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IMPROVING LEARNERS' FLUENCY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATIVE WRITING IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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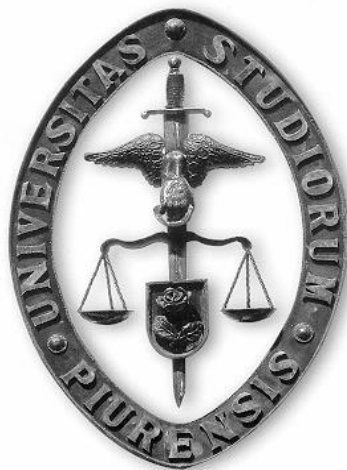


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VICTOR FELIPE DEL AGUILA PINTO

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MAESTRÍA EN EDUCACIÓN

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APPROVAL

The thesis entitled, **IMPROVING LEARNERS' FLUENCY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATIVE WRITING IN THE EFL CLASSROOM**, presented by **VICTOR FELIPE DEL AGUILA PINTO**, in accordance with the requirements of being awarded the degree of Master in Education with a mention in Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language, was approved by the thesis director: **Dr. Majid Safadaran Mosazadeh**, and defended on before a Jury with the following members:

President

Secretary

Informant

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INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest misconceptions in language and language teaching is that fluency has to do exclusively with oral production and that it is solely measured by the capacity of language users to communicate in spoken form well.

Oral fluency is, indeed, part of being an integral fluent user of a given language; however, it would be a huge mistake if we failed to recognize the existence of the other types of fluency, which along with oral fluency, comprise overall, integral, real fluency. Reading fluency, to begin with, has to do with the ability that an individual possesses to understand varied texts reasonably well and be able to process the information they are being exposed to. On the other hand, writing fluency deals with the skill a person has to be capable of expressing ideas and sharing information in written form in such a decent level that their audience finds no strain in following the text. Finally, listening fluency relates to the capacity that a language user has of aurally understanding most of the input being presented to them. Thus, when a person manages to display speaking fluency, writing fluency, reading fluency, and listening fluency, it can be claimed that they have reached fluency in a particular language.

On the subject of fluency in the target language, in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning contexts, regardless of the label of the level in which the students are currently placed, whether

it be a “Basic Phase”, an “Intermediate Phase”, or an “Advanced Phase”, for example, teachers observe that their students do not display an adequate degree of language competence, which is basically demonstrated through fluency.

Although there seems to be a move away from the so-called “strong” Communicative Approach, for many years, a focus on teaching writing, let alone creative writing, has been neglected in favor of an overemphasis on the aural/oral approach due to, mainly, the popularity of the aforementioned teaching method. The communicative classroom has many worthy characteristics and principles, of course, but they are not enough, simply put. There is a lot more to convey by the student, and writing, more specifically creative writing, provides them with the valuable opportunity to express more with the target language and its newly learned forms. We, their teachers, have the chance to bring a sense of production, excitement, and performance into our classes in order to promote among our students the desire to produce something original and even surprising, and, parallelly, they get to practice new aspects of the language they are learning.

Nevertheless, creative writing is seen by many to be a waste of time as it seems to lack focus and discipline; however, this misgiving is unjustified. Creative writing brings along the communicative purpose that invites students to share their personal experiences. Moreover, the element of language teaching and learning is present and is an essential component of this whole process; it is not neglected, whatsoever.

The functional view of language, though, forces language teaching and learning to be more oriented to business and practical application, which values conventional procedures more than the spirit of imagination. We teachers do our best to teach the kind of language that will supply our students with the tools to interact with the world outside of the classroom, but in doing so, are we really letting them exploit their full potential?

Therefore, this thesis endeavors to provide some insight into the implementation of creative writing activities in the EFL classroom and how they may contribute towards the improvement of learners’ fluency in the target language.

Regarding the content of this work, it encompasses a wide range of data, which include the rationale behind the action research initiative, the identified problem and proposed hypothesis, as well as a selection of sample activities and findings.

The very first section focuses on the rationale behind this investigation, which, basically, elaborates on the description of the problem to be dealt with, and it, in turn, concentrates on the reasons why the decision to implement creative writing activities in the classroom was made. This part of the paper also outlines the set objectives and expected outcomes, as well as certain obstacles anyone interested in working on this research even further may encounter.

In the second part, this paper presents the characteristics of the investigation itself and the characteristics of the population and study sample. This section also looks at the practicalities of the work, including the mechanics of the actual implementation of the proposal, such as the instruments and techniques used, in order to tackle the observed problem. With regard to the implementation of the selected creative writing activities within the experimental group of students, it is characterized by both the different levels of difficulty and the variety of tasks themselves. The tasks are completed in pairs and in large groups of around six students, a fact which poses different degrees of challenge to the learner. In terms of variety, the activities that are put forward include dialogs and stories, among others.

Finally, the last part intends to discuss the results and findings upon the completion of the action research, reaching some insightful conclusions, and provides the reader with some sensible recommendations to take into account if they wish to set out to embark on a similar work.

Now, let us first begin with an overview of the delimitations that the present research work encompasses, which includes a justification of the rationale for the conduction of this research initiative as well as some background information in the related field, all of which will be discussed in the following section.

CHAPTER I

INVESTIGATION OUTLINE

1.1. Formulation of the Problem

Following are a few considerations as to why a large number of English language learners, no matter their level of instruction in the target language, do not show an adequate degree of overall fluency.

Firstly, in terms of teaching approaches, Spiro (2004) states that, for many years, language teaching methodology has allowed very little room for the more creative and playful uses of language. She says that the structural approach tends to focus on the form of the language and that the communicative approach overemphasizes the pragmatic, functional aspects of language use.

Second of all, in regard to the way writing activities have been viewed and used in the language classroom, most language teaching programs have implemented writing activities merely to consolidate grammar points; in this respect, Brookes and Grundy (1998) state that writing has not been taught as a skill in its own right from the early stages of the learning process of a second or foreign language. Supporting this standpoint, Holmes and Moulton (2001) point out that teachers of English have, for a long time, had difficulty with ways to reinforce grammar aspects in their class sessions; teachers have tried out a range of orthodox techniques that included writing, such as worksheets, cloze exercises, and others, in order for students to practice particular grammatical structures, yet everything that has been tried has been somehow unsatisfactory. Holmes and Moulton (2001: 1) claim:

These activities lack spark, imagination, and, most of all, the students' voices. So next we tried journals, free writing, and focused-topic writing. Students explored their own ideas in writing, but they tended to use the structures they were familiar with rather than the newly learned ones we wanted them to practice. Not satisfactory for our purposes.

On the other hand, the process towards the completion of a writing assignment has always proved to be a rather daunting endeavor to students, for they normally tend to associate this undertaking with evaluation and grading, which is a fact that is not far from reality, whatsoever.

Teachers, generally speaking, do not see writing activities as an opportunity to assess their students' overall linguistic progress, thereby failing to integrate these sorts of lesson tasks as a key element in their students' learning experience. To most teachers, writing has become a mere tool conducive to summative assessment, forgetting, altogether, that their students need to be provided with opportunities to improve their English level in non-threatening contexts.

In conclusion, the perceivably low level of language competency among students in general English language programs, generally speaking, may, in part, be a result of the following factors:

- Writing tasks are not given the necessary importance in the classroom.
- Students are not motivated intrinsically due to previous negative experiences with writing, either in their first language or the target, foreign one. This situation brings about a kind of rejection towards writing activities.
- Students are not motivated extrinsically due to the fact that their current English instructor does not display the appropriate attitude towards writing activities in the classroom, thus making students feel a sense of disinterest in the task.
- Writing as a means of enhancing English language production is not seen as such.

- Since writing tasks have not been implemented well in class, opportunities at enhancing others skills, such as critical thinking, are also neglected.

Thus, some questions arise when analyzing this problem, like the following: “How can I decrease the affective filter in my students when engaging in writing activities in the classroom?”, “How can I motivate my students to write in class?”, and “How can my students improve their overall language skills through writing?”

1.2. Hypothesis

1.2.1. General Hypothesis

By motivating students to write for writing, without their worrying about their papers being graded, there is a good chance they will feel much more at ease coming up with ideas and participating in tasks they know will contribute towards their learning process.

In this regard, Denne-Bolton (2013) argues that the implementation of a form of creative writing in regular language classes lets learners write freely; they do not have to experience that usual feeling of anxiety, knowing that whatever they write will eventually be corrected and, most likely, graded. Creative writing promotes fluency and provides the students with the opportunity to express ideas, without as many language restrictions and demands.

1.2.2. Specific Hypothesis

Creative writing improves students’ English language fluency.

As Folse (1996) states, the very act of writing out our own thoughts down on a piece of paper before having to orally produce them actually makes a real difference regarding both the quality and the quantity (fluency) of the discussion.

1.3. Delimitations of the Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

To put five creative writing techniques into practice in order to enable students to improve their fluency in the target language.

1.3.2. Specific Objective

To analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of creative writing tasks in order to determine if there is or there is not a considerable difference between the language production from the students in the experimental group and the language production from the students in the control group.

Ellis (1997) views language production when it comes to assessment as follows:

Output can serve a consciousness-raising function by helping learners [and teachers] to notice gaps in their interlanguage. That is, by trying to speak or write in the L2, they realize that they lack the grammatical knowledge of some feature that is important for what they want to say.

Ellis (1997) goes on to claim that output helps to test hypotheses. Therefore, the written production that the students who are involved in this research project will eventually submit will, indeed, serve as the material against which the aforementioned general and the specific hypotheses will be tested.

1.4. Justification of the Investigation

The intent of this research initiative is to provide practical classroom ideas to teachers interested in getting their students to take advantage of writing lessons in order to increase their motivation when engaging in such tasks that may very well eventually lead towards an improvement of their fluency in the target language. As Scrivener (2005) points out, it is necessary for learners to transfer their already stored knowledge of language into actual language production. So one way to achieve this is to provide students with opportunities in which they can

feel safe to explore possibilities; creative writing may very well allow for such an aim.

First of all, when it comes to increasing students' motivation, Ur (1996: 277) maintains:

Extrinsic motivation is that which derives from the influence of some kind of external incentive, as distinct from the wish to learn for its own sake or interest in tasks. Many sources of extrinsic motivation are inaccessible to the influence of the teacher: for example, the desire of students to please some other authority figures such as parents, their wish to succeed in an international exam, or peer-group influences. However, other sources are certainly affected by teacher action.

One of the ways through which teachers can increase students' motivation, according to Ur (1996), is to let learners become aware of successful performance, which can be understood as the students becoming more confident, thereby becoming better able to identify such success on their own; this way, they will need less direct support from someone else. Ur goes on to argue that this is perhaps the most crucial attribute in raising extrinsic motivation. Learners who have been able to succeed in previous tasks will be more willing to embark on the next one; they will feel more confident in their chances of succeeding and more likely to continue making their best effort. Ur notes that it is important to understand that 'success' in this particular case does not necessarily have to do anything with 'getting the answers right'. Ur (1996: 278) claims:

"Further criteria may be the sheer amount of language produced or understood, the investment of effort and care, the degree of progress since a previous performance. All these need to be recognized by the teacher as 'successes' for which the learner can and should take credit."

Secondly, regarding creative writing, Spiro (2004) mentions that there is a slow realization that language is more than just day-to-day 'communication' since a great amount of language use is indeed playful, without any immediate or direct communicative outcome; we can gather examples of such an argument when we look at the frequency of language play in the realm of advertising and newspapers headlines, in

which individuals make use of puns and metaphors, for instance, thereby becoming inventive with language.

Spiro (2004) also argues that creative writing displays its power to not only discover other worlds but also to interpret and enrich this one. She claims that when students have the chance to write about themselves, there is a reason for writing; this does not represent an activity with only one answer or an activity that can be handled equally well by a peer or by a teacher; only the students themselves know what they really want to say; therefore, they have a reason to make their piece of writing as good as they possibly can, for their work may later be performed, displayed, etc.

As a follow-up to Spiro's argumentation and reasoning about students' desire to do their best when writing a creative piece, Ur (1996: 281) adds, "Learners are more likely to be interested in tasks that have to do with them themselves: their own or each other's opinions, tastes, experiences, suggestions." Besides, the very act of writing a creative text involves the exchange of ideas, writing, editing, getting feedback from peers, and rewriting. Creative writing gives authentic and significantly valuable practice in all the skills of writing.

As a consequence, Spiro (2004) explains that when students eventually get to write with more confidence, they end up reading more confidently, too. By better understanding what it feels like to be a writer, students will also become more engaged and positive in their enjoyment of reading.

And, without disregard for reading per Spiro (2004) and listening when hearing out ideas and when paying attention to the final product of other students, as we shall see later on, putting ideas in writing first gives learners the necessary confidence to produce language, albeit a little restrictively, that can then be shared orally with others, hopefully integrating both productive skills, writing and speaking, in order to promote fluency, which is, again, the main objective of this research project.

1.5. Limitations of the Investigation

Depending on the sort of teaching setting we are immersed in, the limitations may vary drastically. In my own particular teaching context, a

language school which offers monthly cycles, the group of students we teachers get to work with change from month to month; that is, every single month, we are in charge of whole new groups of students. Therefore, it is highly recommended to make the necessary arrangements with the area or department responsible for class assignment, for example the academic department, in order for the teacher to be assigned the same group or the same groups of students, for that matter, for as long as the action research should take to complete. This way, the work may be carried out consistently and without delays.

1.6. Antecedents of the Investigation

When it comes to creative writing, there is a vast number of papers and dissertations that deal with the very idea of producing literature that goes beyond the benchmark of literary production in terms of content and form. These pieces of work present samples of creative literature with the attempt to obtain, for instance, a Master's degree in English Literature.

For example, among the large number of dissertations available in the public domain is the one elaborated by Turkish English instructor Aziza Lucia Akdeniz, who produced the thesis titled "The Arris" (2010), which basically consists of a collection of various poems created by the author herself, of course. The thesis was prepared in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts degree in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Oregon. Needless to say, Ms. Akdeniz's work does not attempt to deal with creative writing for academic purposes, meaning to assist learners in their learning process of becoming better writers and improving the level of their English language use. On the other hand, Ms. Akdeniz's dissertation looks to provide a more creative insight, which is achieved by her composing poems, many of which have to do with nature (especially atmospheric phenomena, geographical features, and animals) and how this all connects, hence the title "The Arris" (edge or angle that connects two surfaces), with her feelings towards life itself.

In contrast, when looking for research related to creative writing that has a direct impact on the field of Teaching English, which is the very nature of my own research and thesis, it is found that very few literary contributions have been made, yet the ones that actually do keep some relationship with my investigation provide those interested in the

subject with valuable insight into the work in the realm of creative writing in the English language classroom.

Following are two studies that focus on the promotion of creative writing work in English language lessons and that, in turn, have a close connection with my own research.

Let us first discuss the work entitled “Visual Arts: Effective Means to Enhance Creative Writing Quality” (2008), whose author is named Karen Randle, a Master’s degree candidate at the time.

This project was elaborated in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Teaching at the State University of New York College at Cortland, New York. When I first got hold of this work in particular, I thought it was interesting to have found an action research that shared quite a few similarities with the work I had just completed.

Although Ms. Karen Randle’s work and mine somehow share the same specific objective, which is to see whether the implementation of creative writing activities have an actual beneficial impact on the language production of our students, there are some differences between her work and my own that are worth noting. Whereas Ms. Randle basically aimed at improving her students’ creative writing quality, my work looks to enhancing my students’ overall fluency in the target language. Also, even though we both make use of tasks that contain visual prompts that can hopefully motivate students to write, Ms. Randle mainly focused on providing her students with fine art painting prompts and a few text prompts, while I have incorporated into my research more varied creative writing tasks, including comics, dialogs, video prediction, scripts, and others. And last but not least, Ms. Karen Randle applied her action research to fourth grade students, ages nine and ten, which is probably the reason why all the activities she had her students work on during her research were performed individually, which definitely promoted critical thinking, indeed. I, on the other hand, conducted my work with teenagers between the ages of fourteen and seventeen, which explains why pair work and group work seemed more appropriate, thereby encouraging not only critical thinking but also negotiation with others.

Let us now look at the work on Mr. Mineko Honda.

