UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

TITLE

PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL. 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

> Thesis as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Science of Education English Language Specialization.

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LOJA- ECUADOR

2016

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C E R T I F I E S:

To have directed and thoroughly revised this thesis work entitled: PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO HIGH SCHOOL 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD, under the responsibility of Yessenia Isabel Yaguachi Cueva, undergraduate student pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Science of Education: English Language Specialization. This work complies with the norms and requirements of Universidad Nacional de Loja, therefore I authorize its presentation and defense.

Loja, January 21, 2016.

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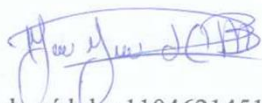
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God for having allowed me to achieve this goal and surround me with pleasant individuals. A special thanks to my mom who has supported me throughout the process.

I dedicate this work and give special thanks to my husband Diego who has been a significant support, and to my wonderful kids Isabela and Ronald for being there for me throughout my entire university life. This fantastic dream is real because you are my motivation to continue growing.

YESSENIA ISABEL

MATRIZ DE ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO

TIPO DE DOCUMENTO	AUTOR Y TITULO DE LA TESIS	FUENTE	FECHA - AÑO	ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO						OTRAS DESAGREGACIONES	OTRAS OBSERVACIONES
				ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN							
				BIBLIOTECA: ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN							
				NACIONAL	REGIONAL	PROVINCIAL	CANTON	PARROQUIA	BARRIO COMUNIDAD		
TESIS	**YESSENIA ISABEL YAGUACHI CUEVA** PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL. 2014-2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.	UNL	2016	Ecuador	Zona7	Loja	Loja	San Sebastian	San Sebastian	**CD**	Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación, Mención: Idioma Inglés.

MAPA GEOGRÁFICO Y CROQUIS

UBICACIÓN GEOGRÁFICA DEL CANTÓN DE LOJA

CROQUIS DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN

COLEGIO "PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO"

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a. TITLE

PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMOGNTS FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL. 2014-2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

b. RESUMEN

La presente investigación se enfocó en el uso de "Represente Esto" como una estrategia de aprendizaje cooperativo para desarrollar habilidades de escritura del Idioma Extranjero inglés entre los estudiantes del primer año de bachillerato. Un plan de intervención de veintidós planes de estudio se llevó a cabo para mejorar la destreza, y se usaron pruebas y cuestionarios fueron utilizados para medir el progreso de los estudiantes en la escritura así como también en su comportamiento y actitudes hacia la estrategia antes mencionada. Los métodos científico, descriptivo, analítico- sintético y estadístico fueron utilizados para puntualizar los datos, analizar los resultados y finalmente obtener conclusiones. Los resultados de los exámenes y de los cuestionarios de los estudiantes demostraron un incremento al escribir. Basándose en estos resultados se podría concluir que la intervención fue importante debido a que esta mostró un adelanto evidente en el rendimiento de los estudiantes atribuido a la aplicación de actividades de aprendizaje de cooperativo.

ABSTRACT

The present research was focused on the use of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy to develop English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students. An intervention plan consisting of twenty-two lesson plans was carried out to improve the skill, and tests and questionnaires were used to measure students' progress on writing as well as their behaviors and attitudes toward the strategy mentioned before. The scientific, descriptive, analytic-synthetic and statistical methods were used to describe data, analyze the results and finally, draw conclusions. The results of the posttest and post questionnaires demonstrate an improvement in students writing. Based on the results it might be concluded that the intervention was important because it showed an evident advance in the student's achievement attributed to the implementation of cooperative learning activities.

c. INTRODUCTION

This research work was focused on the use of "Picture This" to develop basic writing skills with twenty-one students in a public High School. After, applying a pretest the researcher realized that the students have a lack of knowledge in writing skills. However they do not apply techniques that influence and provoke the development of writing skills. Due to this, they become worried about producing written work, or doing any writing activity because they are unprepared to generate a short paragraph.

The researcher has considered it significant to carry out this research work entitled: Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy to develop English foreign language basic writing skills amongst first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School. 2014- 2015 academic period; this research is also significant because it focuses on the use of techniques in order to overcome one of the difficulties of the English language that students have to face which is to develop writing skills.

The reasons why the researcher implemented Picture This as a strategy to improve writing skills, was the fact that students have lack of knowledge in writing skills; another reason is that students have a little background of grammar rules and vocabulary which are significant part to write properly.

Also, the main goal of the current study was to develop writing skills through Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy. To complete this goal the researcher investigated the theoretical and methodological references about Picture This; to diagnose the issues that limited the development of writing skills;

to design an intervention plan based on Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy; to applied the most suitable techniques as part of the classroom activities in order to solve the limitations in this skill and appreciate the effectiveness that Picture This had on student´s writing skills.

The methods that were applied along the intervention plan were the following: The Scientific method to facilitate the study of appropriate resources to improve writing skills. The descriptive method supported to describe the stages of the study and kind of sources used by the teacher. The analytic-synthetic method to analyzed and interpret the obtained results through the tests, to draw conclusions. The Statistical method to make the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the observations.

This research has two variables which are Writing Skills and Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy that helped the researcher to find the issue. The first part is Literature Review that includes all the theoretical frame references which helped the researcher to understand better the importance of developing the writing skill in cooperative learning. The second part involves the methodology used in this research work. It includes: methods, techniques and the detailed population to which the researcher applied this study. The third part contains the results with the respective charts and graphs, which represents the obtained data; it also has the corresponding analysis of each question. The last part refers to the conclusions and recommendations that the researcher obtained after carrying out the respective interpretation and analysis of the results because it was the basis to generate the recommendations given to the research institution.

d. LITERATURE REVIEW

The present research work was carried out with first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado high school to develop the basic writing skills, seeing as they presented a low level in writing development that limited their capacity to generate ideas and express opinions. Likewise, they presented poor vocabulary that impeded effective written and spoken communication.

According to the Common European Framework of reference (CEFR) the level of proficiency for the basic user A2 indicates that they;

✓ Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance

✓ Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.

✓ Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need (Council Of Europe, 2003).

Basic writing skills

Writing skills are important part of communication. Good writing skills allow people communicating in a clear and easy way to all audience**.**

The writing process is a mainly purposeful, mental, and material procedure to produce a written text. While illiteracy is still a considerable problem even in the wealthier parts of the world, nowadays the most communication world-wide takes place in the written mode. Writing separates thoughts from the writer and allows

communication over time and space, with known and unknown readers. (Jozséf, 2001)

Writing in EFL learning

Writing is among the most complex of human activities. It involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representations of knowledge, and of experience with subjects. The interlocking processes of writing by novice and expert authors has been studied by such diverse disciplines as cognitive psychology, stylistics, rhetoric, text linguistics, critical literary theory, hypertext theory, second language acquisition, and writing pedagogy (Gao, 2001)

Writing is an action process of discovering and organizing ideas, putting them on a paper, reshaping and revising them. In other words, writing is an activity that creates ideas or opinions in a composition by using writing convention. It has to be coherent, cohesive and the ideas in the writing should make sense and be connected logically. Writing particularly is used for interacting and communicating with people, whether formal or informal writing (Gao, 2001).

Second language teachers need to be aware that interactive learning activities are crucial to achieve, active participation and use of the target language. Studies have shown that classroom interaction promotes improved learning outcomes, critical thinking, captures students' attention and interest. Individual learning styles influences interaction and participation in the classroom. There are active learners (learn by doing), sensory learners (learn by discussing possibilities and relationships), visual learners (learn when they see things), and the sequential learners who gain understanding in linear steps. (Agbatogun, 2014)

These pedagogical strategies have a positive influence and motivate students to engage actively in the classroom. In traditional classrooms, students engage in recitation of scripts, minimal interaction, and less involvement in productive thinking (Singh, Mohammed, Smith, F, & Higgins, 2012; 2006). Interaction between the students, the learning materials, other students, and the teacher are significant to learning.

The components of writing

Content

The component of writing should be clear to readers. Therefore, those readers can understand the message conveyed and gain information from it. In order to have good writing content, the writing should be well unified and complete. Besides writing has completeness, the main idea has to be explained and developed fully. Completeness is the conditioning of ideas which are developed through particular information.

Unity means that every part of the sentences contributes to one principle by unifying thoughts. Moreover, unity is the first quality of an effective sentence. When we say that a sentence has unity, we mean that everything in it has logical relation to the purpose of the sentences as a whole and nothing is omitted which is necessary to that purpose (Harmer, 2010).

Organization.-

The process of organization materials in writing involves coherence, order of importance, general to specific, specific chronological order and spatial pattern.

Coherence

Coherence means all the ideas stick together. A coherent paragraph is one in which the ideas are in the right order and doesn't confuse the reader. This makes the writer's thoughts easy to follow.

Order of importance

One of the most useful ways of arranging ideas in a paragraph is the order of importance. Technically speaking, a paragraph can be arranged in two ways: beginning with the most important idea, or building up to the most important idea. The advantages of building up to the most important ideas stem from the suspense involved and the tendency for readers to remember best what they read last. The paragraph that concludes with surprise, a clever moment, an appeal or a strong ending is more likely to be successful.

General to specific

The general to specific pattern is the most common type of paragraph order. The arrangement begins with the topic sentences that make a general statement followed by a series of supporting sentences which supply specific details, examples and facts. Since the reader knows what the main points are, they follow the development of that thought more easily. For this reason, it minimizes the chance of the readers misunderstanding and its particular effective for informing and clarifying.

Chronological order

In a paragraph organized chronologically, events are arranged in the order they occurred, usually moving from the first to the last. Some give direction or

explanation of a process, others summarize historical events and the steps or actions taken by individual or organization.

Spatial patter

If the purpose of writing is to tell how something looks, the most effective organization pattern is usually spatial. If we write a description such as: neighborhood, a room or building. We want the reader to have a mental picture of what we are describing. In describing a house or a building, the writer probably firstly describe the exterior and interior. By moving systematically rather than irregularly over the science we convey to the viewer the overall plan or science.

Vocabulary

One of the requirements of good writing always defined by the effective use of words. In personal description, words play dual roles; to communicate and to evoke, to let the readers perceive and feel. These two-fold purposes are evident even in such a practical and common form of writing as an advertisement.

The effective use of words also deals with connotative or figurative language. They are present in nearly all forms of writing but particularly in personal description. Word rich in association are more effective than those that mainly transmit transformation. However, words and phrases enrich the ability to convey experiences imaginatively but they do not have place in factual description. In scientific and technical writing, language should be exact and precise to convey specific meaning and design to communicate information but not the writer's feeling.

Language use

Language use in writing involves correct apparition of grammar. There are many points of grammar such as: verbs, nouns, and agreement. Specific nouns and strong verbs give a reader a mental image or description. This specific noun can be characterized by using a modifier of adjectives, adverbs and participle form.

There are many chances for error in the use of verbs and mistake in arrangement are very common. Mistakes in written work are much more serious since we have an opportunity to re-read and to correct what we have written. We should avoid errors in verbal forms, subject-verb agreement and pronoun antecedent agreement in a case of a noun or pronoun.

Mechanics

The use of mechanics involves capitalization, punctuation, and appropriate spelling appropriately. The use of favorable mechanics in writing will make it easy for readers to understand the ideas and other messages conveyed in the writing.

Capitalization

The use of capitalization in the writing can clarify ideas. If the sentences are capitalized correctly, ambiguous meaning and misunderstanding would not be a problem. Besides, correct capitalization of a sentence will help the reader to differentiate one sentence to others.

Punctuation.

This one can be used as a unit of meaning, and to suggest how go to each other.

Spelling.

There are three important rules to be followed in using spelling appropriately. They are addition, plural formation and handling error within words (Harmer, 2010).

Types of writing

Expository writing

Is where the author intends to inform, explain, describe or define their subject to you. This is the most common type of writing you will find in text books and online. As the author is mostly trying to tell you all about the subject, their opinions are left out leaving you with facts and figures instead of trying to defend or support an opinion (teAchnology, 1999).

Descriptive writing

Uses a lot of great visual words to help you see the person, place or thing they are writing about. The writing can be poetic at times, and explain things in great detail (teAchnology, 1999).

Narrative writing

Is very common in novels, poetry and biographies. The author puts themselves in their characters shoes and writes as if they were that person. They tell life stories and involve plots and storylines (teAchnology, 1999).

Persuasive writing

Takes on the opinion of the writer or issue the writer is writing for. This is considered biased material and is most often found in advertising. You know all of those commercials you see on television? Behind all the talk and messages is a persuasive writer (teAchnology, 1999).

Creative writing

Is perhaps the most fun type of writing? Anything you think up in your head can be turned into creative writing. Creative writing is often thought provoking, entertaining and more interesting to read than say persuasive writing is. Short stories, poetry, novels and plays often fall into the creative writing category. It doesn't necessarily need to follow any line of facts, just as long as it's interesting to read (teAchnology, 1999).

Writing sub-skills

One way to get at the sub-skills of writing is to list the standard steps used to describe the process of writing.

