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IMPROVING THIRD GRADERS' WRITING SKILLS THROUGH THE

PROCESS WRITING APPROACH

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Master´s Degree in English Teaching for Self-directed Learning

Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

Universidad de la Sabana

Chía, 2014

Improving B1 Third Graders´ Writing Skills

Through the Process Writing Approach

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A partial fulfillment for the degree of M.A. in Defining and Implementing Strategies to Foster Self-directed Learning

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Master´s Degree in English Teaching for Self-directed Learning

Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

Universidad de la Sabana
Chía, 2014

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Abstract

Improving Third-Grade Students' Writing Skills Using the Process Writing Approach is an action research study that examined how the first three steps of Process Writing, hereafter referred to as PW (brainstorming, outlining, and first draft) favored the development of writing skills in a group of young learners from a bilingual school in Bogota, Colombia. This study examines how to teach young learners language skills, the importance of language structure (cohesiveness and cohesion), and the process writing approach. During the implementation stage, data was gathered through graphic organizers, a test, and a participation forum. Consequently, the analysis of third graders' writing process revealed three important findings: first, the importance of planning before writing; second, using motivation as a strategy to help learners collect ideas and stay focused to achieve a writing task; and third, expressing ideas using clear and effective language. Overall, third grade students' writing skills improved significantly, making them more aware of the need to complete the thirteen-step writing cycle in the near future. In this study, the researcher was able to see the influence of the process writing approach by assessing how students organized their thoughts, stayed focused, and expressed ideas using clear and effective language.

Key words: PW, brainstorm, outlining, first draft, cohesiveness, cohesion, young learners.

Resumen

Este un estudio de acción investigación que examinó cómo mejorar las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes de grado tercero, implementando en el proceso de escritura los tres primeros pasos que de aquí en adelante denominará PW (lluvia de ideas, estructurar ideas y primer borrador) favoreciendo el desarrollo de las habilidades de escritura en un grupo de niños aprendices en un colegio bilingüe en Bogotá, Colombia. Este estudio examina cómo enseñarles habilidades de lenguaje a niños aprendices, la importancia de la estructura de la lengua (precisión y coherencia), y, el enfoque de escritura. Durante la etapa de implementación, los datos fueron recogidos por medio de gráficos organizadores, exámenes y un foro de participación. El análisis de este proceso de escritura con estudiantes del grado tercero reveló tres hallazgos importantes: primero, la importancia de planear antes de escribir; segundo, usar la motivación como una estrategia para ayudarle a los estudiantes a organizar ideas y enfocarse para lograr una finalizar una tarea de escritura; y, tercero, expresar ideas usando un lenguaje claro y efectivo. En general, las habilidades de escritura de los niños de tercero mejoraron significativamente, además se concientizaron de completar los trece pasos que conforman el ciclo de escritura.

En este estudio la investigadora fue capaz de ver la influencia del enfoque del proceso de escritura por medio de la evaluación centrada en cómo los niños organizaban su conocimiento, se enfocaban y expresaban sus ideas usando un lenguaje claro y efectivo.

Palabras clave: proceso de escritura, lluvia de ideas, organización de ideas, primer borrador, cohesión y precisión, jóvenes aprendices.

Introduction

Within the communicative framework of language teaching and learning, the ability to write is essential for any learner as claimed by Halliday (1985). Written language is taught and used to inform, entertain, persuade and express opinions and ideas. Writing is a tool for people to communicate a variety of messages, so it needs to be developed effectively. Teachers must teach a writing approach that fits students' needs and also an approach that will help students acquire a proficient use of the language and reach a higher level of language proficiency. Those achievements be reflected in higher levels of content quality, organization, and written mechanics. Therefore, writing competence should be a concern to educators who advocate and follow some writing approaches to reinforce the students' writing skills.

One of these approaches is the pw one, which enhances the use of thirteen steps to develop cognitive learning in students that easily improves writing structure. In addition, the PW approach provides writing strategies that benefit the students' writing skills by underlining the need to be accurate and cohesive when writing for a variety of purposes. Learning such strategies can significantly improve the learners' quality of writing.

Accordingly, this report describes the study that focused on fostering students' writing skills through the use of a PW approach with third-grade students at Colegio Cumbres (CC hereafter), located in Chia, Colombia. Some of the academic classes are conducted in English as a foreign language as part of the transitional bilingual education the Ministry of Education promotes in schools. Hence, English is being taught as a second language for primary and secondary education at CC.

Likewise, CC educators´ curriculum for third grade students, which was designed by the International Center for Integral Formation (ICIF) (2007), expects students to produce high-quality and meaningful writing. Students should be able to spell correctly, compose original texts using the conventions of written language such as capitalization and penmanship to communicate clearly, and select and use a writing process for a written assignment. According to Miller (2000), countless journals and books can be found on how to incorporate writing into the primary curriculum, so CC teachers were willing to take full advantage of what the PW approach can offer to meet their academic needs as they write.

Although the PW approach emphasizes thirteen steps, three first steps of the PW were chosen to be implemented during the research study: brainstorming, outlining, and writing a first draft as studied by White and Arndt, (1991). The decision making process was based on how the researcher understood young learners' characteristics, cognitive and linguistic aspects, and also learners' short attention span. Those aspects played an essential role in the way lesson plans were designed. The PW approach was beneficial to address third-grade learners' writing weaknesses, such as sentence structure, the inability to present a critical review and self-analysis of a story, difficulty elaborating on ideas, and poor narrative sequence, among other aspects. As Nunan (2011) has suggested "writing should be presented to students in a way in which they see the benefits of learning how to write, understanding the process of writing and realizing that acquiring the skill is a developmental process that begins with the use of familiar words and producing a range of text types or genres, such as instructions, reports, and narratives" (p. 101) Thus, from Nunan's statement, it is implied that students should be taught and engaged in using a variety of writing resources that will enable them to fully develop linguistic accuracy and content organization skills. It involves knowing which writing skill needs to be emphasized

at the initial stage of learning. The use of various writing steps will also allow students to conceive of the PW approach as a set of steps that will attempt to teach writing in a natural way and to show students that writing is valuable.

The following sections present the statement of the problem, the rationale of the study, and the research questions and research aim that guided the study.

Statement of the Problem

This study observed that 13 boys from third grade achieved an A1 writing proficiency level, which is below the expected B1 level school anticipates students to have. Based on international language standards that were established by the Common European Framework (2002) a B1 learner should be able to "write a straightforward and connected text on the topic that is familiar to them or of personal interest" (p.10). Unfortunately, this was something with which the subjects of this study struggled.

The flaws in the students' writing ability showed some difficulties behind the students' underperformance. According to the diagnostic assessment administered to students as an analysis regarding students' needs, it was demonstrated that third-grade students neither have cognitive features nor they can identify any language features when they were writing different types of texts, such as messages, letters, tales, news, interviews, posters or adverts, narrative writings, persuasive writings, etc. Third-grade students had problems dealing with organizational structure, developing a topic with facts and details, using linking words and phrases to connect ideas to previous information, writing a conclusion ending, and struggling to revise (self-correct) their work to ensure accuracy and understanding. In many cases, the participants in this study could communicate orally, but they lacked good writing skills.

It was also evident that CC was implementing a product-oriented approach in which writing focuses on tasks that give importance to a final product as identified by Nunan (2011) that did not favor young learners since it was not consolidating learning in the other skill areas. Therefore, the school's interest was to provide an opportunity for students to progress in the language by teaching them strategies of how to improve and develop the language through the PW approach.

After noticing this problem, the researcher wanted to endorse a PW approach in order to overcome students' writing difficulties. Consequently, the following main research question was proposed: To what extent does PW help third-grade students´ develop writing skills? and the following subsidiary questions: 1. How can brainstorming elicit learners' responses? 2. How does the outline step assist learners to have an organized and logical sequence of ideas? 3. How does a first draft help learners to focus on language accuracy?

Research Aim

To identify how the process writing approach promotes third grader´s writing skills.

Rationale

The teaching-learning process carried out with third-graders at CC focused on boosting students' writing skills in order to achieve a structured process of writing with young learners and develop certain awareness of how language functions as a system and as a means of communication. Hence, the PW approach advocates teaching a set of steps that would gradually scaffold third-grade students' writing skills. As stated by Butler, Liss, and Sterner (1999), writing acquisition should be conceptualized as a developmental continuum in which the young learner should know the purpose and use of written language.

Furthermore, the subjects of this research acknowledged the need of acquiring an effective writing approach by implementing specific steps into their PW that could match their oral abilities.

Promoting specific writing skills is important to the language teaching program at CC and it is also highly significant for the students' lives. Acquiring new writing skills helps students strengthen their communication and thinking skills. By teaching third-grade learners at CC how to develop good writing skills from an early age, the educational community at CC would be able to expand the PW approach to other grades, as well as examine teachers' classroom practices to address specific issues when they are teaching writing to their students. That way, teachers would have some educational training on how writing should be taught across the curriculum.

Motivation plays a crucial in engaging young learners in the PW approach, both inside and outside the classroom. By motivating young learners to use the writing approach consistently, they might learn to use the complete PW cycle for their assignments more effectively. As a result, learners might use adequate writing skills and therefore, they may be able be able to show achievements in which they gain confidence and appreciation of what they do.

By addressing students' weaknesses in writing, this report may be a starting point for the CC staff to identify specific problems that students have with respect to writing. Also, by considering the strategy implemented in this study, the teachers' ideas about the difficulty of writing might reflect a significant change on students that will lead them to be successful in school.

Theoretical Framework

Writing is a complex process where many students experience a lot of challenges. Formulating ideas, organizing information, creating a structure, and creating a composition are skills that are encompassed within the three steps of the process writing approach that students should learn to develop in order to meet higher writing standard levels and overcome their writing difficulties. The researcher did a thorough study of literature that explored why brainstorming, outlining, and writing a first draft would improve the learners' language proficiency level, as part of the PW approach. For this reason, this study considers: (a) young learners' needs, (b) why teaching writing is still less important for teachers, and (c) the importance of language and conceptual structure to reach cohesiveness and coherence, which become constructs that illustrate the importance of focusing on the PW approach.

The researcher acknowledged some theoretical background to support the implementation of the PW approach and how this improves the writing skills of third grade students at CC. It was also an interest of the school to continue developing the students' writing skills in English by adopting the PW approach as a new teaching strategy to teach writing and boost language structure cohesiveness and coherence.

Young Learners and Writing

In order to analyze how to teach young learners to write, it is important to identify who young learners. Nunan (2011) states the term "young learner" covers a large chronological age span: from 3 years of age to 15. Nunan (2011) is more specific and he explains that some writers and researchers differentiate learners according the following

age ranges: 3- to 5-year olds, 6- to 8-year olds, and so on (p. 201). However, Nunan (2011) and other researchers believe that this kind of segmentation is not necessary and is not particularly helpful. In fact, Pinter (2006) claims "that all children are unique and two children at the same chronological age can exhibit different characteristics. Therefore, Pinter prefers to identify "younger" and "older" learners within the "young learner" population. Pinter explains that younger learners are children at pre-school or in the first couple of years of schooling. They have a more holistic approach to language and they understand meaningful messages without analyzing them. Also, they have limited reading and writing skills, they have limited knowledge about the world and they enjoy fantasy, imagination and movement" (p. 2). Nevertheless, imagination should be seen as a way to help students produce a greater variety of creative writing, regardless of their age. Thus, Gaffield-Vile (1998) defined creative writing as "a journey of self-discovery and self-discovery promotes effective learning" (p. 31), suggesting that when teachers use imaginative writing tasks, students can be engaged in them more effectively.

During the study, it was noticed that young children were very creative. Consequently, if teachers allow them to use such creativity in their writing, eliciting their ideas will help them to acquire important writing skills more easily. As a result, young learner´s writing can become more coherent and cohesive. So, coherence attempts to reach an overall structure of a written piece, such as having an introductory paragraph, a development of the story, and a conclusion. On the other hand, cohesion focuses more on specific details in the writing task, such as using linking words or connecting sentences to improve the quality of a text.

On the other hand, Pinter classifies older learners as children who are well established at school and are used to school routines. They use a more analytical approach,

they have well-developed skills as readers and writers, they have a better awareness of the world and they also show an interest in real-life issues. Moreover, Nunan (2011) identifies the following challenges when teaching writing to young learners: cognitive development, motivation, attention, multi-level groups, and assessment. Therefore, the activities for young learners should be suitable for their age level as well as an evidence of widespread interest in all aspects of the PW, especially in the beginning stages of learning how to write.

Young learners face the challenge of learning several language skills at the same time. When children are attending preschool and primary school, they are taught how to write, speak, listen, and read properly in their native language. If a young child is also learning a second language, the challenge is even greater because the child has to learn each skill in two languages at the same time, which makes the process even more difficult. Linse (2005) acknowledges this problem by stating that "when working with young learners, it is important to remember that along with learning how to write in English, they are refining their oral language skills, and depending upon the age, beginning to develop written language skills in their native language. If students don't have writing skills in their native language, they most likely won't have them in their second language. Teachers of young learners should never underestimate the value of native language literacy" (p. 98). Age and cognitive factors explain why learning a second language involves a different process compared to the learning process of a first language and therefore, the way in which a particular skill in a second language is learned should be different as well.

Regardless of the children's age, a teacher should be aware of the importance of teaching them how to develop the necessary skills that are needed to produce a good piece of writing. This task should be done with very young children and it must be developed even stronger as the learner ages. For this reason, children should be introduced to specific

writing approaches as young as possible, because it is the time when they are refining their other skills. A good writing approach will boost their performance, since they are building awareness and willingness to respond appropriately and they are trying to demonstrate writing skills that will help them to become successful writers.

In spite of cognitive differences that are found in young learners from different age groups, some researchers have expressed their concern about the lack of importance that is given to developing 'good writing skills' when learning English as a second language. Homstad and Thorson (1994) argue for theories of a second language to be prioritized in any classroom. "Theories of second language education have evolved from the audio-lingual method to the more communicative approaches that are commonly used today. Writing is commonly viewed as a support skill, used to reinforce the acquisition of grammar. Communicative approaches in general tend to de-emphasize writing" (p. 16). As pointed out by these two researchers, language production is measured by the ability of a student to communicate orally in front of an audience, or the ability to listen to a speaker and understand what the speaker is saying. Writing in this context becomes unimportant or at least less important than speaking or listening.

A Conflict between Language Skills

For many instructors of English as a Second Language, the importance of writing is not as noticeable as productive skills like speaking. Therefore, many teachers believe that students are making more progress if they can speak more fluently without considering if they are doing it correctly, or if they are communicating their thoughts effectively in English. In fact, several modern theories believe that a teacher should place more emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills because that way, students can really

demonstrate their proficiency in a second language. For instance, according to Richards (2006), "acquiring good listening and speaking skills in English is the main concern of many second and foreign language learners, and today's English teacher needs to be well versed in current approaches to teaching aural/oral skills" (p. 22). As it has been stated, little attention or importance has been given to improve a learner's writing.

Craig and Tran (2006), two Australian researchers on education and learning, have addressed the greater importance that is currently given to the communicative approach to language learning. They consider speaking an essential skill that must be developed in order to be more successful in life. In one of their research studies, they highlight the importance of speaking fluently and consider speaking a highly-valued skill in any social context. These two researchers also state (2006) "Talking and speaking fluently and effectively to others is a highly valued skill. Having the ability to speak with fluency will more than likely enhance life opportunities, whereas no fluency and inarticulacy are likely to confer disadvantage" (p. 67). However, writing cannot be neglected in elementary schools. On the contrary, writing needs to be recognized by the school's stakeholders. The school needs to acknowledge the benefits of exposing students to strategies that will help them develop good writing skills. That way, young learners will view writing as an attainable skill that should be nurtured.

Teachers, on the other hand, have adapted their own instructional approach to satisfy the modern student's preference for a more communicative approach, downplaying the importance of writing. Although a communicative approach may seem rational in practical terms, it can greatly affect the language learning process because it allows learners to develop their productive skills more while giving a lot less attention to writing. This may

result in an incomplete level of proficiency in which students are able to communicate orally but they lack good writing skills.

