using their own first language." It is also important to reflect on the fact that nowadays many exams are taken in written form and, consequently, written expression and performance become fundamental to obtain satisfactory scores. Accordingly, a diagnosis based on different data instruments, namely, an outsider observation, a teacher's diary, and a survey for students were designed in order to have an idea of the participants' strengths and weakness in terms of writing skills. The data were analyzed by using codes, groupings, and categories. The results showed some difficulties regarding writing skills; for instance, the students were not able to write topics related with their emotions or school life; therefore, there was an evident need for the inclusion of every day and academic topics with the purpose of helping them to better their written ability through familiar themes.

The main objective of this piece of research was, by means of the workshops and activities implemented in class, to assess the impact they had in learner's writing. Besides, to improve students' vocabulary, grammar and spelling, doing good use of writing content about familiar topics and daily situations at school.

Through this study, I concluded that Dialogue Journals are efficient tools for learners to improve their written ability, vocabulary, and grammar; they also lower their L1 dependence, since writing helps them to communicate and think more clearly in English. Therefore, this strategy helps students feel confident and enables them to perform better tasks such as drafting, listing, and mapping, editing, and revising texts.

To sum up, this research made a great contribution to the internal curriculum of the institution; it will serve as a diagnosis for future studies concerning the writing skill and the use of strategies in the EFL classroom. For further research, an inclusive study of how students English's level and their perceptions might affect results related to the effectiveness of the strategy implemented in this study.

2 Justification

This study is important because it could contribute as a model for administrators, English teachers and the academic community in general to consider the use of diaries as a useful tool in the EFL classes. Diary journals also develop students' writing abilities and their knowledge on syntactic, morphological and grammatical patterns; therefore, the writing process is a means of instruction that engages students in tasks and activities related to their interests and expectations.

This might also be a useful research because it could allow students to communicate with the teacher one by one through their journals. It makes them feel that they are known, that they have a place in the classroom and, of course, and that they are heard. Besides, dialogue journals provide a vehicle for shy students to talk (Larrotta, 2008). Dialogue journals can be a means for students to explore their thinking through classroom discussions; it means that they could have time to prepare a topic privately and they participate in a collective task that involves discussion.

This is also an innovative research because it helps to determine in greater detail the level of the students' writing skills in terms of grammatical structures and vocabulary use. Writing enables students to be adventurous with the language; it gives them opportunity to be creative, make up their own stories and, therefore, be risky in the use of the language. Since both students and teachers are involved in this process, all can get to know each other better with respect to learning processes and interests.

Additionally, this study has a significant impact on language development and how it affects the English teaching process in the classroom, *i.e.*, teachers who deal with large groups of students cannot interact verbally with each of their learners, so dialogue journals can be an instrument to get information about the issues and problems of students.

Accordingly, this research encourages teachers to be more involved in their students' lives and to connect with them individually in large classes in order for them to let know that they have a place in the classroom, and that their ideas and opinions are important.

In my particular professional field, this study will positively affect the way I teach my English lessons by making them more attractive and meaningful and engaging learners in the activities to gain confidence and improve language skills. In addition, this study will also affect my academic and personal life because it will give me more experience in the field of action research, particularly, in writing since I can strengthen my teaching practices in this skill.

In sum, this study would facilitate the implementation of new writing strategies, which let teachers know, analyze, use and implement use new aspects when teaching children and teenagers how to write for communicate. Therefore, the present study is a chance for similar studies, in which researchers can identify the effectiveness of dialogue journals strategy and their limitations. Context of research and description of the problem

2.1 Context of research

This research was carried out in San Rafael, Valencia, Córdoba. The population of the village is around 36,074 people; its economy is based on agriculture, livestock, and it is an important timber-producing place. However, almost 90% of the families are displaced by violence, many years ago, paramilitary and guerrilla groups controlled Valencia and its surroundings, and they killed a lot of people at that time. Nowadays, some of those families are looking for better opportunities in places like Bogotá or Monteria; they also stay close to the village. This situation has affected the learner's behavior since most of them come from dysfunctional homes or were abandoned, neglected, and deprived of love and affection.

The San Rafael del Pirú School has more than 930 students including preschool, elementary and high school levels; it is divided into 6 branches: San Rafael, the main branch, Santamaria, Laton, Cocuelo, Zahino, Bonny Jardín, and Bonny Arriba, all these for elementary school. In the main branch there are 15 classrooms for elementary and high school, four of these are divided by improvised wood walls; there is also one computer room with enough equipment for each student per class, good technological resources and there is not a teacher's lounge or library. Water is not available all the time, but there is permanent electrical service.

Students go to school on horses, donkeys, by walking and some of them by motorcycles. most of the learners are Spanish speakers. All these aspects affect the learning process of students. In my classes, 80 % of the learners come from poor families, they do not have any foreign language background and their parents are not involved in their

learning process. Students have two hours of English instruction a week, but none of them have parents or relatives at home who can explain to them the English homework, which means that those learners might have difficulties and, probably, they will do it in class.

The Institutional Educative project (IEP) states that students should be guided through pedagogical processes and skills training in order for them to acquire knowledge as well as autonomous, dynamic, creative and critical attitudes to transform their social, cultural, and environmental background. Besides, it is also necessary to engage the school community in pedagogical and productive processes to help students achieve their goals and be able to face the world and solve real life situations. In order to succeed at these purposes, the students' abilities, needs, and expectations have to be taken into consideration.

The two-hour English class that students have, from 6th to 11th grade and the one-hour class that students have in elementary school are not enough to develop all the topics planned, therefore, it is necessary to adjust the syllabi. The evaluation system in the Institution, which must correspond to the contents of the syllabus and the context, is included in the lesson plans and the principal of the school assesses it occasionally.

All materials used by learners and teachers, *e.g.*, flashcards, text books, video beams, tablets, dictionaries, laptops, audio players, and cell phones, among others, are essential tools to help teachers monitor the progress and needs of the students, and also to evaluate them. Teachers have to follow the curriculum and provide, make, adapt or choose materials accordingly. Photocopies are used in class because in public schools' learners are not expected to buy a book.

2.2 Description of the problem

Considering the data gathered and the analysis of said data in the diagnosis stage (through a survey, a student's test, an interview for teachers, and focused observations carried out), the main difficulties of the participants regarding their writing skills were namely, *misunderstanding of ideas in the FL, unsubstantial reading comprehension, inaccurate grammar, and L1 dependence*. All these issues indicated also the problems learners had with the use of tenses, connectors, spelling, subject, and word order. For example, in the student's survey (see annexes) they affirmed that the most difficult writing activities were:

"Al completar oraciones" / writing complete sentences

"Al escribir oraciones cortas" / writing short sentences

"Aprender la gramática" / learning grammar

Besides, there was misunderstanding of ideas in the FL was found, essentially because learners had general difficulties in their performance in the FL. Some examples are stated below:

"Where are they?" / They Italian

"What is their mother's name?" / Their mother's from is Karen

"Where does she live?" / She do on your street

With respect to inaccurate grammar, students mainly showed to have difficulties with syntax, vocabulary, and morphology; as a result, they felt unsatisfied because they could not do the written activities as expected. The following examples taken from the survey and the test illustrated this problem:

“Aprender cómo escribir las palabras es difícil” / learning how to write words is difficult

“Organizar oraciones es complicado” / organizing sentences is not easy

“No sé cómo escribir un texto corto” / I do not how to write a short text

Finally, L1 dependence represented one of the learner's problems. There was permanent interference of their mother tongue when they tried to communicate in English. That is to say, their background knowledge and context influence the learning of English; besides, they do not practice what they learn in class. That is why they used more their mother tongue than English, as evidenced in the excerpts below:

“No sé cómo decir esa palabra en inglés” / I do not how to say that Word in English

“Se me dificulta leer esto” / it is more much difficult what I thought

To conclude, the graph below shows the lack of writing skills is the category, which represented the highest percentage, indicating that in the writing process students had more difficulties to do a written task.

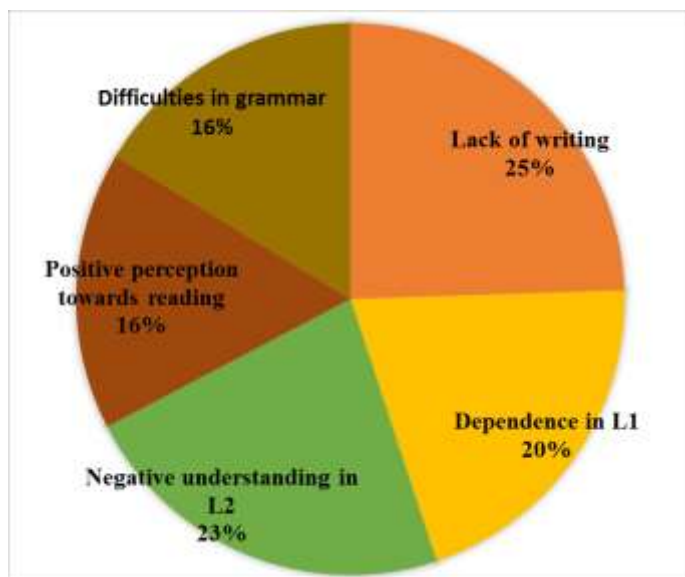


Figure 1 Result of categories found in each instrument

Figure 1 shows that the participants had weaknesses at the moment of doing an activity that involves written expression. Thus, there was an evident need in the design and implementation of some workshops to improve writing, so that learners had the opportunity to achieve better results. Since accurate vocabulary, writing strategies and grammar structures are needed to write coherent texts, Dialogue Journals could be an excellent option to help learners improve their writing performance. This tool could also give learners the possibility to learn vocabulary, grammar, raise their confidence, and express feelings related to their interest and desires. Research question and objectives

2.3 Research question

To what extent do dialogue journals have an impact on sixth grade students' writing skills at a public school in Valencia, Córdoba?

3 Objectives

3.1 Research objectives

4 General research

- To measure the impact of dialogue journals on the student's writing skills.

4.1 Specific research

1. To examine if dialogue journals help increase the English vocabulary of sixth graders.
2. To identify the impact of dialogue journals on English grammar in sixth graders.
3. To explore whether dialogue journals reduce the L1 dependence of the participants.

4.2 Pedagogical objectives:

4.2.1 General pedagogical objective

- To better sixth graders writing through dialogue journals in the English class.

4.2.2 Specific pedagogical

1. To expand students vocabulary through dialogue journals.
2. To better student's grammar through writing.

3. To decrease student's L1 dependence through the exposure to dialogue journal.

5 Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents some concepts about the writing process stated by the main authors mentioned in this research. The first part is concerned to the development of writing by using journals since they can be used as a learning tool to improve students writing. The second section will go through the importance of vocabulary in the development of writing. The third chapter is related to the improvement of grammar. The next section refers to different spelling theories based on different authors. The other two categories described in the research refer to the decrease in L1 dependence and writing content. In the first category, authors try to explain the dependence students have on their mother tongue while writing, and finally, the sequence students keep during the progress of written activities.

5.1 What is a dialogue journal?

This chapter starts describing the concepts of diary journals and the Theoretical foundation they are based on. Authors like Calkins, (1994, p.4) stated that “Writing is more than just recording; it is the process of developing a story or idea.” That means that journals give the students the chance to write and represent their life experiences, the opportunity to continue learning inside and outside the classroom and to have authentic communication. To give learners this experience, teachers should show their students that they see the value and potential joy of writing. Young, one of the world’s experts on the topic of journals, suggests to integrate journals “into the fabric of a course” and “make regular, frequent use of them in class,” which will impress upon students “that journals are valuable, not just ‘busy work, because they are used daily as students and teacher build the

knowledge of the course” (Young 1999, 18). Also, Bean (1996) suggests that one way to begin class is to ask students to discuss a question that they wrote about the night before in their journals.

The process approach and its authors defend the use of journals to improve writing in class. Moreover, some authors have attributed the effectiveness of that approach to the use of journals in class (Pritchard, 1987). Besides, some studies of several writing projects in the United States indicate that journals help students during the class to formulate their thoughts because of the expressive language used and several writing styles. Additionally, Gaskins mentions, “journals motivate student writers to write for their ideas since and then share them with their classmates and teachers” (1982: 859). Once it is done, one of the main processes that is to communicate can be considered successful. So, both students and teachers can improve their writing skills. In other words, journal lets students express their feelings and provide them with confidence because they have the time to organize their minds and delve deeper into their thoughts. A journal allows students "more freedom to explore the ideas of a discipline from a personal vantage point, and therefore greater opportunity to learn without the anxiety of anticipating formal expectations that are made to seem more important than the search for meaning" (Knoblauch and Brannon, 1983: 470).

Helping the students to keep a diary journal will increase their writing skills. Sometimes, they would require keeping these written thoughts without being shared. Moreover, it would not be advisable to keep attention on journal writing on the student's self-expression; otherwise, it might end up seeming more like a chore or a written

assignment and make them feel frustrated once they keep writing their journals. This is their opportunity to write freely without having to be judged.

5.2 The importance of vocabulary in writing

This section refers to the way learners use words in the foreign language to give a message while writing. A lexical knowledge definition is necessary for vocabulary acquisition research. Neumann & Dwyer, defined vocabulary as “words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)” (2009, p. 385). Hornby (1995) cited by Alqahtani (2015) defines it as “the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings.” While Ur (1998) cited by Alqahtani (2015) states: “Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language.” Vocabulary can be described as the “glue” that holds stories, ideas and concepts together. It allows us to express our ideas and communicate effectively. The direct teaching of vocabulary is not a daily occurrence in the vast majority of schools within the UK, even though there is evidence to support the advantages of vocabulary teaching.

Other aspects in the process of writing are related to the students' attitude, previous knowledge and ability to write according to the level. Some previous research demonstrates that the lack of vocabulary knowledge makes writing a difficult task for L2 learners (Astika, 1993) and vocabulary plays a crucial role in writing quality (Walters & Wolf, 1996). This difficulty is especially generated when language proficiency is weak. However, recent research shows that teaching vocabulary may become a problem because many teachers are

not confident about best practice in vocabulary teaching and they do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). It is required for teachers to be aware of the importance of teaching lexis and help their learners to assimilate new lexis in the classroom that let them know new writing skills.

Additionally, to be successful in writing in a foreign language a good level of vocabulary is commonly considered as one of the main factors required for L2 proficiency. Learning words is not something that can ever be fully achieved, it is something that is expanded and extended throughout a lifetime, for that reason, Instruction in vocabulary involves much more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally, through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies; it is essential to language and crucially important for L2 learners. As stated by Harmer (2007) "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 skills can be achieved."

For many students, it is difficult to express their ideas in writing journals without knowing and using words that convey the ideas that they want to write. When teaching how to write in class, lexical growth is coordinated with student's cognitive development and education, so that by the time they need to express complex ideas they have acquired the necessary lexis. In foreign languages, however, students usually experience a gap between what they want to convey in terms of content and what they can convey with the limited vocabulary they have. This is particularly true for writing, which is a more formal mode of

expression than speech, often characterized by less frequent and academic vocabulary, which requires a more carefully chosen vocabulary.

Learners are conscious about the importance of vocabulary and often argue that their major problem in expression is their lack of adequate words. Coxhead (2012) conducted an interview with English learners as an additional language in New Zealand, where learners reported the necessity for academic, technical or professional words to express their ideas in writing. In this way, studying detailed vocabulary instruction effects on improving L2 learners' writing skill and their short and long-term retention is the purpose of the present study.

5.3 Grammar in writing

Accuracy corresponds to one of the most important aspects in the writing processes. Murray (2009) states that the understanding of the rules in grammar might have an impact on the ability to develop rhetoric and coherence. That is to say, the use of grammar represents a considerable improvement in terms of receptive and productive communicative skills considering that grammar helps learners not only to be accurate at the moment of communicating their ideas, but also to understand the message and intention of the writer.

In addition, grammatical accuracy is one of the essential parts to ensure the writer's intended meaning and to avoid communicative misunderstanding (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). The issue of accuracy is applicable to journal writing since it has proven to be an effective way to stimulate natural interaction of language use in ESL and EFL learners in order to promote linguistic development. Conversely, productive writing should mean little effort to

guarantee that learners are using basic sentences and paragraph structures accurately using mechanics, conjunctions and transitions demonstrating appropriation when producing a texts or composition.

Cumming and Ono (1997) argue that “grammar originates in recurrent patterns in discourse and these patterns continually shape it” (p. 112). Drew and Sorjonen (1997) even more directly relate grammar to immediate discorsal concerns when they state, after surveying a number of studies of grammar in interaction, that such studies point to “the interactional consequences which may be associated with the use of certain forms” (p. 101). Cumming and Ono (1997) state that “grammar originates in recurrent patterns in discourse and these patterns continually shape it” (p. 112). Drew and Sorjonen (1997) even more directly relate grammar to immediate discorsal concerns when they state, after surveying a number of studies of grammar in interaction, that such studies point to “the interactional consequences that might be associated with the use of certain forms” (p. 101). Recently, a large number of papers has been devoted to grammar in interaction (Ochs, Schegloff, & Thompson, 1996), including the relationship between grammatical forms (verbs, pronouns, nouns, adjectives etc.) in a conversation. Besides, how grammar is influenced by discourse sequence and placement of items and particular social activities.

