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ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

## TITLE

THE EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE  
LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH BASIC  
WRITING SKILLS AMONGST NINTH-GRADE  
STUDENTS, GROUP E AT 27 DE FEBRERO HIGH  
SCHOOL, DURING THE 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

Research work as a previous  
requirement to obtain the  
Bachelor's Degree in Science of  
Education, English Language  
Specialization.

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2016

## CERTIFICATION

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#### CERTIFIES:

To have directed and thoroughly revised this thesis work entitled: **THE EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS, GROUP E AT 27 DE FEBRERO HIGH SCHOOL, DURING THE 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.**, under the responsibility of the undergraduate student **Jordy Christian Granda Feijoo**, pursuing his 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, Enero, 2016.



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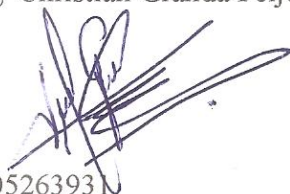
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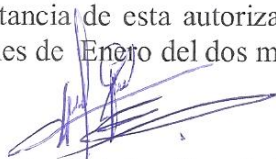
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## **THE AUTHOR**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis work with deep affection to the four most important people in my life. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving father Segundo, for his permanent unconditional support; to my step-mother Enid whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity were always there; to my dearest Fernandito who has always been my inspiration to set a good example as his elder brother. In addition, to a unique professor Dra. Margarita Samaniego who is the best professor I have ever met.

***JORDY CHRISTIAN***

## MATRIZ DE ÁMBITO GEOGRÁFICO

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**a. TITLE**

THE EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS, GROUP E AT 27 DE FEBRERO HIGH SCHOOL, DURING THE 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.

## **b. RESUMEN**

El presente trabajo titulado La Rueda de Extensión como Estrategia de Aprendizaje Cooperativo para Desarrollar Habilidades Básicas de la Comunicación Escrita de los Estudiantes de Noveno Grado, Paralelo E en el Colegio 27 de Febrero, Durante el Período Académico 2014 – 2015, tuvo el propósito de mejorar las destrezas básicas de la comunicación escrita en el idioma Inglés a través de la ejecución de técnicas y actividades de aprendizaje cooperativo. Los métodos usados fueron: científico, analítico-sintético, descriptivo y explicativo los cuales contribuyeron a desarrollar cada parte y proceso de este estudio. Para recolectar información una prueba y cuestionario fueron diseñados y administrados en dos fases, al principio y final de la intervención a diecinueve estudiantes; los resultados recolectados a través de los instrumentos de investigación fueron presentados en gráficos, tablas y con análisis descriptivos. Los resultados finales fueron totalmente significantes debido a que los estudiantes mejoraron en una amplia y adecuada manera las destrezas básicas de la comunicación escrita en el idioma Inglés a través de actividades las cuales estuvieron enfocados los cinco principios fundamentales del aprendizaje cooperativo. Por lo tanto es crucial que los docentes de inglés utilicen estrategias de aprendizaje cooperativo como la Rueda de Extensión con el fin de que los estudiantes logren alcanzar las destrezas de escritura que necesiten de acuerdo a sus niveles de estudio.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research work entitled The Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy to Develop English Basic Writing Skills Amongst Ninth-Grade Students, Group E at 27 de Febrero High School, During the 2014 – 2015 Academic Period, had the purpose to improve English basic writing skills through the performance of cooperative learning techniques and activities within the Extension Wheel strategy. The methods used were the scientific, analytic-synthetic, descriptive and explicative which contributed to develop each part and process of this study. To gather the data, a pre and post questionnaire, and test were designed and administered to nineteen students, the results got through the instruments were presented through use of graphs, tables and descriptive analysis. Consequently, the final results were totally significant due to the students improved in a broad an proper way the English basic writing skills through activities that immersed the five main principles of cooperative learning. So, it is crucial for English language mediators to use cooperative strategies like the Extension Wheel in order that students accomplish the English basic writing skills they need according their levels.

### **c. INTRODUCTION**

The present research work was conducted in order to improve the English basic writing skills through the development of the Extension Wheel strategy within a bunch of techniques and activities that immersed the principles of cooperative learning. So, the research problem to be solved was How does the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?. This problem appeared for the lack of appropriate strategies and teaching tools in the learning process of the English as a foreign language for the development of writing skills.

It has been well-known that at the present English is one of the most spoken languages all over the world, for this reason students had to acquire and developed all the skills in this language as a foreign one. Regarding writing skills students must develop and perform a bunch of sub skills such as grammar, stylistic and mechanicals that helped them to acquire the required level. Through this action research work the main people benefit were the candidate teacher and the ninth grade students, group E, due to the intervention plan the researcher could contribute with a positive impact in the teaching learning process on the development and acquisition of English basic writing skills through the Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy.

The main goal of this study was to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills through the Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy. In

order to accomplish this goal five specific objectives appeared: first, the researcher investigated the theoretical and methodological references about the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy and its application in English basic writing skills. Second, the researcher diagnosed the issues that limit the development of the English basic writing skills with the preliminary investigation through observation of the English classes. Third, the researcher designed an intervention plan based on a specific unit, with 24 lesson plans that were developed for two months with ninth-grade students, group E. After that, the researcher administered through the intervention plan the most suitable techniques and activities based on cooperative learning in order to improve English basic writing skills. Finally, the reflection about the effectiveness of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative strategy was totally significant because students improved in a broad and proper way all the basic writing skills.

This study was an action research due to in education it involved finding out immediate solutions in the teaching learning environments. Additionally, it helped to contribute in the promotion of cooperative learning in English as a foreign language classes. Furthermore, action research allowed the candidate teacher to become a participant in the research because he intervened in a deliberate way in the problematic situation by means of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English basic writing skills.

The methods that were used were the scientific that facilitated the study of the Extension Wheel strategy applied to improve English writing skills, the descriptive that enabled to describe the different stages of the study and the kind

of resources used by the researcher, the analytic-synthetic that was used to analyze the obtained results through the questionnaires and the tests, also was used to make the interpretation of the data, the logical analysis and draw up the conclusions, and the statistic that was used to make the quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and tests.

Referring to the literature review, two variables were taking into account; those were the writing skills as a dependent variable and the cooperative learning as the independent one. Purdy (2010) claims that writing skill is complex and difficult to learn, requiring mastery in not only grammatical patterns but also the rule of writing such as high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information and also choosing the appropriate vocabularies and sentence structure to create a style which is appropriate to subject matter. Additionally, Cooperative Learning is part of a group of teaching/learning techniques where students interact with each other to acquire and practice the elements of a subject matter and to meet common learning goals. It is much more than just putting students into groups and hoping for the best due to they learn from each other improving their English skills. (Brent & Felder, 2004).

The group of students selected for this research work was the students of ninth grade, group E in the afternoon section at 27 de febero High School, which was conformed for nineteen students, twelve boys and seven girls who were in an age between 12 and 16 years old. This group of students was selected because it was clear the development of the writing skill in the first grades of the High School

was not acquired and performed at the level required. And the researcher that was a students of the last module of the English language Department.

Finally, the improvement of the English basic writing skills was totally achieved due to the student achieved the highest score after the intervention plan in the performance of the English basic writing skills and it meant that all the learning outcomes were accomplish correctly. By way of conclusion, it meant that the implementation of cooperative strategies into the English classes were one of the best tool to improve the basic writing skills in English as a foreign language and teachers should take into account in the teaching learning process in order to accomplish all the objectives planned.



#### **d. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The present literature review is composed of two variables, which are writing skills and cooperative learning. The most important authors taking into account for the variable about writing skills are: Jim Purdy, Mary Rose, Dan Tannacito and Steven Peha. For the variable about cooperative learning the authors taking into account in this research are: David and Roger Johnson, Melinda Dooly, Spencer Kagan, Rebeca Brent, Richar Felder, Alice Macpherson and Melissa Holmes.

#### **Writing Skills**

Writing is one of the language skills which is the most important in people's life, through writing, people can inform others, carry out transactions, persuade, infuriate, and tell what they feel. However, it is well known that writing or learning to write especially in a second foreign language is not simply a matter of writing things down. It is one of the four basic skills that are very complex and difficult to learn, though if people make an effort and persevere, their goals can be successful reached.

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From the four learning skills, writing is categorized as one of the productive skills along with speaking since they involve producing language rather than receiving it. Although both writing and speaking are productive skills, those two skills are basically different in various ways (Spratt & Willian, 2005).

According to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador that has set as a reference the Comon European Framework is established that at the end of the different courses students must achieve a determined level. Regarding ninth grades, which is the target group of this research, they have to reach the A1.2 at the end of the school year. It means that learners are expected to produce informational, transactional and expository texts consisting of a sequence of simple sentences that have more detail and show more variety in lexical range and sentence structure in relation to writing skills.

In addition, the assessment indicators of the writing skill for ninth grade students according the national curriculum guidelines of Ecuador, are the following (MinEduc, 2014):

- Copy familiar words and short phrases.
- Take simple notes from a dictated or recorded message within the limits of their vocabulary for the level.
- Write sequences of simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live, and what they do for short informational, transactional and expository texts by using basic appropriate punctuation marks.

- Carry out correspondence with a partner, by giving and eliciting information and advice on personal, educational, and public issues.

### **Basic Writing Skills**

It is critical to remember that there are four specific traits that characterize strong writing. Teacher must teach these to the students, to give them the tools they need to write well. The teaching of basic writing skills provides teachers with instructional strategies for the development of written language. It offers specific techniques to add structure, coherence, and clarity to students' expository and narrative writing. In addition, these are the very criteria by which student writing is judged on assignments. Those main categories are (Rose, 2001 ):

- **Focus:** Refers to the writer's ability to clearly address the topic throughout the paragraph or essay.
- **Organization:** It is the presentation of information in logical order, with an appropriate introduction and conclusion.
- **Support:** It refers to all the information that helps the main idea or ideas. Under support people find other elements of writing, such as: voice, tone word choice, extensions, details and descriptions.
- **Conventions of print:** It is a broad term referring to all rules of punctuation, grammar and so on that makes writing completely clear.

### **Writing in English Foreign Language Learning**

English writing is an essential skill for success in the modern global world, many experts would go as far to say that without certain knowledge of English

reading skills and English writing skills, a career would be somewhat limited if it involves doing business in English-speaking countries at even a basic level.

The good news is that while English reading and English speaking are best learnt in either an online forum or an in-class course, English writing can be taught at a pace consistent with people's current writing ability (Rose, 2001).

One method of learning English writing is to study subjects that people enjoy learning about and writing in the style of their favorite authors of those subjects. Besides that, the best way to learn English writing is together with a good English speaking and reading course, so all three can work together to form the basis of a solid knowledge of the English language (Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013).

### **Writing Sub Skills**

According to Heaton (1995), there are three sub skills necessary for writing.

They are:

- a. **Grammatical skill:** The ability to write correct sentences. The main tools it to domain a wide vocabulary.
- **Vocabulary:** It is the collection of words that you hear and read throughout your life. It means that vocabulary is not only about knowing the pronunciation, meaning a word but also understanding to use them in daily activities (Walch, 2003).
- **Tense:** Verb tenses tell readers when events or actions occurred in time—in the past, present, or future. Your verb choices can also indicate *aspect*, which expresses the completeness or effects of an action. So it is very

important when students write to keep the same tense during the whole text they are working in (Walch, 2003).

According to Ruble (2014) there are some ways to help people advance their grammar skills.

- Read and write more in English.
- Search the Internet for more information and opportunities to practice your skills.
- Go to your instructor's office hours for extra help.
- Go to a peer tutor or a writing specialist at the Writing Center.

**b. Stylistic skill:** The ability to manipulate sentence and use language effectively.

Writing is a craft. Skilled writers incorporate stylistic techniques into their writing for rhetorical effect. In other words, stylistic techniques enhance a piece of writing's aesthetic, emotional or intellectual appeal. Certainly, the content of a text is important, but a writer who can organize his ideas in a unique and provocative way can increase his writing's allure (Heaton, 1995).

- **Purpose:** The purpose is the reason or goal that you have for writing about your topic, and your audience is the specific people that you are writing for. So accomplishing all the instructions of the task your work will be excellent (Linse, 2005).
- **Organization:** In order to avoid problems of thinking for a long time students can get rid of this issue by organizing their writing in advance.

Students should use the writing process in order to help they generate, organize, write about, and review ideas for their essay. So the way students organize their task is also important in writing skills (Linse, 2005).

**c. Mechanical skill:** The ability to use correctly those conversations peculiar to the written language e.g. punctuation, spelling, word order, tense, etc. (Peha, 1995).

- **Punctuation:** It is one of the most useful mechanic skills in which every sentence should include, at least, a capital letter at the start a full stop, exclamation mark or question mark at the end. This basic system indicates that the sentence is complete. (Tannacito, 2009).
- **Word Order:** In order that sentences have sense and can be understood word orders appears which is the order in which elements occur in a phrase, clause, or sentence. Compared with many other languages, word order in English is fairly rigid. In particular, the order of subject, verb, and object is relatively inflexible (Rose, 2001 ).

Many students with learning problems are frustrated in their attempts at written expression because of difficulty with the mechanical aspects of writing. Problems with spelling, punctuation, and handwriting may draw attention away from the writer's focus on ideas. A teacher, therefore, needs effective ways of assisting students in overcoming the mechanical obstacles to writing (Tannacito, 2009).

## **The Stages of the Learning Process of English Foreign Language Writing**

Learning to write is like learning to read. Both follow a sequential process, writing requires and combines more basic skills than any other subject area. Taking into account the developmental stages of second language learners, educators teach writing through a series of steps that build on a child's learning experience. The writing process being in the early grades by exposing students to a variety of quality books read aloud (Tannacito, 2009).

According to Peha (1995) there are seven stages in the writing process, those are:

**Pre-Writing:** It is any writing people do before they start writing, it sounds confusing, but it's not. People all do a little bit of thinking before write, the fun thing of pre-writing is that it really doesn't matter (Peha, 1995).

**Drafting:** "A preliminary version of a plan, document, or picture." But all that tells people is that a draft is something that isn't finished, drafting is all about being pulled into their topic and letting it carry they along right behind (Peha, 1995).

**Sharing:** Sharing a work with other people and getting some feedback about how you're doing. Most writers in a writer's workshop get response from other writers when they share their work in front of the whole group. Your piece doesn't have to be finished for you to share it (Peha, 1995).

Revising: It means “to see again.” This is what revising is all about. Having received comments about your piece during the Sharing stage, you can better see your writing now from the reader’s point of view. That’s the key (Peha, 1995).

Editing: It means taking care of any problems you have with writing conventions like spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage. You can make minor changes to the content of your piece, a word here, a phrase there, but if you want to make bigger changes, go back to the Revising stage (Peha, 1995).

Publishing: Refers to the word “public” because that’s what publishing is all about: preparing a piece of writing so that it can be read, understood, and enjoyed by the public. The main idea is that the Publishing stage is a chance to prepare your writing in a way that will best reach your audience. (Peha, 1995).

Writing is communication, if you have written something, you must have intended for someone to read it, even if that person is only yourself. When you publish a document, you are realizing it for the public for others to read (Tannacito, 2009).

Assessing: The idea here is to pull up a chair right alongside yourself and peak over your own shoulder to see what you’ve done. Here’s how it works: after you’ve published a piece and let it sit for a while, take it out again and re-read it. Then, jot down a few thoughts about what you did. (Peha, 1995).

By way of conclusion, learning to write in English as a foreign language is a process by which students are immersed through the learning and performance of



writing sub skills like punctuation, word order, tense and vocabulary form different topics and following some stages since the first moment of writing.

### **The Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy**

Nowadays, in order to learn foreign languages it is necessary to acquire a bunch of good strategies and techniques that help in the development and performance of every single strategy needed in a language. For instance, Kagan (1995) structures are radically transforming classrooms in many parts of the world. These easy-to-learn, easy-to-use instructional strategies are ideal for promoting second language learning in any part where English is teaching as a second language.

One of the most common and useful strategies that allows students to develop English writing skills is the Extension Wheel due to it allows for student analysis and synthesis using their creativity, gives students a break from the normal things developed in the classroom according the topic that students work with.

The Extension Wheel is a strategy that allows learners to get more information of a specific lesson, through this students start from a central topic to the related details, and have the opportunity to share their notes with other and in this way extends their knowledge and their own understandings about the topic. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011)

The Extension Wheel strategy lends itself the exploration of numerous text structures, including cause/effect, problem/solution, description and point of view,

because the process and resulting products of this strategy are highly dependent upon student`s ideas and connections. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011)

In the development of the extension wheel strategy three phases are developed in order to have a good performance in the writing skills though the cooperative learning in every single classroom, the phases and its steps are:

**ACTIVATION:** The collaborative learning component of this phase helps students to understand how ideas can be expected in multiple ways, depending on a person`s point of view, this phase provides the teacher with links that can be made to students` life during a whole lesson in a single classroom. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011).

The steps of this phase are:

- Have students write the idea or topic in the center of the circle.
- Ask students to think individually about three extensions of the idea or the topic they are working with.
- Once the students have individually thought about the ideas, group them into pairs or small groups to have them do a turn-and-talk to discuss their ideas with each other.
- As students share the rationale behind their extensions with each other, walk around the classroom and silently listen as they discuss their thought processes.