Countless researchers have suggested that teaching productive skills are greatly beneficial for students. However, the importance of the learner´s writing skills should be considered, which play a major role in taking a student to a much higher level of proficiency, in which grammar and accuracy become very important. Tabbert (1984) states in his research report that "grammar is frequently pointed out that students confuse lie and lay, do not choose who and whom correctly, say infer instead of imply, mismatch subjects and verbs, mix up pronoun reference, use double negatives, etc., and that these mistakes are evidence of their need to study grammar" (p. 39). Students should gain control over many conventions of English grammar, usage and mechanics as well as to learn to use language for communication purposes, but they must be taught about the use of this technique, so they can develop the argument in a coherent and cohesive manner.

Language and Conceptual Structures to Reach Coherence and Cohesion

Writing reveals what one knows as well as how the language is being acquired. It is expected then that the student is able to connect ideas within the sentence, known as cohesion. In addition, coherence is another language feature that focuses on the macro-development of the structure of the text. These two particular language structures were necessary for a successful writing process during this study. On the other hand, language structures will nurture young learners' abilities by providing skills and strategies to narrow their ideas. Young children learn how to generate ideas and elaborate on them. They can express their opinion more easily and cope with writing skills that require creativity, in order to reach language proficiency (Sasaki, 1996).

Larsen-Freeman (2003) claims that focusing on the form of the structure is not enough. "Form (How is the structure formed?) is only one of the three dimensions applied to language in communication. The other two are semantic analysis (What does the structure mean?, and the pragmatic one (When/why is the structure used?). Students have to learn not only how to use the forms correctly, but how to use them meaningfully (semantic) and appropriately (pragmatic)" (pp. 34-36). In other words, knowledge regarding language functions and writing skills is needed to improve young learners' writing proficiency. By understanding how a language works, teachers scaffold language development by helping learners to organize their work using a series of steps. As a result, students can expand their knowledge of language functions as well as enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

By relying on language structures young learners develop good vocabulary and identify the meaning of the words. They learn how to avoid the use of unconventional grammar as well as misspelling words as suggested by Carter and McCarthy (2006). Language structures are also very useful to teach students how to present a critical review, do a self-analysis of a story more easily and connect ideas both at the sentence and paragraph level as addressed by Harmer (2001).

Writing allows young learners to develop their thinking and reasoning skills in order to disagree or support a position using specific evidence. Language development requires students to use their writing skills as a means to improve the way they express their ideas and viewpoints in an organized and coherent format. They must develop a logical structure or form that allows them as writers to convey their message to an audience more effectively. As noted by Cameron (2001), writing should then have a meaningful purpose

that describes and explains students' experiences, events, and familiar objects using more effective features.

Furthermore, Harmer (2001) believes that the purpose of writing in language learning is to reinforce and support oral language development. The student needs to work on these language structures to articulate and blend a variety of ideas, in order to convey a message as referred by Hadley (2003) "students need to learn language in logical contexts, either through authentic discourse-length input or through language learning materials that stimulate authentic input using sentences that follow in logical sequence‖" (p. 152). Cohesion is then understood as how the student concentrates on various linguistic ways of connecting ideas across phrases and sentences (Biber G., Conrad, S. and Leech G., 2002). On the other hand, coherence means how the writer follows the sequence of ideas. If the student is able to develop good writing skills, his or her ability to enhance other skills will improve as well. A piece of writing must make ideas flow and there must be a unifying element during a text. Therefore, the organization of information in a logical way should emphasize on a sequence of ideas, a relationship between ideas, and providing organized information to boost coherence in writing.

The Process Writing Approach

In several research studies about writing, there has been an argument about two different approaches: product and process. The product approach stresses the importance of the final product, a coherent text in which the writer's product is clear and meaningful. Teachers that favor this approach focus on activities in which students copy, paraphrase, and reproduce previous written texts. As defined by Steele (2010) "A product approach is a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text, which is

usually presented and analyzed at an early stage" (Product Approach Section, para.4).

Conversely, a process approach is concerned with steps such as: brainstorming, outlining,

drafting and redrafting to reach the final product. White and Arndt (1991) propose that the

process writing approach meets thirteen steps that start with a preliminary idea and tries to

reach a final product. The following steps are included in PW: "1. Discussion, 2.

Brainstorming, 3. Outlining, 4. Rough drafting, 5. Preliminary self-evaluation, 6. Arranging

information, 7. First draft, 8. Group/peer evaluation, 9. Conference, 10. Second Draft, 11.

Self-evaluation (editing; proof reading), 12. Finished draft, and 13. Final responding draft"

(p.5).

The researcher relied on the PW approach in which children could be more aware of

the need to improve their writing skills to reach a higher level of language proficiency.

More importantly, students could perceive writing as an emerging process for learning that

is useful for them to achieve their goals. This study focused on three steps: brainstorming,

outlining, and first draft to mainly improve students in deep writing instruction that requires

them to think more analytically, learning to structure ideas and developing a logical

progression of ideas.

To clarify what the PW approach intended for this study, the researcher considered

it necessary to provide a brief explanation of each step and their components that are

inherent within PW approach, seen as potential steps to reach academic success.

First Step of the PW: Brainstorming

Gathering all the ideas or opinions that students have to effectively address a

specific purpose when writing. When students are told to write a composition, they do not

respond constructively to writing standards and the most common reaction is to start

freewriting. Most students will start writing what comes to their mind about a particular topic, without paying attention to providing creative, useful, or meaningful ideas.

Brainstorming is an informal approach to problem-solving and lateral thinking that contributes to students´ elicitation. This is the first step that students are encouraged to use in the PW approach. It helps to generate ideas or thoughts for problem-solving, and this can be later crafted into creative solutions to the initial problem that supports students' organization of ideas before they start writing. Whitaker (2009) suggests that "when you have a topic, start brainstorming. Write down all the possible answers to your question, and write down all the information, opinions, and questions you have about your topic. Brainstorming will help you see what you already know, what you think, what you think you know, and what else you need to find out about your topic. Writing things down also ensures that you will not forget your great ideas later" (p. 7). Brainstorming uses full experiences and creativity to come up with different and possible ideas. This increases the fruitfulness of explored ideas, which means that students' minds can produce a wider range of solutions.

Another benefit of brainstorming is that it promotes positive responses when learners are running out of ideas. According to a University of North Carolina (2014) handout, College of Arts and Sciences suggests that brainstorming is a great technique to put the writer's brain to work. According to this source, "brainstorming can help you choose a topic, develop an approach to a topic, or deepen your understanding of the topic's potential" (Brainstorm Section, para.1). It is evident that brainstorming can help students keep connected ideas in a way that they are structured and categorized, providing a wider organizational sense.

Brainstorming not only shows that writers are knowledgeable about a particular topic, but that they are capable of expressing their opinions and analysis about the topic in an organized way. It can also help the student when they need to think new ideas. Through brainstorming, students provide free and possible answers by exploring solutions. Even though brainstorming seems to be a challenging and lengthy process, it is very useful helping students to get unstuck by increasing opportunities for learners to produce spontaneous answers on their own. Also, Richards (1990) found that group brainstorming increases student interaction. This becomes a crucial part of developing cognitive skills that engage learners to generate immediate response without judging others' ideas. Results from Richard´s study showed that students who were trained in the use of brainstorming techniques were more efficient at generating and organizing ideas than students in a control group.

Second Step of PW: Creating an Outline

The second step considered for this study is outlining. Outlines will benefit learners to ensure that they have good-quality information to stay focused and organized. When students create an outline for their paper, their whole paper will make sense. They will also avoid having loose ends that disrupt the conceptual flow of a piece of writing and make communication less likely to be successful. The Online Writing Center at Walden University (2014) highlights the fact that "a strong outline details each topic and subtopic in the student's paper, organizing these points so that they build the student's argument toward its conclusion. Writing from an outline can help the student avoid tangents, logical fallacies, and underdeveloped paragraphs." (Outlining Section, para. 1). Additionally, "an outline is a helpful guide in organizing your paper. Outlines give a visual structure to

your work and are used to show relationships and hierarchies within your content. Outlines usually organize the following components of your written work: (a) Introduction; (b) Thesis; (c) Body (major points and minor points); and (d) Conclusion" (How do I outline? Section, para.1).

When students create an outline, they are subdividing their paper into topics and subtopics. The whole idea of outlining is to put the writer´s ideas together in a way that seems logical, coherent, and organized. An outline then provides structure, so the composition has a coherent introduction, body and conclusion. Therefore, the reader will find a paper without a proper outline too vague. The ideas are going to be in the paper, but they will not be connected very well. There will be lots of loose ends that refer to any of the topics or subtopics in the writing, but they will not be in the right place within the writing. Indeed, outlining leads the writer to have structured ideas to support the content of the composition that ensures that readers get a clear idea of what the writer conveys as stressed by Lynn (2010) "Outlining might not be very useful if writers are required to produce a rigid plan before actually writing. But when an outline is viewed as a kind of draft, subject to change, evolving as the actual writing takes place, and then it can be a powerful tool for writing" (p. 53). Lynn´s remark applies to any writer, including children who are in the process of learning how to write properly.

Lene (2009), an expert and researcher on outlining strategy, highlights the importance of outlining before writing: "Generating an outline before working is not just a good idea, it is essential. Most of the thinking that goes into an essay should be done by the time the outline is written, so that when you actually sit down to write your essay from the outline, your writing is not a matter of formulating ideas in your mind but merely a matter of presenting those ideas in a coherent and persuasive manner" (The Importance of

Outlining Section, para.1). Students have the opportunity to present in an organized and chronological way their thoughts and ideas before start to write.

Lene (2009) and Lynn (2010) highlight the importance of outlining as a tool to create a good piece of writing applies to young students, including young children. Regardless of their young age, young children can learn how to follow a set of guidelines given by the instructor and they can learn how to make an outline that will clearly help them to write an organized paper about a specific topic.

Third Step of the PW: Writing a First Draft

Writing a first draft is considered the third step to teach students to plan, connect and prepare to write. After preparing ideas and writing an outline, the learner is ready to start writing the first draft. The idea of the first daft is to write as many ideas as the learners have on paper. However, it is essential for the student to understand the specific type of writing (descriptive, narrative, informative, or persuasive) that they are going to produce in order to concentrate their efforts on the task. After the student has been given information on the type of writing that is required, he or she can start the process of writing a first draft. It is a lengthy process in which the student has to write, then check, make corrections, and then re-write. White and Arndt (1991) are keen to stress that "writing is re-writing; that revision –seeing with new eyes—has a central role to play in the act of creating text" (p. 5).

Anthony (2014) suggests a couple of strategies to write a first draft. The first strategy can include modeling sentence form after a specific author or story. This is called imitation. A second strategy, sentence generation, asks writers to try their sentence out orally before writing it on paper. This can ease frustrations and limit the need for erasures if

the sentence doesn't make sense. Part of sentence generation is the ability to try out varied sentence structures so that each sentence doesn't sound too similar. Although, some of this Anthony's remarks are not necessarily in favor of this study, it is taken granted that the second strategy of asking learners could be adopted that helps students demonstrate proficiency of their second language in diverse contexts.

In any case, writing a first draft depends on the type of writing that the learner is being asked to write. Hence, this step provides students with techniques show not evidence what they have learned. As assured by Steele (2010) "Don't stop to check your spelling or your mechanics. There will be another stage in PW where you can concentrate on that." (The Process Writing Section, para.4). In brief, writing the first draft enriches peoples´ communicative abilities, as underlined by Kondrat (2009): "writing a first draft improves the effectiveness of the person's word use in both written and oral speech" (p. 20) Therefore, the young learner's cognitive improvement is much more evident.

After studying the theoretical background that scaffolds the PW approach and the positive influence of the steps that facilitate the development of writing skills, it has been shown that the PW approach steps afford young learners with useful methods to improve their writing skills. The following section underlines the type of research study used throughout this research process.

State of the Art

There have been many studies on the effectiveness of the process writing approach and its effect on a student's writing skills. The following are some findings obtained by other researchers who studied this particular writing approach and observed whether this writing strategy benefited the students who participated in the study:

Daniel Melgarejo (2009) conducted a research study to assess children's perceptions of writing in English using a process writing approach. The researcher wanted to observe how students made progress with their writing skills through workshops that were based on specific steps given by the process writing approach. He also wanted to record the perceptions that students had with regards to a new writing approach. The assignments that were given to students included portfolios, journals, blogs, and conferences. At the end of the research, students showed they had changed their negative perceptions of writing in English. According to the researcher, "students were also motivated by writing tasks and became more self-aware of their writing practices" (p. 70).

Another study done on the writing learning process from pre-school to university in Colombia revealed some hurdles faced by students regarding learning how to write in EFL from the years they were in elementary to the time they reached college (Viáfara, 2008). The researcher found that during the years in elementary, students were taught to translate from Spanish to English in order to create a low-quality writing piece in English. Writing became a tedious and complex process that was based on translation. Later in life, when students reached secondary school, the most common feature among students was a feeling of fear and lack of confidence when they were asked to do a writing task. According to Viáfara (2008), writing became a complex process in which fears, doubts, and boredom were present in most students.

In their journal about the effectiveness of the process writing approach, Chumling and Guoping (2009), two Chinese teacher-researchers, focused on analyzing two classroom teaching models using the process approach, namely teaching models with minimal control and maximal control to different English level students. Their experimental study shows

that the subjects were all making significant progress in their writing skills. Based on their results, these researchers concluded that the process approach to teaching writing is appropriate in different teaching models and an ideal and effective teaching technique with very good results in the development of writing skills of EFL learners.

Mckensie and Tomkins (1984) published a journal article on the process approach and the importance of its use when evaluating students' writing. These researchers highlight the importance of the process approach in the teaching of writing. According to them, teachers can use this writing technique in order to help children learn to write by developing and refining a piece of writing. The purpose of their article is to show how the integrated approach works at each stage of the writing process. They also present a checklist for teachers to assess whether or not students use specific behaviors of the writing process in their compositions.

In his journal called "The Process Writing Method", Daniel Jarvis (2002) explains why the process writing approach works well for students who need to improve their writing skills. For this researcher, ESL students of the same age and grade level will have varying abilities in writing. He believes that the Process Writing method is very important to develop good writing skills in all students because this method values the talents and growth of individual writers and makes them want to continue writing because they feel good about their abilities.

Goldstein and Carr (1996) did a research study to evaluate how process-oriented activities had a positive effect on a group of students in terms of their writing performance. For this study, these researchers took a national sample of approximately 7,000 fourth-

grade students, 11,000 eighth grade students, and 11,500 students from 1,500 public schools in the United States. The results obtained by these researchers indicated that (1) students of teachers who always encouraged particular elements of process writing were generally better writers than students of teachers who reportedly never encouraged these activities. (2) The average writing ability was also higher among students whose teachers emphasized more than one process writing strategy. Findings also suggest that the use of pre-writing activities is associated with the highest average proficiency scores.

In his research study, Krashen (1984) states that 'many good writers employ a recursive, non-linear approach – the writing of a draft may be interrupted by more planning, and revision may lead to reformulation, with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages'. Therefore, the writing process as a private activity may be broadly seen as comprising four main stages: planning, drafting, revising and editing. These stages are neither sequential nor orderly (Seow, 2002).

Research Design

This section defines the type of research that was carried out, the research methodology, the researcher's role, the participants, the instruments to collect data, and their validations process.

Type of study

The researcher´s purpose in this study was to implement the PW approach with third-grade students to address their writing difficulties. Hence, a qualitative action research ensured the feasibility and effectiveness of the quality of the data that was gathered and

analyzed. This study followed a qualitative research method, since it considered the three series of logical procedures that allow the research study to be holistic, as stated by Nunan (1991) *"Action research is considered a systematic process of inquiry, consisting of three elements or components: (1) a question, problem or hypothesis; (2) data; and (3) analysis and interpretation"* (p. 3). Likewise, Maxwell (1992) defines action research as a systematic process. These cycles gave the researcher a better understanding on how to do research on finding ways to improve teaching practices by looking at the evidence around her context, in order to give an answer or solution that effectively addressed the writing issues that were evident in third grade students. The study started by identifying the students' lack of writing knowledge and how the researcher could assist them to accomplish a task, homework, or a writing activity in class.

The fundamental principles of action research allowed the researcher to develop a reflective practice that was important to validate an analytic process and critical reflection, in order to improve and generate a change in the EFL classroom that benefited the students' PW. Implementing action research also allowed students to have a positive experience. Moreover, the researcher's willingness to change the teaching context and give more importance to the learning-teaching experiences of her learners was considered an innovative approach during the intervention with third grade students.