A second piece of work that has relevance with my current investigation is the one done by Mineko Honda, a teacher of English as a Foreign Language based in Japan, who conducted the academic research titled “Creative Writing in Pairs: Pedagogic Possibilities in Japanese University EFL Classes” (2011) and which was published in *Komaba Journal of English Education*, a Japanese magazine devoted to the field of Teaching English. This research, in particular, caught my attention since Mr. Honda was experiencing several difficulties as a teacher of English in a university, which is the teaching context in which he experimented with creative writing with his students, and although my action research was not specifically done in the university setting, I do have some teaching experience in universities, so needless to say, I felt really identified with the vicissitudes of being an instructor of General English in such universities where one finds really heterogeneous classes, meaning the students of a given class display very different levels of language ability, thereby encountering a great many problems, among which are lack of motivation and academic failure. When it comes to his actual work, Mr. Mineko Honda implemented creative writing activities that included both pair work and group work, just like my own action research does; however, Mr. Honda’s main objective with his investigation was to motivate students to study English and take the subject more seriously, and as a corollary to that, both writing and speaking practice would be provided for. My work, on the other hand, attempts to positively contribute with my students’ English language proficiency as a whole.

Now, some theoretical information on writing, creative writing, and fluency will be discussed in the next chapter, which explores the framework of this study.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Nature of Writing

It is widely agreed that there exist four main language skills, which are basically divided into two groups; these groups are as follows: receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills encompass both listening and reading, while speaking and writing are considered to be productive skills.

As mentioned above, writing is one of the two productive skills, and it involves the graphic representation of oral production, a fact which, in itself, poses some demanding challenges; for instance, by being a macro-skill, writing comprises a number of micro-skills, such as putting words together in correct word order, using vocabulary correctly, following the conventions of sentence level grammar, keeping unity and coherence, among others; all these micro-skills need to be well developed in order to convey ideas clearly to a particular audience.

On the other hand, writing per se is, in fact, approached in order to transmit thoughts to others and to ourselves, for that matter. In this regard, Krashen (2003: 30-31) states:

While writing does not help us develop writing style, writing has other virtues. As [Frank] Smith ... has pointed out, we write for at least two reasons. First, and most obvious, we write to communicate with others. But perhaps more important, we write

for ourselves, to clarify and stimulate our thinking. Most of our writing, even if we are published authors, is for ourselves.

2.2. Writing in the Classroom

Work on writing has always had a place in the English language classroom due to its many well-known benefits. Harmer (2004) points out that the skill of writing has always been taken into consideration in any syllabus in the teaching of English, and it has been used as a multipurpose means, from being just a supporting tool for grammar teaching to being a main syllabus domain in itself. And regardless of the degree of importance that is rendered to the work of writing within the classroom constraints, a degree that differs from teaching context to teaching context, writing stimulates learners to pay attention to language use accuracy, and since they think as they write, language development may very well be provoked throughout the problem-solving process which is inherently contained in the mental operation that writing demands.

Even though engaging in writing work in the classroom presupposes the development of language systems and skills in learners, there seems to be a neglect of sufficient implementation of writing tasks inside the classroom, as well as outside of the formal academic setting. Krashen (2003: 29) argues:

The research confirms Smith's reflections. Actual writing in school appears to be infrequent. Applebee, Langer and Mullis [in 1986] asked students how many essays and reports they had written over six weeks for any school subject. Only 18.6% of the fourth graders and only 7.8% of the 11th graders wrote more than ten. Writing outside of school is also not frequent: Applebee et. al.'s 11th grade group did the most out-of-school writing, but only 17.4% kept diaries, 37.3% said they wrote letters to friends, and 74.8% said they wrote notes and messages at least weekly.

In reference to the infrequency of writing activities in the classroom, McCarty (2014) analyzes:

Teachers tend to think about building fluency in terms of reading, but now more than ever, teachers should be helping their students

build writing fluency as well. Readers who do not read fluently devote much of their cognitive energy to decoding individual words and phrases, making it difficult for them to focus on the meaning of what they read. Similarly, students lacking writing fluency devote lots of cognitive energy to forming individual words or basic sentence structures, making it harder for them to focus on conveying their thoughts and feelings effectively.

Likewise, as Denne-Bolton (2013) concludes, very often English language learners have the chance to practice speaking more than they do writing due to the fact that they are involved in daily conversations within the classroom constraints if not outside of it. In order for them to get the same practice with writing, students will need to write as often as they speak.

Regarding writing in the classroom, Krashen (2003) insists that writing lessons should essentially be learning contexts in which students understand that writing has the capacity to make them smarter, learning contexts that allows students to appreciate the composing process that is intrinsic in the art of writing. As a corollary, when it comes to the contributions made by writing, Krashen and Lee (2004: 10) maintain:

There is no evidence that writing contributes to writing competence; those who write more do not write better, and increasing writing does not result in better writing (Krashen: 1984, 1994). Writing, however, makes a different kind of contribution: Writing can make you smarter. When we write something down on the page, we make a representation of our thoughts, of our "cognitive structures." Once on the page, the brain finds it irresistible to come up with a better version of our cognitive structures. Improving our cognitive structures is real learning (using "learning" in the general sense, not as contrasted with "acquisition"). Writing is not the only way of doing this, of course, but it is a very effective way.

By the same token, agreeing on the fact that writing can, indeed, make learners smarter, we can refer to Littlejohn (1991), who suggests helping our students learn English generally, through writing, for most activities are in pairs or groups, promoting discussion to improve not only writing but general English knowledge.

In this regard, Hedge (1988: 11-12) states:

Another very good reason for spending classroom time on writing is that it allows students to work together on writing in different ways. Although the teacher's ultimate aim is to develop the writing skills of each student individually, individual students have a good deal to gain from collaborative writing. [Additionally,] group composition has the added advantage of enabling students to learn from each other's strengths. It is an activity where stronger students can help the weaker ones in the group. It also enables the teacher to move around from group to group monitoring the work and helping with the process of composition.

And finally, in relation to how teachers should implement writing activities in the classroom, Brookes and Grundy (1998: X) indicate:

We rarely want writing lessons to result in products for the teacher to assess. Instead, we often suggest making a wall display of student writing; this way, writing is taken seriously, readership is provided, and students learn from each other. At other times, writing triggers further writing or discussion. This approach should make writing less stressful for your students. It also provides a more public, genuine context for writing.

2.3. Creativity

What is creativity? Creativity is a very hard concept to define and articulate; however, following are some attempts of give creativity a definition:

Franken (1994: 396) states, "Creativity is defined as the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others." (quoted by Langford, 2011)

Naiman (2011) says, "Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing. Innovation is the production or implementation of an idea. If you have ideas, but don't act on them, you are imaginative but not creative."

So as we can see, creativity can be defined as the capacity of generating new, alternative ideas and then putting them into implementation.

2.4. Creative Writing

Donovan (2012) states, “**Creative writing**, like art, is subjective, and therefore difficult to define.”

Nevertheless, the Your Dictionary Reference (1996) provides a very sensible description to understand creative writing: “... creative writing is writing that expresses ideas and thoughts in an imaginative way. The writer gets to express feelings and emotions instead of just presenting facts.” And among the things listed as being creative writing are novels, poems, short stories, screenplays, scripts, and others.

For instance, poems, as a form of creative writing, instead of being eluded from everyday life, demonstrates that poetic language is more and more at the core of the English language. Through poetic language, we make everything around us, people, things, feelings, and experiences, memorable. And to acknowledge this is to value the colorfulness of everyday speech. Holmes and Moulton (2001: 2) comment on this regard in this way:

How is it that many of us remember poetic language for years when we cannot remember the name of the person we met only minutes earlier? Poetry sticks with us because it resonates in our hearts and minds. The language of poetry grasps our imagination, emotions, and intellect with equal force regardless of our language backgrounds.

As it was already discussed, poetic language is present in many aspects of daily life, from people to products, from places to experiences. In this particular area, Spiro (2004: 11) explains:

Just like poets, we ‘create’ new words by changing their function: parent, for example, is used as a verb in our generation – to parent. It shows us that being a parent is something active. It is not just something you ARE, but something you do as well. [Also,] businesses try to sell us products by using ‘catchy’ phrases and

names that rhyme or repeating sounds like the /k/ sound in Coca-Cola , or playing with the meaning of words, [Finally,] this is just what poets do – they ‘invent’ language in order to explain more exactly their message, and they bring words together so that they surprise or suggest.

It is implied then that creative writing has to do with entertaining rather than providing facts since it goes beyond the regular, ordinary professional and academic forms of literature.

2.5. Creative Writing in the Classroom

Some people may suggest that creative writing has no value in the English as a Foreign Language classroom since it is not typical of the language students will need to use in the real world, outside of the classroom constraints. In an effort to prove this comment wrong, Spiro (2004: 10) maintains:

But everyday language uses many devices traditionally thought of as ‘poetic’. In fact, to recognize and use these is part of our skill as language users. We use metaphors and similes every day, just like poets. To see red means to be angry. But why is anger red? To headhunt means to choose the best person for a job – but is it really about hunting heads? To count one’s chickens means to have unrealistic expectations. But why?

Also, Harmer (2004: 41) discusses and supports creative writing in the classroom as follows:

We [teachers] are concerned with tasks that provoke students to go beyond the everyday, and which ask them to spread their linguistic wings, take some chances, and use the language they are learning to express more personal or more complex thoughts and images. We can ask them to write stories and poems, to write journals, or to create dramatic scenarios.

Harmer acknowledges, though, that this is no easy task due to the limitations which many students face when writing in the target language and due to the fact that some students may not respond well to the invitation to become ambitious and risk takers.

Coinciding with Harmer's realization, Spiro (2004) mentions that some teachers are, indeed, worried about the fact that some of their students do not like to use their imagination. Spiro (2004: 12) argues:

Maybe, for example, adult learners will find certain imaginative leaps childish, not useful, and not relevant to the learning process. All of these are valid responses, and it is certainly true that some of these activities do involve journeys into fantasy and imagination. However, most work with 'everyday' life, thoughts, beliefs, hopes, relationships, and the only leap your learners will need is the realization that familiar language patterns can indeed express all these things.

Still, many a time, adult learners do enjoy the imaginative writing work in the classroom more than we might expect them to. Spiro (2004) adds that it may be overprotective of us classroom teachers to take for granted that our students will definitely dislike creative writing activities; she suggests letting the teacher and the class in every particular lesson evaluate the likely result in each case. She also states that we teachers will be surprised by the positive reactions upon implementing creative writing in our lessons; we see that shy students open up; quiet classes become alive, grammar-oriented students let their grammar-free imaginations fly; a class which has not bonded very well suddenly starts joining together to elaborate rather wild and imaginative pieces.

And last but not least, there is a critical subject to consider, the subject of enjoyment, which critics easily dismiss as not being important enough a reason to implement creative writing tasks in our regular English language lessons. Spiro (2004: 14) discusses the benefits that enjoyment brings about with the implementation of creative writing in the classroom through poetry:

Don't underestimate the value of the poetry writing for the sheer joy it brings the students. Our students often cheer when we announce that it is time to write poetry. Perhaps that is because writing pattern poems offers a nice break from normal routine while providing plenty of opportunity for language work and self-expression. Perhaps it is because students enjoy the chance to be involved in an activity that doesn't seem like "work." Or perhaps

they enjoy the writing because it results in the creation of a visible mini-monument that they can point to and say, “I did that!”

In reference to this particular, Hedge (1988: 46) adds:

In my experience, there are many students in classes at higher levels who are not doing examinations and who are not necessarily learning English for academic or professional purposes. They enjoy creative writing; and many of those who do have specific purposes for writing enjoy the chance to be more creative.

In short, engaging in creative writing in the classroom takes a lot of work since it presents obstacles to both teachers and students, but the process itself, along with the final outcome, proves to be a quite gratifying experience.

2.6. Fluency through Creative Writing in the Classroom

In general terms, stakeholders in education, mainly teachers, school administrators, and parents, are aware of the importance of introducing a dose of creativity into the teaching of language skills. Take for example poetry, a type of creative writing, and its use among little children when they are being looked after. In this regard, Homes and Moulton (2001: 3) point out:

Children are often introduced to poetry early in their lives by parents, grandparents, and other caretakers who chant nursery rhymes for example, before the youngsters have any consciousness of linguistic forms. Poetry teaches children to listen, develop vocabulary, learn to read and write, and think creatively. Poetry takes the structure and beauty of language and provides a personal world to explore.

Similarly, Spiro (2004) points out that children develop their first language to some extent by playing with its rhymes and rhythms, which are both features of poetry, and that children do this with limited attention to communicative significance or utility.

Thus, it is imperative to consider the great influence that creativity and creative language have on the development of a first language amongst children. Then with this knowledge of the importance that

creative language has when acquiring one's own native language, why not implement more activities in the English as a Foreign Language classroom, activities which are carried out by the students themselves and that incorporate a touch of creative language? All of this creative language that the learners will be able to produce can best be exhibited through creative writing activities.

Therefore, the main objective of creative writing in the classroom is to encourage fluency over accuracy.

First of all, it is essential to define these two rather key terms, fluency and accuracy.

Let us begin by attempting to determine what accuracy refers to. In the field of language teaching and learning, accuracy is seen as the quality of producing language, either through speaking or writing, with correctness, free from mistakes. This means that a language user who displays accuracy is capable of using language forms considered to be standard and precise, which does not necessarily mean that he or she will be able to communicate successfully, which in turn brings up another topic, that of usage and use. In this regard, Scrivener (2005: 147) points out:

Very often, when people study a language, they accumulate a lot of 'up-in-the-head' knowledge, that is they may know rules of grammar and lists of vocabulary items [usage], but they find that they cannot actually use this language to communicate when they want to [use]. There seems to be some difficulty in moving language from 'up-there' knowledge to actively usable language. For many learners, their 'passive' knowledge is much larger than their 'active' knowledge.

Therefore, we perceive usage as the capacity to understand how a particular language works and as the mere knowledge about it; however, use is understood as the capacity to put that understanding and knowledge of a language into practical application, which is very much connected with fluency.

Now, let us try to define what fluency actually constitutes. Following is the definition of fluency given by two prestigious dictionaries:

The Websters' Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged (1993) defines fluency and fluidity as the smooth flowing quality and readiness, especially that of utterance or language.

The Collins English Dictionary (1991) defines fluency in the following way: "The quality of being skillful in speech and writing."

Thus, we can conclude that a person who displays fluency is capable of producing language, either in spoken and written form, easily and without much strain.

Let us now look at how creative writing in the classroom may promote fluency.

To begin with, as Condemarín, Galdames, and Medina (1995) point out, engaging in creative writing in the classroom allows learners to develop their oral language skills as well as their written language skills because of the following: First, creative writing prompts students to discuss characters, actions, ideas, feelings, fantasies, and dreams, all of which facilitate learning, memory, the utilization of a great number of lexical items and grammar forms, and linguistic associations to take place; all of this happens within meaningful and exciting contexts for the learners. Second, creative writing promotes the learning and practice of different registers and provides for other activities related to oral production [practice in oral fluency], such as impersonation and dramatization. Third, embarking on creative writing in the classroom avoids dealing with stereotyped and tired topics, such as "my first day of classes" or "my last vacation", but allows students to become aware of their own thoughts, fantasies, dreams, and feelings, all of which leads to the materialization of a written product.

Likewise, in order to implement creative writing in the classroom, Petty (2004) mentions that students need to be given the freedom to take risks, to explore, and to fantasize; she claims that only then will fluent and effective communication flourish; she also states that teachers need to provide directions and examples that allow for original expression

because good writing is based upon the healthy relationship between imagination and technique.

Also, Pearson (2011) maintains that engaging students in creative writing in the classroom gives students a great sense of liberation from the rather formal and constrained assignments; it greatly increases fluency, that is the ease, the spontaneity, frequency, and speed with which they write; their motivation to write also expands because of the absence of fear of being graded and evaluated.

So in order for students to feel liberated and let their ideas flow, Denne-Bolton (2013) believes that they need to write on themes that they know about and that have relevance in their lives; otherwise, they simply do not have the background nor the motivation to start or continue writing; they tend to struggle and eventually give up.

Consequently, it is important to give learners the chance to choose the topics they will be writing on. To start with the activity, the teacher can elicit ideas on possible topics to be discussed. The students brainstorm topics and the teacher can also add some others. When students get the chance to choose, they gain a sense of agency and identity because the topic they have chosen is meaningful to them, a fact that gives them confidence to become good writers and eventually better learners.

On the other hand, Hedge (1988) also argues that writing in groups is a great example of a task where the classroom actually becomes a writing workshop. Hence, since most creative writing work is done collaboratively, the group interaction at each step of the writing task contributes in useful ways to the writing process, a process that includes stages such as brainstorming, logical sequencing and organization, and revision in progress, which calls for spontaneous discussion and analysis. Hedge also believes as well that collaborative writing promotes discussions [most likely in English, thereby promoting fluency] and activities which encourage an effective process of writing.

