



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA

AREA OF EDUCATION, ART, AND COMMUNICATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

**STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES APPLIED BY THE TEACHERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE
READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STUDENTS OF 9TH AND
10TH YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION AT “27 DE FEBRERO” TECHNICAL FEMALE HIGH
SCHOOL . ACADEMIC PERIOD 2008-2009.**

Thesis previous to obtain the Licentiate's
Degree in Sciences of Education, English
Language.

AUTHORESSES:

Adriana Cecilia Prado Gutiérrez

Melva María Paucar Chamba

THESIS DIRECTOR:

Dra. Marcia Criollo Vargas, Mg. Sc.

LOJA – ECUADOR

2010

CERTIFICATION

Dra. Marcia Criollo Vargas Ms. Sc.

TEACHER OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA,

THESIS DIRECTOR

CERTIFIES:

To have directed and corrected this thesis, previous to obtain the Licentiate's degree with the title: STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES APPLIED BY THE TEACHERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STUDENTS OF 9TH AND 10TH YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION AT "27 DE FEBRERO" TECHNICAL FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL . ACADEMIC PERIOD 2008-2009., under the responsibility of the undergraduate Students: Adriana Cecilia Prado Gutiérrez and Melva María Paucar Chamba. Therefore, I authorize its presentation and defense.

Loja, Junio 8 de 2010

Dra. Marcia Criollo V. Mg. Sc.

THESIS DIRECTOR

AUTORSHIP

The whole criteria, analysis, concepts presented in this research work, are of their authoresses' absolute responsibility. They can be used as a consultant bibliography.

Adriana Cecilia Prado Gutiérrez

Melva María Paucar Chamba

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to leave our sincere thanks first, to the National University of Loja, because it gave us the opportunity to study and obtain the degree as English Language Teachers.

Next, to the English Language Career in its authorities and teachers, who contributed in our professional formation during our career.

Finally, we left our thanks to Dra. Marcia Criollo Vargas Mg. Sc. who has given us, all her support as our thesis director to finish this research work.

THE AUTHORESSES

DEDICATION

I want to offer this work, to my dear family such us: My tender mother who guides my way from the heaven. To my dear sisters who with their advices and sacrifice have been able to support me to get my goals.

In conclusion, I'm sure as my mother as my sisters are very happy to see me as a professional.

Thanks and that God bless them forever.

MELVA MARÍA

I want to dedicate this work firstly, to my dear son who with his existence has illuminated my life. I think this work hadn't been possible without my mother's help, the person who gave me her unconditional support to solve any situation. It's important to mention my aunt's help, a woman that has been a model to imitate, an exceptional person that deserves all my respect and admiration.

Thanks and that God bless them forever.

ADRIANA CECILIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is the subject that faces many troubles at secondary school because it has not been taught using effective methodology, that is to say using the right strategies and techniques to develop the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Every skill needs a hard process that requires a series of strategies to help students increase their abilities. But reading and writing go hand to hand and are the skills that support the other two listening and speaking. Moreover teachers should apply the most suitable techniques if they want to enable students to become proficient readers and writers.

All the before mentioned reasons surrounded the development of the present research work, that has been made in the “27 de Febrero” High School of the Loja city and which is about the strategies and techniques used by the teachers and its influence in the reading comprehension and writing skill in the English Learning Process.

The general hypothesis states that the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in the Students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

As specific objectives we want to determine if the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers help to develop the reading skill and to establish the relation between the strategies and techniques applied by

the teachers and the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

In order to do the present research work, it has been necessary to use the scientific method, because it let us follow an ordered and complex process which guided the whole work. We also used the descriptive method to describe the techniques that teachers use in the teaching process. The analytic-synthetic was used to analyze the data obtained in the field work and finally the explicative method was the one used to explain the results compared with the theoretical referents.

Among the techniques used we have applied a survey which let us get the most reliable data with teachers and students in the researched High School.

This work has been developed by a group of undergraduates of the English Career of the National University of Loja, as a previous requirement to obtain the degree of Licentiate in Sciences of Education, English Language Specialization. We hope, have contributed to solve in part the problem statement about the application of reading comprehension and writing skill in the English Learning process.

The present report in its structure is organized in the following way:

In the first part, it has the introduction that presents the thesis work in its whole parts and it also describes the contextual frame of the problem that got us to develop this research.

Next, we have the summary that describes briefly, clearly and an effective way the pertinence of the research and it summarizes the main conclusions and outcomes that we got through this thesis work.

Then, it includes the revision of the Literature where we synthesize the main variables of our hypothesis and which serve as indicators to prove through a logical analysis the stated hypothesis.

It also contains the materials and methodology used during the research process where we describe the methods techniques, procedures and instruments that have been used in the research process, and it also gives a reference about the researched population.

It presents the results of the instruments that were applied as to the teachers as well to the students and the respective interpretation and analysis of every question.

After that, it describes the discussion of the questions with the percentages more representative and the verification of the stated hypothesis through a logical descriptive analysis.

It also explains the conclusions which the group has arrived after we have contrasted the information of the different instruments applied, establishing the logic relation among them with the specific objectives stated in the project.

Finally, it presents the recommendations or possible solutions to the problematic found and which worth the whole process of research developed in the researched institution and which can serve to improve their weaknesses regard to strategies and techniques applied to develop reading and writing skills.

2. SUMMARY

The present research work entitled: STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES APPLIED BY THE TEACHERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STUDENTS OF 9TH AND 10TH YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION AT “27 DE FEBRERO” TECHNICAL FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL . ACADEMIC PERIOD 2008-2009., has been developed in order to know the techniques that the teachers apply to develop the reading and writing skills inside the English Language Teaching learning process.

In the development of the present work we have used the scientific method as the main one, which has helped us to carry out a systematic process with the research object. And we have also used as particular methods the explicative, descriptive, analytical synthetic and deductive methods.

To develop the field work we applied the instrument of the survey to the teachers as well to the students, to process the information we have used the descriptive statistics which had helped us to represent the information in a descriptive way.

Among the main results of the research we have found that the teachers are not applying specific techniques and strategies to develop the reading skill neither the writing one in the English Language teaching learning process with the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education of the researched High School.

Consequently in the researched institution we have been able to find out that there is not enough practice to improve the reading comprehension and written production so that the learning of the English Language by part of the students is regular and limited with the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1. READING

The reading is the communication between the author and the reader by means of, the reader can know the author's emotions, happy and sad feeling so that, the reading is a way of art that permit you relax and it is the trip of the people who can not take the train.

3.1.1. READING COMPREHENSION

The reading is the communication between the author and the reader by means of, the reader can know the author's emotions, happy and sad feeling so that, the reading is a way of art that permit you relax and it is the trip of the people who can not take the train.

For these reason for understanding a reading its necessary take care on the punctuation mark, so if you move a colon or semicolon we can change the meaning of a reading. There are two ways to do the oral reading (in louder voice) and with the mind (in silent way).

3.1.2. THE ROLE OF READING

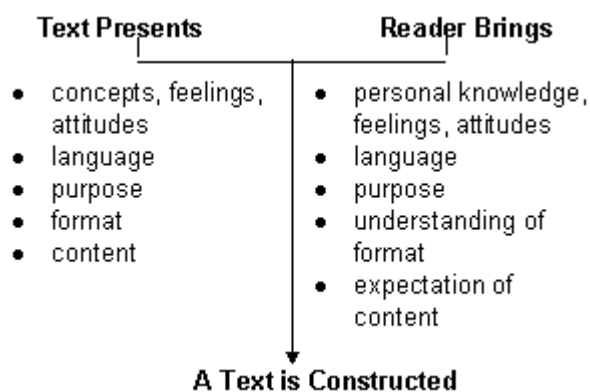
We read in this way we can reflect some author's feelings and a lot of meaning to people who listen us. Hear the reader should modulate the voice, modifying it or varying it, depending on that he/ she wants to express and wants to people understand. In fact, there are different

types of reading, as well as a type of writing. This is an important part in the developing reading

“Increase your efficiency by choosing a style of reading which fits your study task. Make your reading right for the materials you have selected.”¹

3.1.3. THE READING PROCESS

Reading is a transaction between the text and the reader. As students read, they search for and construct meaning based on what they bring to the text and what the text brings to them.



It is important to develop fluent and proficient readers who are knowledgeable about the reading process. Effective readers are active readers who use a repertoire of comprehension strategies before, during, and after interacting with texts

Before reading, strategic readers preview the text by looking at the title and the text to evoke relevant thoughts, memories, and associations. They

¹ WIKIPEDIA, free Encyclopedia. [www. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia](http://www.Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia).

build background by questioning themselves to see what they already know about the topic, the form in which the topic is presented, and the vocabulary that might communicate the ideas about the topic. They set purposes for reading by asking themselves what they want to learn or experience by reading the selection.

During reading, strategic readers create a dialogue with the author, striving to reformulate what the author is saying. They check their understanding of the text by paraphrasing the author's words and they monitor it by imagining, inferring, predicting, and confirming. They integrate their new understanding with existing knowledge. They are continually revising their purposes for reading as they read.

After reading, the strategic readers summarize what they have been reading and contemplate their first impressions. They reflect and take second looks to develop more thoughtful and critical interpretations of the text. Finally, they make applications of the ideas encountered in the text by extending these ideas to broader perspectives

“Successful language learners adapt these strategies as they construct meaning from a variety of oral, written, and visual texts and experiences. Teachers can make a major difference in students' success or failure to read texts effectively by modelling, coaching, facilitating, and promoting reading in their classrooms”.²

² Flood & Lapp, “The Reading Process”. 1991, p. 732

3.1.4. THE READING AS A TEACHING PROCESS

“The reading is a teaching medium that permit us have access to the knowledge in different manifestations and areas. But not only is access to the knowledge even the way to known, in the quality intellectual process, psychometric and attitudinally, where we are able to persuade, interpret, transform and smell of it to a reality”.³

The reading permit us to known the nature, the technology and life of other countries and cultures, the happening in our world, country and it teaches us to have a correct position in front to the future.

3.1.5. WHY ARE READING STRATEGIES USED?

We use strategies for the following reasons:

- Reading makes more sense for struggling readers when strategies are used.
- Good readers use strategies naturally.
- The use of strategies aides struggling readers to become proficient.
- Strategies make reading more fun.

³ Reyes y Sempértegui. Técnicas de Aprendizaje Activo 2007, p. 12

3.1.6. WHEN ARE READING STRATEGIES USED?

To assist students in:

- Predicting outcomes in a reading passage
- Summarizing material which has been read, both fictional and informational.
- Questioning material being read
- Determining important ideas while reading
- Monitoring their reading.
- Searching for clues.
- Rereading to confirm.
- Reading ahead or back for clues.
- Self-correcting.

3.1.7. WHICH ARE THE READING STRATEGIES?

- Skimming.
- Scanning.
- Highlighted.
- Guessing meaning from the context.
- Graphic organizers.
- Diagrams.

3.2. WRITING

Writing may refer to two activities: the inscribing of characters on a medium, with the intention of forming words and other constructs that represent language or record information, and the creation of material to be conveyed through written language. (There are some exceptions; for example, the use of a typewriter to record language is generally called typing, rather than writing.) *Writing* refers to both activities equally, and both activities may often occur simultaneously.

3.2.1. WRITING PROCESS

Writing is a messy process. It is not linear; it is recursive, "a loop rather than a straight line", where the writer writes, then plans or revises, and then writes again (Emig, 1971). Teachers can help students write more effectively by getting them to examine their own creative processes. Although the process of writing is essentially idiosyncratic, writers usually work through a few basic phases. Students can be shown the different stages in the production of a piece of writing and be encouraged to discover what works best for them. Students can be shown the basic phases of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising (editing and proofreading), and presenting. The "writing process is the thinking processes that go on during writing" (Crowhurst, 1988, p. 7). The writing process can be summarized as follows.

Prewriting

- Using prewriting techniques to gather ideas.
- Choosing a purpose and an audience.
- Ordering ideas.

Drafting

- Putting ideas down on paper.
- Exploring new ideas during writing.

Revising

- Editing: considering ideas and organization.
- Proofreading: correcting errors including sentence structure, usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Polishing.

Presenting

- Sharing writing

3.2.2. DEVELOPING WRITING TECHNIQUES

Writing Folders and Portfolios

Students' writing folders are collections of the students' in-process writing. During an English language arts course, students will produce a number of compositions. Some will reflect the entire writing process but some will

reflect only parts of it. For example, a student might begin five different writing pieces. The student might complete the pre-writing for all five, but terminate three of them after completing a first draft. Two other pieces might reflect the complete revision process. One of these might be selected for presentation and/or grading.

A simple letter-size file folder or a manilla folder can be used to store the various compositions as well as checklists, editors' comments, and student and teacher evaluations. Writing folders can be made from Bristol board or a similar light cardboard. Separate sections can be kept for ideas, notes, and first drafts; for work in progress; and for final drafts.

Sample Writing Folder

→ folds ←

Ideas	Revise	Final Drafts
Notes	Edit	
	Proofread	

Writing folders play an important role in the language arts classroom. They are places to sift, sort, and store students' pre-writing notes, drafts, checklists, and feedback. The feedback includes graded compositions.

Writing portfolios are also places where students can store their writing.

They are similar to artists' portfolios--collections of drafts and of exemplary and polished work. At term-end or course-end, students can select from their writing folders those compositions that they feel best represent their writing abilities and progress to include in their portfolios.

One of the major values of writing portfolios is the invitation they offer to students to assess themselves.

Self-assessment prompts such as the following can help focus the task:

- I want to show this to ... because ...
- I like this because it shows that I can ...
- The strongest aspect of this writing is ...
- I spent a lot of time ...
- This shows that I am getting better at ...
- If I could change something, I would ...
- I would now like to ...
- A specific improvement over past writing is ...
- A skill to work on in future assignments is ...

When portfolios are used as a means of evaluation, a guide should be given to the students so they can understand how they are being judged.

A sample set of guidelines follows.

Sample Guidelines for Writing Portfolios

1. Select the best public and informal writing you have. (Public writing is intended for an audience beyond self.)
2. Place the public writing, all of the drafts, the pre-writing activity (e.g., taped discussion of small group brainstorming), and your best informal writing in the front of your portfolio.
3. Write a one-page explanation of why you selected those particular pieces and what the selections say about you as a writer. Consider weaknesses, strengths, areas that have improved, and areas that still require improvement. It is important that the teachers make comments which can help students grow and can validate them as writers.

General

- Strong writing voice. I can hear someone behind those words.
- I can picture this.
- I know just what you mean. I've felt this way too.
- You are losing my attention. Make this part a little more specific.

Beginnings and Endings

- Strong introduction. It makes me want to read this paper.
- Your ending came so quickly that I felt I missed something.
- Your wrap-up really captured the whole mood of the paper.

- The conclusions seemed a little weak. I felt let down.

Organization

- This was very well organized. I could follow it easily.
- I am confused about how this fits.
- I am not sure what the focus of the paper is.
- How is this connected to the sentence or idea before it?
- This sentence or paragraph seems overloaded. Too much happens too fast and I cannot follow.

Clarity

- Can you add detail here? I cannot see the whole picture.
- Good description. I could make a movie of this.
- Adding some physical description would help me see this more clearly.
- Tell me more about this. I need more information.
- An example here would help us support your case more willingly.
- The use of dialogue here would help me see this person more vividly.
- I am not sure what you mean. Let's talk.

Structure and Language

- Notice that you have a number of short sentences here. Can you combine them to improve the flow?
- This sentence is a whopper! Break it up, please.
- Good word choice. It really captures the essence of what you are saying.
- Your language seems a bit overblown. I do not hear you talking and that distracts me.

Usage and Mechanics

- Oops! You changed tenses and confused me.
- You switched from the third person to the first. I can understand it, but it does distract.
- You capitalize words randomly. Let me sit down with you in workshop and show you some things.
- Break your work into sentences so I can more clearly see which ideas are related.

4. RESOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. RESOURCES

4.1.1 HUMAN

Research Group:

- Adriana Prado
- Melva Paucar

Informants

- Teachers on the English Area of “27 de Febrero” High School
- Students of 9th and 10th years of basic education
- Authorities of the researched institution

Institutional

- U. N. L.
- “27 de Febrero” Technical National High School

4.1.2. MATERIALS

- Office material
- Books
- Computer
- Printer
- Scanner

4.1.3 METHODS

The Scientific Method.- Any scientific research followed an ordered and complex process which needs a strict procedure to describe the events during period of observation, so we selected the scientific method because their characteristics seem to be the most suitable.

This scientific method let us, state problem the general and specific objectives and based on them we formulated the corresponding hypothesis which guided all the research process.

This method was used in the searching of the theoretical- scientific fundamentals to explain the relation of the variables in the present work, and also to state the most pertinent recommendations according to the conclusions that we reached, the same that served to contribute with some ideas to improve the reading and writing skills with the students of 9th and 10th years at “27 de Febrero” High School inside the English language process.

Descriptive Method.- We also used the descriptive method because it guided us to demonstrate the main purpose of the research, to describe the problematic that the group found in this educative institution, to describe the variables of the stated hypothesis as cause and effect and we described coherently all the researching work presenting the results and

supporting the conclusions. This method also served to describe the strategies and techniques that the teachers use to develop the reading and writing skills during the English Language teaching learning process.

Analytic- Synthetic Method.- This method also served to analyze the main results that we got through the instruments applied in the field work and which helped us to prove our hypothesis based on the results of major tendencies. It also was helpful to analyze the fundamentals of the theoretical frame which supported the verification of the stated hypothesis.

Explicative Method.- It was used, in the explanation of all the results that we got in the field work contrasting them with the theoretical referents. It let us, to identify the strategies and techniques that the teachers apply into the English Language teaching learning process.

We used the descriptive statistics which served to represent the data in tables, squares and graphs to get a better comprehension of the information.

4.2. TECHNIQUES, INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

To obtain the empiric information we applied the following techniques and instruments.

A **Survey** was applied to obtain information about the English Teaching Learning process and to know what kind of strategies and techniques the teachers apply to develop the reading and writing skills with the students of 9th and 10th years of basic education of the researched High School. It was applied to teachers and students with a previous elaborated questionnaire which contained closed questions with indicators that helped to prove the stated hypothesis.

After we apply the research instruments we processed the data through the following steps:

We **tabulated** the collected data, using the descriptive statistics for the closed questions and unifying criteria for the questions that include reasons.

Then we **organized** the empiric information taking into account the questions that proved the first hypothesis and the ones that helped to prove the second one so that we described them orderly.

After that we **represented** the obtained data in statistic tables and graphs which showed the data in frequencies and percentages that let to **analyze** and **interpret** the empiric information contrasting it with the theoretical referents which helped us to prove the hypothesis.

To **prove** the hypothesis we used the descriptive statistics with tables and percentages which helped to analyze the results and to state some valuable recommendations based on the gotten conclusions keeping in mind the objectives that guided this research.

4.3. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The teacher’s population is formed by 5 English teachers who work with 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at the researched High School.

The students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education are 326, this population is represented in the following chart:

COURSES-PARALELLS	“A”	“B”	“C”	“D”	“E”	“F”	TOTAL
9 th Year of Basic Education	29	28	30	30	27	24	168
10 th Year of Basic Education	34	34	33	34	23		158
TOTAL							326

As we can see the population in 9th and 10th years is a little big. Therefore, the group has considered convenient to take a sample using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{PQ \times N}{E^2}$$

$$(N-1) \text{ ----- } - 0,25$$

K2

PQ = First quartile (0,25)

N= Population

n = sample

K = Constant of proportionality (2)

E = Error of Sample (10%, 0,1)

$$n = \frac{0,25 \times 326}{(0,1)^2}$$

$$325 \text{ ----- } - 0,25$$

(2) 2

81,5

$$n = \text{-----}$$

0,01

$$325 \text{ ----- } - 0,25$$

4

81,5

n= -----

325 (0,0025) -0,25

n= 81,5

n = -----

0,5625

n= 144.8

n= 145

For this reason we applied the surveys to 145 students of 9th and 10th Years of Basic Education who we show below. To do the sample distribution we applied the following formula and the result must be multiplied by the total of each course.

$n = \frac{n}{N}$

N

N = 0,44

SAMPLE BY PARALELLS

COURSE S	STUDENT'S POPULATION	PARALLEL S	SAMPLE BY PARALLE L	SAMPL E TOTAL
9th Year of Basic Education	168	A	13	74
		B	12	
		C	13	
		D	13	
		E	12	
		F	11	
10th Year of Basic Education	158	A	15	71
		B	15	
		C	15	
		D	15	
		E	11	
TOTAL	326			145

5. RESULTS

5.1. TEACHERS' SURVEY

A: Hypothesis No. 1

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at "27 de Febrero" Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

1. Does your students like reading in English?

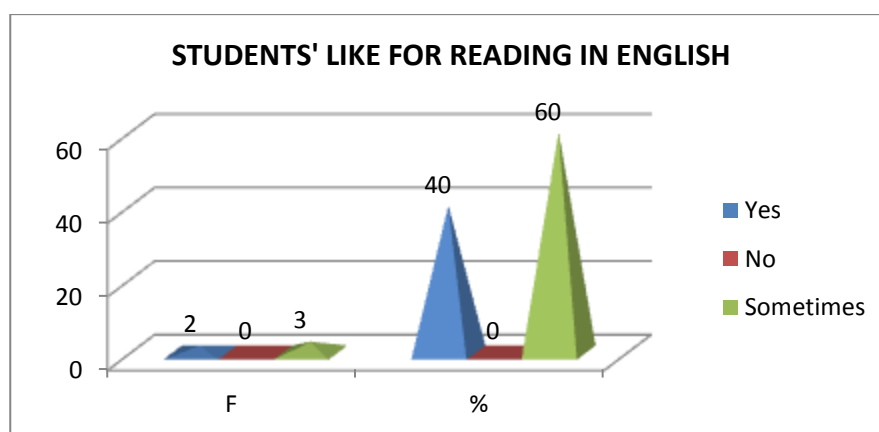
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' LIKE FOR READING IN ENGLISH	F	%
Yes	2	40
No	0	0
Sometimes	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

As we can see in the results 60% of the teachers answered that the students only sometimes like reading and 40% of them said that the students like to read in English.