Cooperative learning

The cooperative learning is an instructional technique developed to improve academic achievement through social and interpersonal skill development; consequently that learning is dependent on the socially designed exchanged of information between learners in groups.

Cooperative learning is applied as a teaching strategy in the classroom to help student's process information faster by having them work in small groups to achieve a collective goal. CL emphasizes the importance of interactions among

students working in small groups on a given task or assignment related to a unit of study, students achievement increases, attitudes toward learning improve, and students learn/retain more information than through other, more intrapersonal, instructional methodologies (i.e. teacher directed/lecture style formats).

Research points to all of these positive effects as well as improved intergroup, interethnic and gender cooperation as well as increased self-esteem and confidence for all student populations including special needs, gifted and main stream students (Loeser, 2008).

Theory of learning

Independent researchers, most notably David Johnson, Roger Johnson, and Robert Slavin claim that cooperative learning started to become a common instructional methodology in classrooms.. Research indicates that cooperative learning has a direct impact on academic achievement, self-esteem, confidence, interethnic relationships, and overall attitudes toward the learning process. Cooperative learning theory draws extensively on research by Piaget, Vygotsky and Carroll. (Loeser, 2008).

Cooperative learning advocates draw heavily on the theoretical work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget (1965) and Lev Vygotsky (1962), both of whom stress the central role of social interaction in learning. In cooperative learning it seeks the word *cooperative* emphasizes another important dimension of CLL: it seeks to develop classrooms that foster cooperation rather that competition in learning. (Richards & Rodgers, Aproach and Methods in Language Teaching, 2001).

The application of cooperative learning brings some advantages in teaching language, some of which are:

- To give opportunities for natural second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair or group activities.

- To prepare teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings.

- To enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structure and communicative function through the use of interactive tasks.

- To offer opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies.

- To enhance learner motivation and reduces learners stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate. (Richards. Jack & Rodgers Theodore, 1986).

The purpose of the cooperative learning strategy working together, students increase confidence, share their strengths and complete tasks more easily. Most students enjoy the chance to work with a partner or in a group and friendly competition between groups often brings out top-notch work. (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

Basic elements of cooperative teams

Positive Interpendance: Team members perceive that they need each other in order to complete the group's task ("sink or swim together"). Instructors may structure positive interdependence by establishing mutual goals (maximize own and each other's productivity), joint rewards (if all group members achieve above

the criteria, each will receive bonus points), shared resources (members have different expertise), and assigned roles (summarizer, encourager of participation, elaborator.

Individual accountability: Assessing the quality and quantity of each member's contributions and giving the results to the group and the individual.

Face-to face promotive interaction: Team members promote each other's productivity by helping, sharing, and encouraging efforts to produce. Members explain, discuss, and teach what they know to teammates. Instructor's structure teams so that members sit knee-to-knee and talk through each aspect of the tasks they are working to complete.

Interpersonal and small skills: Groups cannot function effectively if members do not have and use the needed social skills. Instructors emphasize these skills purposefully and precisely as job-performance skills. Collaborative skills include instructorship, decision-making, trust- building, communication, and conflict-management skills.

Group processing: Groups need specific time to discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships among members. Instructors structure group processing by assigning such tasks as (a) list at least three member actions that helped the group be successful and (b) list one action that could be added to make the group even more successful tomorrow. Instructors also monitor the groups and give feedback on how well the groups are working together (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990).

Picture This as a cooperative strategy

This is a Specially Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategy that uses a visual to provide authenticity to the abstract concepts and/or vocabulary being presented (Marzano, 2004).

Picture this develops the ability to find meaning in imagery. It involves a set of skills ranging from simple identification (naming what one sees) to complex interpretation on contextual, metaphoric and philosophical levels. These should be shared and discussed to further develop understanding for everyone.

Using images helps immerse students in rich details. The details help students become engaged and make the text more impressive. There are no right or wrong answers, and anything that students believe can be justified by details in the picture.

The processes to develop this strategy are the following:

- A blank paper is divided into eight sections.

- Students draw pictures or symbols to represent words or major concepts. Students are not to label the drawings.

- Students exchange papers with a partner and partners try to correctly label each other's drawings.

This activity is especially useful for students who are English Language Learners (ELL). This activity gives the students a basis for connecting a picture with a word or concept, which will help them with memorization. The use of a visual can help the language learner both in acquisition of English and the understanding of abstract concepts. (Cline & Necochea).

This strategy can also be useful for students who are visual learners or who learn artistically. The visual learners will be able to understand to a fuller extent what they are learning. Artistic learners will enjoy creating their pictures and will use these concrete drawings to help them understand the abstract words or concepts (Hodgdon, 1995).

Teachers will benefit from this strategy because it will only strengthen their knowledge of the vocabulary or concept and give them study skills for using in the future for words or concepts they find hard to understand or remember.

There are some useful techniques for developing the writing skill through the use of the Picture This strategy:

Brainstorming - Students work as a group with the teacher, or in small groups. Begin with a stimulus such as a word, phrase, picture, or object and record all responses to that stimulus without prejudgment. The students give ideas on a topic while a recorder writes them down.

Anticipatory KWL Chart - Before reading a selection, hearing a selection or viewing a video students are asked to complete the first two sections of the chart- "What I already know about ...." and "What I would like to find out about ...." After the information has been presented students complete the "What I learned..." section. Responses are shared with a partner. This is also known as a KWL Chart.

*Journals-*Students keep questions and ideas in a journal. Students use pictures about the topic to develop a formal piece of writing.

Pass the Picture -Each person in a group has a visual of a person. A blank sheet of paper is clipped to the back. The researcher asks a question student's write the

answer in a complete sentence or words on the blank paper. Students then pass the visual and the paper to the student on the right. The researcher continues asking questions and students continue writing the answer, then passing the visual to the right for 6-8 questions. At the end, each student have a descriptive paragraph for each visual. Each student takes a visual and shares it with the group while reading the final paragraph description.

***Think-Pair-Share* –** the researcher asked to record an idea or review vocabulary, students draw their ideas or new vocabulary on a paper (think). Each student shares their paper with another student nearby without label (share). The classmates label the picture according what they see and label the picture and exchange to discuss and correct (pairs).

To use the strategy Picture This students need templates, fold papers, markers, grad paper, flashcards, notebook as a journal.

Picture This is a cooperative learning strategy that works with principles of cooperative learning.

One of the principles that characterize this strategy is the positive independence in which at working on Picture This, students perceive that they need each other in order to complete the group's task. In this way the researcher may structures positive interdependence by establishing mutual goals, joint rewards, shared, and assigned roles.

Individual accountability is the second principle that characterizes the strategy assessing the quality and quantity of each member's contributions and giving the

results to the group and the individual (Richards. Jack & Rodgers Theodore, 1986).

Face-to-face promotive interaction characterizes the third principle when students worked in pairs they promote each other's productivity by expressing vocabulary through drawing pictures, sharing, and encouraging to classmate's efforts to label the pictures. Students explain, discuss, and correct the pictures labeled to get feedback. (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

In Group processing principle, at working in groups students discuss how well they can work maintaining effective relationships among them. Consequently, the researcher structures groups processing by assigning tasks, giving lists, monitor the groups and give feedback on how well the groups are working together (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

An example of how a student's paper might look after they have drawn and their partner has labeled.
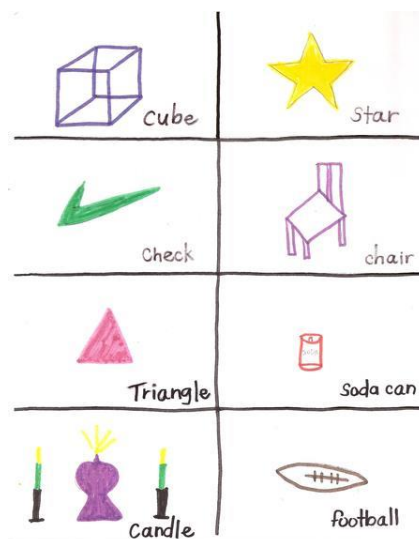
To sum up, Picture This and cooperative learning provides knowledge in order to process the information through social and interpersonal skill to develop the writing skills. Picture This increases the individual's attention because of it´s easy to use it helps students match a visual to their word or concept, and it facilitates intentional communication for students who find it hard to relate a definition or concept to a word or phrase. Students can organize their thinking, visualizing the possible content, linking background knowledge and forming predictions. They begin to form a visual representation of what they are reading and writing. They link new information with prior knowledge and build new understandings.

e. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

This research work was accomplished with the support of specific sources. The *human resources* that contributed throughout different phases were: The target population, first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado high school. An additional human resource was the English teacher who proportionated general data about target students. The thesis advisor who instructed along the stages of the study and the researcher that worked with motivation and a willingness to learn from significant moments which were active subjects in the development of this work. *Technical resources* such as: online resources/ online materials. And *office supplies* like handouts, flashcards, folders, books and printed materials, USB drivers.

Design of the research

The action research is a construction of real knowledge allowing to the researcher to construct knowledge of definite matters through planning, acting, evaluating, refining and learning from the experience in order to comprehend and increase educational practice. It is a constant learning process in which the researcher acquires and likewise shares the newly generated information with those who may benefit from it.

Students also benefited from the participation of the researcher because they learned to work as a group and individually. Consequently, after comparing the results before the intervention and at the end, learners improved their writing

skills, increase their vocabulary, and gained the confidence to be able to participate in class.

The action research approach was implemented in order to develop the basic writing skills amongst first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School, due to evidence that students presented difficulties and low a level of writing ability. The UNL encouraged the researcher to get involved in real-life teaching practices through the implementation of an intervention plan applying a strategy to develop the writing skills.

Methods

The following general methods were applied in the research process in the form of an intervention plan.

The Scientific method facilitated the study of appropriate resources to improve writing skills. Also, it helped in the observations done before and during the intervention. This was done through with gathering data to make relevant predications about the possible solution.

The Descriptive method was used to describe the different stages of the study and the kind of resources used by the researcher. It helped to explain and analyze the object of investigation.

The Analytic-synthetic method was used to analyze and interpret the obtained results through the tests. It also helped to draw conclusions.

The Statistical method was used to make the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the observation sheets.

Techniques and instruments

Data Collection

Since this work is an action based research project, elements of both quantitative and qualitative research were selected for data collection. Quantitative research considered variables and statistics whereas qualitative research consists in an understanding of words or actions. Both qualitative and quantitative instruments were self-developed by the researcher taking into account the principles of the researcher question.

Being this the case, paper and pencil methods (tests) were used to develop quantitative data collection instruments, while observation and interviews (questionnaire, observation sheet) were used for the qualitative ones.

The test allowed participants to perform cognitive tasks in relation to the basic writing skills. Additionally, the test yielded a numerical score by which the researcher could calculate the mean to compare the pre-and post-test results.

Pre-test-Post-test: The researcher- made a pretest/ post-test that provided a measure on the performance of writing skills before the participants (first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School) received a treatment through the intervention plan designed in this research project. After the treatment or intervention plan, a posttest measured again the performance of the writing skills in order to make a pretest-posttest comparison of the cognitive dimension of the performance of the participants studied.

Questionnaire: The research-made a questionnaire that was administered to the participants to answer questions related to their attitudes and feelings toward

Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy. Along with the test, a pre and post-test questionnaire was administered in order to make a comparison between the results. Furthermore, the data collected by the questionnaires supported the test results.

The Observation: The emphasis of the observation was to understand the natural environment as lived by the first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during their English classes. There were two types of observation as detailed below.

Nonparticipant observation: In nonparticipant observation, the researcher was not involved in the situation observed. She observed and recorded behaviors but did not interact or participate in the setting under study. The objective of this nonparticipant observation was to identify the issue for this action research project which was supported through the participant observation.

Population

The first year students, at "Pio Jaramillo Alvarado" Public High School night section will participate in the development of this action research. The participants of the study are 6 boys and 15 girls. They are between16 and 20 years old and they receive five periods of English class per week; each class is about 40 minutes with a certified teacher.

f. RESULTS

In this section descriptive data is given for the variables employed in the study, and the results obtained from the following data collection sources: 1)Pretest and post-test to measure the cognitive dimension about the performance of writing skills consisting of the following subskills topic, sentences production, mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary. 2) Pre and post questionnaire to measure the students´ behavior and attitude toward the cooperative learning strategies such as Picture This. The data was supported by related results obtained throughout the statistical method which includes the means and percentage calculation of the total scores. Finally, the data was analyzed in accordance with 3 and 5 objectives of the research work because they supported and reflected emphatically the investigation.

Objective One: To research the theoretical and methodological references about Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy and its application on the EFL basic writing skills.

Through an extensive research made on internet, libraries and books the researcher structured the theoretical framework which was supported by primary sources.

Objective Three: To design an intervention plan based on Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado high school during the 2014-2015 school year.

This objective was accomplished thanks to an intervention plan, organized in twenty four lessons plans (eight weeks, three lessons per week), that was designed with the help of the literature framework displayed in the following pages (from 81 to 98)

The following tables and figures detail the information gathered.