Furthermore, grammar is “the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meanings.” This means that all speakers of a language know how to use its complex forms of organization with considerable skill; indeed, when a person knows the grammatical rules is considered as a competent user of a language, but the ability of using it in a correct way is more important. For that reason, it is decisive for

learners to recognize the importance of using their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in a meaningful way; so that in writing classes one of the methods used to provide students with collaborative and individual learning is a dialogue journal, since it improves students' writing abilities in terms of grammar, content and lexical usage and confidence in writing ability (Peng, 2007).

5.4 The spelling of words

There are a lot of theories about learning how to spell but it is important to mention that the process of learning to spell has to do with a cognitive process and the spelling ability which involves two processing systems phonological and lexical. However, these aspects have some subskills that deserve attention.

Learning to spell accurately is extremely important from an early stage (Meeks, 2003). It is argued that an individual's literacy level is often judged by others in terms of his or her ability to spell words correctly in every written communications, such as in letters, notes, reports and application forms. In addition, Parker (1991) cited in IPL, has remarked: in our society, being a proficiency speller is important. Good spelling is regarded as the mark of a "well-educated" person, and because of this, it can affect a child's future opportunities and choices in life (p.64).

Difficulties with spelling can affect children's and adults' writing in several ways. A misspelled word can damage the message an author is trying to convey. However, children are not the only ones who make those mistakes. Difficulties in mastering spelling skills can

lead young children to avoid writing and developing a mentality that they cannot write, resulting in stopped writing development (Graham, 1999).

More importantly, difficulties with spelling may hinder the execution of writing processes during the act of writing (Graham, 1990; Scardamalia, Bereiter, and Goleman, 1982). In other words, organizing the ideas, concentrating on how to develop them correctly, and having to think about how to spell a particular word can lead the writer to forget plans or ideas already sustained in working memory, influencing writing output. Also, if attention is focused on spelling concerns, there may be fewer opportunities for the writer to more accurately match their expressions to the intentions at the time of translation, affecting the translation process of ideas or words in sentences.

McCutchen (1995) and others (Berninger, 1999; Graham & Harris, 2000) cited by Graham et al. have argued that spelling and other transcription skills impose a significant drain on the attentional resources of young writers and, consequently, limit their use of other writing processes, like content generation. In other words, spelling can enhance children's ability to identify and decode words correctly (Adams, 1990; Berninger et al., 1998; Ehri, 1989; Ehri and Wilce, 1987 cited by Johnson, M, 2013). Furthermore, students who are better at spelling and are more knowledgeable about the relationship between sound and letters are more likely to write and read and will experience fewer negative experiences when learning either of these skills.

5.5 Diminishing dependence in L1 learners

Writing is measured as an important instrument where students can exchange a few words with each other by sharing ideas, compelling and persuading one another. For most of the ESL learners, writing in a second language is difficult, when writing skill do not receive enough attention. However, the significant role of writing skill and its importance in demonstrating students' learning ability cannot be denied in the first or foreign language. Some similarities can be found between first language and foreign language writing at superficial levels and between the processes that the writers go through (Silva 1993, as cited in Blackmore-Squires, 2010).

Some definitions of L1 writing have been suggested (Silva, 1992; Bell, 1995; Berman, 1994). This study focuses on the idea that L1 dependence learners tended to incorporate L1 speech patterns into L2 writing, that is, learners might transfer their L1 writing-related perceptions (formed as a result of L1 writing-related experiences) to L2 writing contexts (Bell, 1995). Nevertheless, L1 language helps learners when it has elements in common with L2 such as grammatical competences, sentence structures, word order, but hinders the learning process when both language systems differ (Cook, 2001).

L1 and second language depend on each other despite the differences between them. The relationship between L1 and L2 learning indicates how L1 dependence affects learning of another language. Furthermore, certain L1 linguistic knowledge and skills can be positively transferred during the process of L2 acquisition, and transfer happens automatically (Cummins, 1978). In relation to this, Husain (1995) claims that the use of L1 provides foreign language learners with a quick and efficient method for analyzing and comprehending the structure of the target language.

Additionally, student's role is important when learning a second language, therefore, the use of L1 is valuable for language learning because both help in the process and completion of the task and builds a social and cognitive space in which learners will be able to provide each other with assistance throughout the duration of the task. Anton and Dicamilla (1998). When students want to solve any problem during a writing activity, and they omit some important aspects from L2, they find support in L1 language to fulfill the assigned tasks. Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001), the group reported that they almost always had more ideas and a greater amount of clear thinking in L1.

5.6 Writing content strategy

Before discussing writing content, it is important to highlight that writing is a complex and very difficult skill to master for many students (Graham, 2006) and it incorporates numerous cognitive operations (Graham, Berninger, & Abbott, 2012; Helsel & Greenberg, 2007). These operations are both recursive and iterative in nature (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987; Flower & Hayes, 1980) in relation to this, learning to write effectively can be challenging for many children (Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005; Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003).

Writing content is a strategy used to better students' writing sequence, what they were to ask about, logical consistency between ideas, and incorporating the content during the development of each written activity. Flower and Hayes (1980) claim that the first target in writing is to build a logical "network of ideas," or content, with the purpose of engaging in those ideas. The second goal is to take into account the formal and conventional features

of written text to express content. It is a significant feature of writing and cognitive development with the purpose of enriching poor writers. It aims at enabling students to monitor themselves while they develop written activities during classes.

This strategy is a common way to assess learner's writing of texts, paragraphs, or repeated writing activities. Teachers can develop writing meaningful activities such as daily journal writing, free writing on assigned topics, book reviews, story creation, and expressing opinions. Its goal is to provide learners with activities to identify mistakes and use of written content on their activities, on their own. Thus, learners not only acquire subject-matter knowledge, but also naturally develop English writing skills by developing writing tasks, written model sentences, filling in blanks, and practicing while performing the academic tasks.

Santos (1988) and Bridgeman and Carlson (1983) state that nonnative students write more on content than on form (e.g., grammar, spelling, syntax, and vocabulary). Bae and Bachman (2010) studied a writing approach that included factors of content, grammar, spelling, and text length. If the researcher is going to use the writing content strategy, it is crucial to establish which aspects of writing content strategy will be assessed, how it will be assessed, and at the end verify if it was useful or not at bettering learners' writing.

5.7 Studies about the impact of dialogue journals on student's writing

Research on dialogue journals and student's writing has been important, principally the improvement of writing by using dialogue journals, the student's engagement with

written activities, their confidence while writing and monitoring their own progress. Studies have given learners and teachers different tools, ideas and suggestions for enhancing learners writing and the use of multiple writing strategies. Indeed, there are various works of research about the usefulness of dialogue journals on student's writing. Orem (2001) states that dialogue journals provide learners an opportunity to practice using the target language in meaningful and authentic contexts. However, since "the interactions are written", they allow students to use reading and writing in "distinct ways and provide a natural, comfortable bridge to other kinds of writing." (Peyton, 2000).

Furthermore, most of those studies related to dialogue journals have been conducted with ESL learners. (Holmes & Moulton, 1997; McGrail, 1996; Moon, 1999, 2001, 2006; Peyton, 1990; Wang, 2004). Dialogue journals are more important for ESL students who evaluate their L1 and L2 learning processes since in dialogue journals, learners develop awareness of their weaknesses and strengths in language learning; they help learners achieve autonomy, understand more about similar and different cultural backgrounds, and improve their reflective thinking (Trites,2001).

There are many other studies that affirm dialogue journals give learners the opportunity to practice authentic language, increment learners' own motivation, develop writing and reading fluency, and develop close relationship between teachers and students (Kose, 2005). By making comments and asking questions about their students' entries, teachers can get more information about needs and have a wider view of writing performance. Indeed, teachers are capable to effectively look for more resources that will motivate the students directly with a foreign language (Han & Stevenson, 2008).

When working with dialogue journals, various important issues such as learners' writing abilities including grammar, content and lexical usage, and confidence in writing ability are developed (Peng, 2007). Besides, dialogue journals add written and close conversation between a teacher and a student, and increase learners' motivation, develop writing and reading fluency, and the teacher can notice writing mistakes and how to avoid them (Peyton & Staton, 1993; Kose, 2005).

Regarding writing, dialogue journals provide students with essential opportunities to develop their writing and reading skills, giving them the opportunity for meaningful language use as well as capacities to enhance reflective thinking. Besides, through the use of dialogue journals, learners can participate in writing and reading in a natural way, letting them communicate with their teacher in a non-threatening environment. That is, learners' writing skills are reflected during the writing activities, the learning itself and confidence. Harmer (2007) states dialogue journals improves the students' writing skills and help them reflect on their learning during the written activities, and it can be a good writing practice too. (Haynes-Mays, 2011; Yoshihara, 2008) dialogue journals writing establishes a natural, comfortable bridge to different kinds of writing and provides opportunities for students to learn grammatical forms and structures by reading teachers' responses and imitating them.

6 Methodology

6.1 Type of study

This research is a qualitative study, which has its foundations on action research, since it provides the necessary structure to carry out an intervention in order to promote successful changes in students' writing. This study considers Harmer's ideas in which writing is conceived as a process, in which journals are the main tool implemented for teachers to provide students with an opportunity to think about how they are learning (what is easier or more difficult, why and how they achieve success, and also about what aspects of the language they are learning and how it all fits together. (Harmer, 2004).

Through action research, teachers are encouraged to become continuous, lifelong learners in their classrooms and with respect to their practice. This notion is central to the very nature of education in which action research encourages teachers to examine the dynamics of their classrooms, critically think about the actions and interactions of students, confirm and/or challenge existing ideas or practices, and take risks in the process.

Six workshops were implemented with a group of 28 students in order to analyze the impact of this strategy throughout the study.

6.2 Participants

The process was carried out with seventh- grade students at a public school in Valencia, Cordoba. They were 15 girls and 13 boys, whose ages ranged between 12 and 14 years old. The students enrolled belonged to low socio-economical strata. Regarding learner's

background knowledge in English, students had not been exposed to English since preschool and elementary school because they did not receive the number of hours as it is established in the Institutional Educative Project of the school (IEP). Additionally, all of them were exposed to English as a foreign language from 6th grade until now. The Dialogue journal strategy was used as the main tool during English classes as well as some extra strategies implemented and described below.

6.3 Data collection and instruments

Some data collection instruments, incorporating *a teacher's dairy, an outsider observation and a self-reflection questionnaire* were used. Also, a diagnosis test was carried out to assess and measure learners' L2 writing before the intervention. Based on the results, workshops and lesson plans were designed.

6.4 Researcher journal

During the implementation of this study, a teacher's diary was completed with the most relevant aspects of the class, such as writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, writing content and dependence in L1. Besides, learners' performance in written activities during the class was mentioned. The information gathered included positive and negative aspects of the development of each workshop. This evidence provided significant information for use as an instrument for data collection, since the collected data would be helpful to the researcher and teacher. (See Appendix A)

6.5 Outsider observation

In order for this study to be both reliable and valid, it was necessary to gather data from another point of view. To fulfill this requirement, an eight-year-experience English teacher who had worked in the same school for six years who knew the philosophy of school, filled some formats to collect information. The format had questions regarding writing, vocabulary, spelling, L1 dependence and writing content; all of these categories discussed in this study (See appendix B). As stated before, a non-participant observation was carried out. This person considered each of the aspects mentioned before to observe the learners' performance while writing during each task. Every fifteen days, the observations were made in each of the six workshops; the outsider observer provided extra comments related the students' participation and performance with the implementation of dialogue journals strategy.

6.6 Self-reflection questionnaire

A self-reflection questionnaire was completed in every workshop at the beginning or at the end of the class. (See appendices C.). This self-reflection questionnaire was administered to determine the most important positive and negative attitudes of the participants in each of the strategies developed during each workshops, regarding dialogue journals strategy.

Additionally, the self-reflection questionnaire was designed to know the learner's perception about their performance in each of the six workshops, in order to analyze the effectiveness of adding content strategy through writing. Said instrument had eight items,

which gave students the chance to reflect upon their writing process in terms of vocabulary, grammar, writing content, spelling and decrease in L1 dependence. Students had to choose a happy or sad face, which represented a positive or negative reaction.

7 Research stages

7.1 Diagnostic stage

With the purpose of identifying the foreign language learning difficulties of the participants, a diagnosis was carried out in order to identify the problems students were having in the English learning process. A group of data collection instruments were designed and administered: survey, a test, an interview, and an observation (See appendices D, E, F, G). In view of the variety of authors to describe how to collect data and code the information, Freeman's (1998) approach was adopted. Then, the analysis was done by giving different codes and categories to the instruments and identifying them with colors in order to organize the information.

Table 1 Instruments used in the diagnostic stage

No.	Data collection technique	Data collection instrument	Objective	General findings per instrument
1	Participant observation	Journal	To collect data about the English class events.	Low levels of oral interaction in class and poor vocabulary. Negative perceptions about spoken language.
1		Test	To collect data about Ss' performance in the learning of FL	Problems with writing and understanding Difficulties in grammar.
2		Survey	To evaluate Ss' weaknesses and strengths in the learning of English.	Problems in writing Difficulties in grammar
3		Interview	To collect data about the weaknesses and strengths Ss' have the FL language.	L1 dependence

4	Observation	To gather information related with the Ss' learning process	L1 dependence in class. Difficulties in grammar
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Table 1. Compiled by author

First, the students were asked to complete a Likert scale survey that consisted of eight closed questions and two open-ended questions. Students took around 15 minutes to complete it. By means of this instrument, it was possible to know the students weaknesses and strengths in each of the English skills.

Second, an extra 30-minute test with 17 questions was also administered. It helped the teacher-researcher to recognize the way students reacted when exposed to the measurement of language skills and their performance in FL learning.

Third, an eight open-ended questions teacher's interview was carried out with three teachers at the school. This instrument showed the teachers' perception about the teaching learning process in the school.

Finally, an outside observer conducted an observation in order to know the students' reactions in the development of the class, related with their performance and the learning of an FL considering class events and the environment where students were exposed. Some observations took around one hour most of them were recorded and analyzed after the classes.

Table 2 shows the emergent categories resulting from the four instruments analysis. They are the principal categories of analysis: students' lack of writing skills, misunderstanding in FL, positive perception towards reading, difficulties in grammar, and L1 dependence and how they were triangulated by comparing their occurrences and their relevance in all the instruments: .

Table 2 Triangulation Diagnostic stage

N°	Categories	Operationalization	Data collection Instruments				Frequencies	%	Sample
			Survey	Test	Interview	Observation			
1	Lack of writing Skills	Describes the student's failure of writing mainly in vocabulary.	10	20	5	4	39	23%	
2	Negative understanding in FL	Describes the negative understanding that Ss' reported in FL	4	17	3	12	36	21%	
3	Positive perception towards reading	Describes student's positive perception towards reading.	6	12	5	5	28	16%	Most of the answers in this part of the test were corrected, what means their performance in this skill was good.
4	Difficulties in grammar	Describes student's difficulties in grammatical commands.	5	12	5	10	32	18%	
5	L1 dependence	Describes the use Ss' had from their mother tongue	6	8	5	15	34	20%	
Total			31	69	23	46	169	100%	

Table 2 shows that students, teachers and observers agreed on the fact that the students reported to have problems with writing (23%) because they had a lack of practice, lack of

vocabulary, frustration, and anxiety. For example, when asked about the activities in which they found more difficulties in the survey learners affirmed:

“Al Completar oraciones” / completing sentences

“Escoger la opción correcta” / choosing the right option

“Escribir textos cortos” / writing short text

“Escribir oraciones cortas” / writing short sentences

Additionally, the category *misunderstanding in FL* includes *lack of vocabulary, weaknesses in grammar, lack of writing, and frustration*. This category represented 21% of the information gathered at that stage and some examples are provided below:

“Donde vives tú? - Where do you live?” / My live is London

“Te gusta la Música? - Do you like music?” / Yes, I like

“Cuál es su nombre? – what is her name?”/ Margaret are my name

Those aspects mentioned before were referred as the causes why learners are not performing as expected. Therefore, lack of understanding might be another factor which was interfered with the students' writing process. As Pearson, Hansen and Gordon (1979) state “students with well- developed background knowledge comprehend text better than those with weekly developed background knowledge” in fact, the background knowledge of each students plays a crucial role in their language performance.

Furthermore, the category called *positive perception towards reading* revealed that the reading process has been good mainly because learners had no problem while reading and they expected to be more exposed to that skill with more activities; 16% of the information showed this fact. Some comments are stated below:

“Leer me resulta fácil en inglés” / Reading English is easy for me

“Leer oraciones cortas es muy fácil” / Reading short sentences is too easy

“Students who do not develop reading fluency, regardless of how smart they are, are likely to remain poor readers throughout their lives.”

Additionally, *difficulties in grammar* represented 18% of the information collected. Said difficulties were shown throughout the diagnostic test and the conclusions drawn by the observer. As a result, *anxiety and frustration* appeared at the moment of taking the test and the completion of the activities in English class. The data analysis in the diagnosis stage also showed L1 dependence. Graph 2 shows the results.