Reading is a hard skill that needs to be practiced constantly if we want to enable the students to become proficient readers. So that the classroom reading activities are not enough, the teachers have to work the needs of all levels of readers. But, if the students do not like reading we think that the teachers must stimulate them to read. A strategy for improving reading abilities is to work with graded readers that can be developed as extensive reading activities.

2. How many readings do you develop per unit? Mark with an X

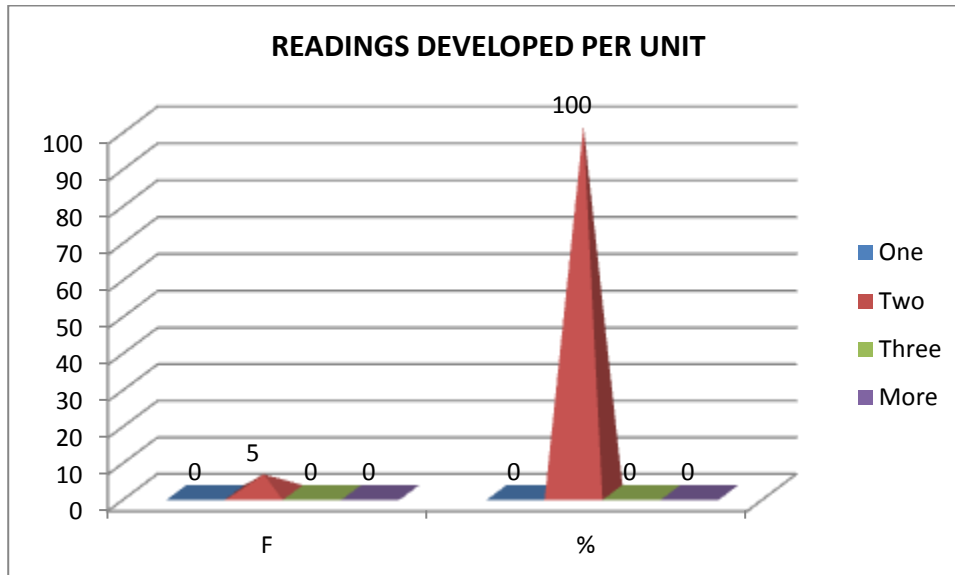
a) Statistics Chart

READINGS DEVELOPED PER UNIT	F	%
One	0	0
Two	5	100
Three	0	0
More	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

The results show us that 100% of teachers said that they develop two readings per unit because those are part of the Our World through English Book.

Reading is a transaction between the text and the reader. As students read, they search for and construct meaning based on what they bring to the text and what the text brings to them. But, two readings developed in classroom are not enough if we want to develop fluent and proficient readers who are knowledgeable about the reading process. For that reason teachers must be aware that they are the only people who can encourage and oblige students to read in English as an extra class activity.

3. Do you apply specific strategies to teach the students to read in English?

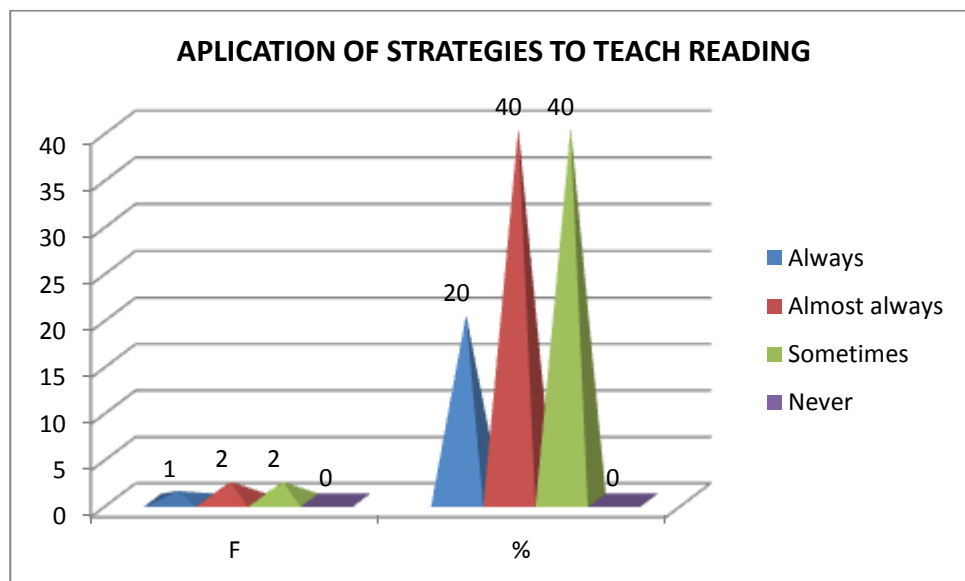
a) Statistics Chart

FREQUENCY IN APPLICATION OF STRATEGIES TO TEACH READING	F	%
Always	1	20
Almost always	2	40
Sometimes	2	40
Never	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

40% of teachers said that they almost always apply strategies to teach reading, 40% of them told us that they sometimes work with reading strategies and 20% of them answered that they always develop reading strategies in class.

Effective readers are active readers who use a repertoire of comprehension strategies before, during, and after interacting with texts: **Before reading**, strategic readers preview the text by looking at the title and the text to evoke relevant thoughts, memories, and associations. They build background by questioning themselves to see what they already know about the topic, the form in which the topic is presented, and the vocabulary that might communicate the ideas about the topic. They set purposes for reading by asking themselves what they want to learn or experience by reading the selection; **During reading**, strategic readers create a dialogue with the author, striving to reformulate what the author is saying. They check their understanding of the text by paraphrasing the author's words and they monitor it by imagining, inferring, predicting, and confirming. They integrate their new understanding with existing knowledge. They are continually revising their purposes for reading as they read; **after reading**, the strategic readers summarize what they have been reading and contemplate their first impressions. They reflect and take second looks to develop more thoughtful and

critical interpretations of the text. Finally, they make applications of the ideas encountered in the text by extending these ideas to broader perspectives. So that the teachers' work teaching reading strategies is not easy, it requires a constant practice and application of the right strategy before, during and after reading.

4. Do you encourage to your students to read extra material in English?

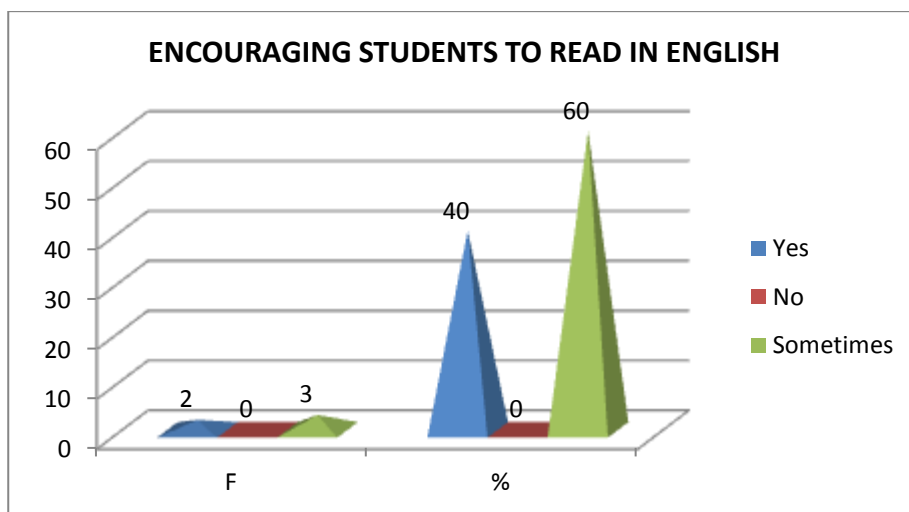
a) Statistics Chart

ENCORAGING STUDENTS TO READ EXTRA-MATERIAL	F	%
Yes	2	40
No	0	0
Sometimes	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

60% of teachers answered that they sometimes encourage students to read and 40% of them told us that they encourage students to read extra-material in English.

The development of the reading skill involves a series of steps or sub skills that must be developed during the reading practice, that is to say that the readers needs to get speed around 200 or 220 words per minute; they should be able to recognize contractions, scan some words, interpret the meaning, the context and understand the purpose of the reading. But, if teachers do not practice extensive reading with their students, it would be impossible to get proficient readers. The teachers should encourage the students to read but they must select the appropriate level, vocabulary, and text. It requires that teachers work with graded readers that must be developed using appropriate reading strategies.

5. What techniques do you apply to develop the reading comprehension? Mark with an x.

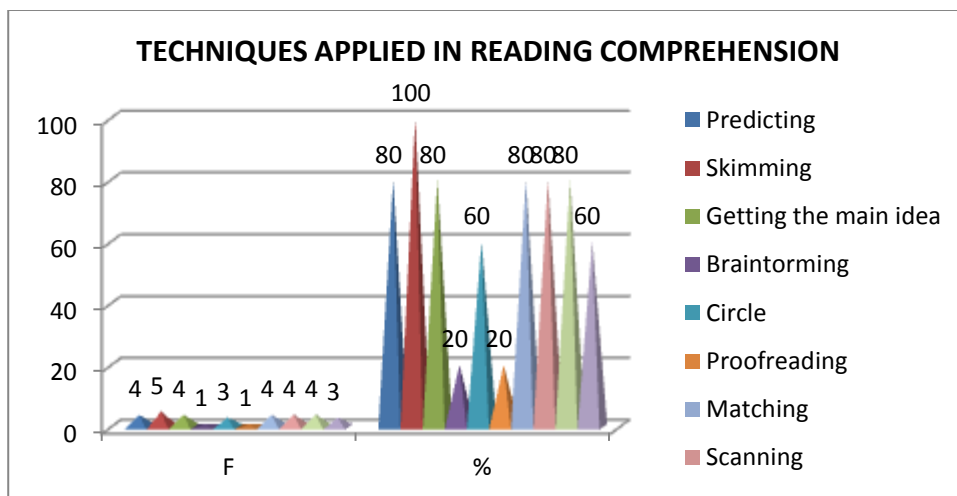
a) Statistics Chart

TECHNIQUES APPLIED IN READING COMPREHENSION	F	%
Predicting	4	80
Skimming	5	100
Getting the main idea	4	80
Braintorming	1	20
Circle	3	60
Proofreading	1	20
Matching	4	80
Scanning	4	80
Highlightning	4	80
Questioning	3	60

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

As the graph shows 100% of teachers matched that they apply skimming; 80% said that they work with predicting, getting the main idea, matching, scanning, highlighting and questioning; 60% of them matched circle and questioning and 20% pointed out brainstorming and proofreading.

As we can see in the results some teachers are confused in the application of some reading comprehension techniques because they pointed to proofreading and brainstorming which are writing techniques. We know that reading comprehension is a difficult skill which needs to be practiced every class and the application of the right techniques: before reading we can work with skimming, scanning and predicting that helps students to set up the purpose, predict the context and what they are going to learn about it; during reading getting the main idea, highlighting and matching can help students to confirm, understand and infer the author's ideas; and, after reading they can work with questioning or graphic organizers that let them check and build up a certain level of understanding.

6. Do you apply post-reading techniques to verify the reading comprehension?

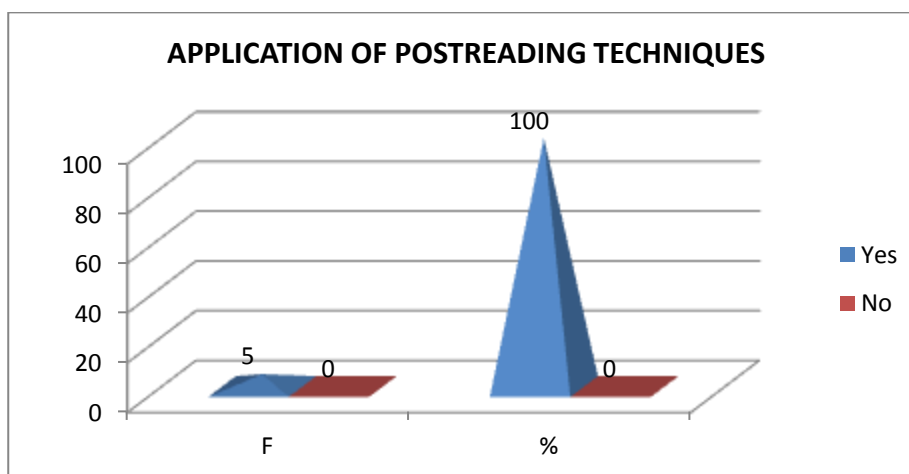
a) Statistics Chart

APPLICATION OF POSTREADING TECHNIQUES	F	%
Yes	5	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

100% of teachers answered that they apply post-reading techniques and they mentioned fill in tables and matching exercises.

Generally teachers just encourage students to read but they do not teach them why they must do it or what is worse they do not do anything after reading what means that they are not applying post-

reading techniques that help to verify the level of comprehension after reading. So that, It is necessary to apply post reading techniques to verify the reading comprehension such as: graphic organizers e.g. hierarchical, column compare, scale compare, arrays, network, tree column and so on, flow charts e.g. scale, charts, spider maps, opinion charts and so on, summaries, questions and answers and so on which let the students to represent what they have understood from the reading and in this way the teacher would be able to determine what the students level of comprehension is.

B: Hypothesis No. 2

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009”

7. Do your students like to write in English? Mark with an x.

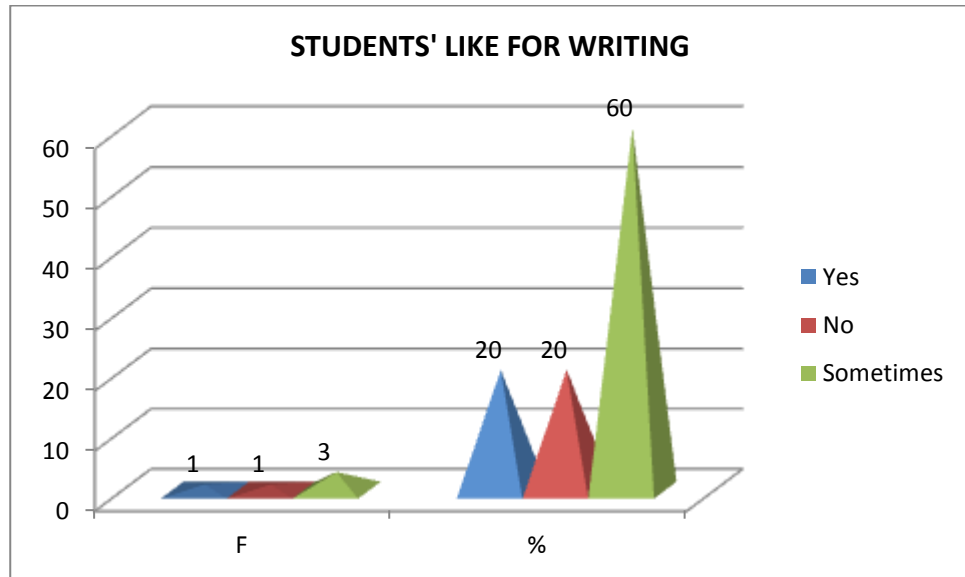
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' LIKE FOR WRITING	F	%
Yes	1	20
No	1	20
Sometimes	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers’ survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

The graph indicates that 60% of teachers answered that their students sometimes like writing, 20% of them told us that their students do not like writing and 20% of them said that their students like writing in English.

Writing in English involves a process where symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences, although again we can be said to be writing if we are merely making list of words, as in inventories of items such as shopping lists. As a rule, however, we do not write just one sentence or even a number of unrelated sentences. We produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways. The sequence

may be very short-perhaps only two or three sentences- but, because of the way the sentences have been put in order and linked together, they form a coherent whole. They form what we may call a “text”. So that teachers must give a lot of exposure their students by reading and they can get some skills to write in English. However, it is necessary that first work on motivational techniques because students do not like reading and writing neither.

8. Which of the following steps do you apply to teach the students to write in English?

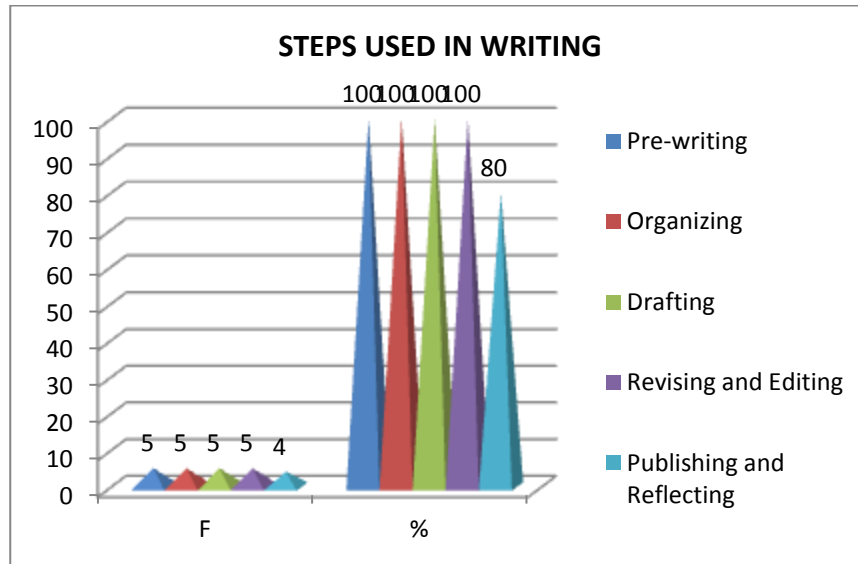
a) Statistics Chart

STEPS USED IN WRITING	F	%
Pre-writing	5	100
Organizing	5	100
Drafting	5	100
Revising and Editing	5	100
Publishing and Reflecting	4	80

Source: Teachers’ survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

100% of teachers answered that they develop the steps of: prewriting, organizing, drafting and revising and editing, 80% of teachers said that they include publishing and reflecting.

We know that in just one piece of writing the teacher should develop all the writing process; nevertheless if teachers omit one of the steps that means they do not practice the writing process where every step plays an important role, that is to say: **Pre-writing** centers on engaging students in the writing process and helps them discover what is important or true for them about any subject at a particular time. Writers must not only think about what they are going to say, but also about how they are going to say it. During the pre-drafting stage students need to establish, at least tentatively,

their purpose, audience, and form. **Drafting** involves producing a first draft. Momentum is the important issue as students focus their attention on the development of meaning and the flow of thought in their writing. **Revising and Editing**, first think of your rough draft as an invention in progress. All the parts are there, but you find that your invention will work better if it is put together a little differently. This is called revising. When you proofread, you polish up your spelling and grammar to eliminate mistakes. This is editing. **Publishing and Reflecting**, The first one is the way you present your finished product to others. Whether you publish a three-page science report or send a letter to the editor of your school paper, you can show pride in what you have written. Your final copy can be handwritten or typed. Either way, it should be neat and easy to read. And the second one presenting; you are an author whether you present a poem to one special friend or submit it to a magazine. Something you write can even be turned into a spoken presentation, like a play or a speech.

9. What techniques do you use to develop the written production?

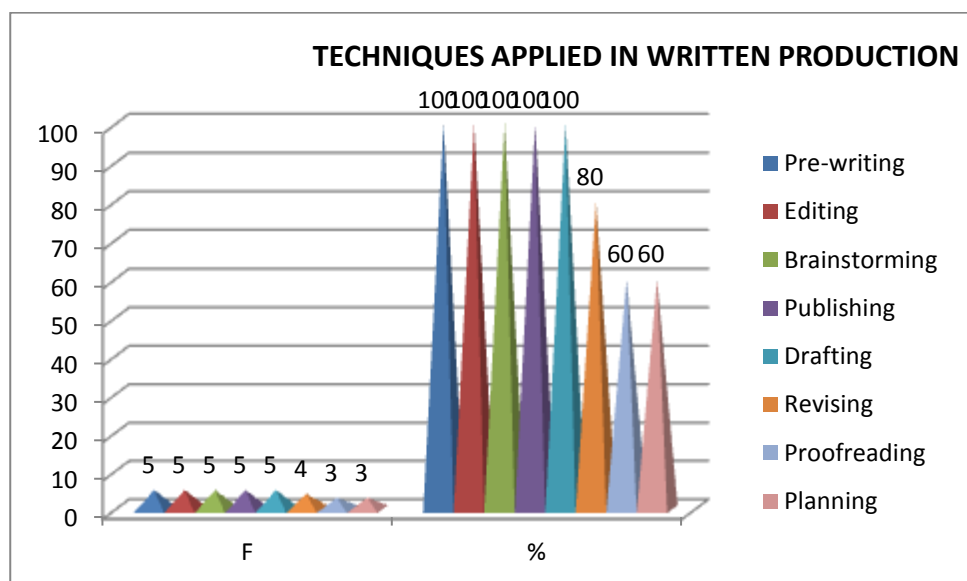
a) Statistics Chart

TECHNIQUES APPLIED IN WRITTEN PRODUCTION	F	%
Pre-writing	5	100
Editing	5	100
Brainstorming	5	100
Publishing	5	100
Drafting	5	100
Revising	4	80
Proofreading	3	60
Planning	3	60

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

100% of teachers mentioned that they work with pre-writing, editing, brainstorming, publishing and drafting, 80% mentioned revising and 60% pointed out proofreading and planning.

The application of the writing process also involves the use of the right techniques in every step that is to say that the first step **Pre-writing**: the writers should think the theme what they are going to write then **brainstorm** the ideas they come up, **organize** these ideas, **Plan** the main idea and detail into the paragraphs; Drafting includes techniques proofreading and rewriting; Revising and Editing are techniques that are part of the writing process; Finally publishing and reflecting are techniques that imply rewriting and polishing the text. So that we think that teachers should order the application of techniques according to the writing process. It would help them to carry out an ordered process and to improve the writing skills on their students.