Moreover, composing a creative writing piece in the target language usually calls for a reorganization of language structures. Regarding this aspect, Willis (1996: 61) claims: "Restructuring language form forces learners to examine aspects of their current grammatical

knowledge and adapt and exploit it so that it will carry the meanings they wish to express.”

Additionally, when it comes to preparing to report their own creative work or a peer's, students have the possibility to manipulate language to be used. In this particular point, Willis (1996: 56) argues:

In planning their report, they have time to create anew, experiment with language and compose with the support of their group, teacher, dictionaries and grammar books. And it is this process that is likely to drive their language development forward and give them new insights into language use [fluency].

Creative writing, thus, is a powerful way of learning and reinforcing linguistic features of the language being studied. Through immersing in creative writing, students can not only consolidate target language learning in a more natural way, but they can also manage to become more fluent in the target language thanks to the many benefits it brings, most of which come from the collaborative work they were involved in. These advantages are mainly connected with work on both familiar and new vocabulary, negotiation, sharing, and reporting.

After having seen some theoretical background information, let us now move onto the discussion of to whom and how this applied investigation was carried out and what tools were utilized throughout the implementation process of the proposal for solving the stated problem.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE INVESTIGATION

3.1. Investigation Type

This research work possesses the characteristics of the so-called qualitative investigation type. This is because this work encompasses, among others, the following features: It is valid based on the description and the observation of the problem and remedy, respectively; it is based on an inductive outline, and last but not least, it does not have as a goal to generalize the results of the investigation.

3.2. Design of the Investigation

According to the used methodology, this work classifies as an interpretive qualitative investigation. Besides, this research is considered an action investigation since it seeks improvement in the educational practice.

3.3. Assumptions

Regarding the surveys that were conducted, both the diagnostic one and the exit one, the following may be assumed:

- It is assumed that all respondents will answer all the questions in the surveys honestly and to the best of their abilities due to the very nature of the surveys themselves, which preserves anonymity and confidentiality.

- It is assumed that the respondents' young ages will not significantly affect their perceptions towards the process of answering the questions in the surveys.

3.4. Questions

- How can I decrease the affective filter in my students when engaging in writing activities in the classroom?
- How can I motivate my students to write in class?
- How can my students improve their overall language skills through writing?"

3.5. Variables

3.5.1. Independent Variables

The utilization of instruments such as:

- Surveys (Diagnostic and Exit Surveys)
- Assessment Essays

The implementation of techniques through creative writing activities, which include the following:

- Video Recognition and Expansion
- Story Circle
- Chained Nonsensical Stories
- Comics
- Dialogs

3.5.2. Dependent Variable

The improvement of fluency, which is determined by the results obtained through the application of assessment essays.

3.6. Population and Study Sample

The research project was carried out at the Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano (ICPNA). Having done the necessary arrangements with the Administrative Services office at the language this school, I was able to be assigned four Basic Nine classes between the months of September and December. I was then ready to divide these four classes into two main groups, the control group and the experimental group, each composed of two classes.

Regarding the method of teaching, since we are now living in a post-method era in the field of language teaching, ICPNA aims at applying an eclectic teaching approach, which means that the institution looks to consider the best features of most language teaching methods that were popular throughout history, by taking, for example, the best from Audiolingualism, the Direct Method, the Communicative Approach, and the like. At the end of the day, though, there is a clear emphasis on the promotion of very learner-centered lessons.

And when it comes to the core teaching material, the textbook used is named World Link, by Susan Stempleski, an English instructor and English Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University.

3.6.1. Identifying Characteristics of the Sample Group

The classes at the language school I teach at, the Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano (ICPNA), are usually made up of twenty five students each; therefore, for this particular study, the overall population consisted of one hundred students, including both the ones in the experimental group and the ones in the control group. Two of the four classes assigned were selected to be part of the control group, so in the end, fifty students participated in the implementation of the proposal, which means that fifty students directly worked with the creative writing activities selected to hopefully promote language fluency.

3.6.2. Age and Gender

The students who participated in this action research were all high school students, both males and females, and their ages ranged from 14 to 17.

3.6.3. Educational and L2 Learning Background

The students who were chosen in order for me to carry out this research project fall, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), into the following category:

CEF Band:	Band A - Basic User
CEF Level:	A2 Waystage
Classroom Hours:	180-200

In my teaching context, this CEFR level is represented in the so called Basic Nine course of our General English program for adult learners.

3.7. Techniques and Instruments of Gathering of Data

To begin with, the elements used to gather data throughout this action research, which took a four-month period to complete, included a very varied number of components, among which are tools and tasks that were utilized and implemented, respectively. This is the reason why it is necessary to divide this section into two main categories: instruments and techniques.

Regarding instruments, according to Schnuttgen (1993), in order for us teachers to be able to gather data [before, during, or after the implementation of the proposal] on how much a given group of students know in relation to a defined body of knowledge, we may make use of instruments such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and a paper and pencil test [like essays].

When it comes to teaching techniques, Grasha (1996) states that a technique is the sample of the practical application of teaching activities, the instructional tasks, within the classroom with the purpose of

achieving a desired goal. In this particular case, the goal is to see if the promotion of fluency in my students is, in fact, achieved through the putting of creative writing activities into practice in class.

3.7.1. Instruments

The first main group, pertaining to the instruments or tools, consists of two elements, surveys and assessment essays.

3.7.1.1. Survey

One of the elements employed as a tool to gather information was a survey, which was conducted twice. (Appendix 1).

Naturally, in order for every single student to understand, the survey was actually conducted in Spanish since this group of students belongs to a basic level of competency in the target language. (Appendix 2).

The first time the survey was conducted was before the proposal was implemented (diagnostic/entry survey), and it was taken by my students to measure their attitudes towards writing activities in class based on their previous learning experiences at the institution, as well as to identify potential challenges they tended to find when dealing with writing activities in the classroom. The outcome obtained from the statistical data led towards a decision-making process on how to tackle the students' needs and preferences, as well as to select the kinds of activities to be put into practice. (Appendix 3).

The second time the survey was used was at the end of the implementation of the proposal (final/exit survey), and it was meant to measure my students' attitudes towards writing activities in class after creative writing activities (the remedy) were implemented in the classroom. (Appendix 4).

The results of both the entry survey and the exit survey were compared against each other to reach a conclusion.

Additionally, statistics was used to better process the information derived from each of the stages of the research.

3.7.1.2. Assessment Essays

After the implementation of the proposal, the six strongest and the six weakest students of both the experimental group and the control group were assigned to work on one last task.

This task was for them to write a composition, again a creative piece of writing, which could let their imagination fly; there were, of course, certain parameters.

The students were certainly given flexibility and freedom to use the vocabulary items they wished to use, but their output needed to be restricted in terms of form; they had to use the simple past tense and comparative and superlative adjectives throughout their papers. The idea was to see how well the students were able to handle these two grammatical structures, which were, at the time, the main foci in their learning objectives of the course they were taking at the school and which were two of the topics that had the most intense practice among the students in the experimental group through the creative writing activities that were implemented. (Appendix 5).

3.7.2. Techniques

The second main group, which has to do with the techniques, includes a wide range of elements; these elements constitute the actual class activities, the creative writing activities, that were proposed and that the students in the experimental group participated in. Concerning the creative writing activities that were selected to promote fluency in the learners, different materials were used to prompt the students' motivation and interest in order for them to feel engaged in the process of this action research. Such materials included, among others, videos, cards with cartoon characters on them, and blank comic strip templates.

The implementation of the proposal consisted of the following tasks:

3.7.2.1. Video Recognition and Expansion

On a given day, I had my students watch a video. (Appendix 6). This video featured two friends discussing how they each had spent their weekend. The video presents the mishaps Rick, one of the video story's main characters, experienced during his weekend. The whole video revolves around Rick's bad luck all the way to the very end; however, when it is time for George, the other main character, to tell his weekend adventures, the video ends when George says, "My weekend was fantastic; first, I ..."

Once the video was over, the students were told they would watch the video again and were asked to try to remember the events by identifying instances in which the past tense was used; then I played the video again. Then they were asked to orally retell the story of Rick in pairs; once they were finished, they were eager to share their recollections with the whole class; the students were asked to give a few lines each so that many people could participate. Afterwards, they had to write down the story they remembered about Rick's terrible weekend.

Later, I asked the students to imagine what George's weekend was like, so in pairs, they wrote their predictions of how fantastic George's weekend really was. They had lots of fun since they came up with really strange ideas. The students were to use the simple past tense, including both regular and irregular verbs. (Appendix 7). This activity offered practice in the grammar structures found in their textbook, *World Link*, unit 1, page 10. (Appendix 8).

3.7.2.2. Story Circle

One other activity involving creative writing is the so called “Story Circle”, provided by Jeremy Harmer in his book *How to Teach Writing* (2004). During this activity, my students worked in large groups of five and six, forming circles. This activity in particular was implemented to again promote, although not exclusively, the use of the past tense in an unthreatening fashion; the students were able to use the simple past in a rather free way. I gave them a prompt which went like this: “*Once upon a time there was a princess who lived in a castle by a river.*” The students were asked to add one more sentence to the cue sentence; they were then to pass the piece of paper to their classmate on their right, and that classmate was to add one more sentence, too. This procedure would go on until each student got their original sheet back; they were then to read the entire story and add one last sentence. The story got so distorted that the students had so much fun reading and sharing their nonsensical lines. (Appendix 9).

3.7.2.3. Chained Nonsensical Stories

Another activity implemented in class was the one called “Chained Nonsensical Stories”, presented by Manuel and Fernández (1986). This task is very similar to the activity described above, story circle, because students need to work in groups; this time, they worked in groups of six in a circle, as well. The main difference, however, between this activity and the previous one is the fact that in this activity, unlike the other one, students are not given complete freedom in terms of grammar and vocabulary when they are to create their stories; in the other activity, they were completely on their own, except, of course, when they asked for assistance. There is some teacher intervention in this activity; I prepared six questions with the verb tenses I wanted my students to practice with, the simple past and the past progressive: These were the questions:

- Who was he/she/it/?

- Where was he/she/it?
- What was he/she/it doing?
- What did he/she/it say?
- What did he/she/it say to the people?
- How did the story finish?

First, my students were grouped in sixes, and every student was given a piece of paper; I asked each question on the list above one at a time. The students answered the first question; then they were to fold up their sheets so that their answers were hidden, and then they passed their sheets to the person on their right. Then I asked the second question; the students answered it, folded the sheet to hide their answers, and passed it to the person on their right. This procedure went on until all the six questions were answered. My students had to keep in mind one important detail; each student needed to answer each question according to the original idea he or she had when they answered the first question. (Appendix 10). After that, the sheets were given back to the original “owner”, and they were to write a short story by combining the sentences into a paragraph; they were encouraged to add connectors and any necessary information so that the ideas ran smoothly, even though the story itself didn’t make much sense, which is, at the end, the objective of this activity, which is to have nonsensical stories to have fun with. Once again, my students had a good time by sharing their nonsensical lines. (Appendix 11).

3.7.2.4. Comics

One of the materials with which my students had a lot of fun and through which they were able to eventually increase their fluency was comics. Since comics have a story line which includes a conclusion; that is, they have a logical structure, students can follow the story in sequence, relying basically on logic rather than on memory, thereby becoming more involved in the content than in the language form, so the learners will become very curious to know what comes next and what eventually comes in the end and will remember, albeit indirectly, lexical items and linguistic forms

with a lot of ease. Furthermore, the idea itself of using comics in the classroom seems, generally speaking, to be very inviting to students, for comics are presented visually and provide freedom to create.

There were two times in which I used comic strips with the experimental group. On both occasions, the students worked in pairs, different partners each time; this allowed for negotiation, which, in turn, let them express themselves in the target language orally, as well. Needless to say, critical thinking was also promoted since the students needed to think hard and articulate their thoughts aiming at a consensus.

During the first time my students got their hands on comic strips, they were given picture characters with speech balloons above some of them. Regarding form, my students were simply asked to use comparative and superlative adjectives, which are the grammatical structures dealt with in their textbook, *World Link*, unit 2, pages 17 and 22. (Appendix 12). Other than that, they were expected to come up with as creative stories as possible. (Appendix 13).

Since this first comic strip activity is neither very complex nor long, my students were encouraged to keep on drawing bizarre characters like the one the kid in the first three scenes is talking to and, of course, keep on developing the story.

When working on this first comic strips activity, some of the students decided to simply create the dialog only with the pictures they were provided with, while some other pairs of students were bolder and did keep on drawing and developing the story. (Appendix 14).

On the other hand, the second time that comics were used in class, my students were asked to be even more creative in order to write and draw a comic strip from the very beginning. They were asked to again focus on superlative and comparative adjectives and were told to be as free as possible when it came to content. (Appendix 15). Due

to time constraints, this activity was assigned as homework. (Appendix 16).

As mentioned earlier, this is a very complete activity that integrates the development of the four different language skills since the students were to write, read, and both listen to and speak to one another in order to make decisions. Also, a series of language systems were tackled, such as lexis and grammar. Once they were all finished; they were more than eager to share their ideas in front of the class.

3.7.2.5. Dialogs

Celebrities:

One of the activities in which my students had the chance to engage into creative writing was to imagine they were famous people and write a short dialog in which they would, firstly, introduce themselves; they were to use the expressions found in their textbook, *World Link*, unit 1, page 4. (Appendix 17). Secondly, they were to use the simple present as well as the present continuous to discuss activities happening temporarily; this was to provide practice in the language found in their textbook, on page 5, unit 1. They were then asked to memorize their lines and perform their conversation to the whole class. The activity went very smoothly, and the students had a good time because they got to be, so to speak, a celebrity for a few minutes, a celebrity whose life is much more exciting than their own, so the students were very interested in knowing more vocabulary to be able to express the experiences the celebrity they chose to represent goes through in their lives. Needless to say, the students enjoyed this activity, and most of them volunteered to role-play their dialogs for the whole class. (Appendix 18).

Cartoon Scripts:

One more activity my students got to do was the following: I had prepared rather glossy and colorful cards with cartoon characters, individual cards, each presenting

only one character; this set of cards was divided into several cartoon characters couples or sidekicks, that is, for instance, a *Shrek* card and a *Fiona* card, a *Homer Simpson* card and a *Marge Simpson* card, a Bamm-Bamm card and a Pebbles card, a Donkey card and a Puss in Boots card. (Appendix 19). I put the cards on the classroom stool, and the students were to stand up and pick up a card; the cards were all facing down; they were to find their counterpart partner, sit together, and imagine they were the scriptwriters of the cartoon show and create a scene for the show. At this point, my students were not asked to use any specific grammar form, but they were encouraged to feel free to come up with creative and rather fantastic scenarios. Again, the students got the chance to integrate different language skills as well as language systems, and they had a good time performing their cartoon show scenes to the whole class. (Appendix 20).

The Strangest Dream:

Another activity was for the students to create a dialog about the strangest dream they'd had the night before. I gave them the first line: "*Last night, I had the strangest dream ever.*" They were to use expressions to show possibility, which is a form found in their textbook, *World Link*, unit 3, page 28. (Appendix 21). As we know, dreams can be so bizarre that they are hard to explain, in which case, my students had a lot of questions when it came to vocabulary. Finally, they shared their dreams with the whole class. (Appendix 22).

In the coming section, we will look at the results that were gathered all along the different stages of the present research, from the diagnostic phase to the assessment phase.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1. Introductory Statement

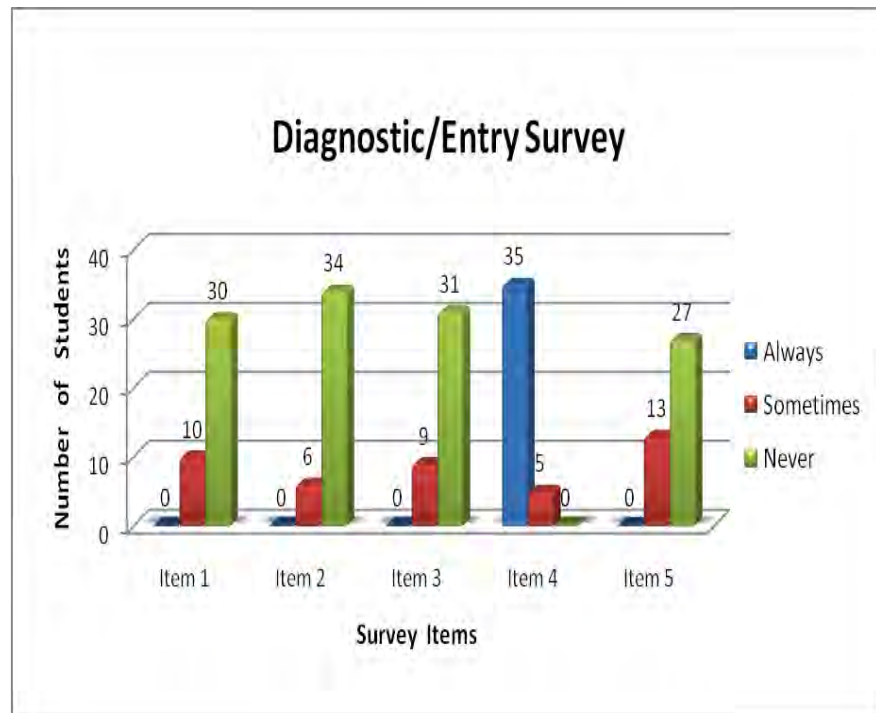
This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section presents the interpretation of the results obtained through the utilization of devices to gather data, by means of surveys and assessment essays. The second section deals with the actual analysis and discussion of the results derived from the application of the aforementioned information-gathering devices, which were used throughout the process of implementation of the research initiative.