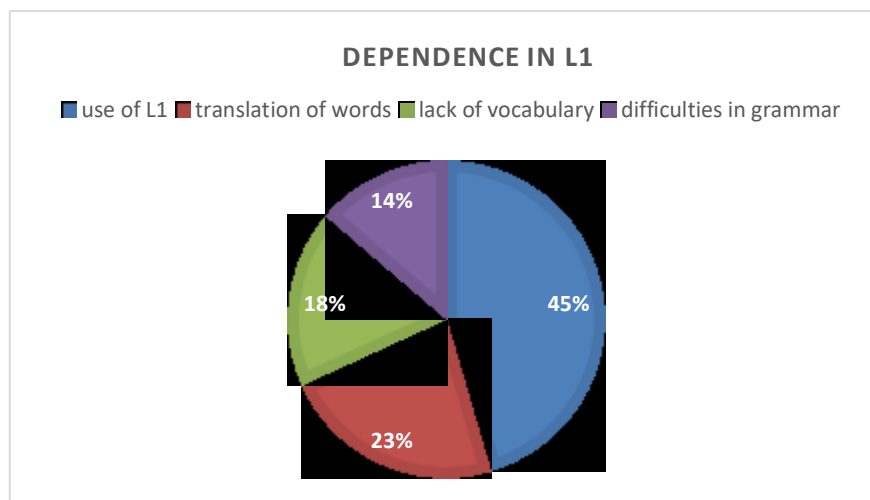


Figure 2 Dependence in L1

The observer and the researcher identified that 45% of the learners use their mother tongue in the English class. This graph also shows that 23% of learners translated words, 18% of them had lack of vocabulary and just 14% had difficulties in grammar. Some of the comments were:

“Pronunciar palabras en inglés es difícil” / pronounce words in English is difficult for me

“No sé Cómo decir esa palabra en inglés” / I do not know how to pronounce that word in English.

“Profe no sé cómo hacer esto, me da pena” / Teacher I do not know how to do this, I shame of myself.

Finally, learners from 6th grade demonstrated that they are willing to learn a new language, but they lacked of exposure to the target language during classes, among other factors.

7.2 Action Stage

The action stage of this research is made up of two different parts: one carried out during class time and the other one at home. In the former, a workshop was implemented during class time for the students to learn how to deal with writing processes, build confidence and develop writing and critical thinking (Seow, 2002). At that stage, learners had to plan, draft, and edit to achieve a final written version (See Graph 3 below, Stages in the writing process Harmer, 2007). In the latter, that process in class was reinforced by implementing the students' dialogue journals in and outside the class in order to improve

and reinforce writing practices. It is important to mention that in this second stage, students were supposed to start planning and end with a final draft version of the written texts or compositions they were asked to write in class. Therefore, they were constantly receiving feedback from their peers and the teacher who guided and motivated them to work on three different types of activities: written conversations, imitation activities, and journal assignments.

Written conversations were aimed to motivate learners to write more in English since language in a dialogue journal is informal rather than formal. That is, learners wrote paragraphs about a topic or topics of their interest using the vocabulary learnt in class. With *written conversations*, learners were able to write their own messages freely, and “send” their dialogue journal to their classmates so that they could read the message and answer; later, messages were sent back again or sent to another person and continue a route until the dialog journal went around the whole class.

In the *imitation activity*, learners wrote an entry in their journal, following the teacher’s instructions to complete part of the task. In this part, the teacher did not give feedback; it was a challenge for students to correct, “Without compromising the meaningful and authentic interaction that is so fundamental to dialogue journals” (Linnell 2010). This section was managed in that way since theory about dialogue journal suggests that correction does not have to be introduced until the dialogue journal writing is well established, and when corrections are done, they should be a natural part of the dialogue.

As for *journal assignments*, the teacher assigned learners different written tasks in order to improve grammar, spelling, vocabulary and writing itself. In addition, that activity

fostered learner's autonomy to write paragraphs or short texts of their interests, take responsibility for their own learning and expand their critical thinking ability. The idea of using those activities was to encourage participants to practice and reinforce vocabulary, grammar, writing content, and spelling through dialogue journals. Therefore, Dialogue Journals were a strategy to stimulate learners to use writing to communicate and, especially, to share their ideas and thoughts.

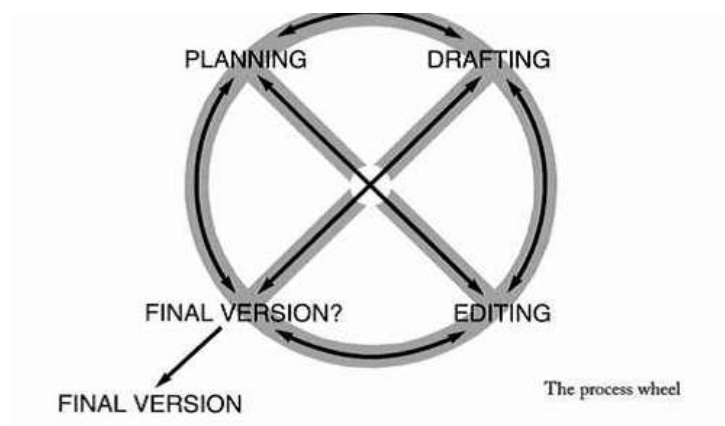


Figure 3 Stages in the writing process according to Harmer (2011).

Figure 3 shows the first part of every writing process, *i.e.*, *planning*; in this part of the process learners understood the information and requirements, and they developed ideas about their experiences selecting the topic of the group. In the part called *drafting*, learners reflected and organized their ideas to develop the activities and made decisions concerning the strategy. Learners had to *edit* after receiving feedback from the teacher and worked to improve the final version of the text. Thus, they realized their effort to overcome in the final draft. In the final version, students come up with a final text following the teacher's feedback. They had to produce a good written text considering content, spelling, grammar

and vocabulary. In each part of the implementation, that is, workshops and Dialogue Journals, students had to follow that same process.

Table 3 Below summarizes the six workshops implemented

WORKSHOP NAME	<i>1. My routine</i>	<i>2. My free time activities</i>	<i>3. Jobs and Occupations</i>	<i>4. Paces and occupations</i>	<i>5. Places to work</i>	<i>6. frequency adverbs and time expressions</i>
Writing activity type	Written conversations		Imitation activity		Journal assignments	
Communicative objective	To Express their ideas through writing short paragraphs.	To organize their ideas while listing them in a short, written format.	To understand new concepts using web mapping for a better comprehension of information.	To select concepts to add information in a paragraph.	To select ideas before adding content in a text.	Completing information while using time expressions in a written activity.
Content objective	Students will be able to write their routines in a short paragraph.	Students will be able to select their free time activities and then listing them in a written task.	Students will be able to extend their vocabulary through mapping new ideas and concepts.	Students will be able to add details in their written paragraphs.	Students will be able to add content in their paragraphs using their ideas.	Students will be able to answer questions and complete information using the expressions and vocabulary in their answers.
Linguistic objective	To better student's grammar through writing paragraphs.	To help student extend their vocabulary through linking words and phrases.	To help student extend their vocabulary through mapping new ideas and concepts.	To help student extend their vocabulary by adding new words to short paragraphs.	To improve students' spelling through writing paragraphs.	To better student's grammar through listing information.

7.3 Evaluation stage

In order to collect the information about the progress of students, the following instruments were used: *Teacher's journal (See appendix A) outsider observation rubrics (See appendix B) and a self-reflection questionnaire for the students (See appendix C)*. To analyze the results of these three instruments, five categories distributed from the highest to the lowest frequency were identified and registered in a chart: *Vocabulary, Grammar,*

Spelling, Decrease of L1 dependence and Writing content. Table 4 shows the data compared and triangulated with the results gathered in the three instruments:

Table 4 Data triangulation in Workshop 1

N°	Code/Category	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teacher's Diary	Observation Checklist	Student's Self-reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes the use of words and expressions in student's writing.	2	2	26	30	17,9
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	1	1	40	42	25,2
3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	1	2	22	25	14,9
4	Decrease in L1 dependence	Code describes the use of L1 that learners reports in the writing performance.	1	2	18	21	12,5%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	2	2	46	50	29,8
TOTAL			7	9	152	168	100

Writing content represents student's writing sequence in their written activities in order to put into practice the vocabulary and expressions learned in class. This category displayed 29.8 % of the triangulation in a total of 50 occurrences. That is, it shows how

learners checked the piece of written paragraphs before getting feedback from the teacher, and enriched their written productions by, for example, looking up words in the dictionary, as evidenced in the following excerpts taken from the diary, the observation, and the self-reflection questionnaire:

“Yo reviso lo que escribo antes de entregarle la actividad al profesor” (Student’s diary)

“Utilizo el diccionario para buscar palabras desconocidas y terminar mi escrito” (Self-reflection questionnaire)

However, it was paramount for students to know the content of a text to write a paragraph, link ideas, use the correct grammatical structures and the vocabulary implicit in a written piece. That is why, dialogue journals establish a convenient methodology to help learners to improve the writing process, while writing short paragraphs and complete sentences.

The category Grammar had 42 occurrences (25.2 %). Learners were able to use grammar in their writings using most of the vocabulary they were taught during lessons. Besides, they linked words or groups of words while they were completing written tasks. All of these actions evidence the positive impact that diary journals had on student’s writing. The self-reflection and the observation showed that students used grammar and vocabulary taught in the lesson.

“Students followed the instructions how they should write their routine” (Outsider observation). *“I wrote my daily routine as the teacher explained. Beginning with I get up...I take a shower.... I go to school...”* (Students' Self-reflection).

The excerpts above showed that the strategy implemented helped learners in the creation of new paragraphs and entries in their journals. Therefore, the same methodology was necessary to continue testing students' progress in writing.

The category *Vocabulary* had 30 occurrences (17.9 %) and represented evidences about the students' difficulties with vocabulary and use of words and expressions to complete written activities in class. For instance, students and teachers stated:

“Se me dificulta escribir mi rutina diaria y no sé cómo describirla” (Students' Self-reflection)

“Students did not know how to use the vocabulary to describe their daily routine; they could not link words and expressions to describe their routine.” (Teacher's diary).

“Students did not use the vocabulary taught in class” (Outsider observation)

These excerpts show that learners had difficulties during the first workshop; it was necessary to continue working hard and get students involved in the written activities in order to improve their writing through this dialogue journals methodology. Additionally, learner's difficulties with vocabulary required practice through the good use of the writing

strategy proposed by the teacher in this first workshop; learners showed that it was not -easy for them to write meaningful complete sentences or to connect ideas in a short paragraph.

The category *spelling* had 25 occurrences (14.9 %). It meant that students made a lot of spelling mistakes and it was hard for them to specifically identify which. While they were writing their activities, they omitted letters and words. The following example evidences that difficulty.

“Learners omitted letters in their written activities; they mixed L1 with FL while they were writing” (Teacher’s diary)

“Los estudiantes al escribir en inglés olvidan algunas letras y palabras escribiendo la forma como se pronuncia la palabra en inglés” (Outsider observation).

These examples point out the behaviors learners had while they were doing the first workshop. They made use of the vocabulary learnt in class, but misspelled words in their written activities because of forgetfulness or because they did not remember how to write words and resorted to their native language, which produced a mixture between -- pronunciation and spelling.

The category *Decrease in L1 dependence* had 21 occurrences (12.5%). The implementation of the first workshop did not have the expected impact on students’ writing process. Learners continued basing their writings on L1 knowledge; nevertheless, some

grammar use and writing content improvement was noticed. The observer recorded some statements related to the L1 use:

“Los estudiantes utilizan su idioma nativo en los escritos, se apoyan de sus diccionarios para realizar las actividades” (Outsider observation)

“Los estudiantes si no encuentran el significado de la palabra en el diccionario, la dejan en español y el resto del párrafo lo escriben en inglés.” (Outsider observation)

“A los estudiantes se les dificulta dejar de utilizar su idioma nativo en sus escritos por que no utilizan la mayoría del vocabulario en sus escritos y no practican el vocabulario previamente enseñado.” (Outsider observation)

The students' writing performance through the use of dialogue journals was assessed by means of an extra writing rubric divided into five codes or categories. Table 5 shows the results obtained in this specific workshop:

Table 5 Results of the written assessment rubrics in workshop 1

WORKSHOP. 1							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Diminish dependence L1	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Std 1	12	12	7	7	14	52	2,6
Std 2	9	15	7	9	13	53	2,7
Std 3	14	16	5	3	14	52	2,6
Std 4	4	12	4	3	5	28	1,4
Std 5	14	10	9	7	13	53	2,7
Std 6	13	11	5	3	14	46	2,3

Std 7	11	15	8	9	15	57	3,0
Std 8	9	15	9	6	13	52	2,6
Std 9	13	12	9	10	15	59	3
Std 10	16	10	14	9	15	64	3,2
Std 11	17	11	7	3	17	55	2,8
Std 12	7	13	5	5	5	35	1,8
Std 13	5	6	4	4	14	33	1,7
Std 14	7	10	6	10	10	43	2,2
Std 15	7	4	5	2	7	25	1,3
Std 16	20	12	9	7	12	60	3,0
Std 17	5	10	5	2	8	30	1,5
Std 18	4	11	5	8	5	33	1,7
Std 19	15	13	14	3	5	50	2,5
Std 20	10	8	15	10	7	50	2,5
Std 21	10	9	12	11	7	49	2,5
Std 22	7	9	9	8	14	47	2,4
Std 23	8	10	6	3	11	38	1,9
Std 24	7	17	4	3	12	43	2,2
Std 25	8	12	6	4	13	43	2,2
Std 26	10	15	10	13	14	62	3,1
Std 27	9	10	8	5	11	43	2,2
Std 28	13	11	12	6	10	52	2,6
Average	9,8	11,3	7,9	5,3	11,2		

Table 5 illustrates each one of the points that students obtained in each criterion assessed during the writing activity. The table also shows the final grades of the students and a general average from each aspect. These results confirmed the aspects reported in the data analysis of the instruments implemented in the workshops. *Vocabulary* had 30 % in the rubrics; learners showed poor use of vocabulary about daily routines during the initial activity; many of them did not use the appropriate and sufficient vocabulary to fulfill the written part of the activity, which is ratified with a 9.8 % in the passing score rubrics.

However, grammar had 20 % in the rubrics; most of the learners had grammar mistakes in their writings, for instance, word order, tenses use, and subject–verb agreement. But, the rest of them made good use of all these aspects mentioned before. The following examples are taken from the student's diary.

S5: I me relax every day. AI have a parti.

/ Subject mistake/ misspelling

S9: I take a shower at 6:30 am. Then, I get dressed at 6:40 am

/ Subject/ verb/ complement/

On the other hand, spelling which is equivalent to 20 % of the grade with an average of 7.9 displayed the difficulties learners had to identify mistakes in a text. Due to the misunderstanding when and where are these mistakes in their writings. That is, they did not know if the verb can be omitted or not, if the subject always should appear in a sentence, they most of the time forget the grammar structures and omit the basic rules while they are writing.

Decreased in L1 dependence is another aspect assessed in the rubrics, equivalent to 15 %, with an average of 5.3% Learners used L1 in their written texts commonly. They made “Spanglish” mixtures to link their ideas and created texts where the subject, verb, or complement were replaced by a Spanish word. In some cases, they just made up a new word. The following example illustrate how students did not decrease L1 use in their writing.

S15: *AI have breakfast a las 8 am. Then, AI ir to school a las 6: 30 am. I hago my homework.*

/ Misspelling/ grammar error/ error FL

S23: *watch a movie. Relax. Visit friends. Leepin.*

/misspelling/ omit subject/

S25: *I estay, relax, have a party, visit.*

/ Error FL/ misspelling/ omit subject/

The last aspect evaluated in class was *writing content*, which corresponds to 15% of the final grade in the assessment rubrics, with an average of 11.2 %; students had a positive result at the moment of writing paragraphs because of the sequence in sentences, linking words and ideas.

In summary, the analysis of the instruments displayed positive and negative aspects regarding writing. However, it is necessary to improve vocabulary, spelling and decrease in L1 dependence for the next activities; writing should be reinforced and practiced in order to get better results.

Workshop 2: Likes and Dislikes

Regarding the categories occurrences were different as it is noticed in Table 6:

Table 6 Categories data analysis workshop 2

N°	Code/Category	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teacher's	Observation	Student's		

			Diary	checklist	Self- reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes the use of words and expressions in student's writing.	2	2	23	27	14,6%
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	1	1	42	44	24,0%
3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	1	2	23	26	14,1%
4	Decrease in L1 dependence	Code describes the use of L1 that learners reports in the writing performance.	2	2	17	21	11,4%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	1	3	62	66	35,9%
	TOTAL		7	10	167	184	100

This second workshop was designed with the main purpose of exposing learners to writing activities, the topic was free time activities and the writing wheel process was used (Harmer, 2011). The workshop was planned bearing in mind writing competences; the linguistic aim of the lesson started with present simple tense for describing daily actions. Learners were expected to practice vocabulary, spelling, and grammar related to free time activities. At a pragmatic level, learners were expected to write a short paragraph by describing activities they did at home. At a sociolinguistic level, learners were expected to focus on some differences between what they did at home and what other learners did in a different context.