10. How often do you send extra task to develop the writing skill?

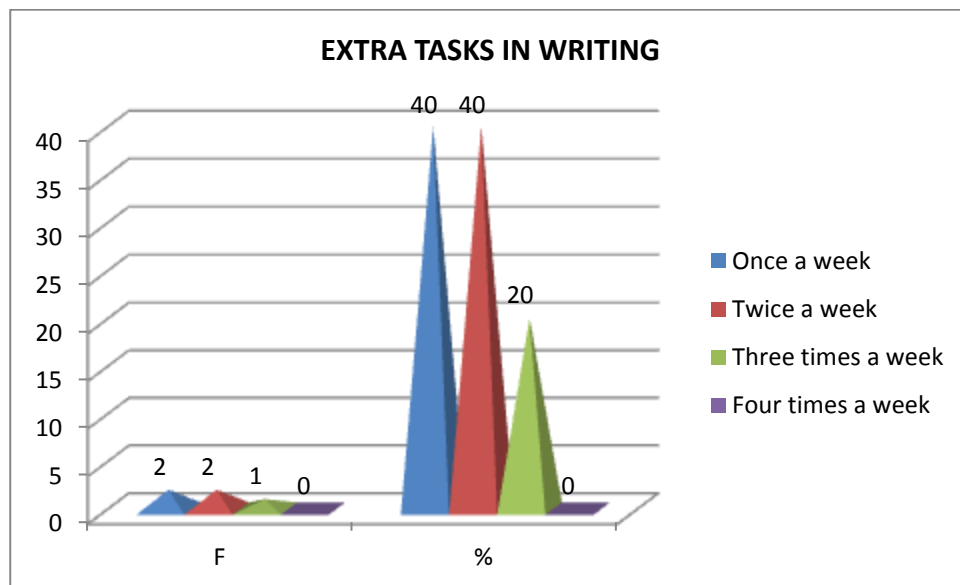
a) Statistics Chart

EXTRA-TASKS IN WRITING	F	%
Once a week	2	40
Twice a week	2	40
Three times a week	1	20
Four times a week	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

According to teachers' opinion 40% of them send extra writing activities once a week, other 40% said that they send twice a week and 20% of teachers answered that they send Three times a week.

The ability o writing needs to be developed through extensive writing, that is to say, through extra class activities that help students to form words, sentences, propositions and a paragraph. Most of the time writing in our language properly is difficult but it is much more difficult to write in a foreign language. It implies a process that encourages a lot of practice and persistence students want to produce something worth reading. So that teachers should send specific extra task activities to work in, but they should also give students enough strategies so that they can write efficiently.

11. What kind of written production do you develop with your Students?

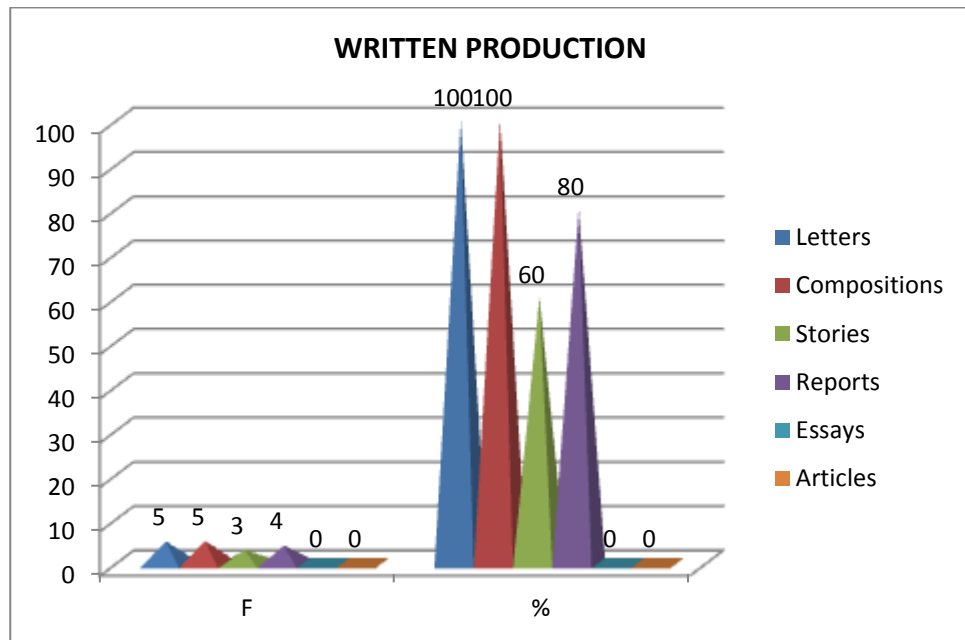
a) Statistics Chart

WRITTEN PRODUCTION	F	%
Letters	5	100
Compositions	5	100
Stories	3	60
Reports	4	80
Essays	0	0
Articles	0	0

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

100% of teachers said that they develop letters and compositions, 80% matched reports and 60% answered that they produce stories with their students.

The written production is hard with students of the first years in High School. Writing tasks which have whole texts as their outcome relate appropriately to the ultimate goal of those learners who need to write English in their social, educational, or professional lives. Some of our students know already what they need to be able to write in English. Others may be uncertain about the nature of their future

needs. The teachers' role is to build communicative potential. There are some students who have no identifiable needs, present or future, for written English, but who enjoy writing, who are motivated to use their language resources in producing stories, reviews, essays, and even poems, simply to practice and improve their English. By encouraging the written production of whole texts in the classroom, we can provide them with different motivations for writing.

12. What's the average of a group of your students in the English Subject in a term? Mark one with an x.

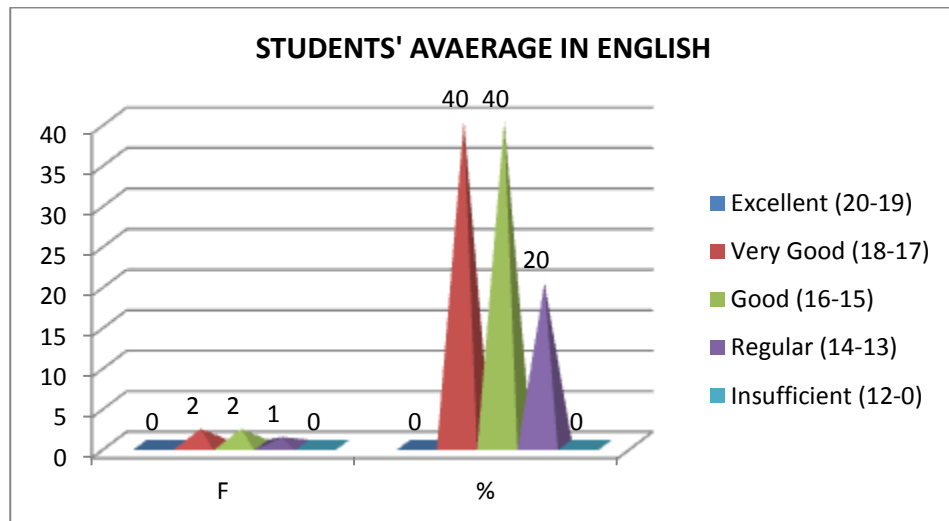
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' AVERAGE IN ENGLISH	F	%
Excellent (20-19)	0	0
Very Good (18-17)	2	40
Good (16-15)	2	40
Regular (14-13)	1	20
Insufficient (12-0)	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Source: Teachers' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

According to teachers' opinion 40% of their students are very good in English language, other 40% stated that their students are good and 20% of them mentioned that their students are regular in the English subject.

Some authors point out that the learning of a foreign language focus the integration of the four skills however with specific learning purposes the teachers can emphasize the use of one of the skill more deeply, in this way the students will have the chance to get a meaningful learning and know more about every skill. But according to the teachers' opinion most of students are very good and good in the English language and only few of them are placed in a regular level.

5.2. STUDENTS' SURVEY

A: Hypothesis No. 1

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at "27 de Febrero" Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

1. Do you like reading in English?

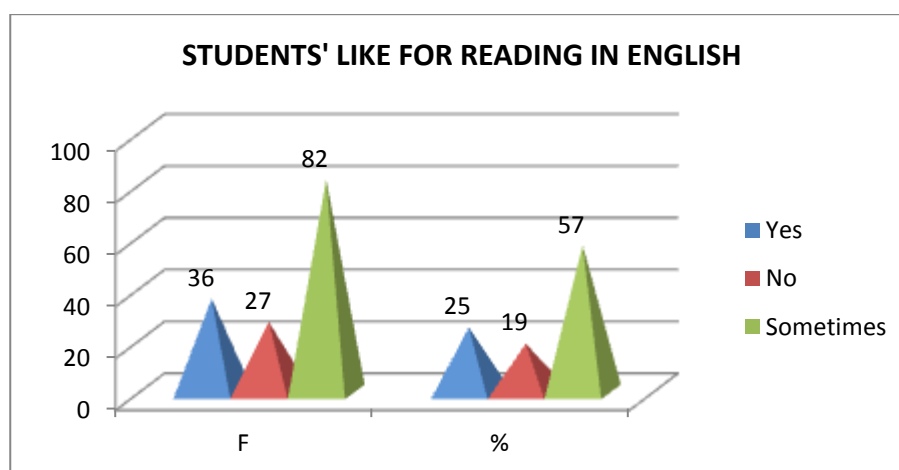
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' LIKE FOR READING IN ENGLISH	F	%
Yes	36	25
No	27	19
Sometimes	82	57
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

The graph shows us that 57% of the surveyed students said that they sometimes like reading, 25% of them answered that they like reading and 19% indicated that they do not like reading in English because it is so difficult.

Reading is a teaching medium that permit us have access to the knowledge in different manifestations and areas. But not only is access to the knowledge even the way to known, in the quality intellectual process, psychometric and attitudinally, where we are able to persuade, interpret, transform and smell of it to a reality. The reading permit us to known the nature, the technology and life of other countries and cultures, the happening in our world, country and it teaches us to have a correct position in front to the future. For that reason it is necessary that teachers encourage students to read, in that way students would develop certain pleasure to read and they will not need to be pressed to read in English.

2. How many readings does your teacher develop per unit? Mark with an X

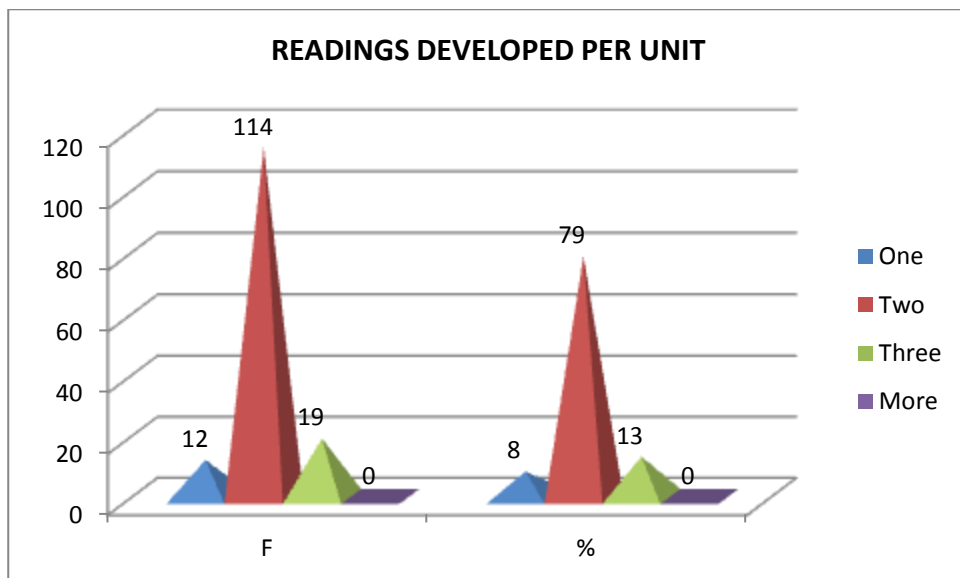
a) Statistics Chart

READINGS DEVELOPED PER UNIT	F	%
One	12	8
Two	114	79
Three	19	13
More	0	0
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

79% of students said that the teachers work with two readings per unit, 13% of them told us that three and 8% answered that one reading per unit.

Teachers and students surveys show that they agree in the number of reading per unit and we believe that is not enough two reading as an intensive reading process because they have just five periods the time per week, which is not enough to work with real reading material such as: magazines, newspapers, travel guides, pamphlets or others. It is a necessity that teachers work in extensive reading getting real readers according to the students' age and level so that they would help them to develop fluency in the reading skill.

3. Does your teacher apply specific strategies to teach you to read in English?

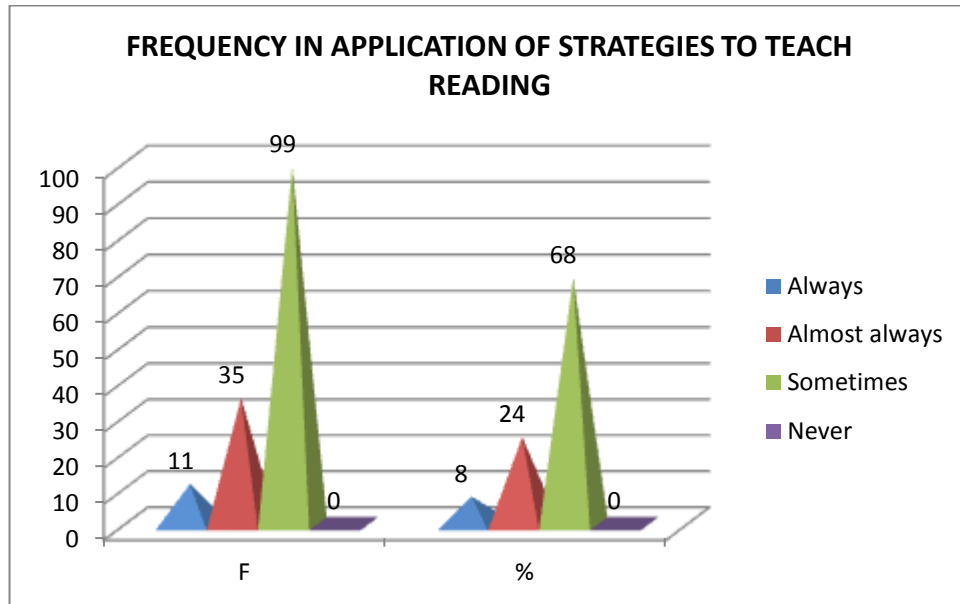
a) Statistics Chart

FREQUENCY APPLICATION STRATEGIES TEACH READING	IN OF TO	F	%
Always		11	8
Almost always		35	24
Sometimes		99	68
Never		0	0
TOTAL		145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

68% of students said that their teachers sometimes apply specific strategies to teach reading, 24% answered that almost always and only 8% matched that the teachers always applied specific strategies to teach students reading.

For normal reading rates (around 200-220 words per minute) an acceptable level of comprehension is above 75%. Like listening, reading is a receptive skill and learners need lots of exposure to written English before they can produce for themselves. Reading helps learners extend their vocabulary and provides a variety of models for their own written skills. Teachers are often reluctant to spend on reading in class as they think it can be done at home, but

it is important that we equip learners with the strategies they need to read widely outside class such as: identifying the reading purpose, use grapheme rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding, use efficient silent reading techniques relatively rapid comprehension, skim the text for main ideas, scan the text for specific information, use semantic mapping or clustering, guess when you aren't certain, analyze vocabulary, distinguish between literal and implied meanings, guessing meaning from context, finding main ideas., reading period and class readers.

4. Does your teacher encourage you to read extra material in English?

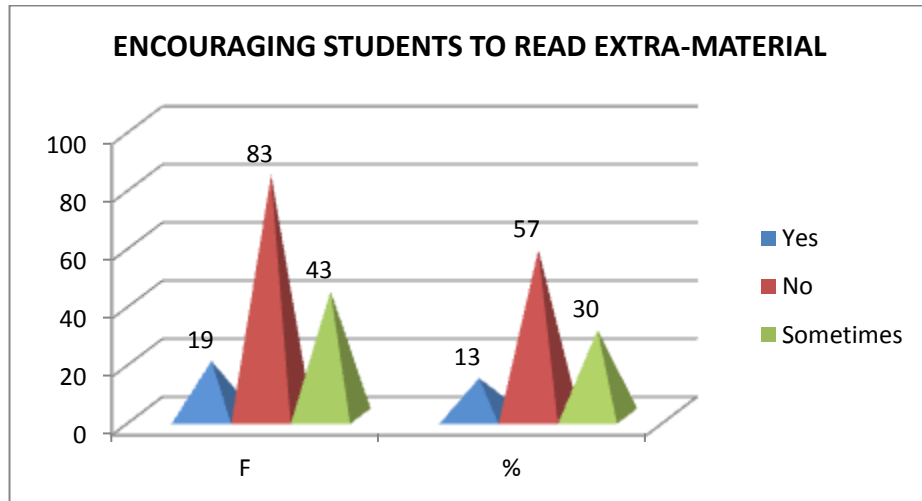
a) Statistics Chart

ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO READ EXTRA-MATERIAL	F	%
Yes	19	13
No	83	57
Sometimes	43	30
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and Analysis

The graph shows us that 57% of students answered that their teachers do not encourage them to practice extensive reading, 30% of them told us that sometimes and 13% manifested that the teachers encourage them to read extra material.

More recent research on teaching reading has shown that technology is a good alternative for teachers to help students improve their reading skills in the English language process because by combining interactive techniques through internet students can get reachable skills in reading and teachers can easily work with graded readers according to their students' needs. So that it is a good alternative for teachers to sent extra class reading activities that can be developed by students in English but they should encourage students to practice extensive reading.

5. What techniques does your teacher apply to develop the reading comprehension? Mark with an x.

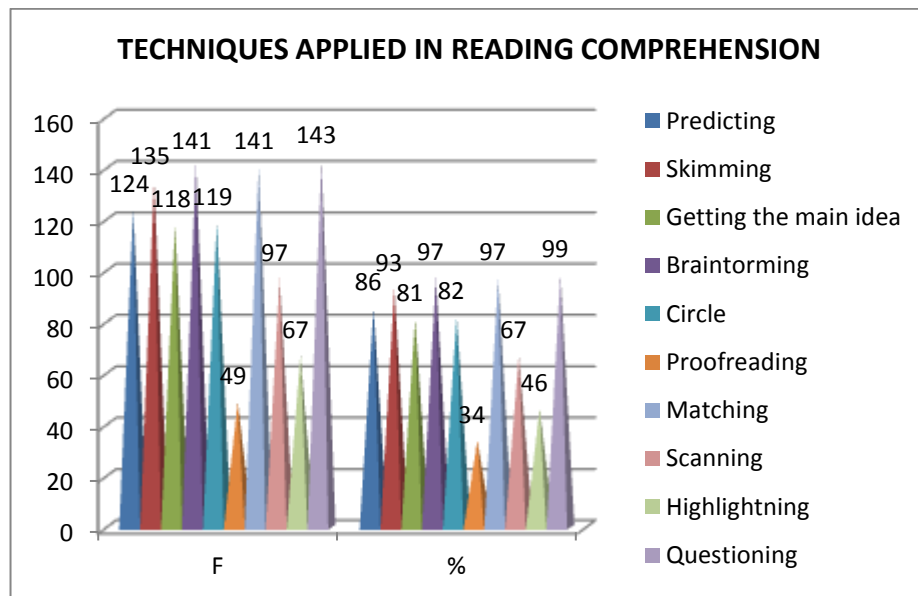
a) Statistics Chart

TECHNIQUES APPLIED IN READING COMPREHENSION	F	%
Predicting	124	86
Skimming	135	93
Getting the main idea	118	81
Braintorming	141	97
Circle	119	82
Proofreading	49	34
Matching	141	97
Scanning	97	67
Highlightning	67	46
Questioning	143	99

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

a) Graphic Representation



b) Interpretation and analysis

According to the students opinion 75% of teachers work using other techniques and they mention filling in the table, 63% of them matched questions and answers, 14% pointed out summaries and 8% indicated the graphic organizers.

We know that reading is a difficult skill especially when it is developed in a foreign language, so teachers need to be aware that there are actually three main levels or strands of comprehension: literal, interpretative and critical comprehension. The teachers should encourage the students to read but they must select the appropriate level, vocabulary, and text. The first level is for children because they understand word by word but the students of 8th, 9th and 10th years of High School must be able to develop the second and third level, that is to say, the interpretative and referential comprehension which involves a thinking process such as: understanding the main idea, drawing conclusions, making generalizations and predicting outcomes such as: rearrange ideas or topics discussed in the text, explain the author's purpose, summarize the main idea, differentiate between facts and deduce conclusions and elaborate a graphic organizer that explains what they have read.

6. Mark which post-reading the techniques does your teacher apply to verify the reading comprehension?

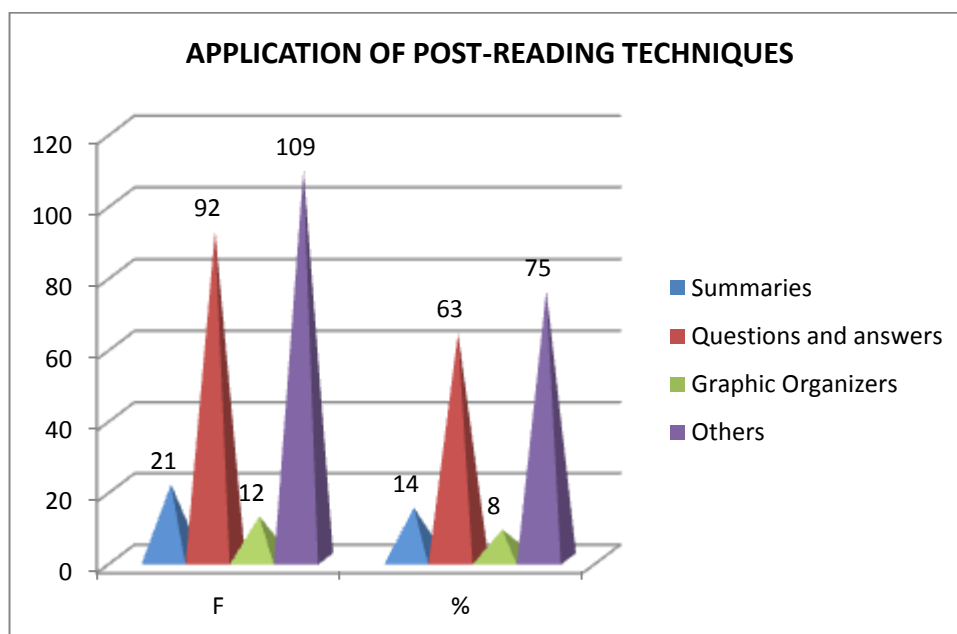
a) **Statistic Chart**

APPLICATION OF POSTREADING TECHNIQUES	F	%
Summaries	21	14
Questions and answers	92	63
Graphic Organizers	12	8
Others	109	75

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) **Graphic Representation**



c) Interpretation and analysis

According to the students opinion 75% of teachers work using other techniques and they mention filling in the table, 63% of them matched questions and answers, 14% pointed out summaries and 8% indicated the graphic organizers.