**CONNECTION:** This phase provides students with an opportunity to manipulate the language as they convey their own points of view to the group members in order to agree in a group decision related to the topic.

The steps of this phase are:

- Once students have finished the discussion ask them to choose three extensions from their oral discussion to transfer onto the first ring of the wheel.
- After students have finished writing the ideas of the first ring, ask them to expand further on those ideas.
- After students have recorded the extended ideas of the second ring, bring the class together and have them share their ideas with the whole group or with another small group.
- As students share with the class, allow them to add additional notes onto their own extension wheels, based on the ideas they are hearing.

**AFFIRMING:** This phase provides with a place to document their learning, having a tangible product to share with peer reinforces the idea that all students participate in the construction of knowledge and students can discuss about what have been learnt. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011).

The steps of this phase are:

- After groups finish recording their ideas, ask students to write a narrative or expository summary of the points identified on the wheel. Students can complete this task individually or in pairs.

- As a teacher you can allow students to choose which idea from the wheel they would like to discuss on their writing.
- Also teacher can allow students to create a pictorial summary that incorporates key terms and ideas.

In order to develop the extension wheel strategy there are a bunch of techniques and activities that teacher can use to get students into groups and perform the development of a specific topic in the English basic writing skills as a foreign language.

Regarding this research work, there are many techniques that can be used in order to perform this strategy and get the overall goal of this plan. All of the techniques used for the extension wheel strategy can be developed in groups. The most common techniques used were:

- **Think break:** It encourages students to take part in the problem-solving process even when discussion isn't feasible.
- **Make Them Guess:** Introduce a new subject by asking an intriguing question, something that few will know the answer to
- **Think-Pair-Share:** Students share and compare possible answers to a question with a partner before to write their sentences or paragraph
- **Jeopardy:** it was the most useful one. Play jeopardy like the TV show with your students. It requires a fair amount of preparation. With writing skills they can use their extension wheel to order the ideas of a specific topic, after they make a summary based on their ideas

- Pair-Share-Repeat: After a pair-share experience, ask students to find a new partner and debrief the wisdom of the old partnership
- One-Sentence Summary: Summarize the topic into one sentence that incorporates all of who/what/when/where/why/how creatively.
- Peer Review Writing Task: To assist students with writing assignments, encourage them to exchange drafts with a partner.
- Symon says.
- Number heads
- Similar partners.(it refers to students that have the same hair style, length, etc.)

In order to develop this activity, teacher must take into account three principles resources that students should have, those are: Extension wheel template, Black sheets of paper and Pens/pencils.

The extension wheel strategy is one of the most important strategies that allows students to work in groups which helps to improve the relationship among the members of the class and to learn from the other through the process of sharing and working as a team.

- Face to face interaction: In this phase of the extension wheel strategy students are promoting each other's' learning through face-to-face activities where they discuss and explain assignment topics with each other (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

- Positive interdependence: When students get in groups have the sense that they're 'in this together,' feeling that each member's individual effort will not only help him/her, but to the whole group. (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).
- Individual Accountability: Each student is accountable for their own contribution to the group and present their ideas based on the key words wrote in each part of the extension wheel. Clearly described goals ensure that each student knows what she is responsible for and what the group is responsible for (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).
- Collaborative skills: Students learn not only the subject matter, but interpersonal skills and how to work in teams. Students are taught skills of communication, leadership and conflict management during the whole development of the extension wheel strategy related to a specific topic. (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

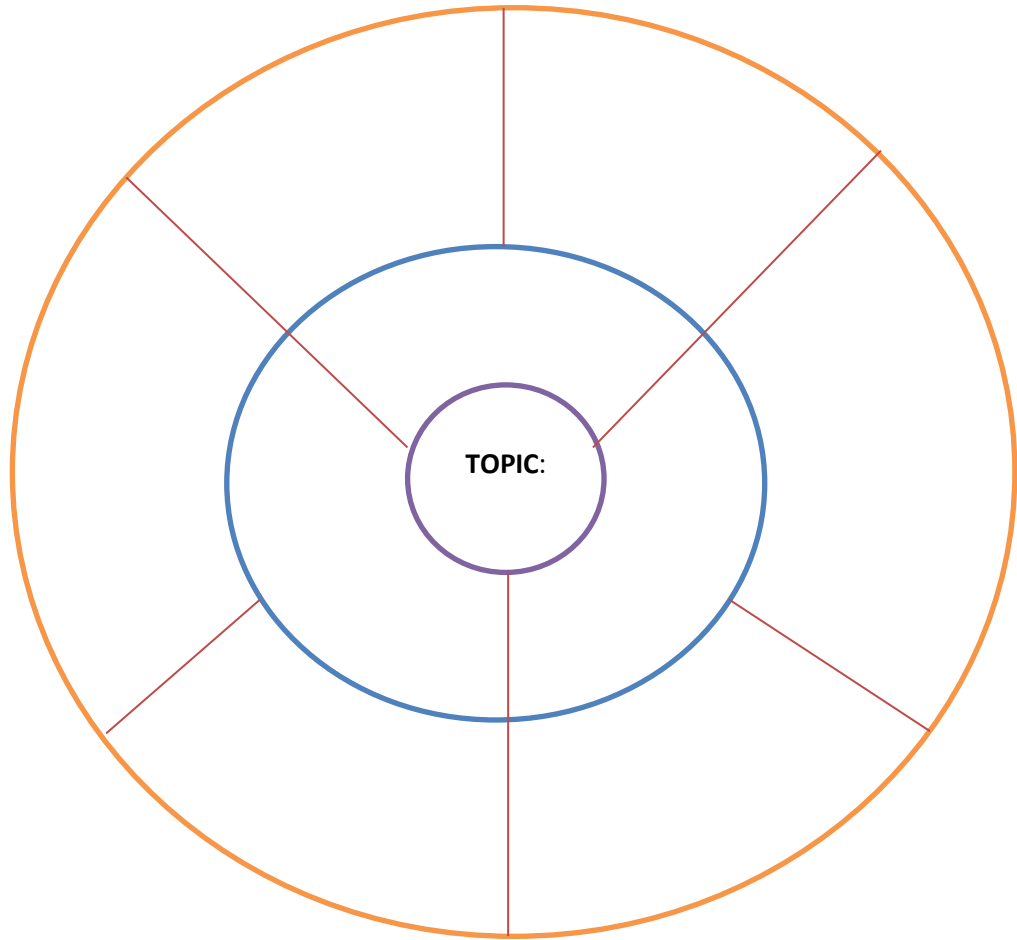
A practical example of the development of the extension wheel strategy, regarding the research work can be:

When teacher explained a class about an specific topic, for instance about the vocabulary(parts of the house), teacher asked students to first go into the first phase, that is activation and encouraged them to write in the middle the topic, in the second ring students can write the most important parts of that vocabulary(main parts of their houses).

When students get ready to the second phase, connection, teacher uses technique number heads to make the groups ‘work and ask students to discuss and argument with reasons why they wrote those key words in their extension wheel (second extension), and they had to fill the third part of the extension wheel with the parts of the house that the other chose.

To the third phase, affirming, students present in front of the class a final summary of their discussion in an oral way describing each other information. Finally, each student used the back of the paper to summarize in a written the ideas of the discussion that were made in the connection phase taking into account all the writing sub skills.

By ways of motivation, regarding this example students can draw the part of the house instead of writing the word and at the end teacher, could paste on an space of the classroom all the students work, especially the extension wheel sheets.



Source: Herrera, Kavimandan & Holmes (2011) *Crossing the Vocabulary Bridge: Differentiated Strategies for Diverse Secondary Classrooms*. Teachers College Press.

To sum up, the extension wheel strategy is one of the best tools that can be used to develop the performance of writing skills in a foreign language because it allows students to improve their relationships into groups of work, share ideas, experiences, knowledge that can be summarize in key words and after through this strategy. The importance of this strategy helps in developing in a wide and deeply way the writing skills due to after sharing comes the time to summarize every single thing in which all the writing sub skills are immersed.



## **e. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **MATERIALS**

In order to carry out this action research a group of resources were used with the purpose to achieve the learning outcomes of the intervention plan. The two main resources were the human and the material ones. Referring to human resources the two principals were: the researcher whose work was to teach the intervention plan for two months based on the schedule of the students which was five hours per week. And the students of ninth grade, group E which was the target group selected to perform this action research.

Regarding materials, the researcher took into account three things: office materials which included all the necessary things to work in the class like papers, the book, a notebook, pen, pencils, etc. Technical resources because at the present they are one of the biggest tools that help in the teaching learning process, those were: Internet, computer, printer, flash memory and camera. Finally, teaching resources which helped the researcher to teach the classes as clear as possible, those were: the extension wheel worksheet, flashcards, copies, etc.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Action research in education involves finding out immediate solutions in the teaching learning environments. According to Burns (2010) the main aims of 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, action

research can be undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students, assisted or guided by professional researchers with the aim of improving their strategies, practices and knowledge of the surroundings within which they practice.

Action research design was chosen in order to contribute in the promotion of cooperative learning in English as a foreign language classes. Furthermore, action research allowed the candidate teacher to become a participant in the research because he intervened in a deliberate way in the problematic situation by means of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst ninth - grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during 2014 – 2015 academic period.

Action research assisted the candidate teacher, who was the researcher conducting the investigation, to find immediate solutions to the issue of writing skills in which students, who were the participants in this research, had experimented and showed some trouble due specially to the lack of implementation of cooperative learning strategies such as the extension wheel.

This is an action-research design since two types of data collection sources were used: the quantitative phase which measured the cognitive knowledge of the students of ninth grade, group E in the development of writing skills, and the qualitative phase which measured and described the students' attitudes on how the students of ninth grade, group E reacted to the use of the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in the development of writing skills.

In addition, the researcher found that action research design was one of the best ways to carry out this study and obtained the best results through a good intervention. However, it is normal that when something is new, there are some questions to be answered. In this case, it was done step-by-step through reading and the explanation of the thesis advisor.

## **METHODS**

This study made a description of data resulting from the intervention plan. The following general methods were applied along the descriptive research.

**The Scientific Method** facilitated the study of the extension wheel strategy applied to improve English writing skills. It helped in the observation performed before and during the intervention. This method also assisted during the prediction of possible solutions; it assisted with gathering data in order to make relevant predictions and analysis of them.

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

**The Analytic-synthetic method** was used to analyze the obtained results through the questionnaires and the tests. It also was used to make the interpretation of the data, the logical analysis and draw up the conclusions.

**The Statistic method** was used to make the quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and tests.

Furthermore, this work used the research spiral cycles proposed by (Koshy, 2005) since the process was likely to be more fluid, open and responsive. It included planning, acting and observing, and reflecting suggests.

## **TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

### **Data Collection**

Since this work was an action research, elements of both quantitative and qualitative research were selected for data collection. Quantitative research considered variables and statics whereas qualitative research considered and understanding of words and actions. Both qualitative and quantitative instruments were self-developed by the researcher taking into account the principles of questions construction. Being this the case, paper and pencil methods (test) was used to develop quantitative data collection instruments, and observations and interviews (questionnaire, observation sheet) for the qualitative ones.

### **The Observation:**

Emphasis during observation was on understanding the natural environment as lived by the ninth grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the English classes. There were two types of observation as detailed below.

### **Nonparticipant Observation**

In nonparticipant observation, the researcher was not involved in the situation being observed. He 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.

### **Participant Observation**

In participant observation, the researcher became a part and a participant in the situation being observed. The researcher deliberated in the problematic situation by means of the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during 2014 – 2015 academic period.

### **Observation Sheet**

Whether in the participant and nonparticipant observation, the researcher needed an observation sheet to record the participants ‘behaviors shown on both variables: performance of the basic writing skills and the attitudes and feelings toward the extension wheel as cooperative- based strategy. This observation sheet was the self – developed instrument that described accurately and comprehensively all the relevant aspects of the situation. In other words, it contained the descriptors of the variables of the action research, the issue under treatment ( basic writing skills) and the treatment itself (extension wheel strategy)

### **The Questionnaire**

A researcher – made questionnaire was administered to the participants to answer questions related to their attitudes and feelings toward the extension wheel

as a cooperative learning strategy. Likewise, the tests, pre and posttest questionnaire were administered in order to make a comparison between the results. Furthermore, the data collected by the questionnaires supported the test results.

### **The Test**

Tests allowed participants to perform cognitive tasks in relation to the basic writing skills. Additionally, tests yielded a numerical score by which the researcher will calculate the mean to compare the pre and posttest results.

### **Pretest – Posttest**

A researcher – made pretest provided a manner to measure of the performance of writing skills before the participants (ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero 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 writing skills of the participants being treated.

### **POPULATION**

This action research was developed at 27 de Febrero High School, which is a public High School located to the south of Loja in La Teabida neighborhood. The group of students selected for this research work was the students of ninth grade, group E in the afternoon section, which was conformed for nineteen students,

twelve boys and seven girls who are in an age between 12 and 16 years old. This group of students was selected because it was clear the development of the writing skill in the first grades of the High School was not acquired and performed at the level required.

According to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador, that is based on the Common European Framework, regarding ninth graders, which is the target group of this research, they have to reach the A1.2 at the end of the school year. It means that learners are expected to produce informational, transactional and expository texts consisting of a sequence of simple sentences that have more detail and show more variety in lexical range and sentence structure in relation to writing skills.

For the English classes this group together with their teacher usually used the book that belongs to this grade as the main material in the learning process; other important material to explain the classes, especially the grammar rules and vocabulary were the board and a notebook in which students copied what the teacher wrote. It was clear that there was lack of importance in the teaching learning process of English as a second language.

## **f. RESULTS**

In this section the data received from the questionnaires and test from the students of ninth grade, group E at 27 the Febrero High School is presented in tables and figures, and a logical analysis is done based on the results obtained.

Since this research is an action-research design there were two types of data collection sources: the quantitative phase which measures the cognitive knowledge of the students of ninth grade, group E in the development of English basic writing skills, and these skills were the issue observed as a big problem that students face in the learning process of the English as a foreign language. The qualitative phase which measures and describes the attitudes of how the students of ninth grade, group E react to the use of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy, which helped to have a good relationship among all the members of the class, and had a better learning process through its use.

The data were supported by related results obtained throughout the statistical method which includes the means and percentage calculation of the total scores. Finally, the data were analyzed in accordance with 3 of the 5 research objectives of the research because they supported and reflected emphatically the investigation, but the other 2 objectives also had a big and wide contribution in the development and performance of this action research work. So, the results of each of the five objectives are presented.



**Objective 1:** To research the theoretical and methodological references about the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy and its application in English foreign language basic writing skills.

Regarding this first objective, it was accomplished through the investigation of theoretical and methodological information that proved the importance of doing action research with current and reliable information that supported the two variables of this study, which were Basic Writing Skills and the Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy and all of that information was the key point that supports the descriptors and purpose of the instruments designed in this action research work taking into account the most important authors that had made real investigations about these two variables.

**Objective 3:** To design an intervention plan based on the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

This objective was developed with the designation of an intervention plan based on a unit that the target group of students work on, the intervention plan was planned for two months which involved 8 macro plans and each of these contains five micro plans with different topics, and those took into account the use of the Extension Wheel Strategy as a Cooperative one emphasizing the development of Writing Skills with the use of key words that allowed the students to expand their writing skills.

**Objective 2:** To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

**Table 1**

*a. Pretest Scores on the Performance of Ninth- Grade Students' Writing Skills.*

Students' Code	P 2/2	O 2/2	V 2/2	T 1/1	WO 2/2	P.M 1/1	TOTAL 10
27F9E01	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E02	1.50	1.00	1.50	0.50	1.50	0.50	6.50
27F9E03	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	1.50	0.50	5.50
27F9E04	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E05	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.75	1.00	0.25	5.00
27F9E06	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.25	0.50	0.50	2.75
27F9E07	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.50	1.50	0.50	7.00
27F9E08	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E09	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E10	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E11	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E12	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E13	1.00	0.50	1.50	0.75	1.50	0.50	5.75
27F9E14	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.25	3.25
27F9E15	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.25	4.25
27F9E16	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.25	0.50	0.25	2.50
27F9E17	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	3.00
27F9E18	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.25	1.00	0.25	3.00
27F9E19	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.25	0.50	0.25	2.50
<b>Mean</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>3.79</b>

**Note:** These are the descriptors evaluated through the writing rubric in the pre-test in the development of the Extension Wheel strategy. **P**= Purpose/task. **2**= Organization. **V**= Vocabulary. **T**= Tense. **WO**= Word order. **P.M**= Punctuation Mark. **27F9E01:** 27 de Febrero High School Ninth Grade E First Student.

**b. Interpretation and Analysis**

As it is observed in table 1, the descriptors of the rubric with the highest score means were both, Word Order and Vocabulary (0.76/2), and the descriptor about Punctuation Mark got the lowest score mean (0.42/1). Finally, the total score

**mean** of writing skills performance is **3. 79** out of 10 that is the maximum score; consequently, the mean is below the average level. Therefore, it was inferred that there was an obvious limitation for ninth-grade students when they had to produce the writing skills. Being this the case, the mean **3. 79** for writing skills represented a main issue which concerned the researcher to conduct this action research in a single classroom.