Pre Test Results

Objective Two: **To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.**

a. Table 1

Pretest Results on Performance of Writing Skills of 1st Year of Bachillerato in Writing Skills

Students´ Code	T	SP	M	G	V	TOTAL /10
	2/2	3/3	1/1	1/1	3/3	
PJA 01	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	1,50	4,50
PJA 02	1,50	1,50	0,25	0,50	1,50	5,25
PJA 03	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,25	0,75	3,50
PJA04	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,25	0,75	3,50
PJA 05	1,50	0,75	0,50	0,25	1,50	4,50
PJA 06	1,50	1,50	0,25	0,50	1,50	5,25
PJA 07	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	0,75	3,75
PJA 08	2,00	1,50	0,50	0,50	1,50	6,00
PJA 09	1,50	1,50	0,50	0,25	0,75	4,50
PJA 10	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,25	0,75	3,50
PJA 11	1,00	0,75	0,25	0,25	0,75	3,00
PJA 12	1,00	0,75	0,25	0,25	0,75	3,00
PJA 13	1,50	1,50	0,25	0,50	1,50	5,25
PJA 14	1,50	0,75	0,50	0,25	0,75	3,75
PJA 15	1,50	0,75	0,50	0,50	1,50	4,75
PJA 16	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	0,75	3,75
PJA 17	2,00	1,50	0,50	0,50	0,75	5,25
PJA 18	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	1,50	4,50
PJA 19	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	1,50	4,50
PJA 20	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	0,75	3,75
PJA21	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	1,50	4,50
Mean	**1,50**	**0,96**	**0,32**	**0,40**	**1,11**	**4,30**

Note. Writing Skills: T= Topic, S= Sentence Production, M= Mechanics, G= Grammar, V=Vocabulary, PJA01 "Pio Jaramillo Alvarado" high school student 01

b. Interpretation and Analysis

A pretest was administered with the purpose to measure a starting point or the amount of pre-existing knowledge about the writing skills. As seen from table 1 the Topic got the highest score mean (1.50/2) and the lowest score mean were (0.32/1) and (0.40/1) for Mechanics and Grammar correspondingly. In conclusion the total score mean of the performance of writing skills was 4.30 out of 10, which is below the average. For that reason, it was assumed that there was a significant weakness and remarkable impediment to first year students had to generate or initiate a short and simple paragraph constituted of a series of simple sentences with verb agreement and punctuation marks. Moreover, they did not have a variety vocabulary. As a result, this significant limitation forced the researcher to manage the action research in this single classroom.

Comparison of the Pre and Post Questionnaire Results

Objective Four: To apply the most suitable techniques of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.
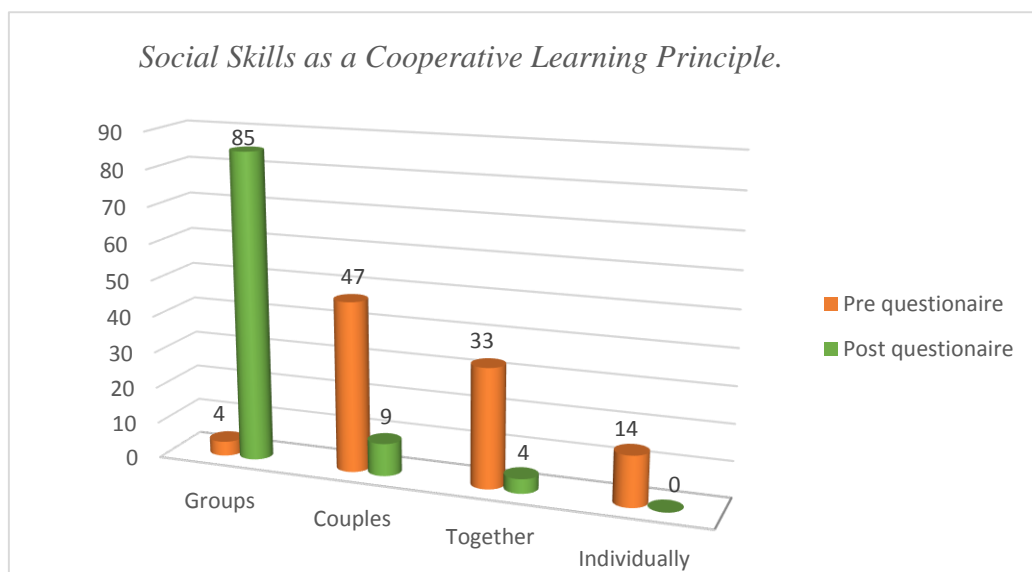
Question 1: How are the activities carried out in English class?

a. **Table 2**

Social Skills as a Cooperative Learning Principle.

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Groups	1	4	18	85
Couples	10	47	2	9
Together	7	33	1	4
Individually	3	14	0	0

b. **Figure 1**

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c. Interpretation and Analysis

The analysis in table 2, revealed the setting in which cooperative learning strategies were implemented. During the pre-intervention plan phase, the 4% of students seemed that group work activities were carried out in English classes. This measurement was lower. Alternatively, after the intervention plan, the researcher administered a post questionnaire and the same group of the pre questionnaire improved from 4% to 85% of students, which was a high level.

Consequently, the techniques to apply Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy generated a progressive success within classroom activities because almost all students could contribute cooperatively in groups during the intervention plan, and in the course of time it increased the collaboration between them on English classes.

Social skills determine the way students interact with each other as teammates. Usually some explicit instruction in social skills is needed to ensure successful interaction (Richards. Jack & Rodgers Theodore, 1986).
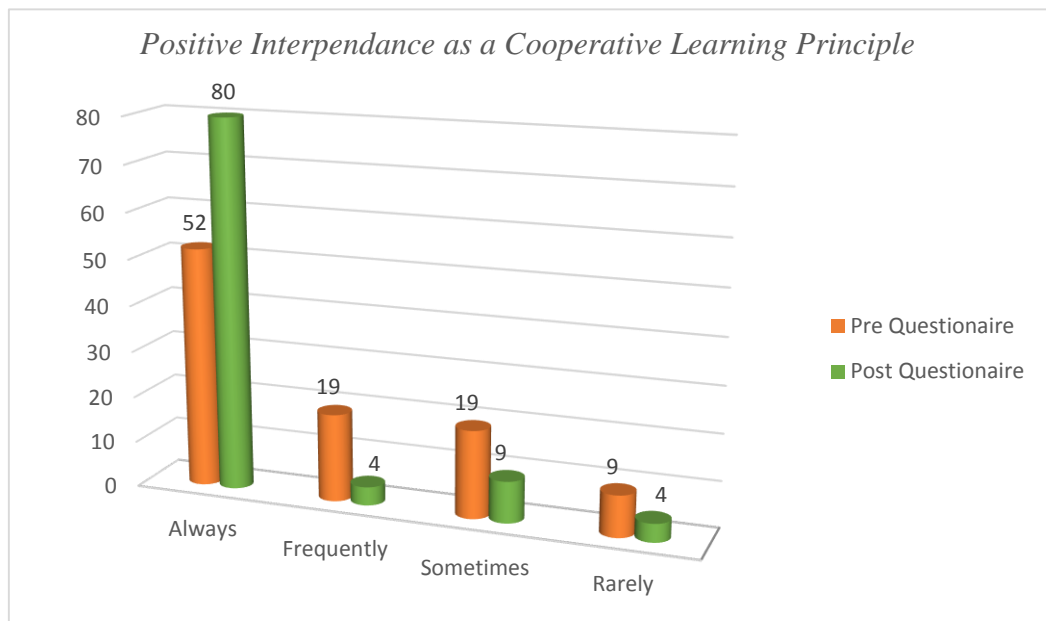
Question 3: The group or pair activities in the English class are developed in a positive and a respectful environment?

a. Table 3

Positive Interpendance as a Cooperative Learning Principle

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Always	11	52	17	80
Frequently	4	19	1	4
Sometimes	4	19	2	9
Rarely	2	9	1	4

b. Figure 2

c. Interpretation and Analysis

The results in table 3 exposed the position in which cooperative learning strategies were applied. For the period of the pre-intervention plan phase, the 52% of students saw that group work activities were conveyed out in English classes. This measurement was below than the expected level. Then again, following the intervention plan, the researcher administered a post questionnaire and the same indicator of the pre questionnaire improved from 52% to 80% of students, which was over the expected level.

Therefore, the techniques to apply Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy made an advanced achievement inside the classroom activities due to more or less all students participated in groups cooperatively in a constructive and respectful environment during the intervention plan, and in the course of time it increased the attention on English classes.

Positive Interpendance: Team members perceive that they need each other in order to complete the group's task (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990).

Question Four: In the group activities in the English class. All the members contribute in the development of a collective work?

a. Table 4

Individual Accountability as a Cooperative Learning Principle.

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Always	7	33	15	71
Frequently	6	28	1	4
Sometimes	8	38	4	19
Rarely	0	0	1	4

b. Figure 3

Individual Accountability as a Cooperative Learning Principle
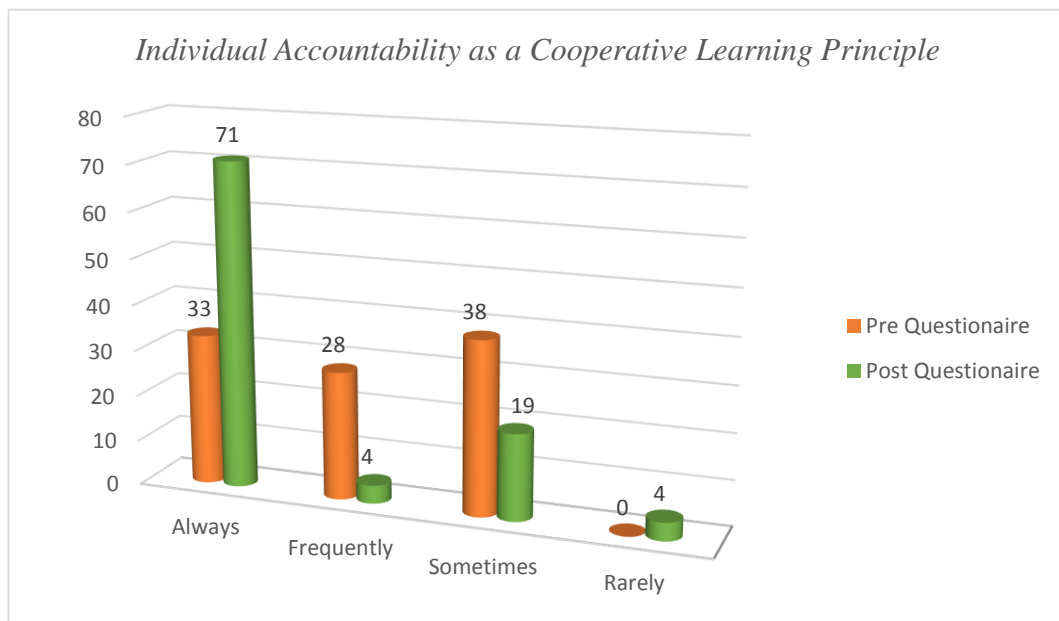
c. Interpretation and Analysis

The results showed in the table 4, exposed the position in which cooperative learning strategies were implemented. During the intervention plan phase the 33% of students declared that groups and pairs activities were always conducted in an individual accountability environment. This percentage was under the expected level. Moreover, once the intervention plan concluded, the researcher applied a post questionnaire and the same indicator (always) of the pre questionnaire increased from 33% to 71% of students, which was at the expected level.

Therefore the implementation of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy developed a higher level of cooperative learning in the classroom environment increased the participation with quality and quantity in collective assignments given during the intervention plan, and during this period the level of English Learning on English classes improved.

Individual accountability involves assessing the quality and quantity of each member's contributions and giving the results to the group and the individual (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990).
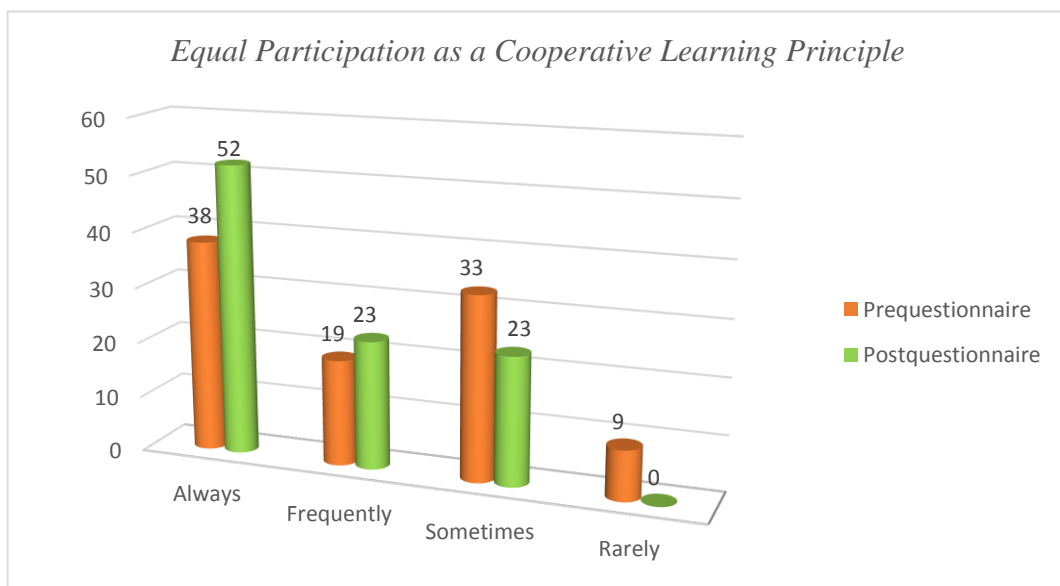
Question 5. When do you work in pairs or groups in the English class the participation is fair?

a. Table 5

Equal Participation as a Cooperative Learning Principle.