We know that reading is a difficult skill especially when it is developed in a foreign language, so teachers need to be aware that there are actually three main levels or strands of comprehension: literal, interpretative and critical comprehension. The teachers should encourage the students to read but they must select the appropriate level, vocabulary, and text. The first level is for children because they understand word by word but the students of 8th, 9th and 10th years of High School must be able to develop the second and third level, that is to say, the interpretative and referential comprehension which involves a thinking process such as: understanding the main idea, drawing conclusions, making generalizations and predicting outcomes such as: rearrange ideas or topics discussed in the text, explain the author's purpose, summarize the main idea, differentiate between facts and deduce conclusions and elaborate a graphic organizer that explains what they have read.

B: Hypothesis No. 2

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009”

7. Do you like to write in English? Mark with an x.

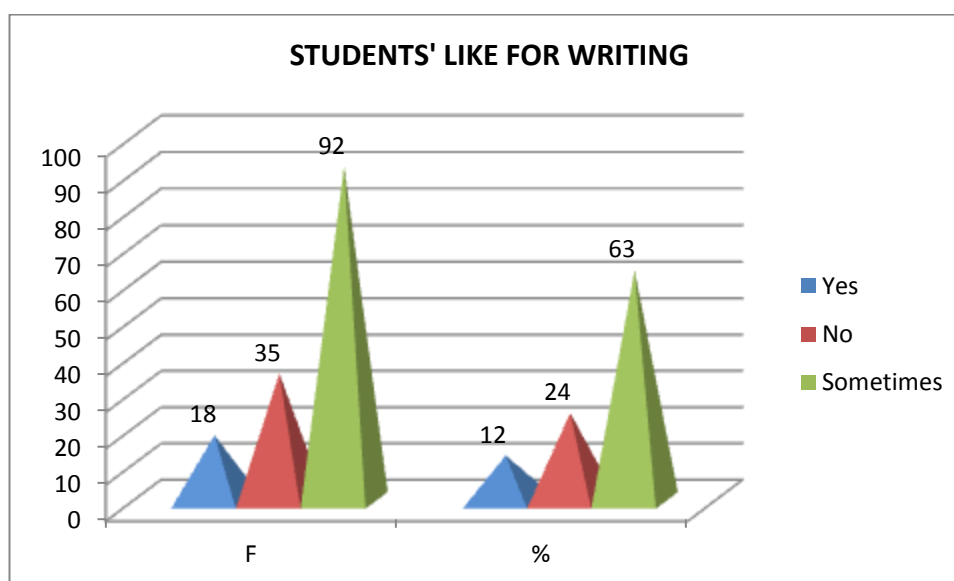
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' LIKE FOR WRITING	F	%
Yes	18	12
No	35	24
Sometimes	92	63
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

63% of students answered that they sometimes like writing; other 24% of them said that they do not like to write in English and only 12% manifested that they like writing in the foreign language.

There is a widely held belief that in order to be good writer a student needs to read a lot. This makes sense. It benefits students to be exposed to models of different text types so that they can develop awareness of what constitutes good writing. The students should be encouraged to bring their own schemata to bear on understanding texts, and in writing to develop their own ideas, offer their own critical analysis, and find their own “voice” the role of the teacher must be one of facilitator and coach, not an authoritative director and arbiter. As a facilitator, the teacher offers guidance in helping students to engage in the thinking process of composing but, in a spirit of respect for student opinion, must not impose his or her own thoughts on student writing. So that students would be more motivated to write in the English language.

8. Which of the following steps does your teacher apply to teach you to write in English?

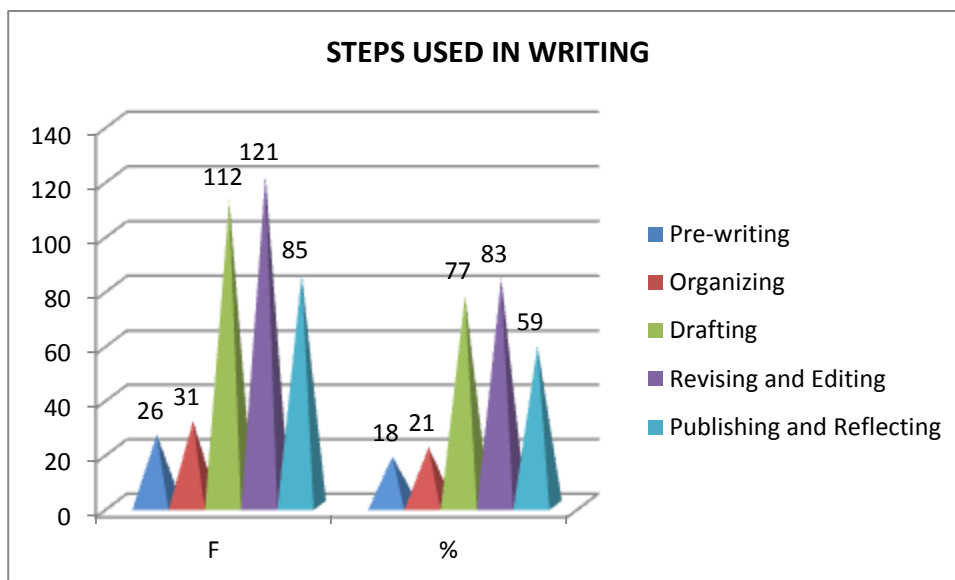
a) Statistics Chart

STEPS USED IN WRITING	F	%
Pre-writing	26	18
Organizing	31	21
Drafting	112	77
Revising and Editing	121	83
Publishing and Reflecting	85	59

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

83% of students answered that their teachers apply revising and editing, 77% pointed out drafting, 59% mentioned publishing and reflecting, 21% indicated organizing and 18% mentioned pre-writing.

The most important insight that recent research into writing has given us is that good writers appear to go through certain processes which lead to successful pieces of written work. They start off with an overall plan in their heads. They think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. They then draft out sections of the writing and as they work on them they are constantly reviewing, revising, and editing their work. In other words. We can characterize good writers as people who have a sense of purpose, a sense of audience, and a sense of direction in their writing. But, all of this implies develop all the steps in the writing process and not just some of them because unskilled writers tend to be much more haphazard and much less confident in their approach.

9. What techniques does your teacher use to develop the written production?

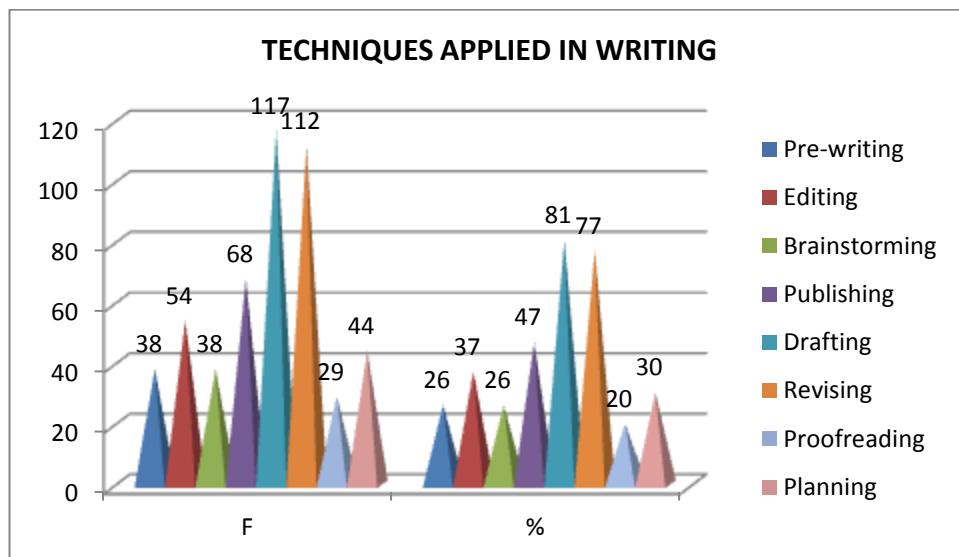
a) Statistics Chart

TECHNIQUES APPLIED IN WRITING	F	%
Pre-writing	38	26
Editing	54	37
Brainstorming	38	26
Publishing	68	47
Drafting	117	81
Revising	112	77
Proofreading	29	20
Planning	44	30

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



Interpretation and analysis

In the question about the techniques that teachers use to develop the writing skill we got the following answers: 87% drafting, 77% revising, 47% publishing, 37% editing, 30% planning, 26% pre-writing and brainstorming and 20% proofreading.

Effectively writing means the application of all the before mentioned techniques but in an ordered process that help students to get certain fluency in producing their ideas coherently. We think that students can start off with an overall **plan** in their heads. They think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. They then **draft out** sections of the writing and as they work on them they are constantly **reviewing, revising, and editing** their work; **prewriting** activities facilitate the planning for both the product and the process. Prewriting techniques teach students to write down their ideas quickly in raw for brainstorming is therefore a group technique for stimulating creative thinking. Individual students can also use this technique to generate material for their writing, once they master it. In fact, competent/ good writers use brainstorming to generate ideas, bits of text, etc., before they set out to write and they continue to use it while writing. So brainstorming is a versatile thinking tool that can be used at any stage of the writing process.

10. How often does your teacher send extra task to develop the writing skill?

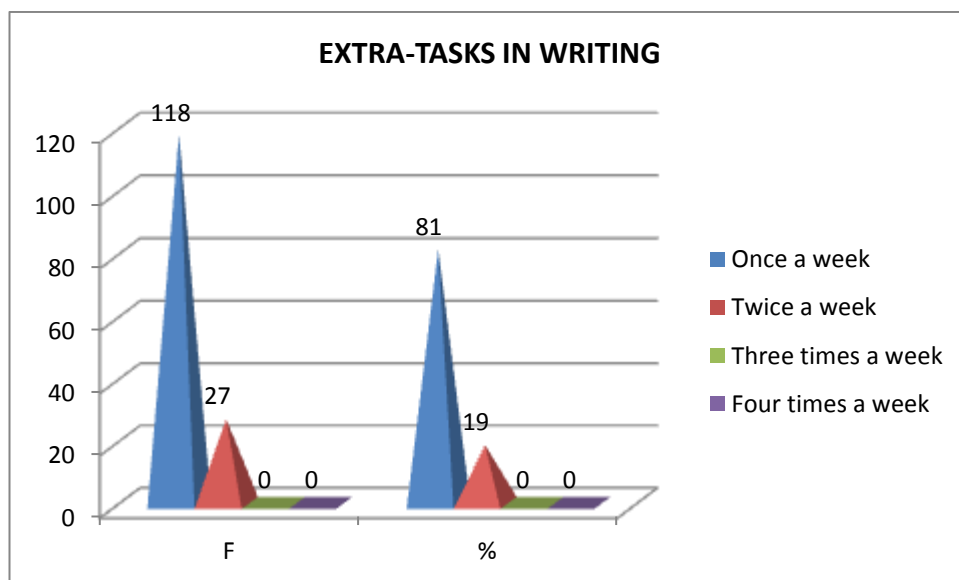
a) Statistics Chart

EXTRA-TASKS IN WRITING	F	%
Once a week	118	81
Twice a week	27	19
Three times a week	0	0
Four times a week	0	0
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

81% of students said that their teachers send extra class writing activities once a week and 19% answered that their teachers work with extra task activities twice a week.

Writing is basic a process of communicating. It generates ideas they encourage a free flow of thoughts and help students to discover both what they want to say and how to say it on paper. Extensive writing is necessary because it gives the students more confidence to write and express their thoughts. But it also requires of the teachers' guide and control because they must be able to produce an acceptable grammatical system, use discursive markers, make sense of every paragraph convey links and connection between events and communicative such relation as main idea, supporting idea, new information, generalization and exemplification.

11. What kind of written production do you develop with your teacher in class?

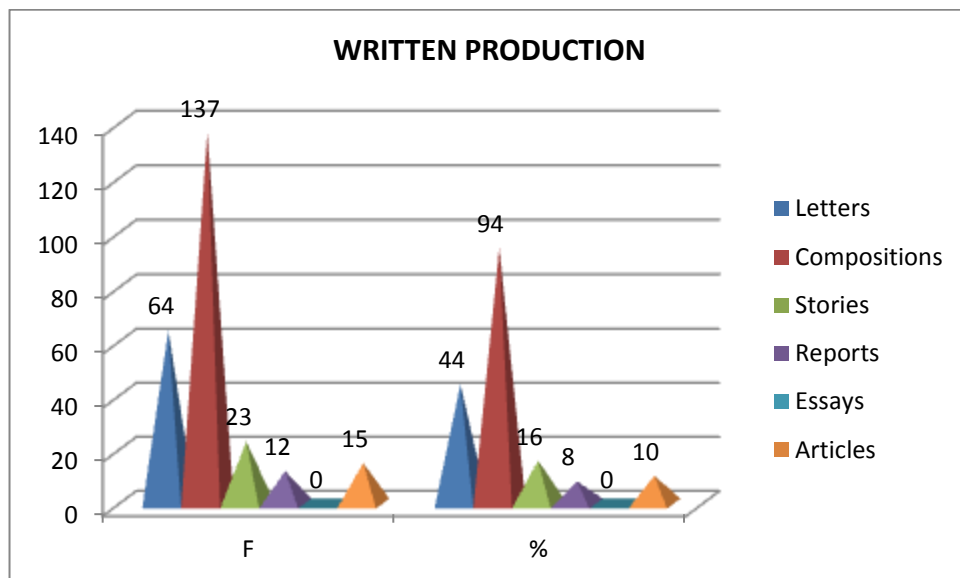
a) Statistics Chart

WRITTEN PRODUCTION	F	%
Letters	64	44
Compositions	137	94
Stories	23	16
Reports	12	8
Essays	0	0
Articles	15	10

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation

94% of students matched that their written production is compositions, 44% of them mentioned the letters, 16% stories, 10% articles and 8% reports.

The results according to students' opinion their written production is always compositions, which is not enough to develop the writing skill because written products are often the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills, skills that not every speaker develops naturally.

There are many kinds of production in writing that the teachers can use with their students in class in order to help them to write. They must diversify the written production through biographies, lyrics, recipes, stories, reports, articles, letters, invitations, scripts, speeches, memoranda, e-mails, instructions and others.

12. What's your average in the English Subject in a term? Mark one with an x.

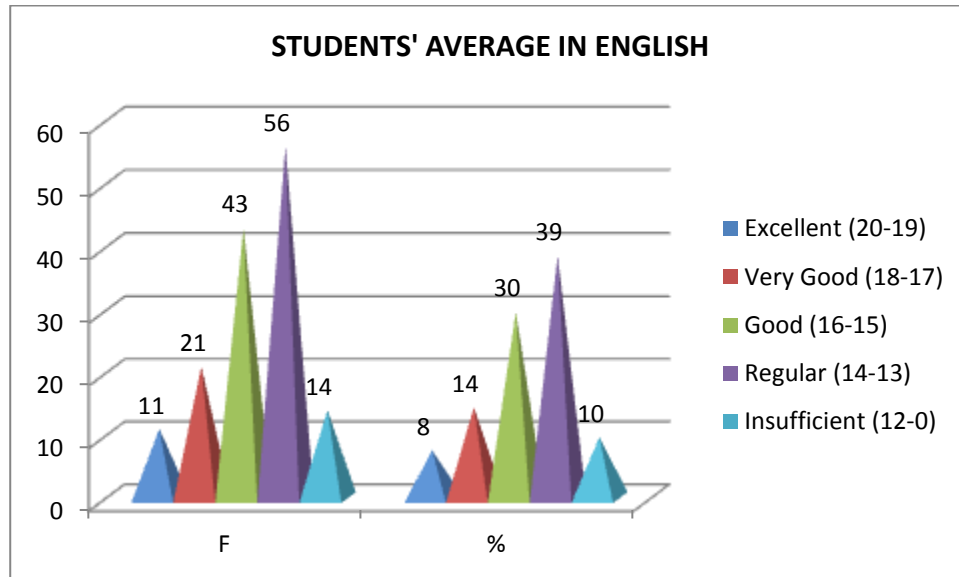
a) Statistics Chart

STUDENTS' AVERAGE IN ENGLISH	F	%
Excellent (20-19)	11	8
Very Good (18-17)	21	14
Good (16-15)	43	30
Regular (14-13)	56	39
Insufficient (12-0)	14	10
TOTAL	145	100

Source: Students' survey

Elaboration: Research group

b) Graphic Representation



c) Interpretation and analysis

As we can see 39% of students placed themselves in a regular level in the English language, 30% held to be good at it, 14% indicated to be very good, 10% matched to be insufficient and 8% said to be Excellent.

According to teachers' opinion most of students are good in the English language but in the students' survey most of them are placed in a regular level what means that there are problems in reading and writing skills. If the teachers do not apply the right techniques to develop the reading comprehension and the written production, the students will not be able to read and write in English.

6. DISCUSSION

After we have made the exposition, discussion and analysis of the collected data through the surveys applied to the teachers and students of the “27 de Febrero” High school, we present the questions that helped us to prove the hypothesis stated in the thesis project.

6.1. HYPOTHESIS ONE

- **STATEMENT**

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

- **DEMONSTRATION**

We have the independent variable, which refers to the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers and the reading comprehension as dependent variable. And the questions that helped us to prove the first hypothesis were:

What refers to the students’ liking for readings in the question number **one**, we have that 60% of the teachers and 57% of students answered that they sometimes like reading in English, which means that students need a lot of encouragement to motivate them to read.

The question number **two** was about the readings developed per unit and 100% of teachers and 79% of students told us that the teachers just develop two readings per unit because those are part of the book, what means that these are not enough to develop the reading comprehension skill.

The question number **three** refers about the frequency of application of specific strategies to teach students reading comprehension and 40% of teachers and 68% of students answered that the application of these strategies is just sometimes by part of the teachers. Therefore we can say that if teachers do not apply specific strategies to develop reading comprehension it would be impossible to know the level of students in the reading skill.

The question number **four** we have that even when 60% of teachers said that they sometimes encourage students to read, 57% of students indicated that their teachers do not encourage students to read extra-material. Therefore with just classroom activities or intensive reading they will not develop an acceptable reading comprehension in the students.

In the question number **five**, which was about the techniques that the teachers apply to develop reading comprehension, in the teachers' survey the major percentages are for the right techniques. In the students' one 97 and 82% pointed to brainstorming and circle, which is not a reading techniques. So we can say that even when the most of the teachers recognize some reading techniques they are confused with them because they are not really applying reading comprehension techniques into the English language teaching learning process.

In the question number **six** we asked about the application of post-reading techniques and even when 100% of teachers said that they applied these after reading; 63% of students pointed out questions and answers and a very low percentage 8% matched graphic organizers which are the most recommendable post-reading techniques to verify students' reading comprehension.

- **DECISION**

After analyzing the obtained results in the applied survey to teachers as well as students the group accepts the first hypothesis which states that, the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th

years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

6.2. HYPOTHESIS TWO

- **STATEMENT**

The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009”

- **DEMONSTRATION**

Regarding to the second hypothesis we have the independent variable the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers and the dependent variable the development of the writing skill so we would analyze the obtained results in the questions below:

The question number **seven** is about the students’ liking to write in English, so 60% of the teachers and 63% of students answered that they sometimes like to write. We know that the writing process needs the motivation of students so that teachers’ role is to support this process.

In the question number **eight**, which was about the application of the writing process, 100% of the teachers said that they apply all the steps of the writing process, 83% and 77% of students just matched drafting, revising and editing and that means that teachers do not develop the writing process steps as an exclusive purpose into the classroom activities. Consequently we can say that the teachers are not supporting the written production with their students because they are not teaching them specific techniques involved in the writing process.

What refers to the techniques applied by the teachers to develop the written production we have the question number **nine**, where 100% of the teachers pointed that they apply pre-writing, editing, brainstorming, publishing and drafting. But 81% of students matched drafting and 77% of them pointed out revising. Consequently we can say that teachers are not applying the right writing techniques according to the writing process which enable students with the skills to write in an ordered way.

The question number **ten** was about the frequency in the task extra sent by teachers to develop the writing skill and 40% of teachers and 81% of students answered that their teachers send extra writing tasks once a week. If teachers do not work with supervised extra-writing

tasks, that let students practice extensive writing, they will not be able to produce anything in the English written language.

The question number **eleven** was about the written production, where 100% of teachers said that they made students to practice writing through letters and compositions; while 94% of students matched just compositions. So we can say that the teachers are not supporting the written production with their students because they only develop compositions which are just one of the written productions that they can develop such as: stories, essays, reports, poems, acrostics, e-mails, songs and so on.

The question number **twelve** was about the students' achievement reached in the English subject by the students, so even when 40% of the teachers said that their students have gotten a good level in English, 39% of students placed themselves in a regular level in the English subject. This let us to assure that the teachers are not applying the right strategies and techniques to develop the reading comprehension and the writing skill within the English Language teaching learning process.

- **DECISION**

Based on the analysis of the obtained results the group accepts the second hypothesis which states that the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009”.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Once we have finished our research work about the strategies and techniques applied by teachers and their influence in reading comprehension and writing skill with the students of eight, ninth and tenth years at “27 de Febrero” High School, we have been able to reach the following conclusions:

- Most students of the researched High School do not like reading in English because they say that it is difficult to get graded readers that are according to their level which are necessary if we want them to become proficient readers.
- The reading activities in the book are not enough to develop reading skills with the students and this is because it involves a process that need a lot of practice and it also implies a lot of exposure of the students to authentic material in English.
- There is little application of reading strategies by part of the teachers especially in the reading process that involves a series of steps or sub skills that have to be developed in the students if we want they count with tools that let them acquire an interpretative level of comprehension.