Regarding the descriptor about Word Order refers to the order in which elements occur in a phrase, clause, or sentence. (Rose, 2001 ). And Punctuation Mark is one of the most useful mechanic skills in which every sentence should include, at least, a capital letter at the start a full stop, exclamation mark or question mark at the end. This basic system indicates that the sentence is complete. (Tannacito, 2009).

**Objective 4:** To apply the most suitable techniques of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

**Pre and Post Questionnaire results:** Five questions were administered in order to gain a more detailed view of students' behavior and attitudes toward the Extension Wheel strategy based on the principles of cooperative learning.

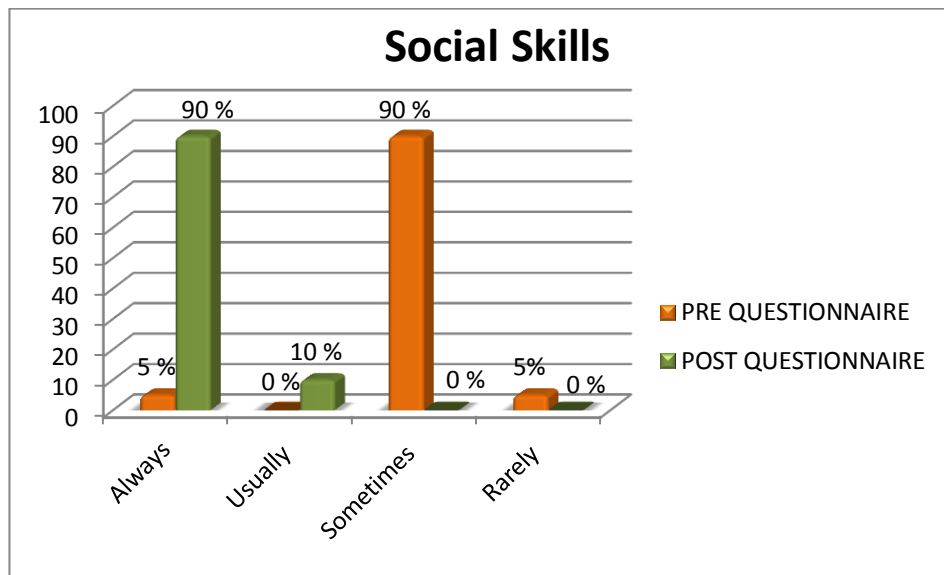
**Table 2**

**Question 1:** English Class activities are developed in groups and in pairs.

a. *Frequency of Social Skills as a Cooperative Learning Principle.*

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	F	%	F	%
Always	1	5	17	90
Usually	0	0	2	10
Sometimes	17	90	0	0
Rarely	1	5	0	0

b. **Figure 2**



**c. Interpretation and Analysis**

As it is illustrated in Table 4, only 5 % of students responded that they always used to work in groups or pairs which did not allow them to develop interpersonal skills and how to work in teams during the pre-intervention plan phase; this percentage was below the expected level. As a consequence, the researcher designed an eight-week intervention plan through cooperative-based lesson plans in which students participated and were able to work in teams of three members or

in pairs in different activities. As a result, when the intervention-plan period was finished, students responded to a post questionnaire and the same indicator (always) of the pre questionnaire increased from 5% to 90 % in student's answer, which is close to the expected level (see grading scale pag.140). It meant that students were able to develop skills of communication, leadership and conflict management through the performance of different techniques in every single activity and increased their English basic writing skills, too.

Regarding the principle of cooperative learning which was Social skills pointed that students learn not only the subject matter, but interpersonal skills and how to work in teams. Students are taught skills of communication, leadership and conflict management during the different activities that are performed. (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

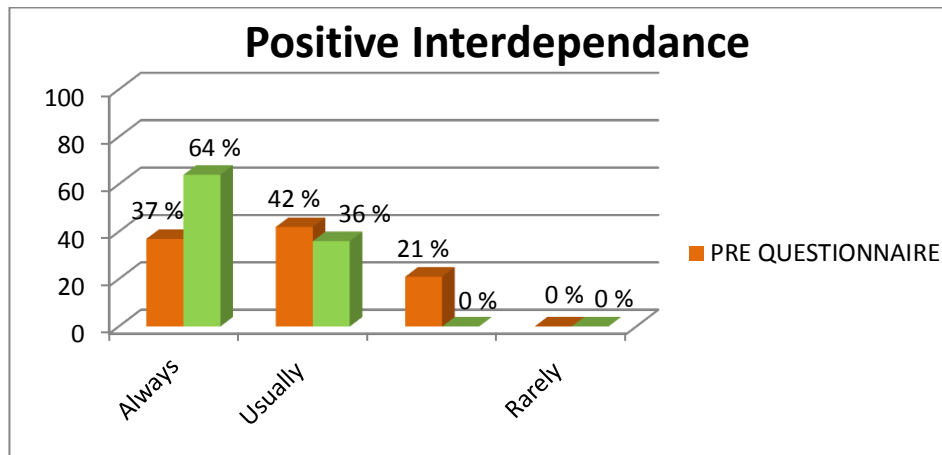
**Table 3**

**Question 2:** The group or paired activities are conducted in a positive and respectful environment.

*a. Frequency of Positive Interdependence as a Cooperative Learning Principle.*

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Always</b>	7	37	12	64
<b>Usually</b>	8	42	7	36
<b>Sometimes</b>	4	21	0	0
<b>Rarely</b>	0	0	0	0

b. **Figure 3**



c. **Interpretation and Analysis**

As it is observed in table 3, during the pre-intervention plan phase only 37 % of students answered that the group and paired activities were always conducted in a positive and respectful environment during the English classes. This was another reason that made the researcher look for a cooperative learning strategy such as the Extension Wheel and worked through an intervention plan. As a result, when the intervention-plan period was finished, students responded to a posttest questionnaire, and the same indicator (always) of the pre questionnaire increased from 37 % to 64 % in student's answer, which is almost near to the expected level. As a consequence, it was noticed that students always used to work in a positive and respectful environment during the group activities in the English classes through different techniques that pointed to the cooperative learning and increased the development and performance of English basic writing skills.

Referring the principle of cooperative learning which was Positive Interdependence where students have the sense that they are 'in this together,' feeling that each member's individual effort will not only help him, but the whole

group. The grade of each student is dependent upon the effort of other group members (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

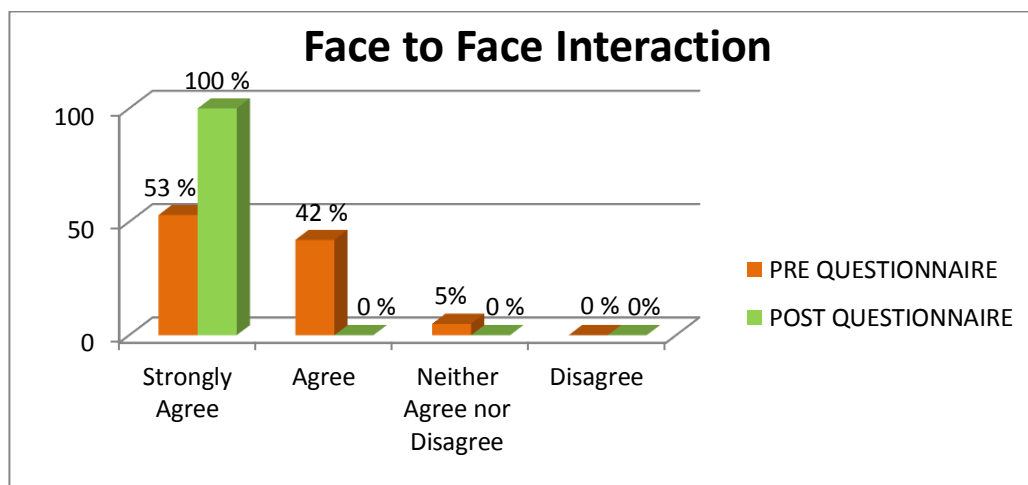
**Table 4**

**Question 3:** Having a good relationship and interaction is essential within the workgroup.

a. *Agreement on Face to Face Interaction as a Cooperative Learning Principle.*

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	%	F	%
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	10	53	19	100
<b>Agree</b>	8	42	0	0
<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	1	5	0	0
<b>Disagree</b>	0	0	0	0

b. **Figure 4**



c. **Interpretation and Analysis**

As seen in table 4, that reflected the environment in which the Extension Wheel strategy was put into practice. During the pre-intervention plan phase, only 53 % of students strongly agreed that having a good relationship and interaction is essential within the workgroup in any activity. This was another factor that encouraged the researcher to design an eight-week intervention plan through

cooperative-based lesson plans. As a result, when the intervention-plan period was finished, students responded to a posttest questionnaire, and the same indicator (strongly agree) of the pre questionnaire increased from 53 % to 100 % due to students answered that they strongly agreed on having a good relationship and interaction among all the members of the group during the group activities in the English classes is essential, where they participated and were able to have and establish a good relationship within the workgroup they belonged. The percentage (100 %) is above the expected level, so the principle about face to face interaction was totally achieved.

Referring to the principle of cooperative learning which is Face to Face Interaction where students are promoting each other's learning through face-to-face activities where they discuss and explain assignment topics with each other (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

**Table 5**

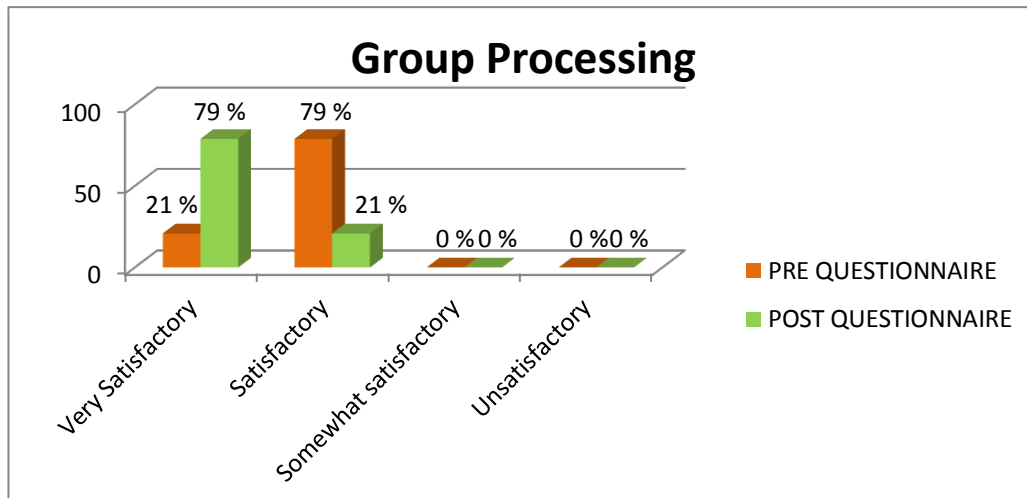
**Question 4:** How satisfying is it for you to work in groups?

*a. Pleasant of Group Processing as a Cooperative Learning Principle.*

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	F	%	f	%
<b>Very Satisfactory</b>	4	21	15	79
<b>Satisfactory</b>	15	79	4	21
<b>Somewhat satisfactory</b>	1	0	0	0
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	0	0	0	0



b. **Figure 5**



c. **Interpretation and Analysis**

As it is illustrated in table 5, the benefit from question four in the pre-intervention plan phase was that students let the researcher know that 21 % of them answered that was very satisfactory for them to work in groups. This was another factor that encouraged the researcher to look for a cooperative learning strategy such as the Extension Wheel, so through an intervention plan, the researcher made students work in groups and used many techniques and ways in which students found satisfactory working as a team and discovered the benefits that it brought. As a consequence, when the intervention-plan period finished, students responded to a posttest questionnaire, and the same indicator ( very satisfactory) of the pre questionnaire increased form 21 % to 79% in student´s answers, which is close to the expected level. It meant that through the performance of different techniques and ways of cooperative learning students used to be satisfied in the development of English activities through groups of

work which increased their cooperative skills and development of English skills as a foreign language.

Regarding the principle of cooperative learning which is Group Processing where students are given a means for analyzing their group for how well the group has learned, and whether or not collaborative skills are being used (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

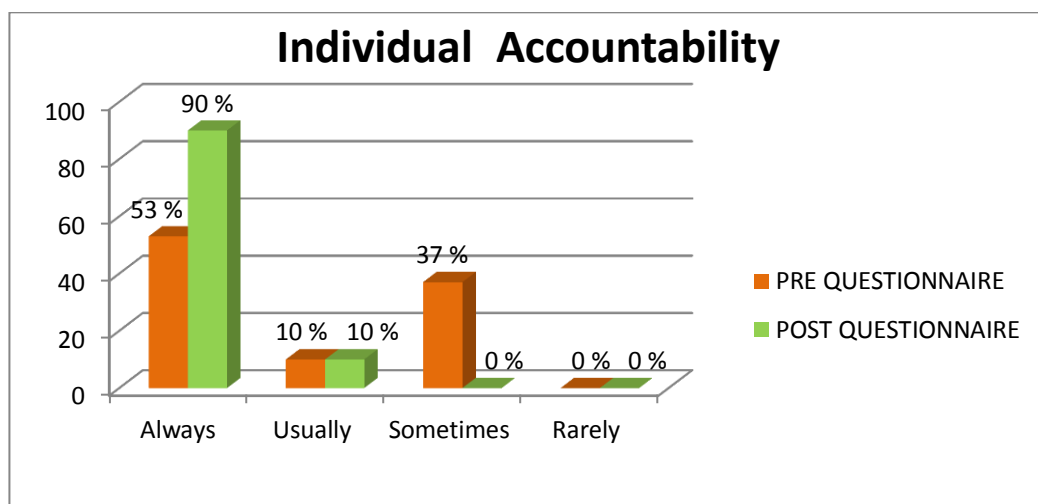
**Table 6**

**Question 5:** In the group activities, all members contribute to the development of collective work.

a. *Frequency of Individual Accountability as a Cooperative Learning Principle.*

	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire	
	f	%	F	%
<b>Always</b>	10	53	17	90
<b>Usually</b>	2	10	2	10
<b>Sometimes</b>	7	37	0	0
<b>Rarely</b>	0	0	0	0

b. **Figure 6**



### c. Interpretation and Analysis

As it is observed in Table 6, during the pre-intervention plan phase, only 53 % of students answered that in group activities all members contributed to the development of collective work during the English classes. This was another factor that the researcher through an intervention plan motivated each member of the group to have a role and contribute to the development of activities assigned to the whole group. As a result, when the intervention-plan period finished, students responded to a posttest questionnaire, and the same indicator (always) of the pre questionnaire increased from 53 % to 90 % in student's answers, which is close to the expected level. It showed that they always used to contribute to the development of collective work during the group activities in the English classes.

Referring the principle of cooperative learning which was Individual Accountability where each student is accountable for their own contribution to the group. Clearly described goals ensure that each student knows what he/she is responsible for and what the group is responsible for (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

**Objective 5:** To reflect upon the effectiveness that the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

**Table 7**

a. *Posttest Results on the performance of ninth grade students 'writing skills.*

Students' Code	P 2/2	O 2/2	V 2/2	T 1/1	WO 2/2	P.M 1/1	TOTAL 10
27F9E01	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	9.50
27F9E02	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E03	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E04	2.00	1.50	1.50	1.00	1.50	0.75	8.25
27F9E05	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	9.50
27F9E06	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	9.50
27F9E07	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E08	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.75	1.50	1.00	9.25
27F9E09	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	0.75	9.75
27F9E10	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.50	1.50	0.50	7.00
27F9E11	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.75	2.00	1.00	9.75
27F9E12	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E13	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.00	2.00	1.00	8.00
27F9E14	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E15	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E16	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E17	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	9.50
27F9E18	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
27F9E19	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	10.00
<b>Mean</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>0.95</b>	<b>1.87</b>	<b>0.95</b>	<b>9.47</b>

Note: These are the descriptors evaluated through the writing rubric in the pre-test in the development of the Extension Wheel strategy. P= Purpose/task. O= Organization. V= Vocabulary. T= Tense. WO= Word order. P= Punctuation. 27F9E01: 27 de Febrero High School Ninth Grade E First Student.

#### b. Interpretation and Analysis

As it is illustrated in Table 7, the mean for the writing skill Purpose got the highest mean (1.97), and the writing skill Organization got the lowest mean (1.87/2) . In addition, the **mean** of the writing skills performance is **9.47** out of 10, which is the highest score, a big change between the pre and posttest was evident through the intervention plan performance. Therefore, it was inferred that there was a significant and proper intervention plan which helped the students to reach basic writing skills that have to be developed at this level.

This means that students achieved in the highest way all the descriptor evaluated within the rubric for developing writing skills. Students accomplished the task with a bunch of details within their paragraphs (Purpose). Most of the students introduced their paragraph using a topic sentence specifically related with the topic (Organization). All the students used both a correct and a wide vocabulary learned but there were some minor errors in some specific words (Vocabulary). There was almost no verb disagreement in all the sentences that students wrote; those sentences were easy to understand (Tense). The majority of sentences were presented in a sequential and logical word order within the paragraph (Word Order). Most of the sentences that conformed the paragraph used punctuation marks but still there were some errors (Punctuation Mark).