As Kauchak, and Eggen, (1989) state that they began implementing action research projects because they wanted to impact their school community and that they did not feel satisfy with what they were doing. They needed a problem-solving way of thinking about her teaching and its impact on her learners' learning". They highlight the need to have a reliable way to measure the efficacy of learning strategies that teachers are using in the

classroom with their learners. An action research project gives teachers the possibility to analyze learners' results in their learning process and look for ways to improve those results. In this sense, it was important to observe the teaching sequence and the learning experience students were facing.

Researcher´s role

The action research method states that the teacher's role is to be actively involved in finding and evaluating results. In addition, the level of commitment to particular philosophical and personal assumptions determines what the researcher should do or how research reports should be evaluated. The researcher of this study observed the phenomena that occurred within the classroom. Moreover, she advocated qualitative action research as a method that consisted of a series of observations and interventions that helped her reflect on teaching-learning strategies that were developed in the EFL classroom. Furthermore, the researcher realized how the classroom setting became an opportunity to improve, commit, and provide feasible answers to concerning learning-teaching situations that were present in this educational context. Practical activities were influenced by reflective teaching, in order to enhance her teaching strategies to promote change in the way learners were being taught in the classroom. According to Schmuck (1997), action research is an endeavor to "study a real school situation in order to improve the quality of actions and results" (p. 29). Action research was an orientation to raise the teacher's awareness towards change. She played the role of a participant-observer of activities that enabled the researcher to have reasonable expectations of privacy and confidentiality. In other words, it was important to identify how a classroom setting becomes a social place that generates situations where learning

situations can be improved by being critical, by observing, and by being reflective in order to offer a better education to students.

Context

The study was carried out at CC which is a co-ed, private school with an emphasis on Catholicism and its curriculum towards the Regnum Christi Philosophy[1] that basis its teaching vision on developing an integral student whose characteristic should emphasize spiritual, religious, ethical, social, and intellectual dimensions. Legionaries of Christ and Consecrated Women are also part of this context (Formation, 2007) that supports students' education. The school was founded in Chia- Colombia in 2001. Its philosophy is: *"Education to face the world. Formation to change it".* The school follows a personalized education in order to potentialize the learners' skills. The school is divided into female and male groups. 'A' classrooms are for females and 'B' classrooms are for males. This type of differentiated education is implemented at this school to understand that boys and girls have different learning styles and strategies as well as different interests.

CC highlights in the curriculum- Practicum (Formation, 2007) that students from our school should reach the global scale that is framed in the Common European Framework as independent user B2. Therefore, the school has to prepare students to meet the standards described in the curriculum, such as reaching the exit profile for the next level, conveying, and organizing meaningful information. Then, the implementation of a qualitative action research project allowed the English area at CC to come up with a plan that would hopefully improve the students' PW, by teaching them how to rely on some learning strategies in order to look for ways to overcome their writing difficulties.

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[1] Regnum Christi Philosophy oriented to Christianity and differentiated education.

Participants

This research study was conducted with a third-grade, B group. There were thirteen boys between the ages of nine and ten years old. They come from a privileged social status where learning is their main interest and focus. In this educational context, the acquisition of a foreign language is concerned about facing today's social and economic requirements in a globalized world. Thus, the school offers 13 hours per week and students are expected to have a medium-to-high English proficiency level (B), according to the Practicum entrance and exit profile for third grade (Formation, 2007).

The study was carried out with boys that were part of the group that was assigned to the teacher by the school. These students were experiencing writing difficulties, such as not complying with the writing tasks, students not being able to support their arguments, and students giving answers that were confusing or illegible in writing. In other words, students did not follow any writing procedure that could show some organization or coherence. Consequently, students did not have the writing abilities to fulfill the tasks. In general terms, male students from third grade did not show much ability or strategies to show evidence of writing development.

Data Collection Instruments

To provide a valid, reliable, and transparent process in this study, the researcher relied on specific instruments, such as the diagnostic assessment, writing activities, the post-test, and an opinion forum, to use them to measure the impact of the PW with third-grade, B students. A set of graphic organizers was also used to introduce the PW that favored the learners' acquisition of important writing skills. In brief, an opinion forum was

designed as a self-evaluation process in order to identify the learners' opinions and feelings about the process and activities that were guided by the researcher and to see if this process worked in favor of the students' needs.

The last step was a post-test that was administered to learners to evaluate the effectives of the PW approach as a teaching practice. As Bachman (1991) underlines, "We cannot expect that an assessment will determine teaching success. An assessment should support good teaching and it should serve as a corrective influence for bad teaching" (p. 681). Carrying out the post-test helped us assess the students' writing performance and how it was evolving during the PW.

Diagnostic Language Assessment

A language diagnostic assessment was administered to identify third-grade students' writing skills. In other words, the pre-test's aim was to establish the writing proficiency level that students had before implementing the PW approach and the methodology that students used prior to being introduced to this new approach. The diagnostic assessment followed the guidelines of a Criterion-Reference test, which targets descriptive teaching objectives and addresses decisions with respect to an instructional goal (Bailey, 1984). Therefore, the students' performance was interpreted in terms of course objectives in which scores are not compared with each other. It also included subtests with tasks for learners, learners' response section, and scoring criteria for each section. This procedure favored the assessment of a learner's performance in the fairest way possible (Wesche, 1983) (Appendix B). However, the needs analysis of the diagnostic assessment only focused on the writing section.

Graphic Organizers

A set of graphic organizers was used as an enhancing tool to improve the students'
writing skills. It also helped learners to know how to start their PW by analyzing, inferring,
interpreting, and reasoning in order to make writing easier for students and to create a
written route, an organization, and a specific planning (Appendix C). It was a favorable
technique that helped learners to address specific writing difficulties. It also complied with
the school's requirements of relying on graphic organizers to boost students' critical
thinking skills.

Graphic organizers are instructional methods that create a learning environment and
specify the nature of the activity in which the learner is involved (Boyle, J. R., and
Weishaar, M. , 1997). The two graphic organizers that supported the implementation of the
PW were brainstorming and outlining. As a result, graphic organizers helped learners to
elicit ideas, organize their thoughts, categorize, and plan before they start writing. All their
background knowledge regarding the task was recorded in the graphic organizers.

Language Post-Test

The aim of the language post-test was to know the learners' progress in their writing
skills after the 10 scheduled interventions. The post-test (Appendix D) followed the same
evaluation criteria and procedures as the diagnostic assessment.

Scoring criteria

The primary scoring criteria of the diagnostic assessment and post-test followed the methodology of Analytic scoring that looks to evaluate the particular purpose of a writing piece. This is a holistic method in which the rating has to create a variety of categories to assess the students' performance on a variety of components in order to avoid a grading bias. Bailey (1984) suggested that learners need to have a group of components in which they identify the assessment criteria in order to comply with the task that was assigned to them.

The next table (Table 1) is the scoring criteria designed to rate the students' writing for the diagnostic assessment and the post-test (this is worth 25 points of the entire exam):

Individual Components	Description	Rate
1. Content	• Title • Main idea • Detail • Conclusion	0-5 points
2. Organization	• Beginning, middle and end clearly stated. • Order of the story • Sequence of events	0-5 points
3. Grammar/ Vocabulary	• Subject verb agreement • Use of adjective, verbs, nouns	0-5 points
4. Grammar/ Sentence Construction	• Complete sentences • Word choice appropriate	0-5 points
5. Mechanics	• Handwriting • Capitalization • Punctuation • Spelling	0-5 points
	Total	25 Points

Table 1. Scoring Criteria (Self-Creation)

Students' Self- Assessment of the PW: Opinion Forum

The stimulated recall that was used in this study is known as an 'asynchronous tool'. In this research study, this tool was called an 'opinion forum'. This opinion forum was used to find out the learners' insight regarding progress, improvement, and acquisition of skills, during and after the implementation of the PW. This was considered a self-assessment related to the process that was carried out to actively engage students to reflect, take ownership, and share views about the process that was implemented in their EFL classroom. Bailey (1984) suggested that teachers must have an encounter with students to evaluate any teaching process that they are part of.

Data Collection

Data collection instruments were applied in three stages during the research process: pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation. There were 10 scheduled interventions. Each pedagogical intervention lasted 45 minutes. The following table shows the stages of implementation of these data collection instruments:

Stages	Instrument-Description	Objective	Chronology	Lesson Plans
Pre-Implementation	Diagnostic: The diagnostic assessment was administered to 13 participants. Learners were familiar with the test format.	To identify students´ writing weaknesses and strengths	September 2013	1 Lesson Plan
Implementation	Step 1: Brainstorm-Graphic organizers: A new graphic organizer was introduced to support the brainstorming stage in every intervention. Step 2: Outlining-Graphic Organizers: Learners were introduced to the term 'outline' to help them organize concepts. Step 3: Writing a First Draft: This articulated method included the information from the previous two steps.	To implement didactic tools to endorse the PW approach to improve students writing skills.	October, November, December 2013 And January 2014	7 Lesson plan
Post-Implementation	Post-test: The post-test was administered to evaluate students´ PW. Opinion Forum-Self-Assessment: Students delivered their opinions and did a self-evaluation of their own PW.	To assess and interpret students´ PW.	February	1 Lesson plan

Table 2: Implementation Process (Self-creation)

After collecting the data, an analytic reading was carried out to help the researcher to identify the findings that were gathered from the diagnostic assessment and writing activities, which included graphic organizers, the post-test, and interpretation of the opinion forum. The researcher relied on a common theory called grounded theory (Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., 1990). Colors and figures were used to identify the difficulties that learners had while they were writing. This technique helped the researcher to group the labeled information and find similarities among them. Then, the labeled information was categorized based on patterns and commonalities among them. Finally, the findings helped the researcher draw conclusions and interpretations of what emerged during the labeling and categorization process (Appendix E).

Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

In the following section, there is a brief explanation of the school's teaching methodology, its pedagogical and didactic components, and the widely extended PW approach that the researcher used as an instructional strategy. In addition, it explains the teaching strategies taken into consideration to comply with the school´s instructional sequence for lesson design, teaching resources, and materials.

Colegio Cumbres Language Teaching Methodology

For the purpose of this project, it was considered to follow the school's approach to teaching that emphasizes on developing the students' second language skills. This approach is found in the Practicum (Formation, 2007). The teaching methodology based its principles on direct instructional procedures that use continuous guidance to support the learners' development of new skills that could improve their language acquisition process.

The school's lesson plan framework consists of the following features: 1) learning how to learn; 2) strategic learning; and 3) critical thinking. The lesson plan's framework aims to achieve the performance goals and performance indicators for third-grade students that are outlined in the Practicum (Formation, 2007). These three elements were taken into account while designing the lesson plans for this research.

Learning how to learn refers to the opportunities that the learner has to reflect on the learning process. The view that is presented in the Sunrise Program (third-grade guide book) emphasizes the importance of seeing learners as capable of monitoring and controlling their learning process and their willingness to tackle their problems. Thus, this

factor played an important role during the interventions in the classroom because it helped

learners to succeed and allowed them to self-assess their writing performance.

On the other hand, strategic learning focuses on how learners build their own

meanings and have access to essential skills to become more aware of their learning

journey. Metacognition refers to how we think. It is something taught to learners that

enhance the metacognition process, such as pre-writing skills, word analysis, and methods

to monitor their writing performance. Hence, the association between teaching, thinking,

and learning is critical to encourage learners to become aware of how they think

(Formation, 2007). Including this strategy in the lesson design and planning guaranteed an

improvement in the students' writing skills.

Additionally, the critical thinking component was considered a process that actively

and skillfully conceptualized, applied, analyzed, synthesized, and evaluated information

gathered by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication of learners

throughout their PW. Graphic organizers were used to foster learners' activation of prior

knowledge, assimilation, and connection of information that helped learners to provide

essential information that improved the development of their PW. The cross-relationship

connection shaped the direction of the lesson. It looked to promote strategies that would

help third-grade students improve the PW.

The next table shows the relationship between each component that promoted

coherence across the instructional framework (Table 3). The table also displays the

materials used; the activities, the objectives, and procedure in order to have powerful

instructional sequence in the lesson plans. This was a cross-curriculum plan that was

tailored to meet the students' needs.

Phases / Material	Component	Objective	Procedure/ Target Comprehension
Pre-Implementation Stage Diagnostic Assessment	Learning How to Learn Component	To identify third grade students' PW. To determine and establish the writing strategies.	Needs Analysis • Acquisition • Identification of writing stages. • Identifying learning skills.
Implementation of the PW Graphic Organizers	Strategic Learning Component	To elicit learners´ ideas.	Brainstorming • Analyze • Retrieve information and ideas.
	Critical Thinking Component	To help learners organize ideas and find the relationship between them to have an original and creative writing.	Outlining • Select • Organize
	All components		First Draft • Revise and edit their own writing.
Progress Assessment Post-test	All Components	To evidence the techniques defined as the PW.	Writing Assessment • Learners´ comprehension of writing skills.
Opinion Forum Computer Data Base	All Components	To evaluate the PW carried out with the third grade students	Self-Evaluation of the writing progress. • Learner´s perceptions. • Learner´s acknowledgement.

Table 3: Components, Activities and Materials.

PW Phases

The lesson plans followed an instructional sequence that is outlined in the school's teaching methodology. This methodology orders content in five stages: motivation, anchoring, scaffolding, consolidation, and evaluation. The objective is to enhance the students' learning abilities. The researcher considered those phases vital not only to contribute to the school's teaching and instructional goals, but also to incorporate explicit explanation and feedback in order to achieve positive outcomes while improving the writing skills of B1-third graders through the PW approach. The research project was developed in three phases as follows:

Phase one: The diagnostic assessment was administered to students to measure their writing proficiency level (see Appendix B). Learners were given three prompts and asked to choose one of them. Session 1: Use one of the three prompts to write a short story and create a new tittle. "Alexander, who used to be rich last Sunday", "If you made a million" or "Boom Town". Students were taught an effective instruction that ensured improvement and success in their writing skills.

Phase two: researcher taught strategies and concepts related to the PW approach. Students were introduced to the concept of brainstorming to elicit their responses and scaffold their prior knowledge to increase their learning awareness. The second step explained was the outline in which students were taught how to organize their ideas to facilitate the writing of their first draft. Finally, students were introduced to the concept of writing a first draft to teach them how to have a text structure in their writing that follow some writing features such as having a topic sentence, details, and a conclusive paragraph. A practice was delivered and modeled for students, so they could understand the process

and rely on concept diagrams and graphic organizers. A series of activities were guided and done by students on their own.

Phase three: Administration of a language post-test to assess the learners' PW approach and comprehension skills. Learners were given three prompts: "Animals in danger", "The place I like the most for travelling" or "My best vacations". The schools' teaching principles ask teachers to encourage self-evaluation. The teacher-researcher designed a forum to promote such skill and to target students' self-awareness.

Results and Data Analysis

This section presents the procedure that was followed to analyze the data that was collected from the diagnostic assessment, the students' artifacts, the post-test, and the forum. It also presents the results obtained during the pre-implementation stage, the emerging categories, and the evidence gathered after the triangulation.

Phase One: Pre-Implementation Stage- Administration of Diagnostic Assessment

Results of the diagnostic assessment involved two features that were identified frequently throughout the pre-implementation stage: lack of appropriate linguistic knowledge and lack of a well-structured use of the language. The two main features that the diagnostic assessment identified were:

1. Cognition Feature
2. Language Feature

Coding and grouping process of the findings that are explained below (see Appendix E).

Cognition Feature

Students had to analyze, connect, and interpret a series of written prompts before doing a writing task. Unfortunately, they did not get good results in the diagnostic assessment. Students were not able to meet the school's writing requirements when they were asked to do the task. They did not have the cognitive elements to support, expand, or show evidence of knowledge of a specific prompt. Nunan (2011) has suggested that writing skills come from the need to boost the cognitive skills of a learner. These skills involve things like classifying, predicting, concept mapping, and diagramming, among others. Learning those cognitive skills will help students to successfully reach learning and strategy awareness. When analyzing the findings that emerged from the students' diagnostic assessment, there were some drawbacks related to the cognition feature, such as struggling with the writing task, difficulty giving a critical review of the story, not developing and elaborating a relevant idea, trouble engaging the readers, difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills, and showing poor coherent narrative sequencing of the story. For instance, Hadley (2003) addresses the importance of developing a logical sequence of ideas that could allow students to deliver an idea successfully in order to fulfill the writing purpose.