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Always	8	38	11	52
Frequently	4	19	5	23
Sometimes	7	33	5	23
Rarely	2	9	0	0

b. Figure 5

c. Interpretation and Analysis

As seen in table 5, it is visible the position in which cooperative learning strategies were implemented. During the phase of intervention plan phase the 38% of students declared that when working in groups the participation is fair. This percentage was below the average expected. Once the intervention plan concluded, the researcher administered a post questionnaire and the same indicator (always) of the pre questionnaire increased from 38% to 52% of students, which was under the expected level.

For that reason the application of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy the level of fair participation in the classroom raised in a minor quantity because a few students' number participated equally in collective assignments given during the intervention plan, and during this time it progressed the level of English Learning on English classes.

Equal participation. The structure in which students participate about equally participation is an integral part of the learning process. Students learn by interacting with the content and with fellow students. For equitable educational outcomes, we need participation to be relatively equal. (Kagan, 2009; Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

Question 6. When you work in group or pairs in the English class do you learn more than when do you work individually?

a. **Table 6**

Face-to Face Interaction as a Cooperative Learning Principle.

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Always	9	42	12	57
Frequently	5	23	7	33
Sometimes	6	28	2	9
Rarely	1	4	0	0

b. **Figure 6**

Face-to Face Interaction as a Cooperative Learning Principle.
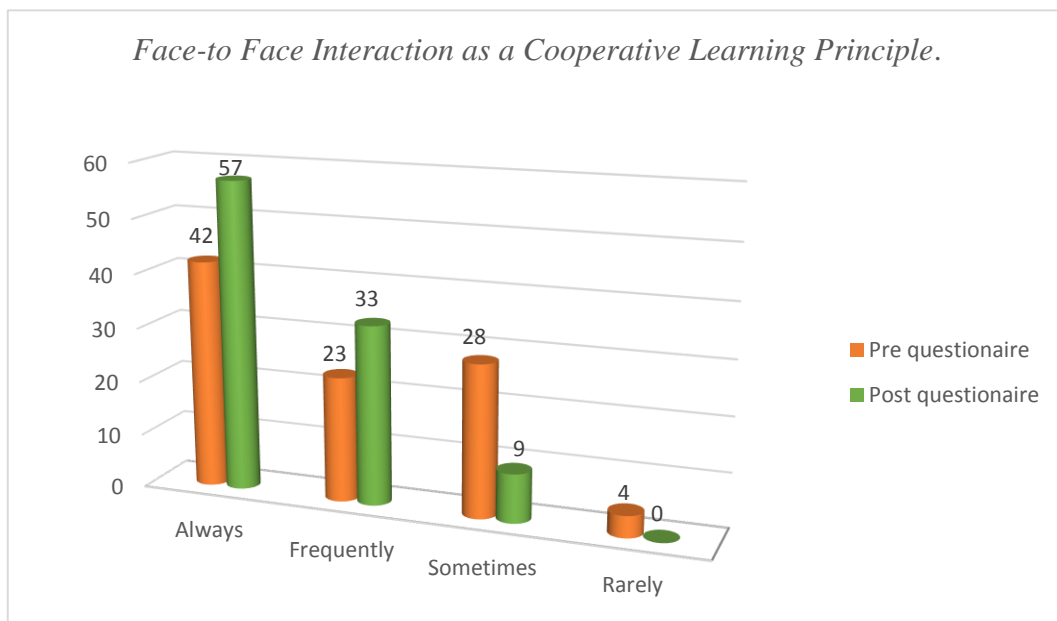
c. Interpretation and Analysis

One of the big advantages of cooperative learning showed in table 6 is that cooperative learning strategies were effective. During the pre-intervention plan phase, the 42% of students appear that work in groups or teams the activities were conveyed out in English classes. This measurement was under the expected level. Then again, after the intervention plan, the researcher administered a post questionnaire and the same group of the pre questionnaire improved from 42% to 57% of students, which produced a little advance, which was below the expected level.

In view of that, the techniques to apply Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy generated a progressive success inside the schoolroom activities because raises a minor quantity of students learning cooperatively in teams during the intervention plan, and in the progress of period it improved the attention and knowledge on English classes.

Face-to face interaction: Team members promote each other's productivity by helping, sharing, and encouraging efforts to produce. Members explain, discuss, and teach what they know to teammates. Instructors structure teams so that members sit knee-to-knee and talk through each aspect of the tasks they are working to complete. (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

Post Test Results

Objective Five: To reflect upon the effectiveness that Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst first year of bachillerato students Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

a. Table 7

Posttest results: Performance of 1ˢᵗ Year of Bachillerato in Writing Skills

Students´ Code	T	S	M	G	V	TOTAL
	2/2	3/3	1/1	1/1	3/3	
PJA 01	1,50	0,75	0,75	0,75	0,50	4,25
PJA 02	2,00	2,25	0,50	0,75	3,00	8,50
PJA 03	2,00	1,50	0,75	0,75	2,25	7,25
PJA04	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,50	3,00	8,50
PJA 05	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,50	3,00	8,50
PJA 06	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,75	3,00	8,75
PJA 07	2,00	0.75	0,75	0,50	2,25	5,50
PJA 08	2,00	2,25	1,00	0,75	3,00	9,00
PJA 09	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,75	3,00	8,75
PJA 10	1,50	0,75	0,50	0,75	2,25	5,75
PJA 11	1,50	0,75	0,25	0,50	1,50	4,50
PJA 12	2,00	1,50	0,50	0,50	2,25	6,75
PJA 13	2,00	3,00	0,25	0,75	3,00	9,00
PJA 14	2,00	2,25	1,00	0,75	3,00	9,00
PJA 15	2,00	2,25	0.75	0,75	3,00	8,00
PJA 16	1,50	0,75	0,50	0.50	1,50	4,25
PJA 17	2,00	2,25	0.75	0,75	3,00	8,00
PJA 18	2,00	2,25	1,00	0,75	3,00	9,00
PJA 19	2,00	1,50	0,50	0,50	2,25	6,75
PJA 20	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,75	3,00	8,75
PJA21	2,00	2,25	0,75	0,75	3,00	8,75
Mean	**1,90**	**1,88**	**0,67**	**0,68**	**2,56**	**7,50**

Note. Writing Skills: T= Topic, S= Sentence Production, M= Mechanics, G= Grammar, V=Vocabulary, PJA01 "Pio Jaramillo Alvarado" High School student 01

b. Interpretation and analysis

Taken into consideration the results illustrated in table 6, the mean for vocabulary got the highest score (2.56/3) and Mechanics got the lowest mean (0.67/1). Additionally the total score mean was 7.50 out 10 which was the average score. Therefore, the posttest means demonstrated an efficient indication that first year students could be able to achieve a piece of writing using new key words and right vocabulary. As well, students were able to complete sentences using some correct but repetitive sentence structures (Sentences). Likewise, there were minor errors in punctuation and spelling (Mechanics). At the same time still in grammar there were a few errors in agreement, number and tense that did not affect the meaning of the writing. From top to bottom of the text all ideas were consistently focused on the topic.

Writing is an activity that creates ideas or opinions in a composition by using writing convention, it has to be coherent and cohesive where the ideas in the writing should make sense and be connected logically (Harmer, 2010).

Comparing Pre-Posttest Means

a. **Table 8**

Comparing Pretest and Post-test means Performance of 1ˢᵗ Year of Bachillerato in Writing Skills

	Pre test	Post test
Topic	1,50	1,90
Sentences/Production	0,96	1,88
Mechanics	0,32	0,67
Grammar	0,40	0,68
Vocabulary	1,11	2,56
Means	4,30	7,50

b. **Figure 7**
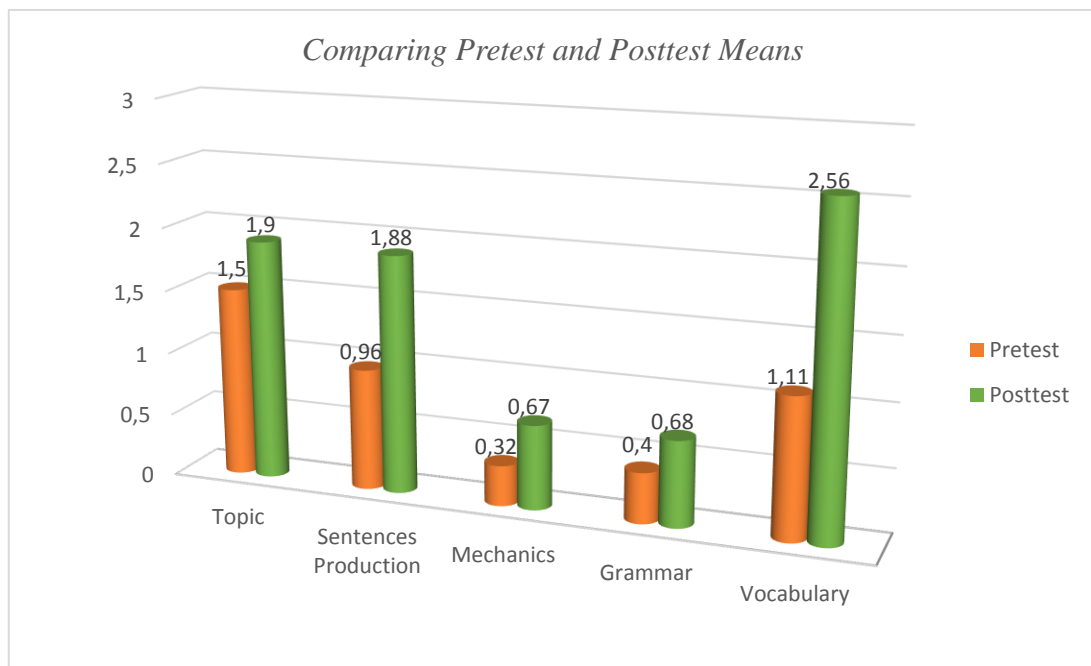
c. Interpretation and Analysis

The analysis indicates in table 7, the Topic, Vocabulary got the highest score means (1.90/2), and (2.56/3) respectively. On the other hand, Mechanics got the lowest score (0,67/1). The total score mean increased from 4,30 to 7,50 which showed evident advance in the student´s achievement attributed to the implementation of cooperative learning activities through the intervention plan. However, it is notable that the posttest means (7.50) is at the average level. Some limitations in this study would have been that the teacher candidate was not proficient yet in classroom management. Additionally, first year students did not have good learning habits (they did not use to analyze their schoolwork or do their task at home or over the weekend) and the period of time to apply the intervention plan was too short to achieve better results.

According to Richard and Rodgers (2003) Cooperative learning is the application for teachers as a teaching strategy classroom to help their student process information faster by having them work in small groups to achieve a collective goal.

The lack of student's awareness of the importance of writing skills at the first stage may block student's interest in improving their own progress. Consequently, the teacher's role is significant to improve students writing skills had an affirmative impact through the application of the intervention plan.

g. DISCUSSION

The action research entitled Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy to develop writing skills was applied with first year students at Pio Jaramillo High School. The data showed that student's knowledge on writing skills increased after applying the intervention plan based on Picture This. The results in the pre and post-test questionnaires showed the significant progress students got along the intervention plan. The application of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy is an important tool that helped students learn. The pre-test mean was low (4,30/10) which showed that students had serious problems in writing but after the use of the strategy it changed. The post-test mean was higher (7.50/10) and led the researcher to conclude that the writing difficulties in the students were greatly overcome. These results showed a good result in the first year because they were able to write in a correct way, following the ideas focused on the topic, sentences production completion, few errors in agreement, number and tense, few spelling and punctuation errors and right vocabulary.

The findings in the pre and posttest questionnaires revealed an important changed in the behavior and perception of the students on cooperative learning. The pre questionnaire showed that most of the students did not practice cooperative learning in the class, they had problems working in groups and pairs, and it was not conducted in a positive and respectful environment. However the results changed because in the post questionnaires this ideology was different. It means that results got our expectative, in other words the practice of a cooperative learning was very useful in some aspects as the relationship between teacher and

students, the positive interpendance principle improved from 52% to 80% when activities were carried out in a positive and respectful environment. In group and pair activities the indicator (always) increased from 4% to 85% which indicated the social skills principle raised. The equal participation had a great change from 38% to 52% and also the individual accountability had a positive result switch from 33% to 71%. Face to face interaction principle increased from 42% to 57% showing an increment.