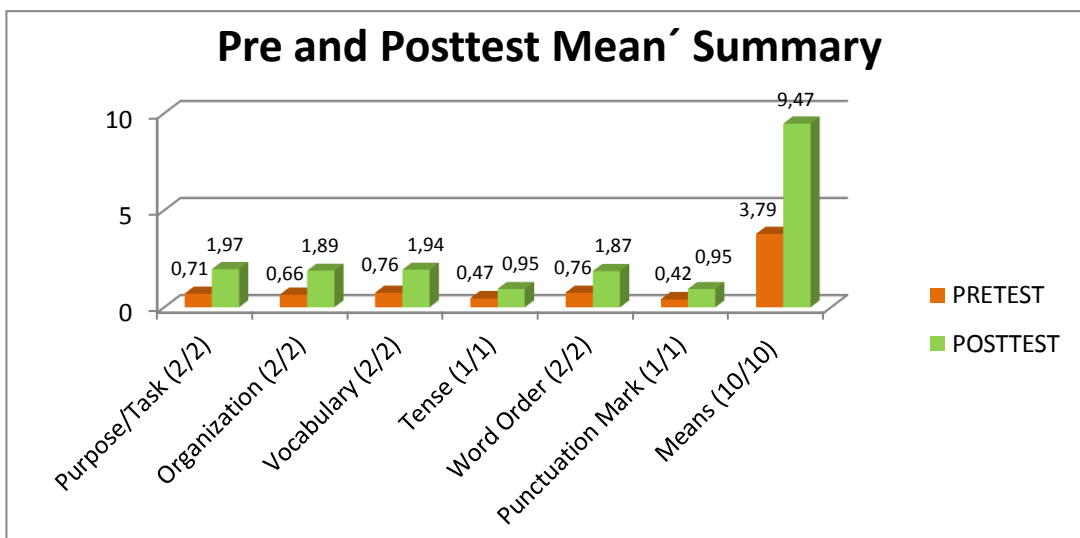
Purdy (2010) claims that writing skill is complex and difficult to learn, requiring mastery in not only grammatical patterns but also the rule of writing such as high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information and also choosing the appropriate vocabularies and sentence structure to create a style which is appropriate to subject matter.

**Table 8**

*a. Pretest and Posttest Means Summary Related to the Performance of Ninth-Grade Students' Writing Skills.*

<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>	<b>PRETEST</b>	<b>POSTTEST</b>
Purpose/Task (2/2)	0.71	1.97
Organization (2/2)	0.66	1.89
Vocabulary (2/2)	0.76	1.94
Tense (1/1)	0.47	0.95
Word Order (2/2)	0.76	1.87
Punctuation Mark (1/1)	0.42	0.95
Means	3.79	9.47

b. Figure 8



c. Interpretation and Analysis

As it is illustrated in Table 8, the mean for the writing skill Purpose got the highest score (1, 97) while the writing skill Organization got the lowest mean (1, 87/2). As it is displayed in the table the final means changed from **3. 79** to **9. 47** which represented a wide progress in the students' achievement attributed to the intervention plan which is based in cooperative work for the performance of English basic writing skills. As a result, it is evident that the posttest mean (**9. 47**) is superior to the expected average (see grading scale pag. 149) but it is important to mention that students did not show any interest and had negative attitudes towards learning due to their background but the candidate teacher in spite of not being an experienced teacher, used the most appropriate strategies and techniques in the motivation of the students and made them work actively as much as possible achieving all the learning outcomes.

It is clear that Cooperative Learning is part of a group of teaching/learning techniques where students interact with each other to acquire and practice the elements of a subject matter and to meet common learning goals. It is much more than just putting students into groups and hoping for the best due to through groups of works students develop different skills and help them to learn the English language skills form different ways. (Brent & Felder, 2004).

Additionally, learning to write is like learning to read. Both follow a sequential process, writing requires and combines more basic skills than any other subject area (Tannacito, 2009). In closing, the influence and performance of cooperative learning strategies and techniques through and intervention plan are crucial for the development and acquisition of English basic writing skills.

## **g. DISCUSSION**

This action research work was conducted amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School in order to improve the English basic writing skills through the Extension Wheel strategy. The data obtained after the intervention plan which was composed of 24 cooperative lesson plans developed for two months, showed that there was a broad and property performance stage in the development of English basic writing skills in the teaching-learning process of the Extension Wheel strategy and a bunch of techniques used in every single class activity. The findings in the pre and posttest and questionnaire showed in a clear way, that there was a significant and important progress in students' knowledge.

Taking into account the quantitative phase, there was a meaningful change in the performance of English basic writing skills because the results of pre and posttest showed a big difference that proved that all the objectives proposed during the intervention plan were totally reached and the learning outcomes were evident because the students reduced in a huge way the difficulties that they faced in the writing skills at the beginning. The results showed that the statistic mean of the test increased from 3.79 to 9.47 in the students' performance which was a very significant change due to the use of cooperative learning strategies and techniques in the development of writing skills.

Likewise, in the qualitative phase that was about the attitudes - how the students of ninth grade, group E reacted to the use of the Extension Wheel strategy, regarding the five main principles of cooperative learning had a



significant progress. Consequently, in social skills, students developed skills of communication, leadership and conflict management; through the positive interdependence principle, students worked in a positive and respectful environment every time; within the principle of face to face interaction, students strongly agreed in established a good relationship in the workgroups; in the group processing principle, students found satisfactory the work as a team and discovered its benefits, and within the individual accountability principle, students realized that have a role and contributed to the development of the activities assigned to the whole group is crucial at any time. As a result, students improved in a significant manner the English basic writing skills through the performance and development of activities that were designed with every single purpose of the cooperative learning, using with the Extension Wheel strategy.

By way of conclusion, the change achieved in the students' performance and development of writing skills through the use of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy, and many techniques and activities immersed in the principles of cooperative learning resulted very positive and appropriate due to students' knowledge of basic writing skills increased notoriously, but still there were some limitations like that students did not show any interest and had negative attitudes towards learning because of their background. In front of this situation, the candidate teacher in spite of not being an experienced teacher used the most appropriate strategies and techniques in the motivation of the students through the teaching learning process. So, it was demonstrated that it is necessary to carry out future researches in order to improve and as a result obtain changes

positively in the benefit of the students' acquisition of the English writing skills they should have as foreign language learners.

## **h. CONCLUSIONS**

There were several issues that limited the performance and development of English writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E. The students did not have almost any knowledge about writing sub skills such as punctuation, vocabulary, tense; word order and organization in their writings due to students were not being encouraged through innovative motivation strategies for developing all the English writing basic skills according to their level like the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy.

The application of cooperative techniques and activities that immersed the five main principles of cooperative learning were totally important in the performance and development of English basic writing skills due to those helped to have a positive and efficient progress of the group activities that were developed in the class and that pointed to acquire and improve the English basic writing skills.

The Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy helped to improve in a broad and proper way the development of English basic writing skills through the performance of cooperative techniques and activities regarding the five main principles of cooperative learning in which students were involved all the time when they had to produce English basic writing skills according their level.

## **i. RECOMMENDATIONS**

English language teachers should increase the motivation on students in every single activity, especially in the development of writing skills through the use of appropriate strategies like cooperative ones that immersed the students to work in groups, sharing their knowledge and creating an appropriate atmosphere in the classroom.

Teachers should employ as many cooperative techniques as possible for developing activities where students are immersed in positive environments in which they can work with anyone in the classroom without any problem, with the advantage that through groups of work the performance of basic writing skills will be achieved at the level required by the norms of the current education system.

English language mediators should implement the use of cooperative strategies like the Extension Wheel as the main tool for developing English basic writing skills which will help to reduce the difficulty in the performance of writing sub skills acquisition, with a variety of techniques and group activities where students can interact and learn on their own within the classroom.

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**k. ANNEXES**

**ANNEX 1: RESEARCH PROJECT**



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE  
LOJA**

**ÁREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA  
COMUNICACIÓN**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**THEME:**

**THE EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE  
LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH  
BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST NINTH-GRADE  
STUDENTS, GROUP E AT 27 DE FEBRERO HIGH  
SCHOOL, DURING THE 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC  
PERIOD.**

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**LOJA- ECUADOR**

**2015**

**a. THEME**

THE EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY TO DEVELOP ENGLISH BASIC WRITING SKILLS AMONGST NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS, GROUP E AT 27 DE FEBRERO HIGH SCHOOL, DURING THE 2014 – 2015 ACADEMIC PERIOD.



## **b. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **Background**

The present research work will be carried out at 27 de Febrero High School, which is located in la Tebaida Parish in the south of Loja city. The educational institution was founded in October 22 of 1958, it was found with the objective of forming professional female of the city in the technical field.

At the present this public institution has been growing so fast and it counts with two sections: morning section and afternoon section. In order to carry out this research work the researcher has consider take into account the Ninth- Grade students, group E in the afternoon section, which involves twenty students who are among twelve to thirteen years old.

### **Current Situation of the Research Problem**

At the present, the teaching learning process of the English language faces several problems in the educational institutions of our country, most of these issues are related to the way of teaching, and it means the lack of good strategies and techniques that allow students to achieve a good command of the English language.

The action research will be carried out at 27 de Feberero High School amongst the ninth – grade students, group E in the afternoon section. The class has a population of twenty students, fourteen boys and six girls, their

ages are among eleven to thirteen years old. The group has a beginner level and receives English classes five hours per week with a certified English teacher.

One of the biggest difficulties in the learning process of the English language is the fact that students do not have a good development of the English writing skills that allow them to have an effective communication in a writing form.

### **Research Problem**

How does the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?

### **Delimitation of the Research**

#### **Temporal**

This action research will be carried out at 27 de Febrero Public High School, in the academic school period 2014-2015.

#### **Location**

The 27 de Febrero High School is located in the south of Loja city, It belongs to the Tebaida Parish.

## **Participants**

People who will be involved in the action research are:

- The researcher.
- The students of ninth- grade, group E of Basic Education at 27 de Febrero High School. They are nineteen students, twelve boys and seven girls who are in an age between 12 and 16 years old.

## **Sub problems:**

- What theoretical and methodological references about the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy are adequate for improving the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?
- What are the issues that limit the development of English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?
- What are the phases of the intervention plan that help the current issues to achieve a satisfactory outcome of the developing the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?
- Which Extension Wheel techniques as a cooperative learning strategy are implemented to improve English foreign language basic writing

skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?

- How does the Extension Wheel as a cooperative strategy reduce the difficulty to develop English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?

### **c. JUSTIFICATION**

Nowadays English language is one of the most spoken languages all over the world. People need it for the general workforce, study and/or travel everywhere.

For these and a lot other reasons, it has become mandatory to include English as one of the subjects in the study programs of formal education in Ecuador. Learning English is a necessity that is faced by students to make them more competitive in this global world.

Therefore, teachers have to develop the English language skills –listening-speaking-reading and writing- in order to get immersed at a good level according to the international standards proposed by the Common European Framework. The teaching professionals have to devote all their efforts to use the best strategies to reach their objective.

The writing skill development is one of the most challenging skills for learners of English as a foreign/second language, because to get it, they have to manage a wide and rich grammar, stylistic, mechanical and critical thought sub skills. Teachers facilitate the writing process by providing the necessary guidance for the learners to be able to express their knowledge of the topic, pay attention to the rhetorical devices, logical, grammatical

and lexical aspects appropriate to different types of texts, spelling, punctuation and other organizational features.

For the above mentioned facts, students must have a good training on how to acquire the techniques and strategies needed for developing the language as much as possible. For that, teachers must be prepared with current strategies to encourage students to learn the second language as much as possible.

Undergraduate students of the English Language Department of Universidad Nacional de Loja should carry out this type of research works as part of their professional life in order to find possible solutions of the problems found in this project.

From the academic point of view, this project research is focused on the development of the basic writing skills in the English language at 27 de Febrero Public High School where young students acquire the knowledge of English as a foreign language.

Considering the scientific point of view, this research project is justified due to students do not develop a good command of the writing skills in English language because of the lack of strategies used by the teacher.

In closing in the present research project, two main purposes appear as relevant. First, to fulfill the requirements to obtain the Bachelor`s Degree in Sciences Education, English Language Specialization; and, second, to have the opportunity to contribute with suggestions for ninth grade students of 27 de Febrero High School that will have a positive impact on the development of the basic writing sub skills in English as a foreign language.

#### **d. OBJECTIVES**

##### **General Objective**

- ❖ To improve the English foreign language basic skills through the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

##### **Specific objectives**

- To research the theoretical and methodological references about the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy and its application in English foreign language basic writing skills.
- ❖ To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.
- ❖ To design an intervention plan based on the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.
- ❖ To apply the most suitable techniques of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.



- ❖ To reflect upon the effectiveness that the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

## **e. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The present literature review is composed of two variables, which are writing skills and cooperative learning. The most important authors taking into account for the variable about writing skills are: Jim Purdy, Mary Rose, Dan Tannacito and Steven Peha. For the variable about cooperative learning the authors taking into account in this research are: David and Roger Johnson, Melinda Dooly, Spencer Kagan, Rebeca Brent, Richar Felder, Alice Macpherson and Melissa Holmes.

### **Writing Skills**

Writing is one of the language skills which is the most important in people's life, through writing, you can inform others, carry out transactions, persuade, infuriate, and tell what we feel. However, it is well known that writing or learning to write especially in a second foreign language is not simply a matter of writing things down. It is one of the four basic skills that are very complex and difficult to learn, though if you make an effort and persevere, your goals can be successfully reached.

Purdy (2010) claims that writing skill is complex and difficult to learn, requiring mastery in not only grammatical patterns but also the rule of writing such as high degree of organization in the development of ideas and information and also choosing the appropriate vocabularies and sentence structure to create a style which is appropriate to subject matter.

From the four learning skills, writing is categorized as one of the productive skills along with speaking since they involve producing language rather than receiving it. Although both writing and speaking are productive skills, those two skills are basically different in various ways (Spratt & Willian, 2005).

According to the Ministry of Education of Ecuador that has set as a reference the Comon European Framework is established that at the end of the different courses students must achieve a determined level. Regarding ninth graders, which is the target group of this research, they have to reach the A1.2 at the end of the school year. It means that learners are expected to produce informational, transactional and expository texts consisting of a sequence of simple sentences that have more detail and show more variety in lexical range and sentence structure in relation to writing skills.

In addition, the assessment indicators of the writing skill for ninth grade students according the national curriculum guidelines of Ecuador, are the following (MinEduc, 2014):

- Copy familiar words and short phrases.
- Take simple notes from a dictated or recorded message within the limits of their vocabulary for the level.
- Write sequences of simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live, and what they do for short

informational, transactional and expository texts by using basic appropriate punctuation marks.

- Carry out correspondence with a partner, by giving and eliciting information and advice on personal, educational, and public issues.

### **Basic Writing Skills**

It is critical to remember that there are four specific traits that characterize strong writing. Teacher must teach these to the students, to give them the tools they need to write well. The teaching of basic writing skills provides teachers with instructional strategies for the development of written language. It offers specific techniques to add structure, coherence, and clarity to students' expository and narrative writing. In addition, these are the very criteria by which student writing is judged on assignments. Those main categories are (Rose, 2001 ):

- **Focus:** Refers to the writer's ability to clearly address the topic throughout the paragraph or essay.
- **Organization:** Is the presentation of information in logical order, with an appropriate introduction and conclusion.
- **Support:** Refers to all the information that helps the main idea or ideas. Under support we find other elements of writing, such as: voice, tone word choice, extensions, details and descriptions.
- **Conventions of print:** Is a broad term referring to all rules of punctuation, grammar and so on that makes writing completely clear.

## **Writing in English Foreign Language Learning**

English writing is an essential skill for success in the modern global world, many experts would go as far to say that without certain knowledge of English reading skills and English writing skills, a career would be somewhat limited if it involves doing business in English-speaking countries at even a basic level.

The good news is that while English reading and English speaking are best learnt in either an online forum or an in-class course, English writing can be taught at a pace consistent with your current writing ability (Rose, 2001 ).

One method of learning English writing is to study subjects that you enjoy learning about and writing in the style of your favorite authors of those subjects. Besides that, the best way to learn English writing is together with a good English speaking and reading course, so all three can work together to form the basis of a solid knowledge of the English language (Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013).

### **Writing Sub Skills**

According to Heaton (1995), there are three sub skills necessary for writing.

They are:

- d. Grammatical skill :** The ability to write correct sentences. According to Ruble (2014) there are some ways to help you advance your grammar skills.

- Read more in English.
  - Write more in English.
  - Search the Internet for more information and opportunities to practice your skills.
  - Go to your instructor's office hours for extra help.
  - Go to a peer tutor or a writing specialist at the Writing Center.
- e. **Stylistic skill:** The ability to manipulate sentence and use language effectively.

Writing is a craft. Skilled writers incorporate stylistic techniques into their writing for rhetorical effect. In other words, stylistic techniques enhance a piece of writing's aesthetic, emotional or intellectual appeal. Certainly, the content of a text is important, but a writer who can organize his ideas in a unique and provocative way can increase his writing's allure (Heaton, 1995).

- f. **Mechanical skill:** The ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language e.g. punctuation, and spelling (Peha, 1995).