To determine the impact of Dialogue Journals on students' writing, the category *decrease in L1 dependence* had 21 occurrences (11,4 %), represented particularly the students' writing difficulties because they had to think first in their native language and then, link words to create a whole sentence that have sense. These samples taken from students' diary and an observation describe the use of L1 in students' writings while developing an activity.

These samples taken from students' diary and an observation describe the use of L1 in students' writings while developing an activity.

“Estar happy, a ser smiling, no ser angry; no estar mad con los demás; gamble con ellos” (Student's diary)

“They have to use their dictionaries for some time to write a new sentence. To start with a paragraph, they spend enough time linking words and ideas to write it; at the same time, they mix English and Spanish to write a message.” (Outsider observation).

The impact of dialogue journals on students' writing, which is the strategy implemented, had a significant result in decreased in L1 use on students' writing due to the organization of their ideas and linking words. Workshop # 1 showed a short reduction of Decreased L1 dependence, from (12.5%) in Workshop #1 to (11.4 %) in Workshop #2. More exercises were needed in order to notice if students' writing increase or decrease continuously.

The category *writing content* had 66 occurrences (35.9 %). In addition, it displayed evidences about students' ability to write sentences with a logical sequence during their writing activities. Using accurate word order and sequence in a sentence helped learners to produce new sentences and short paragraphs in each of the activities. In the following sample, it was evident that they did a great effort to follow a sequence of words in a sentence.

"In English class today, I was in class. I wrote vocabulary, occupations." (Student's diary)

"Ss' try to write complete sentences in a logical way. That is, that have sense. "
(Outsider observation).

The excerpts above showed that learners made a great effort to write sentences that have sense using the vocabulary taught in class. Thus, the same strategy was necessary to monitor students' improvements while writing.

The category *Vocabulary* reported 27 occurrences (14.8 %) this category explains students' issues regarding the meaning of the words and sets of words in a written activity. It is relevant to point out that this category had a different percentage; the following piece of evidence shows learner problems with vocabulary.

"Students do not remember the vocabulary taught last class, for that reason many of them could not finish the activity on time." (Teacher's diary)

“Some of the students made good use of the vocabulary in their new journal entry”

(Teacher's diary)

The excerpts show that learners improved a little more on vocabulary, making new entries in their journals; however, they needed to work more on their meaning and use.

The category *spelling* had 26 occurrences (14.1%) and represents, the difficulties students had when forming words with the correct letters in the correct order, or when they omitted letters in a word. For instance, students and teachers stated:

“The students misspelled words, omitting some letters between these ones.” (Teacher's diary)

“My weekend: I buys of parade to me.” “In clase, inglish today.” (Student's diary)

These examples point out that learner did not use the words correctly in their writing activities, which means they needed to work more on spelling. This sample was taken from the students and teachers' diary, this issue was evident during the performance stage.

The category *Grammar* displayed 44 occurrences (24.0 %). It has evidences about learners' progress using grammar structures correctly and the vocabulary in written activities. The following excerpt evidences this:



Figure 4 Grammar evidence

The aforementioned categories demonstrated that the implementation of Dialogue Journals had a certain impact on students' writing performance; particularly, in grammar and writing content.

However, as demonstrated in Workshop # 1, the writing activities developed in class were evaluated with the individual written rubrics, which show the performance students had in each aspect. Table 7 shows the results obtained by each student in that workshop.

Table 7 Results of the written assessment rubrics in workshop 2

WORKSHOP 2							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Decrease dependence L1	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Student 1	17	12	8	9	13	59	3,0

Student 2	10	15	8	6	16	55	2,8
Student 3	13	16	6	4	13	52	2,6
Student 4	9	11	6	5	9	40	2,0
Student 5	13	11	8	8	15	55	2,8
Student 6	13	12	8	6	14	53	2,7
Student 7	13	15	9	8	15	60	3,0
Student 8	10	15	6	5	13	49	2,5
Student 9	13	19	10	4	15	61	3,1
Student 10	16	10	13	3	17	59	3,0
Student 11	17	11	8	6	17	59	3,0
Student 12	10	13	5	3	10	41	2,1
Student 13	7	8	6	5	14	40	2,0
Student 14	9	10	7	3	10	39	2,0
Student 15	8	7	5	5	10	35	1,8
Student 16	16	8	9	10	12	55	2,8
Student 17	8	10	7	4	10	39	2,0
Student 18	7	11	7	5	9	39	2,0
Student 19	10	9	7	6	11	43	2,2
Student 20	9	8	8	7	10	42	2,1
Student 21	9	9	12	10	10	50	2,5
Student 22	9	8	9	11	13	50	2,5
Student 23	9	10	7	10	11	47	2,4
Student 24	9	16	5	4	13	47	2,4
Student 25	10	12	6	5	14	47	2,4
Student 26	11	15	10	11	14	61	3,1
Student 27	9	10	8	5	11	43	2,2
Student 28	13	11	10	7	10	51	2,6
Average	9,3	10,8	6	3,5	10,7		

Table 7 summarizes each of the points that students obtained in every criteria assessed during the writing activity: *Vocabulary (30 %)*, *Grammar (20 %)*, *Spelling (20 %)*, *Decrease in L1 dependence and Writing content (15 %)*. These results confirmed the aspects reported in the data analysis of the instruments implemented in the workshop.

In addition to this, the graph below describes the most important categories in Workshop # 2 in comparison to Workshop # 1.

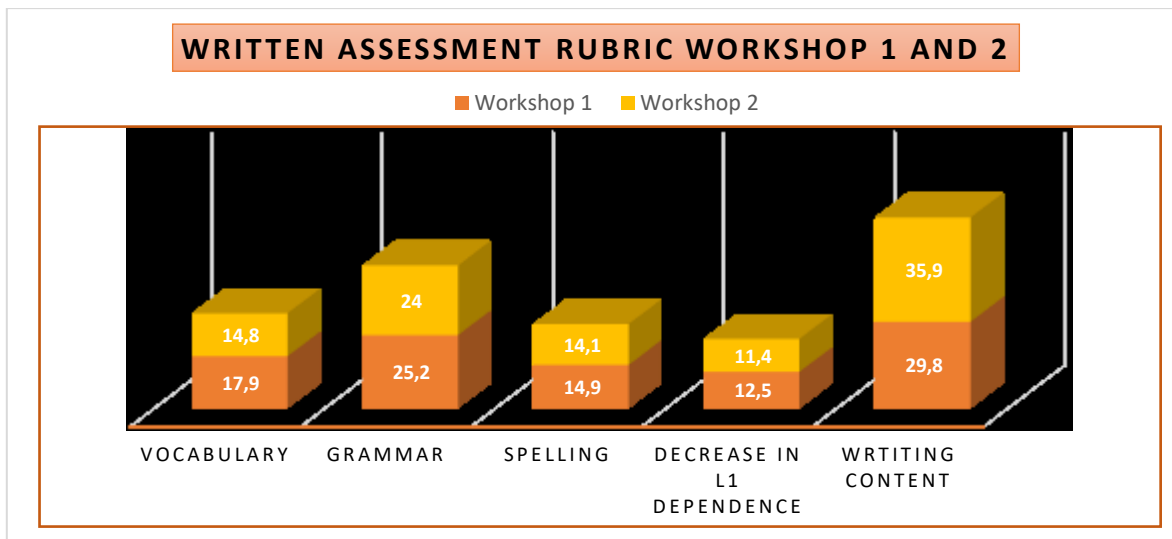


Figure 5 Written assessment rubrics workshop 1 and 2

There was not meaningful improvement in terms of vocabulary, grammar and writing content. Although, it is important to mention that spelling and Decreased L1 dependence decreased significantly. That is, in Workshop #1 spelling had 7.9 % of the results, while in Workshop # 2 it had 6.0 %. Decreased L1 dependence in Workshop # 1 had 5.3 %, in Workshop # 2 it had 3.5 % of the results. This means that students had difficulties when producing written texts and students L1 dependence in using in their writings. To conclude, it was necessary to include diverse activities through which learners can improve their writing taking into account the different strategies implemented in the workshops.

7.4 Workshop 3: Jobs and occupations

Therefore, the following chart explains the most important occurrences each category gathered during this third workshop. (See Table III). Table III: Triangulation workshop 3 (see appendix A) was designed with the intention of engaging students to know the content,

vocabulary and grammatical structures through the thematic of present simple in order to develop the writing activities related with the topic.

Table 8 Workshop 3: Jobs and occupations

N°	Code/Category	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teacher's Diary	Observation checklist	Student's Self-Reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes difficulties learners presented when using words and expressions while writing.	4	2	24	30	17,3%
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	3	3	41	47	27,2%
3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	4	4	20	28	16,1%
4	Decrease in L1 dependence	Code describes the use of L1 that affects learners writing performance.	4	4	24	32	18,4%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	3	3	30	36	20,8%
TOTAL			18	16	139	173	100

The chart above explains the most important occurrences each category gathered during the third workshop (see appendix A), designed to engage students to know present simple and at the same time, to develop the writing activities related with the topic. The table above reports occurrences / frequencies in the categories with the highest and lowest percentages in said workshop (Jobs and occupations).

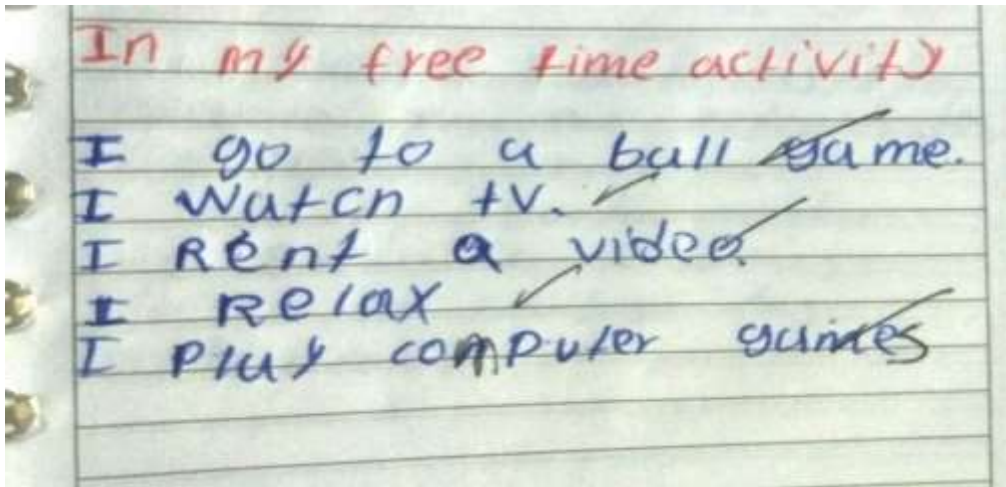
Writing content shows the use of words and expressions in students' writing. This category displayed (20.8%) of the triangulation in a total of 36 occurrences, that is, learners used the expressions learnt in class in their new journal entries, keeping in mind the sequence of words in written activities. These samples, taken from the observation checklist, teachers' diary and student's self-reflection questionnaire showed learners' perceptions related to that strategy

*“Students could create their own paragraphs using the sequence of words”
(Teacher's diary)*

“We could write all in English while doing the activity” (student's diary)

As in those excerpts, it is necessary to mention that Dialogue journal was affecting positively students' writing content in their writing activities. The students kept in mind the sequence of words while writing, improving the way they write and writing new compositions. The next category also revealed that dialogue journals were facilitating students' performance while writing.

The category *Grammar* had 47 occurrences (27.2%), represents how students made a good use of grammatical structures in a writing activity especially because they joined the words to create a new composition, and knew if their compositions had sense or not with the teacher's help. Although students had some mistakes in writing, those mistakes decreased throughout the implementation of this methodology. The following excerpts exemplify this:



6 Grammar evidence

Figure

The excerpt above showed that learners made good use of grammar structures, completed sentences, wrote short paragraphs and introduced the new vocabulary in their entries. This strategy helped learners to improve writing through the creation of new paragraphs.

Vocabulary displayed 30 occurrences (17.3%) suggesting that learners should continue widen their vocabulary. It is important to mention that this category gradually decreased in the results, that is, learners needed to work more on their meaning and make a good use of the vocabulary in their writing activities. The following evidence is a quote taken from the students who had difficulties:

“At the beginning of the activity, students were confused with the vocabulary they did not how to match the place of work with the profession.”

(Teacher's diary)

The example above point out the difficulties learners had while developing the activity. They were confused and were no able to solve the activity by themselves. However, after the explanation of the teacher, they completed the task and used the vocabulary corresponding each point.

The category *spelling* had 28 occurrences (16.1%). This category illustrated the number of students that represented difficulties using the strategy implemented during the third workshop. However, it had a noticeable decrease in the result, which evidence learners did not use the words correctly in their writings, not even the vocabulary taught in class. The following excerpt exemplified this

“Where does a secretary work? Shi works at afice” (student’s diary)

“Where does a fireman work? He work a fire station” (student’s diary)

These excerpts show that students misspelled some words and omitted grammatical rules while writing in their journal entries. Additionally, learners difficulties with spelling require practice and a continuously guidance to be better at writing.

The category, *decrease in L1 dependence* had 32 occurrences (18.4%). This category revealed that learners had difficulties while writing, because they employed all time their native language to create short paragraphs and complete sentences; but, during the activities done in class, learners did not decrease L1 dependence. The following example evidence that difficulty:

“What’s do you estudiante? (Students’ diary)

“What’s your favorite futbol? (Students’ diary)”

As in these excerpts, it is paramount to mention that learners continued using their native language to produce paragraphs, answer questions, and misspelling some words during the activities.

However, as demonstrated in Workshop # 2, the writing activities developed in class were evaluated with the individual written rubrics, which reveal the performance students had in each aspect. Table 9 shows the results gathered per each student in Workshop

Table 9 Results of the written assessment 3

WORKSHOP # 3							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Diminish dependence L1	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Std 1	10	12	10	12	12	56	2,8
Std 2	8	9	9	10	13	49	2,5
Std 3	11	11	10	11	12	55	2,8
Std 4	4	10	8	10	10	42	2,1
Std 5	13	7	12	11	11	54	2,7
Std 6	9	11	5	8	9	42	2,1
Std 7	11	11	4	11	12	49	2,5
Std 8	9	10	4	7	11	41	2,1
Std 9	12	16	12	6	10	56	2,8
Std 10	11	10	15	9	11	56	2,8
Std 11	14	11	7	10	13	55	2,8
Std 12	7	9	11	7	9	43	2,2
Std 13	5	6	6	8	11	36	1,8
Std 14	7	10	11	9	7	44	2,2
Std 15	7	8	7	8	7	37	1,9
Std 16	12	9	5	7	4	37	1,9

Std 17	6	8	8	3	6	31	1,6
Std 18	5	11	9	4	10	39	2,0
Std 19	5	6	7	8	7	33	1,7
Std 20	7	8	9	8	7	39	2,0
Std 21	8	9	5	9	7	38	1,9
Std 22	7	5	10	6	8	36	1,8
Std 23	8	8	6	3	10	35	1,8
Std 24	7	11	4	7	9	38	1,9
Std 25	8	9	9	3	11	40	2,0
Std 26	9	10	10	10	1	40	2,0
Std 27	9	8	8	7	9	41	2,1
Std 28	11	9	12	6	9	47	2,4
Average	8,5	9,3	8,3	7,7	9,1		

Table 9 represents the points learners obtained in the criterion assessed for the activities, the final grades and general average from each aspects. After the analysis of the third workshop, the category *grammar* had 20 % in the rubrics; Learners still have some difficulties when writing long sentences, word order and the present tenses usage. However, some of them made good use those grammar structures, which is confirmed with 9,3 in the passing score rubrics.

Nevertheless, *Decrease in L1 dependence*, which is equivalent to 15% of the grade with an average 9.1 showed learners still used their native language in their journal entries. They combine English and Spanish at the same time to create a piece of text and use words that are written in the same way in both language, but sometimes, these words differ in meaning. The following excerpt illustrate how students' mix the words:

S20: I siempre wrote vocabulary. I english class.

/ Misspelling / grammar error/ error FL

Vocabulary is one of the aspects assessed in the rubrics, equivalent to 30% with 8.5 represented the learners' difficulties in vocabulary about professions and places of work. Learners did not learn; thus they could not answer simple questions, matching words and use it to complete all items.

Otherwise, *spelling* which is equivalent to 20% of the grade with an average of 8.3 showed the difficulties learners made in the time that they were writing a piece of paragraph or solving any other written activity. The following example is taken from students' diary:

S26: Du you work at escol? Yes, Y do.

/Error FL / misspelling/ grammar error

S8: Where a secretary work? Shi secretary works offise.

/ misspelling/ omit auxiliary verb / grammar mistake/

The last aspect that is *writing content* corresponds to 15 % of the final grade in the assessment rubrics, with an average of 7.7 confirmed students' continued bettering in word order, linking words, and sequence in sentences.