At the beginning of this intervention the students´ attitude was not the best because they did not pay attention. Then, when they learned how to use the Picture This template were more interested in the class. However, during the process their participation and intention was more comfortable; it showed the strengths of the class. On the other hand, also existed some limitations such as: the teacher candidate was not an expert yet in classroom management and the period of time was too short to reach better results. This weakness made students did not take advantage of it, sometimes played and used their mother tongue to communicate.

In conclusion, the researcher would like to say this experience has had a positive impact as a teacher candidate and through it got experience how to manage with students limitations. She learned to manage a class and take the control of it and also to apply the use teaching methods and materials and the most important was it was possible to solve the writing skills issue diagnosed at the beginning of this research.

h. CONCLUSIONS

- The issues that limited the development of basic writing skills of first year students were the absence of practice they needed to acquire English writing skills with a strategy that produce its knowledge. Students presented they were not able to produce a written sentence and create a brief simple paragraph linking to sentence structure, vocabulary, verb agreement and punctuation marks. In addition the score (4.30/10) in the pretest was below the expected average, and it was the reason why the present research work was carried out.

- The results in this researcher reinforced the view that the application of the most suitable techniques of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy facilitated to improve writing skills and reduced student's limitations in an effective way. They increased work in teams, and the participation and collaboration in each activity generated a positive effect in learning cooperatively.

- The reflection upon the effectiveness that Picture This strategy as a part of classroom activities reduced the student's limitations significantly. The change of the scores from the pre and post-test (4.30 to 7.50) was significant indication that reveals the success of Picture This had in this intervention. These results involved progressive advance in students writing with few errors in agreement, wide variety of vocabulary and the ideas were more focus on the topic and correct sentence structure, in addition students worked cooperatively and consequently they improved their writing.

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i. RECOMMENDATIONS

- In English classes teachers should influence on writing actions, educate and make accurate use of their subskills, besides they should build bases to decrease students limits creating a great environment of learning to ensure students feel comfortable and confident to achieve complete tasks to develop the writing skills.

- Teachers should develop the writing skill in the English classes using the cooperative learning by preparing suitable and practical material linked with the topic to engage students in learning and to measure each class with a variety of methods to know what they achieve in class.

- Teachers should measure the results acquired with the use of Picture This strategy in order to reduce the difficulties to develop the English Foreign Language basic writing skill.

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k. ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER

THEME

PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL. 2014-2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

Thesis project as a previous requirement to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Science of Education English Language Specialization.

AUTHOR

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Loja- Ecuador

2015

a. THEME

PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL. 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

b. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Background

This research project will be developed at Pio Jaramillo High School which was created in December 9th 1996, when Otto Arosemena Gòmez was the President of Ecuador. Its opening was carried out in October, the following year (1967). This Institution had been started with the night section only but, because of its big demand, the afternoon and the morning section were added some years later.

Mission. - Working efficiently and effectively by means of involving teachers to the society demands and necessities research so that, the future High-school graduated be able to respond to the current challenges.

Vision. - Being it a pioneer in the Secondary Education from the South of Ecuador, that uses top technology, applies a new educative conception, with qualified teachers, modern structures, with a high organization and planning level; its vision is to provide students with a top education, who can easily access into the labor and university fields.

Current situation of research problem

At present learning to communicate has become the principal object in foreign language. Language skills play an important role in the teaching-learning process. However the teaching-learning process of the English language faces several problems in the educational institutions in our country; these troubles are usually related to the way of teaching, the lack of strategies, techniques or learning difficulties even knowledge.

Any of the difficulties in the learning of the English language is the fact that students do not have a good writing skill that allows them to express ideas, feelings, and thoughts to have an effective communication, written or spoken. Therefore, in order to diagnose the incidence of English learning and teaching process of writing the researcher carried out an observation process with the group of students, who are the sample in which the present action research is going to work with.

This observation allowed finding out that the students of the first year presents a low level of writing development which does not permit them to generate and organize ideas, among them and with the teacher.

Many evidences are clarifying that the causes for the problem found are several, one of these causes is that do not allow the improving of the English writing skills are the fact that teachers do not use appropriate strategies, and techniques to make the class enjoyable such as warm-ups, worksheets, templates, dictionary cards, etc.; and another identified cause was that the teacher uses traditional teaching methods and he does not apply suitable strategies and activities to get students engage with the writing.

Research problem

PICTURE THIS AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE THE BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST FIRST YEAR OF BACHILLERATO STUDENTS AT PIO JARAMILLO ALVARADO HIGH SCHOOL 2014-2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD?

Delimitation of the research

Timing

This present research work will be carried out during the 2014 - 2015 academic school year.

Location

This research work will be done at the Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School which is a public institution located in the city of Loja.

Participants

The participants of this research work are the first year that is all the grade constitutes by six and fifteen girls boys and students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High school and the candidate teacher of this study who is going to take part in the intervention plan.

Sub problems

- What theoretical and methodological references about the Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy are adequate for improving the English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year?
- What are the issues that limit the development of the English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year?

- What are the phases of the intervention plan that help the current issues to achieve a satisfactory outcome on developing the English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the   2014 - 2015 school year?

- Which Picture This technique as a cooperative learning strategy is implemented to improve English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year?

- How does Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy reduce the difficulty to develop the English Foreign Language basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year?

c. JUSTIFICATION

English, at the present time is an international language and one of the most universal and most suitable; people around the world need English in diverse social activities. Consequently, the necessity of learning this language has increased.

The Ministry of Education has seen the English language as a significant tool that must be involved in the curricular organization for students to learn at the different stages of education, and the demand of professional people with the domain of the language and the capacity to teach the language to students is something essential that is necessary in teachers.

However, writing becomes an important skill to face the international era. Writing is used widely in every aspect of life, particularly for interacting and communicating with people, whether formal or informal writing. For this reason, educators should look for new teaching strategies, techniques for teaching writing efficiently. Picture This is a cooperative strategy useful as a vocabulary or concept review to showcase the student´s knowledge of what word means and make visual connections. Its interactive and non-threatening way to get students thinking opens up students' minds to the fact with different impressions and thoughts.

For the details mentioned above, the researcher has considered significant to carry out this research work entitled: Picture This to improve the English writing skills of the students of first year at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School, academic period 2014- 2015; this research is also significant because it is focused on the use of techniques in order to overcome one of the difficulties of the English

language that students have to face which is develop writing skills by the use of a variety of techniques in order to make agreeable the English Language Learning development to improve students' writing skills.

Lastly, the advance of this research work is a requirement for the researcher in order to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Science of Education, English Language Specialization as established in the regulations of the Education, Art and Communication Area of the National University of Loja.

d. OBJECTIVES

General

- To improve the EFL basic writing skills through Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

Specific

- To research the theoretical and methodological references about Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy and its application on the EFL basic writing skills.

- To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the   2014 - 2015 school year.

- To design an intervention plan based on Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

- To apply the most suitable techniques of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

- To reflect upon the effectiveness that Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst first year of bachillerato students Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.

e. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present research work was carried out with first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado high school to develop the basic writing skills, seeing as they presented a low level in writing development that limited their capacity to generate ideas and express opinions. Likewise, they presented poor vocabulary that impeded effective written and spoken communication.

According to the Common European Framework of reference (CEFR) the level of proficiency for the basic user A2 indicates that they;

✓ Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).

✓ Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.

✓ Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need (Council Of Europe, 2003).

Basic writing skills

Writing skills are important part of communication. Good writing skills allow communicating in a clear and easy way to all audience even**.**

The writing process is a mainly purposeful, mental, and material procedure to produce a written text. While illiteracy is still a considerable problem even in the wealthier parts of the world, nowadays the most communication world-wide takes place in the written mode. Writing separates thoughts from the writer and allows

communication over time and space, with known and unknown readers. (Jozséf, 2001)

Writing in EFL learning

Writing is among the most complex of human activities. It involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representations of knowledge, and of experience with subjects. The interlocking processes of writing by novice and expert authors have been studied by such diverse disciplines as cognitive psychology, stylistics, rhetoric, text linguistics, critical literary theory, hypertext theory, second language acquisition, and writing pedagogy (Gao, 2001)

Writing is an action process of discovering and organizing ideas, putting them on a paper, reshaping and revising them. In other words, writing is an activity that creates ideas or opinions in a composition by using writing convention. It has to be coherent, cohesive and the ideas in the writing should make sense and be connected logically. Writing particularly is used for interacting and communicating with people, whether formal or informal writing (Gao, 2001).

Second language teachers need to be aware that interactive learning activities are crucial to achieve, active participation and use of the target language. Studies have shown that classroom interaction promotes improved learning outcomes, critical thinking, captures students' attention and interest. Individual learning styles influences interaction and participation in the classroom. There are active learners (learn by doing), sensory learners (learn by discussing possibilities and relationships), visual learners (learn when they see things), and the sequential learners who gain understanding in linear steps. (Agbatogun, 2014)

These pedagogical strategies have a positive influence and motivate students to engage actively in the classroom. In traditional classrooms, students engage in recitation of scripts, minimal interaction, and less involvement in productive thinking (Singh, Mohammed, Smith, F, & Higgins, 2012; 2006). Interaction between the students, the learning materials, other students, and the teacher are significant to learning.

The components of writing

Content

The component of writing should be clear to readers. Therefore, those readers can understand the message conveyed and gain information from it. In order to have good writing content, the writing should be well unified and complete. Besides writing has completeness, the main idea has to be explained and developed fully. Completeness is the conditioning of ideas which are developed through particular information.

Unity means that every part of the sentences contributes to one principle by unifying thoughts. Moreover, unity is the first quality of an effective sentence. When we say that a sentence has unity, we mean that everything in it has logical relation to the purpose of the sentences as a whole and nothing is omitted which is necessary to that purpose (Harmer, 2010).

Organization.-

The process of organization materials in writing involves coherence, order of importance, general to specific, specific chronological order and spatial pattern.

Coherence

Coherence means all the ideas stick together. A coherent paragraph is one in which the ideas are in the right order and doesn't confuse the reader. This makes the writer's thoughts easy to follow.

Order of importance

One of the most useful ways of arranging ideas in a paragraph is the order of importance. Technically speaking, a paragraph can be arranged in two ways: beginning with the most important idea, or building up to the most important idea. The advantages of building up to the most important ideas stem from the suspense involved and the tendency for readers to remember best what they read last. The paragraph that concludes with surprise, a clever moment, an appeal or a strong ending is more likely to be successful.

General to specific

The general to specific pattern is the most common type of paragraph order. The arrangement begins with the topic sentences that make a general statement followed by a series of supporting sentences which supply specific details, examples and facts. Since the reader knows what the main points are, they follow the development of that thought more easily. For this reason, it minimizes the chance of the readers misunderstanding and its particular effective for informing and clarifying.

Chronological order

In a paragraph organized chronologically, events are arranged in the order they occurred, usually moving from the first to the last. Some give direction or

explanation of a process, others summarize historical events and the steps or actions taken by individual or organization.

Spatial patter

If the purpose of writing is to tell how something looks, the most effective organization pattern is usually spatial. If we write a description such as: neighborhood, a room or building. We want the reader to have a mental picture of what we are describing. In describing a house or a building, the writer probably firstly describe the exterior and interior. By moving systematically rather than irregularly over the science we convey to the viewer the overall plan or science.

Vocabulary

One of the requirements of good writing always defined by the effective use of words. In personal description, words play dual roles; to communicate and to evoke, to let the readers perceive and feel. These two-fold purposes are evident even in such a practical and common form of writing as an advertisement.

The effective use of words also deals with connotative or figurative language. They are present in nearly all forms of writing but particularly in personal description. Word rich in association are more effective than those that mainly transmit transformation. However, words and phrases enrich the ability to convey experiences imaginatively but they do not have place in factual description. In scientific and technical writing, language should be exact and precise to convey specific meaning and design to communicate information but not the writer's feeling.

Language use

Language use in writing involves correct apparition of grammar. There are many points of grammar such as: verbs, nouns, and agreement. Specific nouns and strong verbs give a reader a mental image or description. This specific noun can be characterized by using a modifier of adjectives, adverbs and participle form.

There are many chances for error in the use of verbs and mistake in arrangement are very common. Mistakes in written work are much more serious since we have an opportunity to re-read and to correct what we have written. We should avoid errors in verbal forms, subject-verb agreement and pronoun antecedent agreement in a case of a noun or pronoun.

Mechanics

The use of mechanics involves capitalization, punctuation, and appropriate spelling appropriately. The use of favorable mechanics in writing will make it easy for readers to understand the ideas and other messages conveyed in the writing.