Many students with learning problems are frustrated in their attempts at written expression because of difficulty with the mechanical aspects of writing. Problems with spelling, punctuation, and handwriting may draw attention away from the writer's focus on ideas. A teacher, therefore, needs effective ways of assisting students in overcoming the mechanical obstacles to writing (Tannacito, 2009).

## **The Stages of the Learning Process of English Foreign Language Writing**

Learning to write is like learning to read. Both follow a sequential process, writing requires and combines more basic skills than any other subject area. Taking into account the developmental stages of children, educators teach writing through a series of steps that build on a child`s learning experience. The writing process being in the early grades by exposing students to a variety of quality books read aloud (Tannacito, 2009).

According to Peha (1995) there are seven stages in the writing process, those are:

**Pre-Writing:** As its name implies, pre-writing is any writing you do before you start writing, it sound confusing, but it`s not. People all do a little bit of thinking before write. So why not write some of that thinking down? Maybe you do not know exactly what you`re going to write about. Maybe you do not know what you`re going to write about at all. The fun of pre-writing is that it really doesn`t matter (Peha, 1995).

**Drafting:** The conventional meaning of the word “drafting” is: “A preliminary version of a plan, document, or picture.” But all that tells you is that a draft is something that isn`t finished, drafting is all about being pulled into your topic and letting it carry you along right behind. You`ve thought about it during pre-writing, you may have even written a few notes, now just let yourself go. Let yourself be

drawn in by the power of your own ideas. Get up close to them, put your pencil on the paper, open up the throttle of your imagination, and don't stop until you cross the finish line (Peha, 1995).

**Sharing:** Sharing means just what it says: sharing your work with other people and getting some feedback about how you're doing. Most writers in a writer's workshop get response from other writers when they share their work in front of the whole group. Your piece doesn't have to be finished for you to share it. In fact, it's probably better for you to share it several times long before it's done, so you have a chance to make changes based on the comments you receive. (Peha, 1995).

**Revising:** The word "revision" literally means "to see again." This is what revising is all about. Having received comments about your piece during the Sharing stage, you can better see your writing now from the reader's point of view. That's the key (Peha, 1995).

**Editing:** Editing means many things to many people. But here it means only one thing: taking care of any problems you have with writing conventions like spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage. You can make minor changes to the content of your piece, a word here, a phrase there, but if you want to make bigger changes, go back to the Revising stage (Peha, 1995).

**Publishing:** The word "publish" might remind you of another word you know. That would be "public" because that's what publishing is all about: preparing a



piece of writing so that it can be read, understood, and enjoyed by the public. Who's the public? Well, technically, it's anybody. But practically, it's the people in your class, your teacher, and anybody else you decide to show your writing to, the main idea is that the Publishing stage is your chance to prepare your writing in a way that will best reach your audience. (Peha, 1995).

Writing is communication, if you have written something, you must have intended for someone to read it, even if that person is only yourself. When you publish a document, you are realizing it for the public for others to read. Not all of your writing will be taken by the publishing stage, but even turning a paper into your teacher constitutes publishing (Tannacito, 2009).

Assessing: The word "assess" comes from the Latin word "assidere" meaning "to sit beside." The idea here is to pull up a chair right alongside yourself and peak over your own shoulder to see what you've done. Here's how it works: after you've published a piece and let it sit for a while, take it out again and re-read it. Then, jot down a few thoughts about what you did. Are there parts you like more than others? Did you learn something new? What does this piece say about you as a writer. Take a look at comments you might have gotten from your teacher or other writers in your class (Peha, 1995).

## **Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning is organised and managed group work in which students work cooperatively in small groups to achieve academic as well as affective and social goals. In hundreds of studies, cooperative learning has been associated with gains in such variables as achievement, interpersonal skills, and attitudes toward school, self, and others (Johnson, Johnson, & Edythe, 2008).

According to Dooly (2008), cooperative learning is a process meant to facilitate the accomplishment of a specific end product or goal through people working together in groups. Inevitably, cooperation and collaboration seem to overlap, but in the cooperative model of learning, the teacher still controls most of what is going on in the class, even if the students are working in groups.

Collaborative learning, on the other hand, is aimed at getting the students to take almost full responsibility for working together, building knowledge together, changing and evolving together and of course, improving together (Dooly, 2008).

Cooperative learning is more than just group work. A key difference between cooperative learning and traditional group work is that in the latter, students are asked to work in groups with no attention paid to group functioning, whereas in cooperative learning, group work is carefully prepared, planned, and monitored (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

A cooperative learning lesson often begins with some direct instruction where the teacher presents new material. This is followed by cooperative group work. During the group work, students often take on roles in order to help them feel responsible for participating and learning. The teacher monitors groups to see that they are learning and functioning smoothly. “Team spirit” is stressed with students “learning how to learn” by participation with their peers (Kagan S. , 1994).

### **Elements of Cooperative Learning:**

Cooperative learning researchers David and Roger Johnson (Woolfolk, 2004) have identified five elements that define cooperative learning:

✓ Face-to-Face Interaction

Students are promoting each other's' learning through face-to-face activities where they discuss and explain assignment topics with each other (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

✓ Positive Interdependence

Students have the sense that they're 'in this together,' feeling that each member's individual effort will not only help him, but the whole group. The grade of each student is dependent upon the effort of other group members (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

✓ Individual Accountability

Each student is accountable for their own contribution to the group. Clearly described goals ensure that each student knows what she is responsible for and what the group is responsible for (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

✓ Group Processing

Students are given a means for analyzing their group for how well the group has learned, and whether or not collaborative skills are being used (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

✓ Collaborative Skills

Students learn not only the subject matter, but interpersonal skills and how to work in teams. Students are taught skills of communication, leadership and conflict management during the early stages of cooperative learning sessions (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).

### **Cooperative Learning and English Foreign Language Teaching**

Cooperative Learning is part of a group of teaching/learning techniques where students interact with each other to acquire and practice the elements of a subject matter and to meet common learning goals. It is much more than just putting students into groups and hoping for the best (Brent & Felder, 2004).

Cooperative Learning is a very formal way of structuring activities in a learning environment that includes specific elements intended to increase the potential for rich and deep learning by the participants. Cooperative Learning models include the following basic principles (Brent & Felder, 2004):

- Group tasks are designed to be suitable for group work.
- Positive interdependence is built in – cooperation is necessary for students to succeed.
- Attention and class time are given to interpersonal/cooperative skill building.
- Participants learn together in small (2-5 member) groups.
- Students are individually accountable for learning and participation.
- The instructor's role changes from being the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side."

Cooperative Learning is about moving from rote learning to learning how to think critically and in changing circumstances. The consistent use of these principles in an organized way is at the heart of Cooperative Learning (Brent & Felder, 2004).

**Three levels of cooperative learning:**

- *Informal cooperative learning.* Active learning involves groups that stay together for a class period or less to answer questions or solve problems. No strict compliance with the five conditions. (Brent & Felder, 2004)

- *Formal cooperative learning*.\_Groups stay together for extended periods up to the entire course to produce a product (homework sets, design project, class presentation) (Jhonson & Jhonson, 2009).
- *Cooperative base groups*.\_Groups stay together to provide mutual academic and personal support, possibly for several years. Use for academic work and advising (Brent & Felder, 2004).

### **Stages in Cooperative Learning**

Stage 1: Forming: This is the time of organization and orientation to tasks. The task and information about them will be identified. The question to be answered is “What is the task of this group and how will I be able to contribute to that task?” In the behavior area, the members will develop group guidelines, either by consensus or by informal testing of behaviors. Some members will look to others to either lead or follow. The question to be answered is “What kind of behavior is acceptable in this group and how am I to behave?” (Macpherson, 2007).

Stage 2: Storming: Here there are individual emotional responses to the group, the demands of the task will trigger part of this response and the more difficult the task appears in relation to individual’s self-perceived abilities, the greater the potential for a “storm”. The question to be answered is “Am I emotionally ready to deal with this task?” Varied understandings of task and roles are expressed or become apparent. Differences between members may be expressed in a hostile

manner and members may wonder if they want to be part of the group. They think, “Do I really want to work with these people?” (Macpherson, 2007).

Stage 3: Norming: Now communication is opening up and developing. Information is being exchanged and ideas and opinions are shared. The focus is on the task and members are answering the question, “What do I have that will help us accomplish this task?” Workable guidelines are established. On the behavioral side, the individuals are becoming a group. There is a sense of harmony and people are looking at “How can I help contribute to group unity?” (Brent & Felder, 2004).

Stage 4 Performing: Everyone is focused on constructive action directed towards successful completion of the task. The interpersonal and task behaviors with shared understandings start to merge and functionality is the main idea. Problem solving will be primarily directed to the work and the product. (Macpherson, 2007).

Last Stage: Adjourning: When teams have completed their tasks, they wrap up, and then go on to other teams in other places. It is important for the team to take the time to look at its process one last time. “What went well?” “What could we do better in another situation?” so that the loose ends are wrapped up on the task. The conclusion of the interpersonal behaviors includes a chance to say thank you and good-bye to the team members (Macpherson, 2007).

## **Current Strategies of Cooperative Learning**

At the present English language is one of the most spoken languages around the world, so in Ecuador English has been teaching since schools in different educative institutions. The most well-known skills in learning a language are speaking, listening, reading and writing; in order to develop each one of these skills there are a bunch of strategies and techniques that help teacher to develop their student`s skills.

Focusing in writing skill, it is so necessary to have a good command of this skill in order to be able to express our ideas, thoughts or opinions in a written way with the correct use of grammar structures, vocabulary, taking into account that our writing must be develop with coherence and cohesion in a correct order. (Rose, 2001 )

One of the best way to develop writing skill is through cooperative learning, in which students interact among them in order to have different points of view and share what they know a specific topic, and this help them to learn from others and develop their writing skills. (Kagan, Robertson, & Kagan, 1995)

Nowadays, Kagan (1995) structures are radically transforming classrooms in many parts of the world. These easy-to-learn, easy-to-use instructional strategies are ideal for promoting second language learning in any part were English is teaching as a second language. In classrooms in which the Kagan Structures are used regularly, students for whom English is a second language learn both English



and academic content far more quickly and far more thoroughly than when traditional instructional strategies are used.

One of the most useful strategies to improve written skills that the researcher has found is the Extension Wheel Strategy, which allows students to summarize the topic they have learned or to write key words for understanding a specific topic, the strategy is described as follows:

### **Extension Wheel Strategy**

It is a great tool for the classroom because it allows for students analysis and synthesis. This strategy also encourages creativity in students according they own perspectives of the topic, so students are engaged in a topic and they are also challenged to demonstrate their creativity.

The Extension Wheel is a strategy that permits learners to get more information of a specific lesson, through this students start from a central topic to the related details, and having the opportunity to share their notes with other and in this way extend their knowledge and their own understandings about the topic. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011)

The extension wheel strategy lends itself the exploration of numerous text structures, including cause/effect, problem/solution, description and point of view, because the process and resulting products of this strategy are highly dependent upon student`s ideas and connections. (Herrera, Kavimandan, & Holmes, 2011)

Materials needed:

- Extension wheel template.
- Black sheets of paper.
- Pens/pencils.

Directions that teacher must apply in order to get a good result of this strategy, those are:

- Have students write the idea or topic in the center of the circle.
- Ask students to think individually about three extensions of the idea in the center of the circle.
- Once the students have individually thought about the ideas, group them into pairs or small groups to have them do a turn-and-talk to discuss their ideas with each other.
- As students share the rationale behind their extensions with each other, walk around the classroom and silently listen as they discuss their thought processes.
- Once students have finished the discussion ask them to choose three extensions from their oral discussion to transfer onto the first ring of the wheel.
- After students have finished writing the ideas of the first ring, ask them to expand further on those ideas.

- After students have recorded the extended ideas of the second ring, bring the class together and have them share their ideas with the whole group or with another small group.
- As students share with the class, allow them to add additional notes onto their own extension wheels, based on the ideas they are hearing.
- After groups finish recording their ideas, ask students to write a narrative or expository summary of the points identified on the wheel. Students can complete this task individually or in pairs.
- You can allow students to choose which idea from the wheel they would like to discuss on their writing.
- Also you can allow students to create a pictorial summary that incorporates key terms and ideas.

This strategy helps students to organize their thoughts related to the central topic. The collaborative learning component of this phase help students understand how ideas can be expanded in multiple ways, depending on a person`s point of view, and based on those ideas they can create their own summaries in the way they want using ideas from the wheel.

In order to apply this strategy a bunch of techniques will be used in order to have a good application of the strategy in the students, according to VanGundy (2005), there are some useful techniques and activities that teachers must use in their classroom in order to have successful results in the teaching learning process of their students.

<b>Techniques and Activities Used With the Extension Wheel Strategy in the English Language Classroom</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>	<b>PAIR AND GROUP WORK</b>	<b>WHOLE CLASS</b>
<p><b>Think Break</b> Ask a rhetorical question, and then allow 20 seconds for students to think about the problem before you go on to explain. This technique encourages students to take part in the problem-solving process even when discussion isn't feasible. Having students write something down helps assure that they will in fact work on the problem.</p>	<p><b>Picture Prompt</b> Show students an image with no explanation, and ask them to identify/explain it, and justify their answers. Or ask students to write about it using terms from lecture, or to name the processes and concepts shown. Also works well as group activity. Do not give the "answer" until they have explored all options first.</p>	<p><b>Make Them Guess</b> Introduce a new subject by asking an intriguing question, something that few will know the answer to (but should interest all of them). Accept blind guessing for a while before giving the answer to build curiosity.</p>
<p><b>Word Journal</b> First, summarize the entire topic on paper with a single word. Then use a paragraph to explain your word choice.</p>	<p><b>Think-Pair-Share</b> Students share and compare possible answers to a question with a partner before to write their sentences or paragraph based on the words or ideas they have wrote.</p>	<p><b>Real-World</b> Have students discuss in class how a topic or concept relates to a real-world application or product. Then have students write about this topic for homework.</p>
<p><b>Jeopardy</b> Play jeopardy like the TV show with your students. It requires a fair amount of preparation. With writing skills they can use their extension wheel to order the ideas of a specific topic, after they make a summary based on their ideas and those summaries can be used to participate in the jeopardy game.</p>	<p><b>Pair-Share-Repeat</b> After a pair-share experience, ask students to find a new partner and debrief the wisdom of the old partnership to this new partner, and through this they can start to write their own summary about a specific topic.</p>	<p><b>One-Sentence Summary</b> Summarize the topic into one sentence that incorporates all of who/what/when/where/why/how creatively.</p>

	<p><b>Teacher and Student</b> Individually brainstorm the main points of the last homework, and then assign roles of teacher and student to pairs. The teacher's job is to sketch the main points, while the student's job is to cross off points on his list as they are mentioned, but come up with 2-3 ones missed by the teacher.</p>	<p><b>Wisdom of Another</b> After any individual brainstorm or creative activity, partner students up to share their results. Then, call for volunteers of students who found their partner's work to be interesting or exemplary. Students are sometimes more willing to share in plenary the work of fellow students than their own work.</p>
	<p><b>Optimist/Pessimist</b> In pairs, students take opposite emotional sides of a conversation. This technique can be applied to case studies and problem solving as well. They can take note of the principal ideas in order to create their own summary.</p>	<p><b>Board Rotation</b> Assign groups of students to each of the boards you have set up in the room and assign one topic/question per board. After each group writes an answer, they rotate to the next board and write their answer below the first, and so on around the room.</p>
	<p><b>Peer Review Writing Task</b> To assist students with writing assignments, encourage them to exchange drafts with a partner. The partner reads the essay and writes a three-paragraph response.</p>	<p><b>Blender</b> Students silently write a definition or brainstorm an idea for several minutes on paper. Then they form into groups, and two of them read their ideas and integrate elements from each. A third student reads his, and again integration occurs with the previous two, finally everyone in the group has been integrated.</p>

**Source:** VanGundy (2005). 101 Activities for Teaching Creativity and Problem Solving.

## **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 aims of 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, action research can be undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students, assisted or guided by professional researchers with the aim of improving 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, action research will allow the candidate teacher become a participant in the research because he is going to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation by means of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst ninth - grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

Action research assists the candidate teacher, who is the researcher conducting the investigation, to find immediate solutions 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 implementation of cooperative learning strategies such as the extension wheel.

This study is an applied educational research work since it is a practical action research that will allow the practitioner to study the aspects of practice with the introduction of the extension wheel strategy in order to improve writing skills and see the reflections of the intervention.

## **Methods, Techniques and Instrument**

### **Methods**

This study will make a description of data resulting from an intervention plan. The following general methods will be applied along the descriptive research.

**The Scientific Method** will facilitate the study of the extension wheel strategy applied to improve English writing skills. It will help in the observation done before and during the intervention. This method also will assist during the prediction of possible solutions; it will assist with gathering data in order to make relevant predictions and analysis of them.

**The Descriptive method** will enable to describe the different stages of the study and the kind of resources used by the researcher. It will serve to explain and analyze the object of the investigation.

**The Analytic-synthetic method** will be used to analyze the obtained results through the questionnaires and the tests. It will also be used to make the interpretation of the data, the logical analysis and draw up the conclusions.

**The Statistic method** will be used to make the quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and tests.

Furthermore, this work will use the research spiral cycles proposed by (Koshy, Action Research for Improving Practice: A Practical Guide, 2005) since the process is likely to be more fluid, open and responsive. It includes planning, acting and observing, and reflecting suggests.