- Most teachers just apply the questions and answers as post reading technique what means that they do not verify the level of understanding of their students so that these do not get a transcendental level in reading comprehension.
- Most students do not like writing in English because they are not encouraged by the teachers to develop this skill during the English classes and it is evidenced in the students' low average in the English subject.
- The teachers do not develop all the writing process with the students which includes a series of steps such as: prewriting (brainstorming, planning), organizing, drafting, revising and editing and publishing; they just ask the students to write a composition but the students do not have the enough skills to develop this process.
- The techniques more used in writing according to the students' opinion are drafting and revising but they are not applied in relation to the writing process so that students are not able to write in the English Language.

- The teachers just practice the writing skill once a week and this is not enough to develop all the subskills that this process includes. So that most of them are placed in a regular level of knowledge in the English Language.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- That teachers impulse and motive students to read in English because through reading they can learn many things and what is best that they are aware that comprehension involves a process that requires a lot of exposure to reading.
- The teachers should try to develop the extensive reading with extra class activities, trying to use authentic reading material such as: newspapers, magazines, graded readers, but they must check the students' level of comprehension in reading through post reading strategies.

- The teachers must take training in strategies and specific techniques to develop reading comprehension. They should know the reading process and the techniques that they can use in pre-reading: skimming, scanning, predicting, previewing; reading: guessing meaning from context, main idea, making inferences; Post-reading techniques: a summary, graphic organizers, collages among others.
- That teachers check reading comprehension through post-reading techniques such as: comparison organizers, hierarchical organizers, flow charts, continuum charts, diagrams, collages, drawings and so on which techniques help the students to organize the information, interpret and represent the reading in an illustrative way.
- That teachers encourage students to keep a portfolio in English by using diverse ways of writing that they can find on the Internet so that they generate a culture of English writing inside and outside class in these way students can be motivated to write in English.
- That authorities look for training for teachers in the steps of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising and presenting and what every

one of them involves so that they can apply an ordered process with the right strategies that help students to develop this complicated skill.

- That the teachers look for self-training through the Internet about the best techniques and strategies that they can apply to develop the writing skill with their students so that they can produce good pieces of writing that even can be published by themselves.
- That the English teachers try to improve their teaching in reading comprehension and in written production with their students so that they can achieve a better level of learning of the English language in the High School.

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10. ANNEXES



PROJECT

1. THEME:

STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES APPLIED BY THE TEACHERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STUDENTS OF 9TH AND 10TH YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION AT "27 DE FEBRERO" TECHNICAL FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL. ACADEMIC PERIOD 2008-2009.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

2.1. BACKGROUND

The “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School of the Loja City, was created on October 22nd in 1958, through the Ministerial Agreement No. 1002 whose first name was “Dolores Gangotena de Ponce” and whose purpose has been to educate the women of Loja in Handicraft field.

This name was changed in 1960 by National Technical of Business and Female Handicrafts “27 de Febrero” High School, through Ministerial Agreement No. 681. However in 1961 this High School had serious economical problems because of the lack of budget, so that it passed to “Daniel Alvarez” Foundation.

In 1962 the High School had its first group of students with a High School curriculum degree in Modern Humanities with two specialities: Social Sciences and Physical Mathematics, Chemical-Biological Sciences; and the Technical High School Degree in Secretariat.

On January 1996, a generous man Mr. Celi donated a house in the corner of Sucre and Quito streets in which the High School worked for several years. Within few years the students’ population grew and this local was

not enough so that in 1968, the Loja's city Hall donated a land in "La Tebaida" Neighbourhood where 9 years later the High School was built.

However the first building was not enough to work with all the population, for that reason the High School worked in two places. The administration offices, the laboratories and the specialities of Psychical- Mathematics and Chemical- Biological worked in the new building while the other specialities worked in the old house on Sucre and Quito Streets.

Nowadays the whole High School works in the two buildings that they own in "La Tebaida" Neighbourhood with a students' population of 869 in different specialities: Accounting Management and Administration and Organization and Management of the Secretary, and the General Specialities such as: Social Sciences, Chemical and Mathematics; and, 83 teachers accomplishing the main purpose of educating the Female students in technical specialities.

2.2. CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RESEARCHED OBJECT

Learning a foreign language nowadays is as important as learning the use of the new technologies, moreover if we learn the English Language. Speak this foreign language is so important because it has become the one which is essential for communicating in any part of the world.

The study of English Language is mandatory in Ecuadorian public High Schools with a schedule charge of 5 weekly hours. And the Government has established a kind of Agreement with the British similar to improve the teaching learning process of the English Language in all public High Schools through the CRADLE Project. However the knowledge that the students reach during their life in the High School is not basic in the English Language.

The development of the reading and writing skills involve a complex process that requires the application of specific strategies and techniques that help the students to develop those skills. Nevertheless the teachers have little knowledge of these strategies and techniques for that reason there is not a good development of the reading comprehension and the written production of the English Language in the students of the researched High School.

The book used in the CRADLE project is “Our World through English” which is a book that includes readings about our country reality. However if the teachers do not apply the right techniques to develop every reading and they do not follow the writing process steps the students will not gain speed in reading neither they will be able to produce anything in writing using the English Language.

Another aspect that we have been able to detect is that the teachers only use the students' books to work in class and they don't try to improve reading and written production, using extra tasks, readers in English or any other strategies that can help the students to learn.

We know that writing is a basically process of communication on paper, this activity involves many steps, like brainstorming, generating ideas and encouraging the students to discover what they want to say and how to say it. But In the researched high school there is a poor teacher's work to develop the writing process and the reading production with the students.

Based on the mentioned ideas we are able to state the following research problem:

2.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

How the strategies and techniques applied by the English Teachers influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at "27 de Febrero" Technical Female High School?. Academic period 2008-2009.

2.4. DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

a) Temporal

The present research work will be done during the school period 2008-2009.

b) Spatial

The project will be carried out in “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School.

c) Observation Units

The people who are involved in this research are:

- Students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School.
- English Teachers who teach in 9th and 10th years of Basic Education

d) Subproblems

From the general problem, we have derived the following subproblems:

- In what way the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers help the students to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th

and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School?. Academic period 2008-2009.

- How the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School?. Academic period 2008-2009

3. JUSTIFICATION

The present researching work is justified itself if we are aware that there are difficulties specially in the reading and writing skills with the students in the secondary school because they don't have a habit to read any kind of material in English, and this is a big problem which the English teachers have to face every day.

Since the educative point of view, it is important to develop the present project because in our reality we don't even have any kind of English library or English bookstore which can help us to inculcate in the student reading habits, which are very necessary in the learning of a second language.

Considering the scientific point of view the process for learning to write involves certain microskills, and we are aware that the secondary students aren't able to produce a basic writing in English, because there is not an application of the right strategies and techniques to help the students to develop the written production.

So this investigation work is justified if we consider that we need a previous requisite to get the licentiate's degree and if we take into account that the group counts with the necessary resources to get the better

results, which can contribute to improve the English learning process in the investigated High School.

The education is facing serious trouble and most of the students in secondary High Schools receive little formation in reading comprehension and written production in the English Language for that reason they do not get even a basic level of learning the target language. So that it is so important since the social point of view the development of a research about this topic with the students of the selected High School.

We consider that it is a pertinent research work, because it is an innovative theme, and we count with the economic resources, the necessary time, the bibliography, and the knowledge to analyse with enough arguments the most viable alternatives of solution that will help the High School to improve the found problem.

Finally the research is justified because it is a previous requirement that we as undergraduates of the English career of the National University of Loja, need to obtain the Licentiate's degree in Sciences of Education: English Language speciality.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To find out about the Strategies and Techniques applied by the English Teachers and their influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in the Students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

4.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To determine if the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers help to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

- To establish the relation between the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers and the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

5. THEORETICAL FRAME

CHAPTER ONE

5.1. INTEGRATING THE ENGLISH SKILLS

The four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, can be classified as:

- ❖ Receptive: listening and reading.
- ❖ Productive: speaking and writing.

Most speakers of languages, whether they are first or second language speakers have stronger receptive skills than productive ones. They can understand more difficult pieces of speaking and writing than they can produce themselves. Have you found that this is true for you in your first and second language? What about for your students?

It is also the case, though, that different learners will have different strengths across the four skills for a number of reasons:

- ❖ Their previous learning may have concentrated on developing particular skills because of a particular exam syllabus.
- ❖ Their level of confidence may mean that they feel safer with the receptive skills (listening and reading) than the productive skills (speaking and writing).
- ❖ Their own particular learning style may naturally favour the development of one set of skills over the other.

One important thing we can do to help students become more independent is to help them to think about what they can already do well and to build on these strengths.

We need to get students to think about what they like and do not like and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

5.1.1. WHAT IS A READING STRATEGY?

A strategy is an activity used to help students increase reading abilities. Once the educator has diagnosed the problems and challenges that individual student, as well as classes, are having, it is time to decide what methods of instruction will enable the students to become proficient readers. In other words, what will the teacher do in the classroom to meet the needs of all levels of readers?

5.1.1.1. Why Are Reading Strategies Used?

We use strategies for the following reasons:

- Reading makes more sense for struggling readers when strategies are used.
- Good readers use strategies naturally.
- The use of strategies aides struggling readers to become proficient.
- Strategies make reading more fun.

5.1.1.2. When Are Reading Strategies Used?

To assist students in:

- Predicting outcomes in a reading passage.
- Summarizing material which has been read, both fictional and informational.
- Questioning material being read.
- Determining important ideas while reading.
- Monitoring their reading.
- Searching for clues.
- Rereading to confirm.
- Reading ahead or back for clues.
- Self-correcting.

5.1.2 READING COMPREHENSION

The reading is the communication between the author and the reader by means of, the reader can know the author's emotions , happy and sad feeling so that, the reading is a way of art that permit you relax an it is the trip of the people who can not take the train.

For these reason for understanding a reading its necessary take care on the punctuation mark, so if you move a colon or semicolon we can change the meaning of a reading. There are two ways to do the oral reading (in louder voice) and with the mind (in silent way).

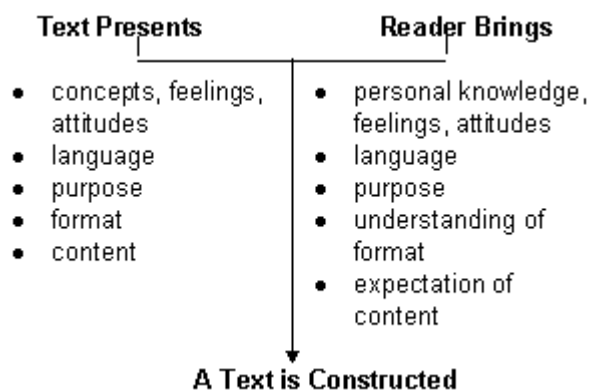
5.1.3. THE ROLE OF READING

We read in this way we can reflect some author's feelings and a lot of meaning to people who listen us. Hear the reader should modulate the voice, modifying it or varying it, depending on that he/ she wants to express and wants to people understand. In fact, there are different types of reading, as well as a type of writing. This is an important part in the developing reading.

"Increase your efficiency by choosing a style of reading which fits your study task. Make your reading right for the materials you have selected."⁴

5.1.4. THE READING PROCESS

Reading is a transaction between the text and the reader. As students read, they search for and construct meaning based on what they bring to the text and what the text brings to them.



⁴ WIKIPEDIA, free Encyclopedia. [www. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia](http://www.Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia).

It is important to develop fluent and proficient readers who are knowledgeable about the reading process. Effective readers are active readers who use a repertoire of comprehension strategies before, during, and after interacting with texts.

Before reading, strategic readers preview the text by looking at the title and the text to evoke relevant thoughts, memories, and associations. They build background by questioning themselves to see what they already know about the topic, the form in which the topic is presented, and the vocabulary that might communicate the ideas about the topic. They set purposes for reading by asking themselves what they want to learn or experience by reading the selection.

During reading, strategic readers create a dialogue with the author, striving to reformulate what the author is saying. They check their understanding of the text by paraphrasing the author's words and they monitor it by imagining, inferring, predicting, and confirming. They integrate their new understanding with existing knowledge. They are continually revising their purposes for reading as they read.

After reading, the strategic readers summarize what they have been reading and contemplate their first impressions. They reflect and take second looks to develop more thoughtful and critical interpretations of the text. Finally, they make applications of the ideas encountered in the text by extending these ideas to broader perspectives.

“Successful language learners adapt these strategies as they construct

meaning from a variety of oral, written, and visual texts and experiences. Teachers can make a major difference in students' success or failure to read texts effectively by modelling, coaching, facilitating, and promoting reading in their classrooms".⁵

5.1.5. THE READING AS A TEACHING PROCESS.

"The reading is a teaching medium that permit us have access to the knowledge in different manifestations and areas. But not only is access to the knowledge even the way to known, in the quality intellectual process, psychometric and attitudinally, where we are able to persuade, interpret, transform and smell of it to a reality".⁶

the reading permit us to known the nature, the technology and life of other countries and cultures, the happening in our world, country and it teaches us to have a correct position in front to the future.

5.1.6. READING TECHNIQUES.

Use of techniques such as these can increase net reading speeds into the range of hundreds of pages per hour. Not only can this techniques help to reduce the load of course work they can also provide a significant edge in managing the information-intensive environment of the acquisition professional.

⁵ Flood & Lapp, "The Reading Process". 1991, p. 732

⁶ Reyes y Sempértégui. Técnicas de Aprendizaje Activo 2007, p. 12

5.1.6.1. SKIMMING.

Skimming is a technique suitable for scientific texts as well as for general texts. This is defined as the search of main ideas using only the first and last paragraphs to obtain a general view of the text. When you are working with scientific texts applying this technique can be easier since this type of literature usually contains topic headings, abstracts or summaries that might come in handy for the reader. "This technique is used to help you get an idea of what you are about to read. Skimming is like having a map before entering a city. It is less likely that you get lost if you have previous information."⁷

For us this technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts.

It helps Students to organize the student's thoughts and specify what information he can get from a book, so that this subsequent reading is more efficient.

- **How do you skim read?**

Don't read the whole text word-for-word. Use as many clues as possible to

⁷ UNL, "Formación Metodológica-Didáctica para Desarrollar el Proceso de Enseñanza-Aprendizaje del idioma Inglés" Módulo 5. Carrera de idioma Inglés. 2004

give you some background information. There might be pictures or images related to the topic, or an eye-catching title. Let your eyes skim over the surface of the text and, whilst thinking about any clues you have found about the subject, look out for key words.

1. Read the title, subtitles and subheading to find out what the text is about.
2. Look at the illustrations to give you further information about the topic.
3. Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph.
4. Don't read every word or every sentence. Let your eyes skim over the text, taking in key words.
5. Continue to think about the meaning of the text.

5.1.6.2. SCANNING.

“Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when you first find a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions”.⁸

This technique helps us to obtain specific information according with the importance and propose that we have to use it but, do not forget that this is only a comprehension technique designed to help you get into the reading, in order to interpret the authors intentions and ideas it is important to read the whole text and the analysis of it must be done with a little bit more detail. To scan we use the underlining technique.

5.1.6.3. HIGHLIGHTED TECHNIQUE.

“The finality of this technique is calling the attention above the text’s content and through this technique we underline the mean ideas and secondary ideas”⁹. With this technique we actualize the book’s content and, of this way the information transcends. In other words the author expressed ideas take new form and new ideas.

For other hand the underlining permit us have a guide for the text or book analysis and after for the synthesis too.

⁸ UNL, MODULE 8th Guidance to Develop Reading Skill 2006-2007

⁹ CARVAJAL Lizardo, “The Methodological and Technical Reading, p.48”

5.1.6.4. GUESSING MEANING FROM THE CONTEXT.

In many cases you simply do not have the time to use a dictionary or to apply a given technique. It is only you and the text. This is when understanding context can come in handy. Context can be defined as the elements that surround a term and help clarify its meaning.

The first thing to do when taking advantage of context is recognizing the grammatical category of the word we are trying to understand or define.

- **Tips for Guessing Meaning from the Context.**

1. Look at the unknown word and decide its part of speech. Is it a noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb?
2. Look at the clause or sentence containing the unknown word.
 - If the unknown word is a noun, what adjectives describe it? What verb is it near? That is, what does this noun do and what is done to it?
 - If the unknown word is a verb, what noun does it go with? Is it modified by an adverb?
 - If the unknown word is an adjective, what noun does it modify?
3. Look at the relationship between the clause or sentence containing the unknown word and other sentences or paragraphs.
4. Use your knowledge gained from steps 1-3 to guess the meaning of the word.

5. Check that your guess is correct.
6. Break unknown words into its prefix, root, and suffix, if possible.

5.1.6.5. GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

“The organizer gives the child another way to see the information. Some of the organizers allow for the information to be written or drawn. Graphic organizers (some of which are also called concept maps, entity relationship charts, and mind maps) are a pictorial way of constructing knowledge and organizing information”¹⁰. They help the student convert and compress a lot of seemingly disjointed information into a structured, simple-to-read, graphic display. The resulting visual display conveys complex information in a simple-to-understand manner.

- **Increasing Understanding by Creating Graphic Organizers:**

The process of converting a mass of data/information/ideas into a graphic map gives the student an increased understanding and insight into the topic at hand. To create the map, the student must concentrate on the relationships between the items and examine the meanings attached to each of them. While creating a map, the student must also prioritize the information, determining which parts of the material are the most important and should be focused upon, and where each item

¹⁰ Davies, Alan and H.G. Widdowson. (1974) Reading and writing. In J.P.B. Allen and S.

should be placed in the map.

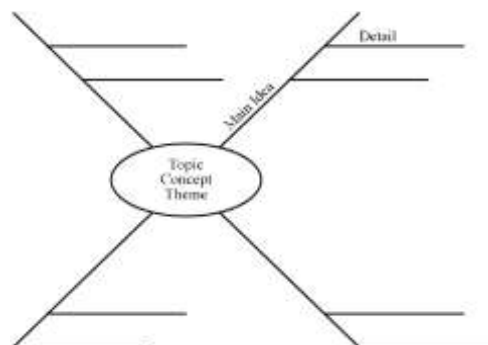
- **Uses of Graphic Organizers**

“Graphic organizers can be used to structure writing projects, to help in problem solving, decision making, studying, planning research and brainstorming”.¹¹

- **Creating Graphic Organizers**

Adding color-coding and/or pictures to a graphic organizer further increases the utility and readability of the visual display.

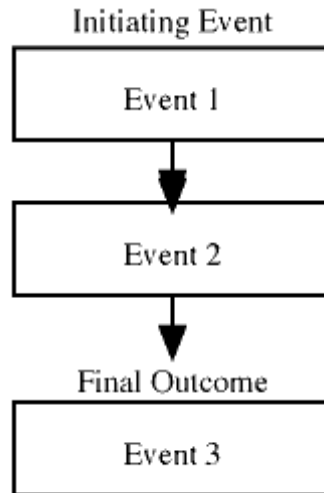
- **Spider Map**



Used to describe a central idea: a thing (a geographic region), process (meiosis), concept (altruism), or proposition with support (experimental drugs should be available to AIDS victims). Key frame questions: What is the central idea? What are its attributes? What are its functions?

¹¹ Hafiz, P.M. and I. Tudor. (1989) Extensive Reading and the Development of Language Skills. *ELT Journal*, 43(1), 4-13.

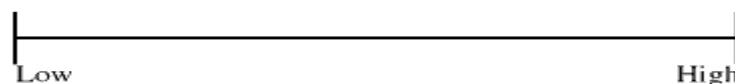
- **Series of Events Chain**



Used to describe the stages of something (the life cycle of a primate); the steps in a linear procedure (how to neutralize an acid); a sequence of events (how feudalism led to the formation of nation states); or the goals, actions, and outcomes of a historical figure or character in a novel (the rise and fall of Napoleon). Key frame questions: What is the object, procedure, or initiating event? What are the stages or steps? How do they lead to one another? What is the final outcome?

- **Continuum Scale.**

Continuum Scale



Used for time lines showing historical events or ages (grade levels in school), degrees of something (weight), shades of meaning (Likert scales),

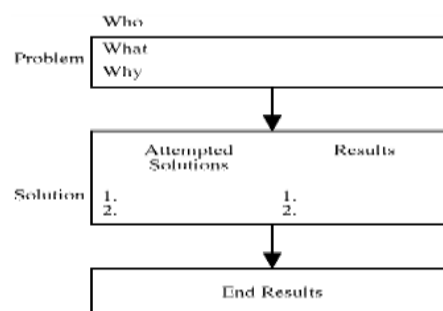
or ratings scales (achievement in school). Key frame questions: What is being scaled? What are the end points?

- **Compare/Contrast Matrix**

	Name 1	Name 2
Attribute 1		
Attribute 2		
Attribute 3		

Used to show similarities and differences between two things (people, places, events, ideas, etc.). Key frame question: What things are being compared? How are they similar? How are they different?

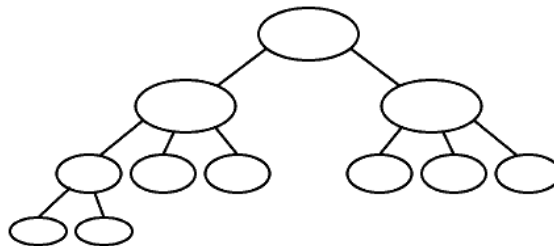
- **Problem/Solution Outline**



Used to represent a problem, attempted solutions, and results (the national debt). Key frame questions: What was the problem? Who had the

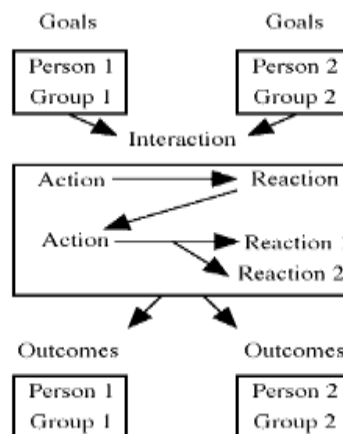
problem? Why was it a problem? What attempts were made to solve the problem? Did those attempts succeed?