Capitalization

The use of capitalization in the writing can clarify ideas. If the sentences are capitalized correctly, ambiguous meaning and misunderstanding would not be a problem. Besides, correct capitalization of a sentence will help the reader to differentiate one sentence to others.

Punctuation.

This one can be used as a unit of meaning, and to suggest how go to each other.

Spelling.

There are three important rules to be followed in using spelling appropriately. They are addition, plural formation and handling error within words (Harmer, 2010).

Types of writing

Expository writing

Is where the author intends to inform, explain, describe or define their subject to you. This is the most common type of writing you will find in text books and online. As the author is mostly trying to tell you all about the subject, their opinions are left out leaving you with facts and figures instead of trying to defend or support an opinion (teAchnology, 1999).

Descriptive writing

Uses a lot of great visual words to help you see the person, place or thing they are writing about. The writing can be poetic at times, and explain things in great detail (teAchnology, 1999).

Narrative writing

Is very common in novels, poetry and biographies. The author puts themselves in their characters shoes and writes as if they were that person. They tell life stories and involve plots and storylines (teAchnology, 1999).

Persuasive writing

Takes on the opinion of the writer or issue the writer is writing for. This is considered biased material and is most often found in advertising. You know all of those commercials you see on television? Behind all the talk and messages is a persuasive writer (teAchnology, 1999).

Creative writing

Is perhaps the most fun type of writing? Anything you think up in your head can be turned into creative writing. Creative writing is often thought provoking, entertaining and more interesting to read than say persuasive writing is. Short stories, poetry, novels and plays often fall into the creative writing category. It doesn't necessarily need to follow any line of facts, just as long as it's interesting to read (teAchnology, 1999).

Writing sub-skills

One way to get at the sub-skills of writing is to list the standard steps used to describe the process of writing.

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One way to get at the sub-skills of writing is to list the standard steps used to describe the process of writing.

Writing Processes

In the 'real world', this procedure includes planning what we are going to write, drafting it, reviewing and editing what have written and then producing a final (and satisfactory) version.

Generate ideas – decide what to write about/ Questions to guide writing

Brainstorming/Concept mapping/Graphic organizers

Draft– put the ideas down on paper without concern for being correct.

Composing

- Ideas

- Words

- Language patterns

Revise – explain and expand the content, confirm logical sequence of sentences.

Edit– make final changes and corrections, make notes to review in future lessons, the type and amount of editing will depend on the purpose and audience of text, focus on one thing at a time (reinforce that writing does not have to be perfect!).

Scribing

- Spelling

- Punctuation

- Grammar

Publish – share the writing with others.

Cooperative learning

The cooperative learning is an instructional technique developed to improve academic achievement through social and interpersonal skill development; consequently that learning is dependent on the socially designed exchanged of information between learners in groups.

Cooperative learning is applied as a teaching strategy in the classroom to help student's process information faster by having them work in small groups to

achieve a collective goal. CL emphasizes the importance of interactions among students working in small groups on a given task or assignment related to a unit of study, students achievement increases, attitudes toward learning improve, and students learn/retain more information than through other, more intrapersonal, instructional methodologies (i.e. teacher directed/lecture style formats).

Research points to all of these positive effects as well as improved intergroup, interethnic and gender cooperation as well as increased self-esteem and confidence for all student populations including special needs, gifted and main stream students (Loeser, 2008).

Theory of learning

Independent researchers, most notably David Johnson, Roger Johnson, and Robert Slavin claim that cooperative learning started to become a common instructional methodology in classrooms.. Research indicates that cooperative learning has a direct impact on academic achievement, self-esteem, confidence, interethnic relationships, and overall attitudes toward the learning process. Cooperative learning theory draws extensively on research by Piaget, Vygotsky and Carroll. (Loeser, 2008).

Cooperative learning advocates draw heavily on the theoretical work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget (1965) and Lev Vygotsky (1962), both of whom stress the central role of social interaction in learning. In cooperative learning it seeks the word *cooperative* emphasizes another important dimension of CLL: it seeks to develop classrooms that foster cooperation rather that

competition in learning. (Richards & Rodgers, Aproach and Methods in Language Teaching, 2001).

The application of cooperative learning brings some advantages in teaching language, some of which are:

- To give opportunities for natural second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair or group activities.

- To prepare teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings.

- To enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structure and communicative function through the use of interactive tasks.

- To offer opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies.

- To enhance learner motivation and reduces learners stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate. (Richards. Jack & Rodgers Theodore, 1986).

The purpose of the cooperative learning strategy working together, students increase confidence, share their strengths and complete tasks more easily. Most students enjoy the chance to work with a partner or in a group and friendly competition between groups often brings out top-notch work. (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990)

Basic elements of cooperative teams

Positive Interpendance: Team members perceive that they need each other in order to complete the group's task ("sink or swim together"). Instructors may

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structure positive interdependence by establishing mutual goals (maximize own and each other's productivity), joint rewards (if all group members achieve above the criteria, each will receive bonus points), shared resources (members have different expertise), and assigned roles (summarizer, encourager of participation, elaborator.

Individual accountability: Assessing the quality and quantity of each member's contributions and giving the results to the group and the individual.

Face-to face promotive interaction: Team members promote each other's productivity by helping, sharing, and encouraging efforts to produce. Members explain, discuss, and teach what they know to teammates. Instructor's structure teams so that members sit knee-to-knee and talk through each aspect of the tasks they are working to complete.

Interpersonal and small skills: Groups cannot function effectively if members do not have and use the needed social skills. Instructors emphasize these skills purposefully and precisely as job-performance skills. Collaborative skills include instructorship, decision-making, trust- building, communication, and conflict-management skills.

Group processing: Groups need specific time to discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships among members. Instructors structure group processing by assigning such tasks as (a) list at least three member actions that helped the group be successful and (b) list one action that could be added to make the group even more successful tomorrow.

Instructors also monitor the groups and give feedback on how well the groups are working together (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. , 1990).

Picture This as a cooperative strategy

Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy to showcase their knowledge of what the word means and make visual connections (Marzano, 2004).

Background

Picture this is a skill to find meaning in imagery. It involves a set of skills ranging from simple identification (naming what one sees) to complex interpretation on contextual, metaphoric and philosophical levels. These should be shared and discussed to further develop understanding for everyone.

Using images helps immerse students in rich details. The details help students become engaged and make the text more impressive. There are no rights or wrong answers, and anything that students believe can be justified by details in the picture.

Description of the activity:

This is a Specially Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategy that uses a visual to provide authenticity to the abstract concepts and/or vocabulary being presented.

How to use this strategy:

1. A blank paper is divided into eight sections.

 2. Students draw pictures or symbols to represent words or major concepts. Students are not to label the drawings.

3. Students exchange papers with a partner and partners try to correctly label each other's drawings.

Who is this activity for?

   -ELL Students: This activity is especially useful for students who are English Language Learners (ELL). This activity gives the students a basis for connecting a picture with a word or concept, which will help them with memorization. The use of a visual can help the language learner both in acquisition of English and the understanding of abstract concepts.

   -Visual & Artistic Students: This strategy can also be useful for students who are visual learners or who learn artistically. The visual learners will be able to understand to a fuller extent what they are learning. Artistic learners will enjoy creating their pictures and will use these concrete drawings to help them understand the abstract words or concepts. (Hodgdon, 1995)

   -ALL Students: Teachers will benefit all other learners as well with this strategy because it will only strengthen their knowledge of the vocabulary or concept and give them study skills for using in the future for words or concepts they find hard to understand or remember.

When to use this activity:

   This activity should be used when students need to remember vocabulary words or new concepts in their curriculum. This activity will help the students with matching a visual to their word or concept. For student who find it hard to relate definition or concept to a word or phrase, this would be a great strategy to use. (Cline & Necochea)

Advantages of Picture This:

- ✓ as a warm-up activity

- ✓ as an introduction to a new unit/novel

- ✓ as a review for a test

- ✓ as an assignment for extra credit

- ✓ as an assignment to be completed with a guest teacher

Benefits of this Strategy:

- Facilitates intentional communication

- Increases the individual's attention

- Easy to use

- Requires little training

- Inexpensive

- Individualized

- Fosters word recognition

***Before writing**._ Students visually can organize their thinking, visualizing the possible content, linking background knowledge and forming predictions**.**

***During writing**._ Students can visualize the content, comparing predictions with ideas, themes and information in the text. They begin to form a visual representation of what they are reading and writing.

***After writing**._ Students can visually link new information with prior knowledge, visually represent what they have read in a graphic summary, and build new understandings**.**

There are some useful techniques for develop writing skill through the use of the Picture This strategy:

✓ **Brainstorming -** Students work as a group with the teacher, or in small groups. Begin with a stimulus such as a word, phrase, picture, or object and record all responses to that stimulus without prejudgment. Prewriting or INTO strategy. The students give ideas on a topic while a recorder writes them down.

✓ **Anticipatory KWL Chart -** Before reading a selection, hearing a selection or viewing a video students are asked to complete the first two sections of the chart-"What I already know about ...." and "What I would like to find out about ...." After the information has been presented students complete the "What I learned..." section. Responses are shared with a partner. This is also known as a KWL Chart.

✓ **Journals**-Students keep questions and ideas in a journal. These may be used later to develop a formal piece of writing.

✓ **_Pass the Picture_** -Each person in a group has a visual of a person. A blank sheet of paper is clipped to the back. The teacher asks a question student's write the answer in a complete sentence on the blank paper. Students then pass the visual and the paper to the student on the right. The teacher continues asking questions and students continue writing the answer, then passing the visual to the right for 6-8 questions. At the end, each student will have a descriptive paragraph for each visual. Each student takes a visual and shares it with the group while reading the final paragraph description.

✓ **_Think-Pair-Share_** - When asked to consider an idea or answer a question, students write their ideas on paper (think). Each student turns to another student nearby and reads or tells his or her own responses (pair, share). (Kagan, 2009)

f. METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN

Design of the research

Action research in education involves finding out immediate solutions in the teaching-learning environments. According to Burns (2010) the main aim of the action research is to identify a problematic situation or issue that the participants – who may include teachers, students, managers, administrators and even parents – consider worth looking into more deeply and systematically. Additionally, AR can be undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students, assisted or guided by professional researchers with the aim of providing their strategies, practices and knowledge of the surroundings within which they practice.

The choice for this action research design is to help to promote cooperative learning in English as a foreign language classes. Furthermore, AR will allow the candidate teacher become a participant in the research because he/she is going to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation by means of the picture this as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High school during school year.

AR assist the candidate teacher, who is the researcher conducting this investigation, to find immediate solution to the issue of writing skills in which students, who are the participants for this research, have experimented and showed some trouble due specially to the lack of the implementation of cooperative learning strategies such as Picture This.

Methods, techniques and instruments

Methods

The following general methods will be applied to the research in an intervention plan. The Scientific method will facilitate the study of appropriate resources to improve writing skill. Also, it will help in the observations done before and during the intervention. This one will support with gathering data to make relevant predications about the possible solution.

The Descriptive method will be useful to describe the different stages of the study and kind of resources used by the researcher. It will help to explain and analyze the object of investigation.

The Analytic-synthetic method will be used to analyze and interpret the obtained results through the tests. It also will help to draw up the conclusions.

The Statistics method will be used to make the quantitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the tests and the qualitative data from the observations. This study work also will follow the process of an action research which embraces planning, acting, observing, and reflecting suggests, proposed (Kemmis K. a., 2000).

This process will help the researcher to see if any necessary modification or improvement would be necessary to improve student's writing skills.

The process of the research will be carried out systematically, by collecting data on one's every practice, analyzing it in order to draw conclusions about how future practice should be.

Techniques and instruments

Data Collection

Since this work is an action research, elements of both quantitative and qualitative research will be selected for data collection. Quantitative research considers variables and statistics whereas qualitative research an understanding of words or actions. Both qualitative and quantitative instruments are self-developed by the research taking into account the principles of the question construction. Being this the case, paper and pencil methods (test) will be used to develop quantitative data collection instruments, observation and interviews (questionnaire, observation sheet) for the qualitative ones.

Tests

Test will allow participants to perform cognitive tasks in relation to the basic writing skills. Additionally, test will yield a numerical score by which the research will calculate the mean to compare the pre-and posttest results.

Pretest-Post-test

A researcher- made pretest will provide a measure on the performance of writing skills before the participants (first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School) receive a treatment through the intervention plan designed in this research project. After the treatment or intervention plan, a posttest will measure again the performance of the writing skills in order to make

a pretest-post-test comparison of the cognitive dimension of the performance of writing skills of the participants being treated.

Questionnaire

A research-made questionnaire will be administered to the participants to answer questions related to their attitudes and feelings toward picture this as a cooperative learning strategy. Likewise the test, a pre and posttest questionnaire will be administered in order to make a comparison between the results. Furthermore, the date collected by the questionnaires will support the test results.

The Observation

The emphasis during observation will be on understanding the natural environment as lived by the first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during their English classes. There will be two types of observation as detailed below.