Action research is an inquiry, undertaken with rigor and understanding in order to constantly refine practice; the emerging evidence-based outcomes will then contribute to the researching practitioner's continuing professional development (Koshy, Action Research for Improving Practice: A Practical Guide, 2005) Action research is a process of study done by systematically collecting data on one's everyday practice and analyzing it in order to draw conclusions about how future practice should be.

Action research will be applied in this study because it will enable the researcher to follow the steps in the spiral that will help her reflect upon her teaching and improve her students' situation. The researcher intends to see if the



plan would work well or if any necessary modification or amendment would be needed to improve her students' language learning.

## **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 considers and understanding of words and actions. Both qualitative and quantitative instruments are self-developed by the researcher taking into account the principles of questions construction. Being this the case, paper and pencil methods (test) will be used to develop quantitative data collection instruments, and observations and interviews (questionnaire, observation sheet) for the qualitative ones.

### **The Observation:**

The emphasis during observation will be on understanding the natural environment as lived by the ninth grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the 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. He 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 part and a participant in the situation being observed. The researcher will participate deliberately in the problematic situation by means of the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.

### **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 and the attitudes and feelings toward the extension wheel as cooperative- based strategy. This observation sheet is the self – developed instrument that describes 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 (extension wheel strategy)

## **The Questionnaire**

A researcher – made questionnaire will be administered to the participants to answer questions related to their attitudes and feeling toward the extension wheel strategy as a cooperative learning strategy. Likewise the tests, pre and posttest questionnaire will be administered in order to make a comparison between the results. Furthermore, the data collected by the questionnaires will support the test results.

## **The Test**

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

## **Pretest – Posttest**

A researcher – made pretest will provide a measure of the performance of writing skills before the participants ( ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero 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 – posttest comparison of the cognitive dimension of the performance of writing skills of the participants being treated.

## **Subtest**

Subtest will be given each two weeks in order to measure the knowledge that the students are learning through the intervention plan made by the researcher. The subtest will consist in worksheets that will contain questions like multiple choices, matching, completing, etc.

## **Pilot testing the questions**

Once the questions for both the test (pre and post) and questionnaire (pre and post) have been developed under the principles of question construction, the researcher will test the questions in order to evaluate the instruments and to make the necessary changes based on the feedback from a small number of individuals who will evaluate the instruments, due to the pilot group will provide feedback on the questionnaire or test, the researcher will exclude them from the final sample or population for the study.

## **Procedures**

The process of this action research work will include the following stages:

First of all, the problematic was detected in advance through the observation, where the researcher could realize that the students do not have a satisfactory level of the English writing skills due to the lack of strategies applied by the teacher in order to improve the writing skills in the students.

After that, the researcher investigated the strategies and techniques that can be applied in order to improve writing skills in second language learner; this allowed the researcher to have enough information to plan the teaching activities that will be developed through the working plan.

The intervention plan will start with the application of the questionnaire and the test, which will allow finding out the strategies and activities carried out with didactic resources by the researcher and to identify the level of English writing skills that the students have. These results will also help the researcher to reflect about the best teaching practices, the motivation, the evaluation process and the attitude that a teacher should have in order to catch students' attention, and in this case, to get students develop good English writing skills as second language learners.

Then, the researcher will apply the most suitable techniques and activities with the extension wheel strategy in order to improve the English writing skills of the students, this process will be done with the help of other didactic resources and teaching aids that provide a good classroom environment, motivation and taking advantage of time at maximum.

Once finished the teaching activities, a second questionnaire and a post-test will be applied in order to verify if the techniques and activities with the use of the extension wheel strategy have improved the English writing skills of the students.

When the intervention plan finished, the researcher will analyze the data collected; it will allow him to verify if the set goals have been achieved and to draw the conclusions of the intervention program.

Finally, a written report that details all the activities carried out during this action research and intervention plan will be presented for the private and public presentation of this research work.

### **Tabulation**

The tabulation of data will be done through a logical analysis of the information collected through the questionnaire and tests applied at the beginning and at the end for the intervention plan in the two questionnaires conducted.

### **Organization**

The researcher will organize the research work with the information received in all the stages applied in order 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.

### **Description**

The description of the collected data and graphics will be described considering the information of the 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**

All the ninth- grade students, group E of Basic Education in the 27 de Febrero High School have been chosen as a sample. It is a class conformed by 19 students, 12 boys and 7 girls, they are between 12 to 16 years old. They have five periods of English classes per week. Most of them have a lower level of English writing skills, which is not good according their level.

## Intervention Plan

### WEEK 1

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	<i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i>
<b>TOPIC</b>	Unit 4 GETTING TO KNOW THE STUDENTS OF NINTH GRADE E AT 27 THE FEBRERO HIGH SCHOOL. - Pre – test application
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<p><b>Listening</b>            Students will listen the ways to introduce themselves within a group.            Students will listen how their partners introducing themselves.</p> <p><b>Speaking</b>            Students will introduce themselves to the class.            Students and teacher will express each other’s expectations for the course.</p> <p><b>Writing</b>            Students will individually create an extension wheel sheet describing them.(name, age, nickname, place where they live, etc)            Students write short sentences with their personal information.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b>            Phrases used to present ourselves : MY name is...., I am... , I live in..., I like..., I have...</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson order to know the students that I will be working with.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, Teacher will introduce myself, to do this teacher will draw an extension wheel on the board in order students start to get familiarize with it. Once teacher has the draw teacher will put some key words in each part of my extension wheel, teacher write some easy ones like: Christian, 20, Granda, University Student, English, Teacher, Teach, UNL, and Single. So, once teacher has written will allow student to guess questions based on those key words from the extension wheel. So they would ask:</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What`s your name?</li> <li>◆ How old are you?</li> <li>◆ What`s your hobby?</li> <li>◆ What is your nickname?</li> <li>◆ Are you married?</li> </ul> <p>If students get any trouble in finding the answers teacher will help them in order they understand all the words written on the extension wheel that is on the board.</p> <p>During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students` prior knowledge which will allow me to know the students` diverse linguistic background.</p> <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p>After the warm-up activity, teacher will introduce himself in a formal way, and teacher will explain the reasons why I will work with them during at least two months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As students are meeting me for the first time teacher will answer some questions that I consider are good that students know about me.</li> <li>◆ Once, students know me and the reasons why are with them teacher will ask the students to present themselves in the way I did. To do this, teacher will give an extension wheel sheet to all of them, and I will explain them how to fill it.</li> <li>◆ First, teacher is going to tell them that they have their name and last name in the center of the extension wheel, and they can use the parts of the second and third extension to write their age, nickname, hobby, etc.</li> <li>◆ They will have at least ten minutes to create their own extension wheel using their creativity as the want.</li> </ul> <p>While they are working in the extension wheel teacher will be monitoring the class in the case any of the students need my help.</p> <p>Once all students finish with the task teacher will ask them to be ready to present themselves to the words they write.</p> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ In order to make students present themselves in front of the class teacher will use the technique “The first letter of my name”. so, teacher will say: A name which start with the letter S, if there is any student he/she will present himself/herself</li> </ul>
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	<p>to the class, and teacher will continue doing that until all the students present their works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ During the student`s presentation teacher will be ready to help if they need it. Also this activity will be so useful for him in order to get to know a lot about the students. In addition, any student of my person can formulate a question to the presenter in order to know more about him/her.</li> <li>◆ Finally, I will congratulate and make suggestions to the whole class about the activity they developed, teacher will also ask them that from this time they have to star keeping all the works that we will do, especially the works make in the extension wheel sheets.</li> <li>◆ In this week, teacher will asks students to complete the pre – questionnaire and a pre- test in order to measure the knowledge that they have in English language, especially in writing skills, and in this way I can get a clear view of the level they have according the national standers and get ready to start in the best way possible based on students background in English as a second language.</li> <li>- To do this, teacher will handle two sheets to the students, one with questions about the cooperative learning and the other which will contain only a question that consists in that students have to write a paragraph follow the clear instruction that will be described in the question of the test.</li> <li>◆ As this will be the first class, teacher won`t send any homework to the students, but teacher will announce them that from the next class we will start to continue learning English language through the use of different techniques in order to improve their English skills through the Unit 4</li> </ul>
<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	<p>Extension wheel sheet  Student`s notebook  Student`s textbook</p>
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	<p>Data source 1: Pre- Test Sheet.  Data source 2: Observation checklist  Data source 3: Pre- questionnaire sheet.  Data source 4: Students` writing samples, weekly</p>
<b>SUPPORT</b>	<p>Coaching and guidance from our university professor.</p>

Adaptde from: Abbs, Barker, & Ingrid (2013) English Student Book. Level 2. Ministerio de Educación.

**WEEK 2**

<p><b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b></p>	<p><i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i></p>
<p><b>TOPIC:</b></p>	<p>Unit 4: DESCRIBING THE PARTS OF A HOUSE</p>
<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p><b>Listening</b> Students will listen to their partner while he or she describes his/her house. Students will listen to their classmates describing their favorite place of the house.</p> <p><b>Speaking</b> Students will share ideas about our imaginary house. Students will ask question to their classmates in order to know why they prefer any specific room or part of their house.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will individually place the different parts of a house in a draw made by them. Students will make a list of the parts and rooms of their own houses.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b> Bathroom, Bedroom, Dining room, Garage, Kitchen, Living room, Stairs, Downstairs, Upstairs.</p>
<p><b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b></p>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the most common parts of a house.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to the Leisure Activities (Eat out, Read, Take a nap,..) that they already learned in previous classes. This is a group warm-up activity, called The Broken Telephone in which students will be divided in two groups, once in the groups they have to form a column, when they get ready, teacher will call two members of each group and teacher will tell a phrase to them using leisure activities(e.g I really enjoy reading book at nights and hanging out with friends), once they get the phrase they have to pass it through all of the members until the first one , that must write the phrase on the</li> </ul>

	<p>board. The group that has the expression or sentence as it is will be the winner. Students will have the opportunity to play this activity three times. This warm up activity will last between 6 to 7 minutes due to there will be 3 opportunities in which students will receive a different sentence about leisure activities.</p> <p>During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow him to know his students' background of the previous classes.</p> <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p>After the warm-up activity, teacher will present flash cards and a video of the new vocabulary and drills correct pronunciation of the most common parts of a house. Teacher will put each flash card in the board in order students understand better.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BATHROOM</li> <li>2. BEDROOM</li> <li>3. DINING ROOM</li> <li>4. GARAGE</li> <li>5. KITCHEN</li> <li>6. LIVING ROOM</li> <li>7. STAIRS</li> <li>8. DOWNSTAIRS</li> <li>9. UPSTAIRS.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As students are learning the new vocabulary, they individually have to take notes about the parts that conform a house.</li> <li>◆ Once, they have familiarize with the new vocabulary, teacher will ask to form groups, to do this teacher will use the technique Number Heads, which consists that each students has to count among 1 and 3, and then all the numbers 1, 2 and 3 will get together in a specific part of the class.</li> <li>◆ When they are in the groups teacher will ask them to work in an extension wheel sheet by the group, they have to choose one part of a house and locate it in the center of the extension wheel, hey can add a second or third extension if they need in order to use key words or ideas to describe this part of the house or what is the function of it.</li> <li>◆ After students have finished their extension wheel, they have to present it in front and they</li> </ul>
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	<p>have to explain the part of the house with all the ideas they have written. At this time, each group has to agree in order to choose an extension wheel of any group(only one) that they consider the best taking into account the presentation of it and how the ideas are presenting in the extensions of the wheel.</p> <p>Once students have chosen one extension wheel for the whole class teacher will ask them to go back to their groups.</p> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once the students are again in the groups, teacher will ask them to write short sentences with the part of the house described on the extension wheel they chose that will be on the board where all of them can see it.</li> </ul> <p>While students are agreeing on ideas to write their group sentences teacher will be monitoring the whole class in order to support or help clarifying student`s ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once, students have finished their sentences, one member or each group will read the sentences and after put in next to the extension wheel that is on the board, here teacher will apply another technique that is the jeopardy game in which the English professor and I will be the judges of the class and have the hard work to choose which sentences that group of students create take into account all the ideas of the extension wheel and is writing in a correct way.</li> <li>◆ In addition, each students of the class will be part of the game because they have to choose sentences of a group that they think is the best taking into account the extension wheel. When teacher, researcher and students agree in the best group work, we will give claps to the group and we use a part of the board to put all the rest of the works near to the extension wheel.</li> </ul> <p>Teacher will be observing my students during the activity to provide information either about the instructions or about the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As homework, students will imagine a house of their dreams and in the extension wheel sheet they will write all the parts that this house have,</li> </ul>
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	so they can use the second and third extension of the wheel to represent each part of the house, they can use drawings too.
<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: Flash cards and video about parts of a house. Student's notebook Student's textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1: Observation checklist Data source 2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

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Ministerio de Educación.

**WEEK 3**

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	<i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i>
<b>TOPIC</b>	Unit 4 : <b>EXPRESSING SIMPLE SENTENCES</b> Expressing and writing sentences with the correct use of the verb BE.
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<p><b>Speaking</b> Students will express sentences using the verb to BE. Students will present themselves using the verb to BE</p> <p><b>Reading</b> Students will identify in a reading the correct use of the verb to BE. Students will create a card with the rules of the verb BE (am, is ,are) according the person.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will write sentences describing themselves using the verb Be (name, age, occupation) Students will form sentences with the correct use of the verb BE according the personal pronoun they are using.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b> Personal Pronouns: I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They. Forms of the verb Be: am, is are.</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the use of the verb to BE (am, is, are).</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to the Parts of a House (Bathroom, Dining room, bedroom, Kitchen, Garage.) that they already learned in previous classes. This is a whole class warm-up activity, called “Tingo Tango” in which students will have to pass a balloon among them and teacher will say the word “tingo” and when teacher says “tango” the balloon has to stop and he student that has it will have to describe a part of the house without saying the name so the rest of students have to guess which part or room of the house he is thinking and describing. This warm up activity will last between 4 to 6 minutes</li> </ul>

due to at least six students have to participate describing a part of house while others guess.

During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students' background for the previous classes.

**Connection**

After the warm-up activity, teacher will present flash cards with the personal pronouns and a video of the use of the verbs to BE (am, is, are)

I am	I'm
You are	You're
He is	He's
She is	She's
It is	It's
We are	We're
You are	You're
They are	They're

- ◆ As students are learning the use of the verb to be they can take notes how we have to use it.
- ◆ Once, they have familiarized with the rules of the verb to BE, teacher will ask them to work in an extension wheel sheet in order write in it the correct use of the verb.to do this they have to put in the center of the wheel “personal pronouns and the verb BE” in a second extension they will write each personal pronoun, they can make drawing of people that represent that pronoun. In a third extension they will match to each personal pronoun the correct form of the verb BE. Finally, in a third extension they can write a sentence according the personal pronoun and the form of the verb to BE.
- ◆ Once they have finished their extension wheel I will ask them to get in pairs, to do this teacher will use the technique Peer Review, which consists in that the student will work with a classmate and they will exchange their extension wheel in order to check each other work.
- ◆ While they are in pair teacher will encourage students to make suggestion about their partners work, specially they have to check if they have



	<p>made a correct use of the verb BE, once they finished the pair review they can returns it to their classmate and let him/her know the suggestions in order to improve the extension wheel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once students have let them know the suggestions to their classmates, teacher will ask them to return them in order to make the necessary changes in the extension wheel according their partners review.</li> </ul> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once the students have made the necessary correction if they were, teacher will ask them to write short sentences that will form a paragraph taking into account all the words they used in the extension wheel. For instance, they can construct sentences with all the personal pronouns but instead they can use real names to make the sentences in the paragraph( I am a nice person, Jorge my cousin is a very tall boy)</li> </ul> <p>While students are writing their individual paragraphs teacher will be around if order to help them if they ask or if teacher notices that teacher has to explain the task again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once, students have finished their paragraphs teacher will ask them to get together with the previous partner but know they are going to read to each other their paragraphs and other will listen in order to make suggestions or corrections if it is necessary.</li> <li>◆ After they have finished teacher will number the pairs in a hidden way so other students will tell me a number and the pair that has that number will pass to the front and share their extension wheels and read what they have written.</li> </ul> <p>Teacher will be observing my students during the activity to provide information either about the instructions or about the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As homework, students will create sentences in which they describe a member of their family using only the verb to BE as much as possible, they can emphasize their writing describing the personality and the way the person they choose is. (Juan is boring, He is 24 years old)</li> </ul>
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<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: Flash cards and video personal pronouns and the use of the verb BE. Student's notebook Student's textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1: Observation checklist Data source 2: Students' writing samples, weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from: Abbs, Barker, & Ingrid (2013) English Student Book. Level 2.

Ministerio de Educación.