- **Network Tree**



Used to show causal information (causes of poverty), a hierarchy (types of insects), or branching procedures (the circulatory system). Key frame questions: What is the superordinate category? What are the subordinate categories? How are they related? How many levels are there?

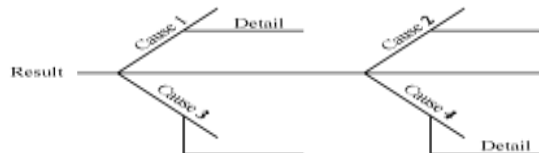
- **Human Interaction Outline**



Used to show the nature of an interaction between persons or groups .Key frame questions: Who are the persons or groups? What were their goals?

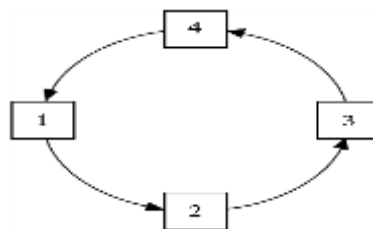
Did they conflict or cooperate? What was the outcome for each person or group?

- **Fishbone Map**



Used to show the causal interaction of a complex event (an election, a nuclear explosion) or complex phenomenon (juvenile delinquency, learning disabilities). Key frame questions: What are the factors that cause X ? How do they interrelate? Are the factors that cause X the same as those that cause X to persist?

- **Cycle Flow Chart.**

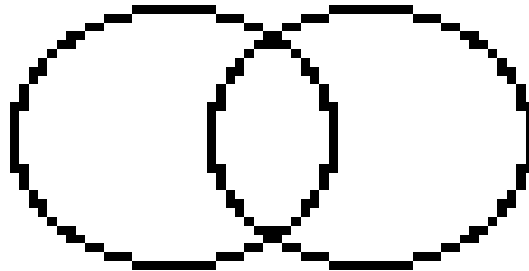


5.1.6.6. THE DIAGRAMS.

“They are the synthesis written about a lesson, topic, or a text. This technique let us to have a graphic and global vision of the theme’s

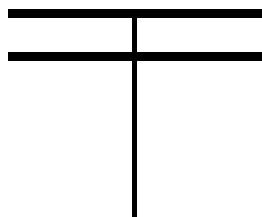
content".¹² It is necessary clarify that ideas should be in order and hierarchies.

- Ven Diagram.



If the task involves examining the similarities and differences between two or three items, use a Venn diagram. Example: Examining the similarities and differences between fish and whales, or comparing a book and the accompanying movie.

- T. Diagram.



If the task involves analyzing or comparing with two aspects of the topic,

¹² RICHARDS AND ROGERS, Teaching Techniques 1986, pag. 26

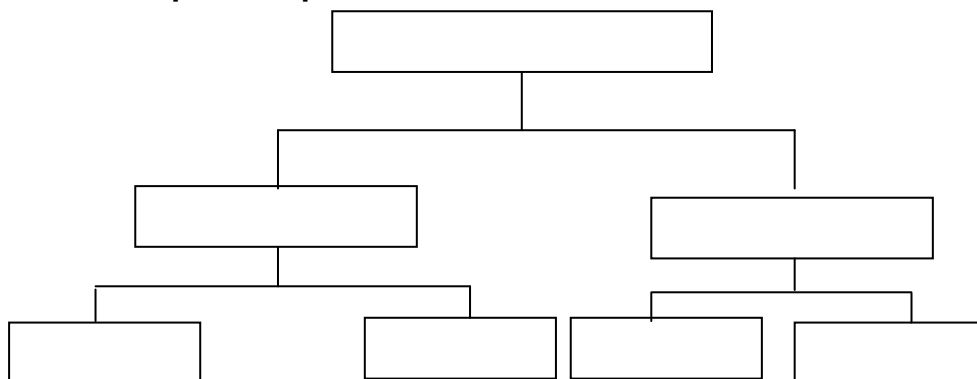
use a T-Chart. Example: Fill out a T-Chart to evaluate the pros and cons associated with a decision.

- Star Diagram



If the topic involves investigating attributes associated with a single topic, use a star diagram as your graphic organizer. Example: Finding methods that help your study skills (like taking notes, reading, doing homework, memorizing, etc.).

- **Conceptual Map.**



It helps us to organize in a hierarch form the concepts that were obtained from a text. It is used when we have to study a widely topic. Farther it permits us to use our creativity to build it.

- **Mental Map**

They are a tool to generate ideas and it is a teaching technique to help students to use their creativity such as: pictures, photos or visual impact the mental map only mention the main points about the topic.

CHAPTER II

5.2. THE WRITING SKILL

Writing may refer to two activities: the inscribing of characters on a medium, with the intention of forming words and other constructs that represent language or record information and the creation of material to be conveyed through written language. (There are some exceptions; for example, the use of a typewriter to record language is generally called typing, rather than writing.) *Writing* refers to both activities equally, and both activities may often occur simultaneously.

A writing system, also called a script, is a type of symbolic system used to represent elements or statements expressible in language.

The study of writing systems has developed along partially independent lines in the examination of individual scripts, and as such the terminology employed differs somewhat from field to field.

The generic term text may be used to refer to an individual product of a writing system. The act of composing a text may be referred to as writing, and the act of interpreting the text as reading. In the study of writing systems, orthography refers to the method of observed writing structure (literal meaning, "correct writing"), and in particular for alphabetic systems, includes the concept of spelling. A grapheme is the technical term coined to refer to the specific base or atomic units of a given writing system. Graphemes are the *minimally significant* elements which taken together comprise the set of "building blocks" out of which texts of a given writing system may be constructed, along with rules of correspondence and use. The concept is similar to that of the phoneme used in the study of spoken languages. For example, in the Latin-based writing system of standard contemporary English, examples of graphemes include the majuscule and minuscule forms of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet (corresponding to various phonemes), marks of punctuation (mostly non-phonemic), and a few other symbols such as those for numerals (logograms for numbers). Note that an individual grapheme may be represented in a wide variety of ways, where each variation is visually distinct in some regard, but all are interpreted as representing the "same" grapheme. These individual variations are known as allographs of a grapheme (compare with the term allophone used in linguistic study). For example, the minuscule letter has different allographs when written as a cursive, block or typed letter. The selection between different allographs

may be influenced by the medium used, the writing instrument, the stylistic choice of the writer, and the largely unconscious features of an individual's handwriting.

The terms *glyph*, *sign* and *character* are sometimes used to refer to a grapheme. Common usage varies from discipline to discipline; compare cuneiform sign, Maya glyph, Chinese character. The glyphs of most writing systems are made up of lines (or strokes) and are therefore called linear, but there are glyphs in non-linear writing systems made up of other types of marks, such as Cuneiform and Braille.

Writing systems are conceptual systems, as are the languages to which they refer. Writing systems may be regarded as *complete* according to the extent to which they are able to represent all that may be expressed in the spoken language.¹³

5.2.1. DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING ABILITIES

Writing is a powerful instrument of thinking because it provides students with a way of gaining control over their thoughts. Writing shapes their

¹³ WIKIPEDIA, free Encyclopedia. [www. Wikipedia](http://www.Wikipedia), The Free Encyclopedia.

¹¹ Heald-Taylor, Gail. *Whole Language Strategies for ESL Students*. Carlsbad: Dominic Press, Inc., 1994.

perceptions of themselves and the world. It aids in their personal growth and in their effecting change on the environment. Students are often unaware of the power of the written word, yet the written word:

*... enables the writer, perhaps for the first time, to sense the power of ... language to affect another. Through using, selecting and rejecting, arranging and rearranging language, the student comes to understand how language is used.*¹⁴

Adolescents' writing abilities develop gradually with incremental and uneven progress. In order to become empowered in writing, students need concentration, instruction, practice, and patience.

The teacher's mandate is to assist adolescents to gain control over the written word. Students should:

- Develop an explicit knowledge of phases of the writing process.
- Write frequently on a variety of topics for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Develop an understanding of the structures and conventions of language.

5.2.2. WRITING PROCESS

Writing is a messy process. It is not linear; it is recursive, "a loop rather than a straight line", where the writer writes, then plans or revises, and

then writes again (Emig, 1971). Teachers can help students write more effectively by getting them to examine their own creative processes. Although the process of writing is essentially idiosyncratic, writers usually work through a few basic phases. Students can be shown the different stages in the production of a piece of writing and be encouraged to discover what works best for them. Students can be shown the basic phases of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising (editing and proofreading), and presenting. The "writing process is the thinking processes that go on during writing" (Crowhurst, 1988, p. 7). The writing process can be summarized as follows.

Prewriting

- Using prewriting techniques to gather ideas.
- Choosing a purpose and an audience.
- Ordering ideas.

Drafting

- Putting ideas down on paper.
- Exploring new ideas during writing.

Revising

- Editing: considering ideas and organization.
- Proofreading: correcting errors including sentence structure, usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

- Polishing.

Presenting

- Sharing writing

5.2.2.1. Pre-writing

“Pre-writing centers on engaging students in the writing process and helps them discover what is important or true for them about any subject at a particular time. Unfortunately, no one has found the perfect system for teaching the writing process. What is certain, however, is that if students are to become capable writers they must develop pre-drafting skills. Experienced writers have their own methods, but inexperienced writers need motivation to write and assistance in uncovering concepts, experiences, and ideas about which to write.

During the pre-writing phase, students need direction--a topic or something to discuss in writing. Topics can come from teachers but students also need to develop the skill of using their own insights and experiences (and those of others) as writing material. Most often, the potential of possible topics is revealed through pre-drafting experiences such as the following:

- Talking with and interviewing people who know something about a topic.
- Brainstorming.

- Focused free writing (i.e., nonstop writing on an intended subject to crystallize ideas and feelings).
- Mapping and webbing (i.e., drawing thought webs or graphic representations of the topic).
- Writing "leads" (i.e., creating three or more opening sentences as a way of determining the shape and scope of the topic).
- Listing.
- Using reporters' questions (i.e., Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?).
- Making similes and metaphors (i.e., asking "What is it like?").
- Finding similarities and differences by comparing and contrasting concepts, pictures, and objects.
- Reading and examining written models to gather information about the topic or to notice genre, style, or tone.
- Viewing pictures, paintings, television, films, CD-ROMs, or slides.
- Using visualization and guided imagery.
- Listening to CDs, tapes, and records.
- Debating, role playing, and improvising.
- Exploring ideas in a journal.

Writers must not only think about what they are going to say, but also about how they are going to say it. During the pre-drafting stage students need to establish, at least tentatively, their **purpose, audience, and form**. Although experienced writers often say that content dictates form (i.e., that

their ideas tell them which form to use), inexperienced writers need to realize that audience and purpose can help determine form. Students need to achieve competency in a variety of forms and consider a range of purposes and audiences such as the following.

Purposes

- To reflect, clarify, and explore ideas.
- To express understanding.
- To explain, inform, instruct, or report.
- To describe.
- To retell and narrate.
- To state an opinion, evaluate, or convince.
- To experiment.

Audiences

- Specific person (e.g., self, teacher, friend, older person, younger person, parent).
- Specific group (e.g., class, team/club, grade, age group, special interest group).
- General audience (e.g., school, community, adults, peers, students, unspecified).

Writing Forms

The ability to shape and organize ideas requires choosing a form that is

appropriate to the audience and purpose. Students need experiences with a range of forms. Some examples include:

- Personal experience narratives.
- Autobiographies.
- Biographies.
- Fictional narratives (e.g., short stories and novellas).
- Diary entries.
- Journal entries.
- Learning logs.
- Poetry (e.g., ballads, acrostics, counted-syllable formats, free verse, song lyrics, other formats).
- Parodies.
- Essays.
- Research reports.
- Reviews.
- News stories.
- Editorials and opinions.
- Advertisements.
- Correspondence (e.g., friendly letters; invitations; letters of thanks, complaint, application, sympathy, inquiry, protest, congratulation, apology).
- Scripts (e.g., skits, plays, radio plays, TV commercials).
- Oral histories.

- Eulogies and last will and testaments.
- Speeches.
- Memoranda and messages.
- Instructions and advice.
- Rules and regulations.
- Minutes and forms.
- Pamphlets.
- Résumés and cover letters.

Through an appropriate balance of experiences with the previous purposes, audiences, and forms, students can become competent in a range of writing tasks.

As teachers plan their writing assignments, they should identify and define the appropriate learning objectives, address the elements of effective communication (subject, purpose, audience, and form), and establish guidelines or criteria to evaluate the outcome of the students' work.

5.2.2.2. Organizing and Developing Ideas

Writers not only need to think about what they are going to say but also about how they are going to say it. Pre-composing plans help students approach the blank page. During the pre-writing phase, students should also give some attention to how they might organize and develop their thoughts (Olson, 1992). Although these plans will be tentative, they are useful for getting started.

Students need to organize their ideas in logical sequences. Several ways of developing and organizing ideas are possible depending on purpose and form. Some different ways of development and organization include:

Chronological order

- A chronological or step-by-step arrangement of ideas by time or order of occurrence.

Spatial order

- Spatial, geometrical, or geographical arrangement of ideas according to their position in space--left to right, top to bottom, or circular.

Common logic

- Definitive (e.g., is called, is made up of).
- Classification and division (e.g., parts and relationships).
- Order of importance (e.g., first, second).
- Comparison and contrast (e.g., compared to, differs from).
- Cause-effect (e.g., consequently, the reason for.)
- Problem-solution (e.g., problem, alternatives, decisions).
- Pros and cons (e.g., strongly support, against).
- Inductive and deductive (e.g., specific to general, broad to specific).

- Dialectic (e.g., thesis/antithesis/synthesis).

Students could consider constructing a map, a chart, an outline, a visual organizer, or a ladder diagram to organize their main ideas and supporting details.

5.2.2.3. Drafting

During this phase, writers produce a first draft. Momentum is the important issue as students focus their attention on the development of meaning and the flow of thought in their writing. The mechanics are secondary to the flow of ideas.

At this point, students should try to say what they mean quickly. Additional drafts can be written that further shape, organize, and clarify the work. As students mentally step back from their work, they can develop more objectivity and give more consideration to the reader. They should be encouraged to share drafts to confirm or adjust the direction of their writing.

During drafting, teachers should encourage students to:

- Say what they mean as directly as they can.
- Be themselves; write from their own point of view or assume a new persona or voice from which to write.
- Write as though they were "telling" the reader about the topic.

Committing their thoughts to paper or computer screen is not an easy task for all students. Strategies such as the following may facilitate the translating of ideas into first and successive drafts.

- **Mapping.** Creating a map of additional ideas and reconceptualizing ways to order them as they write sometimes helps students capture their ideas before they are lost.
- **"Writing-off" leads.** Creating several first lines and then using the key words and direction suggested by one of these leads sometimes gets drafts underway for students.
- **Fast or free writing.** Writing an entire first draft as quickly as possible without rereading or pausing to attend to mechanics sometimes helps students create their first draft.
- **Personal letters.** Writing a first draft as if it were a personal letter to one specific person such as a friend sometimes frees students to create their first draft.
- **Conferencing.** Talking about ideas with a teacher or peer sometimes helps students see how they can start and develop their first draft.
- **Reflecting and questioning.** Pausing to ask themselves what they are saying and if they need to say more or to say it differently sometimes helps students move their drafts forward.

Drafting is rarely completed in one sitting. Students usually need to let the

work sit for a bit and then write a series of successive drafts if they wish to produce polished compositions. Discussing drafts with others (including peers and teacher) can help move each of their drafts closer to the final version. The drafting needs of students, however, will vary.

5.2.2.4. Revising Editing and Proofreading

Drafts reflect the struggle to get words down on paper and, as such, they are usually rough and incomplete. Revising brings a work to completion. It is a complex process of deciding what should be **changed, deleted, added, or retained**. Revising is the general post-writing procedure which involves editing (revising for ideas and form) and proofreading (revising for sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).

Teachers should give students the language to discuss editing and proofreading as well as the strategies to reshape and polish their writing.

Revising strategies require time and practice; therefore, they are best introduced a few at a time. Different strategies may be required for different kinds of writing.

Useful strategies for revising ideas and form include:

- Students can read compositions aloud and possibly tape them.
- Students can examine compositions in relation to specific questions or guidelines. (E.g., Is my composition clear? Is there something that I can do to make it clearer or more appealing? Do my ideas and form address the needs of my audience?).

- Students can use a revision process which involves them in working through various "passes" (Perrin, 1992). The following is an example.

Pass 1: Edit for truth and accuracy . (E.g., Did the governor really say his opponent had a face like a ferret? Why correct the spelling at this point if you might change the sentence?)

Pass 2: Edit for organization. (E.g., Is each paragraph appropriately placed?)

Pass 3: Edit for paragraph structure. (E.g., Does each paragraph have a topic sentence?)

Pass 4: Edit for sentence structure. (E.g., Does each sentence have a verb? Is there variation in sentence length?)

Pass 5: Edit for word choice. (E.g., Have you used "less" when you mean "fewer"?)

Pass 6: Edit for spelling and punctuation.

Pass 7: Edit for conciseness and clarity. (E.g., Is there anything else that should be removed? Added?)

Proofreading involves reading for conventions rather than content. Proofreading and editing are not mutually exclusive. During the editing process, some proofreading may occur and during proofreading, further editing may occur. Proofreading is the process of checking a draft to make sure that the following conventions are correct and appropriate:

- Paragraph structure.
- Sentence structure (syntax).
- Word choice (diction).
- Usage.
- Spelling.
- Capitalization.
- Punctuation.
- Appearance (e.g., spacing, indentation, page numbers).

A checklist for students to refer to when revising follows.

- **Questions for Editing and Proofreading**

Ideas/Content:

1. Do my ideas work together to make my message clear?
2. Do I have enough information?

Organization:

1. Does my paper have an effective introduction and conclusion?
2. Do my words, phrases, and sentences tie my ideas together logically (i.e., transitions)?
3. Are my ideas written in order of importance?

Voice/Tone/Flavour:

1. Is there evidence that I am sincere and concerned about my audience?
2. Is my paper an example of my best effort?

Word Choice:

1. Are my words accurate, concise, and well chosen?
2. Do I feel the need to experiment with any new words?
3. Is my paper enjoyable to read?

Syntax/Sentences:

1. Are my sentences varied?
2. Does my writing flow naturally?

Writing Conventions:

1. Are my paragraphs effective?
2. Does my punctuation enhance the meaning?
3. Have I checked my spelling?
4. Are my capitals where they belong?
5. Do I have subject/verb agreement?

Conferences

Conferences can take numerous forms and the teacher does not always need to be directly involved. In fact, students should be encouraged to discuss their writing with their classmates. Students can meet with one or two classmates to ask for advice, share a piece of writing, or revise a composition.¹⁵

¹⁵ Davies, Alan and H.G. Widdowson. (1974) Reading and writing. In J.P.B. Allen and S.

In **peer conferences**, students need to know how to maintain a helpful and supportive relationship. Alvermann and Phelps (1994) suggest that collaboration among student writers does not occur spontaneously. Teachers need to take time to model good responses and set some ground rules such as the following:

- Be positive. Respond to what the writer is trying to say and what the writer does well. Tearing down another person's work will only result in discouragement and hurt feelings.
- Be helpful. Do your best to make comments that will be useful to the writer.
- Be specific. Talk about specific words, phrases, or paragraphs¹⁶.

Students can be encouraged to use the PQP method of peer response:

P (Praise) What do you like about my paper?

Q (Question) What questions do you have about my paper?

P (Polish) What specific improvements could I make?

(Lyons, 1981, p. 42)

Peer conference guides such as the following can also be used.

Sample Peer Conference Guide

Writer:

Reader:

¹⁶ CROWHURST, The Writing Process, 1988, p. 7

Date:

Written Work:

Discuss the following:

1. What I liked most:
2. The main idea seems to be:
3. Your organization is:
4. Questions I have are:
5. An idea to try is:
6. Additional comments:

In any **teacher-student conference**, the key to success lies in asking questions that teach--questions that lead students to discover what they have to say and want to communicate, and that encourage them to talk about the work. The teacher can, for example, ask:

How is it going?

Where are you now in your draft?

Can you tell me more about that?

Can you say more about ...?

What do you think you will do next?

Where do you want this piece to go?

If you put that idea in, where could it go?

The value of revision is that students learn to "re-see" and rethink their

writing. Ideally, students should go beyond concern for just the product of writing and become equally concerned with the process of writing.

Learning to Write by Writing

The best way to encourage students to become practiced writers is to have them write often and experience first hand the phases of the writing process. By preparing for composing, actually composing, and revising, students learn the phases of the writing process.

The gains of a process approach to writing can only be realized if teachers have an understanding of the various roles they play in helping students to become more proficient writers. The teacher is no longer simply a setter and corrector of assignments. The teacher is a writer along with the students, as well as an instructor, responder, coach, diagnostician, and supporter.

Students need someone to encourage them, to support them during each phase of their writing, to read and respond to their writing, and to provide direct instruction in the mechanics of writing. While students focus on the writing process, the teacher provides appropriate support:

Stage	Writer's Focus	Teacher's Focus
Pre-writing	Exploring ideas	Encouraging, probing
Drafting	Developing ideas	Suggesting
Revising	Clarifying, revising text	Questioning, coaching
Presenting	Sharing text	Responding

Although the writing process need not be followed in its entirety with all pieces of writing, students should be given a rationale for using the process and should be shown how a writer can craft a composition. Graves (1983) recommends that teachers begin writing instruction by **modeling** the writing cycle, and then continue by participating as writers themselves throughout the year. Some steps teachers might take in order to show students how to produce and craft a composition follow. Teachers might:

1. Draw up a list of five topics they really want to write about, choosing topics that will interest their students (for example, a camping trip, a pet's death, an embarrassing school memory).