The following feature was found in the analysis of the diagnostic assessment that was administered on September 27th, 2013. The writing genre was a narrative writing that prompted learners to retell a story in which they were asked to include a beginning, middle

and end. Some excerpts gathered from the students' diagnostic assessment that exemplifies specific cognitive features can be found below:

a. Cognitive feature classified as 'difficulty presenting a critical review and self-analysis of the story, trouble engaging the reader, difficulty with sentence structure and word order, and difficulty elaborating on ideas:

> **Title: If you made a million**
> *Some childs do some activities to save money and become one million of dollars. They do for example …………..money that the back make lakes, cutting the grass, planting trees etc. (Student C)*

b. Cognitive feature classified as 'difficulty developing a relevant idea and poor coherent narrative sequencing':

> **Title: If you made a million**
> *A boy and a girl do woks be made a million the character that I like is the mage because he is to …… (Student J)*

c. Cognitive feature classified as 'difficulty starting a writing task, difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills, and trouble engaging the reading':

> **Title: The boy, who used to be rich last Sunday.**
> *Bake the cake and you receive one quarter, is like towo dimes, or twenty pennies. (Student F)*

When looking at what learners wrote in the phrases above, it is evident that learners struggled to accomplish the task. Their short compositions contained irrelevant and incoherent information that makes the sentence difficult to understand (Appendix F).

Title: "Alexander, Who used to be rich last Sunday"
"Alexander, who used to be rich last Sunday" is about a boy that don´t solve the money and she used for oders, things, por example he used the money to 5 cents and like this. (Student B).

Title: The boy who used to be rich last Sunday
Bake the cake and you recibe and quarter, is like two dimes, or twenty pennies (Student E).

The extracts above illustrate the students' written compositions in the diagnostic assessment and how they struggled to engage in the writing activity and understand the task. In addition, students did not discriminate information to understand the written task more easily. In other words, students' logical reasoning was not taught to have the necessary cognitive elements to prepare them to write naturally. They did not have the elements to solve a problem, which led them to show poor development of the content, lack of coherence, and poor methods of organization before writing.

Language Feature

Language development advocates the conscious use of word and sentence structure to have a coherent and cohesive written text. Tomlinson (2010) stresses that if we want our learners to acquire more language and develop their ability to use it effectively in a variety of contexts, modes, and genres; we need to offer a set of skills that can foster more opportunities to learn. Larsen-Freeman (2003) also encourages teachers to focus on language structure, so that learners can acquire new vocabulary that will help them become more fluent. All in all, through the implementation of the PW, students could definitely develop language abilities and linguistic knowledge that will certainly improve their writing skills.

Some language features emerged during the analysis of the diagnostic assessment that gave the researcher a better idea of the linguistic skills of each learner. Students frequently used unconventional features that showed limited vocabulary. Therefore, they repeated the same words a lot, which affected their creativity. The results of the pre-test were poor. There were some inaccuracies, such as: poor vocabulary and they had difficulty with sentence structure and word order, and lack of transitions. There was also use of unconventional grammar and missing active verbs. Students misspelled words and they also had trouble identifying the meaning of words. Students did not have clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body and conclusion. Thus, learners had to be reinforced on language development that follows some linguistic rules, as advocated by Harmer (2001).

The following information was taken from the diagnostic assessment that was administered to learners from third grade on September 27th, 2013 (Appendix F):

1. Language feature classified as 'difficulty with sentence structure and word order, misspelled words, and lack of transitions':

   Title: Alexander, Who used to be rich last Sunday

   My name is Alexander. I wan´t to be Rich. I said my brothers have dollars and a lot of coins. One day we go to new jersy . My mom give to me and to my brothers one dollar…… (Fragment Student A)

   2. Language feature classified as 'use of unconventional grammar and misspelled words':

   Tittle: Boom Town

   In a town in California in a town one girl tell to her mom to do a backer place to also do a londry a school also a bamber, a chapol, hospital (Student N).

3. Language feature classified as 'difficulty presenting clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion, and difficulty presenting a clear statement':

> ***Tittle: Boom Town***
>
> *She made business. She like to make pies, and her broder brother she afot, The brothers make she lost a very very delicious pay and as they make him that sh don´t do any thing (Student G).*

After gathering the findings that emerged when analyzing the diagnostic assessment the researcher observed how third-grade had a low writing proficiency level. They did not have the elements to support, expand, or demonstrate their knowledge of a specific topic when they were asked to write. Therefore, the researcher moved to phase two, implementation of the PW approach to tackle the students' problems.

Phase 2: Implementation of the Process Writing

To analyze the data gathered, the following principles of Grounded Theory were considered: gathering information, labeling, grouping, categorizing, and making suggestions (Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., 1990). Gathered information was done during the implementation stage in 10 interventions. The labeling or coding process helped the researcher to group similar findings when analyzing each instrument. Finally, the labeling and coding process described the emerging categories that were brought together, based on the findings and commonalities that were found among each coding (Glaser, 1992).

Students were introduced to the PW-oriented approach (White, R., and Arnold, V., 1991). This approach involved a series of steps that learners follow to accomplish a good piece of writing. White and Arndt (1991) and Nunan (2011) view writing as a complex cognitive process that requires consistent intellectual effort, training, and a lot of practical exercises. Therefore, the PW was seen as a logical series of processes that should be learned to create a writing project. It follows thirteen steps that include all the information that is needed to convey a meaningful message from a written text. Even though all thirteen steps are meaningful to achieve better results, this research only studied and developed three steps: brainstorming, outlining, and first draft. This selection took into consideration the students' cognitive development and attention span.

In order to analyze the emerged categories of this research, the researcher decided to make the following research question: To what extent does PW help to develop third-grade students' writing skills? This research question established the general aim to identify how the process writing approach promotes third grader´s writing skills.

 By stressing the research question and the aim of the research as the basis of this research study, the analysis of students' artifacts, the post-test, and the opinion forum in the implementation stage allowed the researcher to identify the following categories:

Planning before Writing Category

Planning is an effective learning strategy that learners rely on to go from complex to more manageable written situations. Therefore, there are some factors that positively affect the learning strategy that this group of students used in order to boost their writing skills.

Graphic organizers assisted the planning process because it prompted the students' response. A creative process was developed, which enhanced autonomy in learners. Students should start building and demonstrating independently how they start to internalize their own skills. Students have to use effective learning strategies to improve their learning skills. Therefore, planning became the immediate learning strategy that guarded prospective thinking and anticipated future actions. Such learning strategy must emphasize on enhancing actions or activities that make learning more effective, more self-directed, and a more engaging learning process (Oxford, 1990). The picture below represents how Learner A is offered opportunities to use his knowledge and experience by planning before starting a strategy on his own and by completing the brainstorm graphic organizer.

In another example, Learner D evidenced an easier way to plan before writing by mapping out ideas. He did not repeat ideas and narrowed down the information to help define useful information. Brainstorming became a useful tool that helped learners to plan and focus on ideas and to evaluate how learners were able to select information from an eliciting process. According to Whitaker (2009), brainstorming illustrates possible and comparable answers about a topic. Students selected suitable information regarding the prompt and the way to add specific information from a large amount of information, taking into account the students' readiness to learn (Cook, 2001).
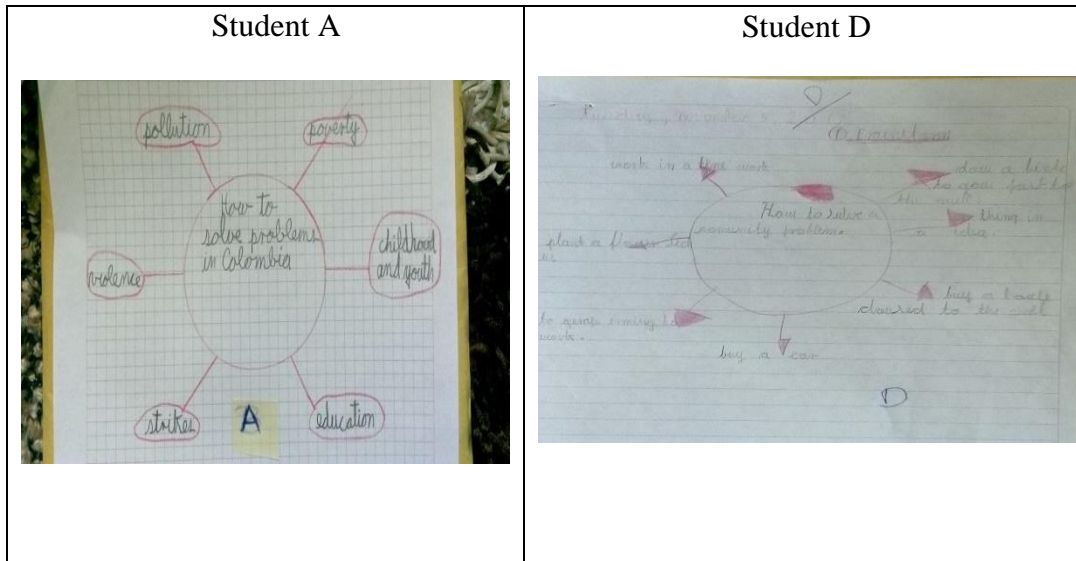
Student A	Student D

Figure 1. Caption in "Planning"

Below, there are some excerpts gathered from the students' artifacts – the

brainstorming process exemplifies how student A planned before doing the actual writing:

Question	How to solve problems in Colombia?	
Planning – Possible ideas	Pollution Poverty Violence	Strikes Education Childhood and youth

Learners were invited to develop the learning strategy that involved some training

that learners employed to holistically develop a set of steps to conquer such strategy. This

encompasses planning, monitoring and evaluation process as Little (1991) has suggested.

All these steps were well articulated and linked in each one of the activities contributing to

enrich students´ writing skills and autonomy process to become successful learners in their

process writing.

Additionally, the results concerning the outline tool are presented in the box below

for student H:

Question	How to solve problems in the classroom?	
Planning – Possible ideas	Problems	Solutions
	No speak English Playing the in the classroom We don´t respect other´s …… No following the instructions	Think Commitment Apologize Relax Pray Plant solutions ………

This excerpt typifies how planning contributes and influences students'
performance. Such findings evidenced the quality of planning and the relationship between
students' performance and students' understanding.

In addition, students used a planning process as a strategy to recognize and establish
their writing performance and potentials. Outlining also had effective responses from
learners that oriented the planning in the right direction before starting the writing strategy.
Students also displayed their ideas to set a time limit that allowed them to structure the
topic and eliminate the repetition of ideas.

All in all, planning before writing is a category that emerged from the analysis of
the data. It prompted young learners to eventually explore planning as a learning strategy
that allowed them to organize their information and their time, and anticipate situations by
using this strategy. As it has been explained, there are numerous contributions of planning
before writing that help the learners to overcome some challenges that they were facing at
the beginning of the project.

Motivation, a Path to Help Learners Collect Ideas and Stay Focused

Usually, learners with writing difficulties are not motivated because they feel
frustrated or they do not feel engage. They frequently fail at writing tasks and lack the

necessary confidence to make a good piece of writing. According to Craig and Tran (2006), students should be motivated by the opportunities that are provided to them to use the language. They should also be motivated when evidence of progress is shown to them. Students also feel encouraged when they notice they can personalize the learning process. In addition, there are other challenges related to cognitive development, especially when teaching young learners (Nunan, 2011). Students go through major developmental changes that should be taken into consideration when a teacher designs learning activities and creates activities for learners. At the beginning of the study, participants felt discouraged when they were asked to complete an activity that required knowledge about the process writing approach because students felt that they were not ready for that kind of assignment. They felt they did not have the language and conceptual elements to complete their tasks. This was a critical factor in helping students establish a focus and collect ideas before they started their writing assignment and improve the quality of their work.

After a revision of students' artifacts during the implementation stage of the process writing approach, the outlining method showed the learners' improvement using this new writing approach. Lene (2009) has stated that creating an outline is vital. It helps learners organize their thoughts to create connections between ideas. For this study, students had to be motivated to use a tool that could help them become better writers and also give them a greater understanding of the assignment. The outlines from Learners G and K show how those learners identified the most important points for their writing task and how easily it was for them to write. They also presented a relationship between ideas by organizing them in a sequence. Graphic organizers helped as well by allowing learners to identify important aspects of the story, such as a plot, characters, and settings. DiCecco and Gleason (2002)

state that outlines improve the learners' literacy level. Learners focused on articulating the topic and organizing it properly. It was evident that learners were motivated to complete the activity that was required by the instructor. The design tasks scaffold students' writing process by including it as part of the children's own learning process.
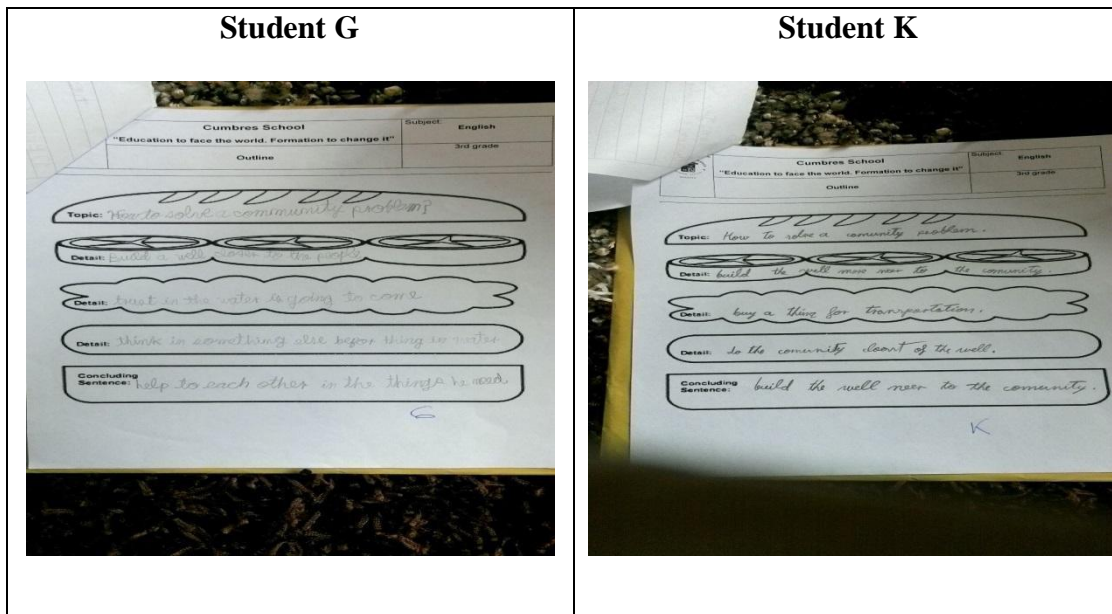
Student G	Student K

Figure 2. Caption in "Step 2 of PW: Outlining"

Many students in class had a history of failure, lack of confidence, and fear towards the language. It was necessary to create a feeling of self-accomplishment in these young learners and also a need for them to support and help each other. These children participated in an opinion forum done in February, 2014. It was a post-activity in which they were asked how they felt during the implementation of the process writing. The following are some of third graders' opinions, beliefs, and interests:

> *My writing skill has improved a lot thanks to my homework and the effort I put in. Because the more I write in English, the better I get. Thank you (Student A)*

> *My writing skill has improved because I practice ever day at school and home. It is important when you talk to an American and the American understands what you write. It is important to travel around the world. (Student C)*

I improved in my writing skills because I learned in class so many rules about how to write, also I learned the brainstorming, the outline, the first draft, it is important to learn another language because if I go to other countries, I can speak there. (Student H)

The previous extracts indicate that third grade students felt they were in a safer learning environment in which teachers provide students the possibility to choose. Jensen (1998) believes that excessive control by teachers reduces learning. Armstrong (1998), in his work called "Awakening Genius in the Classroom", states that students' choices are important to bring out the best in them. "Students who are not given significant choices about what they can learn or how they can learn it soon will either give in and adapt, or give up and tune out" (p. 61). Throughout the study, learners were able to become more successful writers by collecting information and focusing on a specific topic. They also gathered a logical group of ideas that show the relationship between them.