**WEEK 4**

<p><b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b></p>	<p><i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i></p>
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p>Unit 4:  <b>EXPRESSING ACTIONS</b>          -Recognizing the spelling rules for verbs used in the present continuous form.</p>
<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p><b>Speaking</b>          Students will explain to the rest of the class the rules to form verbs in the present continuous form.          Students will ask and answer question about the rules of verbs when they add ING.</p> <p><b>Reading</b>          Students will identify in a reading the verbs that are in are present continuous for.          Students will make a list of verbs in the present continuous form that they find in a reading.</p> <p><b>Writing</b>          Students will write the most common verbs used with the present continuous.          Students will list the most common verbs used with the present continuous.          Students will write a list of verbs according the rules of spelling of ING verbs</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b>          Verbs that end with y: Study, Play, Fix, Show.          Verbs that end with e: Write, Leave, Use, Make.          Verbs that end in consonant+vocal+consonant: Plan, Shop, Run, Get.</p>
<p><b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b></p>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the spelling rules of verbs in the present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> </ul> <p>To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to Personal Pronouns and the Verb to BE that they already learned in previous classes. This is a pair warm-up activity in which students will receive four little pieces of paper with different personal pronouns writing on it. Teacher will ask students to create sentences with those four personal pronouns using as the main verb, the verb to Be, students will have two minutes</p>

to make the four sentences in a written way, the group that finish first has to raise a hand and they have the opportunity to read the four sentences. If they get a mistake other group will have the opportunity to share their sentences. During this activity at least four pairs have to participate and there will be only a winner. This warm activity will last at least 5 minutes in order that most of the students remember the last topic.

During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students' background for the previous classes.

### Connection

After the warm-up activity, teacher will present flash cards and a video of the most common verbs used in present continuous forms and the spelling rules to form them.

#### Spelling Rules for Present Continuous verbs

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- Verbs that end with -e = letter -e is replaced for letter -i
- Drive – driving
- Shave – shaving
- Verbs that end with -y = No changes
- Study – studying
- Play – playing
- Verbs that end with c+v+c = double consonant (\*)
- Sit – sitting
- Stop – stopping
- Swim – swimming

1. STUDY
2. PLAY
3. FIX
4. SHOW.
5. WRITE
6. LEAVE
7. USE
8. MAKE.
9. PLAN
10. SHOP
11. RUN
12. GET.

- ◆ As students are learning the new vocabulary, they individually have to take notes about the verbs they are learning.
- ◆ Once, they have familiarize with the spelling rules of the verbs in present continuous, teacher will ask them to work in pairs, teacher will apply the technique Simon says, to switch positions. Teacher will say simon says: stand up; simon says: stretch your arms and legs; Simon says, switch positions;

	<p>Simon says, sit down; simon says, work with your classmate who is closer to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ When they are in the groups teacher will ask them to work in an extension wheel sheet by the group, at this time teacher will number each group from 1 to 3, each group is going to create the extension wheel with a spelling rule of the verbs in present continuous form. It means that at least 2 groups will have the same spelling rule that will be useful in order to make the final activity.</li> <li>◆ To create the extension wheel they can use their creativity that in the center of the wheel they must have the name of the spelling rule, and in the extensions examples of verbs and sentences.</li> <li>◆ Once they finish the extension teacher will check it in each group and making any suggestion especially about the rule of the verbs in present continuous that they are describing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ At this time teacher will tell to the students that they have to present their work to the rest of the class, to do this each pair of students is going to participate explaining what they have written about the spelling rule they have of the verbs in present continuous.</li> </ul> <p>Students will have five minutes to agree on how they are going to present their extension wheel to the rest of the class in an oral way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ After those five minutes each pair is going to present their work to the whole class and rest of students can ask or add more information or opinions to the presentation.</li> <li>◆ At this time also after the presentation each pair is going to put their extension wheel in a side of the board in order that all of the students can see and understand it.</li> <li>◆ At the end of the presentations students will have the opportunity to see each pair work on the board and they will choose three that have the three rules about the form of the verbs in present continues in order to keep it in their folder and will be useful to remember this lesson.</li> <li>◆ To get a good understanding of the verbs teacher will use some dynamics like : TEACHER MAY I .....? in which students will use a bunch of verbs.</li> </ul>
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	<p>I will be observing my students during the activity to provide information either about the instructions or about the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As homework, students will have to investigate at least five verbs with each rule of the verbs in present continues and they have to write them in a sheet of paper, or they can use an extension wheel sheet to write them on it, it will depend on their creativity.</li> </ul>
<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	<p>Extension wheel sheet  Visual and audio aids: Flash cards and video about parts of a house.  Student's notebook  Student's textbook</p>
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	<p>Data source 1: Observation checklist  Data source 2: Students' writing samples, weekly  Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly</p>
<b>SUPPORT</b>	<p>Coaching and guidance from our university professor.</p>

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**WEEK 5**

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	<i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i>
<b>TOPIC</b>	Unit 4: TALKING OF ACTIONS IN THE MOMENT Creating and expressing affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous tense.
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<p><b>Listening</b> Students will sing a song that contains sentences in the present continuous form. Students will listen to their classmates describing the activities that they are doing.</p> <p><b>Speaking</b> Students will ask and answer to others about what they are doing at the moment. Students will create affirmative and negative sentence orally using correct form of the present continuous.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will create affirmative and negative sentence in the correct form of the present continuous. Students will describe in a written way what is happening now. Students will write a paragraph that describes the activities they are doing at the moment.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b> Personal Pronouns ( I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They) Verbs to be (am, is are) Verbs + ING. Affirmative sentences: Personal Pronouns + Be (am, is, are)+ verb ING+ Complement. Negative Sentences: Personal Pronouns + Be (am, is, are)+not + verb ING+ Complement.</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the present continuous tense.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to Rules of Verbs in the Present Continuous Tense (verbs end in y, e and consonant+vocal+consonant.) that they already learned in previous classes. This is a</li> </ul>

	<p>musical warm-up activity in which students have to pass a ball as they listen to music. teacher will stop the music for the students to stop passing the ball. When the music stops, the ball will stop, too. The student who has the ball at that time has to write in the present continuous form a verb that teacher will say or write on the board according the rules when they add ING to the verbs. Once, the student is ready the other students have to judge if the verbs is in a correct way or not. After they have to pronounce the verbs and the other has to repeat. Then teacher will play the music again, to do the same with some other students. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. The students will be placed in five columns so that the ball will be passed column by column.</p> <p>During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students' background of the previous classes.</p> <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p>After the warm-up activity, teacher will present a video of how to make affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous. Teacher will also explain this topic on the board with clear rules and examples.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Affirmative sentences: Personal Pronouns + Be (am, is, are)+ verb ING+ Complement.</li> <li>2. Negative Sentences: Personal Pronouns + Be (am, is, are)+ not + verb ING+ Complement.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As students are learning the way to create sentences in present continuous, they individually have to take notes about how to form affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ To make sure that students understand the use of time expression in sentences teacher will make some of them participate, it means to tell or write sentences in the present progressive tense with time expressions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ When they are able to create sentences in an easy way teacher will ask them to get in groups of three. To do this, teacher will divide the groups, so in this way they will have different partners in each group. Once they are in the groups they will have to use an extension wheel sheet in order to</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p>follow the instruction that I will apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher will ask them to write in the center of the extension wheel “Sentences with in present continuous form”, then in the next extension they will have to write only the verb that they will use to write a sentence later, in addition they can write the verb and a draw that shows what this verb mean, it is optional.</li> <li>◆ When they have filled the extension wheel with all the verbs possible teacher will check how they create the extension wheel with the verbs they want.</li> </ul> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ After this, teacher will arrange all the groups around the classroom and there will be a big space pin the center on the class. Now, teacher will use the Jeopardy technique that will consist in that each group will pass to the center with their extension wheel and the three members are going to take roles to do this activity.</li> <li>◆ This activity consists in that each member of the group will have a role. 1. He/she will have to say a verb that is in their extension wheel to the other in his/her ear. 2 Once they listen the verb he/she has to dramatize it, without saying any word. 3 this student has to understand what the second student is dramatizing and he or she must create a sentence with that verb in the present continuous form. To do this teacher will time each participation because this is a competence and there must be a group that will win.</li> <li>◆ As a rule the other students of the groups must be quite and paying attention to their classmate participation.</li> </ul> <p>While students are making the participation teacher will be monitoring the whole class and being part of the game in order to keep the order among the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once, all the groups participate teacher will say the winner group and the reasons why they win, finally each group is going to put their extension wheel on the board as always in order that all students can see what each group prepared and how they do it.</li> <li>◆ As homework, students will have to make a short</li> </ul>
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	paragraph using affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous form. They can write sentences about what they are doing or about any other person but they have to use sentences in present continuous form. (My mon is cleaning the house today)
<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: video about how to make affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous tense.. Student's notebook Student's textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1: Observation checklist Data source 2: Students' writing samples, weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adaptde from: Abbs, Barker, & Ingrid (2013) English Student Book. Level 2.  
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**WEEK 6**

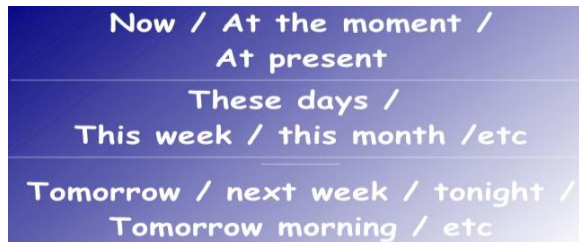
<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	<i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i>
<b>TOPIC</b>	Unit 4: EXPRESSING SENTENCES WITH TIME EXPRESSIONS. Expressing and writing sentences with time expression in the present continuous form.
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<p><b>Reading</b> Students will identify time expressions of the present continuous tense in a reading. Students will select the most common time expression for present continuous tense from a reading.</p> <p><b>Speaking</b> Students will formulate sentences in present continues with the use of time expressions. Students will use time expression to express activities they are doing.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will write sentences using time expression for the present continuous tense. Students will classify a list of the most common time expression use with the present continues.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary:</b> This morning, This afternoon, This evening, Tonight, Today, Tomorrow, The day after Tomorrow, This Week, This Month, This Year, At 3:00, On Friday.</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b>	<p>(Procedures / Teaching techniques)</p> <p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the most common time expressions for present continuous tense.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to Affirmative and Negative Sentences in the Present Continuous Form (My teacher is reading a book now) that they already learned in previous classes. This is a whole group warm-up activity in which students have to speak up an immediately sentence in a present continuous form according a picture that teacher will show to them for no more than 4</li> </ul>

seconds. . If the students say the correct a sentence in the present progressive tense according the picture teacher will continue with another flashcard, if not other student will have the chance to participate. Then teacher will continue showing other flashcards with different daily activities. This will last 3 or 5 minutes. The students will be in their own places and they must be attending in order to create sentences according the picture they will see.

During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students' background of the previous classes.

### Connection

After the warm-up activity, teacher will present a video of the most useful time expression in the present continuous form teacher will also explain this topic on the board using sentences to which I will add a time expression.



- ◆ As students are learning the new vocabulary, they individually have to take notes about how to form affirmative and negative sentences in the present continuous form.
- ◆ With the purpose that students understand and be able to create sentences teacher will make them participate writing some sentences on the board.
- ◆ Once, they have familiarize with the new vocabulary, teacher will ask them to work individually, first, teacher will ask students to organize all the time expression in an extension wheel sheet so this sheet will serve like a guide when we need to create or express sentence with those expressions.
- ◆ To create this sheet they can do in the way they want due to this sheet will be useful for them in order to remember and use this sheet as a key when they want to create sentences in the present

continuous form.

- ◆ After students have finished their extension wheel teacher will check it in order to clarify something the students don't understand or are confused with.

#### **Affirming**

- ◆ Once the students are ready with their extension wheels, teacher will divide the class into two groups to this I will use the technique Number Heads so students will count between 1 and 2, number 1 will be one group and number 2 other. Once in their groups they will form a column, and they will be face to face with other classmate of the other group. At this time teacher will explain the activity in which teacher will use the Word Journal technique, which consists in that a student of one group will say any time expression for present continuous and the member of the other group immediately write a sentence on a sheet of paper using that time expression.
- ◆ In this way the student that finished with the sentence has to go to last place and other couple will do the same activity for five minutes as quickly as possible. The entire time teacher will be monitoring the class in order that students enjoy and learn from the activity.
- ◆ After the five minutes teacher will stop the game and teacher will be in charge of count how many sentences each group have and take into account which sentences are correct or not especially with the use of the time expression. While this students will get back to their places and they can share their extension wheels with their classmates.
- ◆ Once teacher finishes, teacher will share the results with the whole class and students can argue and opinion about the results of the game with the use of the Word Journal technique.
- ◆ As homework, students will use the time expressions from the extension wheel in order to create sentences for each time 3expression, so it will be like a second part of the Word Journal Technique where student based on a word will write sentences that will form a paragraph.

<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: Flash cards and video about parts of a house. Student's notebook Student's textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1: Observation checklist Data source 2: Students' writing samples, weekly Date source 3: Sub-tests on writing, bi-weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

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**WEEK 7**

<p><b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b></p>	<p><i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i></p>
<p><b>TOPIC</b></p>	<p>Unit 4: ASKING AND ANSWERING YES/NO QUESTIONS IN THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE. Asking and answering yes/no questions in the present continuous form.</p>
<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p><b>Listening</b> Students will listen to their classmates asking and answering present continuous questions</p> <p><b>Speaking</b> Students will ask and answer questions in the present continuous form. Students will create questions in the correct structure of the present continuous tense.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will write a paragraph with answers from questions in present continuous. Students will obtain information about what others are doing at the moment through present continuous questions.</p> <p><b>Key vocabulary</b> Personal Pronouns ( I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They) Verbs to be (am, is are) Question Form: Verb BE (am, is, are)+Personal Pronoun+ Verb(ING)+ Complement+ Question Mark. Answer Form: Yes/No+comma, Personal Pronoun+VerbBE(am,is,are)/not.</p>
<p><b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b></p>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the present continuous tense with yes/no questions.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to Affirmative and negative sentences with time expression in the continuous form that they already learned in previous classes. This is a musical warm-up</li> </ul>

	<p>activity in which all the class will be involved, to do this teacher will bring the song presented in some previous classes called “Action in the moment” and students will listen twice and after they will make groups of four students and they will try to sing the song as much as they can, in this way they will remember the sentences in present continuous form and they will get a lot of fun. This activity will last at least 10 minutes.</p> <p>During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students’ prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students’ background of the previous classes.</p> <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p>After the warm-up activity, teacher will explain to the students how to make yes/no questions in the present continuous tense through the board.</p> <p>Question Form: Verb BE (am, is, are)+ Personal Pronoun+ Verb(ING)+ Complement+ Question Mark.</p> <p>Answer Form: Yes/No+ comma+ Personal Pronoun+ Verb BE (am, is , are)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As students are learning the way to create yes/no questions and answers in present continuous, they individually have to take notes about how to form questions and answers in present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ To make sure that students understand the topic teacher will encourage them to create at least two similar yes/no questions in present continuous form using the correct structure to create them.</li> <li>◆ When they are able to use the structure to create questions and answers teacher will ask the students to work individually using an extension wheel sheet in order to follow the instruction that teacher will apply.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will ask them to write in the center of the extension wheel “Yes/no questions in present continuous form”, and in the second extension of the wheel they will write four yes/no questions.</li> <li>◆ When they have filled until the second extension of the wheel teacher will ask them to look for a partner in order to work in pairs, to do this, teacher will apply the technique Pair Interview,</li> </ul>
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	<p>in which students have to get in pairs. Once in the groups they will use the questions that have in their extension wheel in order to ask to their classmate, and they must write the answer in a third extension of the wheel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ While they are sharing, teacher will monitor them to check if they are working in the correct way. In the case they are right; teacher will encourage them to continue in that way. If they are wrong, teacher will help them to get the correct information in the extension wheel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ After they have finished, teacher will ask them to go into another step, in this students will create a short paragraph with the information that they got from their classmates in the extension wheel.</li> <li>◆ To do this activity they will have between 5 to 10 minutes in an individual work. While they are working in their paragraphs teacher will be monitoring the class in order to control and help to the students.</li> <li>◆ When they have finished writing the paragraph I will ask the students to exchange partners, once they do it, they have to share the sentences of their paragraph with the new partner in an oral way, it mean that they are going to talk about other classmate(Juan is playing soccer tomorrow)</li> </ul> <p>While students are sharing the reading their works teacher will be monitoring the whole class and being part of the game in order to keep the order among the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once, students finish sharing their partner's paragraphs teacher will choose some students to participate showing their extension wheel to the class and say some sentences he/she created with from his/her first partner.</li> <li>◆ As homework, students will have to do the same activity they did in the class, that consist in formulate at least three question in the second extension of the wheel sheet and they will ask them to someone and they will put the answers in a third extension. Finally students will wrote some sentences in the present continuous form based on the questions and answers they will get ( e.g. My mon is cooking rice and chicken tomorrow morning)</li> </ul>
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<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: song about “Actions at the Moment” in the present continuous form. Student’s notebook Student’s textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1: Observation checklist Data source 2: Students’ writing samples, weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from: Abbs, Barker, & Ingrid (2013) English Student Book. Level 2.  
Ministerio de Educación.