2. List their topics on the board, discuss each briefly, and tell how they came to choose one of them to write about at this time.
3. Begin a very rough draft on a transparency at the overhead projector so that students can see their writing begin to take shape. While teachers write, they should talk about their thoughts, word choices, and changes in focus or direction as they occur.
4. Begin revising on the transparency, using arrows to move or add parts, crossing out some parts and substituting others, making marginal notes, and asking students for suggestions. As in step 3, teachers should think aloud as they work.
5. At this point they can ask students to begin producing their own lists of possible topics, choose one, and begin a rough draft. A few days later, as students get ready for further revisions, teachers can return to their transparency and revise and edit further as in step four.¹⁷

Mini-lessons

Students need varied writing experiences combined with direct instruction in context. Mini-lessons (5-15 minutes) can be designed to help students learn "how to do" something (e.g., write an effective descriptive paragraph) or they can address a language concept needed for a task (e.g., how to write a concise sentence). These focused lessons can occur during any phase of the writing process. They can be taught to the whole class, to a small group, or to an individual.

¹⁷ TEMPLE & GILLET, *The Linguistic Skills Development*, 1983, p. 238

Sample Mini-lesson

A mini-lesson on writing an effective introduction might include the following information:

An introduction usually serves two purposes. It catches the reader's attention and it suggests or states the main idea of a paper. Stating your main idea in your introduction makes it easy for the reader to understand what you are trying to narrate, describe, explain, or prove. (Not every piece of writing, however, needs a formal introduction. Often narration begins in the middle of the action with an introduction designed to capture the reader's attention.)

Experienced writers often catch their reader's interest using one of the following methods.

- Taking a stand on a controversial issue: *Communication with extraterrestrials is possible.*
- Presenting (retelling) a short anecdote: *The car lurched across the field, alternately chasing and being chased by a huge, brown bull.*
- Beginning with a quotation: *"You can do it", they said. "There's nothing to it. Skiing is as easy as walking."*
- Asking a question: *What do twelve years of schooling do to your mind?*
- Address the reader directly: *Imagine standing on the prairies 20,000 years ago.*

- Providing a vivid description: *The low sky was like a sheet of metal; the fields faded in the distance, but the presence of the wolves was still felt.*
- Beginning with a startling or interesting fact: *It happened quickly. Sixty million buffalo once roamed the prairies and plains of North America. By 1889, there were estimated to be only a few scattered herds.*

Each opener presents a vivid but incomplete glimpse of what is to follow. The reader wants to read on to see the rest of the picture.

Writer's Workshop

Many teachers use a writer's workshop approach that involves students in three types of activities:

- Mini-lessons (5-15 minutes) on a writing concept or skill that all or certain students can use in their writing.
- Writing time (30-40 minutes) where students start new compositions, research, revise, or work with other students.
- Sharing time (10 minutes) where, during the last ten minutes of the workshop, students share their writing in small groups and discuss writing problems they are having.

The primary focus during each workshop class period is to provide students with blocks of time to write. The teacher serves as a workshop

facilitator who monitors and gives feedback to individual students and ensures that each student's progress is charted. The teacher also ensures that important skills are taught, and that conferencing with individual students and among peers occurs.

5.5.2.5. Presenting and Publishing

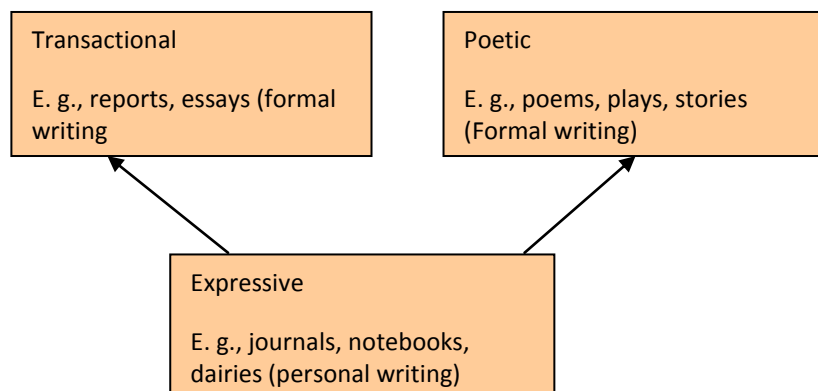
The writing process usually culminates in sharing and presenting. Publishing in its broadest sense means "making public" or sharing with others. Students should be given the opportunity to choose pieces of writing they wish to have presented. Any piece that the teacher might select for presentation should be the result of a discussion with the student. The ways of presenting student writing are numerous: shared reading, bulletin board, individual books, class/school/city newspapers, student anthologies, or literary contests. Having a wider audience often will lead students to take more care and pride in their writing. However, teachers should keep in mind that some writing is private and some students will be reluctant to make their writing public. Teachers should be sensitive to individual student needs, while at the same time encouraging them to share some of their best work.

5.2.3. A VARIETY OF WRITING EXPERIENCES

Although the writing process is the starting point for developing students' writing abilities, teachers must recognize that students need a range of writing experiences to develop as writers. Moffett and Wagner (1983),

Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, and Rosen (1975), and others have noted that writing practice and instruction must occur in at least three modes--the expressive, transactional, and poetic. Students use the **expressive mode** to explore and explain their own thoughts and feelings informally. They use the **transactional mode** to report, inform, explain, and persuade. They use the **poetic mode** to create a literary work. Each has a place in a balanced writing program.

Traditionally, high school English courses have focused on the transactional and poetic modes to the exclusion of the expressive. Britton et al. (1975) argue that the expressive mode is the base for the other two and, therefore, deserves a higher profile in secondary school classrooms. Young (1982) captures this in the following diagram¹⁸.



¹⁸ YOUNG, Strategies in Reading Comprehension, 1982, p. 80

Informal writing can easily be incorporated into language arts courses. Just as silent sustained reading (SSR) is a familiar practice in many classrooms, silent sustained writing (SSW) can be similarly incorporated. To this end, students can use the following:

- Response journals, which encourage them to reflect and respond to what they are reading, hearing, or viewing.
- Writers' notebooks, which encourage them to explore and record their ideas for subsequent compositions.
- Memorandums, which encourage students to respond personally to an issue. (E.g., "Write one page per week on an issue about which you feel strongly. Choose your format. This will not be graded except for effort. It must be original and will be responded to in one of two ways--either hand it in for written comments or share it with the class.")
- Fast writes, which encourage students to increase their fluency through timed writing on a given topic. By putting down whatever comes to mind, writing as quickly as they can, students can begin to see their initial ideas and discover others that can be expanded and developed in subsequent writing.
- Dialogue journals, which encourage students to interact with teachers as both make written responses to each other's entries.
- Learning logs, which encourage students to reflect on what they have learned in any subject area. Logs explore questions such as

the following: What did you learn today? What confused you? What questions do you still have? What was the point of the lesson?

In many instances, informal writing need not necessarily be assessed. Depending upon purposes, however, informal writing in journals or logs can be assessed and evaluated. For example, the following three-point scale can be used:

0 = no entry attempted

1 = a limited entry attempted; incomplete or unclear

2 = a clear, complete, and thoughtful entry.

Whatever form of assessment or evaluation is used, teachers need to set expectations. Mechanical errors will not be the focus of the teacher's responses but recurrent technical weaknesses will be noted for diagnostic purposes and future teaching. Each journal or log entry should be dated and labeled. The journal or log should be accessible to the student. The time when students write in their journal or log may vary--at the beginning of a lesson, during a lesson, for closure, once a week, twice a week, three times a week. As students work with the various modes--expressive, transactional, and poetic--they gain experience with the types of writing that are outlined in the learning objectives and that are carried out in daily living.

5.2.4. DEVELOPING WRITING TECHNIQUES

5.2.4.1. Writing Folders and Portfolios

Students' writing folders are collections of the students' in-process writing. During an English language arts course, students will produce a number of compositions. Some will reflect the entire writing process but some will reflect only parts of it. For example, a student might begin five different writing pieces. The student might complete the pre-writing for all five, but terminate three of them after completing a first draft. Two other pieces might reflect the complete revision process. One of these might be selected for presentation and/or grading.

A simple letter-size file folder or a manilla folder can be used to store the various compositions as well as checklists, editors' comments, and student and teacher evaluations. Writing folders can be made from Bristol board or a similar light cardboard. Separate sections can be kept for ideas, notes, and first drafts; for work in progress; and for final drafts.

Sample Writing Folder

→ folds ←

Ideas	Revise	Final Drafts
Notes	Edit	
	Proofread	

Writing folders play an important role in the language arts classroom. They are places to sift, sort, and store students' pre-writing notes, drafts, checklists, and feedback. The feedback includes graded compositions.

Writing portfolios are also places where students can store their writing. They are similar to artists' portfolios--collections of drafts and of exemplary and polished work. At term-end or course-end, students can select from their writing folders those compositions that they feel best represent their writing abilities and progress to include in their portfolios.

One of the major values of writing portfolios is the invitation they offer to students to assess themselves.

Self-assessment prompts such as the following can help focus the task:

- I want to show this to ... because ...
- I like this because it shows that I can ...

- The strongest aspect of this writing is ...
- I spent a lot of time ...
- This shows that I am getting better at ...
- If I could change something, I would ...
- I would now like to ...
- A specific improvement over past writing is ...
- A skill to work on in future assignments is ...

When portfolios are used as a means of evaluation, a guide should be given to the students so they can understand how they are being judged. A sample set of guidelines follows.

Sample Guidelines for Writing Portfolios

4. Select the best public and informal writing you have. (Public writing is intended for an audience beyond self.)
5. Place the public writing, all of the drafts, the pre-writing activity (e.g., taped discussion of small group brainstorming), and your best informal writing in the front of your portfolio.
6. Write a one-page explanation of why you selected those particular pieces and what the selections say about you as a writer. Consider weaknesses, strengths, areas that have improved, and areas that still require improvement. It is important that the teachers make comments which can help students grow and can validate them as writers.

General

- Strong writing voice. I can hear someone behind those words.
- I can picture this.
- I know just what you mean. I've felt this way too.
- You are losing my attention. Make this part a little more specific.

Beginnings and Endings

- Strong introduction. It makes me want to read this paper.
- Your ending came so quickly that I felt I missed something.
- Your wrap-up really captured the whole mood of the paper.
- The conclusions seemed a little weak. I felt let down.

Organization

- This was very well organized. I could follow it easily.
- I am confused about how this fits.
- I am not sure what the focus of the paper is.
- How is this connected to the sentence or idea before it?
- This sentence or paragraph seems overloaded. Too much happens too fast and I cannot follow.

Clarity

- Can you add detail here? I cannot see the whole picture.
- Good description. I could make a movie of this.

- Adding some physical description would help me see this more clearly.
- Tell me more about this. I need more information.
- An example here would help us support your case more willingly.
- The use of dialogue here would help me see this person more vividly.
- I am not sure what you mean. Let's talk.

Structure and Language

- Notice that you have a number of short sentences here. Can you combine them to improve the flow?
- This sentence is a whopper! Break it up, please.
- Good word choice. It really captures the essence of what you are saying.
- Your language seems a bit overblown. I do not hear you talking and that distracts me.

Usage and Mechanics

- Oops! you changed tenses and confused me.
- You switched from the third person to the first. I can understand it, but it does distract.
- You capitalize words randomly. Let me sit down with you in workshop and show you some things.

- Break your work into sentences so I can more clearly see which ideas are related.

5.2.4.2. STRUCTURE AND FORMS OF WRITING

Good writing requires a host of skills in content, organization, and style (including the conventions of written English). The conventions of writing are the generally accepted mechanics of language. They make communication possible. While writers are always consciously or unconsciously attending to the mechanics, they are most often focusing on them in the revision stage, particularly during proofreading. During this stage, students attend to the following¹⁹:

- Form (e.g., paragraph, essay).
- Sentence structure (syntax).
- Word choice (diction).
- Usage.
- Spelling.
- Punctuation and capitalization.
- Appearance (e.g., spacing, indentation, page numbers, quality of handwriting).

¹⁹ T. CROWHURST, The Writing Process, 1988, pp. 231-232.

Students need to understand that readers expect certain conventions in writing. Surface errors distract the reader. A good revision guide, one that includes editing and proofreading criteria, is a start. Students need to understand how the guide can assist them.

Sometimes, students will need to learn about a particular convention. Instruction is most effective when it is provided at this point. Some instruction can be given in mini-lessons to groups of students who have a common need. Some instruction can also be given in individual conferences as teachers help students with their writing.

Form

Form is basic to all writing. During writing, ideas are given shape and structure. Students need to understand the various formats available to them and understand that purpose dictates the format of each composition. Clear, practical instruction and practice with many models help students understand the range of writing forms available to them.

Prose Forms

The following list illustrates the range of prose forms:

Description:

paragraph, essay, character portrait, or sketch

Narration:

paragraph, essay, anecdote, short story, diary, journal, biography, autobiography, fable, parable, myth, legend, personal letter

Exposition:

paragraph, essay, report, article, character study, research paper, news story, newspaper column, business letter, review, memo

Persuasion:

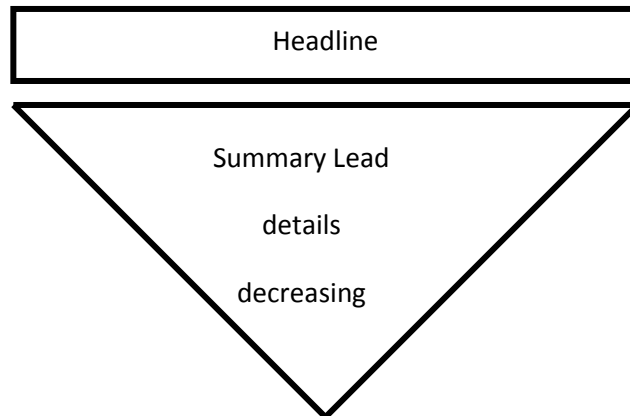
paragraph, essay, brief, editorial, letter to the editor, review, column.

In prose forms, the basic unit of organization is the paragraph. Paragraph structure varies with the type of material. For example, journalistic publications such as newspapers use a particular format with very few sentences in each paragraph. Dialogue in narrative text dictates another format. The beginning and ending paragraphs of an essay call for yet another format. Although there is no absolute standard for paragraphs, prose has one essential quality--all sentences in a paragraph must have some meaningful relationship with one another.

Students should learn the basic elements of a paragraph (i.e., topic sentence/main idea, supporting details, and concluding sentence) and the different methods of development. These include chronological, spatial, and logical order (including listing, comparison-contrast, cause-effect, definition, and problem-solution). Students should be capable of organizing their ideas in each of the various patterns.

Students should also understand that purpose can dictate the organization of paragraphs. For example, the journalistic "inverted pyramid" differs from the usual expository pattern. The next page contains illustrations of several paragraph types.

News Story Paragraph Form

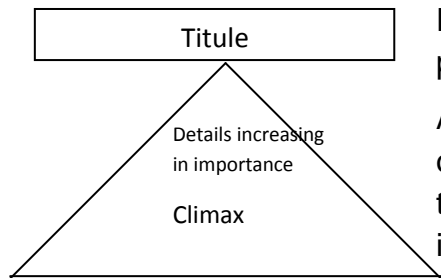


Descriptive Paragraph

Topic Sentence:	Gives the main impression of the scene, object, or person.
Supporting Details:	Give the sensory details that lead to the main impression. These details are usually arranged in a logical, spatial sequence (e.g., top to bottom, left to right).
Concluding Sentence:	Summarizes or emphasizes the overall impression.

Narrative Paragraph

Narration differs from description (although description may be embedded in narration).



Paragraphs can be used for special purposes.

A paragraph, consisting of only two or three sentences, may be used at the beginning of a longer essay to introduce the topic.

In narration, the direct speech of a character should occupy a paragraph by itself.

Expository Paragraph

Topic	Gives the main idea of what you are explaining
Sentence:	
Supporting	Support the main idea and are usually arranged in a
Details:	chronological order or in order of importance.
Concluding	Restates the main idea, summarizes the details, or
Sentence:	emphasizes the important idea.

Persuasive Paragraph

Topic Sentence:	States what the reader should do or believe.
Supporting Details:	Give the reasons for doing or believing the topic sentence. These details are usually arranged in a "persuasive" order (e.g., leaving the most persuasive reason until last).
Concluding Sentence:	Restates or summarizes the argument.

Essays

The essay is a prose form with which all students should become practiced. An essay usually begins with an opening paragraph which states the topic or thesis, a body of one or more paragraphs which provides evidence or proof, and a concluding paragraph which sums up arguments and relates to the thesis. The following describes one essay format:

Paragraph 1 (Introductory Paragraph): This contains an introduction to the problem or issue and a statement of the thesis. The first paragraph also makes mention of the key supporting points to be developed in order to prove the thesis.

Paragraph 2: The second paragraph explores and develops the supporting point mentioned first in the introductory paragraph.

Paragraph 3: This paragraph explores and develops the supporting point mentioned second in the introductory paragraph.

Paragraph 4: This paragraph explores and develops the supporting point mentioned third in the introductory paragraph.

Paragraph 5 (Concluding Paragraph): This is a conclusion that sums up the evidence presented in the body of the essay and reaffirms the thesis.

Students may wish to expand the body of the essay to include more than three paragraphs. Each additional paragraph should logically follow and develop the thesis under consideration. Students should use transitional devices to show the correlation between paragraphs.

Poems

Besides prose, students may write poems. The following are examples:

- Lyrical poems including free verse, songs, cinquains, haiku, tankas, odes, elegies, sonnets.
- Narrative poems including limericks, ballads, episodes of epics
- dramatic poems including monologues, soliloquies, dialogue.

Plays

Students might also wish to try dramatic writing. The following are examples:

- Monologues and dialogues.
- Scenes from a play.
- One-act or full-length plays.

Sentence Structure

The study of language, its elements, and its nature is an important component of a language arts program. Grammar and usage cause endless controversy both inside and outside the classroom. Much of this controversy stems from the misunderstanding of terms and their associated concepts. Grammar is perhaps the least understood term. Grammar is not so-called good English, nor is it the abstract study of parts of speech. Certainly grammar is not the mechanical aspects of composition (i.e., punctuation, capitalization, and spelling). Grammar, in its broadest sense, is the study of the way language works. Two aspects of the grammar of English that students need to understand are sentence structure (syntax) and usage.

"Language continues to develop through the use of language, not through exercises in naming of parts" (Sanborn, 1986, p. 74). Diagramming sentences and learning the names of the parts of speech do not improve students' writing or reading but do steal instructional time from meaningful language activities.

Secondary school students should have a good understanding of English syntax--the principles of sentence formation. If students lack this

understanding, it is important to take time to teach the essentials.

Discussing and modeling sentence structures can:

- Make students aware of the sentence patterns that exist in the English language.
- Give students a vocabulary for talking about elements of language and for talking about their specific writing problems.
- Help students use word order patterns to make meaning as they read even if they do not understand all of the vocabulary (e.g., "Jabberwocky").
- Expose students to the many possibilities of English syntax beyond the basic structures.

Sentence Concepts

Secondary Level students should understand that English language sentences are based on common "kernel" sentences. There are three basic sentence patterns (common kernels) in English:

- S-V (Subject-Verb): Subject and intransitive verb

Trevor drives. He works.

- S-V-O (Subject-Verb-Object): Subject, transitive verb, and direct object

The driver delivered the pizza.

This pattern is sometimes complicated by the insertion of an indirect object (e.g., *Trevor told his boss a story.*) and by object complements (e.g., *The pizza made Trevor famous.*).

- S-LV-C (Subject-Linking Verb-Complement): Subject, linking verb, and predicate noun or predicate adjective

Pizzas are Italian. Pizzas are nutritious.

About thirty percent of English sentences can be classified as S-V; 40-45 percent as S-V-O; and about 25 percent as S-LV-C (Hook & Evans, 1982, pp. 251-252).

The basic English sentence patterns can be expanded by adding qualifiers/modifiers (words, phrases, or clauses). For example,

Basic sentence: *The pizza cooks.*

Qualifiers:	What kind? large, pepperoni How? quickly, to a crisp Where? in the oven Why? so it can be delivered
-------------	--

Expanded sentence: *So it can be delivered, the large pepperoni pizza cooks quickly to a crisp in the oven.*

Basic English sentences can also be transformed. Simple transformations include:

- Negative ("not" or "n' t" and an auxiliary verb are inserted)

Pizzas are not junk food.

- Imperative ("you" becomes the subject)

Eat the pizza.

- Question

Type 1: Yes-No; subject and auxiliary verb are switched

Did the pizza get delivered?

Type 2: "Wh" word (who, what, which, when, where, why) or "how" and an auxiliary verb are inserted

Why do people like pepperoni pizza?

- There ("there" and linking verb are inserted)

There are nutritious pizzas.

- Passive (the subject and direct object are switched and the main verb is changed to the past participle)

Pizzas are delivered daily by drivers.

Complex transformations include:

- Joining (two sentences are joined using conjunctions such as "and", "but", "or")

Anchovy pizzas are popular. Pepperoni pizzas are popular.
Anchovy and pepperoni pizzas are popular.

- Embedding (two or more sentences are combined by embedding one into the other)

Pizzas are food. Pizzas are nutritious. Pizzas are a nutritious food.

Sentence Combining

Sentences can be combined for variety. Mellon (1967), O'Hare (1973), and Strong (1986) found that students could increase their syntactic fluency and writing ability when introduced to sentence combining activities. Studies show that sentence combining can "lead to fewer excessively short sentences, to a reduction in the number of 'and' sentences, and, perhaps most importantly, to a clearer indication of how ideas are related" (Hook & Evans, 1982, p. 254). In addition, sentence combining involves a minimal use of terminology. Some examples follow:

Tom found a wallet. The wallet was old and tattered.

Tom found a wallet that was old and tattered.

John is a fireman. John fights fires.

John who is a fireman fights fires.

OR

John, a fireman, fights fires.

However, teachers using sentence combining need to be careful that

students do not always equate longer, often extraordinarily complicated, sentences with "better" sentences. Students need to examine their ideas and not just the number of words in a sentence.

"A basic aim of intelligent sentence combining is to make good sentences, not merely long ones. It follows that 'decombining' may be at least as important as putting sentences together" (Strong, 1986, p. 18).