4.2. Interpretation of Results

4.2.1. Surveys

Let us look at the statistical results obtained from the information derived from the survey that was applied to my students in the experimental group took. The survey, which served both as a diagnostic and as an exit data collection tool, was conducted twice.

To begin with, let us first consider the results of the diagnostic survey.

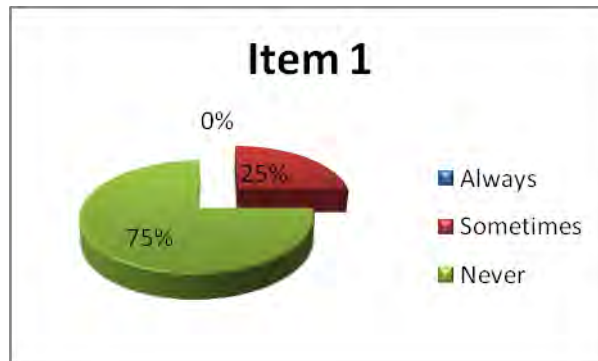


Graphic 1. Diagnostic Survey Results

Graphic 1. shows the results of the diagnostic survey, which was conducted before the proposal of the action research was implemented. It can be observed that on the day the survey was conducted, forty students of the two classes that were selected to be part of the experimental group were present in class; they all needed to reflect on five items, keeping in mind their previous learning experiences that had to do with writing activities in class. Following are the five items that were considered in the survey:

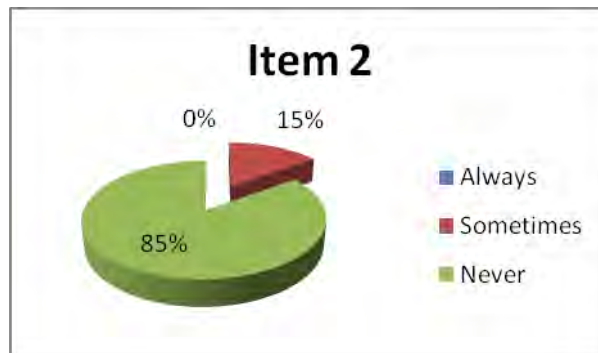
1. - I look forward to the writing task day
2. - I enjoy working on the writing activities
3. - I feel the writing activities are fun
4. - The objective of the writing activities is to assign a grade
5. - The writing activities are done in a variety of ways

Following is the analysis of the results:



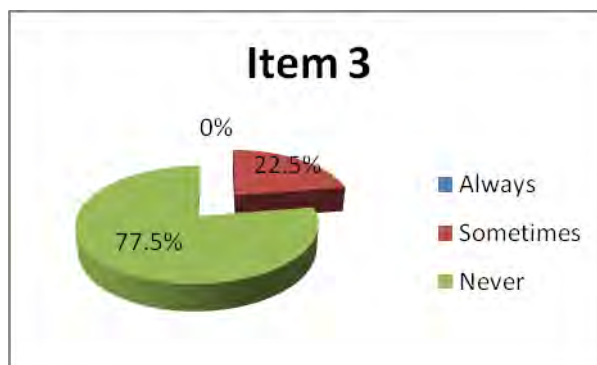
Graphic 2. Item 1 of Diagnostic Survey

In item 1 (Graphic 2) , “I look forward to the writing task day”, it is seen that 30 of the students chose “Never”, while only 10 of them selected “Sometimes”, and not one of them chose “Always”. This gives the following percentage: 75 percent of the students surveyed expressed their never looking forward to participate in writing activities in class.



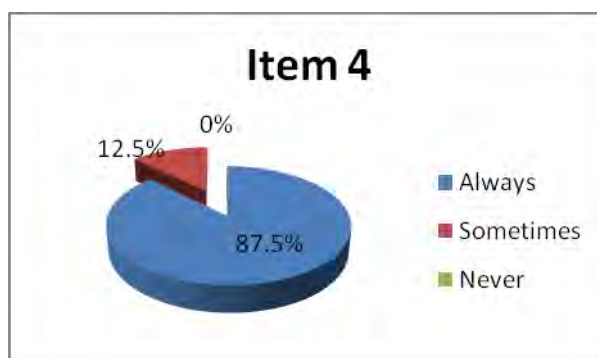
Graphic 3. Item 2 of Diagnostic Survey

For item 2 (Graphic 3), “I enjoy working on the writing activities”, 34 of the students selected “Never”, while only 6 of them chose “Sometimes”, and not one of them considered “Always”. These results are expressed in the following percentage: 85 percent of the students surveyed expressed their never enjoying working on writing activities in class.



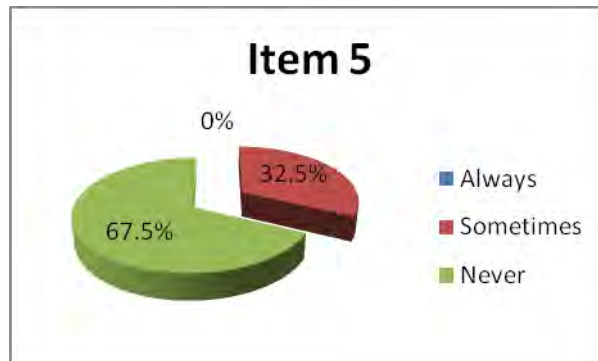
Graphic 4. Item 3 of Diagnostic Survey

In item 3 (Graphic 4), “I feel the writing activities are fun”, it is seen that 31 of the students chose “Never”, while only 9 of them selected “Sometimes”, and not one of them chose “Always”. This gives the following percentage: 77.5 percent of the students surveyed expressed their never feeling that the writing activities in class are fun.



Graphic 5. Item 4 of Diagnostic Survey

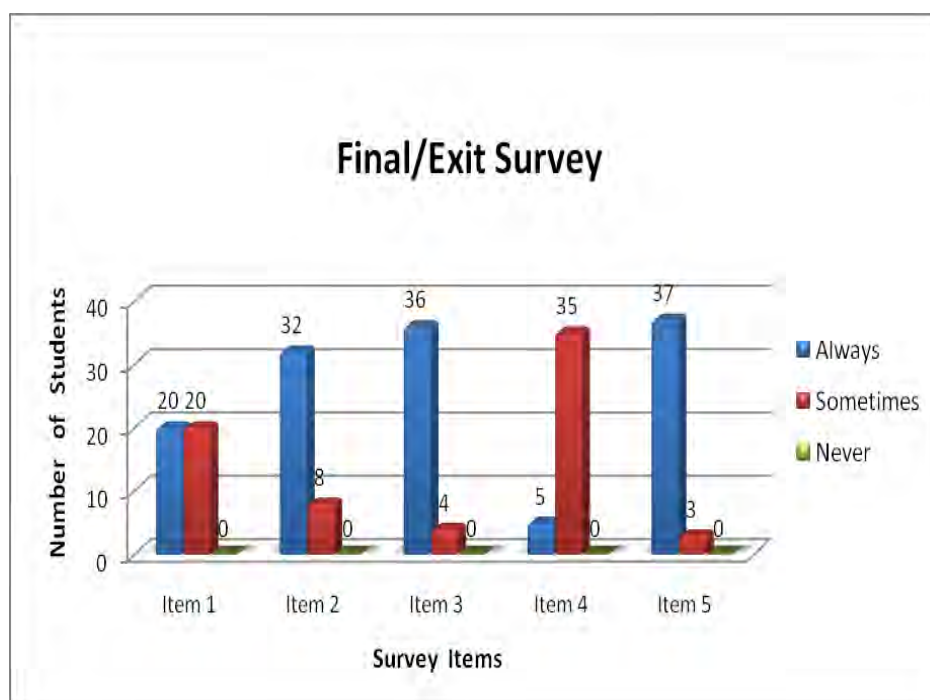
For item 4 (Graphic 5), “The objective of the writing activities is to assign a grade”, 35 of the students selected “Always”, while only 5 of them chose “Sometimes”, and not one of them considered “Never”. These results are expressed in the following percentage: 87.5 percent of the students surveyed expressed they felt that the writing activities in class always had evaluative purposes.



Graphic 6. Item 5 of Diagnostic Survey

In item 5 (Graphic 6), “The writing activities are done in a variety of ways”, it is seen that 27 of the students chose “Never”, while only 13 of them selected “Sometimes”, and not one of them chose “Always”. This gives the following percentage: 67.5 percent of the students surveyed expressed that in class, the writing activities they had taken part in lacked variety.

Now, let us look at the results of the exit survey.

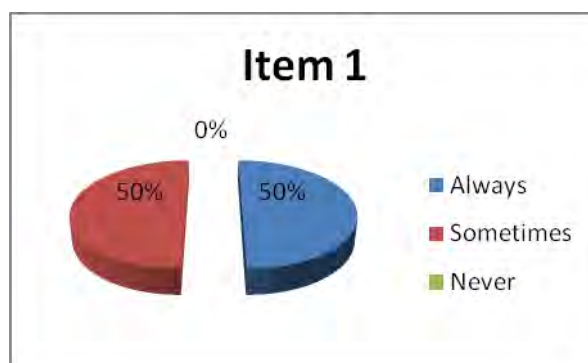


Graphic 7. Exit Survey Results

Graphic 7. shows the results of the exit survey, which was conducted after the proposal of the action research was implemented, that is, after the selected creative writing activities were introduced. It can be observed that again forty students of the two classes that were selected to be part of the experimental group participated in this survey. This was purposely decided on in order to make the number of students taking the diagnostic survey and the exit survey coincide. These forty students were asked to reflect on the same items again, this time though, keeping in mind their latest learning experiences that had to do with writing activities in class. Following are the five items considered in the survey:

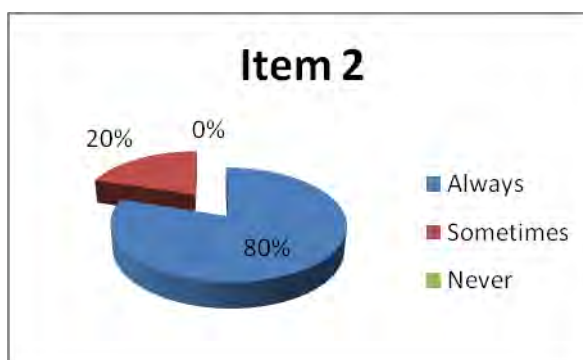
1. - I look forward to the writing task day
2. - I enjoy working on the writing activities
3. - I feel the writing activities are fun
4. - The objective of the writing activities is to assign a grade
5. - The writing activities are done in a variety of ways

Following is the analysis of the results:



Graphic 8. Item 1 of Exit Survey

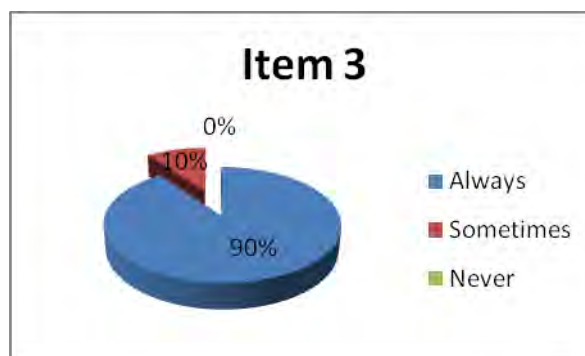
In item 1 (Graphic 8) , “I look forward to the writing task day”, it is seen that 20 of the students chose “Always”, which is 20 more students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 50 percent of the overall population, compared to the 0 percent in the diagnostic survey. Also, 20 of the students selected “Sometimes”, which is 10 more students than in the diagnostic survey, and it represents the 50 percent of the overall population, compared to the 25 percent in the diagnostic survey. Finally, not one of students chose “Never”, which is 30 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 0 percent of the overall population, compared to the 75 in the diagnostic survey.



Graphic 9. Item 2 of Exit Survey

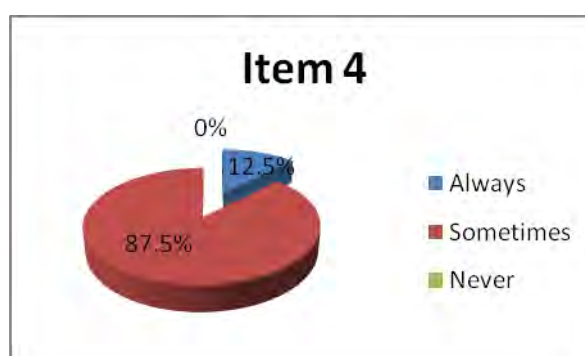
For item 2 (Graphic 9), “I enjoy working on the writing activities”, 32 of the students chose “Always”, which is 32 more students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 80 percent of the overall population, compared to the 0 percent in the diagnostic survey. Also, 6 of

the students selected “Sometimes”, which is 2 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, and it represents the 15 percent of the overall population, compared to the 20 percent in the diagnostic survey. Finally, not one of students chose “Never”, which is 34 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 0 percent of the overall population, compared to the 85 in the diagnostic survey.



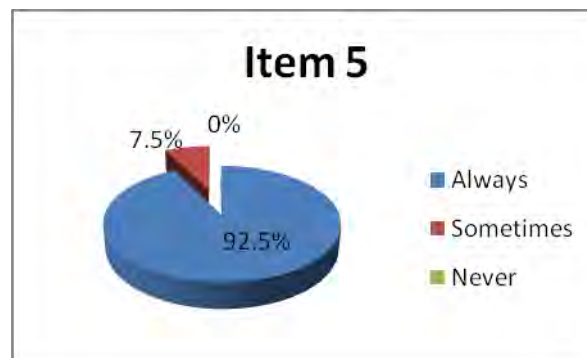
Graphic 10. Item 3 of Exit Survey

In item 3 (Graphic 10), “I feel the writing activities are fun”, it is seen that 36 of the students chose “Always”, which is 36 more students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 90 percent of the overall population, compared to the 0 percent in the diagnostic survey. Also, 4 of the students selected “Sometimes”, which is 5 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, and it represents the 12.5 percent of the overall population, compared to the 22.5 percent in the diagnostic survey. Finally, not one of students chose “Never”, which is 31 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 0 percent of the overall population, compared to the 77.5 in the diagnostic survey.



Graphic 11. Item 4 of Exit Survey

For item 4 (Graphic 11), “The objective of the writing activities is to assign a grade”, 35 of the students chose “Sometimes”, which is 30 more students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 87.5 percent of the overall population, compared to the 12.5 percent in the diagnostic survey. Also, 5 of the students selected “Always”, which is 30 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, and it represents the 12.5 percent of the overall population, compared to the 87.5 percent in the diagnostic survey. Finally, not one of students chose “Never”, which is the same number of students as in the diagnostic survey, both of which represent the 0 percent of the overall population.



Graphic 12. Item 5 of Exit Survey

In item 5 (Graphic 12), “The writing activities are done in a variety of ways”, it is seen that 37 of the students chose “Always”, which is 37 more students than in the diagnostic survey, which represents the 92.5 percent of the overall population, compared to the 0 percent in the diagnostic survey. Also, 3 of the students selected “Sometimes”, which is 10 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, and it represents the 7.5 percent of the overall population, compared to the 32.5 percent in the diagnostic survey. Finally, not one of students chose “Never”, which is 27 fewer students than in the diagnostic survey, which now represents the 0 percent of the overall population, compared to the 67.5 in the diagnostic survey.

4.2.2. Assessment Essays

As it was mentioned earlier, when discussing instruments in Chapter II, after the proposal had been implemented, a total of twelve students were selected for the final assessment stage. The six strongest students, three from each class, and the six weakest students, three from each class, of both the experimental group and the control group were assigned to work on one last task. This last task consisted in writing an essay, a creative piece of writing, which could hopefully provide the investigation with solid evidence of the expected objectives being achieved.