With the information presented and the codes which emerged from the analysis of the three instruments as a reference, the conclusion is that seventh graders had a good perception of English; they wanted to learn, with the activities that teacher planned for them. Besides, it was evident that learners wanted to write more in English in spite of the difficulties they had when developing the activities (low English writing, and a dependence in L1).

Workshop 4: Places and Occupations

Table 10 reports the most significant categories that emerged in the application of that workshop.

Table 10 Triangulation workshop 4

N°	Code/Category	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teacher's Diary	Observation checklist	Student's Self-reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes difficulties learners presented when using words and expressions while writing.	4	3	17	24	13,7%
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	5	3	44	52	29,8%
3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	3	2	18	23	13,2%
4	Decrease in L1 dependence in	Code describes the use of L1 that affects learners writing performance.	2	3	23	28	16,1%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	4	4	40	48	27,5%
TOTAL			18	15	142	175	100

As observed, *grammar* had the highest percentage (29.8 %) with 52 occurrences. This category established how well learners developed and used the strategy. The samples below were taken from student's self- reflection questionnaire, the teacher's journal and the

outsider observation rubric. They typified the attitude that learners and teachers had with the implementation of the strategy during the activities:

“Some of the students used the grammatical structures completed in class during the implementation of the written activities” (teacher’s diary).

“We could use grammatical structures on my writing” (student’s diary).

“They could use grammatical structures taking into account the topic of the unit. Where do doctors...? They work...., most of them omitted some letters, but they could complete the task” (Outsider observation).

These examples indicate that learners wrote new entries in their journal diaries using grammatical structures previously taught, bearing in mind the topics and the way to answer the activities; that is, no matter whether they omitted some letters, they were able to complete the activity.

The category *writing content* (27.5 %) and 48 frequencies was the second category with highest percentage. It was observed that learners continued linking words or groups of ideas they learned, which means there was a continued progress of grammatical structures during that specific workshop. The following excerpts exemplify that fact:

“Students followed the sequence of the words in each paragraph” (Teacher’s diary)
Students were able to create their own paragraphs, using the vocabulary taught in class”
(Teacher’s diary).

The excerpts above indicates that learners put into practice the teacher' explanation, the vocabulary practice in class and the strategy implemented to complete all the activities. Accordingly, this strategy was essential to monitor students' development in writing.

The category *spelling* had 23 occurrences (13.2%). Some learners presented difficulties when spelling words and they did not know what words misspelled. The following evidence typified that issue:

“During the written activities of some students, it was noticed that they did not write words properly, omitting letters; and they wrote words as they pronounced them.”
(Teacher's diary).

The excerpts note that learners continue omitting letters, punctuation, word order, auxiliary verbs and pronouns in their writings. It means, they forget how the word should be written and it is necessary to better this aspect.

The category *vocabulary* had 24 occurrences (13.7%) and showed evidences that learners did not use many words and expressions in their writings, indicating that they had to practice and learn better the vocabulary taught in class. The following evidence, taken from the teacher's diary, suggests this:

“Students did not identify the vocabulary previously taught before starting the activity”
(teacher's diary)

“Students were confused between the last vocabulary (workshop N° 3) with the new one (workshop N° 4), to complete the activity” (teacher’s diary).

These excerpts show that students had some difficulties completing the written activity. That is, they did not know how to solve the activity, using the vocabulary previously taught, and completed the task with the wrong words. Then, it was necessary to keep practicing the vocabulary through the use of the teacher' strategy to better students' writing.

The category *decrease in L1 dependence* had 28 occurrences (16.1 %) showed that, after implementing this strategy, students had difficulties using L2 language; that is, they mixed L1 and L2 to create short paragraphs, answer questions, complete sentences, they felt more comfortable using L1 to complete the activities. The evidence below typified this:

“I used my native language in the English class; I used the vocabulary in spite of some words I did not identify” (student’s diary)

“My classmates and I used our L1 language to participate in the English class. Also, our teacher explains us in Spanish because we could not understand sometimes the class” (student’s diary).

The examples above point out learners' comments about the use of L1 language to understand and solve the activities in class. They asked the teacher to conduct the class in Spanish in order to answer each point of the activity, that is, they felt comfortable using L1. Table 11 illustrates the scores learners got in this workshop in the different aspects.

Table 11 Results of the written assessment rubrics in workshop 4

WORKSHOP # 4							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Diminish dependence L1	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Std 1	7	10	6	6	14	43	2,2
Std 2	5	15	7	5	8	40	2,0
Std 3	4	17	5	4	15	45	2,3
Std 4	7	14	3	7	14	45	2,3
Std 5	6	10	7	6	15	44	2,2
Std 6	5	14	8	5	15	47	2,4
Std 7	4	18	5	7	16	50	2,5
Std 8	7	15	6	6	15	49	2,5
Std 9	5	19	7	5	16	52	2,6
Std 10	6	12	3	6	18	45	2,3
Std 11	7	13	4	7	19	50	2,5
Std 12	8	15	5	4	12	44	2,2
Std 13	7	7	7	6	17	44	2,2
Std 14	5	10	5	4	9	33	1,7
Std 15	5	8	7	5	9	34	1,7
Std 16	6	10	8	4	10	38	1,9
Std 17	5	12	6	3	10	36	1,8
Std 18	7	11	7	6	10	41	2,1
Std 19	3	10	5	4	10	32	1,6
Std 20	4	10	3	5	10	32	1,6
Std 21	5	11	5	5	12	38	1,9
Std 22	7	13	3	8	12	43	2,2
Std 23	4	12	5	7	14	42	2,1
Std 24	6	16	4	6	14	46	2,3
Std 25	8	13	6	4	14	45	2,3
Std 26	5	15	4	3	15	42	2,1
Std 27	6	11	5	5	12	39	2,0
Std 28	7	14	6	6	13	46	2,3
Average	5,7	12,4	5,4	5,2	11,5		

Table 11 displays the analysis of the written individual rubric, the final grades of each students and a general average from each aspects. These results prove the aspects reported in the data analysis of the instruments carried out in the workshops. *Grammar* had 30% in the rubrics; learners presented difficulties word order, tenses use, omitting letters, but they did their best effort solving the activities in spite of the grammar mistakes. The following example illustrate how students answer the questions:

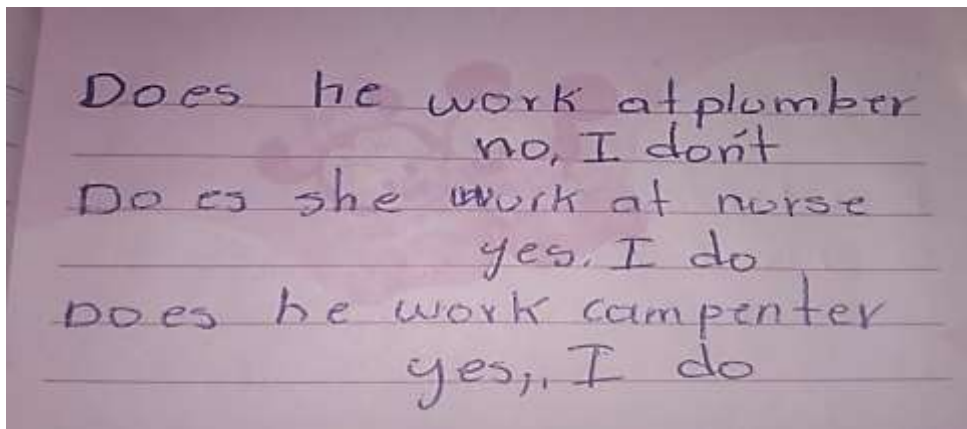


Figure 7 Grammar evidence

Nevertheless, *writing content* is equivalent to 15% of the grade with an average of 11.5, it shows the good results students had with writing long logical sentences, linking words and ideas to write their own paragraphs. The dialogue journal strategy had a positive impact on the aspects mention before, considering the activities and practice of students in class.

Vocabulary had 30% in the rubrics. It represents learners' issues regarding the vocabulary activities implemented in class, that is, they did not use the correct vocabulary to

complete each item in the task assigned by the teacher. It is ratified with 5.7 % in the passing score rubrics.

However, spelling which is equivalent to 20 % of the grade with an average of 5.4% displayed the difficulties learners had to write short phrases; they had misspelled words in the texts they wrote for the activities during classes. The following example illustrates this:

S13: my mother watdes a movie.

/ Misspelling/ verb error/

S13: my mother visitas may friends.

/ Verb error/ misspelling/

Decreased in L1 dependence equivalent to 15 %, with an average of 5.2% points out that, Learners did not isolate L1 in their written texts. They used L1 during class participation and the development of activities all time. In addition, they link words from English to Spanish and vice versa. The following excerpts exemplify what is mentioned:

S13: My father is a fumigator

/ L1 dependence/ misspelling/

S13: My mother is a ama de casa

/ L1 dependence/ omit verb/

In summary, the analysis of the instruments revealed that the dialogue journal strategy had a positive impact on aspects like writing content and grammar, while spelling decreased in L1 dependence and vocabulary should be practiced to get better result.

Workshop 5: Places to Work

To support the validity of the data collected in this study, the instruments also used in each workshop and the same categories were pre-established. Table 12 shows the triangulation of the instruments, categories and their number of occurrences during the analyses:

Table 12 Triangulation workshop 5

N°	Code/Category	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teacher's Diary	Observation checklist	Student's Self-Reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes difficulties learners presented when using words and expressions while writing.	3	2	12	17	10,7%
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	5	3	46	54	34,1%
3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	2	2	14	18	11,3%
4	Decrease in L1 dependence	Code describes the use of L1 that affects learners writing performance.	23	2	14	19	12,0%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	4	3	43	50	31,6%
TOTAL			17	12	129	158	100

Writing content shows the improvement students had in their writings, by using the vocabulary, expressions, and word sequences during the written activities. This category had

31.6 % in a total of 50 occurrences. The following excerpts revealed learners and teacher perspective on this strategy:

*“Students tried to write complete sentences and the vocabulary taught in class”
(Teacher’s diary).*

“I wrote in English using the vocabulary “(students’ self-reflection)

The excerpts above illustrated that this strategy helped learners in producing new sentences, making good use of the vocabulary and linking words to produce new paragraphs in each of the activities developed in class.

The category *grammar* had 54 occurrences (34.1%). Learners improved the use of grammatical structures in the written activities. Besides, they joined words to create paragraphs with the teacher’s help; the following excerpts evidenced that:

“I used grammar to learn more English” (students’ self- reflection)

“Students used the grammar structures explained before start the written activities; they were able to answer questions using third and first person” (Teacher’s diary).

The excerpts illustrate that learners wrote sentences that made sense to express their ideas and, at the same time, used the grammatical structures learnt in class to complete the written activities, regardless of the misspelled words

Decrease in L1 dependence had 19 occurrences (12.0%) suggested that learners continued having difficulties and because of that, they were using their L1 language with a high continuity; the following excerpts verified that:

“I used my native language because it is pretty difficult to me to use English”

(Student’s self- reflection)

“I used my native language in all English classes” (Students’ self-reflection)

“Students did not isolate their native language; they mentioned words in L1 most of the time; (teachers’ diary).

The excerpts point out learner’s issues in decreasing L1 dependence at English class when developing the writing activities. That is, their oral and written participation, generally made in their native language, meant that they had difficulties to learn a foreign language.

The category *spelling* had 18 occurrences (11.3 %) and revealed students continued having difficulties in identifying word mistakes, and misspelling words during written activities. The following example exemplified this:

“While students were writing and answering the questions, they misspelled words and omitted letters, but they did not notice” (teachers’ diary).

“Students did not know how to identify if they wrote a correct or incorrect word” (outsider observation).

These excerpts show that learners did not identify if they wrote or not a correct word, if they omitted letters, grammar rules, and punctuation; they require practice and guidance to improve their performance in writing.

Vocabulary had 17 occurrences (10.7 %) and was a weak aspect on students' writing since most of the students presented difficulties using the appropriate vocabulary in the activities. There were some learners who did not use the vocabulary during the implementation of the written activities in this workshop, this means that, they did not know how to interact with that vocabulary in paragraphs and formats. The following excerpt evidenced some of the problems students experienced:

"I rarely used the vocabulary in English; I used it in my native language" (students' self-reflection)

"I was confused with the vocabulary at the beginning of the class" (students' diary).

The examples above showed that learners used the vocabulary, but some of them rarely used the vocabulary in English, that is, they completed the written activities using the vocabulary and resorted to their native language. Besides, as shown in workshop N°4, an individual written rubric was implemented during the different activities developed in class to evaluate the performance of students in each aspect. Table 13 shows the results per each student:

Table 13 Results of the written assessment rubrics in workshop 5

WORKSHOP # 5							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Decrease in L1 dependence	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Std 1	12	10	10	10	14	56	2,8
Std 2	11	15	12	6	8	52	2,6
Std 3	17	17	10	4	15	63	3,2
Std 4	7	14	8	7	14	50	2,5
Std 5	20	10	11	8	15	64	3,2
Std 6	12	14	10	8	15	59	3,0
Std 7	15	18	9	7	16	65	3,3
Std 8	10	15	9	10	15	59	3,0
Std 9	14	19	12	8	16	69	3,5
Std 10	16	12	13	8	18	67	3,4
Std 11	18	13	10	9	19	69	3,5
Std 12	9	15	7	4	12	47	2,4
Std 13	7	6	8	10	17	48	2,4
Std 14	10	10	6	6	9	41	2,1
Std 15	10	5	8	8	9	40	2,0
Std 16	15	10	8	9	10	52	2,6
Std 17	9	12	8	7	10	46	2,3
Std 18	8	11	9	9	10	47	2,4
Std 19	9	8	9	6	10	42	2,1
Std 20	10	10	8	9	10	4,7	2,4
Std 21	10	11	8	7	12	48	2,4
Std 22	11	13	12	13	12	61	3,1
Std 23	12	12	11	10	14	59	3,0
Std 24	9	16	9	9	14	57	2,9
Std 25	8	13	8	6	14	49	2,5
Std 26	10	15	13	10	15	63	3,2
Std 27	10	10	10	11	12	53	2,7
Std 28	17	14	12	10	13	66	3,3
Average	11,6	12,4	9,5	8,1	13,1		

Table 13 highlights the points that each students obtained in each criterion assessed during the writing activity, the final grades, and a general average from each aspect.

Considering the results reported from the data analysis of the instruments, the category *writing content* is equivalent to 15% of the grade, with an average of 13.1 illustrated the progress learners had while writing short paragraphs. In addition, they were able to link words that have sense and writing new entries in their journals, using this strategy as a tool to better their writing performance.

The category *grammar* that had 20% in the rubrics, with an average of 12.4 pointed out the improvements learners had using grammatical structures in their writings. Most of them correctly used tenses, sentence structure, word order and phrases. The following evidence is an example taken from students' diary:

Furthermore, *vocabulary*, that is equivalent to 30% in the rubrics with an average of 11.6, showed learner's issues regarding vocabulary and poor use of the present simple: yes-no questions during the activity. Most of them did not use correct and sufficient vocabulary to answer the questions and complete the rest of written activities.

Spelling is another aspect estimated in the rubrics, equivalent to 20%, with an average of 9.5. Learners continued having difficulties with identifying when and where are these mistakes in a paragraph. This means, they forgot basic rules, grammar structures, auxiliaries, verbs, and pronouns, while they are writing. The following excerpts illustrate this aspects:

Figure 8 Spelling evidence

S20: do you is a carpenter

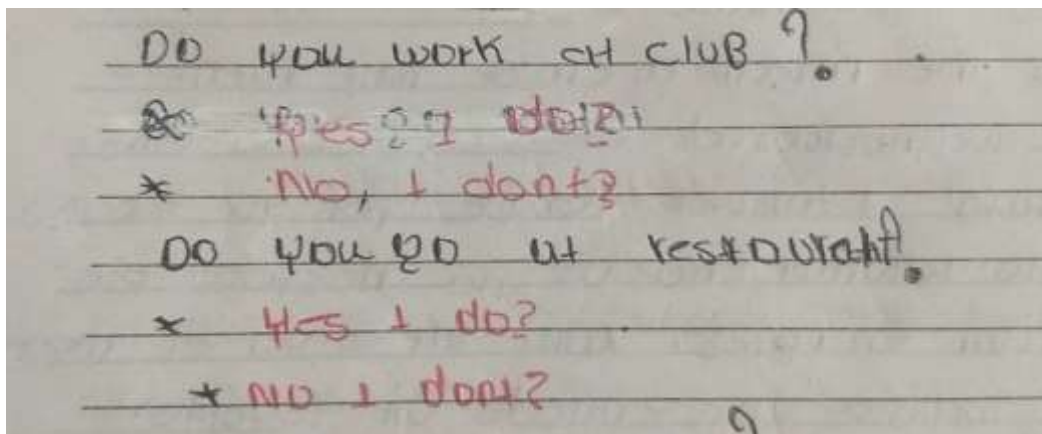
/ Misspelling/ verb error/ omit vocabulary/

S20: Do you at 4:00 pm

/ omit verb/ omit punctuation/

S20: De you work as hospital

/ Misspelling/ auxiliary error/ omit punctuation/



The category, *decrease in L1 dependence*, which is equivalent to 15% of the grade with an average 8.1, displayed Learners used L1 language in their own writings, mixed

English and Spanish at the time of creating a new entry in their journals or writing a paragraph to complete the activities. Additionally, during the activities developed in class, learners did not isolate their native language because they felt comfortable and secure using it.