Expressing Ideas Using Clear and Effective Learning Category

After planning, collecting and organizing the ideas, it is easier to focus on the type of writing that the learner is going to be drafting. Following previous steps increases fluency and accuracy in the writing (White, R., and Arnold, V., 1991). During this study, learners M and D were able to connect, relate, and develop ideas from the outline. They also cope with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills. These learners had some difficulties with having tied endings and complete paragraphs; however, they represented a critical review and self-analysis of the problem that was presented to them. The picture below shows the students' sentence structure. There are no spelling mistakes; they developed a relevant idea, and they had a strong of coherent narrative sequencing. Both students coped with the writing tasks that require creativity.
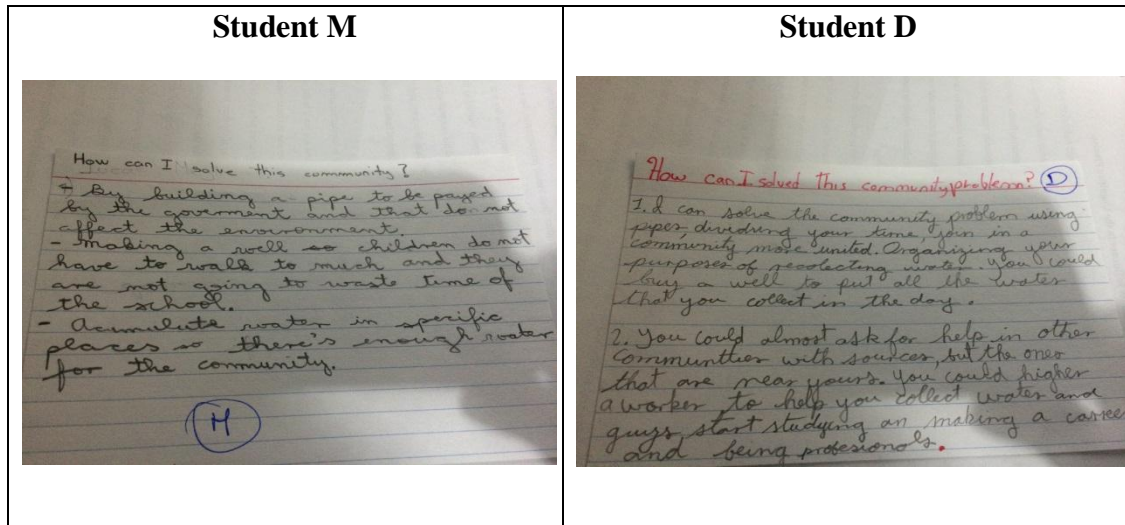
Student M	Student D

Figure 3. Caption in "Step 3 of PW: First Draft"

The first drafts showed part of the technique used by third-grade students to develop their own writing. It is a rough sketch of what learners wanted their writing to become. Through this sketch, students developed ideas to produce an appropriate writing. In addition, they presented a clear thesis statement and they showed clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion, which made their writing more coherent and cohesive. This process also allowed learners to find appropriate language for their text, providing active verbs, and the use of conventional grammar and more logical therefore; they improve the sentence structure and word order that is important to produce a paper of higher quality. There was an invitation to students to do independent writing. They explored and used the steps taught during the intervention that allowed the researcher evidenced how students and that resulted in the improvement of the language elements. This experience took students to see themselves as authors as suggested by Savingnon (2002). Their independent writing started through the use of journals. They recorded personal experiences; explore reactions and interpretations of personal things they faced every day in the classroom or at home.

The following findings were collected from third-grade students' artifacts, a classroom activity during the implementation stage, where students were asked to answer the following question: How can I help a community to get some water?

1) *One thing I think you can do is make a charity contest and collect money so with the money you collect you can buy cups and a refrigerator with a water disposal so insted of going to a well you can just grab a cup and fill it with water.*
2) *You can hire people to go get water from the well or you can make…..the well I water goes through so you can go get water closer in the morning so your family has enough time to get the water in the morning. (Student I)*

As it is seen the student grew as a writer. The language structure employed by the student demonstrated more complex vocabulary. Sometimes, he tends to repeat information; however, his point of view is seen and understood.

Some of the findings that emerged from the language post-test followed the same scoring criteria and assessment objectives as the diagnostic assessment that was administered in February. The test measured how well students mastered the process writing approach and how much learners improved in accomplishing tasks over time. Moreover, the test assessed the effectiveness of the techniques that were used during the implementation of the process writing approach. This was considered a reliable and valid assessment that evaluated the students' progress. The test also allowed the teacher to find out whether the students acquired the necessary writing skills that were expected for this research study. Third-grade students were able to show an improvement in their writing skills by meeting the criteria that was established to evaluate their post-test. Their results showed that students accomplished better results in terms of content, organization, grammar, sentence construction, and mechanics.

The pictures below show student C's progress and the complex process the student had to go through.

Student C- Brainstorming and Outlining	Student C- 1st Draft
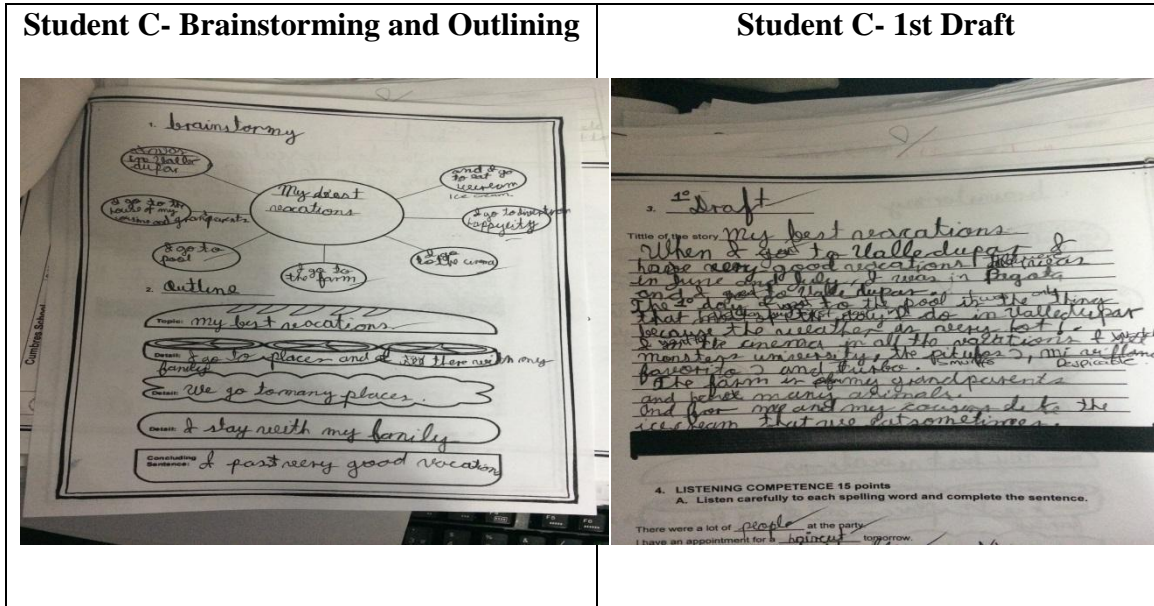
Figure 4. Caption in "Post-test"

The participants also provided expressed express their beliefs and opinions about their individual learning achievements or needs after they learned throughout the PW approach in an opinion forum in February, 2014. They were encouraged to provide their insights with confidence and engagement. Students showed interest and active involvement in providing serious and honest responses. They also reflected on their learning skills by making connections and contextualizing their writing experience within their learning environment. The opinion forum was considered an opportunity for students to self-assess, self-critique and self-reflect on this enriching process that taught them how to write, but also how to identify their own learning skills.

The table below has extracts of some of the students' responses from the opinion forum. Students were self-assessing their writing skills. The PW has been successful for

students and they perceived that they have developed better writing skills by following the

PW approach (Appendix G).

Students participation forum (February 2014)	Student participation forum (February 2014)
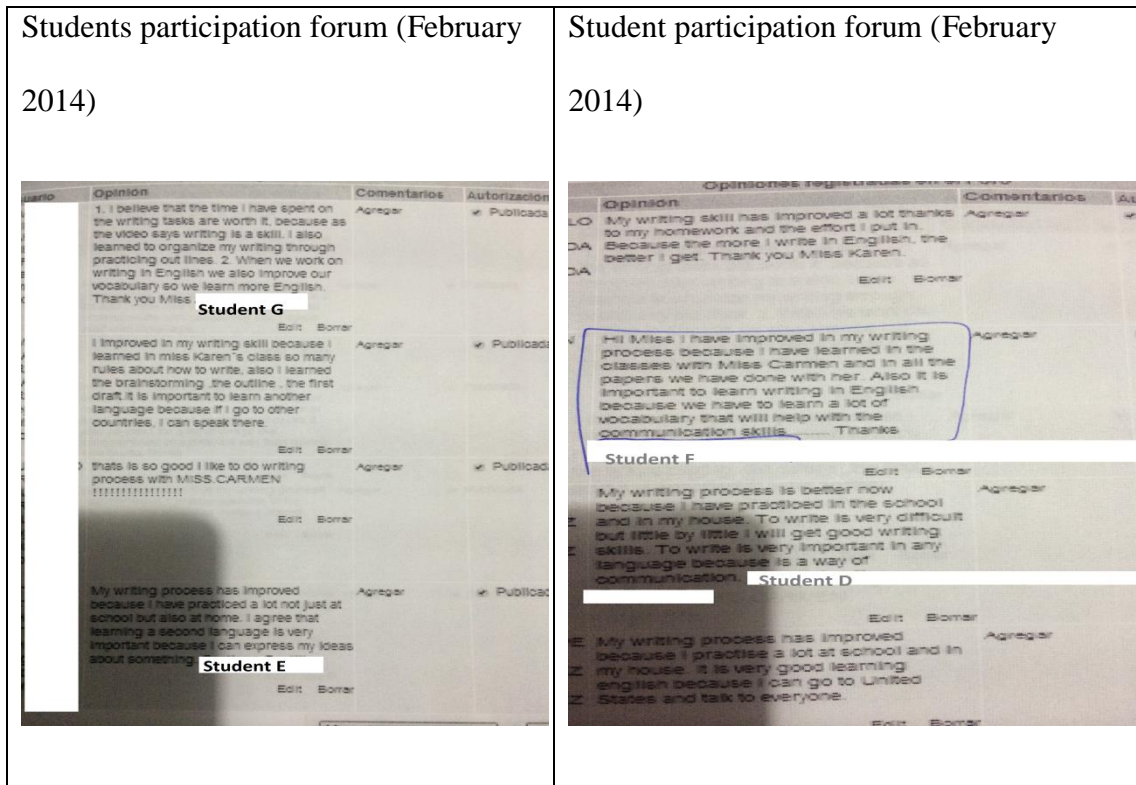
Figure 5. Caption in "Forum"

Comparative Table of Results

Appendix F shows each student's writing performance during the pre-

implementation, implementation, and post-implementation of the PW approach. This table

displays how the writing process approach maximized students' writing abilities in each

stage of the research. This is part of open coding and it was analyzed to show evidence of

the aforementioned emerging categories.

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Conclusions

This research has addressed the questions that were made at the beginning of the study by showing the usefulness of the PW approach to enhance writing abilities in students of third grade. Students were willing to learn the three major steps of the PW: brainstorming, outlining, and first draft. Students even recognized the aim of each step and how they can use different sources such as graphic organizers to connect ideas and have a more organized and coherent structure for their writing.

After analyzing the diagnostic assessment in the pre-implementation stage, two major features emerged: cognition and linguistic features. In the cognition category, specific difficulties were found. They included difficulty presenting a critical review and self-analysis of a story, difficulty elaborating on ideas, difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity and critical thinking skills, trouble generating ideas, difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity and poor coherent narrative sequencing. On the other hand, the linguistic feature had the following drawbacks: poor vocabulary, repeating the same information, clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion, difficulty identifying the meaning of words, use of unconventional grammar, illegibility in writing, a significant number of misspelled words, and difficulty with sentence structure and word order. This hindered third-grade students' creativity and the development of good writing skills.

These difficulties were classified as part of conceptual and language features. They were addressed during the implementation stage to determine didactic and pedagogical

strategies that intended to promote third grade students' writing skills. The strategies that were included in the PW approach for this study were brainstorming, outlining and writing a first draft.

Three categories emerged after collecting, grouping, and coding. They were called: a) planning before writing, b) motivating the path to collect ideas and stay focused and c) expressing ideas using clear and effective learning. When planning, students identified the purpose and audience. Students showed more motivation by understanding that the process writing approach required some training and ownership. They were willing to overcome language difficulties and follow a written structure.

Graphic organizers helped in the process of brainstorming. Learners were stimulated and boosted their creativity. It also increased their level of involvement during the production time, since they conveyed possible answers. Brainstorming encouraged students to participate actively when a question, a topic or a problem were introduced. The outlining process gave students the possibility to organize the paper in a logical sequence that follows a specific order. They also showed more interest in the PW thanks to the graphic organizers used during the interventions.

A first draft was used by learners to create a sketch of their writing and figure what the final text needed to look like. Students improved the quality and coherence of their written texts. They were also interested in reviewing the draft and spending more time doing a more extensive revision of the text. However, the content needed to be relevant for students in order for them to develop academic language (vocabulary and sentence patterns) and adopt new learning strategies. Nunan (2011) believes that "teaching methods need to be

dynamic to carry language content and practice, as well as aims and learning theories"
(2019). Students were offered a lot of practical written exercises that enhanced their ability
to write. Finally, students were more worried about the quality of the text, which made
them more aware of grammatical structures that resulted in a better development of their
language and conceptual features.

Another objective of this research was to evaluate the PW approach after
implementing the didactic and pedagogical strategies to improve students´ writing skills. It
was evidenced that students had a meaningful progress in their writing process. Classroom
activities were evaluated to measure students´ progressive development of self-assessment
in which learners had the opportunity to reflect on the assimilation of relevance to become
a self-directed learner. As, Nunan (2011) mentioned in his research about the acquisition of
an L2, it is important to develop consciousness as learners and develop good strategies as
teachers in order to succeed in the acquisition process. Students presented positive attitude
towards the PW and showed motivation towards what they were assigned to write.

Learners had the ability to acknowledge their needs and weaknesses in order to find
out how they could overcome such difficulties. In addition, self-directed learning approach
was a way to teach learners how to self-regulate their process in order to experience
personal development by *selecting, managing, executing, and assessing their own learning
growth* (Candy, 1991). SDL involved individual willingness from students to be part of a
model that would help them to develop new writing skills. However, motivation was a key
factor that encouraged students to become more independent in their learning process and
the teacher-researcher made a great effort to make sure it was preserved and guarded
(Bandura, A. and Schunk, D. H., 1981).

The writing approach helped the educational community by focusing on allowing learners to acquire and apply what the learning environment is providing in terms of writing techniques, as well as acknowledging new learning strategies and promoting autonomy. The PW approach contributed to the students' overall effectiveness in writing and most importantly, both students and their teacher focused more on the process rather than the product, which gives a better perspective to the concept of education.

This experimental study has given the researcher an opportunity to find out whether the process writing approach has a practical effectiveness in an EFL session that focuses on improving the writing skills of children from third grade. The results that were obtained at the end of study show how important it is to explore the benefits of using the steps proposed by the process writing method and also teach elementary instructors regarding the ways in which they can implement this method as part of their writing lessons with their students. Moreover, Cumbres School can share its own experience with other schools that are trying to improve the writing quality of their elementary students. One of the main goals of this research is to be able to help schools adapt their English curriculum to teach the writing process approach to their elementary students in order to help them understand the necessary steps that are needed to write coherently and significantly better. Further studies should be made on the writing process method and its contribution to teaching appropriate writing skills to young learners.

Implications

A fundamental implication is related to the thinking-process skills that students developed, such as observation, description, establishing similarities and differences,

comparison, definition, analysis, synthesis, classification, and deduction of themes. This thinking process was developed by learners during the study. They did it through the use of graphic organizers during the brainstorming and outlining steps. This pedagogical implication strengthened the students' logical and intellectual abilities that are needed to improve their writing skills. The researcher had to use meaningful learning strategies that were aimed at favoring the students' thinking skills.

A different pedagogical implication is to have a differentiated instruction that advocates alternatives for students with variable readiness, background knowledge, language level, learning preferences, and interest to react responsively to their specific needs. The aim of including differentiated instruction is to have a more effective classroom and to maximize a learners' growth that will result in individual success. During the research process, the researcher noticed that some students had the tendency to keep their thoughts, ideas, and opinions about a topic to themselves, affecting their self-confidence, which resulted in low self-esteem. This was the case with student F, who did not make any progress in his PW. Tomlinson (2010) suggests the importance of designing and developing a model of differentiated instruction that favors and meets students' different levels of abilities and guards students' integrity.