As Scrivener (2005) points out, although language systems such as grammar and lexis can appropriately be assessed objectively since they may be presented by using discrete items, as in a test containing multiple-choice questions, for instance, assessing skills such as writing, for example, calls for a more integrative approach. Therefore, when assessing language production, in this case through writing, essays are a great assessment tool towards this aim; this, however, means that they need to be assessed subjectively due to their very nature, that of language skills.

Consequently, rubrics are to be used when assessing subjectively. As we know, rubrics are a set of criteria and standards linked to learning objectives in order to assess students' performance. Also, rubrics provide for standardized evaluation, making assessment simpler and more reliable.

Taking the above into consideration, the set of rubrics against which my students' creative writing papers were assessed is the following:

Rubrics for Creative Writing Assessment Essays

Area \ Level	Level 3: Exceeds Standards	Level 2: Meets Standards	Level 1: Does Not Meet Standards
Creativity	Writing is very creative. Ideas and style are refreshing and imaginative.	Writing is somewhat creative. Some new and imaginative ideas are observed.	Writing contains many predictable, shallow ideas and an uninspired style.
Spelling and Grammar	Proper use of spelling and grammar is employed consistently throughout the writing assignment.	There are a few spelling and grammar errors; however, this does not take away from the overall quality of the writing assignment.	Poor spelling and grammar obscure the overall effectiveness of this piece, making it difficult to follow.
Word Choice	Strong, vivid words and descriptions are observed throughout. Words are above average and used appropriately throughout the work.	Strong words and descriptions are observed. Some above average word choices are used appropriately without awkwardness.	Poor word choice and descriptions are observed throughout. Elementary word choices and many words are misused.

Fluency	There is a strong rhythm and flow of language. Sentence structure is varied throughout the piece.	There is a rhythm and flow of language. Sentence structure is often varied	No attempt to create a rhythm. Sentence structure is clearly not varied.
Organization and Development	Strong organization of ideas and use of supporting details are evident in the work.	Organization of ideas and use of some supporting details are evident in the work.	Poor organization of ideas and no attempt to supply supporting details are evident in the work.

Sources:

Source 1: Icpna Assessment System for Student Achievement
(Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano)

Source 2: 500-Word Flash Fiction/Non-Fiction Writing Contest
Rubric (RCampus)

By basing my assessment on the rubrics above, I was able to gather reliable results. With that in mind, following is the comparison and contrast of the twelve papers written by both my students in the experimental group and the control group.

Strongest Students in Control Group	Strongest Students in Experimental Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Students show a good command of varied lexical items due to their solid background knowledge. • There is usually no coherence in the use of tenses, switching from past tense to present tense quite often, causing strain in the reader to follow the sequence of events. • There are minor mistakes in the use of the assigned grammatical forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Students show a good command of varied lexical items due to their solid background knowledge. • There is usually clear consistency in the use of the simple past tense, thereby keeping coherence in the narration of events. • There are minor mistakes in the use of the assigned grammatical forms.

Weakest Students in Control Group	Weakest Students in Experimental Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students show limited use of vocabulary in order to articulate what they really intended to express. • The students display avoidance to use some of the grammatical forms (comparative and superlative adjectives) probably due to lack of confidence in their ability to handle such forms well. • There are quite many mistakes in the use of the simple past tense and comparative and superlative adjectives, namely regarding inflection. • The students came up with rather short stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students show varied vocabulary, which eventually aided them to express their thoughts effectively. • The students show willingness to take risks and use the grammatical forms they were asked to consider. • There are very few mistakes regarding inflection of simple past tense verbs and comparative and superlative adjectives. • The students elaborated on their stories with more details, thereby writing at length.

4.3. Analysis and Discussion of Results

4.3.1. Surveys

Let us discuss the results obtained from both the diagnostic survey, applied before the proposal, and the exit survey, conducted upon the completion of the implementation of the proposal.

On the one hand, when analyzing the results obtained from the diagnostic survey, it is evident that the participants had had very monotonous writing lessons throughout their experience as English language students, clearly showing that their level of motivation to participate in writing activities in class was rather low. Based on the information obtained, we can conclude then that this very little motivation the students displayed towards their participation in writing activities in the classroom was mainly due to the lack of variety their previous teachers gave to writing tasks during their lessons and due to the fact that writing was used merely as a tool for evaluation leading to a grade, thereby removing the feeling of enjoyment and replacing it for feelings of boredom and trepidation.

On the other hand, it is clear that after being presented with varied and intensive creative writing activities to work with in the English language classroom, the participants experienced a change of attitude towards class lessons containing writing tasks. This newly acquired motivation and positive attitude in the students who participated in the proposal prompted them to take risks in terms of language use and to express themselves at length, bringing about an improvement in their command of the target language, as we shall see later on.

4.3.2. Assessment Essays

In order to discuss the results obtained from the assessment essays, there is one consideration to bear in mind.

As it was mentioned in Chapter III – Methodology of the Investigation, in the section devoted to the variables, the students

who were selected in order for me to conduct this research project fall, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), into the following category:

CEF Band:	Band A - Basic User
CEF Level:	A2 Waystage
Classroom Hours:	180-200

Therefore, by assessing the information resulted from the essays written by these twelve students against the rubrics presented earlier and by looking at the results shown above, considering the CEFR category which the students belonged to, it can be observed that there is, in fact, a difference in performance between those students who participated in the implementation of the proposal, the experimental group, and those students who did not, the control group.

First, when comparing and contrasting the papers produced by the strong students in the experimental group with the papers produced by their counterparts in the control group, we can discuss the following results:

In the case of the strong students in the experimental group, they were able to reach level 3 (Exceeds Standards), within, of course, their CEFR category. The students exhibited a satisfactory use of vocabulary; they showed they were capable of using grammar forms, such as the simple past tense, very coherently, which eventually let them narrate events logically; and, consequently, the students made very few mistakes when they had to employ the language they were asked to make use of. All in all, this is basically due to both their already good command of English for a basic level user, according to their CEFR category, and the fact that they were part of this experimental research initiative.

However, the strong students in the control group were able to reach level 2 (Meets Standards) only, within, of course, their CEFR category. Regarding lexis, the students also showed an adequate use of vocabulary items; however, when it came to form, they displayed limited control of the use of tenses, a fact which prevented them from being fully understood; nevertheless, when

asked to use other structures, the students were able to do so without much struggle. On the whole, this is true essentially due to their already good command of English alone.

Second, after comparing and contrasting the papers written by the weak students in the experimental group with the papers written by their counterparts in the control group, we can analyze the results obtained as follows:

When it comes to the weak students in the experimental group, it can be seen that they were able to reach level 2 (Meets Standards), within, of course, their CEFR category. The students were able to express their ideas more effectively, thanks to their use of various lexical items; they were more willing to try out the grammatical constructions that they had just been introduced to; fewer mistakes were made by the students in terms of form, such as past tense verbs and adjectives of comparison; and the students produced longer texts, elaborating on their narratives with more elements. Altogether, this is basically due to the fact that they were part of this experimental research initiative, which, as we know, provided a lot of written practice through the implementation of creative writing activities, which, in turn, indirectly prompted a better use of grammar and lexis, thereby promoting more fluency.

However, the weak students in the control group were able to reach level 1 (Does Not Meet Standards) only, within, of course, their CEFR category. The students had trouble communicating their ideas because of their poor amount of lexis; the students did not feel self-confident about their command of some language forms, such as adjectives for comparison and simple past verbs, avoiding using them, and when they did use these language features, they made several mistakes; and, as a consequence, the written productions the students were able to offer were too limited in length. All in all, this is basically attributable to both their poor level of competency in the target language and, of course, the fact that they were not part of the experimental initiative.

In short, we can see that, although the strong students in the experimental group benefited significantly from the implementation of the proposal of introducing creative writing into

the English as a foreign language classroom, the learners who profited the most from the initiative were the so-called weak students in the experimental group. This is concluded based on the evidence gathered from the assessment essays they produced; there was a really big difference between the papers produced by the weak students in experimental group and the papers produced by the weak students in the control group.

Accordingly, the papers produced by the weak learners in the experimental group, when compared to the papers produced by their counterparts in the control group, were longer and more creative, for the students ventured to explore more possibilities; they were richer in lexis, for the students took more risks with words; they were more coherent, for the students used forms consistently well; and, as a result, they were easier to read and follow.

Following, immediately after the list of graphics that were used in this chapter, are a number of conclusions that were drawn based on the analysis of the results that were obtained upon the completion of the implementation of the proposal.

CONCLUSIONS

All in all, my objective was to see how much my students' fluency could be improved through the implementation of creative writing activities, and I can say that the advantages it provides outweighs its disadvantages, generating a large amount of lexis in use, which eventually leads to becoming more competent when communicating, which can be evidenced when comparing the assessment essays written by those in the control group and the assessment essays written by those in the experimental group. This improvement in language competence is especially significant among the weakest students, though. And last but not least, as a corollary, we can see from the statistical information obtained through the surveys conducted that the students eventually had the chance to enjoy their writing tasks in class, in most cases, for the very first time.

Following is the list of the conclusions derived from the investigation upon its completion. The conclusions deal with different regards, such as linguistic aspects, communicative competence features, and learning strategies.

- In spite of its uncomplicated nature, creative writing proved to strengthen multiple language skills, while posing a challenge to students to venture to share their own view of their surroundings and inventiveness in a nonthreatening way, which allowed for the students' engagement and eagerness to be part of the process, so the creative pieces they eventually produced were little wonders, and the students experienced 'instant

gratification' after having composed a fine piece of writing in a relatively short period of time.

- Throughout the implementation process of the proposal, I observed that besides the originally intended practice on some language aspects, such as grammar structures in some of the activities, creative writing ended up to be very effective means of a wide range of other ends, such as vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, speaking, listening, reading, language awareness, critical thinking, literary appreciation, and, obviously, writing, thereby promoting in the students fluency in the target language.
- Practice on specific grammar aspects was also present; the students had the opportunity to work with phrases, word order, and verb tense. Because my students were provided with intensive practice around certain grammatical forms, such as the simple past tense, they were able to communicate ideas very coherently when using those forms, displaying fluency, which means to be capable of conveying ideas quite easily, preventing miscomprehension and, consequently, strain to the audience.
- The students' creativity was fostered by giving them free rein to their imagination. By having students write about themselves, which is the case most of the time within the classroom constraint, the use of vocabulary is extremely restricted since the students limit themselves to the use of everyday lexical items; however, my students got to write about unreal contexts or famous people; thus, they made use of language that was beyond their present level, thereby increasing their competency in the target language and becoming more fluent.
- Since the students were given flexibility and freedom to use information in a safe environment, they were very willing and more than eager to explore possibilities and take risks; this very fact allowed for the creation of imaginary contexts that require the use of vocabulary that was still not part of their lexicon; my students were able to experiment with words to see what fitted since the pressure of writing a perfect product was removed, allowing for discovery and use of new vocabulary when they resorted to their dictionaries in order to find the words that helped them fulfill their inventive prospects. This idea alone

increased the students' fluency, for the more vocabulary a person possesses, the more fluency he or she displays in interaction.

- Engaging in creative writing, by creating a comic strip story, for example, encouraged my students to use their stored lexicon and grammar, a fact which promoted the practical application of their already accumulated linguistic knowledge and skills in the target language, thereby consolidating them.
- In addition to language skills, there was also the promotion of other strategies, which may eventually become learning strategies. First, there was the opportunity for my students to develop logical and sequential skills through storytelling. Also, the students were given the chance to polish summarizing skills when having, for example, to report their classmates' production.
- The students built up a feeling of confidence in their capacity to communicate in the target language by elaborating on their ideas and in their ability to depict their feelings in writing. When they got to see their creative pieces displayed in the classroom, my students visually witnessed their growing fluency. And having the chance to hear their creative work read aloud or read them themselves among their classmates and 'fellow creative authors' provided them with evidence of their own communication skills.
- After the students completed a creative writing task, whether it was in the form of a dialog, a script, or a comic strip story, they were asked to read aloud or act out their piece of work in front of the class; by doing this, the students got the chance to practice their public speaking skills and share their thoughts with others. Generally, the learners appreciated reading their peers' creative written productions as well as letting others read their own.
- Because all the creative activities described in the present thesis were implemented as either pair work or group work, team collaboration was key towards a successful product, so one of the benefits was to also promote team work, which, in turn, provided for negotiation in order to reach a consensus on what decisions to make regarding the steps to take; this process of

negotiation enhanced the flow of language and built fluency. Additionally, the natural pressure to perform, which normally results in writer's block, was reduced due to the fact that the responsibility for writing was distributed among the group members.

- There was a sense of community when my students shared their final written products since they learned from each other and about each other by composing a text for an audience besides their teacher. They found out what is relevant and valuable for others. The resulting written products became a testimony to the group's creativity and language command, providing the group with satisfaction and unity.
- Finally, as an additional benefit, the creative writing activities put into work provided my students with a lot fun since these tasks helped them to set their imagination free and create situations that proved to be very amusing, indeed. This very fact made my students understand that not all writing activities need to be bounded by a serious setting because certain criteria need to be followed in order to be given a passing grade. And since the activities were so much fun, the material and their contributions themselves seemed to be more memorable.

In the next section, some final recommendations will be provided; these pieces of advice have to do with both the actions that may be taken by anyone wishing to engage in a research work such as the one in this study and with the actual implementation of the proposal in the classroom. All of these suggestions are, of course, meant to be left to the discretion of the fellow teachers, considering their own particular teaching context.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Embarking on creative writing demands students' understanding of the benefits that this endeavor brings about. So if teachers do wish to introduce creative writing into their teaching, it is imperative that they consider the student's attitudes and views towards the implementation of nontraditional writing assignments due to the fact that some students may resist and not like it. Therefore, I believe that it is necessary to instill in our students a spirit of flexibility and boldness in order to venture into the realm of the imaginary; it will gradually dawn on them that creative writing is beneficial, and they will eventually understand the rationale behind it.
- Indeed, from experience, I can say that engaging in creative writing represents an enormously time-consuming enterprise for teachers. So if teachers eventually decide to run creative writing work in their classes, it is highly recommended that they allow enough time to do so and not rush the process.
- Since creative writing is time consuming, I found myself skipping certain activities in the textbook when working on one creative writing task with my students. Thus, we teachers need to be very careful and act judiciously as to make wise decisions on what textbook tasks to overlook. Besides, because there is a syllabus to follow and a final examination for our students to take, we, teachers at a language school like mine, do not have much time available to successfully run creative writing activities in a regular

and permanent way, since there are also other papers students need to write that are to be corrected and graded.

- With regard to when creative writing is best put into practice in the classroom, it is advised to implement it in our lessons after students have already seen and learned a language point through direct instruction, that is, after the language presentation stage and the controlled practice stage. This way, creative writing is used to reinforce newly learned language points rather than introduce them so that students can engage in the production stage, though, in a different and original fashion.
- Some teachers may be worried that if they decide to implement creative writing within their lessons, their students might make errors by attempting to use language they haven't been exposed to yet. This is, of course, a valid concern; however, worrying excessively about errors can, in fact, be an inhibiting factor for the student. Therefore, since all classroom tasks normally have a particular language aim, it is suggested that if teachers have concerns about accuracy, they may encourage accuracy in only the specific language point they have just introduced and that they want their students to reinforce. It is also recommended that minor inaccuracies, or local mistakes that do not impede comprehension, be overlooked and be accepted as part of the creative process; the students, in this way, will not only create ideas, but they will also look for strategies that will hopefully help them to fill gaps in their knowledge; this is where the learning process actually takes place.
- When it comes to material preparation, it is suggested that, whenever possible, some stimulation be presented to the students, so we need to keep in mind that there will be certain amount of preparation to do at home, trying to find suitable material. Sensory stimuli, particularly visual, activates the creative process and provides the students with substantial material to write about. The stimuli may be in the form of colorful pictures or videos; these stimuli prompt the production of words and ideas.
- It is also important to define a topic or topics that are familiar to most students, topics that may not cause strain in order for them to understand; such topics can go around the family, the work, the

school, and the like. The topics, of course, should provide variety, and even though it is impossible to please every student in class every time, the topic should be an engaging one, accompanied by a task with the right degree of challenge. The element of surprise or originality is always very helpful. Apart from the topics, the exploitability factor is also key; we teachers need to select tasks that are engaging, tasks that can ideally keep learners' interest over a length of time, which in turn takes us to another crucial aspect, that of length. Implementing short tasks or longer tasks with separate sections is far more productive than a single long activity.