In brief, each of the aspects mentioned before showed positive and negative results during the implementation of the workshops. Thus, spelling, decrease in L1 dependence, and vocabulary had negative results; which was evidence in the analysis of the instruments.

Workshop 6: My schedule

Table 14 displays the categories and their occurrences during the triangulation of categories and instruments in this workshop.

Table 14 triangulation workshop 6

N°	Code/Categor y	Operationalization	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS			Frequencies Total	%
			Teachers' diary	Observation Checklist	Students' self-reflection		
1	Vocabulary	Code describes difficulties learners presented when using words and expressions while writing.	3	4	24	31	15,0 %
2	Grammar	Code describes the use of grammar structures while writing.	4	3	45	53	25,7 %

3	Spelling	Code describes difficulties in identify spelling mistakes.	2	2	15	19	9,2%
4	Decrease in L1 dependence	Code describes the use of L1 that affects learners writing performance.	3	2	12	17	8,2%
5	Writing content	Code describes students' writing sequence in their writing activities.	5	4	77	86	41,7%
TOTAL			17	15	173	206	100

Writing content represents Learners' writing sequence in sentences and paragraphs while developing the written activities. This category showed 41.7 % of the triangulation with a total of 86 occurrences. Additionally, students improved their written productions, linking words, writing long sentences that had sense, and using the vocabulary and expressions in the activities.

"Learners could write sentences with sequence" (Teacher's diary)

"Learners wrote complete sentences. The sequence of words in many cases was good, but some of them were confused and did not how to follow the sequence of words in the written activity" (outsider observation rubric).

These excerpts suggested that writing content improved notably in this workshop since students were engaged with the activities developed in class; they were able to follow the sequence in their own short paragraphs.

The category *Grammar* had 53 occurrences (25.7%) and confirmed that students were bettering in writing through dialogue journal strategy. That is, learners used grammar structures: auxiliaries, verbs, expressions in their writings, using the aspects mentioned before to complete the activities. The following evidence represents this:

“I used grammar on my written activity” (students’ self-reflection questionnaire)

“Learners could use grammar in their writing” (teachers’ diary)

The excerpts above revealed that learners made good use of grammar to complete the written activities and strengthen writing performance. Therefore, this strategy was useful to improve students’ ability to write in a second language.

The category *vocabulary* had 31 occurrences (15.0%) and represented evidences about Learners continued having difficulties using the new words phrases or expressions to write a piece of paragraph. The following excerpt exemplifies this:

“Students already knew the vocabulary, but in the activity some words they did not know before appeared, so they looked for the meanings and continued working with the vocabulary and the new one” (teachers’ diary).

This example highlights that learners did not learn the vocabulary that included expressions, phrases, regarding the activity, making it harder for them to complete all the activities proposed by the teacher. It is noticeable that learners still have difficulties with the vocabulary.

The category *Spelling*, had 19 occurrences, (9.2 %) confirmed that students continued having problems in their writings and they were not able to identify spelling mistakes in their own compositions. That means spelling was very difficult for them in each of the written activities. The following excerpt shows this:

“Students still were confused to write sentences with sense; they omitted words while writing and they could not notice the mistakes” (teachers’ diary).

The excerpts display that learners were confused when writing sentences that has sense, omitting words and expressions, without identifying the mistakes while writing.

The category *Decrease in L1 dependence* had 17 occurrences (8.2%). The implementation of this strategy did not have the expected impact on students’ writing performance. Learners continued basing their writings on L1 knowledge; for instance teacher stated:

As I mentioned before, learners did not isolate their native language, they talk between them in Spanish, ask questions to the teacher in Spanish too; they resolve the activities in English, but sometimes words they do not know, write it in Spanish (teachers’ diary).

The example above shows that learners did not stop using their native language during the development of each of the six workshops; they did the activities in English, but their oral participation, conversations between classmates, and some written words, were in Spanish. Those excerpts are significant evidences for each workshop. Table 15 shows the results of the students when assessed in this last workshop:

WORKSHOP 6							
Students	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Decrease in L1 dependence	Writing content	Total	Final Score
	30%	20%	20%	15%	15%		
Std 1	13	12	10	10	14	59	3,0
Std 2	14	15	12	6	8	55	2,8
Std 3	17	17	10	5	15	64	3,2
Std 4	10	14	8	7	14	53	2,7
Std 5	20	10	13	8	15	66	3,3
Std 6	13	14	10	9	15	61	3,1
Std 7	16	18	9	8	16	67	3,4
Std 8	11	15	10	10	15	61	3,1
Std 9	15	19	12	9	16	71	3,6
Std 10	16	12	13	8	18	67	3,4
Std 11	18	13	10	10	19	70	3,5
Std 12	10	15	9	4	12	50	2,5
Std 13	14	8	10	10	17	59	3,0
Std 14	11	10	7	8	9	45	2,3
Std 15	10	5	9	8	11	43	2,2
Std 16	15	10	10	10	10	55	2,8
Std 17	12	12	10	9	10	53	2,7
Std 18	9	11	11	9	10	50	2,5
Std 19	12	8	11	10	10	51	2,6
Std 20	12	10	9	11	10	52	2,6
Std 21	10	11	8	7	12	48	2,4
Std 22	14	13	12	13	14	66	3,3
Std 23	12	12	11	10	14	59	3,0
Std 24	10	16	9	10	14	59	3,0
Std 25	10	13	10	9	14	56	2,8
Std 26	11	15	13	10	15	64	3,2
Std 27	11	10	9	11	15	56	2,8
Std 28	15	14	13	10	13	65	3,3
Average	12,8	12,5	10,2	8,8	13,3		

Table 15 Results of the written assessment rubrics in workshop 6

Table 15 shows that some learners improved their grades and the rest of them continued having some difficulties in each of the categories assessed in the workshops.

These results indicated learners continued using L1 language in the whole activities. *Writing content* had 15 % in the rubrics; learners had good results in this category during each workshop developed in class. Many of them wrote sequence sentences and text that had sense while complete part of the activities, which is ratified with the 13.3 score of the passing score rubrics. The following excerpt exemplified this:

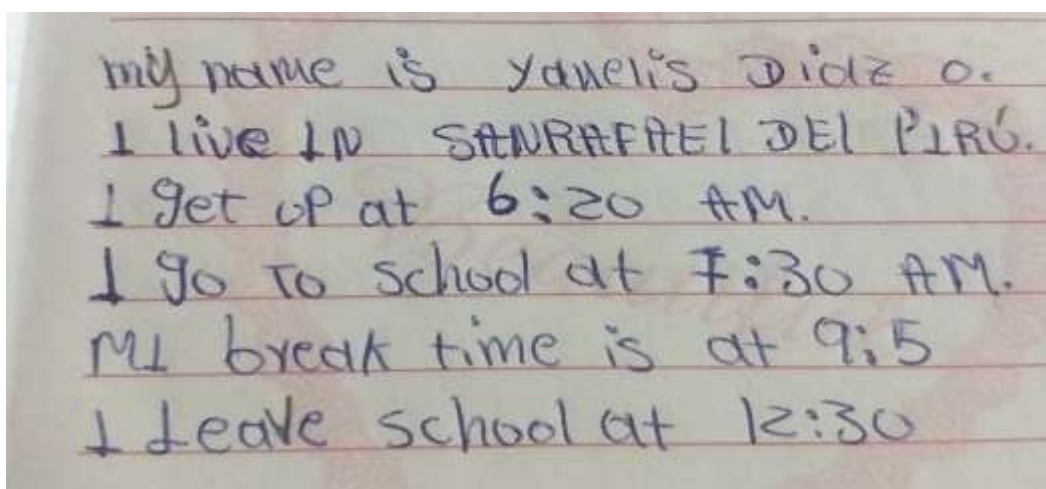


Figure 9 writing evidence

The category vocabulary that is equivalent to 30% in the rubrics with an average of 12.8 showed negative results regarding vocabulary use in oral, written activities. That is, learners had some problems when using the vocabulary in each workshop, misunderstanding the vocabulary previously taught in each class, with the new one.

Grammar is another aspect assessed in rubrics, equivalent to 20% of the grade with an average of 12.5 showed learners' progress using this strategy to improve the most

important aspects in grammar such as word order, sentence structure, and tenses to be used in the learners' compositions. The following example illustrate this progress:

S13: I sometimes dance.

I seldom go to a doctor.

I always go to school.

I frequently go to cinema.

Moreover, *spelling* that is equivalent to 20 % of the grade with an average of 10.2 showed students' issues when identifying their own spelling mistakes in a text. They did not know how and when these mistakes were made; they omitted letters, subjects, verbs, basic grammar structures etc.

S5: Mi name is

S5: I an....

Decrease in L1 dependence had 15% of the grade with an average of 8.8 and represented evidences about learners continued using L1 language in their compositions; they did not set L1 language aside in class, outside and inside during the English activities, they used it all time and were confident with its use.

According to Table 16, the category with the highest percentage was *writing content* with 34.9 % of total occurrences. Learners made a good use of words, grammar structures and sequence in paragraphs. Besides, dialogue journals improved the students' writing skills and coherence in writings. Additionally, the activities including worksheets, written texts, completing paragraphs about the topics of the lessons, let them improve the sequence of

words in a text. Then, *grammar* with 24.4 % was the second most relevant category during the implementation stage, which means that students showed that not only could they use grammar structures in short paragraphs, they were able to write new entries in their journals and completed short texts in simple written formats. Compared with the first workshop, it is important to say that learners progressively gained better results since they kept practicing and completing the assigned activities in class and the dialogue journals outside the class (See table 16).

Table 16 Triangulation of categories in the evaluation stage

Table 16 Triangulation of categories in the evaluation stage								
	w1	w2	w3	w4	w5	w6	Total	Percentage
Vocabulary	30	29	28	29	28	27	171	15,5
Grammar	42	44	49	46	50	44	275	24,4
Spelling	25	26	21	30	24	21	147	13,1
Decrease in L1 dependence	21	24	18	24	28	24	139	12,4
Writing content	50	66	62	83	64	68	393	34,9
	168	189	178	212	194	184	1.125	100%

8 Findings

Throughout the implementation of the workshops, the results gathered from this study showed if the objectives were or were not achieved considering each of the aspects mentioned in this research. The three objectives were to measure the impact of dialogue journals on increasing vocabulary and grammar, and to decrease the students' L1 dependence. At the end, I confirmed that learners meaningfully enhanced vocabulary and grammar structures during the development of the workshops. This is a summary of the findings for each objective:

Dialogue journals strategy and the improvement of vocabulary

While the workshops were being carried out, students achieved a progressive improvement in certain aspects of writing and one of them was vocabulary. Through the results gathered in the instruments and the scores obtained in the individual assessment rubrics, that improvement was evidenced in each stage. From the implementation of the first workshop, and after starting each one of the classes by introducing the vocabulary for students to learn it, they were able to use it in their written activities. So, pupils demonstrated that their vocabulary had increased progressively and, consequently, they were able to write topics of their interest by using the vocabulary learnt in class

After triangulating the six workshops, it was noticeable that certain frequencies increased the effective use of the strategy, whereas the others decreased difficulties, and the results of those frequencies varied in each workshop. Therefore, one may state that dialogue journals strategy had a positive effect on the learners because they were able to accurately use the vocabulary previously taught along the study and, later, they were also able to write

long logical sentences, short paragraphs and new entries in their journals. Furthermore, dialogue journals strategy had a meaningful impact on students writing particularly on understanding reflections, responding or analyzing events, experiences or concepts (Ballantyne and packer, 1995). As Harmer (2007) stated, by providing opportunities for students to think both about how they are learning and also what they are learning, dialogue journals improve their writing skills and help them to reflect on their learning, and it can be a good writing practice too.

Dialogue journals strategy and the improvement of grammar

Peng (2007) stated that in writing classes, one of the strategies used to provide students with collaborative learning is dialogue journal writing since it enhances students' writing abilities in terms of grammar structures, writing content and confidence in writing ability. This study echoed what that author affirmed, writing in dialogue journals was useful because the learners explored different classes and it helped them to improve certain aspects of grammar in their writings. With this strategy, students were able to improve grammatical forms, structures, and word order. However, it is important to highlight that dialogue journals were demanding and appealing for students.

“Grammatical competence is a critical element of successful language learning” (Canale & Swain, 1980), which means that L1 language may be used for teachers to teach grammar in the English classroom to those learners with lower proficiency in language. Cook (2001). During the implementation of workshops, the students were also able to use grammar, vocabulary, and their L1 language to complete all the written activities. Learners did so with the help of the teachers, later, on their own. This finding echoes Kreeft (1984)

who argues that writing dialogue journals provides learners with a big number of comprehensible texts to read and helps them to build fluency in writing.

Accordingly, dialogue journals were used in order for pupils to evaluate their writing and learning processes. Through them, students developed awareness of their weaknesses and strengths in writing, achieved autonomy, understood more about grammar and linguistics aspects, and improved their reflective thinking. Trites (2001). However, some learners did not improve the same aspects as the rest of their classmates, they rather had lower scores in the individual rubrics than the other ones. It was evident that these learners had difficulties when using long sentences, word order, and spelling rules.

Dialogue journals and students' L1 dependence

In order to have better results in writing, learners needed to decrease L1 dependence while writing. Broadly, "ESL learners frequently resorted to their L1 organization skills in L2 writing" Berman (1994), it is to say, if while writing new entries in their dialogue journals in L2 language they did not know how to solve an activity or write a word, learners would find support in their L1 (L1 dependence) to complete the task. Thus, learners did not set L1 language aside during the English activities; they used it all time and were confident with its use.

During the study, flashcards, students' diary, and repetition were also used and added to complete this tool. Flashcards caught learner's attention while developing the written activities, in order to help them learn vocabulary. Students dialogue journal was employed to

better learner's writing, however, learner's difficulties to decrease L1 dependence did not have the expected results. Repetition was developed through imitating short texts, long sentences and grammatical aspects. That also supported learners' new entries in their dialogue journals, creating confidence and commitment to complete all written tasks.

9 Conclusions and pedagogical implications / recommendation

This study meant to explore the impact of dialogue journals on seventh graders' writing. After the implementation of the research, the results proved an impact reflected in the improvement of learners' writing. This impact is principally due to the application of dialogue journal strategy. This section presents the main conclusions and pedagogical implications derived from those results in order to provide teachers and researchers with useful insights about the applicability of this methodology.

One of the contributions of this study is related to the use of dialogue journals in teenagers, and the improvement of writing as well as the increase of vocabulary, grammar and decrease in L1 use. Students put into practice the vocabulary previously taught in class; they are also able to monitor their own progress and learning. Furthermore, dialogue journal is a strategy "where learners draw on their personal funds of knowledge and make connections between what they know and what they are learning in class" (Uduma 2011). This study confirmed that one of the benefits of dialogue journal in L2 language learners is the development of writing fluency (Holmes & Moulton, 1997; McGrail, 1996; Peyton, 1990, 2000).

The second contribution of this investigation is in the significance of using meaningful activities for young learners when writing. The participants improved their writing while they worked with their diaries in this study, they were motivated more focused. This study confirms then that dialogue journals recorded ESL students' writing progress, which fosters the students' writing confidence. Dialogue journals can be an

effective tool for increasing L2 students' writing confidence during classes (Alexander, 2001).

The impact on students' writing is the third contribution of this research. Additionally, writing new entries and sharing ideas with the teacher about real situations helped the learners to enhance English writing fluency, motivation, and reflective awareness. Thus, with challenging activities, learners increase confidence while writing.

As for writing fluency, the fourth contribution of this study is that dialogue journal benefits learners because it is meaningful and help them gain confidence while writing. Pre-writing activities might be engaging ways to develop fluency, since practicing before writing helps students to better in that skill. Giving learners the chance to write about topics of their interest is important. Thus, teachers can lead and give students the chance to write topics they like and avoid the risk of decreasing their growth (Holmes and Moulton 1997; Larrotta 2008).

The last contribution of this research deals with the fact that dialogue journals are useful for learners' reflective practice and teacher-and-learner interactive engagement (Carroll & Mchawala, 2001; English & Gillen, 2001; Peyton, 1993b, 2000; Peyton & Reed, 1990; Peyton & Staton, 1993; Reed, 1993; Trites, 2001.) Dialogue journals allow students to have a better writing progress by providing them with the opportunity to interact with their teacher and classmates. This confirms that dialogue journal contributes to learner interaction, letting students use reading and writing in "effective ways and provide a usual, comfortable bridge to alternative kinds of writing" (Peyton, 2000, p. 1).