Using students' own sentences as much as possible, teachers can explain the rationale behind sentence combining and the appropriate punctuation for combined sentences.

Sentence Errors

Writing requires an understanding of certain sentence conventions. It demands that students consolidate ideas through co-ordination and subordination, and generally state their ideas as clearly and succinctly as possible in an appropriate order. Maxwell and Meiser (1997) identify the major sentence problems of Secondary Level students as:

- trying to say too much in one structure, thus creating a tangled, confused sentence
- writing a series of short, choppy sentences which are unconnected and often redundant
- including more than one main idea, thus making the relationship between ideas unclear
- writing non-sentences or fragments.

Other common sentence errors that cause students problems include:

- Vague pronoun reference.
- Wrong or missing preposition.
- Comma splice.
- Tense shift.
- Unnecessary shift in person.
- Wrong tense or verb form.
- Lack of subject-verb agreement.
- Pronoun agreement error.
- Dangling or misplaced modifier (Connors & Lunsford, 1988).

Additional errors are related to punctuation (e.g., no comma after an introductory element; no comma in a compound sentence; no comma in a non-restrictive element; possessive apostrophe error; lack of comma in series; unnecessary comma with restrictive element) or word choice (e.g., wrong word, its/it's).

Most errors can be talked about, understood, and corrected with a minimum amount of terminology. For example, a sentence fragment is lacking a key element; to change a sentence fragment into a complete sentence, add whatever is missing--a subject, a verb, or both.

The important thing to remember is that teachers should address the specific errors that each student is making. Teachers can use student samples to explain and clarify common student problems with sentence

structures.

Sentence Style

Finally, students should learn to attend to stylistic elements of a sentence (Parker, 1982, 1990; Larock, Tressler, & Lewis, 1980). For example,

Conciseness

- Avoid wordy sentences. Eliminate unnecessary words and expressions.
- Avoid over-using "to be", "which", "who", "whom", "that", "it", "this", and "there".
- Always use precise and concrete words.

Forcefulness (Emphasis)

- The strongest positions in a sentence are the beginning and the end.
- Single words and short phrases can also be effective in mid-sentence; sometimes they are set off by punctuation, and sometimes not.
- An existing single word or phrase can often be repositioned for greater emphasis.

Variety

There are a number of ways of adding variety to sentences, including:

- Length (short, long; avoid too many short, choppy "baby" sentences.)
- Structure (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex)
- Purpose (declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, or imperative).
- arrangement (loose, periodic, parallel, balanced, and inverted).

Style is a difficult writing quality to define and is, to a large degree, idiosyncratic. For experienced writers the connection between style and "voice" might dictate that a certain type of sentence be used--a preponderance of short sentences, for example. However, teachers should help students to develop their individual styles in various ways including working on sentence variety--a critical element in writing style.

Word Choice

Effective writers can communicate clearly with a careful choice of words. Although good word choice is partly a matter of preference, and therefore style, students should understand that certain choices will help them communicate their ideas to their readers.

The tools for this search for words include a good dictionary and a thesaurus. Students should be encouraged to consider context as well as

the following:

- Whether they have chosen the precise word to convey their meaning (ambling, striding, walking).
- Whether they want to use concrete descriptions or abstract concepts (a specific example of beauty or the abstract term "beauty").
- Whether they want to use vivid imagery or plain, straightforward descriptions.
- Whether they want to use words figuratively or symbolically.

In addition, students should learn to recognize clichés and triteness, and to avoid them.

Usage

Language usage is another important aspect of grammar. It refers to a person's form of expression--choices of words and structures in both speaking and writing. In different social situations, a person adjusts usage so that language varies according to purpose, context, and intended audience. Usage is what is acceptable in a particular situation. There are no hard and fast rules of language usage but there are ranges of uses appropriate to varying situations. Students should be sensitive to these situations and be comfortable and confident in determining their audience, purpose, and situation, as well as the appropriate style for these variables.

Some suggestions for student activities follow:

- Give students situations to explore. For example:
 1. *Your family car has coasted across the dock and into the lake. You were in charge of it when the accident happened. Three different audiences are very interested in your short, written account of the incident:*
 - *a parent*
 - *the insurance company*
 - *your friend who left a new CD player in the car.*

Write an explanation for each interested party. Use appropriate language (Toronto Board of Education, n.d., p. 95).

- *Describe a possible audience for each of the following sentences. What particular words in each sentence suit the audience you chose?*
 - *"My landlord, Harold P. Jones, demands that I pay my rent immediately or face eviction."*
 - *"Old Jones told me to cough up or ship out."*
 - *"Mr. Jones wants his rent money now; otherwise he'll force me to leave."*

(Toronto Board of Education, n. d., p. 96).

- Help students understand the range of "appropriateness" found in the language. Language differs in register according to the writer, the purpose, the audience, and the subject matter. For example:

Casual: a conversation, a diary entry

Informal: a class discussion, a personal diary

Fairly formal: a news report, a formal essay

Very formal: a lecture, a technical report.

- Help students explore the varieties of usage found within a classroom, community, or region. It should be pointed out that speech dialects differ according to region and social group, and that even "standard" English allows for a variety of acceptable speech. Spoken and written language are somewhat like fashion. They are a matter of style.

If we spoke as we write, we should find no one to listen, and if we wrote as we speak, we should find no one to read. The spoken and the written language should not be too near together as they must not be too far apart (T. S. Eliot).

- Help students learn standard usage. Hook and Evans (1982) summarize the most common usage items on which a teacher might focus:

- Verb agreement in number (chiefly the forms of "be" and "have").
- Past tense and past participle forms (about 40 pairs such as "saw-seen" and "took-taken").
- Compound subjects involving pronouns (e.g., "She and I were"; "He and Judy were").
- Pronouns as objects of verbs, prepositions, and verbals (e.g., "saw Lois and him", "for her and me").
- Adjective wrongly used as a modifier of an action verb (e.g., "The engine runs good.").
- Double subject and double negatives (e.g., "Bill he doesn't have none.") (p. 292).

Other "abusage" for consideration might be: a lot, anyways, could of, irregardless, off of, real (as an adverb), reason is because, and you use. These problems should be addressed when they occur in real contexts rather than addressed through memorization of rules, drill, or discrete exercises. A school staff might decide those items that need to be stressed.

Capture students' interest in language by discussing such variations as slang, jargon, adspeak, miligab, bureaugab, technogab, and poligab. These forms fascinate students because of their deliberate distortions. Teachers do not need to teach these language variations directly, but can

show students the uses and limitations of these various forms. Students can also discover that some people, often teenagers, deliberately choose not to use standard English to distance themselves from mainstream society.

Spelling

Spelling plays an important role in communicating through the written word. Students need to realize that spelling errors detract from their overall message and that society, in general, is less tolerant of poor spelling than of any other problems with language.

When students are uncertain about a correct spelling, they need to be aware of the options that they have, including:

- Checking a word visually.
- Using a dictionary.
- Using a spell-check program on a computer.
- Asking a good speller.

By far the most effective way of learning to spell is proofreading one's writing. Students can become more effective spellers by:

- Checking their own and others' writing carefully for spelling.
- Analyzing their own spelling problems, grouping them in patterns (e.g., pneumonia, pneumatic), and describing their own spelling rules.

- Keeping a list of their own demons and periodically having a peer dictate this list.
- Nothing sound-alikes (e.g., their/there/they're) and look-alikes (e.g., then/than) but learning them within an appropriate context.
- Learning at least three basic spelling rules:

Rule 1: dropping the final "e"

Rule 2: doubling the final consonant

Rule 3: learning about "ie" and "ei"

- Carefully pronouncing words (e.g., accept/except).
- Using mnemonic devices (e.g., "stationery" where the "e" stands for envelope).
- Developing a way of studying new words (e.g., examine, pronounce, make associations, cover, write, check).

5.2.4.3. Punctuation and Capitalization

The purpose of **punctuation** is to help the reader understand the writer's meaning. For example, "I left him convinced he was a fool" is not the same as "I left him, convinced he was a fool". A different intent is conveyed by each of "She is there now", "She is there now?" and "She is there now!" Variations in punctuation may result in differences in meaning, lack of meaning, or different emphasis.

Most punctuation marks are written substitutes for intonation--visual symbols that have developed as substitutes. Some punctuation marks, such as those found in the business letter, are dictated by custom. Students need to know the basic function of punctuation marks and their "customary" uses in writing.

Marland (1977) recommends that punctuation be taught by function, including:

- The seven ways of marking off a "sense group": the comma, the semicolon, parentheses, the period followed by a space and upper-case letter, the paragraph indentation, the space or signs for section divisions, the chapter-ending space
- The three ways of marking interruptions: a pair of commas, a pair of dashes, a set of parentheses
- The different ways of showing that a word has been borrowed or is being used in a special way: underline, quotation marks, italics, or boldface.

Capitalization is closely related to punctuation. It is also a signal to the reader. A capital letter, for example, announces to the reader the beginning of a new sentence, a title, a name, a day, a month, a place, a holiday season, a direction, a school subject, or a language.

Students can learn to punctuate and capitalize by:

- Editing and proofreading carefully their own and their peers' compositions.
- Learning during mini-lessons the purpose and history of the punctuation marks (e.g., the teacher places text on a transparency, omitting all punctuation and capitalization marks, for students to discuss and punctuate).
- Referring to a handbook.
- Working on trouble spots with the teacher or a peer (e.g., the semi-colon is equal in value to the comma plus co-ordinate conjunction: ; = , + and).
- Preparing a punctuation and capitalization rules chart.
- Writing "la dictée" (i.e., transcribing accurately a dictated selection using correct spelling and punctuation).

A variation of this last strategy would have the teacher distributing unpunctuated and uncapitalized copies of a composition. Students correct their copy as they listen to the dictation and then compare their copy to the original.

6. HYPOTHESIS

General

The Strategies and techniques applied by the teachers influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in the Students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

Specific

- The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.

- The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009”

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1. TYPE OF STUDY

The group has identified the present research work as a descriptive because the researchers will not manipulate the variables of the stated hypothesis, but they will describe the facts as they happen in their real world.

7.2. METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

The Scientific Method.- Any scientific research follows an ordered and complex process which needs a strict procedure to describe the events during period of observation, so we have selected the scientific method because their characteristics seem to be the most suitable.

This scientific method will let us, to state problem, the general and specific objectives and based on them we will formulate the corresponding hypothesis which will guide all the investigative process.

This method will be used in the searching of the theoretical- scientific fundamentals to explain the relation of the variables of the present work, and also to state the most pertinent recommendations according to the conclusions that we reach, the same that will serve to contribute with some ideas to improve the reading and writing skills with the students of 9th and 10th years at “27 de Febrero” High School inside the English language

process.

Descriptive Method.- We will also use the descriptive method because it will guide us to demonstrate the main purpose of the research, to describe the problematic that the group found in this educative institution, to describe the variables of the stated hypothesis as cause and effect and we will describe coherently all the researching work presenting the results and supporting the conclusions. This method will also serve to describe the strategies and techniques that the teachers use to develop the reading and writing skills during the English Language teaching learning process.

Analytic- Synthetic Method.- This method also will serve to analyze the main results that we will get through the instruments applied in the field work and which will help us to prove our hypothesis based on the results of major tendencies. It also will be helpful to analyze the fundamentals of the theoretical frame which will support the verification of the stated hypothesis.

Explicative Method.- It will be also used, in the explanation of all the results that we get in the field work contrasting them with the theoretical referents. It will let us, to identify the strategies and techniques that the teachers apply into the English Language teaching learning process.

We will use the descriptive statistics which will serve to represent the data in tables, squares and graphs to get a better comprehension of the information.

7.3. TECHNIQUES, INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

To obtain the empiric information we will apply the following techniques and instruments.

A **Survey** will be applied to obtain information about the English Teaching Learning process and to know what kind of strategies and techniques the teachers apply to develop the reading and writing skills with the students of 9th and 10th years of basic education of the researched High School. It will be applied to teachers and students with a previous elaborated questionnaire which will contain closed questions with indicators that will help to prove the stated hypothesis.

After we apply the research instruments we will process the data through the following steps:

We will **tabulate** the collected data, using the descriptive statistics for the closed questions and unifying criteria for the questions that include reasons.

Then we will **organize** the empiric information taking into account the questions that will prove the first hypothesis and the ones that will help to prove the second one so that we will describe them orderly.

After that we will **represent** the obtained data in statistic tables and graphs which will show the data in frequencies and percentages that will let to **analyze** and **interpret** the empiric information contrasting it with the theoretical referents which will help us to prove the hypothesis.

To prove the hypothesis we will use the descriptive statistics with tables and percentages which will help to analyze the results and to state some valuable recommendations based on the gotten conclusions keeping in mind the objectives that guided this research.

7.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The teacher's population is formed by 5 English teachers who work with 9th and 10th years of basic education at the researched High School.

The students of 8th, 9th and 10th years of basic education are 326, this population is represented in the following chart:

COURSES-PARALELLS	“A”	“B”	“C”	“D”	“E”	“F”	TOTAL
9th Year of Basic Education	29	28	30	30	27	24	168
10 th Year of Basic Education	34	34	33	34	23		158
TOTAL							326

As we can see the population in 9th and 10th years is a little big. Therefore, the group has considered convenient to take a sample using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{PQ \times N}{E^2 \cdot (N-1) + K^2}$$

PQ = First quartile (0,25)

N= Population

n = sample

K = Constant of proportionality (2)

E = Error of Sample (10%, 0,1)

$$n = \frac{0,25 \times 326}{\frac{(0,1)^2}{(2)^2} - 0,25}$$

$$n = \frac{81,5}{\frac{0,01}{4} - 0,25}$$

$$n = \frac{81,5}{325 (0,0025) - 0,25}$$

$$n = \frac{81,5}{0,5625}$$

$$n = 144,8$$

$$n = 145$$

For this reason we will apply the surveys to 145 students of 9th and 10th years of basic education who we show below. To do the sample distribution we will apply the following formula and the result must be multiplied by the total of each course.

$$n = \frac{n}{N}$$

$$N$$

$$N = 0,44$$

SAMPLE BY PARALELLS

COURSE S	STUDENT'S POPULATION	PARALLEL S	SAMPLE BY PARALLEL	SAMPL E TOTAL
9th Year of Basic Education	168	A	13	74
		B	12	
		C	13	
		D	13	
		E	12	
		F	11	
10th Year of Basic Education	158	A	15	71
		B	15	
		C	15	
		D	15	
		E	11	
TOTAL	326			145

8. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RESOURCES

8.1. HUMAN

Research Group:

- Adriana Prado
- Melva Paucar

Informants

- Teachers on the English Area of “27 de Febrero” High School
- Students of 9th and 10th years of basic education
- Authorities of the researched institution

Institutional

- U. N. L.
- “27 de Febrero” Technical National High School

8.2. MATERIALS

- Office material
- Books
- Computer
- Printer
- Scanner

8.3. BUDGET

➤ Elaboration of the project	200
➤ Copies and reproduction of the project	100
➤ Elaboration of the thesis	300
➤ Copies and reproduction of the thesis	200
➤ Expenses in the Ceremony	200
➤ Others	100

.....
TOTAL \$ 1.100

8.4. FINANCING

All the expenses of this research work will be assumed by the research group.

10. TIMETABLE

ACTIVITIES \ MONTHS	May				Jun				Jul				Aug				Sept				Oct				Nov			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Presentation of the Project	x	x																										
Write the recommendations to the project					x																							
Approving of the project						x																						
Checking and redesign of the research instruments							x																					
Application of the research instruments							x	x																				
Processing of the research									x	x	x	x	x	x														
Drawing conclusions															x	x												
Elaboration of the report																	x	x										
Private qualification of the thesis																			x	x								
Writing the recommendations																					x	x	x					
Public sustentation and Graduation																									x	x	x	x

11. BLIOGRAPHY

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12. ANNEXES

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA

AREA OF EDUCATION, ART AND COMMUNICATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

TEACHER'S SURVEY

The present is a research work about the techniques to develop the reading and writing skills in 9th and 10th years of basic education at "27 de Febrero" High School of the Loja city. So that we wonder if you would complete the following questionnaire:

1. Does your students like reading in English?

Yes () No () Sometimes ()

Why:

.....
.....

2. How many readings do you develop per unit? Mark with an X

One..... Two..... Three..... More.....

Explain:

.....
.....

3. Do you apply specific strategies to teach the students to read in English?

Always () Almost always () Sometimes () Never ()

4. Do you encourage to your students to read extra material in English?

Yes () No () Sometimes ()

Explain:

.....
.....

5. What techniques do you apply to develop the reading comprehension? Mark with an x.

Predicting	()	Proofreading	()
Skimming	()	Matching	()
Getting the main idea	()	Scanning	()
Brainstorming	()	Highlighting	()
Circle	()	Questioning	()

6. Do you apply post-reading techniques to verify the reading comprehension?

Yes ()

No ()

Which

ones:.....

.....

7. Does your students like to write in English? Mark with an x.

Yes ()

No ()

Sometimes ()

Explain:.....

.....

8. Which of the following steps do you apply to teach the students to write in English.

a) Prewriting ()

b) Organizing ()

c) Drafting ()

d) Revising and Editing ()

e) Publishing and Reflecting ()

9. What techniques do you use to develop the written production?

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| Prewriting | () | Drafting | () |
| Editing | () | Revising | () |
| Brainstorming | () | Proofreading | () |
| Publishing | () | Planning | () |

10. How often do you send extra task to develop the writing skill?

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| Four times a week | () | Three times a week | () |
| Twice a week | () | Once a week | () |

11. What kind of written production do you develop with your Students?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----|----------|-----|
| Letters | () | Stories | () |
| Compositions | () | Articles | () |
| Reports | () | Essays | () |

12. What's the average of a group of your student's in the English

Subject in a term? Mark one with an x.

Excellent 20-19 () Very Good 18-17 ()

Good 16-15 () Regular 14-13 ()

Insufficient 12-0 ()

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA
AREA OF EDUCATION, ART AND COMMUNICATION
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER
STUDNETS' SURVEY

The present is a research work about the techniques to develop the reading and writing skills in 9th and 10th years of basic education at “27 de Febrero” High School of the Loja city. So that we wonder if you would complete the following questionnaire:

1. Do you like reading in English?

Yes () No () Sometimes ()

Why:

.....
.....

2. How many readings does your teacher develop per unit? Mark with an X

One..... Two..... Three..... More.....

Explain:

.....
.....

3. Does your teacher apply specific strategies to teach you to read in English?

Always () Almost always () Sometimes () Never ()

7. Does your teacher encourage you to read extra material in English?

Yes () No () Sometimes ()

Which

material:.....

.....

8. What techniques does your teacher apply to develop the reading comprehension? Mark with an x.

Predicting () Proofreading ()

Skimming () Matching ()

Getting the main idea () Scanning ()

Brainstorming () Highlighting ()

Circle () Questioning ()

9. Mark which post-reading techniques do your teacher apply to verify the reading comprehension?

- a) Summaries () b) Graphic organizers ()
c) Questionnaires () d) Others ()

Which
ones:.....
.....

10. Do you like to write in English? Mark with an x.

- Yes () No () Sometimes ()

Explain:.....
.....

11. Which of the following steps does your teacher apply to teach you to write in English.

- a) Prewriting ()
b) Organizing ()
c) Drafting ()
d) Revising and Editing ()
e) Publishing and Reflecting ()

12. What techniques does your teacher use to develop the written production?

Prewriting	()	Drafting	()
Editing	()	Revising	()
Brainstorming	()	Proofreading	()
Publishing	()	Planning	()

13. How often does your teacher send extra task to develop the writing skill?

Four times a week	()	Three times a week	()
Twice a week	()	Once a week	()

14. What kind of written production do you develop with your in class?

Letters	()	Stories	()
Compositions	()	Articles	()
Reports	()	Essays	()

15. What's your average in the English Subject in a term? Mark one with an x.

Excellent	20-19 ()	Very Good	18-17 ()
Good	16-15 ()	Regular	14-13 ()
Insufficient	12-0 ()		

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION

CONSISTENCY MATRIX

THEME: STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES APPLIED BY THE TEACHERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STUDENTS OF 9TH AND 10TH YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION AT “27 DE FEBRERO” TECHNICAL FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL . ACADEMIC PERIOD 2008-

SUBPROBLEMS	OBJECTIVES	HYPHOTESIS	VARIABLES	INDICADORES
<p>General</p> <p>How the Strategies and Techniques applied by the English Teachers influence in the development of the reading and writing</p>	<p>General</p> <p>To find out about the Strategies and Techniques applied by the English Teachers and their influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in</p>	<p>General</p> <p>The Strategies and techniques applied by the teachers influence in the development of the reading and writing skills in the Students of 9th and</p>		

skills in the Students of 9 th and 10 th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School?. Academic period 2008-2009.	the Students of 9 th and 10 th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.	10 th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.		
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<p>Subproblems</p> <p>In what way the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers help the students to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de</p>	<p>Specific</p> <p>To determine if the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers help to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009.</p>	<p>Specific</p> <p>The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers are not helping to develop the reading skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High</p>	<p>Strategies and techniques to develop the reading skill</p>	<p>Predicting Skimming Scanning Getting the main idea Brainstorming Highlighting Circle Questioning Books read</p>
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<p>Febrero” Technical Female High School? Academic period 2008- 2009.</p> <p>How the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic</p>	<p>To establish the relation between the strategies and techniques applied by the teachers and the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education at “27 de Febrero” Technical Female High</p>	<p>School. Academic period 2008-2009.</p> <p>The strategies and techniques applied by the teachers do not facilitate the development of the writing skill in the students of 9th and 10th years of Basic Education</p>	<p>Strategies and techniques to develop the writing skill</p>	<p>Prewriting Drafting Revising and editing Publishing and reflecting Letters Stories Compositions Articles Reports Excellent (20-19) Very Good (18-17) Good (16-15) Regular (14-13)</p>
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Education at "27 de Febrero" Technical Female High School? Academic period 2008- 2009	School. Academic period 2008-2009	at "27 de Febrero" Technical Female High School. Academic period 2008-2009"		Insufficient (12-0)
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