- After the students have finished a writing task, I feel that it is important to validate their effort and creativity by having them report their work to their classmates; in doing so, the students will feel a sense of achievement. The report stage is when the students, individually or with their group mates, orally report briefly to the class as a whole. This way, learners also have the chance to find out how others achieved the same learning objective after the task has been completed.
- During the report stage, after every group of students has presented their work to the whole class, it is expected that the other students applaud their classmates' work and effort. So if the applause does not start spontaneously, it is highly recommended that the teacher lead the applause.
- Finally, I believe that in other teaching contexts, like K-12, for example, teachers count with so much more time in their hands to do many more activities, and since many of those teachers prepare their own exams, thereby knowing what contents to cover in their lessons, they can manage the teaching and learning processes more easily, meaning there exists much more flexibility to offer their students opportunities to engage in creative writing tasks, such as the ones proposed, more frequently. Therefore, engaging in creative writing activities in the classroom on a regular basis requires a lot of time, which is why I feel that the best teaching contexts to implement these sort of activities are the K-12 and university ones, teaching and learning contexts where teachers get to have the same groups of students for a whole school year or semester, respectively.

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Appendix 1

Survey

Anonymous Survey on Writing Activities **in Class**

1.- I look forward to the writing task day	3	2	1
2.- I enjoy working on the writing activities	3	2	1
3.- I feel the writing activities are fun	3	2	1
4.- The objective of the writing activities is to assign a grade	3	2	1
5.- The writing activities are done in a variety of ways	3	2	1

3 = Always

2 = Sometimes

1 = Never

Appendix 2

Survey in Spanish

Encuesta Anónima acerca de Actividades de Escritura **en Clase**

1.- Espero con interés el día de la actividad de escritura	3	2	1
2.- Disfruto de las actividades de escritura	3	2	1
3- Siento que las actividades de escritura son entretenidas	3	2	1
4.- El objetivo de las actividades de escritura es de asignar una nota	3	2	1
5.- Las actividades de escritura son realizadas en forma variada	3	2	1

3 = Siempre

2 = A veces

1 = Nunca

Appendix 3

Samples of Responded Diagnostic/Entry Survey

Sample 1

Encuesta Anónima acerca de Actividades de Escritura en Clase

1.- Espero con interés el día de la actividad de escritura	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2.- Disfruto de las actividades de escritura	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3.- Siento que las actividades de escritura son entretenidas	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4.- El objetivo de las actividades de escritura es de asignar una nota	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	2	1
5.- Las actividades de escritura son realizadas en forma variada	3	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	1

3 = Siempre 2 = A veces 1 = Nunca

Sample 2

Encuesta Anónima acerca de Actividades de Escritura en Clase

1.- Espero con interés el día de la actividad de escritura	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2.- Disfruto de las actividades de escritura	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3.- Siento que las actividades de escritura son entretenidas	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4.- El objetivo de las actividades de escritura es de asignar una nota	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	2	1
5.- Las actividades de escritura son realizadas en forma variada	3	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

3 = Siempre 2 = A veces 1 = Nunca

Appendix 4

Samples of Responded Final/Exit Survey

Sample 1

Encuesta Anónima acerca de Actividades de Escritura en Clase

1.- Espero con interés el día de la actividad de escritura	3	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	1
2.- Disfruto de las actividades de escritura	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1
3.- Siento que las actividades de escritura son entretenidas	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1
4.- El objetivo de las actividades de escritura es de asignar una nota	3	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	1
5.- Las actividades de escritura son realizadas en forma variada	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1

3 = Siempre 2 = A veces 1 = Nunca

Sample 2

Encuesta Anónima acerca de Actividades de Escritura en Clase

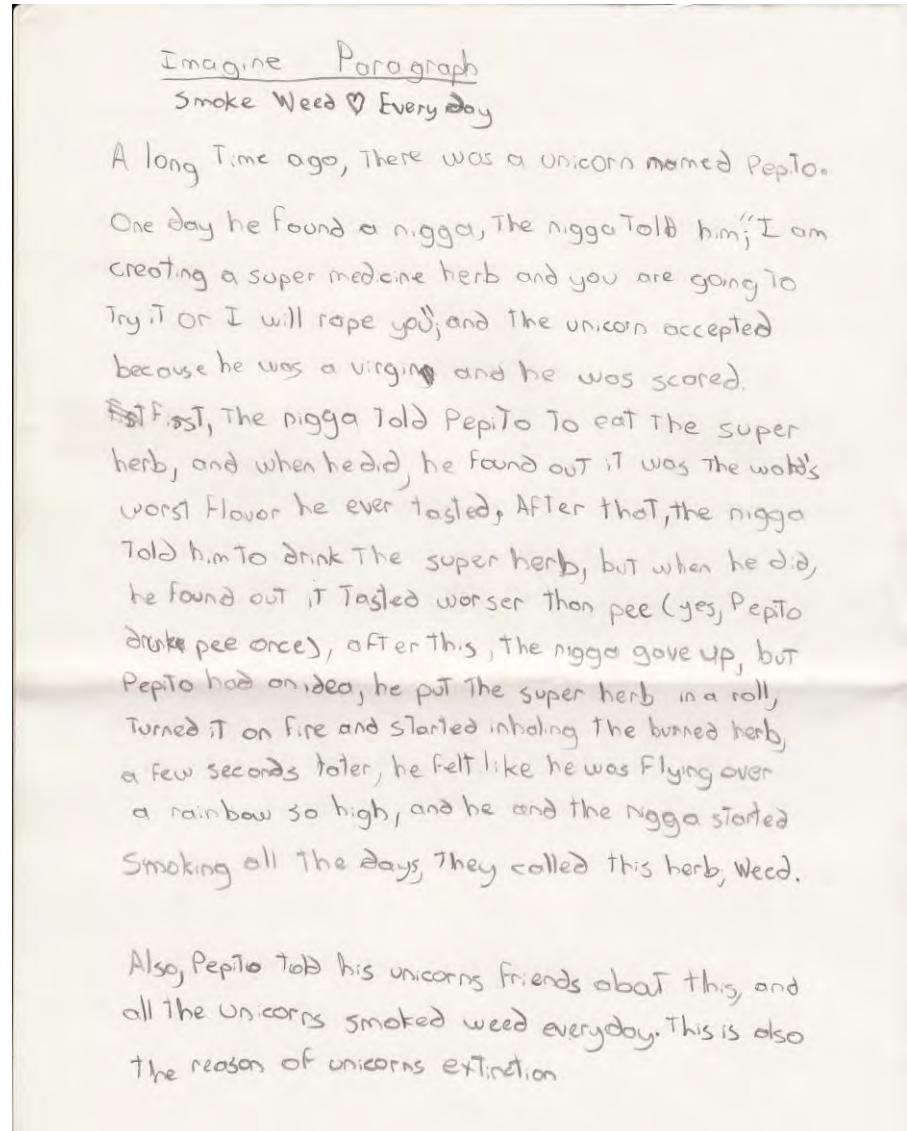
1.- Espero con interés el día de la actividad de escritura	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1
2.- Disfruto de las actividades de escritura	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1
3.- Siento que las actividades de escritura son entretenidas	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1
4.- El objetivo de las actividades de escritura es de asignar una nota	3	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	1
5.- Las actividades de escritura son realizadas en forma variada	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	2	1

3 = Siempre 2 = A veces 1 = Nunca

Appendix 5

Samples of Assessment Essays

Sample 1: Strong Student in Control Group



Sample 2: Strong Student in Experimental Group

Yesterday, I went to U.S.A. with my best friend Carla. We were walking in New York and ... Suddenly, we saw Axl Rose!! We were so excited because we love him. Later, we saw that he was walking next to Slash. We thought that they were not friends anymore, but they were together. They were coming closer to us. They gave us a pair of tickets for their concert. They had a new member in GNR. I saw his photo in the ticket. He was shorter than Axl, Slash, Izzy, Steven and Duff. I think he is the shortest man I've seen. The concert started at 8 o'clock. When Carla and I arrived at the concert, we found 100 dollars! Then, Axl presented the new member, his name was Alexis. I couldn't believe that, he was an alien!! But he was the prettiest man ~~in~~ in the world. They sang Paradise City and Patience. When they finished, Alexis disappeared. All people were afraid. Axl said that it was a joke, but he was really afraid. They tried to continue playing and singing. They sang Welcome to the Jungle and when all people were listening to the song, Alexis appeared again. Nobody can explain that, but the truth is that he is a good singer.

Sample 3: Weak Student in Control Group

technology

- once upon a time ^{a person who} create robots that help on the streets cleaning the floor and there were a lot of robots in all the country doing different things but there were too intelligent robots sometimes they replace to the teachers in different colleges but also there were bad robots they stole banks because the economy in this country always increased.
- One day the president decide that the robots inhabit in another world and the robots left the earth.

End

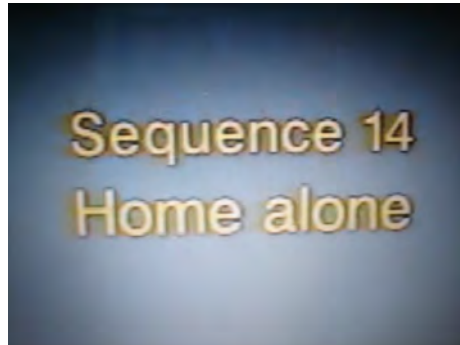
Sample 4: Weak Student in Experimental Group

SOME DAYS AGO, I WAS WALKING ON THE STREET AND I SAW A DOG. THIS DOG WAS SMALLER THAN A MOUSE, SO I DECIDED TO KEEP THE DOG TO MY HOUSE. ONE DAY I GOT UP EARLY AND I DIDN'T FIND THE DOG, SUDDENLY I HEARD A VOICE, THIS VOICE WAS CALLING, IT WAS MY DOG! WHEN I SAW MY DOG, I WAS REALLY AMAZED, MY DOG WAS BIGGEST ANIMAL IN THE WORLD AND ALSO MY DOG WAS TALKING TO ME. I GOT PASS OUT, BUT THIS STORY WAS A DREAM. WHEN I GOT UP, I SAW TO MY DOG SLEEPING NEXT TO ME.

Appendix 6

Link to Video Used in “Video Recognition and Expansion” Activity

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRbR0I-l9UI>



Appendix 7

Samples of Student Work on "Video Recognition and Expansion" Activity

Sample 1

Rick and George met at the school cafeteria; George asked Rick about his weekend. Rick began telling George about his weekend. First, Rick was watching a TV program and his parents said him some things that he had to do. His mother said him that when he want, he can cooked a pizza for 15 minutes. Then he was angry and cooked a pizza. After, he called and forgot that the oven was on, so the pizza was burn and he was scared. Later, he called the firefighter. Then, he hit his car against the garage door and his father was really angry but his mom was fine because the kitchen was clean. On the other hand, George said his weekend was fantastic. First, he went to a party with his girlfriend and danced all night with her. Then, he went to the cinema and saw a horror movie. After that, he met with his best friend and they talked a lot. Later, he played with his brother and had a good time. Finally, he called his girlfriend and talked with her all night. He had a really fantastic weekend, but Rick doesn't have a good weekend.

Sample 2

Rick and George met at the school cafeteria; George asked Rick about his weekend. Rick began telling George about his weekend. First, Rick said that he has a terrible weekend. because his father went out, and he stayed alone in home. He was Hungry and then he put the pizza in the kitchen, then He talked on the phone with his friend and he forgot the pizza, next he went to the kitchen and saw the pizza burned, so he called to the fireman.

Next he cleaned the kitchen, and he went to a pizza shop but he hit his car against the garage door.

Finally George invited one ice cream to Rick.

On the other hand, George said his weekend was fantastic. First, he traveled to Colombia and he kissed Shakira, Later he he went to the famous restaurant in Colombia and he ate with Gabriel Garcia Marquez, at the night he found 10000 dollars on the floor.

Sample 3

Rick and George met at the school cafeteria; George asked Rick about his weekend. Rick began telling George about the activities in his weekend. First, Rick was alone in his house, watching TV. Then he talked for phone and he bought a pizza. He cooked the pizza in the oven because he was hungry. After He hit his car against the garage door. Finally He talked with his parents about the problems. On the other hand, George said his weekend was fantastic. First, he went to a party and He drank alcohol with a aspirin. Then He fought with the king of the party, He hit the nuts of the king of the party as "Bruce Lee". Finally he took of all his clothes and He went to house very fast.

Sample 4

Rick and George met at the school cafeteria; George asked Rick about his weekend. Rick began telling George his weekend. First, Rick fried the PIZZA because He talked with his friend, then he went to the kitchen and he saw the burned PIZZA and He had to clean the kitchen. He ~~felt~~ hungry and he drove his father's car's then he hit his car against the garage door. on the other hand, George said his weekend was fantastic. First, he went to the party with his girlfriend's then he went to hotel because they were hot, and Sunday he eat KFC with his friends and later, he drank beer and smoked weed a lot. Finally, he killed a his worst enemy.


Appendix 8

Sample of *World Link* Textbook, Unit 1, Page 10


4 Language Link Review of the simple past

A Read about Diego's high school experiences. Underline the regular simple past verbs. Circle the irregular ones. Then tell a partner: what happened to Diego?

In high school, I studied a lot and got good grades. But the first time I took the university entrance exam, I failed. That was hard. To prepare for the next exam, I went to a test prep center. Two good things happened there: I met my girlfriend in the class. And the next time, I passed the entrance exam!




B Look at the high school photos of these two famous people. Complete each profile with the correct past tense verbs from the box. Then fill in their names.



act become die go take write

Her mother (1) _____ when she was six years old. In high school, (2) _____ drama and dance classes. She (3) _____ to New York in 1977, and later she (4) _____ a very famous singer. She also (5) _____ books for children and (6) _____ in movies.

Her name is (7) _____ Louise Ciccone.



be divorce enter move run win

He (1) _____ born in Hawaii to an American mother and a Kenyan father. His parents (2) _____ and later he (3) _____ with his family to Indonesia and then again to the U.S. In 1988, he (4) _____ Harvard School and in 2008, he (5) _____ for President of the United States. (6) _____

His name is (7) _____

C Choose a person in B and write three or four questions about him or her. Then ask your partner the questions.

In high school, what classes did she take?

Appendix 9

Samples of Student Work on "Story Circle" Activity

Sample 1

ICPNA

COURSE Basic 09 GRADE _____

NAME 1 DATE _____

Once upon a time, there was a princess who lived in a castle by a river. She drank poison because she had a impossible love the mouse. She escaped with the mouse and had sex. she got married with the mouse and had one baby and his name was fuckencio and fuck had sex with a "tia memora" and they had antiochior. After she drank alcohol all the day - she was a hangover, and she was dead, #948. Tuc. Hangover 1000 ways to die.

Sample 2

ICPNA

COURSE _____ GRADE _____

NAME _____ DATE _____

Once upon a time, there was a process who lived in a castle by a river. she fell One day, she fell off from the tower and died. And she turned into a zombie she decided to poison. She grasped an army of zombies and she played football with her army ~~because~~ but the next day she got up and all was a dream. She found to a friend and she chanced for him. But the dream was way better so she committed suicide.

Sample 3

ICPNA

COURSE _____ GRADE _____

NAME _____ DATE _____

Once upon a time, there was a princess who lived in a castle by a river. She has a beautiful dress but she doesn't have legs. so she went to the supermarket and she buy legs, she returned to her house and she cooked a big food. She accidentally cooked her new legs and she ate it. then she found a part of leg, a finger, and she was so scared that she killed her dog and she felt sad.

Sample 4

ICPNA

COURSE _____ GRADE _____

NAME _____ DATE _____

Once upon a time, there was a princess who lived in a castle by a river. she got married with "el negro Mama". A day "el negro mama" was sex with the princess, then she was pregnant, but el negro mama was ugly so she drank a poison and her baby died. The princess made "el negro mama" believe that he was her boyfriend. "el negro mama" cried every night and drank "rakumik". Then, the princess escaped with allanta y Andy V because they're very ugly and she liked the boys ugly.

Appendix 10

Samples of Student Work on “Chained Nonsensical Stories” Activity
Part 1

Sample 1

SUPERMAN

at the school

She is dancing

Let's Go

good bye.