Nonparticipant observation

In nonparticipant observation, the researcher is not involved in the situation being observed. She observes and records behaviors but does not interact or participate in the setting under study. The objective of this nonparticipant observation is to identify the issue for this action research project which will be supported through the participant observation.

Participant observation

In participant observation the researcher will become a participant in the situation being observed. The researcher will participate deliberately in the problematic situation by means of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst the first year students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during 2014-2015 school year.

Observation sheet

Whether in the participant and nonparticipant observation, the researcher will need an observation sheet to record the participants´ behaviors shown on both variables: performance of the basic writing skills the attitudes and feelings toward picture this as a cooperative-based strategy. This observation sheet is a self-developed instrument that describe accurately and comprehensively all the relevant aspects of the situation. In other words, it contains the descriptors of the variables of the action research; the issue under treatment (basic writing skills), and the treatment itself (picture this as a cooperative learning strategy).

Description

The description of the data collected and illustrations will be described considering the information pre and post intervention. The description of each questionnaire's data will be completed to facilitate the interpretation of the information shown; and also do the logical analysis of the data received.

Population sample

The first year students, at "Pio Jaramillo Alvarado" Public High School night section will participate in the development of this action research. The participants of the study are 6 boys and 15 girls. They are between16and 20 years old and they receive five periods of English class per week; each class is about 40 minutes with a certified teacher. All of them are attending English classes.

Tabulation

The tabulation of data will be done with the data collected in the two questionnaires conducted. A logical analysis will be done with the information received.

Organization

The researcher will organize the work with the information received in all the strategies applied to compare and analyze the impact of the intervention. A report of the intervention will be disseminated with the findings and ideas among the teachers, the partners and the school.

Intervention Plan

Week One

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy to improve the writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	Getting to know
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their peers while they are sharing answers. Students will listen for guess who is information's partner. **Reading** Students will read the conversation given on the Picture This cards. **Speaking** Students will introduce themselves. Students will share information about themselves. **Writing** Students will write a paragraph using the information that they remember about their classmates. Students will write an introduction about themselves
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the lesson. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to introduction (from, live, family, sports). As a whole class, they will have to remember the words related to the introduction that they already learned in the previous classes. This is a warm up activity teacher will make one copy of the conversation cards Picture This for each group of six students. To do this time teacher will apply the technique Quick Link.-students make a circle and select a leader; the group leader shouts out "get into groups of six," everyone quickly joins in a group of six. At any time, even before the group of six is formed, the leader shouts out another instruction. Examples: everyone that plays basketball, everyone that likes dance, groups of six, then the leader will read the question and will be charge that all the group answer. ☞ During this warm up stage, Teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection** ☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will handout the pretest.

	☞ Teacher will collect the cards and pass them out to the students. Ask the students to write a one-paragraph introduction about themselves based on the question on their card.
	☞ As students are learning how to introduce they are going to write classmate's introduction
	☞ Once they are familiarize with the introduction they are going to read into the whole class.
	Affirming
	☞ Teacher will hand out the pre - questionnaire.
	☞ Teacher will ask students to try to remember as much information as possible about their classmates, and write a one-paragraph introduction about one of their classmates.
	☞ As homework, students will write a paragraph as a journal and using a picture about themselves.
	☞ To finish the lesson, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This conversation cards Visual aids; card Student's notebook Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008) Rubric
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist, Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Data source3: Pre-test Data source4: pre questionnaire Data collection source: Pre-test, pre questionnaire Rubric
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Week Two

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	Useful expressions *"How often do you go rock climbing"*
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen the dialogue to improve the pronunciation. **Reading** Students will identify the useful expressions in a dialogue related to the frequency of their activities. Students will practice the correct stress use in questions. **Speaking** Students will practice the dialogue taking turns. Students will express preferences using would rather. **Writing** Students will match questions for the useful expressions for the dialogue of this lesson. Students will write what I see? What I think? Picture This template **Key Vocabulary:** Useful expressions(nothing much, sure do you, at least, guess, see you)
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the class. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to likes and dislikes in sports (love to play soccer, hate to ski). This is a warm up activity teacher will hand out a Picture This template that will contain pictures to students infer writing what they see, what they think using simple words. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. ☞ During this warm up stage, Teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection**

Picture This template

Picture	What I see	What I think	Confirming

	☞ Teacher will present word cards with the useful expressions presented in context 1. ☞ At this time teacher will again give the Picture This template to students fill the column confirm. ☞ For the next activity, teacher will have the students write a few sentences about what they discovered, or read a text related to the picture. ☞ At this time teacher will hand out the templates again to students check their predictions and correct them using the information from the text. **Affirming** ☞ Teacher will applied the technique; Pass the Picture -Each person in a group has a visual of the people in the dialogue. A blank sheet of paper is clipped to the back. The teacher asks a question student's write the answer in a complete sentence on the blank paper. Students then pass the visual and the paper to the student on the right. Teacher continues asking questions and students continue writing the answer, then passing the visual to the right for 6-8 questions. At the end, each student will have a descriptive paragraph for each visual. Each student takes a visual and shares it with the group while reading the final paragraph description. ☞ As homework, students will write their own dialogue with the useful expressions. Students will create Picture This dictionary cards with the useful expressions. To finish the lesson, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This template Visual aids; word cards Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008)
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist, Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Week Three

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first-year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	To express activities through action verbs
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their partner while they are talking about leisure activities. Students will listen to their peers when discussing about the drawings of the Picture This template. **Speaking** Students will compare their drawings of the Picture This through a discussion. Students will read aloud to the class to improve their pronunciation. **Writing** Students will interpret pictures labeling from Picture This workshop. Students will individually write sentences cards. **Key Vocabulary:** Action verbs(Hit, Climb, Fight ,Kick ,Run, Play, Ride, Swim, Jump)
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the class. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to sports (soccer, baseball, etc.) This is a warm up activity Trust me students re-arrange the furniture in the classroom so it resembles an obstacle course or maze. Teacher will divide students into pairs and give each pair a blindfold. Students have to guide their partners, without touching them, through the maze by short words. Teacher may choose to add more obstacles. For example the student blindfold walk without see and the partner give instructions like jump, walk. Once students have successfully passed through the maze, they switch roles with their partners. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. ☞ During this warm up teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know

	students' diverse linguistic background.
	Connection
	☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will present flashcards of the new vocabulary in context. 1.
	✓ Hit
	✓ Climb
	✓ Fight
	✓ Kick
	✓ Run
	✓ Play
	✓ Ride
	✓ Swim
	✓ Jump
	☞ As students are learning vocabulary they are going to write a sentence with each word of the vocabulary and match which sport it works.
	Affirming
	☞ At this time teacher will applied the Picture This strategy Students will fold a blank paper that will be divided into eight sections. Next students will select eight verbs that they already know and draw pictures or symbols to represent them. Students are not to label the drawings. Students exchange papers with a partner and partners try to correctly label each other's drawings.
	☞ As homework students will write vocabulary cards with each action verb./ Students will write sentences using the action verbs learnt
	☞ To finish the lesson, on the flashcards , students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This flashcards
	Visual aids ; flashcards
	Student's textbook **Fuente especificada no válida.**
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist,
	Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source
	Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly
	Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.

Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Week Four

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	Sports
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their partner while they are taking about sports. **Speaking** Students will discuss their definitions about categories of sports. Students will read aloud to the class to improve their pronunciation. **Writing** Students will individually create Picture This vocabulary cards. Students will write about their favorite sport. **Key Vocabulary:** Sports (wind, common, contact, water, winter, less usual)
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the lesson. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to sports, hobbies and activities, useful expressions. This is warm up activity Picture This teacher will give them a list of sports, then students fold a blank paper that will be divided into eight sections. Next students will select eight words to draw pictures or symbols to represent sports. Students are not to label the drawings. Students exchange papers with a partner and partners try to correctly label each other's drawings. ☞ During this warm up teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection** ☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will present poster of the new vocabulary in context. 1. ☞ As students are learning vocabulary they are going to work with a partner to do this teacher will applied the technique: Think Pair Share

	o *Think*; students they are going to write in a card their own definition of the 5 categories and the other side they are going to list the sports that belongs to these categories. For example: WIND SPORTS; Curling, Ice Skating, Skiing. o *Pair*; they are going to compare with a partner next to them. o *Share*; they are going to discuss the meaning of each category. ☞ After students have finished writing their definitions for each new key word and categorize they are going to come back to their seats. **Affirming** ☞ Once students have come back to their positions they have to write a brief paragraph about their favorite sport. ☞ Teacher will hand out bingo cardsat this time teacher is going to put the words in a box, bag, or basket (where players cannot see the words) and take one word at random, until one of them made bingo that will has 5 words in line. This line could be horizontal, diagonal, or vertical. ☞ As homework students will create vocabulary cards with the most common sports. Students in a sheet of paper will describe as a journal the sport that they like to practice using a picture of the sport. ☞ To finish the lesson, on the poster, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This bingo card Visual; poster Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008)
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist, Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted fromD'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.

Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press

Week Five

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first-year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	Leisure Activities
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their partner while they are taking about leisure activities. Students will listen to their peers when they answer question about their preferences. **Reading** Students will read some questions about sports and hobbies. **Speaking** Students will express opinions about leisure activities. Students will discuss about the Picture This cards to get feedback. **Writing** Students will write sentences with new vocabulary. Students will write leisure activities or sports that they practice. **Key Vocabulary:** Leisure Activities (games, handicrafts, fitness activities, hobbies)
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher built a lesson based on the most common leisure activities. ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the class. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to games (soccer, baseball, hockey) activities (dance, watch TV, play video games). ☞ This is a Picture This warm up teacher will provide a template and students will fill the two first column "What I see" and "What I think" using simple words. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. ☞ During this warm up stage, Teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection** ☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will present poster of the new vocabulary in context. 1.

- ➢ Leisure activities
- ➢ Games
- ➢ Handicrafts
- ➢ Fitness activities
- ➢ Hobbies

☞ Teacher will hand out the Picture This template again to students fill the column "Confirming".

Picture	What I see	What I think	Confirming
Playing the guitar			
painting			
surfing			

As students are learning vocabulary they are going to write their own leisure activities and next they will write sentences with them.

☞ After students have finished writing their own leisure activities they have to work in groups 2-4 teachers put the Picture This cards in a box, bag, or basket (where players cannot see the cards) in the center of the classroom.

☞ Teacher will applied the technique Jigsaw – 4-6 people per team.

Affirming

☞ Invite someone from each group to take a card and carry it to his or her group. Picture This cards.

☞ Players examine the title and the pictures on the front of their card. Then match the pictures with the appropriate

words or phrases on the cards. Players then take turns reading and answering questions in their groups. Then the player who answered the question should take the card and ask the next question. When the group has responded to all of the questions on their card, one member of the group can return the card and get another.

☞ Once students have finished the questions on the cards, groups will share their answers.

☞ As homework, students will write leisure activities that they like or sports that they practice. /Students will describe the activities that they used to practice in their free

	time.
	☞ To finish the lesson, on the poster, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This cards
	Visual; poster
	Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008)
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist,
	Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source
	Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly
	Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Week Six

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first-year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	To express frequency of activities.
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their partner while they are taking about the activities from calendar. Students will listen to their peers when they share their common activities. **Speaking** Students will read aloud to the class to improve their pronunciation. **Writing** Students will write questions that begin with how often. Students will illustrate through a calendar with common activities. Students will write sentences using the adverbs of frequency. **Key Vocabulary:** Always, frequently, usually, often, sometimes, occasionally, seldom, rarely, never.
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher elicit to students reproduce a brainstorm based on how often activities happen. ☞ To get started, Teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to frequency (once, twice). This is a warm up activity; brainstorm students work individually or in small groups. Students will write key words. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. ☞ During this warm up teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection** ☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will present a poster of the new vocabulary in context. 1.

	➢ Always
	    ➢ Frequently
	    ➢ Usually
	    ➢ Often
	    ➢ Sometimes
	    ➢ Occasionally
	    ➢ Seldom
	    ➢ Rarely
	    ➢ Never
	
	☞ As students are learning vocabulary they are going to write their daily routine using the adverbs of frequency presented on the poster. For example: NEVER;I *eat a pineapple for the breakfast,* USUALLY;*I take a shower* and then they are going to compare partner´s information
	
	☞ After students have finished writing their ideas for each new key word they are going to share into the whole class then students will come back to their seats.
	
	Affirming
	
	☞ Once students have come back to their positions they have to work in pairs to do this teacher will applied the technique Think Pair Share.
	
	☞ At this time teacher will provide a template calendar and a sheet with some pictures of common activities.
	    o *Think*; Students are going to select the pictures at random and paste in each square of the day´s week.
	    o *Pair;* after students finish their calendar they will swap with the partner to write a sentence about what they see using the adverbs of frequency. For example; *Every Monday morning he takes a shower/ twice a week he goes to the gym.*
	    o *Share*; Once students check template, teacher will make students share their sentences from the adverb most use to the less.
	