Additionally, it is important to recognize the limitations of this study. Firstly, certain activities did not match the students level of English. However, those activities were amusing and demanding for them. Secondly, there was an unusual difficulty when students had to write paragraphs, even if they knew the vocabulary and grammatical structures, students were not able to write without guidance. Thirdly, the way in which the strategy was carried out helped learners to write better.

Consequently, dialogue journals, as Reed (1988) suggests are a technique in which young, new language learners can engage in dialogue journal writing to great, linguistic, cognitive, and personal benefit. It is to say, students can exchange personal meaningful ideas, commonly between teacher and themselves, by means of writing new entries in their journals to: practice authentic language, increase their motivation, develop writing and reading fluency, and develop close relationship between the teacher and students (Kose, 2005). For future studies, I recommend future researchers teachers to consider students' needs, since learners do not have the same English level. Future research should delve deeper and consider the students' levels of English and interests, which might affect results related to the effectiveness of the strategy.

Future studies should also consider students' writing English abilities in order to confirm the students' strengths and weaknesses, especially when they write to communicate. Besides, teachers should consider the kind of activities that learners can perform. Teachers and researchers should model ways to appropriately use dialogue journals in order to make this strategy more effective.

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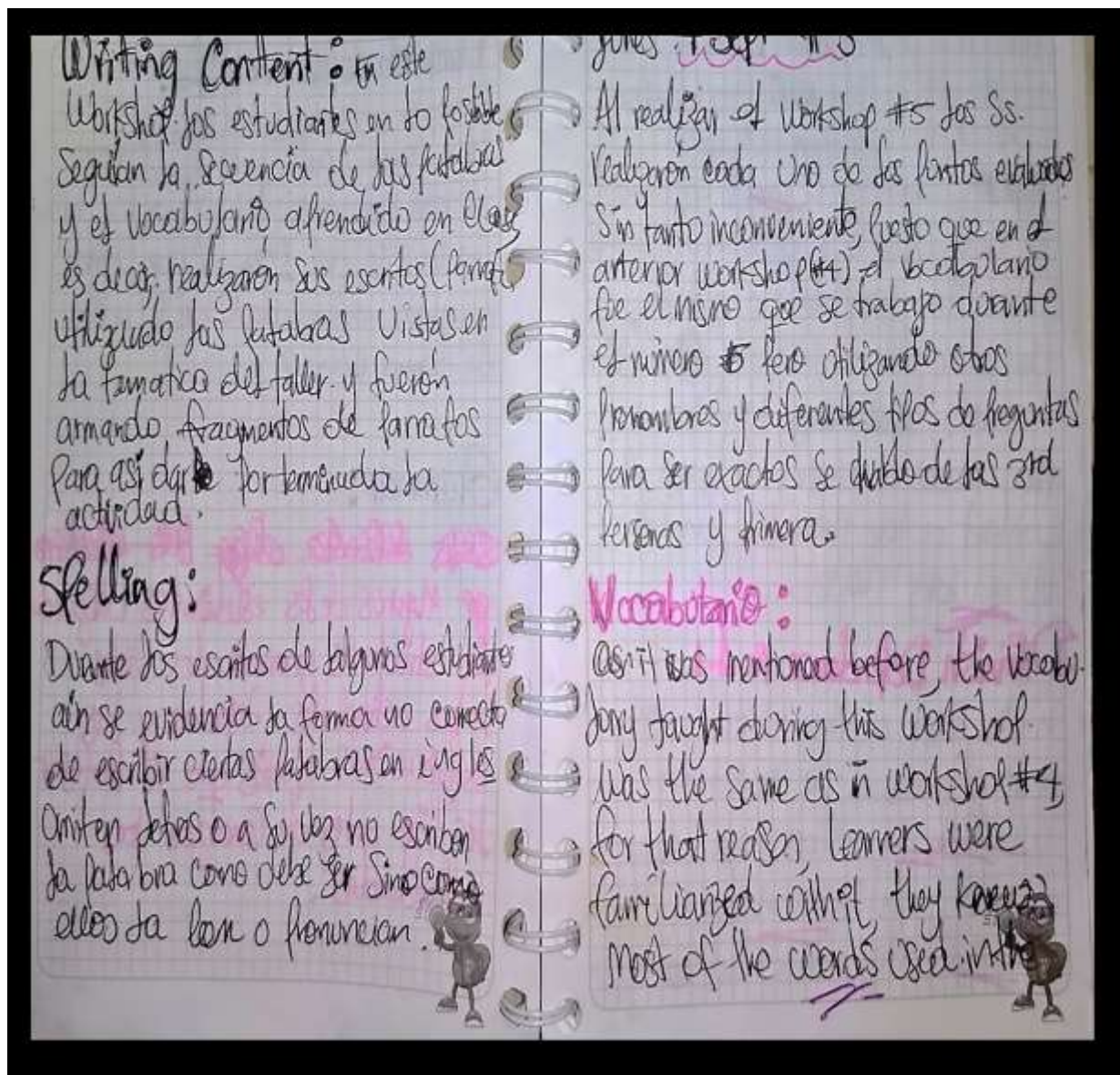
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11 Annexes

Annex 1 Teacher's journal diagnosis stage



faster than the rest, they said it was easy because the language in the reading was understandable and they could finish; of course they speak in Spanish during classes, but at the moment to answer the activities I told them it is in English not Spanish, but sometimes they answer it in Spanish and English too.

Grammar:

They had difficulties with the questions for them it was pretty difficult to follow the structure how to answer it, I gave them an example how to do it, and they tried.



they did not know the place where frequency adverbs go, and answer it with difficulties.

Writing Content:

During the activities students wrote sentences with sequence but not in the whole activities, in the speaking one, they wrote answers with any problem, but had problems with the meaning of each question. In the Sredo activity it was a reading, they should complete a sentence with the read frequency adverb, and the last one a written activity, they were confused, they did not follow the sequence of words at the moment to answer questions. for that reason they continued working in class.



Annex 2 Outsider observation

OUTSIDER OBSERVATION

Observer: Virginia Santos V.

Number of students:

Group: 7°

Subject: English **Name of the**

workshop: Daily routine Class **objective:** _____

Listed below you will find some statements about what students should do when using a specific writing strategy to better student's writing. Please mark with an "X" the best option for each statement according to what you observed in the class.

	Not so good	Good	Very good	Excellent
Category				
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students use words and expressions. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have words ideas and simple phrases relates. 	1	2	3	4
		X		
Grammar	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write complete sentences that have sense. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can link words or groups of ideas. 	1	2	3	4
		X		
Spelling	1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can spell personal details. 		X		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can identify spelling mistakes. 	X			
Diminish dependence in L1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners Diminish L1 in their writings. 	1 X	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use L1 in their writings. 	1	2 X	3	4
Writing Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students check their drafts before getting a feedback from the teacher. 	1 X	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student's writings have sequence. 	1 X	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After each class, students write a new entry in their journals. 	1	2	3 X	4

















Comments: *Ss' have to use their dictionaries for some time to write a new sentence. To start with, a paragraph, they spend enough time linking words and ideas to write it; at the same time, they mix English and Spanish to write a message. Also, Ss' try to write complete sentences in a logical way. That is, that have sense.*

Score:

Annex 3 Students' self –reflection questionnaire

STUDENTS' SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Regarding to the perception you have about your performance in the previous workshop, answer the following questions saying **YES** or **NO** analyzing the effectiveness of practicing writing.

	YES	NO
Did I write complete sentences that have sense?		
Did I use the vocabulary learn in class?		
Did I check what I write?		
Did I put my ideas into complete sentences?		
Did I need more practice to drafting a paragraph?		
Could I introduce a piece of the paragraph?		
Could I identify spelling mistakes?		
Could I diminish L1 in my writings?		

Write something extra you want to add to the class:

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Video Beam | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Computador | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Audios | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |


8. Que actividades te gustaría realizar en clase de inglés? Escoge múltiples

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Diálogos | <input type="radio"/> Completar textos |
| <input type="radio"/> Role plays | <input type="radio"/> Describir objetos |
| <input type="radio"/> Mesas redondas | <input type="radio"/> Realizar oraciones |
| <input type="radio"/> Debates | <input type="radio"/> Crear una historieta |
| <input type="radio"/> Ordenar párrafos | <input type="radio"/> Escuchar canciones |
| <input type="radio"/> Identificar la idea principal del texto | <input type="radio"/> Escuchar las noticias |
| <input type="radio"/> Hacer preguntas | <input type="radio"/> Entrevistas |
| <input type="radio"/> Responder preguntas | <input type="radio"/> Sopas de letras |
| <input type="radio"/> Corregir errores | <input type="radio"/> Crucigramas |
| <input type="radio"/> Comprender un texto | <input type="radio"/> Dramas |

Annex 5 Students' test

NAME _____ DATE: _____

Para ver su nivel, conteste todas las preguntas. En esta sesión del examen, demostrara su habilidad para entender el idioma inglés. Hay 4 preguntas, de las cuales debe marcar una sola opción. To test your progress at this level, answer all questions. In this section of the test, you will show your ability to understand spoken English. There are 4 question, choose the best answer.

A  Listen to the conversations. Chec

1. His first name is _____ .
 - Z-A-C-K-A-R-Y
 - Z-A-C-H-A-R-Y
 - Z-A-C-H-E-R-Y
2. Sue's phone number is _____ .
 - 718-555-8781
 - 718-555-8881
 - 718-555-8871
3. The _____ is in his bag.
 - CD player
 - cell phone
 - camera
4. The man's wallet is _____ .
 - under his desk
 - in his pocket
 - in his book bag

- Esta sesión del examen se enfoca en tu habilidad para usar la gramática y entender el inglés escrito. Hay 13 preguntas y cada una de ellas tiene una sola respuesta correcta. Escoge la mejor respuesta a cada pregunta A, B, C, D según el caso.

5). Where do you live?

- A. I am live in London.
- B. My live is London.
- C. I live in London.
- D. I lives in London.

6). How many brothers does he have?

- A. He has two brothers.
- B. I has two brothers.
- C. He got two brothers.
- D. He two brothers.

7). Where are they?

- A. They is Italian.

- B. They is Italy.
- C. They are in Italy.
- D. They Italian.

8). What is her name?

- A. My name is Margaret.
- B. My name are Margaret.
- C. Margaret are my name.
- D. Her name is Margaret.

9). Are you German?

- A. No. My are American.
- B. No. My is American.
- C. No. I is American.
- D. No. I am American.

10). Do you like coffee?

- A. Yes, I like.
- B. I like the coffee.
- C. Yes, I do.
- D. Me don't like coffee.

11). Where does she live?

- A. She lives on your street.
- B. She live on your street.
- C. She do on your street.
- D. She does on your street.

12). Do you like music?

- A. Yes, I does.
- B. Yes, I like.
- C. Yes, I do.
- D. Yes, I am.

13). Where was she born?

- A. She be born in Paris.
- B. She is born in Paris.
- C. She was born in Paris.
- D. She born in Paris.

14). What is their mother's name?

- A. Their mother's name is Karen.
- B. Their mother's name are Karen.
- C. Their mother is Karen

D. Their mother's from is Karen

*Annex 6 External interview**ENTREVISTA*

1. ¿Qué habilidades considera Ud. los estudiantes deben mejorar? R/ análisis, comunicación.
2. Qué haría al respecto para mejorar esta situación? Redacción de textos, producción de textos, lecturas, interpretación de textos. Tienen muchas falencias para redactar un texto, mala ortografía, desinterés por aprender, algunos se distraen con facilidad.
3. Considera Ud que la lectoescritura es importante en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje de los estudi-antes? ¿Porque? Mejora la comunicación entre los estudiantes, adquieren mejores habilidades para comunicarse.
- 4.Cuál es la habilidad que más debe trabajarse en clase'? ¿Porque? Todas son importantes, pero la primordial es la interpretación.
5. Tienen sus estudiantes problemas para aprender? ¿cuáles son? Si, se distraen con facilidad, no demuestran interés por aprender, se les dificulta escribir, no separan las palabras, no escriben bien.
6. ¿Si sus estudiantes no tienen una buena ortografía, que estrategias utilizaría Ud. para mejorar la ortografía en sus estudiantes? Practicar dictados, elaborar oraciones o párrafos con las palabras que escribieron mal. Explicación de reglas ortográficas.

7. ¿De qué forma enseña Ud el desarrollo de la escritura, lectura, habla, escucha en clase? ¿Como? ¿Qué tipos de actividades utiliza? A través de videos, redactando, leyendo y escribiendo textos. Por medio de mesas redondas, foros, imágenes.

Annex 7 Observation Form used by researcher

**INSTITUCION EDUCATIVA SAN RAFAEL DEL PIRU
MASTER'S IN ENGLISH DIDACTIC
STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE FORM**

This form is designed to help teachers that support authentic engagement in learning and to gather additional information regarding the use of dialogue journals on student's writing. We are asking for your help, please provide the information listed below and feel free to ask any question about the form before the class starts. The information you record will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your assistance.

Institution	San Rafael del Pirú	Level	
City		Number of students and age	
Date		Lesson	
Time		Teacher	
Subject	English	Observer	

PART 1: LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Please fill out this chart with the language activities developed during the class and with some comments about what happened: (be brief)

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS

PART 2. REFLECTING ON WRITTEN PRODUCTION

The following list of events is related to the development of the skills that learners are developing in class; please draw a tally every time the event happens during the class.

<i>Select the best option for each one of the following:</i>	<i>TALLIES</i>	<i>COMMENTS</i>
VOCABULARY		
1. Use variety of words and expressions.		
2. Use relevant vocabulary.		
3. Use adequate vocabulary related to his/ her routine.		
4. Write simple sentences and short paragraphs.		
GRAMMAR		
5. Use limited range of structures.		
6. Learners frequent inaccuracies in writing.		
7. Learners check what they already have written.		
8. Apply rules of grammar using frequency adverbs.		
9. Teacher identify the sequence on their writings		
10. Write topics of their interests.		
SPELLING		
11. Learners can spell personal details.		
12. Learners check their punctuation.		
13. Learners copy short notes.		
14. Learners can copy known words.		
DECREASE IN L1 DEPENDENCE		
15. Learners diminish L1 in their writings.		
16. Learners diminish L1 in their learning process.		
WRITING CONTENT		
17. Students start with the main idea in each writing.		
18. Students check their drafts before getting a feedback from the teacher.		
19. Student's writings have sequence.		
20. After each class, students write a new entry in their journals.		

PART 3. REFLECTING ON WRITTEN ACTIVITIES USED

*The following list of events are related to the use of **DIALOGUE JOURNALS** in class, please mark a tally every time each event happens during the class*

<i>Dialogue Journals helped them to</i>	<i>TALLIES</i>	<i>COMMENTS</i>
Teacher uses dialogue journals to assess students' writing.		
Dialogue journals help Ss' to improve their writings.		

Dialogue journals increase Ss' vocabulary.		
Learners use dialogue journals to better grammar.		

PART 4. OBSERVER'S FEEDBACK

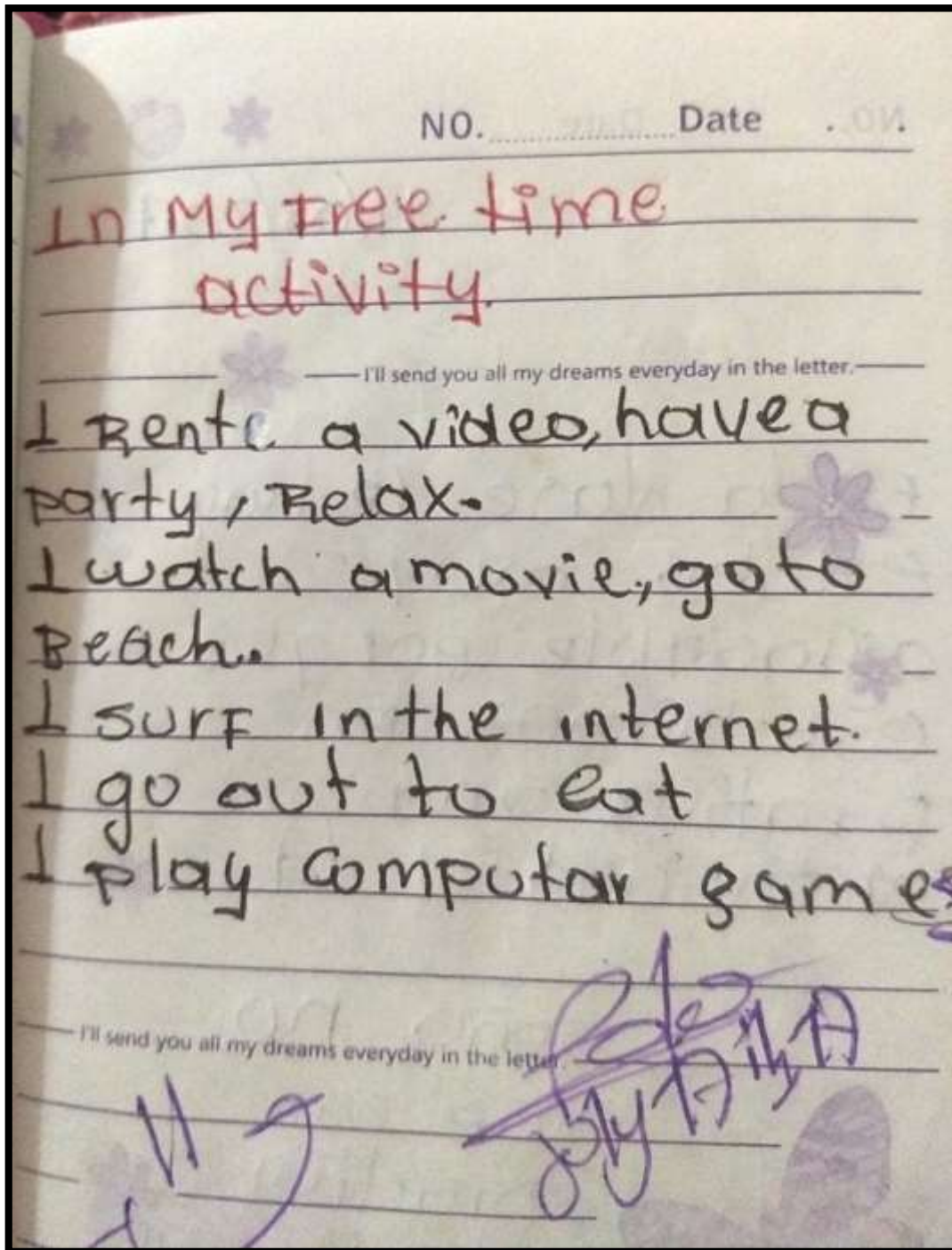
1. How did the Students feel with methodology or approach used by the teacher during the development of the class?
2. How do you consider the use of materials in this class?
3. How can you describe the use of dialogue journals in this class?
4. How was the students' performance when writing a new journal entry?
5. How did the students react when are asked to write a new entry?