They Married

Sample 2

My doggy

IN THE RESTAURANT

he was running

Bye.

be happy

He Goes To Home

My Teacher

IN THE KITCHEN

It was crying

See you tomorrow

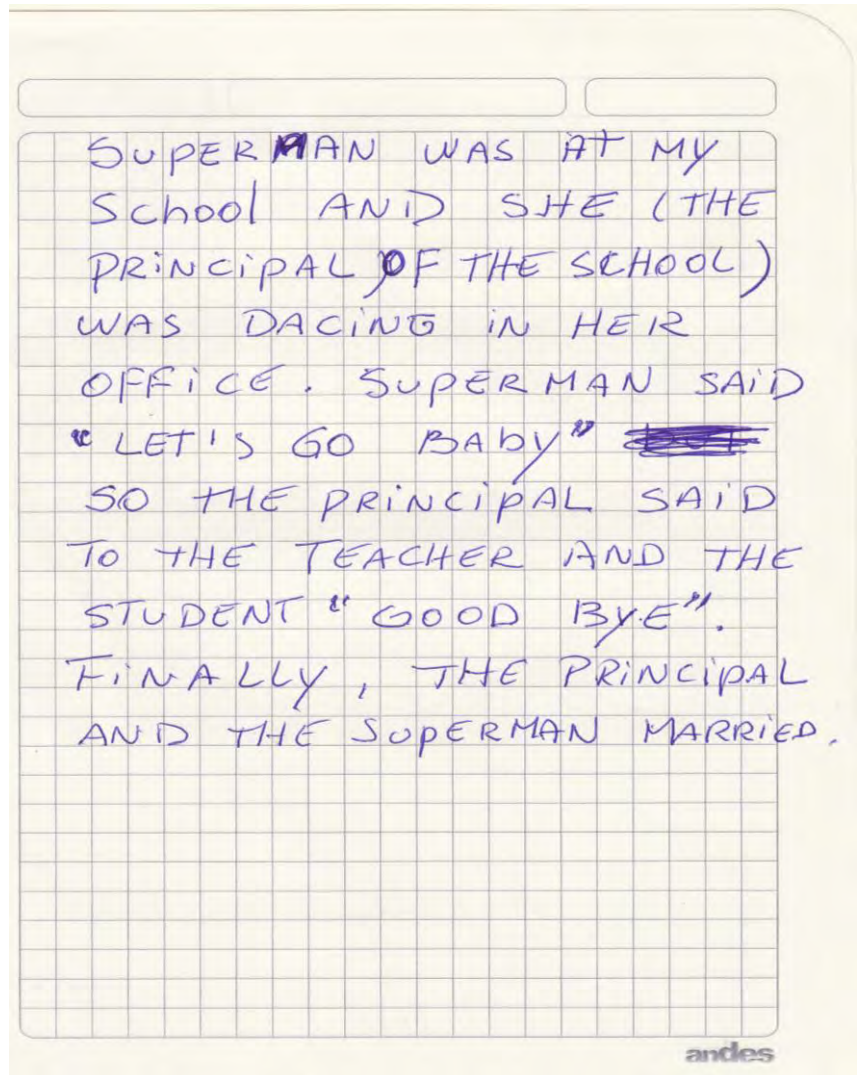
You are THE best

they died.

Appendix 11

Samples of Student Work on "Chained Nonsensical Stories" Activity Part 2

Sample 1



Sample 2

My doggy was in the restaurant and he was running around. After that the restaurant manager came and said to my doggy: "Bye". My dog answered "Don't worry be happy". After that my doggy went to home.

Sample 3

My teacher was in the kitchen and it (my dog) was crying. My teacher said: "See you tomorrow". And then ^{my} dog said "you are the best". Finally they died.

Appendix 12

Sample of *World Link* Textbook, Unit 2, Page 17

Language Link The comparative form of adjectives

- A** Read the advertisement. Underline all the adjectives. Then tell a partner: How are the underlined adjectives similar? How are they different?



- B** Complete the chart with the missing words. Then check your answers with a partner.

The comparative form of adjectives					
One syllable		Two syllables		Three or more syllables	
_____	sweeter	simple	_____	_____	more refreshing
large	_____	_____	spicier	delicious	_____
big	bigger	_____	more crowded	interesting	_____

Notice! The comparative form of good is better.

- C** Complete the sentences with the comparative form of the adjective in parentheses.

- The red curry is spicier than the green curry. (spicy)
- Cherry candy is _____ than real cherries. (sweet)
- Wow! This apple pie is _____ than my Mom's! (delicious)
- Our English teacher is _____ than our math teacher. (popular)
- You're a _____ cook than I am. (good)
- She is really embarrassed. Her face is _____ than an apple! (red)

Info! The comparative is often followed by *than* when comparing two things.

- D** Think of foods to compare using the adjectives in the box. Then say sentences comparing the foods with a partner.

good healthy refreshing salty sweet

Apples are healthier than potato chips.



Hot bananas served with a spicy chocolate sauce is a popular dessert in...
a. Morocco
b. Guatemala
c. India

4 Language Link The superlative form of adjectives

A Read the information about the restaurants. Then complete the sentences below with the correct form of each adjective.



Restaurant A is old.

Restaurant A is expensive.

Restaurant B is _____ than Restaurant A.

Restaurant B is _____ than Restaurant

Restaurant C is _____ restaurant.

Restaurant C is _____ most _____ restaura



B Complete the chart with the missing words. Then check your answers with a partner.

The superlative form of adjectives					
One syllable		Two syllables		Three or more syllables	
_____	the sweetest	simple	_____	_____	the most expensive
large	_____	_____	the spiciest	delicious	_____
big	the biggest	_____	the most crowded	interesting	_____

Notice! The superlative form of good is the best.

C Complete the restaurant profile with the superlative form of the adjectives in parentheses. Then answer these questions:

- Why is this restaurant unusual? Why do people like it?
- Does it sound interesting to you? Why or why not?



Are you looking for an interesting place to have a meal? One of (1) _____ (unusual) places in the world is Beijing's Dark Restaurant—where you eat in a completely dark room! Dark Restaurant is one of (2) _____ (trendy) spots* in China. For many, it is also (3) _____ (popular) place to go on a first date. "It's (4) _____ (good) way to get to know someone," says Zhi-ying Chen, a visitor to the restaurant. "In the dark, you can relax and talk." Chen adds, "I also had one of (5) _____ (delicious) meals of my life." His girlfriend agrees. "It was (6) _____ (weird) but (7) _____ (interesting) eating experience I ever had!"

*spot = place



D Work with a partner. Use these adjectives to talk about restaurants you know.

noisy trendy cheap
boring romantic bad

Bob's Bistro is the **noisiest** restaurant I know.

Appendix 13

Template of “Comic” Activity 1

Comic Story 1

Using these characters, create a comic strip story. Try to use comparative and superlative adjectives. If possible, expand the story by adding more pictures and dialogs.



Appendix 14

Samples of Student Work on “Comics” Activity 1

Sample 1

Comic Story 1

Using these characters, create a comic story. Try to use comparative and superlative adjectives. If possible, expand the story by adding more pictures and dialogs.

The comic strip consists of six panels arranged in two rows of three. In each panel, a crocodile character (wearing a striped shirt) and a boy character (wearing a white shirt with a large letter 'A') are shown. The dialogue is as follows:

- Panel 1: Crocodile: "Hi, Alvin. How are you?"
- Panel 2: Boy: "Are you talking to me? I know you?"
- Panel 3: Crocodile: "You don't recognize me? I'm your best friend, Freddy!"
- Panel 4: Boy: "This is the worst dream EVER!"
- Panel 5: Crocodile: "You're the biggest #1 %&^\$#"
- Panel 6: Boy: "Whatever!"

Sample 2

Comic Story 1

Using these characters, create a comic story. Try to use comparative and superlative adjectives. If possible, expand the story by adding more pictures and dialogs.



Appendix 15

Template of “Comic” Activity 2

Comic Story 2

Create a comic story from scratch. Draw characters and write dialogs. Try to use comparative and superlative adjectives.

COMIC STORY

1	2
3	4
5	6

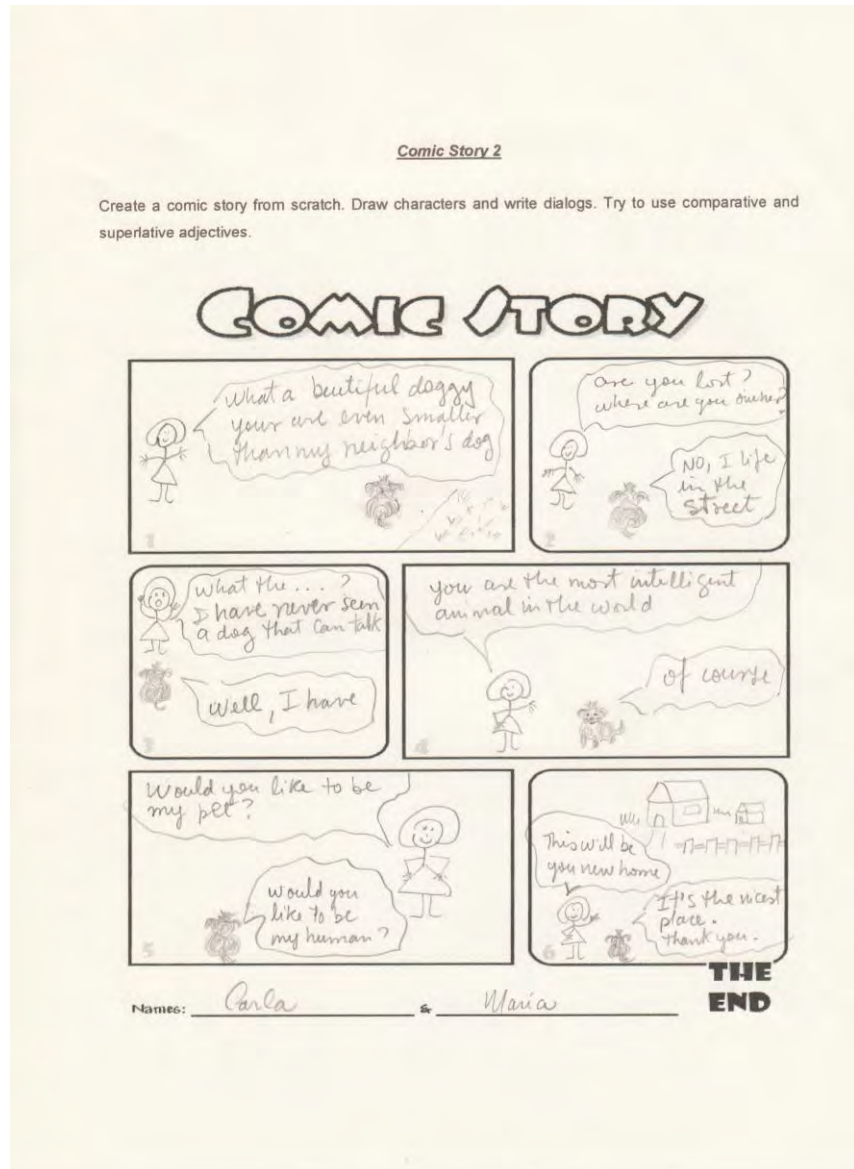
**THE
END**

Names: _____ & _____

Appendix 16

Samples of Student Work on “Comics” Activity 2

Sample 1



Sample 2

Comic Story 2

Create a comic story from scratch. Draw characters and write dialogs. Try to use comparative and superlative adjectives.

COMIC STORY



Names: JOSÉ M. & MARIO H.

**THE
END**

4 Speaking I'd like you to meet ...



A Listen to the conversations. Who is meeting for the first time?

CD
Track 6

Conversation 1

Maria: Hi, Junko. /yunkou/
Junko: Hi, Maria. It's good to see you again! How are you?
Maria: Fine. How about you?
Junko: Pretty good.
Maria: Oh, and this is my friend Ricardo. We both go to City University.
Junko: Hey, Ricardo. Nice to meet you.
Ricardo: Yeah, you too.

Conversation 2

Mr. Otani: Morning, Miriam. /miriam/
Miriam: Good morning, Mr. Otani. ... Oh, Mr. Otani, I'd like you to meet Andres Garcia. He started working here yesterday. Andres, Mr. Otani is our V.P. of Sales.
Mr. Otani: Nice to meet you, Andres.
Andres: It's very nice to meet you, too, Mr. Otani. /otani/



B Practice both conversations with two partners.

ASK ANSWER

What does Maria say to introduce Ricardo?
What does Miriam say to introduce Andres?

5 Speaking Strategy



A Work in groups of three: Student A, Student B, and Student C.

1. Student A: Choose a famous person to be. Write down your identity on a piece of paper and give it to Student B.
2. Student B: Read the identity of Student A. Then introduce Student A to Student C formally.
3. Change roles and follow steps 1 and 2 again.

Useful Expressions		
	Introducing a person to someone else	Responding to introductions
formal	Mr. Otani, I'd like to introduce you to Andres. Mr. Otani, I'd like you to meet Andres. Junko, this is Ricardo. Junko, meet Ricardo.	It's (very) nice to meet you. (It's) nice / good to meet you, too. Nice / Good to meet you, too.
informal	Junko, Ricardo.	



B Now introduce the "famous friends" you met in A to your other classmates. Use a formal or informal style and use the Useful Expressions.

Ana, I'd like you to meet
(name)

It's nice to meet you,
(name)

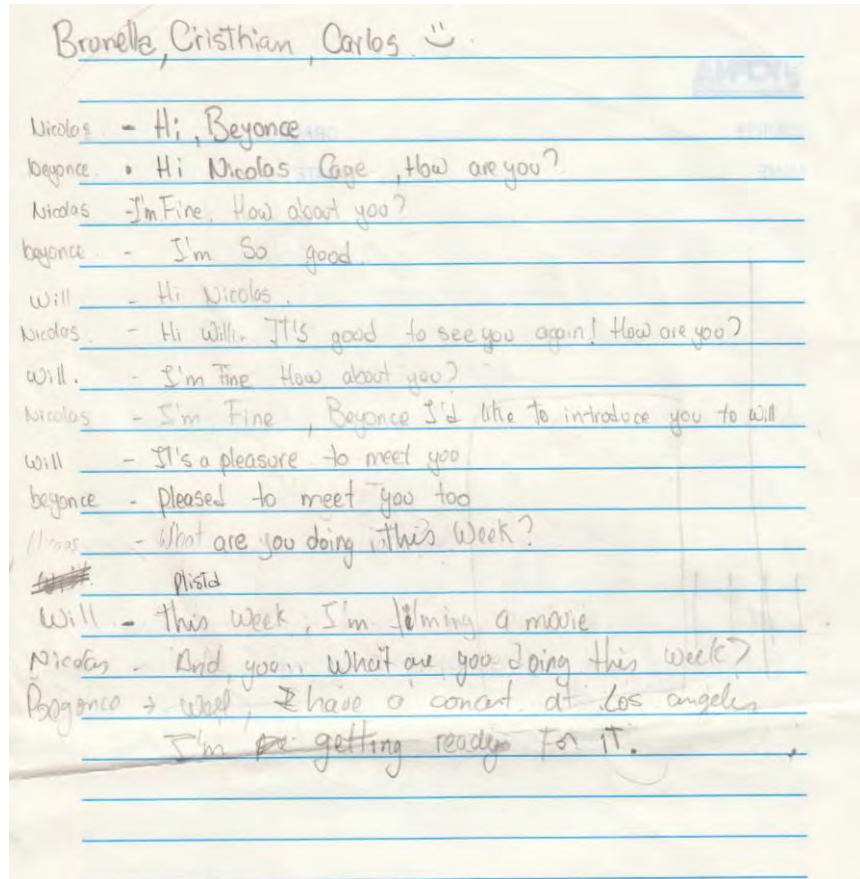
It's nice to meet you, too, Ana.



Appendix 18

Samples of Student Work on “Dialogs (Celebrities)” Activity

Sample 1



Sample 2

ICPNA

COURSE _____ GRADE _____

NAME _____ DATE _____

S: Hey, look there!

C: What's up?

S: This is my friend

C: Who?

S: Robert in the middle dance's floor

C: Really I'd like to meet him

S: ~~Of~~ Nice! Hey, Robert!

R: Hi, Susy How're you doing?

S: Fine, thanks so This is Chuck Norris

R: o.o ... ah!!! chup doms. Hi!!!, I'm Robert.

C: Hi, Robert, Nice to meet you.

R: Yeah, you too.

S: Guys - Let's dance

→ S: What time do you get up?

C: I get up at 11:00 am.

S: Really! It's very late What about u?

R: I get up at 6:00 o'clock.

S: Why ??? frank - sua

R: Because I work from 7:00 to 4:00 pm every day?

S: Really ??? Chuck look healthy! what are you doing in this month?

C: I'm going to legym at night.