	☞ As homework students will create a calendar based on the birthday's month with their own activities. /Students will write the frequency that they do tasks for the school and use a picture
	
	☞ To finish the lesson, on the poster, students will review again the learning outcomes

Classroom	Picture This brainstorming

Resources	Visual Aids ; poster
	Calendar´s template
	Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008)
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist,
	Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source
	Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly
	Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.

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Week Seven

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first-year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	To describes an action adding ing to verbs.
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to their partner while they are taking about activities that they enjoy. Students will listen to their peers when they ask for information about likes and dislikes. **Reading** Students will read some questions about likes and dislikes. Students will examine the grammar to compare their examples **Speaking** Students will discuss about their preferences using foldables. Students will talk about their favorite's activities. **Writing** Students will spell the verbs adding ing. Students will write a paragraph about things that they like and hate doing in their free time. **Key Vocabulary:** Gerunds after verbs(like, love, hate,(don't)mind, prefer)
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher built a lesson based on the most common activities that they enjoy. ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the lesson. ☞ To get started, have students activate their prior knowledge related verbs that express likes (watching, playing, and doing). As a whole class, they will have to remember the activities that they already leaned in the previous classes. This is a warm up Teacher will give the instructions to students interview five partners. Can you … | NAME	speak English	ski	skate	swim	skateboard	ride a bike	play football	play tennis	play table tennis	paint	dance
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
	✔										

	☞ During this warm up stage, Teacher will also assess the students' speaking through the speaking interview.
	Connection
	☞ After the warm-up activity, Teacher will present poster of the new vocabulary in context. 1.
	➢ Gerunds after verbs
	➢ Like
	➢ Love
	➢ Hate
	➢ (don't)mind
	➢ Prefer
	☞ As students are learning vocabulary are going to write sentences with the activities that they like do or don't like doing using gerunds.
	Affirming
	☞ Students will create a Picture This foldable that will be show by the teacher, and in each color they are going to write a summary about the activities that they enjoy and the activities that they hate but using gerunds.
	☞ As homework, students will write about the things that they like and hate doing in your free time using a picture.
	☞ To finish the lesson, on the poster, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This foldable Visual; poster Pieces of paper in different colors Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008)
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist, Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source Data source3: Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly Data collection source: sub-test on writing, bi-weekly
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Week Eight

Research Problem	*How does "Picture This" as cooperative learning strategy improve the writing skills amongst first-year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014-2015 school year?*
Topic	Reading *"Boxing is for boys; dancing is for girls"*
Learning Outcomes	**Listening** Students will listen to the model pronouncing an a tape. Students will listen to their peers when they share opinions. **Reading** Students will scan the text. Students will read the instructions for the test. **Speaking** Students will share the information obtained. Students will discuss their answers about the reading. **Writing** Students will list sports that belongs to girls and boys. Students will develop the post-test and the post questionnaire.
Instructional Focus	**Activation** ☞ Teacher will introduce the learning outcomes for the lesson. ☞ To get started, have students activate their prior knowledge related with sports, activities and adverbs of frequency that they already learned in the previous classes. This is a warm up activity Picture This teacher will provide a list of words to student's select eight words. A blank paper is divided into eight sections. Students draw pictures or symbols to represent words. Students are not to label the drawings. Students exchange papers with a partner and partners try to correctly label each other's drawing through a discussion. ☞ During this warm up teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him/her to know students' diverse linguistic background. **Connection** ☞ After the warm-up activity Teacher will hand out the posttest to assess student's knowledge.

	☞ At this time teacher will applied the technique; Anticipatory Picture This KWL Chart - Before reading the text, students will complete the first two sections of the chart-"What I already know about ...." and "What I would like to find out about | Anticipatory Picture This chart		
---	---	---
What I already know about	What I would like to find out about	What I learned
			  ☞ Students will read the text and take some notes about the text. ☞ The teacher will assess student's comprehension through questions. ☞ ...." After the information has been presented students complete the "What I learned..." section. Responses are shared with a partner. This is also known as a KWL Chart **Affirming** ☞ Students will create a magic book that will be show by the teacher, taking two pieces of paper in different color they are going to summaries the activities that enjoy girls and boys. ☞ As homework, students will write the most common activities for girls and boys using a picture ☞ To finish the lesson, students will review again the learning outcomes
Classroom Resources	Picture This chart Visual; poster Pieces of paper in different colors Student's textbook (Abbs, Barker, Freebairn, & Jj, 2008) Rubric
Data Collection	Data source1: Observation checklist, Data source2: Students' writing samples, weekly Data source3: Pot-test Data source4: post questionnaire Data collection source: Pre-test, pre questionnaire
Support	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from D'Ann Rawlinson & Mary Little. (2004). Improving Student Learning through Classroom Action Research. Daytona Beach: Project CENTRAL.

Herrera, S., Holmes, M. &Kavimandan, S. (2011). Crossing the vocabulary bridge. New York: Teacher college press.

Organization and management of the research

Resources

Human

- The research work will be carried out with the active participation of the researcher Yessenia Isabel Yaguachi Cueva.

- Students of 1st year of Bachillerato at ─Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School academic period 2014-2015

Material

- Printed materials

- Books and eBooks

- Journals

- USB drivers

- Folders

Technical

- Computer

- Printer

- Internet connection

g. TIMELINE

PHASES	ACTIVITIES	2015											2016		
		FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Project	Presentation	■													
	Correction	■													
	Approval		■												
	Appointment of the Thesis Advisor		■												
Intervention Plan	Validation of Data Collection Instruments			■											
	Act and Observe			■	■										
	Data Organization and Tabulation					■									
Thesis Process	Interpreting and Reflecting						■								
	Writing up and Reporting						■								
	Thesis Review and Certification							■							
	Graduation Application Procedures								■	■					
	Private Review of the Thesis										■				
	Corrections											■			
	Public Presentation													■	■

h. BUDGET

Resources	Cost
Internet connection	$100.00
Print of the project	$90.00
Material	$60.00
Other	$150.00
TOTAL	$400.00

Financing

The expenses derived from the present work will be assumed by the researcher.

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j. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Observation sheet

<table>
<tr><td colspan="8" align="center">OBSERVATION SHEET</td></tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="3">Observation #:

Topic:

Objective of the session(what will students be able to do/know at the end of this session)</td>
<td colspan="2">Date/time:
Class size:
Participants: First year students</td>
<td colspan="3">Location:
Duration of the observation(start/end times)
Observer involvement:
participant/not participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Dependent variable: basic writing skills</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Rating scale: 4 = always 3 = usually 2 = sometimes 1 = rarely 0 = not observed</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Descriptors</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Mechanics</td><td colspan="2">Students capitalized the first word in every sentence.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students capitalized all proper nouns.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Each sentence Students wrote ends with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students used punctuation correctly</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students spelled words correctly.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Grammar</td><td colspan="2">Each sentence contains a subject and verb.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">There are no run-on sentences.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Subjects and verbs agree in number</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">When pronouns are used, they clearly refer to someone or thing</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Style</td><td colspan="2">Sentence length is varied.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Clear, interesting, colorful, words are used.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Unnecessary words were cut out.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Independent variable: Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">All students clearly understand which groups they belong to for both parts of Picture This</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">All students have the opportunities to learn with and from their peers</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">All students take advantage of the given time to make or prepare their responses/report for the group's</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Students ask their teacher/classmate for clarification to assist theirs peers during the performance of the academic activities</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Students listen to one another</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Students question to one another</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Assume personal responsibility being involved in the group</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Students disagree politely</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Shy pupils contribute to group work</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Annex 2. Pre and Post-test

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

DATE COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE TEST/POST TEST

Students code: ……………………………………………………….

Date:……………………………………………………………….

Instructions:

Write a brief paragraph about sports and leisure activities. Answer yourself the following questions to include in your paragraph. What sports are the most popular in your country? Which one is your favorite sport or leisure activity? Do you like practicing it with your friends or your family? What sports do you think are for girls or boys? How often do you practice your favorite sport? Etc.

Duration of the task: 30 minutes

Length of the paragraph: 6 – 10 lines

Sports and Leisure Activities

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Thanks

Annex 3. Rubric

RUBRIC TO EVALUATE WRITING					
CRITERIA	**Advanced 4**	**Developing 3**	**Competent 2**	**Beginning 1**	**POINTS**
Topic	All ideas are consistently focused on the topic.	Some ideas are focused on the topic.	Most of the ideas loss of focus on the topic.	Several ideas unfocused on the topic	
Sentences	No sentences errors, variety in length and type. Uses purposeful and varied sentence structures	Complete sentences, no run-ons or fragments some variety in length and type. Uses correct and varied sentence structures	Complete sentences; few run-on sentences. Uses some correct but repetitive sentence structures	Mostly complete sentences; some fragments or run-on. Uses little to no correct sentence structure	
Mechanics	Correct punctuation and spelling, throughout variety used. Easy to read.	Minor errors in punctuation and spelling. Well-formed letters.	Few punctuation, and spelling errors. Mostly legible.	Several punctuation, spelling errors. Hard to read.	
Grammar	No errors in agreement, number, tense.	Few errors in agreement, number, tense.	Some errors in agreement, number, tense.	Many errors in agreement, number, tense.	
Vocabulary	Uses new key words easily, and the right vocabulary for the topic.	Uses new related words correctly.	Attempts to use new key words in the paragraph	Limited basic vocabulary	
					TOTAL

Annex 4. Pre and Post Questionnaire

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA

DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE / POST QUESTIONNAIRE

Student's code: ……………………………………………………………….

Date: ………………………………………………………………………..

1. How are the activities carried out in English class?

> 4Groups
>
> 3Couples
>
> 2 Together
>
> 1Individually

2. **How often do you work in a group or in pairs?**

> 4. Always
>
> 3. Often
>
> 2. Sometimes
>
> 1.Rarely

3. **The group or pairs activities are developed in a positive and respectful environment?**

> 4. Always
>
> 3.Often
>
> 2 Sometimes
>
> 1Rarely

4. In group activities do all members contribute to the development of collective work?

    4. Always

    3. Often

    2. Sometimes

    1.Rarely

5. When you work in group or in pairs is the participation fair?

    4. Always

    3.Often

    2 Sometimes

    1Rarely

6. When you working in group do you learn more than when working individually?

    4. Always

    3.Often

    2 Sometimes

    1Rarely

Annex 5. Research Matrix

THEME: Picture This as a Cooperative Learning Strategy to Develop Basic Writing Skills amongst First Year of Bachillerato Students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School. Academic Period 2014- 2015.

Problems	Objectives	Theoretical frame	Methodological design (action research)	Techniques and instruments
General How does Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy to develop basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School. Academic Period 2014- 2015? **Specific** ● What theoretical and methodological references about Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy are adecuate for improving the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School2014- 2015school year ? ● What are the issues that limit the development of the EFL basic writing skills	**General** To improve the EFL basic writing skills through Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year. **Specific** ● To research the theoretical and methodological references about Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy and its application on the EFL basic writing skills. ● To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High	**Writing in EFL learning** Types of writing Writing sub-kills **Cooperative learning** Theory of learning Basic elements of cooperative learning **Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy** Background Advantages of picture this . **Methodogy and work**	Preliminary – investigation a. Observing the English classes b. Stating the background of the problem c. Describing the current situation d. Locating and reviewing the literature e. Creating a methodological framework for research f. Designing an	i. Observation sheet(Participant and non-participant observation) Pre and post test Pre and post questionnaire

amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year? • What are the phases of the intervention plan that help the current issues to achieve a satisfactory outcome on developing the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year. • Which picture this techniques as a cooperative learning strategy are implemetedto improve EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year? • How does Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy reduce the dificulty to develop the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year?	School during the 2014 - 2015 school year. • To design an intervention plan based on Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year. • To apply the most suitable techniques of Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the EFL basic writing skills amongst first year of bachillerato students at Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year. • To reflect upon the effectiveness that Picture This as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst first year of bachillerato students Pio Jaramillo Alvarado High School during the 2014 - 2015 school year.	**plan** Design of the research Methods techniques and instruments Methods Techniques and instruments Intervention plan Organization and management Bibliography Timeline Annexes Index	intervention plan **Intervention and observation** g. Administering test and questionnaires h. Observing and monitoring students' performance according to the intervention plan **Presentation of the research findings** -Reflecting, analyzing and answering the proposed inquires - Organizing the final report	

ANNEX 2 GRADING SCALE

Questionnaire

Quantitative Score Range	Qualitative Score Range
	English Approximation
100	Above the expected level
90	Between the expected level.
70-80	At the expected level
50-60	Below the expected level.
40	Under the expected level

National grading scale

Test

Quantitative Score Range		Qualitative Score Range
	English Approximation	**Spanish**
10	Superior	Supera los aprendizajes requeridos.
9	Excellent	Domina los aprendizajes requeridos.
7-8	Average	Alcanza los aprendizajes requeridos.
5-6	Below Average	Está próximo a alcanzar los aprendizajes
4	Failing	No alcanza los aprendizajes requeridos.

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