The last implication has to do with students transferring their writing skills to other subjects as in the case of Science. In addition, students were eager to participate in written-composition activities in school, such as a newspaper contest, writing for pleasure, and institutional activities, such as mother's day, father's day, valentine's day and Thanksgiving. This means that students recognized the PW approach as a long-life commitment that must be used toward their own education and their own interests. Thus,

there were no restrictions about the way learners developed their own writing and each

student's work was respected by others (Hiemstra, 1991).

Developing PW approach was the result of many influences and experiences that

were part of the mediation of different writing tasks. The following pictures represent how

students are conveying the acquisition of the PW approach to other subjects and interests in

life.
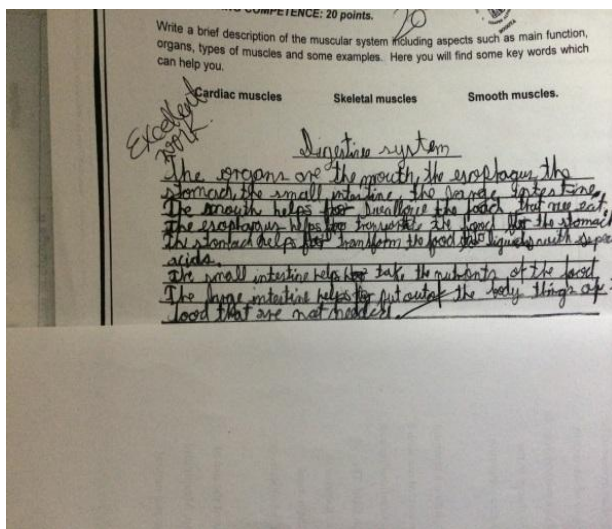
Science class- Student J-	Best Writing Compositions Contest English Bulleting Board

Figure 6. Caption in "Cross-Curriculum Writing Activities"

Science class- Student J-	Best Writing Compositions Contest English Bulleting Board
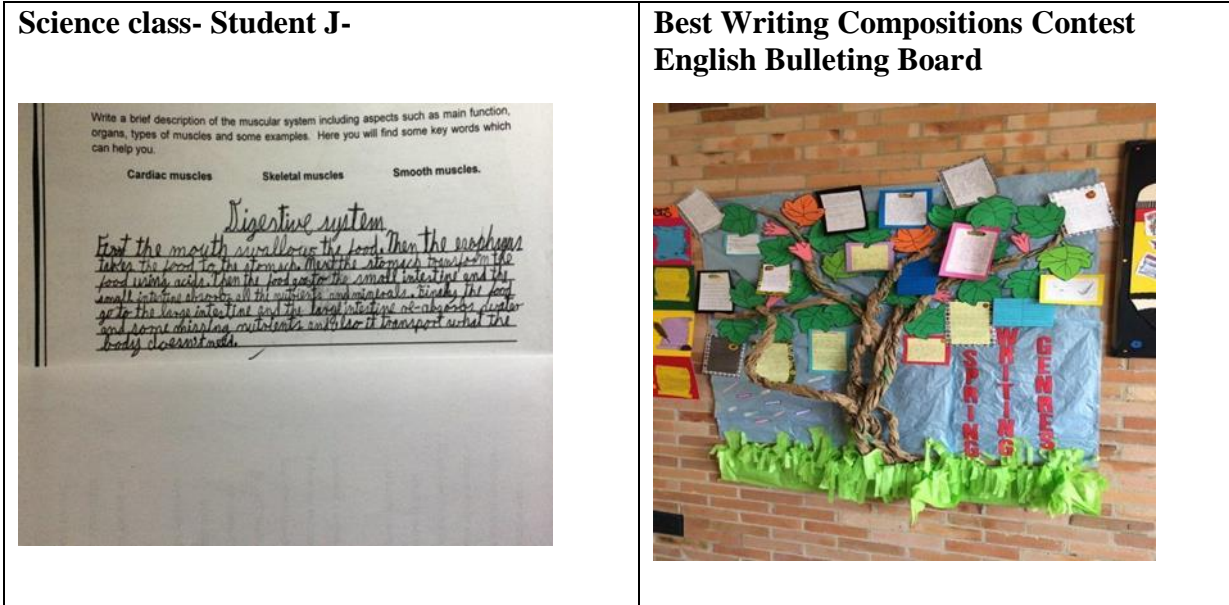
Figure 7. Caption in "Cross-Curriculum Writing Activities"

Further Research

This research allowed the researcher to establish other inquiries that refer to the teaching-learning process of developing writing skills in a foreign language. There has been a common teacher's role in terms of giving feedback to her students. The most significant feedback is given in terms of performance. However, from an educational perspective, the role of doing corrections needs to be shifted to enhance student-oriented techniques of correction, such as self-correction or peer-correction. Peer and self-correction have benefits such as fostering learning autonomy, social responsibility, assertive communication, social abilities, and changes of evaluation paradigms.

Another suggestion is to complete the 13 steps advocated by White and Arnold (1991). It will be interesting to complete those steps of the PW approach with a group of students in a school year.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Consent Letter

COLEGIO CUMBRES
SEMPER ALTIUS

Education to face the world.
Formation to change it.

Chía, septiembre 15 de 2013

Profesora
CARMEN EDITH DONCEL RIZO
Titular Curso Tercero B

Referencia: Autorización para aplicar Investigación.

Apreciada en Cristo. De acuerdo con su solicitud de realizar su investigación: "Improving Third Graders´ Writing Skills Through the Process Writing Approach " con los niños de Tercero B, le comunicamos que ha sido aceptada la autorización para que usted lleve a cabalidad dicho proyecto de investigación en las fases que requiera, especialmente como es la recolección de datos y sus aplicaciones dentro del aula de clase.

Esperamos que nuestra Institución se vea enriquecida con los hallazgos y propuestas que surjan de tipo pedagógico o didáctico para llevar a cabo la enseñanza del inglés como segunda lengua.

Esta autorización se expide a los 15 días del mes de septiembre de 2013.

Prefectura
Estudios
Primaria

ROBERT AVILA VALENCIA
Prefecto de Estudios – Sección Primaria
Colegio Cumbres Bogotá

KM. 26 Autopista Norte, Sindamanoy, Chía - www.cumbresbogota.com - PBX: 862 9292

· SEMPER ALTIUS SCHOOL NETWORK ·

Appendix B: Diagnostic Assessment

	Cumbres School **"Education to face the world. Formation to change it"**	Subject: **English**
	Diagnostic Assessment	Grade: **3°**

Name:	**Score:**
Date:	

☞ **Instructions:**

- Write your name on the test.
- Read each question twice.
- Read all the answer choices for the question.
- Mark your answer in pencil.
- Check your answer

1. READING COMPREHENSION: 20 POINTS

A. Based on the title and the picture, what can you said about the story before you read it?

_____

_____

_____

BABY BEAR´S STORY

My name is Baby Bear. I live with my parents, Papa Bear and Mama Bear, in a little house in a big forest. We live simply and happily together. But yesterday our peaceful lives were upset by a stranger.

Mama made our breakfast oatmeal as usual. And, as usual, we went for a walk until the oatmeal was cool enough to eat. When we got back home, the front door was unlocked. "I'm sure that I locked the door," Mama said.

"Let's move cautiously," said Papa. "There may be a stranger in the house."

We crept into the house. We could see that someone had been eating our oatmeal. Mama and Papa growled that somebody had nibbled at their bowls. My bowl was completely empty. "Oh! Somebody has eaten my oatmeal all up!" I cried.

"That's okay, Baby Bear," said Mama. "I'll fix you a nice new bowl of oatmeal. We will put berries on it."

I smiled at Mama. Then I went over to sit on my special chair to wait for my oatmeal. That´s when I noticed my chair was all broken to pieces. "Somebody has broken my chair" I cried.

"That´s okay, Baby Bear," said Papa. "After breakfast, I'll fix your chair. It will be as good as new."

I smiled at Papa. "I think we should look for this stranger," I said. "Good thinking, Baby Bear," said my parents. We started searching the house.

I was the one who found her. "Look," I called to my parents, "She´s sleeping in my bed."

The three of us gazed down at the sleeping blond girl. She seemed harmless enough.

"She was probably hungry," I whispered. "I'm sure she didn't mean to break my chair. Maybe she would like to play with me when she wakes up."
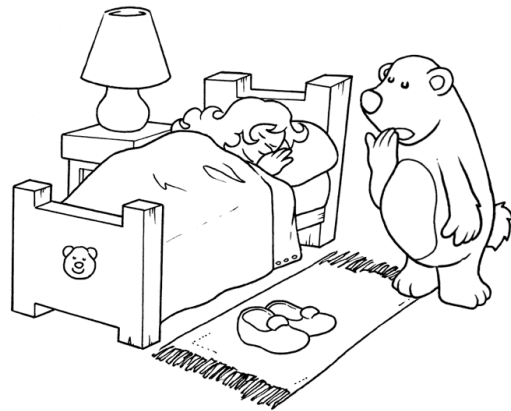
She must have heard my voice. Her eyelids fluttered open. She looked up and saw the three of us standing over her.

I smiled at her, but that seemed to frighten her. She leaped from the bed and raced out the door. She ran into the woods as fast as she could.

I felt sad because I really did want to play with her. The Mama Bear reminded me that she was going to make some breakfast. Papa Bear reminded me that she was going to fix my chair. I gave them each one a hug. Then I sat down on the porch to wait for my oatmeal.

B.   After you read answer the following questions.

1.   What is the setting of this story?
   A.   A zoo in the city.
   B.   A school for bears.
   C.   A neighborhood park.
   D.   A house in the woods.

2.   Which event could happen in real life?
   A.   A girl is sleeping in a bear´s bed.
   B.   A bear locking the front door.
   C.   A girl eating a bowl of oatmeal.
   D.   A bear cooking breakfast.

3.   Which of the following events could not really happen?
   A.   A bear found berries in a forest.
   B.   A girl broke a chair.
   C.   A baby bear ran and played.
   D.   A bear picked flowers for the table.

4.   What kind of story is this?
   A.   A fantastic story.
   B.   A science fiction story.
   C.   A mystery story.
   D.   A realistic story.

5.   Complete the sequential organizer about the story.

First

Next

Then

Find a synonym for the underlined word.

6. Mama was <u>mending</u> a shirt.

    A. Cleaning.

    B. Folding.

    C. Hanging.

    D. Fixing.

7. The <u>marketplace</u> was full of people.

    A. Movie theater.

    B. Parking lot.

    C. Shopping area.

    D. Playing field.

8. Jo's dad <u>fined</u> her fifty cents.

    A. Showed.

    B. Saved.

    C. Charged.

    D. Paid.

9. Do you earn <u>interest</u>?

    A. Payment for work done.

    B. Friends.

    C. Payment for the use of money.

    D. Points.

10. Nicole <u>arranged</u> the flowers.

    A. Unwrapped.

    B. Smelled.

    C. Positioned.

    D. Carried.

11. Take a compound sentence from the reading "Baby Bear's Story" and write it on the line below.

    _____

12. "in a little house in a big forest." is a:

    A. Sentence.

    B. Command.

    C. Fragment.

    D. Exclamation.

13. "Let's move cautiously," is a

    A. Sentence.

    B. Command.

    C. Fragment.

    D. Exclamation.

14. In the sentence "Oh! Somebody has eaten my oatmeal all up " is missing:

    A. ?

    B. !

    C. .

    D. "

15. Match each sentence with the appropriate punctuation form.

"What a fantastic house you have!"	Question.
I was the one who found her.	Exclamation.
Sit down.	Compound sentence.
The chair in front of you.	Command.
How are you?	Fragment.

3. WRITING COMPETENCE: 25 points

Use one of the three prompts to write a short story based on what you remember of each one of the stories and create a new title for it.

"Alexander, Who Used To Be Rich Last Sunday."   **"If You Made a Million."**

"Boom Town."

Title of the story: _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. LISTENING COMPETENCE 15 points
Listen carefully to each word from the spelling words of this book.
    1._____-2_____3_____4_____5_____6_____7_____8_____

5. SPEAKING COMPETENCE 25 points

Talking about our project "Saving money". You will give your personal opinion on the project based on your goals, expectations and results.

GOOD LUCK!

Parents' Signature _____
I sign after I review the exam _____

Appendix C: Graphic Organizers

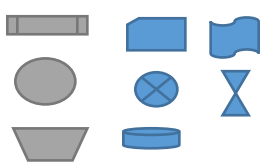|	**Cumbres School**	Subject:
	"Education to face the world. Formation to change it"	**English**
	Outline	Grade: 3rd

Name:	Score:
Date:	

Topic

Detail:
Detail:

Detail:
Concluding
Sentence:

INTRODUCTION
Idea 1
Idea 2
Idea 3

idea 1:
1.
2.
3.

idea 2:
1.
2.
3.

idea 3:
1.
2.
3.

CONCLUSION
Idea 1
Idea 2
Idea 3

Topic:

Detail:

Detail:

Detail:

Concluding
Sentence:
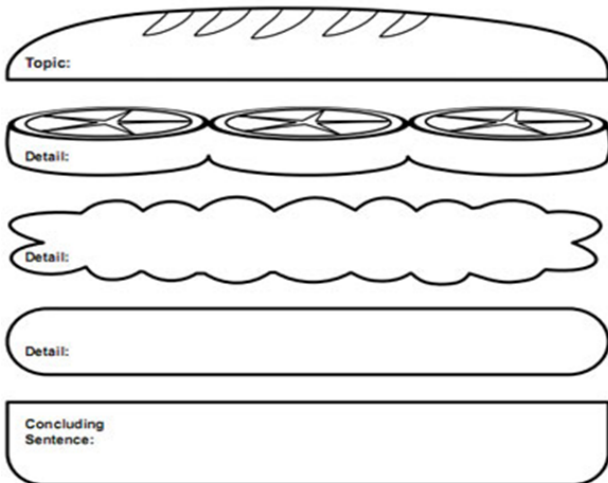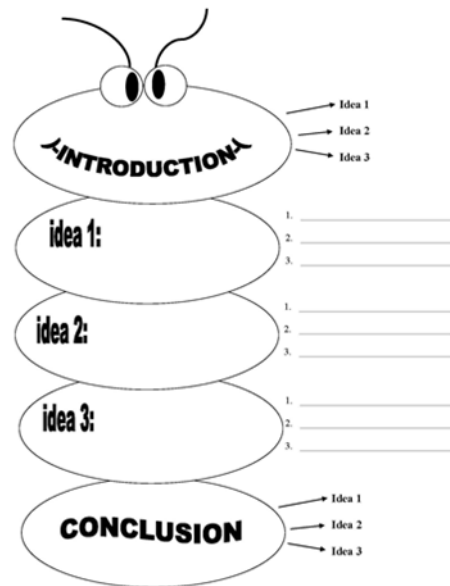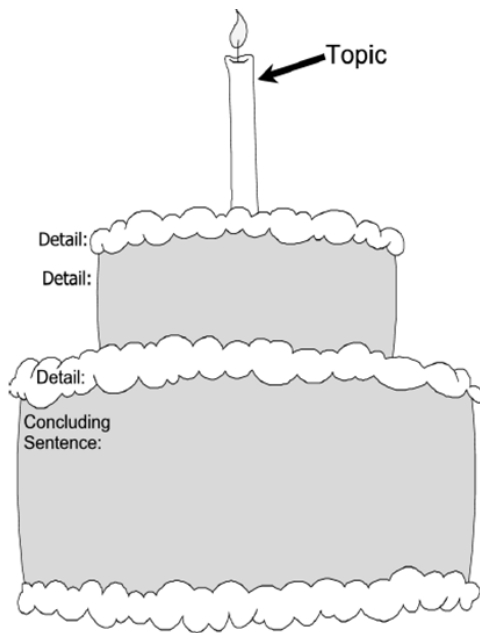
Appendix D: Post-Test

	Cumbres School "Education to face the world. Formation to change it"	Subject: **English**
	Post-Test Second Term Evaluation	Grade: **3°**

Name:	Score:
Date:	

Instructions:

- Write your name on the test.
- Read each question twice.
- Read all the answer choices for the question.
- Mark your answer in pencil.
- Check your answer

READING COMPREHENSION: 20 POINTS

C. Why does the author choose this title and illustration for the text?

_____
_____

THE ANT AND THE DOVE

One day an ant was out for a morning stroll in his neighborhood park. Feeling a little thirsty, he climbed up on the rim of a fountain and leaned toward the water to get a drink. PLOP! SPLASH! He tumbled into the water. Sadly, ants can´t swim. He struggled in the water, afraid that he might drown.