**WEEK 8**

<b>RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	<i>How does the Extension Wheel as cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 academic period?</i>
<b>TOPIC</b>	Unit 4: ASKING AND ANSWERING INFORMATION QUESTIONS IN THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE. Asking and answering information questions in the present continuous form. - Post -test application.
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<p><b>Listening</b> Students will listen to their partners asking question with informative words.</p> <p><b>Speaking</b> Students will answer information questions through a long answer. Students will create information questions in the correct structure of the present continuous tense.</p> <p><b>Writing</b> Students will list the wh-words to make questions. Students will write a paragraph with answers from information questions making to their partners. Students will answer the post questionnaire and test as a final activity of the week.</p> <p><b>Key Vocabulary</b> Personal Pronouns ( I, You, He, She, It, We, You, They) Verbs to be (am, is are) Wh- words: What, Where, When, Why, How.</p>
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS</b>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Teacher is building a lesson based on the present continuous tense with information questions.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will introduce the Learning Outcomes for the lesson on construction paper.</li> <li>◆ To get started, teacher will have students activate their prior knowledge related to yes/no question in the present continuous form that students have already learned the previous class. This is a group work activity in which students will get in groups of three with a table. So, teacher will give them pieces of papers that contain words that they have to order in order to make yes/no questions. Groups will have one minute to order</li> </ul>

	<p>the sentence and the one that finish first will be the winner. At least the groups will order five sentences, so this activity will last between 6 to 7 minutes.</p> <p>During this warm up stage, teacher will also assess the students' prior knowledge which will allow me to know my students' background of the previous classes.</p> <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p>After the warm-up activity, teacher will explain to the students how to make information questions in the present continuous tense using wh-words through the board.</p> <p>Wh- words: What, Where, When, Why, How.</p> <p>Question Form: Wh-word+Verb BE (am, is, are)+ Personal Pronoun+ Verb(ING)+ Complement+ Question Mark.</p> <p>Answer Form: Yes/No+ comma+ Personal Pronoun+ Verb BE (am, is , are)+Complement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As students are learning the way to create information questions and answers in present continuous, they individually have to take notes about how to form questions and answers in present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ To make sure that students understand the topic teacher will write some question in a mixed way on the board so students will order them in the correct way.</li> <li>◆ When they are able to use the structure to create questions and answers teacher will ask the students to work individually using an extension wheel sheet in order to follow the instruction that teacher will apply.</li> <li>◆ Teacher will ask them to write in the center of the extension wheel "Information questions in present continuous form", and in the second extension of the wheel they will write at least four Wh-words, only the words(what, where, etc)</li> <li>◆ When they have filled until the second extension of the wheel teacher will ask them to look for a partner in order to work in pairs, to do this, teacher will apply the technique Simon says, to switch positions. Teacher will say Simon says: stand up; Simon says: join the partner that is your best friend, join a partner of different sex to</li> </ul>
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	<p>you; join and work with the partner who is behind you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Once, they are in pairs, teacher will explain that the next step is that they are going to participate in a game called “Ask and Answer” so to this they will use the Wh-words that they have in the extension wheel in order to ask to their classmates any questions that expresses present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ To star this activity teacher will allow them to it for at least 5 minutes without using their extension wheels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Affirming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ After the five minutes teacher will remind the students what they have to do next. So at this time each pair of students is going to go to the front of the class and using their wh-words from the extension wheel.</li> <li>◆ They will ask spontaneous question based on the wh-words, and their partners will have to answer as fast as possible because there will be two minutes for each group, and the one that get most questions and answers will be the winner.</li> <li>◆ While the groups will be participating the rest of students will have to pay attention in order to find any mistake that their classmates made in the use of present continuous form and those mistakes will be count like less points to the group.</li> <li>◆ After all the group finish, teacher and students will agree on the winner group. During the whole activity teacher will be monitoring the class and trying to give feedback as students need.</li> <li>◆ Finally, teacher will review the topic emphasizing the explanation in the most common mistakes that students made during the activity “Ask and Answer” with the use of present continuous form.</li> <li>◆ In this week teacher also will take a final test ( post- test) in order to prove if the students improve the writing skills with the uses of various techniques in the extension wheel strategy.</li> </ul>
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<b>CLASSROOM RESOURCES</b>	Extension wheel sheet Visual and audio aids: song about “Actions at the Moment” in the present continuous form. Student’s notebook Student’s textbook
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Data source 1 : Post – test sheet Data source 2: Observation checklist Data source 3: Students’ writing samples, weekly
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Coaching and guidance from our university professor.

Adapted from: Abbs, Barker, & Ingrid (2013) English Student Book. Level 2.  
Ministerio de Educación.



## **h. BUDGET AND FINANCING**

### **ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **Resources**

##### **Human**

- The researcher.
- Students of ninth grade of Basic Education at 27 de Febrero Public High School.

##### **Material**

The material used in the present research work consists of:

- **Office materials:** books, copies, paper, folders, pen, pencils.
- **Technical resources:** Internet, computer, printer, flash memory and camera.
- **Didactic resources:** extension wheel sheets, flash cards.



### **Budget**

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Internet Connection	\$100.00
Print of the project	\$ 350.00
Video records	\$ 50.00
Office Material	\$100.00
Copies	\$ 100.00
Teaching Materials	\$100.00
Unforeseen expenses	\$ 150.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$950.00</b>

### **Financing**

All the expenses related to the present research work will be assumed entirely by the researcher.

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## j. ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Observation Sheet



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA  
 ÀREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN  
 ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

OBSERVATION SHEET		
Observation #: ..... Topic: ..... ..... ..... Objective of the session: ..... ..... .....	Date/Time: ..... .... Class size: ..... ..... Participants:..... ....	Location: ..... .... ..... Observer involvement: Participant / Not participant.

ITEM	YES/NO	OBSERVATIONS
<b>INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: EXTENSION WHEEL AS A COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY</b>		
Do the students remember the last topic through the warm – up activity?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students have a good attitude while they have to work with other classmates?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students have a bad attitude while they have to work with other classmates?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do the students have problems working in groups?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do the students interact with their classmates while they are in the groups?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students have opportunities to learn with and from	Yes ( )	

their pairs?	No ( )	
Do the students share responsibilities for completing assigned tasks?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students take advantage of time to develop the group`s activity?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students have problems to understand the instructions of the teacher?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students infer the purpose of the Extension Wheel as a cooperative learning strategy to develop Writing Skills?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students use the extension wheel sheet to take notes about important information (key words)?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
<b>DEPENDENT VARIABLE: ENGLISH BASIC WRITING SKILLS</b>		
Do students create sentences or short paragraphs based on the words they have written in the extension wheel sheet?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students organize their ideas before writing?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students apply the rules of punctuation and grammatical structures in their sentences?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students follow the stages of the writing process?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students apply coherence in their paragraph writing?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Do students apply cohesion in their paragraph writing?	Yes ( ) No ( )	
Are students able to fulfill the written task assigned?	Yes ( ) No ( )	

Additional Comments:

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## Annex 2: Pre and Posttest



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA  
ÀREA DE LA EDUCACIÒN, EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÒN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
**DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE TEST / POST TEST**

**Student's code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

Write a brief paragraph about what is happening in Alex's House and tell where their relatives are.

Briefly describe the home and answer yourself the following questions to include in your paragraph. What are Max, Alex, Alice, Liz, Tom and Kate doing? And where are they? As a conclusion write about what is your favorite place in your house. Why is it your favorite place?

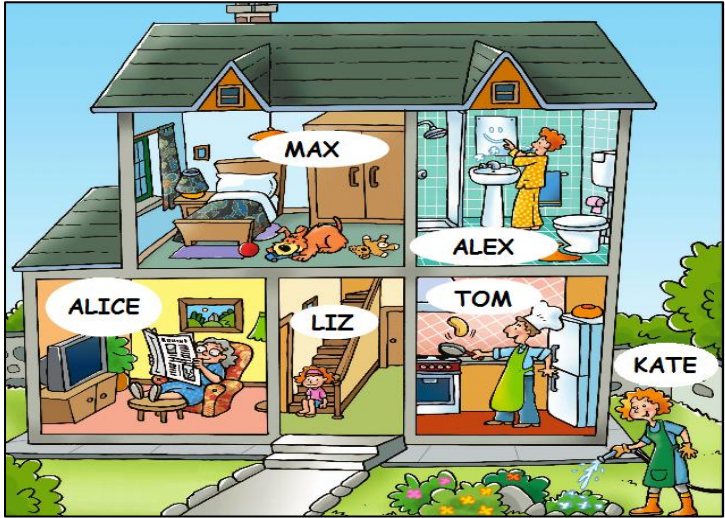
What is in that room? What can you do there? etc.

Write the sentences in a logical order, taking into account the appropriate punctuation, personal pronouns, tense of the verbs, word order and spelling.

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Length of the paragraph:** 6 – 10 lines

Alex's House




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Thank you.

## RUBRIC FOR THE PRE – POST TEST

Student's code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dimension		1 = Weak	2 =Moderately Weak	3 = Average	4 = Strong	Total
<b>Purpose/Task</b>		Accomplishes the task; includes <b>few</b> details, some of which may be only <b>loosely connected</b> to the task. There are many irrelevancies.	Accomplishes the task; includes <b>few</b> details, some of which may be only <b>loosely connected</b> to the task. There are many irrelevancies	Accomplishes the task; includes <b>some</b> details that are generally connected to the development of the task, but there may be some irrelevancies.	Accomplishes the task; includes <b>many</b> details that are clearly connected to the development of the task, but there may be minor irrelevancies.	
<b>Organization</b>		The topic is not introduced in an expected way.	Introduce the topic in a non-clear way.	Introduce the topic in a fairly way	Introduce the topic in a clear and interesting way	
<b>Vocabulary</b>		Includes <b>limited</b> vocabulary and /or most vocabulary is inaccurate or unrelated to the topic.	Includes <b>basic</b> vocabulary; some vocabulary may be inaccurate or unrelated to the topic.	Includes a <b>variety</b> of vocabulary related to the topic.	Includes a <b>wide variety</b> of vocabulary that expands the topic but there may be minor inaccuracies	
<b>Structure/Conventions</b>	<b>Tense</b>	Verbs do not agree with one another and there is little to no fluidity within writing because of verb tense confusion.	Little to no verb agreement. Fluidity of writing is affected by verb tenses.	Some verb tenses agree and fluidity is slightly affected by verb tenses.	No verb disagreement. Fluidity of writing is not affected by verb tenses.	
	<b>Word Order</b>	The sentences don't make sense at all.	Few sentences follow the logical and word sequential order	Some sentences do not follow a logical word order.	The facts are presented in a sequential word order	
	<b>Punctuation</b>	The paragraph is not clear, and very difficult to understand, not punctuation is presented.	The paragraph is not clear, sometimes difficult to understand, only with few punctuation	The paragraph is somewhat neatly handwriting. With some punctuation.	The paragraph is neatly handwriting, with most of the appropriate punctuation	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>						



### Annex 3. Pre and Post Questionnaire



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOJA  
AREA DE LA EDUCACIÓN EL ARTE Y LA COMUNICACIÓN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
DATA COLLECTION SOURCE: PRE/POST QUESTIONNAIRE

Student's Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear student:

As student of the English Language Career of the Universidad Nacional de Loja, I would be very grateful if you can answer the following questionnaire in a clear and honest way. The information obtained will be used for the development of the research work for educational purposes.

1. English Class activities are developed in groups and in pairs.

- 4. Always ( )
- 3. Often ( )
- 2. Sometimes ( )
- 1. Rarely ( )

2. How important is it to you to complete activities during English class?

- Working in groups ( ) 4 Very Important
- Working in pairs ( ) 3 Important
- Working alone ( ) 2 Somewhat Important
- Working together ( ) 1.No Important

3. The group or paired activities are conducted in a positive and respectful environment.

- 4. Always ( )
- 3. Often ( )
- 2. Sometimes ( )
- 1. Rarely ( )

4. Having a good relationship and interaction is essential within the workgroup.

- 4. Strongly Agree ( )
- 3. Agree ( )
- 2. Neither agree nor disagree ( )
- 1. Disagree ( )

5. How satisfying is it for you to work in groups?

- 4. Very satisfactory ( )
- 3. Satisfactory ( )
- 2. Somewhat satisfactory ( )
- 1. Unsatisfactory ( )

6. In the group activities, all members contribute to the development of collective work.

- 4. Always ( )
- 3. Often ( )
- 2. Sometimes ( )
- 1. Rarely ( )

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION

#### Annex 4. Research Matrix

**Theme:** The Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy to develop English Basic Writing Skills among Ninth – Grade Students Group E at 27 de Febrero High School, During the Academic Period 2014 – 2015.

PROBLEM	OBJECTIVES	LITERATURE REVIEW	METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN (ACTION RESEARCH)	TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS
<p><b>General</b> How does the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy improve the English foreign language learning basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, Group E at 27 de Febrero High School, During the Academic Period 2014-2015?</p> <p><b>Specific</b> -What theoretical and methodological references about the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy are adequate for improving the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at</p>	<p><b>General</b> To improve the English foreign language basic skills through the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy among ninth-grade students, Group E students at 27 de Febrero High School during the 2014 – 2015 school year.</p> <p><b>Specific</b> -To research the theoretical and methodological references about the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy and its application in English foreign language basic writing skills.</p>	<p><b>Writing Skills</b> -Basic Writing Skills -Categories of Strong Writing. -Writing in English Foreign Language Learning. -Writing Sub skills -The Stages of the Learning Process of English Foreign Language Writing.</p> <p><b>The Extension Wheel as a Cooperative Learning Strategy</b> -Cooperative learning. -Elements of Cooperative Learning. -Cooperative Learning in English Foreign Language Teaching. -Levels of Cooperative Learning. -Stages in Cooperative Learning. -Current Strategies of Cooperative Learning -Extension Wheel Strategy -Techniques Used with the Extension Wheel Strategy.</p> <p>-Cooperative learning. -Elements of Cooperative Learning. -Cooperative Learning in English Foreign Language Teaching. -Levels of Cooperative Learning. -Stages in Cooperative Learning. -Current Strategies of Cooperative Learning -Strategies and techniques in the</p>	<p><b>Preliminary investigation</b> -Observing the English classes. -Stating the background of the problem. -Describing current situation. -Locating and reviewing the literature. -Creating a methodological framework for research. -Designing an intervention plan.</p> <p><b>Intervention and Observation</b> -Administering tests and questionnaires. -Observing and monitoring students` performance according to the intervention plan.</p> <p><b>Presenting of research findings</b> -Reflecting, analyzing and answering the proposed inquiries. -Organizing the final report.</p> <p><b>Preliminary investigation</b> -Observing the English classes. -Stating the background of the problem. -Describing current situation. -Locating and reviewing the literature. -Creating a methodological framework for research. -Designing an intervention plan.</p>	<p>-Observation (Participant and Nonparticipant Observation) -Pre and Posttest -Pre and Post Questionnaire.</p> <p>Sheet and Post</p> <p>-Observation (Participant and Nonparticipant Observation) -Pre and Posttest -Pre and Post</p> <p>Sheet and Post</p>

<p>27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?</p> <p>-What are the issues that limit the development of English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?</p> <p>-What are the phases of the intervention plan that help the current issues to achieve a satisfactory outcome of the developing the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?</p> <p>- Which extension wheel techniques as a cooperative learning strategy are implemented to improve English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?</p> <p>-How does the extension wheel as a cooperative technique reduce the difficulty to develop English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School, during the 2014-2015 Academic Period?</p>	<p>To diagnose the issues that limits the development of the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.</p> <p>-To design an intervention plan based on the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth- grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.</p> <p>- To apply the most suitable techniques of the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy in order to improve the English foreign language basic writing skills amongst ninth-grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.</p> <p>-To reflect upon the effectiveness that the extension wheel as a cooperative learning strategy had amongst ninth – grade students, group E at 27 de Febrero High School during the 2014 – 2015 academic period.</p>	<p>development of the class activities.</p> <p>-Cooperative Learning in the classroom.</p> <p>- Writing sub skills</p> <p>-The Stages of the Learning Process of English Foreign Language Writing.</p> <p>-Cooperative Learning in English Foreign Language Teaching.</p> <p>-Levels of Cooperative Learning.</p> <p>-Stages in Cooperative Learning.</p> <p>-Current Strategies of Cooperative Learning</p> <p>-Extension Wheel Strategy</p> <p>-Techniques Used with the Extension Wheel Strategy.</p> <p>-Basic Writing Skills</p> <p>-Categories of Strong Writing.</p> <p>-Writing in English Foreign Language Learning.</p> <p>-Writing Sub skills</p> <p>Techniques used with the Extension Wheel Strategy:</p> <p>-Think Break.-Word Journal.-Students Pictures.-Jeopardy.-Think Pair Share.-Pair Share Repeat.-Teacher and Student.-Forced Debate.</p> <p>-Optimist/Pessimist.-Peer Review Writing.-Make them Guess.-Real World.-One Sentence Summary.</p>	<p><b>Intervention and Observation</b></p> <p>-Administering tests and questionnaires.</p> <p>-Observing and monitoring students` performance according to the intervention plan.</p> <p><b>Presenting of research findings</b></p> <p>-Reflecting, analyzing and answering the proposed inquiries.</p> <p>-Organizing the final report.</p>	<p>Questionnaire.</p>
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## ANNEX 2: GRADING SCALES

### *Grading Scale for the Test*

#### NATIONAL GRADING SCALE

Quantitative Score Range		Qualitative Score Range
	<b>English Approximation</b>	<b>Spanish</b>
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.

### *Grading Scale for the Questionnaire*

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

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