In the following chart, please give your personal suggestions about aspects related to the teacher or student's writing performance. They can be positive or suggested areas of improvement. This information will be taken into account to improve the learning and teaching process in class.

Strengths	Areas to work on

Thank you for your cooperation!!

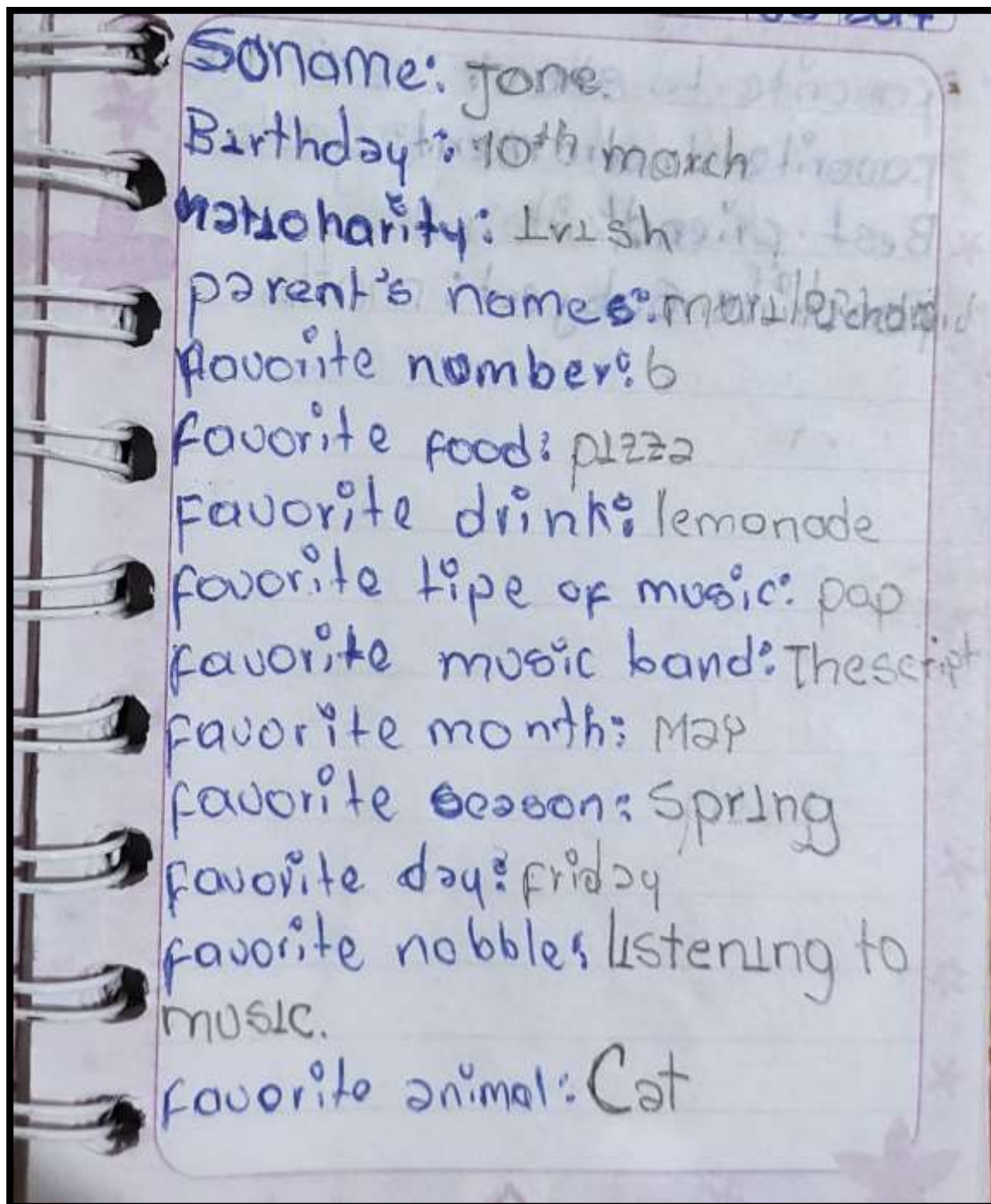
Annex 8 Student's journal



NO: _____
Date: _____

MY free time activities

- * watch a movie
- * go to a ball game.
- * rent a video
- * surf in the internet.
- * work out
- * I visit friend's
- * I stay home
- * I relax
- * I sleeping
- * I play computer games
- * I go out to eat
- * I go dancing
- * I have a party
- * I go to Beach



Annex 9 Individual evaluation Rubric***Individual written Assessment Rubric*****Passing score: 6.0****RATING SCALE**

	%	DESCRIPTORS FOR PASSING SCORE	% Assigned	Final Score
Vocabulary	30	Use of words and expressions (10)		
		Have a limited vocabulary (10)		
		Have a basic repertoire of words (10)		
Grammar	20	Write complete sentences that have sense (10)		
		Limited range of structures (10)		
Spelling	20	Can spell personal details (10)		
		Can Identify spelling mistakes (10)		
Diminish dependence in L1	15	Learners use L1 in their writings (5)		
		Diminish L1 usage help students in their writings (10)		
Writing Content	15	Students start with the main idea in each writing.(5)		
		Student's writings have sequence.(5) Students check their drafts before getting a feedback from the teacher.(5)		

QUALITATIVE SYSTEM EVALUATION ADAPTATION

SCORE OBTAINED	STUDENTS GRADE
90 - 100 %	UPPER
80 % - 89%	INTERMEDIATED
60 - 79	BASIC
10 - 59	LOW

English Language Level Descriptor (CERF)

The following criteria will be taken into consideration for the students' assessment rubric

	VOCABULARY RANGE	GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY	ORTHOGRAPHIC CONTROL
A1	Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations.	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire	Can copy familiar words and short phrases e.g. simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names of shops and set phrases used regularly. Can spell his/her address, nationality and other personal details.

Annex 10 workshop 1

Workshop # 1

Personal Information



1). in this activity, you are going to start a short conversation with a classmate in order to exchange your personal information. An example of this is explained below:



2). after complete the first part of the activity, you are going to complete a format with your own personal information. Later, you are going to work in pairs with a classmate in order to share what you did in your new entry, an example of this:

Activity Personal Information	
Name: _____	Date: _____
Complete the information.	
<p>My name is _____. I am _____ years old. I live in _____. My favourite food is _____. My father's name is _____ and my mother's name is _____. My best friend's name is _____ and my favourite sport is _____. On weekends I usually _____.</p>	

3). At home, taking into account the format you completed in class, you are going to write a new entry on a diary journal, in which you will write the most relevant personal information about you. The information needed will be: *how many brothers do you have? Where are you from? How old are you? What's your phone number? When is your birthday? What's your last name? where do you live?*



Annex 11 Workshop 2

3
Discover new words

1 class Match the free time activities with the pictures.

<p>1 watch a DVD → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2 play computer games → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3 watch a football match → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4 listen to an mp3 player → <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>5 read magazines → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6 be at the cinema → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>7 play basketball → <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>8 go to the beach → <input type="checkbox"/></p>
--	---

2 What about you? Tick the activities you do in your free time and write a text.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> listen to the radio</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> go to the cinema</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> play football</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> surf on the internet</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> meet friends</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> play basketball</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> watch DVDs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> read magazines</p>
---	--

In my free time I and


At the weekend I go to

At school I play

54

3 **Free time**

Write here all the free time activities you know in English.



Here you can draw, stick and write whatever you want about your favourite free time activity.

Taken from <https://en.islcollective.com/>

WORKSHOP # 2
FREE TIME ACTIVITIES
INSTITUCION EDUCATIVA SAN RAFAEL DEL PIRU

FULL NAME: _____ GRADE: 7^o

1). Watch and Listen the video, then tick (✓) the activities that you hear.



2). Listen and watch the video again and list the free time activities missing in part 1.

To Do List:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Taken from <https://en.islcollective.com/>

- ❖ At home, taking into account the format you completed in class, you are going to write a new entry on your diary journal, in which you will write your free time activities.

Annex 12 Workshop 3

Jobs and occupations word search

Find and circle the words.

word list

- bus driver
- chef
- cleaner
- dentist
- doctor
- fireman
- manager
- nurse
- pilot
- policeman
- postman
- shop assistant
- teacher
- waiter

- ❖ During class, taking into account the format you completed in class, you are going to write a new entry on your diary journal, In addition, you can compare what your classmates did, and correct it if it is necessary. The information needed will be: **What does she do? What does he do? Use the vocabulary related jobs and occupations.**

what does she / he do?

Complete the worksheet. Find the answers.

what does she do? → *she is a pilot. she flies planes.*
 what does he do? → *He is a doctor. He helps sick people.*


























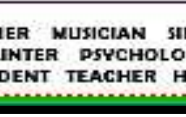













<u>Questions</u>	<u>Answers</u>
1. what does he do?	
2. what does he do?	
3. what does she do?	
4. what does he do?	
5. what does she do?	
6. what does she do?	
7. what does he do?	
8. what does she do?	

Taken from <https://en.islcollective.com/>



Taken from <https://en.islcollective.com/>

Annex 13 Workshop 4


WHAT DO THEY DO? JOBS			1. Write the names of the jobs under the pictures.
			2. Write the name of the job under the sentence. Then put the number of the job.
1.	2.	3.	*He takes care of people's health.
			*She sings jazz in a night club.
4.	5.	6.	*He goes to school and does homework.
			*She sells tickets for plays or films.
7.	8.	9.	*She serves people in a restaurant.
			*He works in a mine.
10.	11.	12.	*She takes care of patients in hospital.
			*He paints houses and buildings.
13.	14.	15.	*She lends you books.
			*He entertains children at the circus.
16.	17.	18.	*Mrs Smith teaches English.
			*He paints beautiful pictures.
19.	20.	21.	*She fixes your computer.
			*He makes furniture.
22.	23.	24.	*He writes novels and stories.
			*He breeds hens, cows and turkeys.
25.	26.	27.	*She plays the violin beautifully.
			*He makes delicious Italian food.
28.	29.	30.	*She helps people with emotional problems.
			*She works very hard at home.
31.	32.	33.	*He makes bread and cakes.
			*He's doing some research on cancer.
34.	35.	36.	*He works in court.
			*Some voters support him.
37.	38.	39.	
40.	41.	42.	
43.	44.	45.	
46.	47.	48.	
49.	50.	51.	
52.	53.	54.	
55.	56.	57.	
58.	59.	60.	
61.	62.	63.	
64.	65.	66.	
67.	68.	69.	
70.	71.	72.	
73.	74.	75.	
76.	77.	78.	
79.	80.	81.	
82.	83.	84.	
85.	86.	87.	
88.	89.	90.	
91.	92.	93.	
94.	95.	96.	
97.	98.	99.	
100.	101.	102.	


LIBRARIAN FARMER MUSICIAN SINGER MINER POLITICIAN COOK BOX-OFFICE CLERK
 TECHNICIAN PAINTER PSYCHOLOGIST DOCTOR CLOWN JUDGE BAKER SCIENTIST
 DECORATOR STUDENT TEACHER HOUSEWIFE SCIENTIST CARPENTER WRITER WAITRESS


KEY	
1. NURSE	DOCTOR (9)
2. CLOWN	SINGER (15)
3. CARPENTER	STUDENT (13)
4. COOK	BOX-OFFICE CLERK (20)
5. FARMER	WAITRESS (6)
6. WAITRESS	MINER (17)
7. JUDGE	NURSE (1)
8. HOUSEWIFE	DECORATOR (14)
9. DOCTOR	LIBRARIAN (16)
10. TEACHER	CLOWN (2)
11. POLITICIAN	TEACHER (10)
12. SCIENTIST	PAINTER (18)
13. STUDENT	TECHNICIAN (19)
14. DECORATOR	CARPENTER (23)
15. SINGER	WRITER (21)
16. LIBRARIAN	FARMER (5)
17. MINER	MUSICIAN (24)
18. PAINTER	COOK (4)
19. TECHNICIAN	PSYCHOLOGIST (22)
20. BOX-OFFICE CLERK	HOUSEWIFE (8)
21. WRITER	BAKER (23)
22. PSYCHOLOGIST	SCIENTIST (12)
23. BAKER	JUDGE (7)
24. MUSICIAN	POLITICIAN (11)

WHERE DO THEY WORK?

A. Look and number the pictures







B. Write sentences using the verb WORK

Ex.

1. A ~~man~~ works in a fast-food restaurant.

2. _____


3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

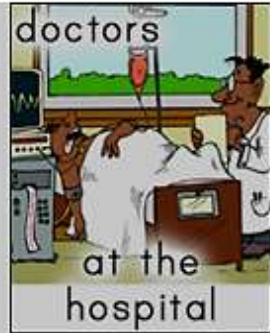


- ❖ After completing the first part of the activity, you are going to model the following example, then, you are going to write a new entry on your diary and compare with a classmate what you did.

Where Do Doctors Work?

3

work



Where do doctors work?











They work at the hospital.

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.



Annex 14 Workshop 5

- ❖ Before starting class, share your ideas with a classmate and check the vocabulary and structures used in your journal diary.

Where do they work?

 	1. _____ works in a _____.	 
	2. _____ works in a _____.	
	3. _____ works in a _____.	
	4. _____ works in a _____.	

Where do they work?

5. _____ works in a _____.

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

Where do they work?

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

| _____

❖ Write and complete the following example in your diary journal, using the vocabulary previously taught in class.

My Neighborhood

In my neighborhood, there are many places to go. If I am hungry, I can go to a _____ and eat. There is a _____ in my neighborhood where I can mail a letter to my grandmother. There is a _____ to go shopping, a _____ where I can buy a birthday cake too! If I want to read some books or do my homework, I can go to the _____. I go to the _____ with my friends to watch a movie. My favorite place is the _____, because I can get money there! There is an _____ in my neighborhood, my big brother goes there to surf the internet or play computer games.

- *Chinese*
- *Restaurant*
- *Post office*
- *Shopping Mall*
- *Bakery Cinema*
- *Bank*
- *Internet*
- *Bar*
- *Surf the internet*
- *computer games*

Annex 15 Workshop 6

Warm up:

In-groups of three people, share your ideas with your classmates, and discuss which part of the written activity is right or wrong (diary journal entry).

Read the text then, model the example and write it on your notebook.



My name is Mary and I am eleven years old.

On weekdays, I always get up at seven o'clock because I have lessons, but on Saturday and Sunday I never get up early, I usually get up after nine o'clock.

On Saturdays, I sometimes have piano lessons. Then I usually have lunch at my grandmother's house. We sometimes go to the café after lunch and I always ask for an ice cream, but my grandmother never buys me one!

On Sundays, my parents and I always go out for lunch and in the afternoon, we do an activity together. We hardly ever go to the beach when the weather is nice. When it is raining, we often go to their cinema. I love the cinema!

Complete with the correct adverb, according to the text.

1). Mary_____has piano lessons on Saturdays.

2). She _____has lunch with her grandmother.

3). They_____ go to the café after lunch and Mary_____ asks for an ice cream, but her grandmother_____ buys her one.

4). On Sundays Mary and her parents_____ go out for lunch.

5). They_____go to the beach, but when it is raining they _____go to the cinema.

- ❖ In your diary, write a short paragraph about you, use frequency adverbs vocabulary and your information. Let's do it!