"Help!" he cried, as loudly as he could.

At that very minute, a dove was flying over the fountain and heard the ant´s faint cry for help. She looked down to find the source of the sound. She saw the ant struggling in the water. She knew the ants can´t swim.

"How can I help him?" she asked herself. "I can´t fly down and pick him up. I might crush him." The dove thought hard for a minute. Then she flew over to a big oak tree and tore off a large leaf. Holding the leaf in her beak, she flew back to the fountain and dropped the leaf in the water, close to the ant.

The ant looked puzzle until he realized that help had arrived. He quickly climbed out on the leaf and sailed safely to the edge of the fountain. Waving his thanks to the dove, he climbed down to the ground.

The next morning the ant was back in the park. It was a lovely day for a walk. The ant was happily humming his favorite song.

All of sudden, the ant saw the dove. She was walking along a path, looking for food. The ant started to shout hello to his friend. Then he noticed a man sneaking up on the dove. The man had a net in his hand. The ant guessed that the man wanted to capture the dove in the net.

"How can I help the dove?" the ant thought. "She saved me, and now it´s my turn to save her. But how can one little ant stop a big man?"

The ant thought hard for a minute. Then he scurried over the man´s feet and climbed up the man´s leg. When the ant got the bare skin, he bit the man as hard as he could.

"Ouch!" yelled the man as he dropped the net. Alerted by the noise, the dove flew away. As she went, she waved her thanks to the ant.

Moral: One good turn deserves another.

After you read answer the following questions.

16. What is the setting of this story?
    E. Garden.
    F. A zoo.
    G. A forest.
    H. A park.

17. Which part of the setting is important to the events of the story?
    E. The fountain.
    F. The playground.
    G. The oak tree.
    H. The sun.

18. Which of these best describes the dove?
    E. She bit people.
    F. She was clever.
    G. She could swim well.
    H. She was tricky.

19. How were the ant the dove alike?
    E. They were good at solving problems.
    F. They enjoyed swimming and other sports.
    G. They were proud of their good looks.
    H. They were quiet and patient.

20. Why did the ant bite the man?
    A. To get the food he needed.
    B. To stop the man from crushing the ant.
    C. To show the dove how brave he was.
    D. To repay the dove for helping the ant.

21. Complete the main idea graphic organizer about the story.

GRAMMAR COMPETENCE **15 Points**

22. Which word below can be used as a plural for a kind of animal?

    A. Deer.

    B. Horse.

    C. Mosquito.

    D. Robin.

23. The man in "The Ant and the Dove" had a net. What is the correct way to refer to the net?

    E. The mans' net.

    F. The men's net.

    G. The man's net.

    H. The mans net.

24. Which word is a proper noun?

    E. lacrosse.

    F. rules.

    G. December.

    H. solution

25. Which word best completes the sentence?

In the story, the ant saved the _____ life.

    E. doves

    F. dove´s

    G. doves'

    H. doves'es

26. The underlined words in the sentence is a:

The dove thought hard for a minute.

    E. Subject.

    F. Verb.

    G. Adjective.

    H. Complement.

WRITING COMPETENCE: 25 points

Use one of the three prompts and follow the three steps seen in class for the writing process. Write the name of each one of the stages in the space provided.

"Animals in danger"

"The place I like the most for travelling"

"My best vacations"

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1. _____
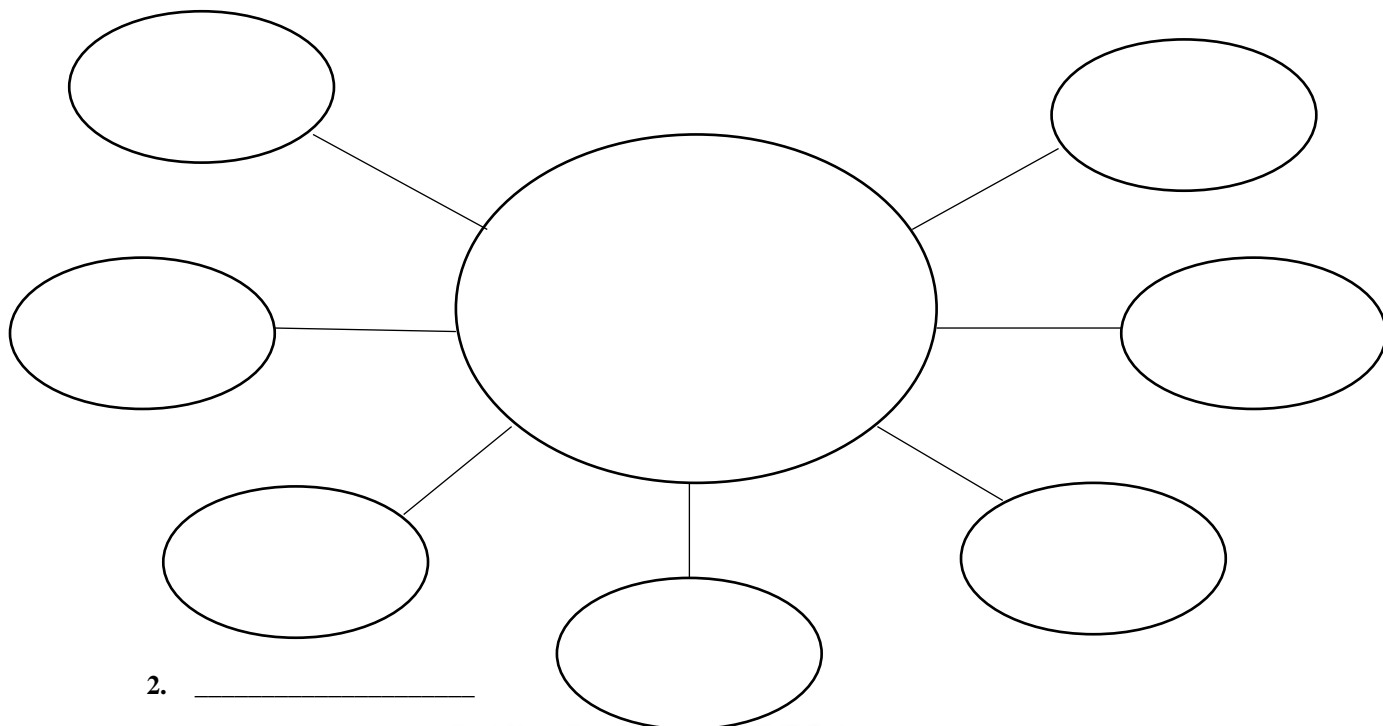
2. _____

Topic:

Detail:

Detail:

Detail:

Concluding
Sentence:

3. _____

Tittle of the story_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

LISTENING COMPETENCE 15 points

A. Listen carefully to each spelling word and complete the sentence.

There were a lot of _____ at the party.

I have an appointment for a _____ tomorrow.

Caterpillars turn into beautiful _____.

I wore my _____ because the sun was so bright.

I saw the lightning _____ across the sky.

He is a famous _____ and has played in the Super Bowl.

B. Now spell the four words you will listen to.

4. SPEAKING COMPETENCE 25 points

Based on the reading giving previously about "Animals in danger" you will share your opinion about it in a round table.
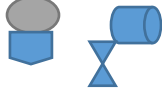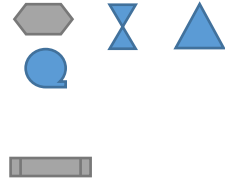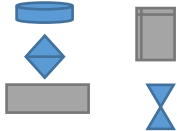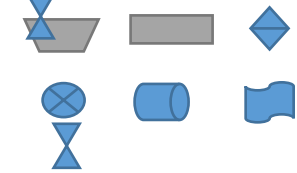
100 points total
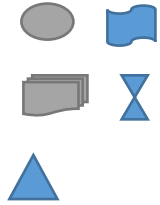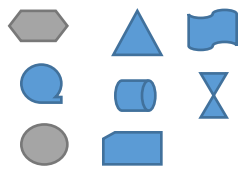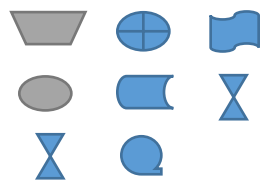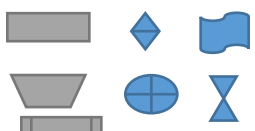
GOOD LUCK!!!
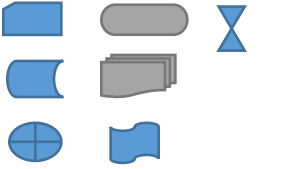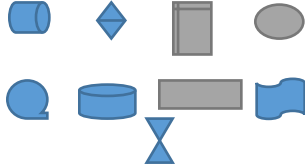
| Parents' Signature _____ |
| I sign after I review the exam _____ |

Appendix E: Grouping Process

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

INSTRUMENT - LANGUAGE PRE-TEST – DIAGNOSIS SESSION - September	TEXT STRUCTURE Description Interpretative Writing Standard	ACTIVITY	Findings	EXAMPLE
		Use one of the three prompts to write a short story and create a new title. "Alexander, Who used to be rich last Sunday" "If you made a million" "Boom Town"		1. **Title: Alexander, Who used to be rich last Sunday** (Student A) My name is Alexander. I wan´t to be Rich. I said my brothers have dollars and a lot of coins. One day we go to new jersy . My mom give to me and to my brothers one dollar……
				2. **Title: "Alexander, Who used to be rich last Sunday" (Student B)** "Alexander, who used to be rich last Sunday" is about a boy that don´t solve the money and she used for oders, things, por example he used the money to 5 cents and like this.
				3. **Title: I you made a million** (Student C) Some childs do some activities to save money and become one million of dollars. They do for example …………..money that the back make lakes, cutting the grass, planting trees etc.
				4. **Title: "If you made a million" (Student D)** I like this estory because; the boy was asked hard to save the money and can sall what she wante.
				5. **Title: The boy who used to be rich last Sunday (Student E)** Bake the cake and you recibe and quarter, is like two dimes, or twenty pennies.

					6. Title: Alexander, who used to be rich (Student F) One day the granparents of a boy giveed one dollar to to cach one. The boys saved the dollar but Alexander spend the dollar in bubble gum, in broken toys in a magic trick, savin chocolate bar, in the bath room, renting a snake but finally Alexander was poor.
					7. Title: Boom Town (Student G) She made business. She like to make pies, and her broder brother she afot, The brothers make she lost a very very delicious pay and as they make him that sh don´t do any thing.
					8. Title: If you made a million. (Student H) The boy trabajet of ganed 1.000.000
					9. Title: Alexander (Student I) Alexander is the youngest of the towo bothers one day the granparents is gave one dollar Alexaner wanted the hocky toues send the money**.**
					10. Title: If you made a million (Student J) A boy and a girl do woks be made a million the character that I like is the mage because he is to ......
					11. Title: Alexander who used to be rich last Sunday (Student K) One day Alexander didn´t now who used to be rich.

				12. Title: Boom Town (Student L) Amanda bake pies very delicious. One day Amanda bake a pie for her father, her father gives pie for miners a mon gives for Amanda a work Amanda said: okey then she have money for her fimily.
				13. Title: "If you made a million" (Student M) I like this istory because the istory is about save money and it is a experice very beautiful. Because is a istory that childrens save money save money is a dream tht we can fulfill.

Emerging Categories	
Conceptual Category	**Language Category**
Difficulty presenting a critical review and self-analysis of the story: Difficulty developing a relevant idea: Trouble engaging the readers: Difficulty elaborating on ideas: Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity: Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills: Trouble generating ideas: Difficulty starting on writing task: Poor coherent narrative sequencing:	Poor vocabulary: Repeating same information: Lack of transitions: Lack of opinion: Presenting a clear thesis statement: Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion: Difficulty identifying meaning of words: Use of unconventional grammar: Provide active verbs: illegibility in writing: Many misspelled words: Difficulty with sentence structure and word order:

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

After identifying the findings that emerged when analyzing the diagnostic exam results, it is observed that students are placed in A1 proficiency level which does not meet the school´s standards. They did not have the elements to support, expand or evidence their knowledge of a specific topic when they were asked to write. The results emerged provided valuable information for the homeroom teacher to rely on teaching strategies to help students improve, enable and encourage students to write meaningfully.
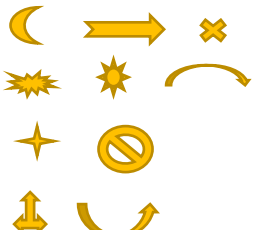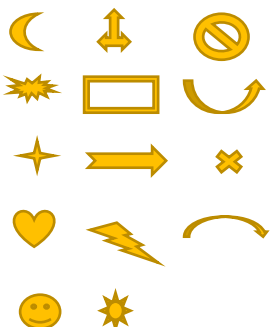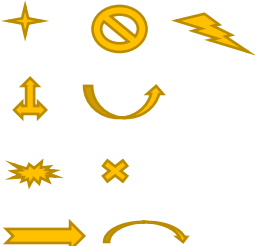
Therefore, the teacher-researcher is relying on the process writing approach, specifically on the three first steps (brainstorm, outline, first draft) to address students´ writing pitfalls and benefit students ´ writing performance. There were 12 interventions to develop the process writing. These interventions were based on generating ideas for writing by using prewriting techniques for a variety of purposes.
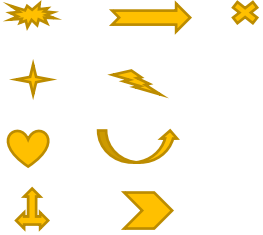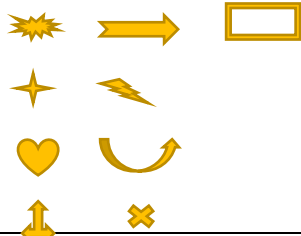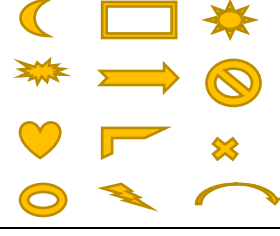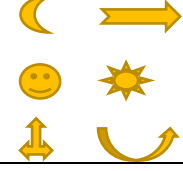
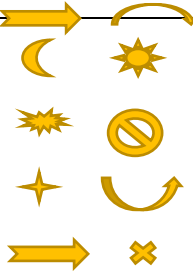| Phase 1: Brainstorm (3 Interventions)	Objective	Strategy / Activity	Findings	Writing Progress
Getting ready to write Planning out what is going to be written **October 1** **November 2**	Help students to come up with innovative ideas.	Brainstorm Topic: How to solve problems in Colombia Topic: Description Describing Bob	**Picture Student A Brainstorm**	It was reached a creative process enhancing autonomy. The student came up with different solutions.
		Topic: How to solve problems in the classroom Homework: Students will ask their parents how they usually deal with work problems.	**Picture: Student C Brainstorm**	Student mapped out ideas. Possible ideas. No repetition of ideas. Narrowing down information.
Phase 2: Outlining (3 interventions)	Objective	Strategy /Activity	Findings	Writing Progress
Organizing ideas Support evidence for main point Acknowledgment and dismiss other side of the arguments **November 2** **December 1**	Help students to organize ideas and find the relationship between them. Organize information in systematic ways.	Outline: Organize ideas Topic: How to solve a community problem Topic-H/W: How do you understand nature?	**Student: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, outline**	The student identifies the most important points to be discussed in their document. The student shows a relation between ideas. The student organizes in a sequential way the information. The student focuses on the topic
Phase 3: Writing first draft (3 Interventions)	Objective	Strategy / Activity	Findings	Writing Progress

Have an introduction, body and conclusion Have supporting details **December 1** **January 2**	Motivate students to write an original and creative writing.	First Draft Topic: How to solve a community problem Topic: Writing a letter Write a letter including author´s purpose.	Student M, A, C, B, H, I, J.	Student connects, relates and develops the ideas from the outline. Student argues with tied endings. Student writes complete paragraphs. Student relies on conventional grammar, sentence structure and word order.
Phase 4: Post-Test Second Term Evaluation (1 intervention)	**Objective**	**Strategy / Activity**	**Findings**	**No improvement**
February	Evidence the techniques defined as the writing process.	Brainstorm	Gather ideas clearly Brought up variety and creative ideas Gave lots of ideas	**Student M, H, I** Poor vocabulary Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical
		Outline	Organizing ideas Presented a clear thesis statement.	**Student M, H, I** He does not organize his ideas. Use of unconventional grammar
		First Draft	Enrich vocabulary (E,K, L F) Generating ideas (C, F) Present clear thesis statement (K, H) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (B, C, D, E, J, G, K, I, M) Relate personal information with the language. (A, M, F, K, L)	

POST IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

Instrument: Post- Language Test February	Test Structure Narrative writing Standard	Activity	Findings	Examples
		Use one of the three prompts to write a short story and create a new title. "Animals in danger", "The place I like the most for travelling" or "My best vacations"		1. **No Title (Student A)** The student didn´t develop the task.
				2. **Title: My best Vacations (Student B)** In my best vacations, I want to go to Santa Marta to be whith my family go to a very hotel. The activities that I want to do are:see fish, swin in the pool, cath lizards, cath sifh, ride bycicle, play tennis, play soccer, ride a car and swim in the Ocean, so I can do many esports whith my family. I like to go to Santa Marta Because has Ocean.
				3. **Title: My Best Vacations (Student C)** When I went to Valledupar I have very good vacations, It was in June and July, I was in Bogota and I go to Valledupar. The 1° day I go to the pool is the thing that most of the day I do in Valledupar because the weather is very hot!. I am the cinema in all the vacations I see monsters, university, the pitufos 2, mi villano favorito 2 and turbo. The farm is of my grandparents and (….) many animals. And for me and my cousing like the ice cream that we eat sometimes.
				4. **Title: My best vacation is in cartagena (Student D)** I go to the walled citi I buy tous y swin in my pool. I was playing in the mar and I eat in walled city. I eat lounch I go to my farm, I eat sancocho and I play with the dog and I montar in horse I do a picnic I bacunar the Ganado y areas the Ganado I play and I go to the mall comes I and I play footbal and sotball and parkes and domino and I invitid a peoples and withi the peoples we eat, suiwm and play with my father. I play with the boys and plaid music and go to my farm and I play wit the pistol of water.