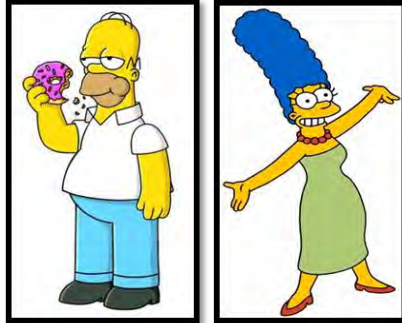
S: Tell me, Robert Are you doing on a diet?

R: Of course

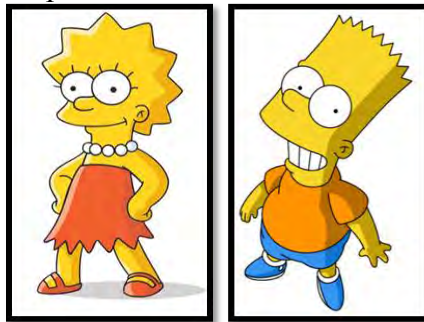
Appendix 19

Cartoon Characters Cards

Cartoon Character Couple 1



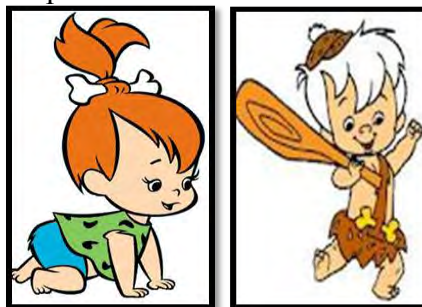
Cartoon Character Couple 2



Cartoon Character Couple 3



Cartoon Character Couple 4



Cartoon Character Couple 5



Cartoon Character Couple 6



Cartoon Character Couple 7



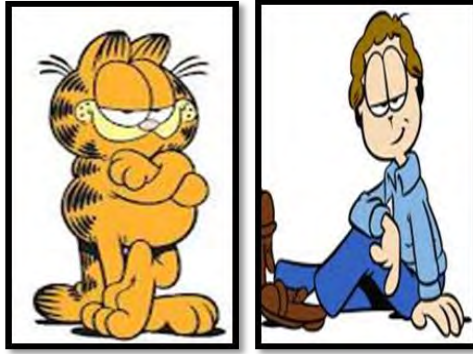
Cartoon Character Couple 8



Cartoon Character Couple 9



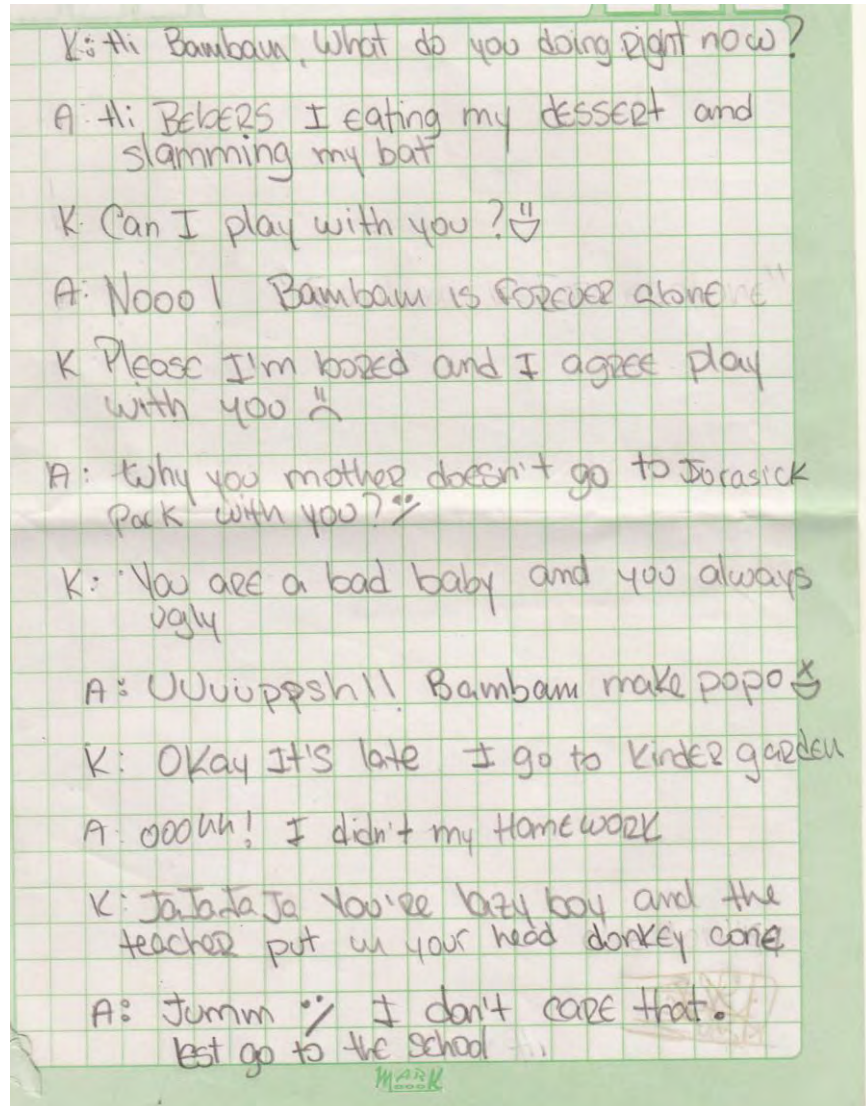
Cartoon Character Couple 10



Appendix 20

Samples of Student Work on "Dialogs (Cartoon Scripts)" Activity

Sample 1



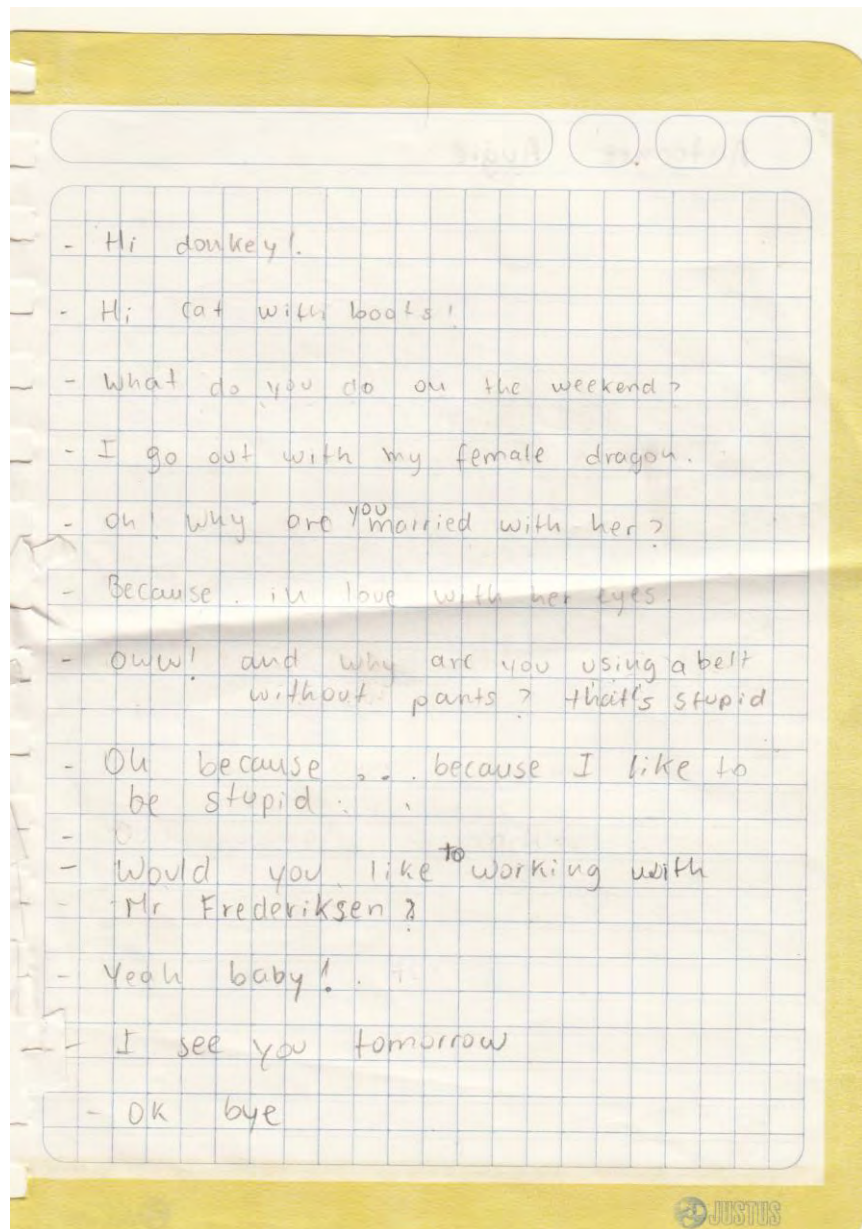
Sample 2

B: Hey Lisa.
L: What do you want Bart?
B: Are you taking ~~saxophone~~ saxophone class this month?
L: Yeah!
B: Do you have money?
L: Well, I don't have money for you.
B: Oh! come on let me some money.
L: No, I'm going to the supermarket right now.
B: Please! It's only ten dollars.
L: Don't bother me.
B: I hate u', do you know ~~y~~ that?
L: Of course, I hate u', too.

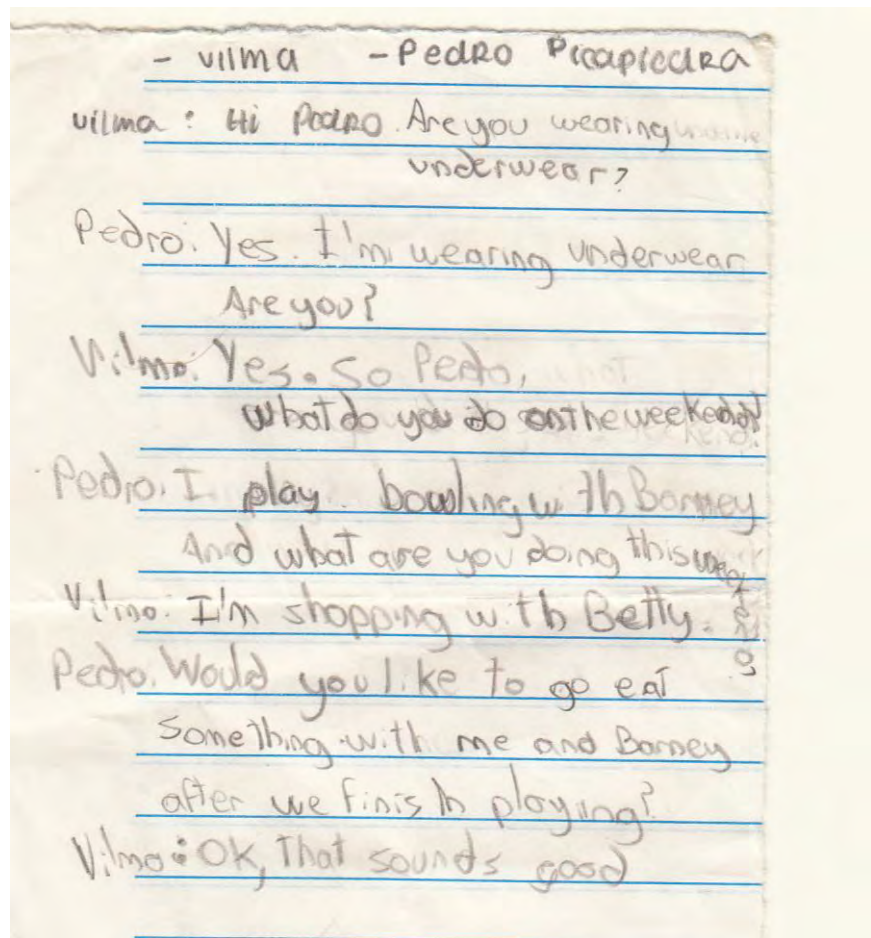
Sample 3

Shrek: Hi Fiona How you do?
Fiona: hello Shrek! I'm fine - and you?
Shrek: pretty good
Fiona: what do you do on the weekend?
Shrek: I visiting "donkey" every weekend
Fiona: this weekend - I went out. "El gato con botas"
Shrek: Fionaaa! are you crazy?
Fiona: Nooo! are you jealous?
Shrek: No, I'm relaxing right now.
Fiona: relaxing?
Shrek: yeah! it's true
Fiona: ok bye
Shrek: see you later?
Fiona: I don't now ~~THU~~

Sample 4



Sample 5



4 Speaking I bet she's good at math.

A Nico and Sandra are talking about a news article. Listen and answer the questions.

CD
Track 22

1. What did a woman in New York City do?
2. How did she do it?
3. What is she going to do now?

Sandra: Anything interesting in today's news?

Nico: Yeah, I'm reading about a woman in New York City. She just won \$25,000.

Sandra: That's a lot of money. Did she win the lottery?

Nico: No, she guessed the correct number of candies in a jar.

Sandra: Really? How many were there?

Nico: 7,954.

Sandra: Wow. That was a lucky guess!

Nico: Oh, I doubt she guessed. I bet she's good at math. The article says she won a similar contest in the past.

Sandra: So, what's she going to do with the money?

Nico: I don't know. She'll probably go on vacation or use it for school.

B Practice the conversation with a partner.

5 Speaking Strategy

A On the lines below, write two things about yourself that are true. Write one thing that is a lie.

B Get into a group of 3-4 people and do the following:

1. One person tells the group his or her sentences.
2. The others . . .
 - ask the speaker questions to find out which sentence is a lie.
 - use the Useful Expressions to discuss their ideas.
 - guess which sentence is a lie. If you guess correctly, you get a point.
3. Change roles and repeat steps 1 and 2.

Useful Expressions: Talking about possibility	
Saying something is likely	
I bet (that)	Marco plays drums in a band.
Marco probably	plays drums in a band.
Maybe / Perhaps	Marco plays drums in a band.
To disagree that it is likely	
I doubt (that)	Marco plays drums in a band.

I bet Marco plays drums in a band. He owns a pair of drum sticks.

Well, maybe he plays drums, but not in a band.

Yeah, I doubt he plays drums in a band. I bet that's the lie.

Appendix 22

Samples of Student Work on “Dialogs (The Strangest Dream)” Activity

Sample 1

A: Hey, Sheyla listen. Last night, I had the strangest dream ever. In the dream I was in my house and soon I saw a shadow of my grandfather but I thought that is only a shadow of my clothes.

B: What happened next?

A: Then I listened his voice and I felt nervous. Next I was in strangest place with my dog and finally my mom woke me up.

B: What do you think it means?

A: I have no idea. It probably means that I have to visit my grandfather in the cemetery. What about you?

B: Well, it might mean that your grandfather not resting in peace and he needs that you pray a lot.

A: Maybe you're right.

B: Take it into account.

A: Thanks.

B: No problem.

Sample 2

B: Hey, Katie listen. Last night, I had the strangest dream ever. In the dream I met a Barack Obama and E.t, my boyfriend was Leonardo Di Caprio, but in the night my boyfriend became in a were wolf and he tried to eat me, but with kisses because he loved me

K: What happened next?

B: then I slept all night long, when I waked up I stayed at the cemetery, in my body I felt blood also pain in my heart and I become a zombie and I ate all the world also Felipe.

K: what do you think it means?

B: I have no idea. It probably means I'm hungry. What about you?

K: Well, it could mean that you're in love with Felipe

Sample 3

Hey, Lucia listen. Last night, I had the strangest dream ever. In the dream I was in a strange house with my 2 friends. We are walking and my friends disappear. and I was alone in a room and appear Freddy Cruther with Chuky's girlfriend. In my dream they were lovers.

What happened next?

Then Tiffany sang "1 2 3 close the door..." and I was scared but appear Superman with Bikini and I was more scared.

What do you think it means?

I have no idea. Maybe means I watch much tv. in the night.

What about you?

Well, it might mean that you're crazy. and you are obsessed with horror movies and super heroes, too.

Sample 4

A: Hey, ~~from~~ listen. Last night, I had the strangest dream ever. In the dream I was in Australia and a kangaroo took me in his pouch with his dub and it raped me and then we went to his cave. In the cave there was a big party rock!, but I couldn't enter because I wasn't an animal.

B: What happened next?

A: I scalped Winnie Pooh so I could be able to enter the party. In the corner of the cave there was a group of frogs, and the king of the party was the kitty Felipe. I licked the frogs and I felt like I was in drugs so I couldn't walk normally and I fell off from the window and died. And the bugs raped me and ~~finally~~ ~~Winnie Pooh~~ Winnie Pooh came for his skin and I finally woke up.

B: What do you think it means?

A: I have no idea. It probably means that it shouldn't travel to Australia.

What about you?

B: I think it ~~may~~ ^{may} mean that the animals want to rape you.