				5. Title: My favorite vacations (Student E) My father tell mi that my mom, my dad and I will do a trip to San andres. I was very happy because will be my frist time I go to San Andres. I go to the airport of El dorado in Bogota. I go to the airplaine. The trip was of two hours. When I already was in San Andres was amaizing. The taxi go with my fami.ly to the hotel. When we go to the bote I saw the fishes then the corals. It was very funy. 3 days later I go to Bogota. The taxi use to ours to house.I was happy recording the trip thinking it was fun.
				6. Title: My best Vacations (Student F) My best vacation are Chistmars. My brother comes of Cuba and celebrate Christmars. I still good with my family in Chirtmars in old year Jesus take a gifts of me are a ps3 and more things. The that my family does Chirtsmasr tree, pesebre, decorate with lithing in pesebre, put some toy, structrures pray novena. The food to eat in Chirstsmas are meat, chees, buñuelos, natilla, Jesus camera goods deers.
				7. Title: My best Vacations (Student G) My best vacations. I like them because I can know of something of last years and take something of that day. I can make the lunch with my family, I can play boz with my broder, so I can make a lot of things with my family and to go to cinema and go movies to also can pray the novena in the house of my relatives in Bogota and I can eat buñuelos and natillas with my relatives and go to new places.
				8. Title: My vest vacashons (Student H) In the 2012 my father plan a vacashon to go to europ I conocer new part of the planet. I stay in two hotels one gor name is haill I wat I don't now and the other wa is a house yut fod, toys, to and not. I the the tine of avian a 11 hours.
				9. Title: That vacatins I want my family. (Student I) I gou to Erupe and gou madrid, Barcelona, francia, milan, Valencia, venecia, frankfort, Venesuela. Valencia this is very maising because créate a paella.

					10. Title: My favorite vacations (Student J)
					One day my family dicide to go to mesico and optes 2 weeks finaly we go in the airpline in theairpline I play and play and play play play and play after we go to mesico I ask for my mom to give me the ipad and she say yes, and I play , play, play, play, pla and play after hours the ipad (……) the charge but I go hotel computer room and I play and play and play and play and play allnight. The next day I so thing because Iplay all night but I go to a mayan pyramid and I eat a food that eat the Mayan triby.
					11. Title: My best vacationshion Girardot (Student K)
					In my best bacation I want to go to Girardot a horel that call is the peñon of the club compensar in the club compensar are a (….) soccer, and of tenis and a golf ant a park of water, a toboggan very large that we can go and an island with ocean and a pool very large. In the pool you can find a lizard go for the toboggan you can find a family of lizards and in the hotel Girardot the peñon do happy birdays and thegoof it is very dilicious and it is very nice go to Girardot el peñon and the havitations are very nice.
					12. Title:My best bacations (Student L)
					I go to Cuba with my family. I drink a delicios juse I stay in a bery good hotel. It was 3 pools are big ocean a boofet a tobogran very good rooms, it has cars to move one side to other others it has a very good atansion and and (…) play ground for the kids beutiful plants a togogan with farm of dinosors it have a place to see the suns a place to change toayas and they also are with and flopis I want to repeat that bacations because they were asom I stay fun my parents quiet and good my brother have friend.
					13. Title: My best vacations in punta cana.(Student M)
					My father and my mother planned go to punta cana plant in Santo domingo because in Punta Cana is in (…..) to punta cana is at night in the morning go to the beach and surft went table surf (:……………………………..)

Writing Progress Conventions: The student

Writes longer and more elaborate sentences.	Copes with writing tasks that require creativity
Organizes the writing into larger units of text.	Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills
Capitalizes proper nouns	Generates new ideas
Identifies and uses past, present, and future verb tenses properly.	Coherent narrative sequencing
Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas, and quotation marks.	Presents a clear statement
Masters regularly spelled patterns	Follows sentence structure and word order
Writes with more proficient spelling	Uses of conventional grammar
Arranges words in alphabetic order.	Uses of transitions
Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text	Spells words endings
Writes legibly in cursive writing.	Develops a relevant idea

Self-Evaluation process- Forum February

Instrument: Forum February	Activity	Teacher-Researcher´s interpretation and comments	Examples
	Self –Assessment Process writing Approach	Students are giving a written representation of their progress.	**1. Student A:** My writing skill has improved a lot thanks to my homework and the effort I put in. Because the more I write in English the better I get. Thank you Miss.
		This allowed students to set achievable goals for themselves.	**2. Student B:** My writing process has improved because I practice a lot at school and in my house. It is very good learning English because I can go to United States and talk to everyone.
		Students keep track of what they are learning and doing and how they are thinking so they can make necessary adjustments to meet their personal goals.	**3. Student C:** My writing skill has improved because I practice every day at school and home. It is important when you talk to an American and the American understands what you write. It is important to travel around the world.
		Students evaluate their progress against their earlier performance and they reinforce themselves for their successes.	**4. Student D:** My writing process is better now because I have practiced in the school and in my house. To write is very difficult skills. To write is very important in any communication.
		Students showed responsibility by evaluating their own progress.	**5. Student E:** My writing process has improved because I have practiced a lot not just at school but also at home. I agree that learning a second language is very important because I can express my ideas about something.
		Students evaluated the process writing approach as beneficial to language learning.	**6. Student F:**

		Students are aware of their levels of abilities in the writing skills. Students are sure of performing successfully in writing skill. Students developed awareness of strengths and weaknesses. Students are more independent. Students monitored their learning and judged their performance level.	Hi Miss I have improved in my writing process because I have learned in the classes with Miss Carmen and in all the papers we have done with her. Also, it is important to learn writing in English because we have to learn a lot of vocabulary that will help with the communication skills…..thanks.
			7. Student G: 1.I believe that the time I have spent on the writing tasks are worth it, because as the video says writing is a skill. I also learned to organize my writing through practicing outlines. 2. When we work on writing in English we also improve our vocabulary so we learn more English. Thank you Miss.
			8. Student H: I improved in my writing skill because I learned in miss class so many rules about how to write, also I learned the brainstorming, the outline, the first draft it is important to learn another language because if I go to other countries, I can speak there.
			9. Student I: That's is so good I like to do writing process with Miss Camren !!!!!!!
			10. Student J: I think that the kids can improve their writing process by writing more. I think that writing is a skill that kids have. Also adults can improve their writing process by using: computers, pens, pencils, etc…. this is my opinion bye…
			11. Student K: 1.I think that my process has improved, because I have more ideas to solve problems. 2. It is important because I can communicate with the people if we speak this language.
			12. Student L: I think that my writing process has improved because I practice with my homework and good attitude. It is important when I learn a second language because I can communicate with other people that speak that language. This is my opinion.
			13. Student M: I think it has improved because when we start the year I did letter so little buy now I do it bigger and I think that is important that people learn a second language s important because if we want to go to another country or continent we have to learn the language that is spoken there if we want to communicate with other people.

Appendix F: Data Collection

Stage Student	Pre-Implementation	Implementation	Post-Implementation	Comments
A	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Poor vocabulary. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Many misspelled words.	No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) It was reached a creative process enhancing autonomy. (Brainstorm) The student focuses on the topic. (outline) Relate personal information with the language. (First Draft)	The student did not write anything in the language post-test.	Student A made some progress, especially in the opinion pieces. He occasionally accomplished the tasks, reaching an average level of development. He followed the PW steps. However, he did not develop the language post-test.
B	Difficulty presenting a critical review and self-analysis of the story. Difficulty elaborating on ideas. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Use of unconventional grammar. Difficulty with sentence structure and word order.	The student came up with different solutions. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) Possible ideas. (Brainstorm) Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) The student organizes in a sequential way the information. (outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Generates new ideas. Coherent narrative sequencing. Follows sentence structure and word order. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	As it is seen in the pre-implementation stage, the student had lots of difficulties coping with the tasks. However, during the implementation stage, he followed the steps and he conveyed his ideas clearly. He provided open sentences in his texts. In regards to the use of conventional grammar, the student did not overcome such difficulty. He tends to write Spanish words whenever he does not know the word in English.
C	Difficulty developing a relevant idea. Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text.	The student improved most of the writing pieces, especially those where he had to tell experiences that are related to

	Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Illegibility in writing.	No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) Possible ideas. (Brainstorm) The student identifies the most important points to be discussed in their document. (Outline) Organizing ideas (Outline) Presented a clear thesis statement. (First Draft) Generating ideas (First Draft) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Capitalizes proper nouns. Identifies and uses past, present, and future verb tenses properly. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Writes with more proficient spelling. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Generates new ideas. Coherent narrative sequencing. Follows sentence structure and word order. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	important family moments. Nevertheless, the student still has difficulty with his penmanship' skill. Sometimes, it was hard to understand what he wrote.
D	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills. Trouble engaging ideas. Poor vocabulary. Lack of transitions. Lack of opinion. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Many misspelled words.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) The student shows a relation between ideas. (Outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Coherent narrative sequencing. Follows sentence structure and word order. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	The student grew as a writer. The student wrote more structured and more complex pieces. However, the student continued to use unconventional grammar in which he relied on Spanish words to explain situations. Despite the fact that he or she identified verbal tenses in some sentences, the student still tried to make the same mistake of writing in present tense when he is writing about past events.
E	Difficulty developing a relevant idea. Difficulty starting on writing task. Lack of opinion.	Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) The student builds arguments.	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Capitalizes proper nouns.	The student used phrases to connect his ideas in one piece of writing. He provided a lot of formation, but he had some difficulties using verbal

	Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Difficulty identifying meaning of words. Many misspelled words.	(Brainstorm) Organizing ideas. (Outline) Presented a clear thesis statement. (First Draft) Enrich vocabulary. (First Draft) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Writes with more proficient spelling. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Follows sentence structure and word order. Uses of conventional grammar. Develops a relevant idea.	tenses correctly.
F	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills. Lack of transitions. Presenting a clear thesis statement. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Use of unconventional grammar.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) Student´s ideas are tied together. (Outline) Generating ideas (First Draft) Relate personal information with the language. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Capitalizes proper nouns. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Follows sentence structure and word order. Develops a relevant idea.	The student showed more detailed information when writing. He has acquired more vocabulary. He used lots of local words such as sancocho, arepa, buñuelos, etc. He did not improve in spelling; he still makes lots of spelling mistakes.
G	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Repeating same information. Lack of transitions. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Use of unconventional grammar. Many misspelled words. Difficulty with sentence	Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) Ideas seem logical, logical and coherent. (Outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Capitalizes proper nouns. Master regularly spelled patterns. Writes with more proficient spelling. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Writes legibly in cursive writing. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Generates new ideas.	This student improved a lot. His improvement was based on how aware he was of his own mistakes. Therefore, the student put a lot of effort. He committed himself in doing extra activities to overcome difficulties that he faced during the pre-implementation stage.

	structure and word order.		Coherent narrative sequencing. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	
H	Difficulty presenting a critical review and self-analysis of the story. Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity. Trouble engaging ideas. Lack of transitions. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion.	Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) Ideas are well connected. (Outline) Presents chronologically and organized ideas. (Outline) Present clear thesis statement (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Identifies and uses past, present, and future verb tenses properly. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Generates new ideas. Follows sentence structure and word order.	Despite the fact that this student wrote a lot more and much better than what he did in the pre-implementation stage, the student continued to have difficulty organizing the writing into larger units of text. It was also difficult for the student to have a coherent narrative sequencing. He still has a hard time coping with spelled patterns.
I	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Difficulty starting on writing task. Lack of transitions. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Difficulty with sentence structure and word order.	Possible ideas. (Brainstorm) Develops ideas, connects them once in a while. (Outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Writes legibly in cursive writing.	Unfortunately, this student did not reach the expected outcomes. He could not write longer and elaborate sentences. The student was not able to organize the writing into larger units of text. He could not present a critical review and self-analysis of the text. He could not cope with writing tasks that require creativity.
J	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Lack of transitions. Difficulty starting on writing task. Difficulty elaborating on ideas. Repeating same information. Lack of opinion. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) Organizes ideas to put them together in the draft. (Outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Uses punctuation, including end punctuation, commas and quotation marks. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	The student improved in providing more sentences; however, he tends to repeat the same information. He does not follow sentence structure and word order. He also has difficulty writing with more proficient spelling.

	Illegibility in writing.			
K	Difficulty developing a relevant idea. Difficulty elaborating on ideas. Lack of transitions. Presenting a clear thesis statement. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Difficulty identifying meaning of words.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. Organizes main ideas and topics. (Outline) Enrich vocabulary (First Draft) Present clear thesis statement (First Draft) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft) Relate personal information with the language. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Capitalizes proper nouns. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Generates new ideas. Coherent narrative sequencing. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	The student misspelled words frequently. However, he was able to write longer sentences. He also follows sentence structure and word order.
L	Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require critical thinking skills. Trouble engaging ideas. Repeating same information. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion. Lack of transitions. Presenting a clear thesis statement.	Narrowing down information. (Brainstorm) Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) No repetition of ideas. (Brainstorm) Organizes ideas and sequence of events. (Outline) Organizing ideas (Outline) Presented a clear thesis statement. (First Draft) Enrich vocabulary (First Draft) Relate personal information with the language. (First Draft)	Writes longer and more elaborate sentences. Organizes the writing into larger units of text. Presents a critical review and self-analysis of the text. Copes with writing tasks that require critical thinking skill. Generates new ideas. Coherent narrative sequencing. Follows sentence structure and word order. Uses of transitions. Develops a relevant idea.	The student improved a lot. He organizes and presents complete ideas and sentences. However, he has to work on identifying and using past, present, and future verb tenses properly, since he tends to get confused with them.
M	Poor coherent narrative sequencing. Difficulty developing a relevant idea. Difficulty coping with writing tasks that require creativity. Lack of transitions. Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion.	Student mapped out ideas. (Brainstorm) Possible ideas. (Brainstorm) Develops the outline, but has a hard time organizing thoughts. (Outline) Clear and logical transition between the introduction, body and conclusion. (First Draft) Relate personal information	Capitalizes proper nouns. Master regularly spelled patterns. Writes legibly in cursive writing.	The student showed very little improvement. He did not write longer and elaborate sentences. He could not cope with critical thinking skills. He could not develop coherent narrative sequencing.

	Difficulty identifying meaning of words. Illegibility in writing. Many misspelled words. Difficulty with sentence structure and word order.	with the language. (First Draft)		